

GUARD THE GOSPEL

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GUARD THE GOSPEL

Welcome to the class for beginners and young Christians. In one of the most passionate appeals in scripture, Paul wrote the following verses to Timothy, a young evangelist,

“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the World; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.” (2 Timothy 4:1-4)

The apostle Paul wanted Timothy to know and to preach the Word of God. One of the reasons for Paul’s constant emphasis on the Scripture was so that the Christians would not be led astray by the false doctrines that are bound to come. The apostle knew only too well that Satan, the Father of lies, would soon try to destroy God’s kingdom, the church. God’s word is our only source for salvation, and Christians are the only people who can bring that salvation to mankind. The leaders of this church believe that any disciple who is not thoroughly equipped with the word of God will not be confident of what he believes, turning his commitment into legalism. Instead, it is our desire to see every disciple deepens his own convictions from the Bible so that he will be able to stand against Satan in any form, whether it be persecution, criticism, or personal doubts.

Christians, we urge you to take this class seriously so that, as a church family, we will all be able to Guard the Gospel.

Love,
John & Karen

Objectives

1. Help us to deepen our convictions in the basic Christian doctrine after conversion.
2. To be trained in the Word.
3. To grow in our confidence in sharing our faith with our family and friends.

Requirements

1. Attendance and participation (20%)
2. Weekly quizzes, consisting of memory verses and order of New Testament and Old Testament Books (30%)
3. Final Exam (50%)
The passing mark is 80%. Successful graduates will be presented with a certificate.

SEEKING GOD

What is the purpose of your life?

1. **Acts 17:16-21.** Briefly explain the situation in Athens.

2. **Acts 17:22-28**
 - a. Question: Why did God create and bring us to this very place and time?
So that we will seek him in order to have a personal relationship with him.
 - b. Question: Why do so few people seek God today?
 - Not only is God unknown (v.23), but also the image of god is perverted. You wouldn't want a god like that.
 - We've created our own gods. We all worship something.
 - Vv.24-26—We need to change our idea of God, i.e. powerful, personal, etc.
 - There's nothing comparable to or more important than knowing our Creator God.

3. **Jeremiah 29:11-14**
 - a. Question: Have you ever done something with all your heart?
 - b. We will be able to find God if we seek him with all our heart.

4. **Examples of people who sought God:**
 - a. **Acts 8:26-40**
 - Important man; very busy.
 - Still finds time for God (Jerusalem trip).
 - Took the initiative to read scriptures on his own.
 - Humble to ask for help.
 - Made decision about things he learned.
 - Acted on his decision.
 - Able to rejoice because he came to know God.

 - b. **Acts 17:11-12**
 - Noble character; integrity.
 - Enthusiastic.

- Daily examined the Scriptures—it was a personal commitment to search for Him
- Example: If you lost something of value, what would you do to find it? The most valuable thing in life is a relationship with God!

C. John 1:18

- Where to begin?
- Jesus has made God known.
- To the degree you know Jesus, to that same degree you will know God.

D. John 20:30-31

- By believing in Jesus, we will have true life now and eternal life later.
- John was an eyewitness to everything.
- There is power in the Word of God to cause faith, example: An acorn has power placed in it to produce a giant oak.

Reflections

- a. Keep reading the Bible.
- b. Review the Scriptures we have looked at on your own.

KNOWING JESUS

1. John 1:1 & 14

Jesus is God.

- a. God caused His word to become a man so we could know him,
- b. Analogy: Imagine you are all-powerful, and you want to communicate with an ant colony to let them understand how much you love them. How will you do it? Become an ant yourself.

2. Colossians 2:9

All of the fullness of God lives in Christ. This means that every aspect of God's character can be seen in Christ. Let's look at Jesus' character....

a. Mark 4:35-41

Jesus, like God, has an all-powerful, controlling nature. Jesus is fully God.

b. Luke 4:1-13

Jesus was tempted. We imagine Jesus to be a superman, invulnerable and gliding through life with perfect ease. But Jesus was tempted like us; in the desires of the flesh (4:3-4), materialism (4:5-7), and pride (4:8-12). This was not a one-time temptation for the whole of Jesus' life (v13). He lived a life of struggle with Satan (Hebrews 5:7).

c. Hebrews 2:17-18

Jesus is merciful. Having suffered in the areas we suffer in, he not only understands, he can help us. He shares in our humanity so he can free us when we are tempted.

d. Hebrews 4:15-16

Jesus is a sympathetic savior. Jesus understands our problems because he both faced and overcame them all.

e. Mark 1:29-39

Jesus is compassionate. He constantly met people's needs (v29-33). Prayer was a top priority for him (v35). He was intent on his purpose to seek & save the lost (v38).

f. Luke 23:32-43

Jesus is forgiving and filled with love.

g. John 2:3-17

Jesus has indignation! Clearing the temple, Jesus showed us his burning passion for righteousness that we all should have.

h. John 3:1-10

Jesus taught the teachers! And people thought he was just an uneducated carpenter.

i. John 6:35

Jesus was not just a teacher of truth, he is truth. He pointed to *himself* as the source of spiritual nourishment. Jesus used the ‘I Am’ statement to emphasize his uniqueness.

j. John 8:12

Jesus is light. Jesus taught truth from God so that we can see the way to heaven. In the world there are disagreements about basic moral issues, and it is “unfashionable” to take a stand in our beliefs. Without Jesus we are truly in the dark.

k. John 11:25

Jesus promised eternal life to his followers. Many did not believe it was his to give. Later, his resurrection proved this to be no empty claim.

Reflections

- a. What is one quality of Jesus that you want to imitate?
- b. How can you practise that in your life?

THE WORD OF GOD

1. 2 Peter 1:20-21

- a. The Bible is not man's interpretation of God.
- b. The Holy Spirit inspired the men who wrote the books of the Bible.

2. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

- a. All Scriptures came from God, literally from His breath.
- b. It is to be applied to our lives.

3. Hebrews 4:12-13

- a. The Word is relevant.
- b. The Word cuts us; we will feel the pain — like a scalpel used in an operation
- c. But ultimately it is good because the “cancer” (sin in our lives) gets removed.

4. John 8:31-32

- a. Intellectual belief is not enough—nor can we go by our feelings.
- b. Everyone must hold on to and follow the teachings of Jesus to be a true disciple.
- c. Sincerity does not equal truth.
- d. Religious people can be wrong; being religious doesn't mean being spiritual. (It especially applies to us)

5. Matthew 15:1-9

- a. Do not go by traditions or creed.
- b. Worship by traditions (which supersede the Word of God) is worship that is in vain.

6. 1 Timothy 4:16

- a. Watch your life and doctrine closely—they are inseparable.
- b. Which is more important, life or doctrine? Both. Like wings on an airplane, which wing is more important?

7. Acts 17:10-12

- a. We must check what religious leaders say.
- b. Your challenge: Read and study the Bible every day!

8. John 12:48

- a. Why study the Bible? The Word will judge us.
- b. Decision: Will you live by the Bible and not by your feelings, traditions, etc?

Reflections

- a. Set aside time to read the bible daily.
- b. Jot down what you have learn from the bible or any questions you may have so you can clarify them with other mature disciples.

DISCIPLESHIP

Introduction:

Matthew 28:18-20

- a. What does Jesus want everybody to become?
- b. Which is a more popular term today — disciple or Christian?
- c. The word “Christian” only appears three times in the New Testament. It was a name people around them gave the disciples (**Acts 11:19-26**), seven years after the church began.
- d. The word “Disciple” occurs over 270 times in the New Testament. Jesus defines the term disciple throughout his ministry.

1. Mark 1:14-18

- a. Calling the first disciples
- b. Come follow me (Christ). “Christian” literally means “Christ-like.” We are to follow him in:
 - action / attitude / purpose / character / dreams / desires
 - as his disciples, we should ask ourselves “What would Jesus do?” then go and do likewise.
- c. Make us fishers of men—Jesus gave this vision to his first disciples & reveals our mission on Earth.
- d. Immediately they responded! There was no delay or hesitation

2. Luke 9:23-26

- a. “If any man...” An open invitation to all, not just to some.
- b. Deny self. Notice Christ in the garden (**Matthew 26:36-39**)—*“Not my will, but your will be done.”* Don’t give in to moods.
- c. Carry the cross — daily
- d. Gain world and forfeit soul OR lose our life for Jesus and save it.
- e. Positive: To live for a cause greater than ourselves is an awesome feeling! Something worth living for every day!
- f. Positive: Allows person to love. Love is the opposite of selfishness—the more we deny ourselves the greater our capacity to love.

3. Luke 14:25-33

- a. If any man...
- b. Verses 28-30: Count the cost / think through the decision.
- c. Verses 31-32: Consider the alternatives.
- d. Verse 26: Love Christ more than any person.
- e. Verse 27: Persecutions.
- f. Verse 33: Everything, not just anything.
- g. Positive: Give everything to Jesus; he will give you everything you need to live a quality life (marriage, relationships, etc).
- h. Positive: Something worth dying for is something worth living for!

4. Luke 11:1-4

- a. Must learn to pray—disciples saw the strength Jesus received from the Father.
- b. Disciple has a “learner’s” heart—a “teach me” attitude.
- c. Verse 3: Daily personal relationship with God.
- d. Positive: Incredible that we can talk with God—that He listens and answers. This should give us the strength to live as disciples.

5. John 13:34-35

- a. Love one another
- b. Be an active part of the fellowship

6. Matthew 28:18-20

- a. Command—make disciples (a charge given to all)
- b. Who is a candidate for baptism? (anyone who wants to be a disciple)
- c. You need someone to disciple you to maturity in Christ.
Positive: Great to know that you have others in your life who love you and will help you keep your commitment as you continually learn more of God’s will for your life.
- d. This is the only way to save the people in the world!

7. Matthew 22:37-40

- a. As a disciple of Jesus, love God (and others) with a total commitment.

- b. Positive: This is the way we were created to live. A person will never be complete and satisfied until he/she loves God like this.

8. Conclusion

- a. Am I a disciple?
- b. Am I a Christian?
- c. Am I saved?
- d. What do I need to do to become a disciple?

Reflections

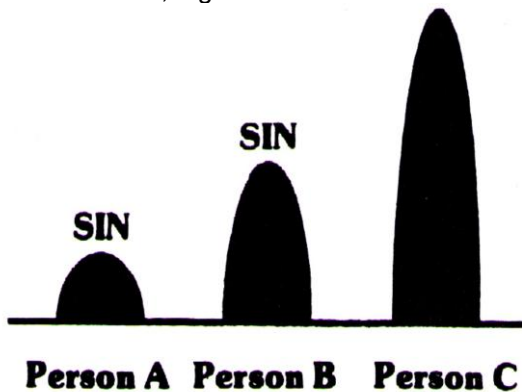
- a. Write down the names of friends, colleagues or relatives you want to leave an impact on.
- b. Plan in your schedule to spend time with a different one each week to grow your friendship with them.

SIN

1. Who has sinned?

Romans 3:23

- a. All have sinned—no one can make it to heaven on their own goodness. All are lost.
- b. Definition of sin: to miss the mark (an archery term—to miss the bulls eye—to miss perfection).
- c. Who is further away from God in the diagram below? All equal; all are lost; it doesn't matter who sinned more (Analogy of all swimming to Hawaii from Singapore). Therefore, a good moral life does not save you.



2. What is sin?

Sins of commission

- a. **Mark 7:20-23**—sinful thoughts
 - Sin comes from the heart
 - Personal responsibility (not upbringing, environment, genes, social pressure. etc.)
- b. **Galatians 5:19-21**—sinful actions
 - Sinful actions are obvious
 - Live like this, no hope of heaven
- c. **James 4:17**—Failing to do the things God commands.

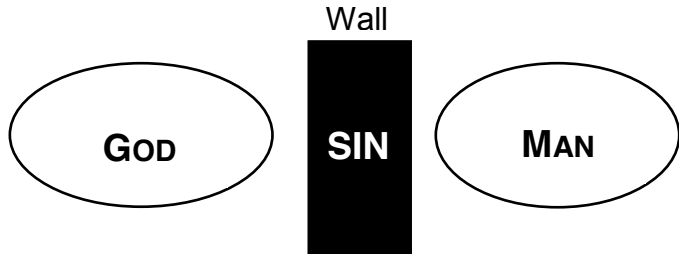
3. What are the consequences of sin?

A. **Romans 6:23**—Death (get what we deserve)

B. Separation:

- **Separation from God—Isaiah 59:1-2**

a. Sin separates us from God for eternity



b. No second chances! Where we are with God when we die is where we will be with God for eternity (either separated or in a right relationship).

- **Sin separates us from others/from those we love**

a. Pride / hatred / resentments / anger / prejudice / selfishness / lies, etc.

b. Hurts caused by sin hinder marriages and families from being close and loving—friendships become superficial.

- **Sin separates us from ourselves**

a. Depression, guilt, not liking self, feeling sorry for self, hopelessness, feeling unloved, feeling meaningless, etc.

b. This is what our personal sins can do to us—even to the point of thinking about or attempting suicide

c. So separated from ourselves that we would harm ourselves to try to escape (or to live in denial).

4. Questions: Where am I?

a. Right with God or separated from God?

b. Clearly man's greatest problem is sin

c. Man's greatest need is forgiveness

- d. The first step in receiving the forgiveness of our sins:
repentance

Reflections

In your prayer this week, thank God for giving you a chance to be aware of your sin so that you can walk on the road to eternity.

THE CROSS

1. **Passion Account**

a. **Mark 14:32-65; 15:1-37**

Why did Jesus do this? We need to be humble to acknowledge it is “because Jesus loves me.”

2. **Physical Death—Read medical account in Appendix A**

3. **Our response**

a. **Roman 5:6-8**

- Jesus died for us while we were powerless, sinners, ungodly, basically His enemies.
- That’s real love—Jesus taking my place—dying for me.
- We should be incredibly thankful.

c. **2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 20-21**

- We should not live for ourselves.
- Be motivated to do God’s will because He loves us.
- As an ambassador for God, I urge you—be reconciled to God!
- Jesus was our sin offering—he took the penalty of sin and we can have his righteousness credited to us (a substitution).

4. **Let’s Get Personal**

- Ask the person with whom you are studying to go over their list of sins.
- Read **Isaiah 53:4-6** (substitute with the person’s name).

Reflections

Write a letter to God and thank Him for His love and a chance to live a new life.

REPENTANCE

1. Who needs repentance?

Luke 13:1-4

- a. Everyone must repent
- b. No degree of sinners
- c. Alternative to repentance is perishing

2. What is repentance?

Acts 26:20-21

- a. Repentance means a change of heart/mind. It is a decision.
- b. Repentance literally means “to turn around.” (Go a different direction).
- c. Repentance is a POSITIVE command—change to become what we were created to be—like Jesus.
- d. Repentance is followed by deeds—your life reflects the change.
- e. Can be done in an instant, though the effects last a lifetime.
- f. Preaching the biblical message of repentance leads to opposition. (Some do not want to change. Many do not appreciate being told the truth about their life.)

3. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11

- a. Worldly sorrow and godly sorrow

Examples: Speeding: The officer pulls you over. Worldly sorrow—you’re sorry you got caught. Good chance you will speed again. Godly sorrow—you’re sorry that you have broken the law, endangered lives, etc. In both cases you are sorry, but repentance (change in lifestyle) comes only with godly sorrow.

Pregnancy: Your girlfriend gets pregnant. Worldly sorrow—sorry about the consequences. Start to use contraceptives. May have an abortion. Godly sorrow—will never be immoral again.

- b. Godly sorrow produces a visible change in one’s character and lifestyle.

- c. Therefore you can tell whether or not someone has repented.

1 Peter 2:22-25

- Godly sorrow—understands that our sin hurts God (put Jesus on the cross)
- If in love with God—will not want to hurt Him—will not want to sin.
- Returning to let God direct our lives—that's repentance

4. Mark 9:42-48

- a. Radical attitude towards sin
- b. World's attitude: sin is okay in moderation
- c. God's attitude: sin is always wrong—deal with sin radically

5. Acts 3:19-20

- a. Once we repent, there will be times of refreshing
- b. Must repent in order to have sins forgiven

6. Conclusion

- a. Do you think you have repented in accordance with what the Bible teaches?
- b. How many people do you think have truly repented?
- c. Do you really want to repent?

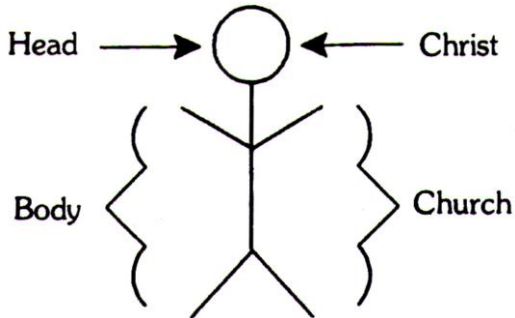
Reflections

- a. Have it in our lifestyle to confess our sins regularly.
- b. Get input on any area of your life that you may need more help in.

THE CHURCH

1. Colossians 1:15-19

The church is the body of Christ. The body needs the head. The church is essential to Christianity.



2. Ephesians 2:19-21

- a. The church is the family of God
- b. **1 Corinthians 12:12-13**—Baptized into the body of Christ, the Church. (**Romans 6:3-4** teaches we are also baptized into Christ). Baptism is when we become a Christian, a son of God, and at that same point we become members of the church, the family of God.

3. Ephesians 2:20

- a. Cornerstone: Christ
- b. Foundation: Apostles and prophets
 - Apostles : represents the New Testament
 - Prophets : represents the Old Testament
- c. The Church is based on the Word of God only

4. Have you ever wondered why there are so many denominations?

- a. The Bible teaches there is one church
 - **Ephesians 4:4-6** (one body)
 - **Romans 12:4-5** (one body)
 - **1 Corinthians 12:12-13** (one body)

5. 1 Corinthians 12:14-27

- a. We may be different but we each have our own role (v. 17)
- b. We need the body. The body needs us (v. 21).
- c. Be involved on a relational level in the church (v. 26)

6. Hebrews 10:23-25

- a. Do not miss church
- b. The fellowship helps us to be unswerving in our commitment (v. 23)
- c. Another purpose of fellowship is to encourage each other so we will remain faithful (v. 24)
- d. Come to all services, i.e. Sundays, Wednesdays, devotionals, Bible Talks, retreats, seminars, fun times etc.

Reflections

- a. In your prayer, thank God specifically for the disciples He has placed in your life.
- b. Write a card to thank your discipler/mentor who taught you to walk in the basics of Christianity.

BAPTISM

1. **Review Romans 3:23-25**
 - a. All have sinned/all must repent
 - b. Sin must be forgiven – we need a new start
 - c. Faith in the blood of Jesus saves you (v. 25)

2. **John 3:1-7**
 - a. Born again
 - Born again (v. 3)
 - Born of water and Spirit (v. 5)
 - Born again (v. 7)
 - b. New start / new life / new beginning

3. **What message must one believe to be saved? Acts 2:22-24**
 - a. Jesus is from God—miracles (v. 22)
 - b. Jesus was raised physically from the dead (v. 24)
 - c. Everyone is responsible for the crucifixion of Christ

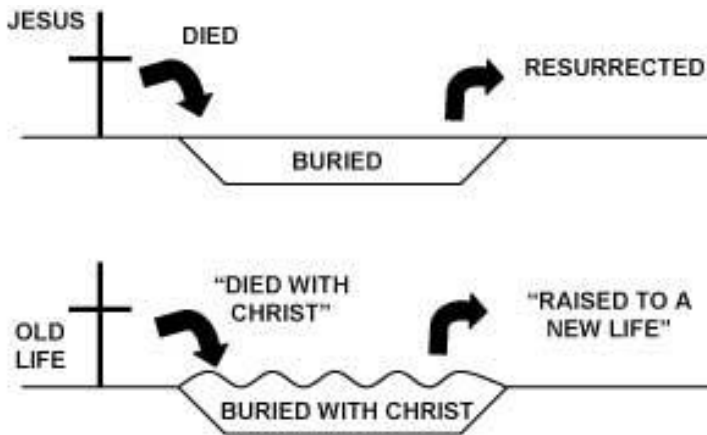
4. **Response of people—Acts 2:37**
 - a. Cut to the heart
 - c. What shall we do?

5. **Once the people believe, what did they do? Acts 2:38-41**
 - a. Repent (Greek — to turn)
 - b. Be baptized (Greek – “*baptizoma*” - to be immersed)
 - c. Purpose:
 - Sins forgiven. Therefore, this is the point in time when a person is saved. A new beginning / new start.
 - Holy Spirit given to each who responded—power to live as God commands.

6. **Ephesians 4:4-6**

There is only one baptism!

7. **Baptism—Roman. 6:1-4**
 - a. Baptism is the sharing (a participation) in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (it is more than just a symbolic ritual).
 - b. New life begins at baptism / a new beginning / new start.



8. 1 Peter 3:21

- a. Floodwater symbolizes baptism though the bible never calls it "symbolic".
- b. Pledge of a good conscience.
- c. It saves by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

9. Colossians 2:12

- a. "Burial": baptism is immersion
- b. Faith is in the power of God to forgive us of our sins and receive the Holy Spirit, i.e. baptism without faith in Jesus' blood and God's grace is meaningless.
- c. Baptism is an expression of this faith!

10. Examples

- a. Acts 8:26-38 (The Ethiopian Eunuch)
- b. Acts 22:6-16 (Paul)
- c. Acts 16:29-34 (The Philippian jailer)
- d. Acts 18:24-26 (Apollos)
- e. Acts 19:1-5 (The Ephesians)

Reflections

Recall the day you were baptized and thank God for the journey you took to be right with Him.

FALSE DOCTRINES

1. 1 Timothy 4:16

Life and doctrine are equally important! So we need to get the right doctrine to lead the right life.

2. Matthew 15:6-9

Watch out that we do not become followers of traditions!

3. Various False doctrines

a. Infant baptism

- Personal faith is needed **Colossians 2:12**
- Began approximately third century A.D.
- Original sin
 - a. **Ezekiel 18:20**
 - b. Became “church doctrine” in 549 A.D.

b. Praying Jesus into your heart / Sinner’s Prayer

- **Revelation 3:20**
Taken out of context. This verse is addressed to Christians.
- Began in the early 1800s in America

c. Confess that Jesus is Lord / Altar Call

- **Romans 10:9**
Taken out of context. This verse shows Paul addressing a problem of the Israelites: unbelief that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.
- **Romans 10:13**
When do you call on the name of the Lord?
At baptism (**Acts 22:16**)!

d. Salvation by “faith alone”

- **Ephesians 2:8**
Taken out of context without considering other passages.
- Refuted by **James 2: 24; John 8:30-32; Hebrews 5:9; Romans 1:5** and **Romans 16:26**.
- **Colossians 2:12** teaches we are saved by faith, in the working of God at baptism.

e. Once saved, always saved

- **John 10:29** says that no one can snatch the sheep from the Shepherd(Christ). And **Romans 8:38-39** teaches that no one can separate us from the love of God.
- Refute by:
 - **Hebrews 10:26 -31**
We cannot keep sinning deliberately.
 - **Jude 21**
We need to do our part to stay in God.
 - **James 5:19-20**
A Christian can wander from the truth.
 - **2 Peter 2:20**
A Christian can fall away.

And there are many consistent passages in the Bible that teaches that continual repentance in our lives is essential for salvation (**Romans 6:1-2, 15-18; Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 2:4-5, 21-22; 3:1-3, 19-20, etc**).

f. Believer's baptism

- A teaching that is otherwise known as confirmation as a Christian, so not necessary for salvation.
- Refuted by **1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12**

g. The thief at the cross was not baptized and was saved

- Found in **Luke 23:39-43**
- Refute by:
 - **Mark 2:10**
Jesus had the authority to forgive sins
 - **Romans 6:3-4**
Baptism is a participation in Jesus' death, burial and Resurrection. The penitent thief could not have been baptized as Jesus had not die yet.
 - **Hebrews 9:17**
The New Covenant was not yet in force when Jesus was alive.

4. Salvation Plan

Bible—True doctrine (hear, believe, repent, confess, baptized, stay faithful till the end)

Reflections

Knowing the truth, we should have more confidence and conviction to share with those who do not know it. This week, try your best to ask a friend to study the bible and bring a mature Christian along.

HOLY SPIRIT

Three areas of the Holy Spirit

1. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- a. received at baptism (**Acts 2:38 & 5:32**)
 - Hence Holy Spirit is necessary for salvation (**Romans 8:9, John 3:5, Titus 3:5**)
 - Also known as baptism in the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:13**)

2. The baptism with the Holy Spirit

- a. Characteristics in **Acts 2** and **10**
 - Promise: **Acts 1:4-5**
 - Prophesied
- b. Accounts of the baptism with the Holy Spirit
 - To usher in the church beginning with the Jews (**Acts 2**)
 - To usher Gentiles into the kingdom beginning with Cornelius (**Acts 10**).
 - Cornelius and family were baptized in water (**v48**).
 - Peter explained actions to the Jews (**Acts 11:1-18**).
- c. Does the baptism with the Holy Spirit still exist today?
 - There is only one baptism (**Ephesians 4:4-6** written about 60-62 AD)
 - There are three options:
 - John's baptism – passed when new covenant began (**Acts 19:1-5**)
 - Baptism with the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2 and Acts 10**) – No longer present as it was a prophecy/promised that has been fulfilled for the specific purposes mentioned; it was never meant as a general command.
 - Baptism through immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins & receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (**1 Peter 3:21** makes reference to this water baptism for salvation, written around 62 AD, therefore it has to be the one baptism **Ephesians 4:4-6** was referring to)

3. Miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit

A. Many types of miraculous gifts (**1 Corinthians 12: 8-10**)

- Passing on of gifts
 - Apostles would pass on the gifts (**Acts 8:18**)
 - Those whom received it could NOT pass it on
 - Choosing of the Seven. Note: Stephen immediately starts to perform miraculous signs among the people (**Acts 6:1-8**).
 - Philip, one of the seven who received the gift earlier on, goes to Samaria & performed many miracles. Simon the Sorcerer, who believed & thus received the forgiveness of sins & indwelling of the HS, saw the Spirit's gift only given by the apostles' laying on of hands. Note: He offered them money for the ability but not Philip earlier on because Philip could not pass them on (**Acts 8:1-25**)
 - Paul finds disciples in Ephesus who only received John's baptism & told them to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins & receiving the HS. They then received the gift of prophecy & speaking in tongues by the laying on of Paul's hands. Paul is an apostle. (**Acts 19: 1-6**)
 - With the eventual death of the apostles & those whom they pass the gifts onto, the miraculous gifts of the HS would have ceased.

- Misuse of tongues
 - **1 Corinthians 12 and 14** are not directives on how to receive tongues (the church has already received them) but rather correctives on how not to misuse them because everyone was speaking at the same time!
 - **1 Corinthians 12:28-30** clearly shows the concept of every member speaking in tongues is against Scripture
 - **1 Corinthians 13: 8-10** "Perfection" here could NOT mean the coming of Christ because it is in the neuter gender in Greek as opposed to the masculine gender. Only other option is referring to the completion of the Bible sometime after the 1st century.
 - Purpose of the miraculous gifts was to: get non-believers to believe & to edify Christians & strengthen their faith (**1 Corinthians 14:20-22**)
 - The Bible fulfills that role today!

- B. There can be miracles done by Satan today (**2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**)
- A person can be filled with the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues (**Ephesians 5:18-29**).
 - Jesus was accorded the full measure of the Spirit & he NEVER spoke in tongues (**John 3:34-36**).
 - Speaking in “tongues” common in many religions because these “ecstatic utterances”; non-understandable sounds, attempts to revive the otherwise dry & dead worship.

Reflections

Make it a time in your prayer this week to thank God for the gift of Holy Spirit in you after you got baptized!

APPENDIX A

A Medical Account of the Crucifixion Simplified & Amended¹, by Douglas Jacoby, 2007.

Hanging, electrocution, kneecapping, and gas chamber: these punishments are feared. They all happen today, and we shudder as we think of the horror and pain. But as we shall see, these ordeals pale into insignificance compare with the bitter fate of Jesus Christ: crucifixion.²

No one is crucified today. For us the cross remains confined to ornaments and jewelry, stained-glass windows, romanticized pictures and statues portraying a serene death. Crucifixion was a form of execution refined by the Romans to a precise art. It was carefully conceived to produce a slow death with maximum pain. It was a public spectacle intended to deter other would-be criminals. It was a death to be feared.

Sweat like blood

Luke 22:24 says of Jesus, "and being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."³ The sweat was unusually intense because his emotional state was unusually intense. Dehydration coupled with exhaustion further weakened him. (Note: the scriptures nowhere say that Jesus was sweating blood.)

Beating

It was in this condition that Jesus faced the first physical abuse: punches and slaps to the face and head while blindfolded. Unable to anticipate the blows, Jesus was badly bruised, his mouth and eyes possibly injured. The psychological effects of the false trials should not be underestimated. Consider that Jesus faced them bruised, dehydrated, exhausted, possibly in shock.

Flogging

In the previous 12 hours Jesus had suffered emotional trauma, rejection by his closest friends, a cruel beating, and a sleepless night during which he had to walk miles between unjust hearings. Despite the fitness he must certainly have gained during his travels in Palestine, he was in no way prepared for the punishment of flogging. The effects would be worse as a result.

A man to be flogged was stripped of his clothes and his hands tied to a post above his head. He was then whipped across the shoulders, back, buttocks, thighs and legs, the soldier standing behind and to one side of the victim. The whip used – the flagellum – was designed to make this a devastating punishment, bringing the victim close to death: several short heavy leather thongs, with two small balls of lead or iron attached near the end of each. Pieces of sheep's bone were sometimes included.

As the scourging proceeds, the heavy leather thongs produce first superficial cuts, than deeper damage to underlying tissues. Bleeding becomes severe when not only capillaries and veins are cut, but also arteries in the underlying muscles. The small metal balls first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by further blows. The fragments of sheep's bone rip the flesh as the whip is drawn back. When the beating is finished, the skin of the back is in ribbons, and the entire area torn and bleeding.

The words chosen by the gospel writers suggest that the scourging of Jesus was particularly severe: he was certainly at the point of collapse when he was cut down from the flogging-post.

The mocking

Jesus was allowed no time to recover before facing his next ordeal. Made to stand, he was dressed in a robe by jeering soldiers, crowned with a twisted band of thorny twigs, and to complete the parody, given a wooden staff as a king's scepter. "Next, they spat on Jesus and struck him on the head with the wooden staff." The long thorns were driven into the sensitive scalp tissue producing profuse bleeding, but even more terrible was the re-opening of the wounds on Jesus' back when the robe was torn off again.

Further weakened physically and emotionally, Jesus was led away to be executed.

The crucifixion

The wooden cross used by the Romans was too heavy to be carried by one man. Instead the victim to be crucified was made to bear the detached crossbar across his shoulders, carrying it outside the city walls to the place of execution. (The heavy upright portion of the cross was permanently in position here.) Jesus was unable to carry his load – a beam weighing around 75 to 125 pounds (approximately 35-55 kg). He collapsed under the burden, and an onlooker was ordered to take it for him.

Jesus refused to drink the wine and myrrh offered him before the nails were driven in. (It would have dulled the pain.) Thrown down on his back with arms outstretched along the crossbar, nails were driven through Jesus' wrists into the wood. These iron spikes, about 6 inches long and 3/8 inch thick, severed the large sensorimotor median nerve, causing excruciating pain in both arms. Carefully placed between bones and ligaments, they were able to bear the full weight of the crucified man.

In preparation for the nailing of the feet, Jesus was lifted up and the crossbar fixed to the upright post. Then with legs bent at the knee, a single nail was used to pierce both feet, one foot being placed over the other. Again there was severe nerve damage and the pain caused was intense. It is important to note, however, that neither the wounds to the wrists or feet caused substantial bleeding, since no major arteries were ruptured. The executioner took care to ensure this, so that death would be slower and the suffering longer.

Now nailed to his cross, the real horror of crucifixion began. When the wrists were nailed to the crossbar, the elbows were intentionally left in a bent position so that the crucified man would hang with his arms above his head, the weight being taken on the nails in the wrists. Obviously this was unbearably painful, but it had another effect: It is very difficult to exhale in this position. In order to breathe out, and then take in fresh air, it was necessary to push the body up on the nailed feet. When the pain from the feet became unbearable, the victim would again slump down to hang by the arms. A terrible cycle of pain began: hanging by the arms, unable to breathe, pushing up on the feet to inhale quickly before again slumping down, and on and on.

This tortured activity became more and more difficult as Jesus' back was scraped against the upright post,⁴ as muscle cramps set in because of the inadequate respiration, and as exhaustion grew more severe. Jesus suffered in this manner for several hours before, with a final cry, he died.

Cause of death

Many factors contributed to Jesus' death. A combination of shock and suffocation killed most victims of crucifixion, but in Jesus' case acute heart failure may have been the final trauma. This is suggested by his sudden death following a loud cry, after only a few hours: a quick death, it seems (Pilate was surprised to find Jesus already dead). A fatal cardiac arrhythmia, or perhaps cardiac rupture, are likely candidates.

The spear wound

Jesus was already dead as the executioners broke the legs of the criminals crucified alongside (in order to speed their deaths). Instead, we read that a soldier pierced Jesus' side with a spear. Where on his side? The word chosen by John suggests the ribs, and if the soldier intended to make Jesus' death certain, a wound to the heart was the obvious choice.

From the wound came a flow of "blood and water." This is consistent with the spear blow to the heart (especially from the right side, the traditional site of the wound). Rupturing the pericardium (the sac surrounding the heart) released a flow of watery serum, followed by blood as the heart was pierced.

Conclusion

The detailed accounts given in the gospels combined with the historical evidence on crucifixion bring us to a firm conclusion: modern medical knowledge supports the claim of the scriptures that Jesus died on the cross.⁵

APPENDIX B: FALSE DOCTRINES

From Chapters 11 and 13 of *Prepared to Answer* by Gordon Ferguson,
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False Doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses

A. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: The Holy Spirit is simply God's active force and not a person

Bible Truth:

Matthew 12:31-32 – The Holy Spirit is a person and can be blasphemed against

John 14:26 – The Holy Spirit acts as a person in much the same way as Jesus

Romans 8:26-27 – The Spirit is a “he”, has his own mind, and intercedes for us

See also: **Acts 5:3; 7:51; 31:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Timothy 4:1**

B. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: The doctrine of the Trinity is confusing and false

Bible Truth:

Matthew 28:19 – God is one God, consisting of three distinct personalities, and we are to be baptized in the name of each of them

2 Corinthians 13:14 – God has three equal parts, though they have different functions and roles

C. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: Jesus is a created being, an archangel, and not equal to God

Bible Truth:

Isaiah 9:6-7 – An Old Testament prophecy about the coming of Jesus referred to him as God

John 1:1 – Jesus was not created but was with God from the beginning and is equal to God

John 20:28-29 – His disciples worship Jesus and call him God, and he does not stop them from doing so

Titus 2:13 – The bible calls Jesus both God and Savior

See also: **Jeremiah 23:5-6; Micah 5:2; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20**

D. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: Man does not have a soul or spirit that lives past the death of the body

Bible Truth:

Zechariah 12:1 – Man receives a spirit directly from God

2 Corinthians 5:4-8 – Our basic nature is that we are a spirit who lives in a body, and not a body that happens to have a spirit

See also: **Matthew 22:23-32; Luke 16:19-31; Acts 9:39; Romans 14:8**

E. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: Christ is coming back to earth to establish a literal 1,000-year kingdom

Bible Truth:

Colossians 1:13 – God's kingdom on earth is the church, and it is already here

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 – When Jesus comes, it will be to take us home with him to heaven

2 Peter 3:10-13 – When Jesus comes, he will destroy the physical universe

F. Jehovah's Witnesses Claim: The 144,000 in the book of Revelation is a literal number of spiritual Jehovah's Witnesses who will go to heaven, leaving the rest of the Witnesses on the earth for eternity

Bible Truth:

Revelations 7:1-8 – In context, this passage depicts all the redeemed on earth who were undergoing persecution, and who were going to be protected spiritually by God. This number is not meant to be taken literally or else everything else would need to be taken literally as well (e.g., the 144,000 are all Jewish male virgins!)

False Doctrines of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons)

A. Mormon Claim: A number of Gods exist, and they have flesh and bones

Bible Truth:

Mark 12:29 – There is only one God, and he is spirit
See also: **Ephesians 4:6; John 4:24; Luke 24:39**

B. Mormon Claim: Jesus was begotten by the Father through literal intercourse

Bible Truth:

Matthew 1:18-23 – Jesus was begotten by the Holy Spirit through a virgin mother

C. Mormon Claim: Jesus was married to several women and had children by them

Bible Truth:

2 Corinthians 11:2 – The only wife that Jesus ever had is the church

D. Mormon Claim: Living humans can be baptized for the benefit of dead humans

Bible Truth

Luke 16:19-31 – After death, there is no second chance
See also: **2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:27**

E. Mormon Claim: The Aaronic and Melchizedek priesthoods were given to the Mormons by God

Bible Truth:

Hebrews 7:11-12 – Only Jesus occupies the Melchizedek priesthood, and the Aaronic priesthood was part of the old covenant which was done away with by Christ

F. Mormon Claim: The Mormon church has a continuing line of prophets who reveal and interpret the will of God.

Bible Truth:

1 Corinthians 13:8-10 – Prophecy ended with the death of the first century apostles.

Ephesians 3:2-5 – The apostles received all truth in the first century, and through inspiration delivered it to us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – The New Testament was complete and gives man all that he needs to please God.

Notes
