



Corinth Missionary Baptist Church

"The City of Faith"

813 South Cherokee Road
Social Circle, Georgia 30025



Dr. Constance Davenport
Christian Education Director

SPRING – 2025

March 2025 – May 2025

Min. Kim Jones
Sunday School Superintendent

Sis. Ruth Parks
Asst. Sunday School Superintendent

Bishop William Davenport
Senior Pastor

Credits:
Jesus Is All Ministries

Lesson summaries by:
Montario Fletcher, Willie Ferrell, and Kimbley Y. Baker-Richardson

Free Access - Previous Lessons
<https://www.jesusisall.com/sunday-school.htm>

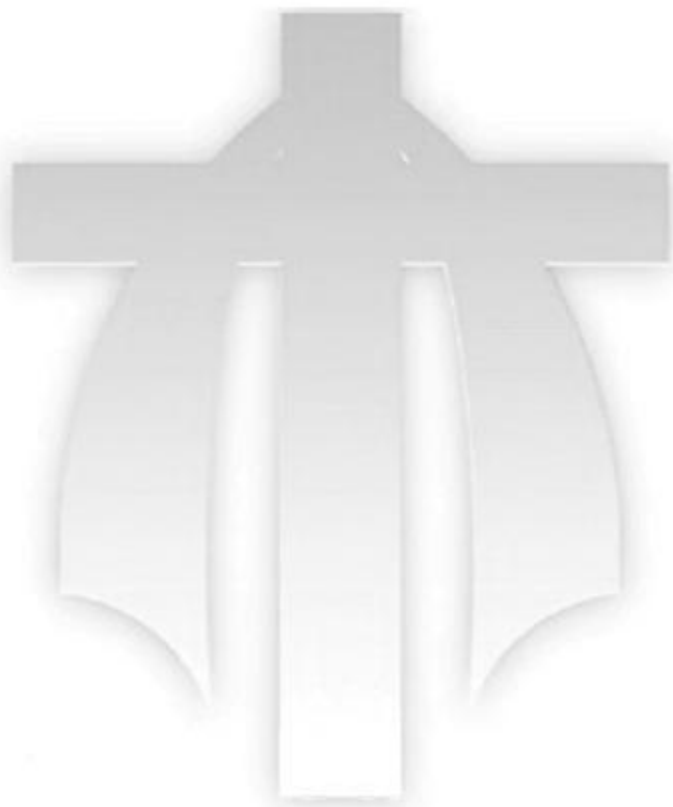
“Diligent study of these lessons will not only bless you spiritually, but also aid you in discovering God's plan for your own life.”

-John Alva Owston





CORINTH
MISSIONARY
BAPTIST
CHURCH
ADULT
SUNDAY SCHOOL
CLASS



ADULT

SPRING 2025 SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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You can also follow the lesson by joining live each Sunday morning via our website:

<https://www.thecityoffaith.org/sundayschool>



Sunday, May 2, 2025

Lesson 1 - "The Test of Love" (Part I)

Lesson Text: **1 John 3:11-24**

Background Scripture: **1 John 3:1-24**

Devotional Reading: **1 Corinthians 13**

1 John 3:11-24

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. 22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Lesson Aim

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to: Compare and contrast John 3:16 with 1 John 3:16.

Introduction

One of the major themes of the New Testament is love. Among the ancient Greeks there were several words for love. One word connoted romantic love, another family love, and another love between friends.

There was, however, one word that was rarely used among the secular Greeks: agape. Appearing in its various forms about fifty times in 1 John, it most often is used for God's love for us and the love we are to have for one another. Compared to the other kinds of human love, agape is more likely to involve self-sacrifice.

When asked about the greatest commandment, Christ quoted the Law, which declared that we are to love both God and our neighbor (Mark 12:28-34; cf. Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18). When addressing the problem of misusing spiritual gifts in the Corinthian church, Paul established that love is the proper motivation for Christian service (1 Cor. 13).

While love is one of the most talked about teachings of Christ, it may be one of the least practiced. The Lord Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

Lesson Background

John wrote this epistle against a background of false teachers who came to be known as gnostics. Among other things, gnostics taught that it did not really matter if a person had morality or love—as long as he or she had “secret knowledge.” To combat this

false teaching, John emphasized the interconnection of right belief, right actions, and right love. To put it another way, it is the right involvement of head, hands, and heart. The child of God must believe the truth, obey the commands, and love the brethren.

Of these three areas, John's clear favorite is the emphasis on love (although they cannot really be separated). Today's lesson will explore John's examination of God's love, the world's lack of love, and the saints' love that meets every test.

SUPPORTIVE LOVE (1 John 3:11-15)

1. What did John mean by the "beginning" (1 John 3:11)?

To remind his readers that they were to love one another, John stated that this was not a new revelation. This was the "message" they had "heard from the beginning."

Here, the word "beginning" does not mean the beginning of the world. Rather, it refers to the beginning of the readers' acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ and their acceptance of the gospel (Acts 11:15; Phil. 4:15).

The command to love one another is not new to the Christian, yet we must be reminded frequently of the importance of showing Christian love in all our actions, attitudes, and words.

2. Why did Cain kill his brother? How were his works evil? (v. 12)

The infamous Cain is remembered because he was the world's first murderer. (Gen. 4:8-15). While the account in Genesis does not specifically mention the devil, it is evident that Cain was inspired by Satan, who is here called the "wicked one" (1 John 3:12). Indeed, all evil in the world has its origins in Satan's influence, for the devil was a "murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44) and the father of lies.

Genesis tells us that Cain was angry because God accepted Abel and Cain was rejected. Even when the Lord gave Cain the opportunity to repent and offer an acceptable sacrifice, he refused. Instead, he rose up against his brother and killed him. This was "because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (1 John 3:12).

"Note that Cain and Abel, being brothers, had the same parents, and they both brought sacrifices to God. Cain is not presented as an atheist; he is presented as a worshipper. And this is the point: children of the devil masquerade as true believers. They attend religious gatherings, as Cain did. They may even bring offerings. But these actions in themselves are not valid proof that a man is born of God. The real test is his love for the brethren-and here Cain failed" (Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, Victor).

3. Why should we not be surprised if the world hates us? (v. 13)

Christians should not be surprised if they are hated by the world. After all, the world hated Christ and sought to destroy Him. Christ said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18). Obviously, we cannot expect any better treatment than the Lord Jesus received.

Christ even warned the apostles that a time was coming when those who killed them would think they were rendering a service to God (16:2). In fact, we should expect to be persecuted for our faith. Paul warned Timothy, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). If we are not persecuted, then we need to check ourselves. We need to ask whether we are living as Christians or blending in with the world. Remember, we can either please the world or God, not both (cf. James 4:4).

4. How have believers "passed from death unto life"? (v. 14)

One of the key words in both the Gospel of John and his first epistle is the word "life." John usually did not mean physical life but spiritual life, which is eternal and found in Christ (John 10:10).

While eternal life is often depicted as that which will be received in the future (Titus 3:7), John stated that this "life" is the present possession of the saints. The words of 1 John 3:14 are quite similar to John 5:24: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Loving the brethren is one of the ways we know we are in a redeemed relationship with Christ (1 John 3:14). When we do not show our love for our fellow Christians, it reveals that we abide in death, which is estrangement from God.

5. How does John compare hate to murder? (v. 15)

John uses very strong language to tell his readers that those who have hatred toward fellow believers are as guilty as if they had actually committed murder. Hatred in the heart precedes the outward act of murder. The only thing that keeps some people from actually committing murder is fear of prison or execution.

Though it is unlikely that John's audience had not literally committed murder, they had possibly committed murder in their hearts. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ made a similar declaration concerning anger (Matt. 5:21-22).

"Hating is the root; murdering is the fruit. Both share the same results, alienation. Both will share the same eternal consequences, condemnation" (Station, Life in the Son, College Press). Hatred is a form of murder, John was clear in stating the eternal ramifications of hatred, for "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).

This does not mean that murder is an unpardonable sin. Some well-known heroes of faith were guilty of murder, such as Moses (Exod. 2:11-14), David (2 Sam. 11:14-17), and Paul (Acts 22:4, 26:10). All of them were forgiven, though. John was telling his readers the seriousness of hatred. Hatred makes it impossible to maintain a relationship with God. Tragically, some who profess faith in Christ exhibit murderous attitudes toward others.

To be continued...

*Lesson summarized by Montario Fletcher
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



March 9, 2025

Lesson 2 - "The Test of Love" (Part II)

Lesson Text: **1 John 3:11-24**

Background Scripture: **1 John 3:1-24**

Devotional Reading: **1 Corinthians 13**

1 John 3:11-24

11 For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. 12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. 13 Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. 14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. 16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. 19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. 20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. 22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. 24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to: Compare and contrast John 3:16 with 1 John 3:16.

SACRIFICIAL LOVE (1 John 3:16-18)

1. What is the supreme example of God's love towards us? (v. 16)

The primary way we know God loves us is that Christ "laid down his life for us" (3:16). There is no greater manifestation of God's love for sinners than the death of Christ on Calvary (John 10:11; Rom 5:8; Eph. 5:25; cf. John 3:16). "The example of God and Christ should inflame our hearts with this holy love" (Matthew Henry's Commentary).

Since Christ set the supreme example of sacrificial love, Christians are enjoined to "lay down [their] lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16). While this may include literally giving one's life for a fellow believer, there are other ways we can make sacrifices for fellow Christians. Helping those in need is certainly an appropriate way to do this. The important thing to remember is that we need to put other people ahead of ourselves. That is the essence of sacrificial, or agape, love.

2. How can Christians show God's love toward those in need? (v. 17-18).

Nearly all Christians affirm that we should love one another. Practically speaking, though, how can we claim to have God's love without showing compassion towards Christians who are needy? John was quite clear. Those who have been blessed with material possessions must share with brothers in need.

There are those who take advantage of the charitable spirit of their fellow brethren, and aiding the lazy will not encourage them to improve their situation (2

Thess. 3:8- 12). In those cases, we need to be in prayer so that God can show us their hearts. We must let God guide us in determining whether someone is actually in need or is actually being lazy.

There are nevertheless needy people who can and should be helped by their Christian brethren. This may include people who are sick, out of work, or otherwise suffering financially. We need to reach out and help those people, for in this way we are ministering to Jesus Christ Himself (Matt. 25:31-46). Although our primary concern should be for the family of faith, others should not be excluded (Gal. 6:10).

Our love for others must be shown "in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18), not just in telling them we care. Concrete action must backup our affirmation of God's love, living in our hearts. As James 2:15-16 asks, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"

3. Why is confidence in the heart important to both salvation and prayer? Can we trust our feelings regarding salvation? (v. 19-21)

Another key word in John's writings is "truth." Whereas the Gnostic false teachers claimed to know the truth, John wanted his readers to be assured of the truth that can come only from faith in Christ. He alone is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). As Christ said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (8:32).

Those who are truly redeemed have a confidence in their hearts that only God can give. Indeed, the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirits that we are God's children (Rom. 8:16). This is not just a matter of emotions, however. The feeling of assurance is based on faith, which in turn is based on the facts of the gospel. Claiming salvation based on feelings alone is to cast aside the objective truths of the gospel found in the Bible. Remember, you may not always "feel" that you are saved, but if you have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, then you are saved. The enemy can use emotions to deceive us, but the word of God is the solid rock that will never change.

"When God, who is greater than our conscience and pronounces a more authoritative verdict, one based on perfect knowledge of us and of all relevant circumstances, assures us of the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, we enjoy peace of conscience" (Bruce, The Epistles of John, Eerdmans).

4. Why is it important to keep God's commandments? How does this relate to prayer? (v. 22-24)

Lest any of his readers get the idea that assurance of salvation is based solely on an inner conviction, John went on to stress the importance of obedience to God's commands. "Obedience to the Lord's commandments is not the cause but the proof of His people's dwelling in Him" (Bruce). Once a person has received Christ, that person is free to live in righteousness, not sin. A Christian living in sin demeans the grace of God (Rom. 6:1-2), which teaches us to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12). Christian liberty is not the license to sin; it is the freedom to do what pleases God.

The fact that Christians "keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22) gives not only confidence in the heart but also confidence before God's throne. "Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:16).

Petitions that are in according with God's will, will be granted. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). "But if they are guilt-ridden and conscience-stricken, rather than seeking the fellowship or enjoying it, they will flee the presence of God and will not dare seek answers to prayers that he alone can provide" (Barker and Kohlenberger, eds., Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan).

5. In what ways can we know that a person is indwelt by the Spirit? (v. 24)

Believing in Christ, loving one another, and obeying His commandments-are all important facets of the Christian life. To this John added that the presence of the Holy Spirit is evidence of God's indwelling presence in the believer (3:24). Scripture testifies that

God's Spirit has taken residence in the redeemed (Acts 2:38; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19; Gal 3:2).

Although the Holy Spirit lives in the Christian, it is possible to grieve Him (Eph. 4:30) and quench His power (1 Thess. 5:19) in our lives. The evidence of the Spirit's presence is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).

The most important thing to remember in this lesson is that those who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit will be obedient to God and show sincere love towards the brethren and the lost souls.

Conclusion - LOVE: THE COMMENCEMENT

The context of 1 John suggests many ways that love can be put to work. We can show our love for God by committing ourselves to His Son and clinging to the truth of His Word. If we truly love God, we will not dishonor His Son by lazy discipleship (Hebrews 6:12). If we truly love God, we will not allow false teachings against His Word to stand (1 Timothy 6:3–5). Love and light must walk hand in hand.

We also show our love for God by loving His children. God wants us to combine our love for Him with our love for one another. This kind of shared love is what characterizes living in God's community—the church. Our love for one another is to be genuine and practical. Mere lip service cannot feed the hungry or clothe the naked. Real love is always ready to reach out.

Finally, we can show our love for God and His church by “talking up” our eagerness to go to Heaven. It is not a cop-out on this world to be eager to go to the next. When Jesus returns and we are suddenly, gloriously changed, we will live forever in fellowship with God, Jesus, and all our fellow saints. If we really treasure the reward of Heaven, we will want to bring the lost into the community of the saved. Inviting someone to join us on the road to Heaven is the ultimate expression of loving one another.

Prayer

Our Father, we cannot thank You enough for the love that has allowed us to be called Your children! Your people have rejected You time and time again over the course of many centuries. Yet You were working through it all to bring Your plan to fruition: the

redemption of humans from submitting to self-inflicted sin. Forgive us for sometimes treating Your great love so casually. Help us to honor Your love by reflecting it toward one another. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Thought to Remember - Love must act.

Anticipating Next Week's Lesson

Note that verses 8 and 16 of next week's text (1 John 4:7-21) say that "God is love." However, the world would like to turn that around, claiming that human generated love produces "God." In preparing for next week's lesson, consider what is wrong with this concept?

*Lesson summarized by Montario Fletcher
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:

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Sunday, March 16, 2025

Lesson 3 - "The Way to Love" (Part I)

Lesson Text: **1 John 5:1-12**

Devotional Reading: **1 John 5:1-12**

Background Scripture: **John 17:1-5**

1 John 5:1-12

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? 6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. 10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Lesson Aims

- **Facts:** to show there is a fellowship of love between God and believers based on a faith that overcomes the sinful world system.
- **Principle:** to emphasize that the only way to the love relationship between God and men is to place faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Application:** to make it clear that admittance into the family of God will exclude all who refuse to accept His redemptive love.

Introduction - The Way to Do It

"No, here's the way it's done." The father, a skilled craftsman, is teaching his son the right way to do a job. If the youngster is too stubborn to listen, he will be slow to make progress. But if he has confidence in his father's ability and pays careful attention, he will learn his lesson well.

God has tried to teach His children the way of love. At the beginning He provided generously for Adam and Eve. He even allowed them to exercise their freewill choice. Time and again in the history of Israel, He lovingly rescued His people from oppression. When they sinned, He corrected them. When they repented, He forgave them. When they prayed, He opened the windows of Heaven to pour out blessings on them. Most of all, He sent Jesus to die on the cross for them. No greater example of love has ever been known.

We have been shown the way to love. Will we be stubborn, or will we learn?

Lesson Background

This is the final chapter in John's first epistle, written near the end of the first century ad. The special problem of those who originally received the letter was a heresy called gnosticism, or at least an early version of it. This teaching placed little value on

faith, love, or obedience. Instead, the gnostics said that secret knowledge was the way to Heaven. (The word gnosis means “knowledge” and is found within the English words diagnosis and prognosis.) As John brings his teaching to a conclusion, he puts all his emphasis on being in the right relationship with Jesus Christ. This includes having love for all God’s children.

THE WITNESS OF SUBMISSION TO GOD - 1 John 5:1-5

1. What does the phrase "born of God" (1 John 5:1) mean?

The phrase "born of God." is equivalent to the words "born again" that Jesus used with Nicodemus (John 3:7). Since no one chooses to be born, "born of God" implies the fact that the new birth is not something we achieve but a gift we receive through the regenerating power of God's Spirit (vs. 5,6).

John begins this section with a focus on faith. Anyone who is truly born of God will have faith that “Jesus is the Christ” (a title that is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *mashiach* (Messiah), meaning "anointed one." This faith is not merely an idle opinion about Jesus’ identity. It involves sincere confession and commitment to Christ (see 1 John 4:2,15). It is a trusting, ongoing faith (as shown by John’s use of the present tense in the word *believeth*). True faith is vital for a lifelong relationship with Jesus.

Everyone who has the proper faith relationship with Jesus, within the biblical plan of salvation, is a child of God. John’s immediate point here is that every such child should be an object of our love. After all, if we love him that begat, then we should also love anyone that is begotten of him. We remember what John has just said at the end of the previous chapter: “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar” (1 John 4:20).

2. How can someone "believe" and yet not be saved?

When John spoke of believing in this context, he was not talking about mere mental assent. He meant total commitment to God's Son, for it is possible to have a kind of belief that does not save (Luke 8:13; James 2:19,26). Many claim they believe in Jesus simply because they acknowledge that such a man lived on earth and did some amazing things. For John,

however, believing is a total trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord that is expressed in obeying His commands.

True faith is also seen in one's willingness to love others who are born again. According to the beloved disciple, there can be no true love for God apart from loving one's Christian brother. As love validates our faith, so a lack of love invalidates it (1 John 3:14; 4:8).

3. What is one thing that shows we know and love God (v. 2)?

For John, this question can be answered quite simply: "when we love God, and keep his commandments."

While some might think John was asserting that a person could earn divine favor by keeping God's commandments, this was not John's point at all. Rather, he was saying that obedience is evidence of saving faith and the new birth. A disobedient faith is contradictory and cannot be called genuine in the sight of God or man (cf. James 2:14- 26). We also recall that Christ said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

4. What does it mean that God's commandments are not "grievous" (v. 3)?

Indeed, "his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). The word translated "grievous" could be understood as "burdensome" and “refers to something so heavy that it weighs down a person or breaks him down" (Staton). As our Creator, God knows what is best for us. It is for both our temporal and our eternal benefit to obey God. Disobedience, in fact, may lead to chastisement for sins committed (Hebrews 12:5-11). Among those who truly love God, His commandments are met with loving submission. We are not prisoners who fear our keeper; instead, we obey as loving children who desire to please our Father.

5. John says God's commandments are not grievous (burdensome). Without giving prepackaged answers, what would you say to a believer who is struggling with obedience in some area?

What we say to one who struggles with obedience can depend on the nature of the disobedience: giving up profanity may require a different approach from giving up an adulterous affair. It can also depend on

whether or not the person seeks us out for counsel or we seek the person out for godly confrontation.

Modeling holy lives ourselves is a prerequisite in any case. Presenting oneself as an imperfect fellow struggler is also important. At our new birth, the Holy Spirit grants us a new nature that empowers us to obey, yet we know that we still struggle with sin (Romans 7:7–25). But we are not in the struggle alone: we have our fellow believers. God's Spirit changes our hearts, motives, and desires to the degree we allow Him to do so.

To be continued...

*Lesson summarized by Willie Ferrell
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



Sunday, March 23, 2025

Lesson 4 - "The Way of Love" (Part II)

Lesson Text: **1 John 5:1-12**

Devotional Reading: **1 John 5:1-12**

Background Scripture: **John 17:1-5**

1 John 5:1-12

1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? 6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. 10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Lesson Aims

- **Facts:** to show there is a fellowship of love between God and believers based on a faith that overcomes the sinful world system.
- **Principle:** to emphasize that the only way to the love relationship between God and men is to place faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Application:** to make it clear that admittance into the family of God will exclude all who refuse to accept His redemptive love.

THE WITNESS OF SUBMISSION TO GOD - 1 John 5:1-5 (continued)

1. What is meant by "the world"? How can we overcome it (vs. 4,5)?

Another sign of the new birth is the believer's ability to overcome the "world." Of course, "world" is used here as John used it previously when he instructed his readers to "love not the world" (2:15). If we do not overcome the world, the world will certainly overcome us!

How can victory over the world be realized? John declared that our faith is the means through which we can vanquish the world. A weak faith will give in to the world and its allurements. A strong faith, however, provides hope for victory over the world. Jesus said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). By faith we share in the victory of Christ.

2. The next time you face temptation, how will it help you to know that everyone who is born of God overcomes the world?

There's nothing more empowering and encouraging than hearing "you can do it," as these verses proclaim. Other Scriptures confirm our ability to triumph over sin. Since we know that God always offers us a way out (1 Corinthians 10:13), we know to look for that escape. Since we know that we are in

a battle and that God has equipped us with tools to fight Satan's attacks (Ephesians 6:10–18), we know to prepare for and expect temptations (1 Peter 5:8).

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT-1 John 5:6-8

3. How did Christ come by "water and blood" (v. 6)?

It was John who told about the water and blood at the time of Christ's crucifixion: "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34). There John was likely emphasizing the humanity of Christ and thus the truth of His incarnation, namely, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (1:14).

"Water" and "blood" might refer to two significant events in the life of Christ by which He was identified as Messiah: His baptism and His death. In the book of 1 John, the apostle was to some degree addressing the Gnostic heresy that denied the incarnation. Some of these false teachers asserted that the divine Christ came upon Jesus the man at baptism but left before the crucifixion at Calvary. Such a view obviously distorts the truth of the incarnation—that Christ is fully God and fully man.

4. What is the textual question relating to verses 7 and 8?

The earliest manuscripts of 1 John do not contain the words from "in heaven" (v. 7 to "in earth" (v. 8). Regardless, verses 7 and 8 do articulate a truth that is taught elsewhere in Scripture, namely, that God has revealed Himself as "the Father, the Word (Christ), and the Holy Ghost" (see Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:10–12; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 3:14–19).

While the Trinity bears witness in heaven, "there are three that bear witness in earth" (1 John 5:8). As mentioned in the comments on verse 6, this is a likely reference to the baptism of Christ, the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the death of Christ on Calvary. These three witnesses were also continuing in the life of the early church through the coming of the Spirit upon believers (Acts 2:1-4, 38-39; Rom. 8:16-17), water baptism upon conversion (Acts 2:41; 8:38; 18:8), and the blood of Christ being remembered when the Lord's Supper was observed (Luke 22:19-20).

5. Why is the witness of God greater than man's witness (vs. 9,10)?

As humans, we often receive "the witness of men," that is, we accept what others tell us to be true. Nevertheless, we know that men sometimes lie or distort the truth. For this reason, "the witness of God is greater," for it is impossible for Him to lie (Hebrews 6:18). The testimony that we have received concerning Christ is the testimony of God: "This is my beloved Son: hear him" (Luke 9:35).

Those who come to Christ in faith have the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. He testifies with our spirits that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). However, as we have already seen throughout 1 John, knowing that one is a true child of God is not merely a subjective experience. John declared, "These things have I written unto you that believe... that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13).

If we reject the "record that God gave of his Son" (v. 10), we are declaring God to be a liar. Those who reject the Bible will one day have to answer to the One who inspired it. The Pharisees diligently studied Scripture but failed to see Christ revealed therein (cf. John 5:39). Likewise, it is possible for people today to know the Bible and miss its main message, which is Christ.

11. What did John mean when he said that "life is in his Son" (v. 11)? What is eternal life?

Thankfully, our heavenly Father has offered eternal life to those who believe, "and this life is in his Son." Eternal life cannot be earned or bought; it is a free gift to be received by faith in Christ.

While "eternal life" is usually understood as our future hope of heaven, John saw it as the present possession of the believer. This life begins as a person comes to know God. It begins when he or she experiences God firsthand and enters a saving relationship with Him (see Acts 2:38; John 17:3). This is the testimony—the promise of God.

John does not want anyone to be confused in any way by the false teaching they are hearing. Thus verse 12 of our lesson is almost a repeat of John 3:36. John's readers can know this fact for a certainty: he that hath the Son hath life. The believer can count on receiving life as the gift from God. But whoever has not the

Son of God in heart and life should be warned of this fact: he or she has not life. The certainty of reward or punishment on Judgment Day is determined by whether or not a person follows Jesus.

Conclusion - FOLLOWING THE WAY

Jesus is the way. He is God's way, the right way. In fact, He is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him (see John 14:6). If Christianity is criticized for claiming to be the only true religion, it is only repeating the claims of its founder. It may not be politically correct these days to say there is only one way to Heaven, but that is what the church must say to be faithful to her Lord.

Victorious faith enables us to love as Jesus loved. A review of today's text shows us what this includes. Verses 1 and 2 say that we should love all God's family. When Jesus walked this earth, He extended His love to all who would respond to God's call. We follow Jesus in this way of love.

Verse 3 says that we should keep all God's commandments. Jesus became obedient to the point of death on a cross (see Philippians 2:8). Although He was a Son, He learned obedience by what He suffered and He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (see Hebrews 5:8, 9). We remember that following the way of love includes obeying God's commands.

Verses 4 and 5 say that we are to have faith to overcome all this world's opposition. When Jesus faced opposition, He put His trust in the Father. He faced the temptations in the desert, for instance, by relying on God's Word. He faced the prospect of death on the cross by turning to God in prayer in the garden. We can be more than conquerors through this kind of overcoming faith.

Verses 6 through 10 say that we are to believe all God's testimony. When Jesus quoted Scripture, He showed that He believed it to be true. He used Adam and Eve to establish what is right in marriage (see Matthew 19:4-6). He used Noah and the flood to teach about the second coming (see Matthew 24:37). He used Jonah to teach about His own resurrection (see Matthew 12:40). Jesus accepted these accounts as true. We should have the same view of God's Word as Jesus did: "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35).

Verses 11 and 12 say that the person of faith will receive God's reward. When Jesus put His trust in God and did as His Father told Him, God raised Him from the dead. He was then highly exalted and given the name above every name (see Philippians 2:9-11).

Today Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven. We should take God at His Word and never doubt His promises. Then we will have eternal life in His Son.

Prayer

Father, we thank You for sending Jesus to live on earth as a man and to purchase our salvation. We praise You for the gift of eternal life we have in His name. Help us to have the faith to love as Jesus loved and to overcome this world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thought to Remember – The way of love is the way to life.

Anticipating the Next Lesson

Lessons for the remainder of the quarter are based mainly on texts from the book of Revelation. Texts from Luke and John, relative to Jesus' crucifixion, will also be applied. For next week, think about Christ as King. Study Revelation 1:8; Luke 19:28-38.

*Lesson summarized by Willie Ferrell
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



Sunday, March 30, 2025

Lesson 5 - "Christ is Our King"

Lesson Text: **Revelation 1:8; Luke 19:28-40**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 1:8; Luke 19:28-40**

Devotional Reading: **Psalm 118:21-28**

Revelation 1:8

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Luke 19:28-40

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. 29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, 30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. 31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. 32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. 33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? 34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him. 35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. 36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. 37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. 39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. 40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

- Describe the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.
- Realize that people's temporary acceptance of Jesus as a king foreshadowed the time when He will come as eternal King.
- Find ways to take comfort and hope from identifying ourselves with Christ the King.

Introduction

This week's lesson is the first in a set that begins to focus on Jesus as He is found in the book of Revelation. The next four lessons, come during two important days in the church calendar: Palm Sunday and Resurrection Sunday. These two Sundays bracket a period in Jesus' life called Passion Week- His final week leading up to the crucifixion.

The events of Passion Week are always worth studying and pondering (considering) anew. Taken together, the rest of the lessons allow students to see Jesus as more than the main character in the events of Passion Week; He is also the reigning Lord of all creation. This is the glorious picture found in the book of Revelation.

Lesson Background - Triumphal Entry

The title and words of the old spiritual "Ride on, King Jesus" recall the day when Jesus was received into Jerusalem as king. The welcome of Jesus into the holy city on the Sunday before His crucifixion has long been called the triumphal entry. This event is found in all four of the Gospels, each having some unique details. Although the Gospels do not make any reference to this event as a "triumph," it does bear some relationship to the ancient custom of welcoming a victorious king or general back to his home city.

The city of Rome had a tradition of staging triumphal processions. This parade would include the Roman legions, enemy prisoners, wagons loaded with treasure, and the victorious general in a special chariot. Sometimes a new triumphal arch would be created.

The triumphal entry of Jesus was a way of recognizing Him as king. What did it mean for those present to acclaim Jesus as king, and what does that mean for us today? This lesson will examine some of the implications involved in recognizing Jesus as king in our lives.

Additional Lesson Background

In Luke 9:51 we see that Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.” For the next 10 chapters of that Gospel, Jesus and the disciples were on the pilgrim’s journey to the temple city for the spring celebration of Passover. This was not a quick trip, and they were in no hurry. Traveling south from Galilee they passed through Jericho, a small city just north of the Dead Sea. This was a common route for travelers to Jerusalem from the north, and Jesus’ band was doubtlessly a small part of thousands making the journey.

While in Jericho, Jesus was confronted by a blind man who understood Jesus’ true identity. The man called out to Jesus as the “Son of David” (essentially the same as saying Messiah) and begged to be healed. This healing took place in the presence of the crowd, and they praised God (Luke 18:35–43). In Jericho Jesus also had a dramatic encounter with a height-challenged tax collector named Zaccheus. Jesus used this occasion to clearly state what He was about: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

When His business in Jericho was finished, Jesus and His followers began the ascent to Jerusalem. Although Jericho is only about 15 miles from Jerusalem, there is a change in altitude of some 3,300 feet. It was a hot, dusty climb, but we can imagine the growing excitement of the pilgrim throng as it approached the beloved Jerusalem. This is the setting for the primary passage of today’s lesson, Luke 19:28–38.

THE LORD REIGNING (Rev. 1:8)

1. Why should we be cautious when interpreting Revelation?

Since there has been widespread disagreement even among those who share a common viewpoint on Revelation, we should be cautious in our interpretation of this book and not become too dogmatic (or rigid) about some of the details. Those who have studied Revelation in depth know that much of the imagery of the book comes from the Old Testament—the division of the Bible that contains many visual metaphors.

2. What does “Alpha and Omega” mean? Where else is this concept found (Revelation 1:8)?

When the Lord declared, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending” (vs. 8), it was a familiar concept. Isaiah 44:6 says, “Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel... I am the first, and I am the last.” Of course, alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet and omega the last.

The title “Alpha and Omega” clearly refers to Christ (Rev. 1:11; 21:6; 22:13). The concept of being first and last, that is, independent of time, calls to mind the appearance of the Lord to Moses at the burning bush, where the Almighty identified Himself as “I AM THAT I AM” (Exod. 3:14). That Christ identified Himself with the God who appeared to Moses is clear in John’s Gospel, where Jesus declared, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58).

THE LORD REVEALED (Luke 19:28-35)

3. Why does the Bible frequently speak of going up to Jerusalem (Luke 19:28)?

That Luke tells us they were “ascending up to Jerusalem” reminds us that the ancient capital of Israel was situated on a hill. From whatever direction one came, it was always up to Jerusalem.

4. Where were Bethphage and Bethany and the Mount of Olives (v. 29)?

As the procession came close to the city, it passed near two small villages, Bethphage and Bethany. The latter village was the home of Mary and Martha. Just east of Jerusalem was the Mount of Olives, the location of Christ’s revealing discourse concerning Jerusalem’s destruction and the end times (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21).

5. Why was a young donkey selected for Christ to ride on (v. 30)?

Christ's ultimate ride on a young donkey fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zech. 9:9).

*Lesson summarized by Kimbley Y. Baker-
Richardson
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



Sunday, April 6, 2025

Lesson 6 – “Christ Is Our King” (Part II)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 1:8; Luke 19:28-40**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 1:8; Luke 19:28-40**

Devotional Reading: **Psalms 118: 21-28**

Revelation 1:8

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Luke 19:28-40

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. 29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, 30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. 31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. 32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. 33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? 34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him. 35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. 36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. 37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. 39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. 40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

- Describe the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.
- Realize that people’s temporary acceptance of Jesus as a king foreshadowed the time when He will come as eternal King.
- Find ways to take comfort and hope from identifying ourselves with Christ the King.

THE LORD REVEALED (Luke 19:28-35) ...continued

1. How did Jesus know that the disciples would be questioned in their attempt to take the colt (vs. 31-35)?

Knowing that people might question the disciples concerning their actions, Jesus anticipated the situation and told them how they should reply. Whether this was a prearranged signal to those who had agreed to loan the donkey to Jesus or simply a way to allay (or calm) the fears of the owners concerning the loss of their donkey, we do not know. Either way, Christ knew that if the disciples answered, “Because the Lord hath need of him” (Luke 19:31), the young colt would be released to them.

THE LORD RECEIVED (Luke 19:36-40)

2. Why are the events of that day referred to as Palm Sunday?

John’s Gospel alone tells us that the people “took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him” (12:13)-hence the familiar designation, “Palm Sunday.”

3. How do we know that most in the multitude were sympathetic toward Jesus (vs. 36,37)?

As the road from Jericho to Jerusalem wound its way down the Mount of Olives toward the eastern gate of the city, “the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice” (Luke 19:37). The reason they rejoiced was “for all the mighty works that they had seen.” This indicates that the majority of those traveling with Christ were in sympathy with His ministry and work.

4. What word of praise by the crowd was similar to words that were proclaimed at Christ’s birth (v. 38)?

That the people shouted, “Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest” (Luke 19:38) is certainly reminiscent of the angels’ message at Christ’s birth. Luke alone records that the angels were “praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (2:13-14).

5. Why did the Pharisees criticize Christ’s followers (vs. 39, 40)?

Since they did not believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Pharisees thought it blasphemy for the multitude to praise Him as they did. In fact, they called upon the Lord to rebuke (or scold) His disciples for giving Him such accolades. “Whether men praise Christ or no, he will, and shall, and must be praised” (Matthew Henry’s Commentary).

Resource by Gregg Grandchamp: How Is Jesus Our King of kings and Lord of lords?

Three times in the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as “King of kings and Lord of lords. Paul uses the phrase in his first letter to Timothy, “...until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he will display at the proper time — he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light...” (1 Timothy 6:15-16, ESV)

In [Revelation 17:14](#), we read this, “They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and King of

kings — and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”

Then again in [Revelation 19:16](#), “...and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.”

In [Revelation 1:5](#), we are told of the position and authority of Jesus, “and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.” And Jesus’ own words taught, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” ([Matthew 28:18](#)).

Clearly, the use of King of kings and Lord of lords refers to the supreme power, rule, and authority of Jesus. No one compares with his strength and authority — now or forevermore. His rule is established now. Indeed, Jesus was, is, and will always be the King of kings. And we will be with him. “And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...” ([Ephesians 2:6](#)).

Thanks to his sacrifice, we now possess every spiritual blessing in Christ — but we do not yet experience the fullness of those blessings. Indeed, we are redeemed and saved, adopted, and sanctified. We possess these blessings, yet we still battle our sinful nature. The experience of these blessings is not yet fully ours.

In his first coming, Jesus launched the last days — and in his return, he will complete the work.

The blessings belong to us already, but we cannot yet fully live them until the return of our King of kings.

<https://www.christianity.com/wiki/jesus-christ/how-is-jesus-our-king-of-kings.html>

Conclusion -- JESUS THE KING: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

A central theme in the Bible is the kingship of Jesus. Jesus does not inherit a kingdom from an earthly father or win it through His accomplishments. His kingship is not bestowed upon Him by adoring citizens of the realm. He is king, has always been king, and will always be king. There will be challengers to His throne, but He will reign supreme

(1 Corinthians 15:24, 25). Many rejected Him as king (see John 19:15), but in the end He will receive their acknowledgment (see Philippians 2:10, 11).

What are the personal implications of Jesus' kingship? Does He reign in your life? Consider the question this way: When you willingly disobey King Jesus, do you fear His wrath (see Revelation 6:16)? The New Testament teaches that those who reject the reign of the Lord will be crushed in "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15). Those who love Him, those who serve Him, will be those who obey Him. When Christ reigns in our lives, we can be free from the fear of God's mighty wrath (see 1 Thessalonians 1:10).

If you claim citizenship in the kingdom of God and of His Christ, is your allegiance absolute and consistent? Is your loyalty to Jesus unwavering, even in the face of opposition? Are you able to let go of your own selfish desires to serve the King of kings without reservation?

*May God bless us as we each strive toward perfect and unreserved service, so that one day we will hear the words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: ... enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21) [Charles R. Boatman, International Sunday School Lessons 2006-2007, Standard Publishing, Cincinnati, OH].

PRACTICAL POINTS

1. We need fear nothing the future might bring if we personally know the almighty One, who controls all things (Rev. 1:8).
2. The Lord can use anyone and anything for His glory (Luke 19:28-31).
3. Greatness and humility are not mutually exclusive; in fact, those who are truly great are humble (Luke 19:33-35; cf. Zech. 9:9).
4. We should be quick to praise the Lord for who He is and for what He has done (Luke 19:36-38).
5. Heartfelt praise can never be muted (vs. 39-40).

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER - Celebrate the King!

PRAYER

God in Heaven, we repeat the refrain: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! We thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to bring us salvation. May He reign supreme in our lives, now and forever. In His blessed name we pray, Amen.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

In preparation for next week's lesson, study Revelation 1:12a, 17-18 and John 20:11-16. Considering that the texts are short, also read as a background the following passages: Revelation 1:9-20; and John 20:1-18, 30-31). Think about the connections between these Bible passages as you prepare for next week's lesson. Good studying!

*Lesson summarized by Kimbley Y. Baker-
Richardson
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:

[illegible]



Sunday, April 13, 2025

Lesson 7 – “Christ is Risen” (Part I)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 1:12a, 17-18; John 20:11-16**

Background Scripture: **Revelation: 1-9-20; John 20:1-18,30,31**

Devotional Reading: **Romans 14:7-1**

Revelation 1:12a, 17, 18

12a And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.

.....

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

John 20:11–16, 30, 31

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, 12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

1. Describe Mary Magdalene’s role as a witness to the resurrection of Jesus.
2. Explain the importance of eyewitness testimony for the resurrection of Jesus.
3. Develop a personal faith-statement in Jesus, which is grounded in the biblical evidence for His resurrection.

INTRODUCTION

The cross is the most recognizable religious symbol on earth. It appears as jewelry, in logos, on buildings, in cemeteries, and in countless other places. Some churches often use a cross with Jesus included, called a crucifix. Other churches prefer an empty cross, symbolizing that Jesus’ work on the cross is finished. Still other churches favor another symbol: an image of the risen Christ over the cross. This reflects an understanding that while Jesus’ atoning sacrifice on the cross is essential to our salvation, it is His resurrection that validates that work and completes His mission on earth.

This next two lessons are for “Resurrection Sunday”. This has been celebrated by the church since her earliest days as the central event in all of human history. We will explore what it means to be a witness to the risen Christ and how such witnesses have continuing significance for us today.

Lesson Background

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the tomb is the keystone of the Christian faith. Everything stands or falls with the resurrection. If Christ did not rise on the third day, He is either a liar or a lunatic-but certainly not the Son of God. As Paul pointed out to the Corinthians, if Jesus’ resurrection never

happened, we would still be lost in our sins and without hope (1 Corinthians 15:14-19).

In many of the sermons recorded in the book of Acts, the first preachers of the gospel were careful to proclaim the resurrection of Christ (2:24; 3:26; 5:30; 10:40; 13:37; 17:31). True gospel preaching always declares that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures...was buried, and...rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4). That all of this happened "according to the scriptures", sounds another note of early Christian preaching, namely, that Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy.

At the heart of all gospel preaching is Christ's sacrifice and His glorious resurrection on the third day.

ALIVE FOREVERMORE (Revelation 1:12a; 17-18)

**1. Who was speaking to John in Revelation?
How is He described (Revelation 1:12a)?**

In the Book of Revelation, John receives a series of signs. He received a vision of Jesus. In this vision, John does not see the Jesus he was expecting. Jesus was clothed in His glory.

At first, John only heard behind him "a great voice, as of a trumpet" (Rev. 1:10). The One speaking identified Himself as "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" (v. 11), and commissioned John to write to the seven churches of Asia. Then John "turned to see the voice that spake with [him]" (v. 12) and was astonished at what he saw.

Since John had been with Jesus during His ministry, he probably expected to see Jesus as he last saw Him. The vision, however, showed the exalted Jesus (vs. 13-16). Reading this apocalyptic description of Jesus, we can understand why John responded as he did.

2. Where was John when he received this vision from the Lord? Why was he there?

John lived at a time when Roman authorities were openly persecuting Christians, primarily because they would not acknowledge the emperor as divine. Consequently, John was exiled to "the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v. 9) Patmos was a small,

rocky island in the Aegean Sea about seventy miles southwest of Ephesus. The Romans used it as a penal colony. "Apparently, the Asian authorities had interpreted his preaching as seditious and removed him from the mainland in an attempt to inhibit the growth of the early church" (Mounce).

How willing are we to preach the risen Christ today at home, work, school, and even out in the streets. Are we willing to tell the world about Jesus at any cost, or do we fear losing our livelihood, relationships, and even freedom. Christians have the best news in the world, and we should be willing to share that Good News with everyone.

3. What reassuring words did the Lord speak to John (v. 17)? Can you imagine going in front of a judge and having to go on trial, where your fate is in the judge's (or jury's) hands?

For most people, this is a fearful experience, even if you never actually committed a crime. Multiply that fear by a million, and you have a glimpse of what John experienced. We're talking about Jesus as the highest authority in existence. He is the one who has all power in His hands.

John was so paralyzed with fear that he was motionless. John probably felt that he would not survive this experience (cf. Isa. 6:1-5; Dan. 10: 7-9). Jesus, however, laid his right hand on John and reassured the apostle with His familiar "Fear not" (Rev. 1:17). Literally, the Greek text says "Stop being afraid."

As the voice previously identified Himself (v. 10-11), so the Lord again declared, "I am the first and the last" (v. 17). This calls to mind the title "I AM," which the Lord used when He appeared to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:14). We are also reminded of the many "I am" statements in John (6:35; 8:12, 56; 10:7, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1). Indeed, Christ is the eternal One. It is Christ that created time; thus, he is the beginning and the end.

4. What keys does Christ have (v. 18)?

When Satan influenced men to betray and murder the Son of God, he did not realize that Christ was dying for the sins of the world and would rise from the dead. Although those responsible for the crucifixion were in no way exonerated for their actions, it was

nevertheless part of God's eternal plan for the redemption of mankind (Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Rev. 13:8).

Acts 2:23

²³ Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

1 Peter 1:18-20

¹⁸ Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

¹⁹ But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

²⁰ Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

Rev. 13:8

⁸ And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Jesus tells John that He has the keys to unlock the strongholds of death. Through the resurrection of Christ, the power of death over the human race was forever broken! Christ alone has "the keys of hell and of death" (v.18).

As Christians, the worst thing that we will face on this earth is physical death. For the unbelievers, they face something worse than physical death. That is spiritual death, or permanent separation from God. The unbeliever's ultimate fate is torment in hell. Of course, it is the responsibility of the Christian to reach out to as many unbelievers as possible so that at least each unbeliever will have a choice to choose whether to accept Jesus or reject Him. Those who accept Him will receive life from Jesus.

To be continued...

*Lesson summarized by Montario Fletcher
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



Sunday, APRIL 20, 2025

Lesson 8 – “Christ is Risen” (Part I)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 1:12a, 17-18; John 20:11-16**

Background Scripture: **Revelation: 1-9-20; John 20:1-18, 30, 31**

Devotional Reading: **Romans 14:7-1**

Revelation 1:12a, 17, 18

12a And I turned to see the voice that spake with me.

.....

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

John 20:11–16, 30, 31

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, 12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. 13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. 14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. 16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

- Describe Mary Magdalene’s role as a witness to the resurrection of Jesus.
- Explain the importance of eyewitness testimony for the resurrection of Jesus.
- Develop a personal faith-statement in Jesus, which is grounded in the biblical evidence for His resurrection.

APPEARANCE TO MARY (John 20:11-14)

1. Which Mary is John 20 speaking of? What do we know about her?

Mary Magdalene was one of the most devoted followers of Christ. Although she has often been identified as the sinful woman in Luke 7:37-39, this is an unfounded assumption. She was, however, delivered from demons (Mark 16:9). She was among a group of women who provided material support for Christ and His apostles (Luke 8:1-3). Mary also stood faithfully at the cross (John 19:25), even though most of the apostles forsook Him.

There is a saying in many churches that those whom the Lord has delivered from a lot of sin praise Him the most. This was certainly the case with Mary Magdalene.

2. Why did Mary and the other women come to the tomb early on Sunday?

Jesus had died Friday afternoon, and His body was placed in the tomb shortly thereafter. Since the Sabbath began at sundown, there was little time to prepare the body for burial. The Sabbath (Saturday), during which no work was permitted, was observed until sundown. This is why Mary and the other women who wanted to anoint the body waited until daybreak the "first day of the week" (v. 1) to perform

the task of preparing the body. They wanted Jesus to have a proper burial because they loved Him.

3. Why was Mary weeping at the tomb of Christ? (v. 11-12)

Mary and the women arrived at the tomb to prepare Jesus' body only to find that the stone had been moved (Luke 24:2). This stone was so big and heavy that it would take several men to move it. They rush in to see what happened, and they found the body missing. After witnessing the empty tomb, Mary Magdalene (and the other woman) ran to tell Peter and John, who immediately ran to the tomb to see for themselves (John 20:2-8). Once they saw that what the women had reported was true, they returned to the city. However, those who initially heard the report of the women were skeptical. Luke 24:11 says, "Their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."

Mary returned to the tomb, where she stood alone and wept (John 20:11). Looking at the sepulchre, Mary saw two angels (v. 12). These heavenly messengers brought news from God Almighty (Luke 2:9-14). Whenever angels appear, we know that there is an important issue at stake.

The angels questioned Mary concerning her sadness. They of course were not sad, for Christ had risen from the grave, forever defeating the powers of death. Not realizing that Christ had risen from the dead, Mary stated the reason for her sadness: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him" (v. 13). Mary was upset because she thought that Jesus would not be given the proper burial He deserved.

ASSURANCE OF JESUS (John 20:15-16)

4. When Christ appeared to Mary, who did she think He was? Why? (v. 15)

While still weeping in the tomb, she turns around and sees a man behind her. This man was actually the risen Lord, but because of Mary's extreme grief, she did not recognize Him immediately. Tears might have blurred her vision, and she was not expecting to see Jesus alive.

The Lord asked Mary the reason for her sorrow and whom she was seeking. Mary's emotional state and tears clouding her vision could account for the fact

that she assumed that the person she was addressing was the caretaker of the garden.

5. What is meant by "Rabboni" (v. 16)? Why did Mary address Jesus this way?

Jesus wanted Mary to understand that the person that Mary was talking to was in fact Jesus, himself. Now He addressed Mary by her name. Instantly, she recognized the voice and saw that Jesus was standing in front of her. Upon recognizing the voice of her beloved Friend, Mary responded with the highly respectful "Rabboni," which means "Master" or "Teacher." She now saw that Jesus had risen from the dead. Now, Mary has a reason to rejoice instead of weep.

Notice that Mary does not find the living Christ because of her seeking (remember: she is looking for a dead Christ). Rather, the living Christ finds her! This has huge significance for us today. The risen Jesus is alive still and is still seeking disciples. Jesus said He came to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). If we make ourselves available, call on His name, and follow the biblical plan of salvation, Jesus finds us and changes us.

We will never be the same when this happens. We can be transformed from death to life (John 5:24). Our great fear of death no longer paralyzes us, for "now is Christ risen from the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:20) and "in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). Even if we die, we will be raised to eternal life and "so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

6. Now that Jesus has risen, what is every Christian's mission?

Those that knew Jesus best saw Jesus crucified, but they once again saw Jesus alive physically. Once they were convinced of this truth, they risked their lives to proclaim the risen Lord (Acts 5:27-33).

Two thousand years later, we still hear about the risen Christ. Our mission is to keep preaching and teaching about our risen Lord and lead others to Him so they can receive salvation from Him. We are recipients of His love, so let's continue to spread that

love by drawing others into the family of God. Jesus will be certainly pleased.

*Lesson summarized by Montario Fletcher
Jesus Is All Ministries*

Conclusion

The Bible is not the record of humanity's search for God. It is much more the story of God's search to redeem His lost children. Yet there are those who, like Mary, still search for a dead Christ. Some seek Him as only a historical figure from 2,000 years ago. They find an enigmatic figure, a person very difficult to explain using the standard criteria of history.

Others seek Christ only in the pages of tradition. They see Him as the originator of a great system of ethical teaching: selflessness and service. Still others seek a Christ that fits their predetermined needs. They want a Savior according to their expectations, not according to His terms and demands. Therefore, they seem to serve a dead Christ. He makes no impact on what they do, how they behave, or their future plans.

The great news of Resurrection Sunday is that we serve a risen Savior. He was alive on that morning when Mary visited the tomb. He is alive today and still seeking those who would serve Him, love Him, and be His disciples. As believers we can walk daily with the confidence of Jesus' presence in our lives. He is not dead! Hallelujah, He is risen indeed!

Prayer

Father, we thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to die for our sins on the cross. Jesus, we are thankful that you rose on the third day and paid our sin debt in full. Let us remember your sacrifice Jesus. We take it very seriously. Though salvation did not cost us anything, Father, it cost you your only Son. Let us rejoice and be thankful for what you did Jesus. We pray this in your name, Jesus. Amen.

Thought to Remember: THE RISEN CHRIST STILL OFFERS ETERNAL LIFE.

Anticipating Next Week's Lesson

Chapter 4 of Revelation is the next lesson. Since it is loaded with symbolism and strange beings, do some serious studying and praying for this lesson.

NOTES:



Sunday, April 27, 2025

Lesson 9 – “Christ is Worthy to Redeem” (Part I)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 5:1-5, 11-14**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 5**

Devotional Reading: **Psalms 107:1-9**

Revelation 5:1–5, 11–14

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? 3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. 11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Lesson Aims

- **Facts:** to see how Christ will be able to open the scroll of judgment in heaven and receive universal adoration.
- **Principle:** to realize that the aspiration of all faithful believers must focus on the Lamb of God.
- **Application:** to urge people to accept judgment on their sins and then receive redemption from Christ so that they can reign with Him.

Lesson Background

Last week’s lesson looked at the opening scene of John’s vision of Heaven. We found a breath-taking tableau of worship before the throne of God, led by the 4 creatures that attend the throne. The worship was joined by 24 honored elders. Study of this scene allowed us to understand the heart of true worship. This week’s lesson continues in that vein, but worship has ceased temporarily. The reasons for its pause and for its resumption are key elements of Revelation 5.

A central item in this chapter is a certain scroll (compare Isaiah 29:11). This scroll represents the mystery of God’s gracious salvation and of His judgmental wrath. The scroll is closed by seven seals.

The breaking of each seal in the following chapters brings about symbolic events tied to the grim judgments of God. While the images are terrifying, we who are in Christ can rest assured that God’s punishing anger will not be visited upon us. Our names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. We have overcome by the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 12:11).

LAMB REVEALED IN HEAVEN (Revelation 5:1-5)

1. What is the significance of the "right hand" (Revelation 5:1)?

What was unveiled in Revelation 5 is a continuation of what began in chapter 4. "A door was opened in heaven" (v. 1), and John was invited to come up and see things that were yet to come. Surrounding the throne of God were the twenty-four elders (v. 4) and the four living creatures (v. 6), who were involved in ceaseless praise of the Almighty.

John saw that in the right hand of God there was a book (5:1). The right hand was often used in performing oaths; so, this is the likely reason for the book being in the "right hand" (cf. 1:16-17; 10:5-6).

John's vision is quite similar to one given to Ezekiel: "When I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe" (Ezek. 2:9-10). That the scrolls given to Ezekiel and John were written upon on both sides is significant. "The fact that it was covered on both sides with writing indicates that it was filled with meaning and importance." (Summers, Worthy Is the Lamb, Broadman). "

John could see writing on both sides of the scroll, which meant that nothing more could be added. What was written was complete and final.

2. Describe the "book" seen by John. What do the seven seals indicate?

The book (or scroll) that John saw was sealed with seven seals. The seven seals give a high sense of the importance to the scroll's contents. The book of Revelation uses the number seven 55 times. Seven is this book's number for perfection. The number seven here tells us that the scroll contains the perfect message of God. It awaits its revelation to John and the rest of the heavenly audience.

3. Do we know who the "strong angel" (v. 2) was? What does Scripture teach about angels?

While some have suggested that the "strong angel" was Gabriel, no indication is given concerning the identity of this angel. That he was "strong" implies that there are ranks and varieties of angels, which can

be inferred from other texts as well (Gen. 3:24; Job 1:6; Isa. 6:1-2; Ezek. 28:13-15; Dan. 10:13; Matt. 18:10; Jude 1:9). This strong angel will be seen again in Revelation—first as the one who bore the little book (10:1-2) and then as the one who cast a great millstone into the sea (18:21). In these latter passages he is called a "mighty angel," but the Greek word for "mighty" is the same word that is translated "great" in Revelation 5:2.

The great angel asked a question: "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (v. 2). It should be noted that when the seals are broken (6:1-17; 8:1-6), judgments such as had never been seen before are unleashed upon the earth in that time designated as the "great tribulation" (7:14). As Christ said, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. 24:21).

The question "Who is worthy?" could be understood in the sense of "Who is able?" "The vision assumes that he who opens the scroll has power to execute what is written therein" (Beasley-Murray, Revelation, Eerdmans).

The book (or scroll) cannot be opened without breaking the seals. The seal on government correspondence in the ancient world is more than a way of keeping the document closed. The nature of the seal determines who has the authority to break it and read the document. For example, a document sealed with the emperor's imprint can be viewed only by an official of the highest level (compare Esther 3:12; 8:10).

The one who opens it must have the proper authority—that is, must be found worthy.

4. Why was John weeping (vs. 3,4)?

The explanation that no one in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth was able to open the scroll was a way of saying that neither angels, nor living persons, nor departed spirits were either worthy or capable of opening the sealed scroll. They were therefore unworthy to look upon the contents of the book, thus preventing John from knowing its contents.

At this the Apostle John "wept much"; that is, he began shedding many tears. To have been called to heaven only to be disappointed because the future

could not be revealed was difficult for John to accept. "Unless the seals are broken and the scroll of destiny unrolled, God's plan for the universe will be frustrated. Hence the Seer breaks out in unrestrained weeping. He wept at the prospect of an indefinite postponement of God's final and decisive action" (Mounce, The Book of Revelation, Eerdmans).

5. In what ways could an observer tell by your actions that your heart has ached because God's plans were seemingly thwarted and that He was not being glorified as He deserves?

John was moved to tears because the scroll could not be opened. He was upset that God's plan and purposes seemingly could not proceed. People reveal their spiritual maturity by the things that they allow to upset them. Some are distraught that their church is not giving to them what they want in terms of preferred music, worship times, décor, etc. Others become upset with God when He does not answer their prayers the way they desire (see James 4:1–3).

Such concerns are quite shallow in contrast with John's reaction! John was upset because God was not going to be glorified since (apparently) His plan could not proceed as planned. A Christian who is deeply saddened because God is not being honored is a person who is more likely to work hard to fulfill God's purposes on this earth.

To be continued...
Lesson summarized by Willie Ferrell
Jesus Is All Ministries

NOTES:



Sunday, May 4, 2025

Lesson 10 - "Christ is Worthy to Redeem" (Part II)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 5:1-5, 11-14**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 5**

Devotional Reading: **Psalm 107:1-9**

Revelation 5:1–5, 11–14

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. 2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? 3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. 11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; 12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. 14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

Lesson Aims

- **Facts:** to see how Christ will be able to open the scroll of judgment in heaven and receive universal adoration.
- **Principle:** to realize that the aspiration of all faithful believers must focus on the Lamb of God.
- **Application:** to urge people to accept judgment on their sins and then receive redemption from Christ so that they can reign with Him.

Lamb Revealed in Heaven (Revelation 5:1–5) ...continued

1. Why was Christ called the Lion of the tribe of Judah and the Root of David (v. 5)?

Approached by one of the twenty-four elders, John was told, "Weep not," or perhaps, "Stop weeping." Indeed, there was no reason to weep, for one came forward who was worthy to open the sealed scroll, namely, the "Lion of the tribe of Juda."

This term harks back to Genesis 49:9, where Judah was called a "lion's whelp" (the birth, or young of any of various canine). Heb. 7:14 states, "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah". Likewise, "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah" (v. 10), indicating that this tribe would supply royalty to the nation of Israel and, ultimately, the true King of Israel, Jesus Christ. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:33). Since the lion has long been recognized as the king of beasts, it is appropriate that the King of kings (Rev. 19:16) is depicted as a lion.

Another figure drawn from the Old Testament is the "Root of David" (5:5). Isaiah 11:1 says, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

Sometimes the Old Testament prophets refer to the Messiah as the branch of David who originates from David's dynasty (see Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15). This was true of the earthly Jesus, a rightful descendant of David (Matthew 1:1).

But in His eternal fullness, the Messiah is not derivative of the house of David. Rather, just the reverse is true: that house is dependent upon Him. The preexistent Christ is the source of the promise to David. This was taught by Jesus when He pointed out that David prophetically referred to the Messiah as "my Lord" (Luke 20:41–44).

It is therefore quite clear that the allusion to the Lion of Judah and Root of David in the Apocalypse is a reference to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He alone was successful in opening the sealed scroll, for He alone is worthy to do so.

"Christ has conquered once and for all. Paradoxically, this decisive victory over Satan and death was accomplished on the cross. He conquered by an act of total self-sacrifice. The result is that he alone is worthy to open the scroll of destiny both to reveal and carry out the final dissolution of all forces set in opposition to the eternal kingdom of God" (Mounce).

SLAIN LAMB (Rev. 5:6-11)

In verse 6 we discover that the One previously described as a Lion is now "a Lamb as it had been slain." Even so, the Lamb "stood." Obviously, slain lambs do not stand, but this Lamb is God's Son, who conquered death three days after being slain. "Christ, the Lamb, bears the marks of His death (see Luke 24:40; John 20:20, 27) even in His glorified state" (Ryrie, ed., Ryrie Study Bible, Moody).

Having taken the scroll from the hand of God (v. 7), "the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb" (v. 8) and sang a new song in praise to the Redeemer. Through Christ's shed blood, those "of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (v. 9) were able to receive the forgiveness of sins and be made "kings and priests" (v. 10). The gospel is for "all nations" (Luke 24:47), for "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34) and offers salvation to all.

LAMB WORSHIPED IN HEAVEN (Revelation 5:11–14)

2. What is the significance of "ten thousand times ten thousand" (vs. 11,12) angels?

Joining in with the adoration of the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures was the "voice of many angels round about the throne" (Rev. 5:11). "[John's] same eyes that had seen Jesus spat upon, slapped, scourged, stripped, and crucified were now the eyes that were seeing millions of angels encircling the throne of the King of kings in adoration and worship. The same ears that had heard Jesus blasphemed, falsely accused, mocked, and convicted of blasphemy were now the ears that heard the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders join the millions of angels in thunderous praise of the Lamb who alone, is worthy!" (Lotz).

The word translated "ten thousand" is the Greek *muriades*, which is where we get the English "myriad." This term was frequently used by the Greeks to represent a number beyond human comprehension. Considering the great number surrounding the throne of God, we can understand why their chant was in a "loud voice" (v. 12). Because the Lamb was willing to come to earth and die for sinful humanity, all heaven praised His sacrifice. He alone was worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing. "All these are intrinsic qualities of Christ, except the last, which is the expression of the creatures' worship" (Barker and Kohlenberger, eds., Expositor's Bible Commentary, Zondervan).

3. Who else joined in with praise to God and the Lamb (vs. 13,14)?

The worship chorus is now joined by every creature. The celebration is so great that even heaven cannot contain it! Joining the heavenly chorus in praise to the Lamb of God, "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea" (v. 13) renders his adoration to the heavenly Father and the Lamb. Just as God had received praise as Creator in the preceding chapter (4:11), now He receives praise as Redeemer.

As modern Christians, we must admit that we all have our preferences with regard to music and worship styles. We should nevertheless examine all Christian music in light of its intended purposes: to aid us in worshiping our Creator and Redeemer (Heb.

2:12), and to teach and admonish one another as believers (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

We note that this praise was being rendered "for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13). Eternity will not be long enough to praise God, from whom all blessings flow, not the least of which is eternal salvation through the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

As Revelation 5 closes, "the four cherubim were constantly saying 'Amen.' After every ascription of praise by the rest of the universe, these four living ones say 'Amen.' They place the seal of their, and God's, approval upon this universal adoration. Also, the elders fell down and worshiped, rendering divine homage not only to the triune God, but also specifically to the Lamb. Most glorious antiphony!" (Hendriksen, *More Than Conquerors*, Baker).

Once the heavenly vision of God's throne has concluded in Revelation 4 and 5, everything is set for what was to follow, namely, the opening of the seven seals. "These two chapters reveal the indescribable glory and infinite majesty of the Godhead in heaven. The following chapters reveal the sovereign power of God expressed in judgment on a wicked world sunk in unprecedented depths of sin and blasphemy. Though believers today do not have the privilege of sharing John's vision, . . . every believer can take the word pictures of Scripture here and anticipate the glory and the wonder of the heavenly scene that he will someday see with his own eyes" (Walvoord and Zuck, eds., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Victor).

Conclusion - JESUS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

One of the burning issues of John's day was the danger of worshiping false gods. Under the reign of Emperor Domitian, citizens were required to do a yearly act of worship to the "genius" of the emperor-something Christians refused to do. For this they were persecuted, some even to death. John knew that one of the seven churches of Asia had suffered the martyrdom of a faithful member named Antipas (Revelation 2:13). Revelation tells the horrible story of people who worshiped a false god.

There are two sides to the coin of worship. On one side is the principle that worship is for God and only for God. If there is another recipient of worship, worship has become idolatry, the most grievous sin in the Bible. When John falls down to worship an angel, he is admonished, "Do it not . . . worship God!" (Revelation 19:10). This is an absolute in the Bible.

The elders fell down and worshiped, rendering divine homage not only to the triune God but also specifically to the Lamb (5:14). It is proper and fitting to worship Jesus the Lamb, who redeemed us by taking away our sin. This is the Jesus we have a relationship with today. He is seated at the right hand of God in Heaven. Jesus should be counted as worthy in our hearts and in our worship.

The other side of the coin is that acts of worship clearly reveal who a person's god is. We may claim to worship God, but the way we live our lives will show what we really count as worthy. It may be ourselves. It may be a political philosophy. It may be wealth and pleasure. We see Paul's awareness of this when he writes of those "whose God is their belly" (Philippians 3:19). Let us be aware of these things as well.

Prayer - To God, the one who sits on the throne, we offer our praise, our honor, and our blessings. To the Lamb, our redeemer, we offer our deepest thanks and devotion. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thought to Remember - HONOR JESUS IN YOUR WORSHIP

Anticipating Next Week's Lesson

We will study what will happen to believers living on the earth following the rapture of the saints. In spite of the tribulation to be unleashed by Satan through the antichrist and the false prophet, these converts to Christ will be clothed in robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, representing His righteousness. Study Revelation 7:1-17 "Christ Is Our Protection."

*Lesson summarized by Willie Ferrell
Jesus Is All Ministries*

NOTES:



Sunday, May 11, 2025

Lesson 11 - "Christ Is our Protection" (Part I)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 7:1-3, 9, 13-17**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 7**

Devotional Reading: **Psalm 121**

Revelation 7

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

- Detail the salvation of 144,000 Jews and a great multitude of Gentiles during the coming tribulation period.
- Hold out hope that those who fail to be saved in this present age will, if they survive, have an opportunity to be converted during the tribulation.
- Make sure of our salvation now and to urge others to do the same.

Introduction - THE HISTORY OF BLOOD

Blood is a "hot commodity" today-the Red Cross always seems to need blood donors. Yet blood is a dangerous fluid because of medical risks. Diabetics who travel frequently experience the discomfort many people feel at the thought of blood touching them if they have to deal with another's blood-soaked testing strips. Basketball players are ordered off the floor because a little blood is seen. The HIV/AIDS crisis has made us wary of contact with anything tainted by blood. Yet there is no substitute for whole blood and blood derivatives for many medical procedures. We are scared by blood, but we need it.

In the religions of the ancient world, blood was viewed as sacred. Some ancients saw blood as containing the life principle, even the soul. They did not understand the function of blood in the body. The fact that blood circulated in the body was not well understood until William Harvey's conclusions in about A.D. 1615. [Harvey: An English physician, anatomist, and physiologist who discovered the circulation of blood in the human body in 1628; (b. 1578, d. 1657).]

Blood was widely consumed as a food in the first century A.D. This practice was abhorrent to the Jews

(Leviticus 7:26; 17:12, 14; 19:26) and was forbidden by the early church (Acts 15:20). Like many of their contemporaries, ancient Jews believed a person's blood contained his or her life. If the blood drained from a person, they knew that that person would die.

Thus, life and blood were tightly linked (Deuteronomy 12:23). This helps us understand the frequent phrase innocent blood. From our modern, scientific point of view, we cannot imagine blood itself being guilty or innocent any more than hair can be. Yet innocent blood conveys the idea of the violent death of an innocent person. To slay an innocent person would bring "blood" or "bloodguilt" upon the perpetrator (see Deuteronomy 19:10; compare Psalm 106:38).

The Old Testament taught that human blood was not to be shed in violence (see Genesis 9:6, part of the covenant with Noah). Murder was more than a criminal act; it was an offense against God. There was a sense, then, that all the human blood belonged to God and that humans had no right to abuse it (see Genesis 4:10).

Yet animal blood was an integral part of the Jewish religious system. A dramatic example of this is found in Exodus 24:3–8, Moses' ceremony of the blood of the covenant. In this ceremony of commitment, Moses took fresh animal blood and sprinkled it on the crowds of people (*Warning: don't try this at your church!*). Thus, their vow was sealed. The Old Testament taught that blood purifies, as summarized in the New Testament passage Hebrews 9:22: "without shedding of blood is no remission [of sins]."

Blood—on the one hand, so abhorrent; on the other hand, so important. Today's lesson looks at Revelation 7, which gives a spectacular picture of the importance of the blood of Jesus for John's readers and for us today. [Note that although none of the Bible was written to us, the entire Bible was written for us.]

Lesson Background

Last week's lesson (Revelation 5) saw a crisis in Heaven resolved by the appearance of the redeeming Lamb of God—the risen Christ. He was deemed worthy to break the seven seals of the mysterious

scroll held by God. Only the Lamb could unroll the book to reveal its contents.

Revelation 6 is the account of the breaking of the first six seals. When a seal is broken, various symbolic things happen. The first seal, the white horse, represents the lust for conquest; a good example of this is the Roman Empire (Revelation 6:1, 2). The second seal, the red horse, symbolizes war; this is both the ancient and modern plague of humanity (6:3, 4). The third seal, the black horse, stands for famine; this is a usual consequence of war (6:5, 6). The fourth seal, the pale horse, denotes death; this is the ultimate result of war (6:7, 8). These four seals are a distinct set, sometimes referred to as the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse."

The fifth seal (Revelation 6:9–11) presents a question from the people of God, "How long, O Lord?" (6:10). The answer is that they must wait "for a little season," that is, a little longer (6:11). While they wait, their confidence is found in the way they address God: "O Lord, holy and true" (6:10).

The sixth seal (Revelation 6:12–17) is summed up in the statement, "wrath is come" (6:17). It presents a frightening picture of cosmic upheaval when the wrath of God and of the Lamb is unleashed on sinful humanity. Those caught in this cataclysm (disaster or tragedy) ask, "Who shall be able to stand" against it? (6:17). The answer is not given but is obvious: no one can withstand the unleashed fury of God. This is the day of God's final vindication of His righteousness (see Amos 5:18–20).

The seventh seal does not come until Revelation 8:1. It does not have a distinct event attached to it. Rather, it is the beginning of the next series, the seven trumpets. Chapter 7, our focus in this lesson, is an interlude between the terrifying images of the first six seals and that next sequence. It comes back to answer for the people of God the question, "Who shall stand?"

The people of God are the saints pictured in the fifth seal. While no one can withstand God's wrath, there is a protection for the people of God so that they will not have to face it. This protection comes through the blood of the Lamb, our blessed Savior, Jesus Christ. Now, this is good news indeed! Thank God for the blood-covering of Jesus Christ!

GREAT ANGELS (Rev. 7:1-3)

1. What is meant by the “four corners of the earth” (Rev. 7:1)?

The number four symbolizes the whole earth in Revelation. This may be represented by the four angels charged with the earth, the four corners or quarters of the land (See Rev. 20:8), or the four winds that blow upon the earth (compare Jeremiah 49:36; Ezekiel 37:9; Daniel 7:2; Mark 13:27). Four corners simply mean the four points on the compass. It has also been suggested that the four winds represent the four horsemen in Chapter 6.

2. Why were the angels holding four winds back? (vs.1)

The four angels seem to be stewards of the earth. Their actions of holding four winds back demonstrate a pause in the furious activities of the previous chapter. Instead of bringing immediate destruction to earth, strong angels hold the winds in check, preventing them from blowing upon the earth, sea, and trees. The four winds are the symbols of God’s judgments (cf. Jeremiah 49:36). The angels who are about to let them loose are bidden to pause.

Note that during this time another angel enters the scene (Rev. 7:2). God’s servants are sealed to protect them from the approaching wrath. “Like as, the last judgment came upon Egypt, there was time given to enable the people of God to sprinkle the lintel and door-posts of their houses with the blood of the Paschal lamb, which was God’s seal of preservation for them, so it is here.” -The Pulpit Commentary (H. D. M. Spence-Jones, Ed.)

3. What might be the significance of the “angel ascending from the east” (vs. 2)?

That the angel in John’s vision rises from the east is noteworthy. In Ezekiel, the glory of the Lord came from the east (43:2, 4). The wise men who came to worship the infant Saviour also came from the east (Matt. 2:1). The sun also rises in the east-giving us a new day.

4. What are some other examples of seals or marks mentioned in the Bible?

The idea of a seal, or mark, is used numerous times in Scripture. Cain was marked by God (Gen. 4:15).

Israelite homes were marked by blood on the night of the Passover (Exod. 12:12-13). In a vision given to Ezekiel, a mark was to be placed on the foreheads of those who grieved over the detestable practices of Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:1-6). In Revelation, not only are the servants of God marked with a seal (9:4; 14:10, but those who follow the Beast are as well (13:11-18).

5. How many were sealed? What are some possible interpretations of this number (vs. 3)?

The precise identity of the servants who are sealed has been a matter of considerable speculation. The number of servants is 144,000 (7:4), which some take as a literal number. Others, however, consider it purely symbolic, saying that it “refers to that generation of faithful believers about to enter the final turbulent period that will mark the end of human history” (Mounce).

Since the 144,000 are from “all the tribes of the children of Israel” (vs. 4), many believe they are Jews, although some think the number is a symbol for all true believers. “These are Jews from the 12 tribes (12,000 each) who are protected in order to perform some service for God during these days. Perhaps they are evangelists” (Ryrie, ed., Ryrie Study Bible, Moody).

To be continued...

Lesson by Kimbley Y. Baker-Richardson
Jesus Is All Ministries

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Sunday, May 18, 2025

Lesson 12 - "Christ Is our Protection" (Part II)

Lesson Text: **Revelation 7:1-3, 9, 13-17**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 7**

Devotional Reading: **Psalm 121**

Revelation 7

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Lesson Aims

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

- Detail the salvation of 144,000 Jews and a great multitude of Gentiles during the coming tribulation period.
- Hold out hope that those who fail to be saved in this present age will, if they survive, have an opportunity to be converted during the tribulation.
- Make sure of our salvation now and to urge others to do the same.

GREAT MULTITUDE (Rev. 7:9)

1. How is the "great multitude" (vs. 9) different from the 144,000 (vs. 4)?

Unlike the 144,000, this great multitude is one "which no man could number." Also, in contrast to the sealed servants, this numberless multitude is made up of "all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (vs. 9: see 5:9; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; and 17:15). Whereas the 144,000 are portrayed as Jews, the "great multitude" is made up of all nations.

We later discover that this great multitude has come out of the "great tribulation" (7:14). "This multitude is composed of many racial and geographic groups who will be redeemed during the tribulation period... In these difficult days, many will find Christ as Savior" (Ryrie).

2. What do the white robes and palm branches signify?

The redeemed ones wear white robes, symbolic of their cleansing through the blood of Christ (Rev. 7:14). It is not through their own righteousness that they stand before the throne but through the imputed righteousness of Christ. They extol neither their

goodness nor their works, but the salvation God planned from eternity for them (vs. 10).

The “palms in their hands” (vs. 9) symbolize victory. Just as Jesus was met with palm branches when He arrived in Jerusalem, so it will be when the redeemed stand before Him in the New Jerusalem. “Standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” signifies their position of acceptance and honor as God’s true servants” (Barker and Kohlenberger, eds., Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Zondervan).

GREAT TRIBULATION (Rev. 7:13-17)

3. What is the Great Tribulation? When will it occur (vs. 13, 14)?

While there are some commentators who view the Great Tribulation as a symbol for the entire church age, a large number of interpreters see this a seven-year period just prior to the Second Coming. There is, however, a considerable amount of debate concerning whether the church will be raptured prior to, during, or after the tribulation period. Many believe that everything in Revelation 6 through 19 depicts the period of the Great Tribulation on earth after the church is removed. This being so, studying what awaits planet earth is intriguing, to say the least.

4. What kind of imagery is given of heaven (vs. 15, 16)? How is this related to what is said later in Revelation?

Verse 15 is not simply a picture of future bliss in Heaven. This can also be seen as a possibility for us today. Worship is our acknowledgment of the Holy God and submission to Him.

The imagery used in verse 16 is quite similar to that in Isaiah 49:10, whose primary reference is to the return from Babylonia: “They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them.”

While most of us rarely hunger or thirst, such images would have been very inviting to ancient peoples, who frequently faced such prospects on a daily basis. During His ministry, Christ used similar images to portray Himself as the one who could satisfy both hunger and thirst (John 4:14; 6:35). Toward the end of Revelation, some of these same images are repeated (see 21:3-6, 25; 22:1, 5, 17).

John 4:14

¹⁴But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

John 6:35

³⁵And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Revelation 21:3-6, 25

³And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

⁴And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

⁶And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.....

²⁵And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Revelation 22:1, 5, 17

¹And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.....

⁵And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.....

¹⁷And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

5. How can God wipe away all tears? (vs. 17)

This means that in God’s presence, there will be no crying, sorrow, or suffering and pain. As in John’s Gospel (see 10:1-16), the Lamb in Revelation 7:9-17 is both sacrifice and shepherd. That the Lamb will

“feed” God’s people means that He will supply all their eternal needs. As all of our present needs are met in this world, so our future needs will be met in the world to come. Whatever hurts we have experienced in this life will be healed, for “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (John Alva Owston, Bible Expositor and Illuminator)

Conclusion

Many people know they ought to get right with God, but they put off making a decision. There will be conversions to Christ during the Great Tribulation, but if a person intends to wait until that time, there is no guarantee he will even survive until then. “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2). Are you prepared to spend eternity with God?

Paul put it very plainly when he said “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3). Robert Lowry (1826–1899) wrote in the hymn:

Nothing But the Blood

What can wash away my sin?	Oh! precious is the flow
Nothing but the blood of Jesus;	That makes me white as snow;
What can make me whole again?	No other fount I know,
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.	Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

We must realize, without the blood of Jesus, we would be overwhelmingly dirty because of our sin. As we consider God’s marvelous provision, may we offer thanks to the one who still sits on the throne and to the Lamb who gave His blood for us.

Practical Points

1. When God’s judgment comes, it will encompass the whole earth (Rev. 7:1).
2. God’s people experience His mercy daily, even in time of divine judgment (vs. 2-3).
3. We must never place national, ethnic, or racial limits on salvation, for that would violate God’s plan and practice (vs. 9).
4. Our service does not end with death, but will continue forever before the throne of God (vs. 13-15).
5. The promise of eternal blessing helps us remain faithful to God in trying times (vs. 16-17).

Thought to Remember - OUR ETERNAL PROTECTION IS THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

Prayer

O Jesus, Your blood, Your blood, Your cleansing blood! It is a mystery and a marvel to us; what power it has! Father, we thank You for providing our salvation through the blood of Your only Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray, amen.

Anticipating Next Week’s Lesson

In preparation for the next lesson, you should study Revelation 19:1-21: “The Final Banquet”. While studying, on the marriage supper of the Lamb described in verses 7-10, make sure you can identify the groom and bride. Good studying!

*Lesson summarized by Kimbley Y. Baker-
Richardson
Jesus Is All Ministries*

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Sunday, May 25, 2025

Lesson 13 - "The Final Banquet" (Part I)

Lesson Text: **Psalm 48:1-14**

Background Scripture: **Revelation 19:1-21**

Devotional Reading: **Revelation 19:5-10**

Revelation 19:5-10

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

Lesson Aims

- **Facts:** to reveal reasons for praise to God in heaven and to describe the marriage of the Lamb of God, Christ, to His bride, the Church.
- **Principle:** to motivate believers to rejoice in their union with Christ beginning now and culminating at the marriage supper of the Lamb in heaven.
- **Application:** to praise God the Father and Christ with our mouths and by the righteous way we live.

Lesson Background

As we come to the next stage in our discussion of the book of Revelation, let's consider where we've been so far. John's Revelation has been a story of hope.

John repeatedly makes the same point throughout Revelation: if you are faithful to God, then you will be a part of God's eternal victory.

There is agreement among many that what is described in Revelation 6 through 19 occurs during the Great Tribulation. In these chapters we encounter Babylon, the great harlot. The reason for this was that Babylon, in the history of Israel, was a place that brought about the destruction of many of God's people. Babylon thus stood as an icon of human arrogance, a place that put itself before God in its pursuit of worldly pleasure and success (even though God used it as His instrument).

Worldly pleasures, fame, possessions, money, etc., appeal to virtually all of us on some level, don't they? And this appeal is characterized as the lure of a prostitute; thus, we have Babylon as the great whore who lures people away from God. As we look into the next part of the story in chapter 19, we find John using this image of the great harlot to contrast the virtuous character of the bride of Christ.

MESSIAH SUPREME – Rev. 19:5-8

1. What does "small and great" mean in Revelation 19:5?

All those who fear God, that is, all His servants, are called upon to render praise to the Almighty. The phrase "small and great" means every believer on earth, regardless of their social-economic status or level of spiritual maturity (Mounce, *The Book of Revelation*, Eerdmans). Although some think these servants are a select group within the church, such as martyrs (17:6; 19:2) or prophets (10:7; 11:18; 16:6; 28:20), most think they represent "the whole company of God's people" (Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, Eerdmans).

2. How is the voice heard by John described? (v. 6)

John describes this voice as the sound of a great multitude. Earlier in the chapter (vs. 1-2), a heavenly multitude praised God for His judgments upon Babylon. Now this same multitude rejoices in the approaching marriage of the Lamb. "The sound that John hears is like the sound of a great throng of people, like the roar of mighty rushing waters, and like a great peal of thunder. Such high drama is appropriate for the announcement that God has at last established his universal reign on Earth" (Mounce).

3. What does "Alleluia" (vs. 6) mean?

The book of Psalms contains many exclamations of the great multitude. "Alleluia" is a variation of "hallelujah" and means "Praise ye the Lord" (Psalms 111:1; 112:1; 113:1; 148:1; 149:1; 150:1). Interestingly, Revelation 19 is the only place where "alleluia" appears in the King James Version of the Bible. The Hebrew equivalent, halleluyah, which has the same translation as "alleluia" appears many times in the Old Testament.

4. What does "omnipotent" mean? How else is the Greek term translated? (v. 6)

The reason the servants of God can sing this hallelujah chorus is that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 19:6). The Greek word translated "omnipotent," meaning "all-powerful," is elsewhere rendered "almighty" and is used only of God. In the New Testament, this word is found ten times, nine of which are in Revelation. Literally, the word means "ruler of all," or "one who holds things under his control."

5. What is the "marriage of the Lamb" (vs. 7)? Who is the "wife" of the Lamb?

The image of the festive occasion of a marriage now emerges upon the scene. Jesus is known as the Lamb of God since He died for the sins of the world. Students of Scripture know that this image is not a new one, for the Lord is often pictured as being married to His people. This was true of both Israel (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Hos. 2:19-20) and the church (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22-33).

We know that Christ will return one day for His church. As a bride makes painstaking preparations for her wedding, we must make preparations as we anticipate time when we will be united with the Lord. Indeed, "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7).

6. What is meant by the "righteousness of saints" (vs. 8)?

The final phrase of verse 8 reveals that the description of the fine wedding outfit reflects the "righteousness of the saints." We don't have a righteousness of our own. Rather, it is the sacrifice of the Lamb of God that enables the bride to present herself in the white and clean wedding dress (compare Philippians 3:9). The imagery of Isaiah 61:10 is powerful: "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

MARRIAGE SUPPER – Rev. 19:9-10

7. How and why did John draw our attention to the marriage supper? (v. 9)

The "wife" of verse 7 is an image of the faithful who join Christ forever. Now John refers to the same group as they which are called. There is a slight change in the dynamics of the story here because now John tells us that he has been asked to write the true sayings of God. While all Scripture has its origins in God, John now draws even more attention to the vital nature of the message. His readers must know of the utter reliability of the point that anyone who is faithful to God, and thus participates in this marriage supper of the Lamb, is truly blessed.

8. How did the angel identify himself to John (v. 10)?

Here, John is so overcome by the magnificence of God's blessing of His people that he attempts to worship the angel who is delivering the message. The angel rebukes John for the mistake but also helps John to understand the problem. The angel correctly responded by telling John that he was merely a "fellow servant" (v. 10). Angels are heavenly beings who have great power and privilege. They are nevertheless "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. 1:14) ...For this reason people are to worship God, the giver of revelation, and not the angel, who is merely the interpreter of visions." (Mounce).

Conclusion - The Christian life is filled with challenges that wear us down and threaten our ability to remain faithful. Satan knows all our weaknesses, and he doesn't hesitate to exploit them. If we understand the true nature of God -- that He is victorious, destroying His enemies and blessing His

faithful -- then we have what it takes to remain steadfast, even in the face of suffering. If we are steadfast in our faith, then we will be ready for the groom's arrival.

Prayer – Our mighty and gracious Father, we thank You for the hope You have given us through the sacrifice of the Lamb. Help us to remain steadfast and faithful to You as we await Your return. To be with Jesus for all eternity, will be worth it all. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Thought to Remember – BE READY FOR THE WEDDING FEAST.

*Lesson summarized by Montario Fletcher
Jesus Is All Ministries*

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