

Lesson 3

Picture the horror of being trapped in a house as scorching flames and choking smoke close in on you. Then imagine how grateful and relieved you'd feel to be plucked to safety. Well, the truth is that every person on the planet is in tremendous danger. We all urgently need rescue—not by people in uniform—but by our Father in heaven. God loves you so much that He sent His Son to save you. You've probably heard this before, but are you sure you understand what it's actually all about? What does it really mean and can it truly change your life? Read on and find out!

1. Does God really care about you?

This is what He has said: “Since you were precious in My sight, you have been honored, and I have loved you” (Isaiah 43:4).

“Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love” (Jeremiah 31:3).

Answer: God’s never-ending love for you is far beyond human understanding. He would love you even if you were the only lost soul in the world. And Jesus would have given His life for you even if there had been no other sinner to save. Never forget that you are precious in His sight. He loves you and cares about you deeply.



2. How has God demonstrated His love for you?

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

“In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into

the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:9, 10).

Answer: Because God loves you so deeply, He was willing to send His only Son to suffer and die rather than be separated from you for eternity. It might be difficult to fully grasp that kind of abundant love, but God did it for you!

3. How could He love someone like you?

“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

Answer: Certainly not because anyone deserves it. Not one person has ever earned anything except the wages of sin, which is death (Romans 6:23). But God’s love is unconditional. He loves those who have stolen, those who have committed adultery, and even those who have murdered. He loves those who are selfish, those who are hypocritical, and those who are addicted.

No matter what you have done, or what you are doing, He loves you—and He wants to save you from sin and its deadly consequences.



Jesus' love for you is clearly seen in His willingness to forgive your sins and His desire to give you victory over every temptation in your life!

4. What did Jesus' death do for you?

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!” (1 John 3:1).

“As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12).

Answer: Christ died to satisfy the death penalty against you. He was born a man so He could suffer the kind of death all sinners really deserve. And now, today, He offers to give you the credit for what He did. His sinless life is credited to you so that you can be counted as righteous. His death was accepted by God as full payment for all your wrongs, and when you accept what He did as a gift, you are taken into God's own family as His child.

5. How do you receive Jesus and pass from death to life?

Just admit three things:

1. I am a sinner. "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23).
2. I am doomed to die. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
3. I cannot save myself. "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Then, believe three things:

1. He died for me. "That [Jesus] ... might taste death for everyone" (Hebrews 2:9).
2. He forgives me. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9).
3. He saves me. "He who believes in Me has everlasting life" (John 6:47).

Answer: Consider these life-changing truths:

- Because of my sins, I am under a death sentence.
- I cannot pay this penalty without losing eternal life. I would be dead forever.
- I owe something I cannot pay! But Jesus says, "I will pay the penalty. I will die in your place and give you credit for it. You will not have to die for your sins."
- I accept His offer! The moment I acknowledge my debt and accept His death for my sins, I become His child! (Simple, isn't it?)



6. What must we do to receive this gift of salvation?

“[We are] justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24).

“A man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:28).

Answer: The only thing you can do is to accept salvation as a gift. Our works of obedience will not help us to be justified because we have already sinned and deserve death. But all who ask in faith

for salvation will receive it. The worst sinner is accepted just as completely as the one who sins the least. Your past does not count against you! Remember, God loves everyone alike and forgiveness is simply for the asking. “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8, 9).



Jesus' power changes a repulsive sinner into a loving saint.

7. When you join His family through faith, what change does Jesus make in your life?

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Answer: When you receive Christ into your heart, He begins the process of destroying your old sinful self and changing you into a new spiritual creation. Joyfully, you begin to experience the

glorious freedom from guilt and condemnation, and the old life of sin becomes repulsive to you. You will see that one minute with God provides more happiness than a lifetime of being the devil's slave. What an exchange! Why do people wait so long to accept it?

8. Will this changed life really be happier than your old sinful life?

Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you ... that your joy may be full" (John 15:11).

"If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Answer: Many feel that the Christian life will not be a happy one because of self-denial. The exact opposite is true! When you accept the love of Jesus, joy springs up within you. Even when hard times come, the Christian can enjoy God's assuring and powerful presence to overcome and "to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).



No joy on earth can compare to the happiness and joy of a Christian home.

9. Can you make yourself do all the things Christians should do?

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Answer: Here is where the greatest miracle of the Christian life is revealed. There is no forcing yourself to be good! What you do as a Christian is the spontaneous outflowing of another



When Jesus enters your life, His miraculous power transforms obedience from a burden to a joy.

Person's life within you. Obedience is the natural response of love in your life. Being born of God, as a new creature, you want to obey Him because His life has become a part of your life. To please someone you love is not a burden, but a delight. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalms 40:8.



It is not a burden to please someone you truly love.

10. Does this mean that even the Ten Commandments will not be hard to obey?

"If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

"Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him" (1 John 2:5).

Answer: The Bible ties obedience to a genuine love for God. Christians will not find it wearying to keep the Ten Commandments. With all your sins covered by Jesus' atoning death, your obedience is rooted in His victorious life within you. Because you love Him so deeply for changing your life, you will actually go beyond the requirements of the Ten Commandments. You will regularly search the Bible to know His will, trying to find more ways of expressing your love for Him.

"Whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:22, emphasis added).



Keeping the Ten Commandments to earn salvation always results in failure and despair. It's too late to save yourself because you have already sinned! But the person who has accepted the gift of salvation delights in walking the path of obedience to God's laws.

11. How can you be certain that keeping the Ten Commandments is not legalism?

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

“[The saints] overcame [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Revelation

12:11).

Answer: “Legalism” is trying to earn salvation by good works instead of accepting it as a gift. Saints in the Bible are identified as having four characteristics: (1) keeping the commandments, (2) trusting the blood of the Lamb, (3) sharing their faith with others, and (4) choosing to die rather than to sin. These are the true marks of a person who loves Christ and desires to follow Him.

12. How can you be sure that the faith and love in your relationship with Christ will continue to increase?

“Search the Scriptures” (John 5:39).

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the



Lord, so walk in Him” (Colossians 2:6).

“I die daily” (1 Corinthians 15:31).



Your love for Jesus will also deepen as you share His love with others.

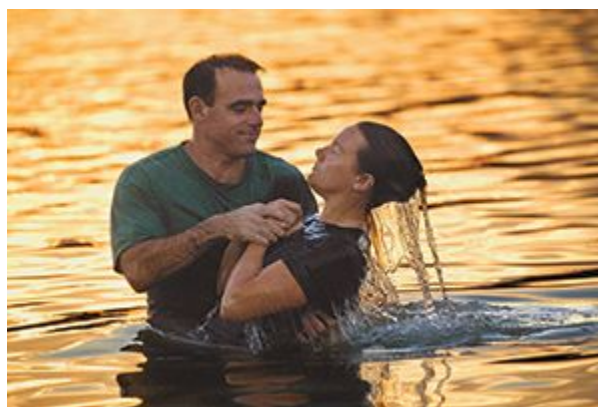
Answer: No personal relationship can prosper without communication. Prayer and Bible study are forms of communication with God, and they are essential in keeping your relationship with Him growing. His Word is a “love letter” that you will desire to read daily to nourish your spiritual life. Conversing with Him in prayer will deepen your devotion and open your mind to a more thrilling and intimate knowledge of who He is and what He seeks in your life. You’ll discover amazing details of His incredible provision for your happiness. But remember, as in other personal relationships, the loss of love can turn a paradise into slavery. When we cease to love Christ and His example, religion will exist only as forced compliance to a set of

restrictions.

13. How can you let everyone know about your life-changing relationship with Him?

“We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life ... that the body of sin might be done away with” (Romans 6:4, 6).

“I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:2).



Answer: Baptism symbolizes three significant components in the life of one who has accepted Christ: (1) death to sin, (2) birth to a new life in Christ, and (3) a spiritual “marriage” with Jesus for eternity. This spiritual union will grow stronger and sweeter with time, so long as we continue in love.

God Seals Our Spiritual Marriage

To seal your spiritual marriage with Jesus for eternity, God has promised never to forsake you (Psalm 55:22; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5), to take care of you in sickness and in health (Psalm 41:3; Isaiah 41:10), and to provide for every need that could possibly develop in your life (Matthew 6:25–34). Just as you received Him by faith, keep on trusting Him for every future need and He will never let you down.

14. Would you like to accept Jesus into your life right now and begin experiencing a new life?

Answer:

Thought Questions

1. How could one person's death pay the penalty for the sins of all mankind? What if we are just too sinful for God to save us?



Because “all have sinned” (Romans 3:23) and because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23), something special is required for every person who has been born. Only one whose life is at least equal to all mankind could die for the sins of all mankind. Because Jesus is the Creator and Author of all life, the life He laid down was even greater than the lives of all people who would ever live, “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

2. If I accept Christ and His forgiveness but then fall again, will He forgive me again?

We can always trust God to forgive us again if we are truly sorry for our sin and confess it. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). See also Matthew 6:12.

3. How can I even approach God in my sinful condition? Wouldn't it be better to have a priest or minister pray for me?

Since Jesus lived in human flesh and was “tempted as we are” (Hebrews 4:15) and was victorious (John 16:33), He can forgive us from our sins; we don't need a human priest or minister to do that. Further, 1 Timothy 2:5 tells us specifically that there is only “one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” Because of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and constant prayers for you (Romans 8:34), you can approach God—and you can go to Him boldly! (Hebrews 4:16).

4. Is there anything I can do to help God save me?

No. His plan is wholly a plan of grace (Romans 3:24; 4:5); it is “the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8). It is true that as God grants us grace through faith, He also gives us the desire and strength to obey Him. This results in loving obedience to His laws. So even this obedience results from God's free grace! Obedience, the service and allegiance of love, is the true test of discipleship and a natural fruit—the result—of faith in Jesus Christ.

5. When God forgives my sin, am I still required to do some kind of penance?

Romans 8:1 says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ.” Jesus paid the full penalty for our transgressions, and those who accept this in faith owe no works of penance for cleansing, as Jesus has already “washed us from our sins” (Revelation 1:5). Isaiah 43:25 shares this beautiful promise: “I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.” Micah 7:18, 19 shows the finality of His forgiveness for you: “Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”

Quiz Questions

1. God poured out all heaven in what great gift to man? (1)

- The Bible.
- His church.
- Jesus Christ.
- The law.

2. The greatest demonstration of love the world has ever seen was (1)

- The loaves and fishes.
- Jesus' death on the cross.
- Pentecost.
- Peter's confession.

3. Christ's sacrifice on the cross was for (1)

- Everyone.
- Only the righteous.
- Only the evil.
- Those predestined for salvation.

4. Who does God love the most? (1)

- Church members.
- Prostitutes and thieves.
- Everybody alike.
- Born-again Christians.

5. Christ was born into the human family in order to (1)

- Pay the penalty for sin.
- Know how weak we are.
- Become a good carpenter.

6. In order to obtain salvation, a person must (1)

- Take a Bible course.
- Belong to the church.
- Speak in tongues.
- Accept it as a gift.

7. We are saved by (1)

- Good works.
- Grace.
- Desire.

8. Forgiveness and acceptance lead us to know (2)

- That we can keep sinning.
- Regret for pleasures denied.

- Joy and peace.
- Assurance of eternal life.

9. Obedience should be based upon (1)

- Fear of hell.
- Desire for approval of friends.
- Jesus' abiding presence / Love for Jesus.

10. Christian conduct, or keeping the commandments, is (1)

- Legalism.
- One of the fruits of true conversion.
- Unimportant.

11. Marriage to Christ is symbolized by (1)

- Joining a convent or monastery.
- Baptism.
- A wedding ring worn on the right hand.
- Making a vow of celibacy.

12. The two greatest ways to stay in love with Christ are (2)

- Daily Bible study.
- Giving a liberal offering.
- Abstaining from pork.
- Constant attitude of prayer.

13. It is my desire to accept Jesus into my life and experience the new birth.

- Yes.
- No.