



NEW DIRECTIONS

STAGE 1 - A NEW LIFE

Lesson 1: Your Purpose – God Created You.

Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? Before you can answer these important questions about yourself, you first need to answer some important questions about God.

How many gods are there? (1 Cor 8:6; Eph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:5)

God is *sovereign*, which means that he alone is the supreme ruler and authority over everything and everybody everywhere. Do you agree with what the Bible says about God? If not, why? (1 Chr 29:11-12; Psa 103:19; 135:6; 1 Tim 6:15)

What about God, regarding *time*, confirms his right to rule over all things? (Psa 90:2; 93:2; Jer 10:10; Jude 1:25)

What about God, regarding his *personal character*, confirms his right to rule over all things?

- He is _____, which means he is supremely majestic and beautiful, separate and untouched by anything evil. (Psa 99:1-3, 5; Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8)
- He is _____, which means he is perfectly loving, patient, and merciful in every way. This includes all that he is and everything that he says or does. (Psa 86:5; 119:68; 110:5; 145:9; Luke 18:19)
- He is _____, which means he always makes the right decisions and always does what is right. (Gen 18:25; Psa 99:4)
- He is omniscient, which means he knows and understands _____. (Psa 139:1-6; 147:5; 1 John 3:20)
- He is omnipotent, which means he has all _____. (Psa 147:5; Rev 19:6)
- He is _____, which means he is present everywhere all the time. (Psa 139:7-10; Jer 23:24)

What did God *do* which shows he has authority over all things? (Gen 1:1; Neh 9:6; Rev 4:11)

Why did God create you? (Find at least two reasons, Gen 1:26-28)

The words *image* and *likeness* refer to things like carved statues and artistic paintings. A statue or painting of a lion looks like a lion and causes you to think about a lion, even though these things are not actually a lion. In this way, God is the master/creator artist who made you to be like him and to show what he is like. This is what it means to glorify him (see Psa 8:1-5). How well do you fulfill this purpose? In what ways do you fail?

The words *have dominion* mean to “rule over.” God, who is the King over all, made you to guide, govern, use, and care for what he has created, according to his good purposes and desires (Psa 8:6-10). How well are you doing this? In what ways do you fail?

To show what God is like and to rule over his creation according to his desires requires a close, trusting relationship between people and God. How would you describe the kind of relationship that the first people had with God? (Gen 1:28-31, 3:8)

How does your relationship with God compare to the kind that the first man and woman enjoyed at the beginning? (Eph 2:13)

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

Lesson 2: Your Problem – You Went Away.

God has created you with the ability to think, feel, and make choices. What big choice did God give to the first man and woman? (Gen 2:16-17)

Satan, an angel who had rebelled against God, raised doubts about the goodness and truthfulness of God through some clever and deceptive questions. How does this same thing happen for people today? (Gen 3:1-5)

How did Adam and Eve respond to this temptation to question the goodness of God and to rebel against his authority? (Gen 3:6)

How did this tragic turning point change their relationship with God? (Gen 3:7)

How did it change the relationship of God to every other person in the world? (Rom 5:12, 19)

Sin is a word that describes the personal character and behavior of any person who “falls short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23). “Falling short” means to fail at something. How does this relate to what you learned about God’s purpose for your life? (Gen 1:26-28)

- According to Moses, what are some ways that people sin? (Exo 20:3-17)
- According to Jesus, what are some ways that people sin? (Matt 5:21-22; 5:27-28)
- According to Paul, what are some ways that people sin? (1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:3-6)

Do you agree you are a sinner who fails to glorify God in the ways the Bible describes?

What consequence for sin does every person experience? (Gen 2:16-17; 3:19; Ezk 18:20; Rom 5:12)

- The meaning of *death* includes “separation” and “destruction.” The most familiar aspect of this is what happens to a person as the result of old age, disease, warfare, or a tragedy of some kind. Every person eventually “dies,” leaving his or her body behind. This is *physical* death and it happens because of sin. (Eccl 9:5; Heb 9:27)
- Death also includes *spiritual* separation from God. Every person is born in a sinful condition, separated from God in a spiritual way, without a close, cooperative relationship with him. This estrangement and detachment from him bring about an empty and destructive lifestyle. How does Romans 6:23 describe this aspect of death?
- Death also includes *eternal* separation. Those who die as sinners, still separated from God, will stand before him for a final judgment at the end of time. If they refused to return to God in this present life, they will be sent to a place called “the lake of fire.” This is a real place of never-ending suffering and separation from God and from everything that is good (Matt 25:41; Rev 20:6, 14; 21:8).

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

Lesson 3: Your Savior – Jesus Came.

God has provided the perfect solution for your failure – a way to overcome your sin and restore your relationship with him forever. He would send someone to succeed where Adam and Eve, and you and everyone else has failed. (Rom 5:18-19)

Who did God send into the world to deliver us from our sin? (Matt 1:21; John 3:16; Gal 4:4)

Like all of us, he was a _____ being. (Phil 2:7-8)

He was not a spirit being who looked like a human. He had a real body, soul, and spirit just like every other person in the history and future of the world. What are some evidences for the real humanity of Jesus?

- From Matthew 21:18
- From Luke 2:52
- From John 19:28
- From Hebrews 5:8

Jesus lived his life as you live yours, but with one major difference: when he faced the temptation to make wrong choices, he never _____. (Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22)

Not only did Jesus never sin, but he always:

- Did the _____ of God (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38)
- Did what _____ God (John 8:29)
- Kept the _____ of God (John 15:10)

By always doing what is good and right and by never doing what is sinful and wrong, Jesus perfectly fulfilled God’s purpose for creating human beings like you and me.

What does it mean to glorify God? (see Lesson 1)

- Does your life glorify him? (Eccl 7:20; Rom 3:23) Yes / No
- Did Jesus glorify him? (John 7:15-18, 28, 29; 8:29) Yes / No

Jesus was more than a human being, a good teacher, or a prophet. He was even more than the best person who ever lived because he was _____. (John 1:1; 10:33; 20:28; Tit 2:13; Heb 1:8; 2 Pet 1:1; 1 John 5:20; Rev 1:8)

As God and man, Jesus did more than live in your place, doing as a human being what you cannot do. He also _____ in your place (Rom 5:8). He did not die for his own sins, because he had none. He died for yours instead, suffering in your place what you deserve to suffer.

By doing this as a perfect and innocent person:

- He accepted the guilt of _____. (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2)
- He suffered the full consequences for your _____ on the cross. (1 Pet 2:24)
- He exchanged his goodness for your badness and his _____ for your _____. (2 Cor 5:21)

By dying the death that you deserve to die, he made it possible for you to:

- Be the right kind of person he made you to _____ (2 Cor 5:21)
- Live the right kind of life he created you to _____ (1 Pet 2:24)

In fact, the perfect life and sacrificial death of Jesus is so necessary that without him, you can do _____ that is right before God. (John 15:5)

Three days after he died, Jesus _____ from the grave. (1 Cor 15:3-8)

This confirms that he fully satisfied God's judgment for your sin (Rom 5:9). He righted your wrongs completely and conquered the power of sin and death forever.

- His resurrection gives victory over _____. (1 Cor 15:54-55)
- His resurrection gives victory over _____. (1 Cor 15:56-57)

The Bible calls the death and resurrection of Jesus the _____ (1 Cor 15:1; 2 Tim 2:8). This word means "the good news of victory." What Satan ruined at the beginning of the world Jesus restored. What you could never do, Jesus did in your place. The death and resurrection of Jesus made it possible for you to have a close relationship with God, and to be who he created you to be.

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

Lesson 4: Your Salvation – You Believe.

Jesus does not automatically restore every person to a right relationship with God. (This is a wrong view called *universalism*.) How did Jesus illustrate this fact in his teaching? (Matt 7:13-14)

Jesus is not one of many ways to have a right relationship with God. (This is a wrong view called *ecumenicalism*.) How did Paul explain this fact in his teaching? (Acts 4:12)

To enter a restored relationship with God, you must respond to _____ the right way. (John 20:31; Rom 10:8, 13)

Jesus is the _____ way to a right relationship with God (John 14:6).

How is God different from the gods of other world religions? (Psa 96:5)

All other religious leaders and prophets are sinners like you and me. Consider the failures of the following prophets of the Bible. How did they fail?

- Noah (Gen 9:21):
- Abraham (Gen 12:11-13; 20:1-2, 5):
- Moses (Num 20:7-13):
- David (2 Sam 11, 12:9):
- Peter (Matt 26:69-76):
- Paul (Acts 8:3; 22:4; Gal 1:13; 1 Tim 1:15-16):

Other non-biblical prophets and religious leaders also fail due to their own sins. This includes Buddha, Muhammad, Joseph Smith, and more. For this reason, none of these people can be your savior.

Religions commonly require you to do certain works or follow certain behavior to have a right relationship with God. These works may include: (1) obeying the Ten Commandments, (2) fulfilling the Five Pillars, (3) following the Eightfold Path, (4) doing the Seven Sacraments, and so on.

Can the good works that you do give you a close relationship with God? (Tit 3:5)

How many people can do good works successfully? (Rom 3:10)

When we attempt to do good works, what are these works like before God? (Isa 64:6)

Since no other person or religion can give you a close relationship with God, you need to follow Jesus.

What two words describe the way that you should respond to the good news (“the gospel”) about Jesus? You must _____ and _____ (Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21). Together, these are the two necessary elements of the right response to Jesus.

Repent means “to turn” (Luke 13:5; Acts 17:30). What should you turn away from?

- _____ (Acts 3:19). This means you must admit you are a sinner and that you want Jesus to change that.
- _____ (1 Thess 1:9). This means you must abandon any other idols, gods, and religions.
- _____ (Heb 6:1). This means you must acknowledge that the good and religious things you have done cannot save you.

What happens to a person who refuses to repent? (Luke 13:3; Rom 2:5)

Believe means “to trust in” and “to rely on” someone or something (Acts 16:30-31; Rom 1:16). What or who must you “trust in” and “rely on” to be saved? (Mark 1:15; John 3:16; 1 Cor 15:1-6)

What happens to a person who refuses to believe? (John 3:18; 8:24)

So, you must turn away from all other wrong ideas and misplaced trusts to put your trust in Jesus completely.

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

Lesson 5: Your Change – You Receive.

When you believe on Jesus, he gives you many amazing benefits in return. The word _____ describes the means by which (or through which) God gives you so many benefits when you believe on him and he saves you? (Acts 15:11; Rom 5:15; Eph 2:8; Tit 2:11)

Consider the following benefits of salvation that God gives you:

- _____ (Acts 10:43; 13:38; Eph 1:7; Col 3:13).

This means that God removes the full record of your sins and releases you from the judgement and penalty of those sins. To what degree does he do this? (Psa 103:12)

- _____ (Rom 3:22; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21).

This means that God not only removes (-) all sin from your record, but he adds (+) the goodness and “rightness” of Jesus to your record instead. He erases your sin and replaces it with the perfect record of Jesus.

- _____ (Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:10; Col 1:21-22).

This means that God removes our hostility to him so that we are no longer his enemies but his friends.

- Acceptance (Rom 15:7).

This means that God _____ you. He no longer separates himself from you, but he brings you alongside and welcomes you with open arms into his family as his _____ (John 1:12; Gal 4:6).

- _____ (John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:47; Rom 6:23; 1 John 5:13).

This means that God will give you the best quality of life imaginable – from a spiritual and eternal standpoint. As a result, you will receive a close relationship with God and will be able to live out his purposes day by day (John 17:3). What’s more, he will guarantee you entrance into his everlasting kingdom that will be perfect and good in every way and free from every kind of evil (see Rev 20-21).

- The _____ (Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19).

This means that God not only receives you into his family and his kingdom forever, but he enters *into* your life the moment you believe on Christ. That’s what makes the difference between a person who is a believer and a person who is not (see Rom 8:9).

When you turn to Jesus and trust on him as God and Savior, he changes you so completely that you become a new _____? (2 Cor 5:17)

Why is this so? (2 Cor 5:17)

What are some of the “new things” that the Holy Spirit produces in your life? (Gal 5:22)

Once you believe on Christ, your new relationship with God is permanent. He will never reverse what he has done for you.

- What did Jesus say that guarantees the permanence of your salvation? (John 10:28-29)
- What else has God done that guarantees the permanence of your salvation? (John 6:27; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30)

Is there anything that can take away your salvation or place it at risk? (Rom 8:31-39)

You receive hope for the future.

- God will continue to change you to become more like Christ in the way that you think and live. How does Paul explain this? (Phil 1:6)
- When you die, you will go immediately into the _____ of the Lord (2 Cor 5:8). For this reason, you will no longer have a _____ of death. (Heb 2:14-15)
- You will see _____ someday and will be _____ him. (Rom 8:29; 1 John 3:2)
- You will live forever in the new world which God will make. What will this new world be like? (Psa 17:11; Rev 21-22)

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

Lesson 6: Your Response – You Follow.

Jesus calls people who believe on him _____ (Matt 28:19; Acts 11:26; 14:22). This word means to be a “follower” or a “devoted student” of Jesus.

What is the first important step for a disciple to take after he or she believes on Jesus for salvation? (Matt 28:19; Acts 8:36-37; 16:31-34)

This step is the way that you publicly identify yourself as a follower of Jesus. Why is it important to publicly identify yourself with Jesus? (Matt 10:32)

In whose name are you to be baptized? (Matt 28:19)

Does the kind of baptism that Jesus teaches include infant baptism as a valid form of baptism? Why or why not? (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:41; 8:36-37; 16:31-34)

Which best describes the form of baptism that Jesus teaches? (Mark 1:10; Acts 8:38)

Circle one: (A) immersion (B) sprinkling (C) pouring

Why is this so?

What should a disciple do after he or she takes this first step of following Jesus? (Matt 28:20; John 16:14; 1 John 2:13)

Where do you discover all the things that Jesus desires to teach you? (1 Pet 2:2)

How should you respond to what you learn? (Jam 1:22)

How does the Bible describe this process of discovering and doing everything else that Jesus teaches? (Eph 4:15 and 2 Pet 3:18, then 1 Cor 3:2 and Heb 5:12-13)

As you begin your new life as a follower of Jesus, what kind of mindset does he teach you to embrace? (Matt 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23; 14:25-28)

How does Romans 12:1-2 describe this new way of living and thinking (in your own words).

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?

If you have turned to Jesus to trust in him as your God and Savior, then now is a good time to schedule a date for your baptism. Which upcoming Sunday(s) can work for you?

To prepare for your baptism, write out your personal testimony of salvation. In your next Bible study session, you will review this testimony with your pastor or whoever is mentoring you. Then you will share this testimony with the church when you are baptized.

Writing Guide: In 500-1,000 words (or 1-2 typed pages), describe:

1. Your life before you believed on Jesus (your struggles, doubts, wrong beliefs, fears, and/or failures)
2. How you came to believe on Jesus (how God brought the gospel into your life, then when and how you responded to this message)
3. How you desire to follow Jesus today (the ways that he is changing you, your newfound joy, your appetite for the Word of God, and your desire to serve him with your life)

Lesson 7: Your Friends – You Join.

Jesus told his followers that he was going to build his _____ (Matt 16:18). This word refers to “an assembly” or “a group of people” with a common bond and a shared purpose (see also Eph 2:20-22).

The Bible also calls this group of people the “_____ of Christ” (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18, 24).

Who places the followers of Jesus into this spiritual body? (Acts 2:47; 1 Cor 12:13, 24)

What core beliefs do the members of this body share in common? (Eph 4:4-6; 1 Cor 15:1-7)

How does God add people to the church?

- First, they are _____. (Acts 2:40-41, 47)
- Then, they are _____. (Acts 2:41)

Every believer needs to identify with a specific church and participate faithfully with that church on a regular basis as a _____. (1 Cor 12:12, 14, 18, 20, 25-26)

What are four things that the earliest church did together on a regular basis? (Acts 2:42)

- They continued in _____. This means that they listened to regular teaching from the Word of God by pastors and teachers in the church.
- They continued in _____. This means that they communicated openly with one another as close friends and met one another’s needs.
- They continued in _____. This means that they observed the Lord’s Table to remember Christ’s suffering for their sins.
- They continued in _____. This means that they worshipped God and offered their requests to him together in prayer.

What is the responsibility of every believer in a church? (Eph 4:12, 16)

How should the members of a church serve or minister to one another? (Rom 12:4-8)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:20-26 then answer these questions.

- Some members of the body are not needed. True / False
- Some members of the body are less important. True / False
- Every member of the body does the same kinds of ministry. True / False

The phrase "one another" occurs throughout the New Testament to describe how believers should treat one another. What do the following examples teach us to do?

- _____ one another (Romans 13:8)
- _____ one another (Romans 14:19)
- _____ one another (Romans 15:7)
- _____ one another (Romans 15:14)

What should members of a church *not* do? (Heb 11:25)

Gathering with your church is MORE / LESS (circle one) important today? (Heb 11:25)

When we gather together as a church, what two ways should we encourage ("provoke") one another? (Heb 11:24)

When you are baptized at Faith Baptist, you will also become a member of the church. You'll learn even more about our church in the next stage of this Bible study series, but for now, please familiarize yourself with the "About Us" menu at StudyGodsWord.com.

History Community Mission Message Beliefs

After reading these pages, what important things do you discover about our church?

Do you agree with what you learned in this lesson?

Do you have any questions or disagreements about what you learned?

How should you respond to what you learned?