Bethlehem Baptist Church of Spring House

New Members Class Discipleship Training

Bethlehem Baptist Church
Penllyn Pike & Dager Road
Spring House, PA 19477

Reverend Charles W. Quann, Pastor
# Table of Contents

- Welcome ........................................................................................................... 1
- Class Instructors ............................................................................................... 2
- Prologue ............................................................................................................. 3
- One Year Reading Plan for the Bible ................................................................. 11
- Lesson 1 Who and What is God like? ............................................................... 15
- Lesson 2 Sin and the Son .................................................................................. 19
- Lesson 3 Who Am I? ......................................................................................... 22
- Lesson 4 Assurance of Salvation ..................................................................... 25
Welcome

Welcome to the Bethlehem Baptist Church family! Because of the commitment you have just made, which is to learn, to give, and to grow, we welcome you to our New Members Class. We are excited about this opportunity to be used of God in preparing you to fulfill your purpose. This is the most serious point in your Christian walk. The foundation is being laid, and it is important that it is a proper and sure one, so that you can build upon it and thereby grow.

The staff of teachers of the New Members Classes are here to give you support, time, and to share with you many things which may be helpful to you as a new member of this church. Please feel free to call on our team with any questions or concerns you may have. In addition, Bethlehem is blessed with a spirit filled ministerial staff that is available to you. Please reference our Church Directory for names and telephone numbers.

Because God gave His best, our desire is to give our best to you as well. Our church will grow and prosper when you agree to provide your best also. If you have any special needs, or if you are having any problems, we are here to help and support you.

Congratulations on your decisions to make Jesus Lord of your life, and for uniting with our church family.

Pastor Charles W. Quann
Class Facilitators

Deacon Barry Thompson
Minister Keith Hodges
Reverend Kevin Mitchell
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Pailin
Joe Porawski
David Dinkins
Tiffany Crump
Deaconess Agnes Jefferson
Deaconess Donna Button
Deacon     Tommie Wilkins
Trustee    Darlene Lee
Prologue
Overview

Attending our New Members Discipleship classes is recommended for persons new to Bethlehem Baptist Church. There are six (6) Discipleship classes. Classes 1-4 of our Discipleship training are now available online. You can access these classes by going to our website home page at www.bbc4christ.org. Click on the Ministry tab and select education and development then choose new Discipleship training. Follow the directions that guide you through the course material. Upon completion of the online Discipleship classes, please contact the church office at (215-643-4977) to request the written assessments for classes 1-4. You will be required to answer the fill in the blank questions to the best of your ability based on the online classes you just completed. New Members Discipleship Classes 5 & 6 will be offered regularly on Sundays during our Church School hour, which is from 9:15am to10:30am, Wednesday evening during bible study at 7:00pm and Saturday mornings 9:00am to 12:00pm. These six (6) total classes will help you understand more about your relationship with Christ, who we are as a church family, and how we love God and Serve people at Bethlehem Baptist Church.

The classes are interrelated, however, they are not incremental so that you may miss one class, continue on to the next, and pick up the missed course during a future offering. For example, if you miss class number five, you may continue on to class number six. Since the classes continually rotate, you may take class number five when it is next offered. The Sunday church bulletin will indicate the class number and title that is being offered Sunday, Wednesday evening, and Saturday morning. You may begin taking Discipleship classes at any time.

This handbook is yours to keep. You may write in it and take notes as you please. Please bring it to with you for each class. We will not be able to discuss everything in this handbook during our time together, so please be sure to keep it and reference it often. Because the numbers of books are limited, we cannot provide you with additional copies. However, if you forget your handbook you should still come to class. There will be a loaner copy for your use. We ask that you refrain from taking notes in loaned copies and that they be returned at the end of the class.
What Does It Mean To Be A Christian?

Grace, mercy, and forgiveness are key elements within God’s plan of salvation. 

So what does it mean to be a Christian?

Theologically speaking, a Christian is someone who has received the Lord Jesus as Savior (John 1:12), trusts Him alone for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 4:12), has put no trust in his own efforts (Isaiah 64:6) to please God, and repented from his/her sins (Mark 1:15).

In the Bible, the word "Christian" only appears three times. In Acts 11:26, Luke writes "...The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." In Acts 26:28, King Agrippa tells Paul; "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian." And, in 1 Peter 4:16: "...but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God." In each case, the Greek word Christianos (khris-tee-an-os') is used, which is translated "follower of Christ."

1. So, what does it mean to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ? It means you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, by accepting Him as your personal Lord and Saviour. Simply believing in God is not enough. Being a good person is not enough. Nor is going to church, being baptized or taking communion, although all of those things are done by Christians. Let's look at what the bible says:

2. Visible proof of being a Christian is right behavior. Christianity is a lifestyle. To be a Christian he or she must allow the Spirit of Christ to go to work in their life and that is how the Christian becomes Christ-like or like Christ.

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called, those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Romans 8:29-30

Since we are followers of Jesus, we should follow His example. He lived with one great purpose; to do His Father’s will. As Christians, this should be our goal and our purpose as well. The Christian life is abundant, (read John 10:10). As Christians we are to be active and joyful. Going, doing, giving, helping, witnessing, sharing, helping, and serving are to be significant parts of our daily living. These things ought to be a significant part of our life as Bethlehem Baptist Church Disciples. We are called to be God’s ambassadors on earth. Read 2nd Corinthians 5:14—21 and 1st Timothy 4:7-12, try to use a modern version.
What we believe as Baptists

Baptists: any of various evangelical Protestant churches that believe in baptism of voluntary, conscious believers.

Evangelical: Of, relating to, or being a Christian church believing in the sole authority and inerrancy of the Bible; and in accordance with the Christian gospel, believing in salvation only through regeneration (rebirth; new birth; born again), with the result being a spiritually transformed personal life (John 3:1-8).

Protestant: one whose faith and practice are founded on the principles that the Bible is the sole source of redemptive revelation. Protestants believe in justification by faith alone (Romans 3:28; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:11), but not a faith that is alone (James 2:24) and in the universal priesthood of all the believers (1 Peter 2:9).

Baptism: an immersion in water, performed as a sign of the removal of sin. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the death and burial (submergence) of the believer to sin in Christ; and the resurrection (emergence) of the believer to new life in Christ (Romans 6:4). Baptism also symbolizes reception and admission into the community of Christians (Acts 10:47-48).

Tenets of the Baptist Faith

1. We believe the Bible is God’s Word given by divine inspiration, the record of God’s revealing of Himself to humanity (2 Timothy 3:16). It is trustworthy, sufficient, and without error—the supreme authority and guide for all belief and conduct (2 Peter 1:23-25; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is the truth by which God brings people into a saving relationship with Himself and leads them to Christian maturity (John 20:31, 2 John 5:9-12; Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 2:2).

2. We believe in the one living and true God, perfect in wisdom, sovereignty, holiness, justice, mercy, and love (I Timothy 1:17; Psalm 86:15; Deuteronomy 32:3-4). He exists eternally, one in essence, but at the same time in three coequal persons who act together in creation, providence and redemption (Genesis 1:26; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Peter 1:2; Hebrews 1:1-3).

3. We believe God created man in His own image to have fellowship with Himself and to be steward over His creation (Genesis 1:26-28). As a result, each person is unique, possesses dignity and is worthy of respect (Psalm 139:13-17). Through the temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God; this brought sin and death to the human race and suffering to all creation (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-21; 8-22). Therefore, everyone is born with a fleshly or sinful nature (a nature that acts independently of God and is opposed to God) and needs to be reconciled (brought back into relationship) to God (Romans 3:9-18, 23).

4. We believe salvation is the free gift of God to all who believe, and must be received personally through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:4;
Ephesians 2:8-9; Acts 20:21). As a child of God, the believer is acquitted of all guilt and brought into a new relationship of peace with God (Romans 5:1). Christians grow as the Holy Spirit, given to them through faith in Jesus Christ, enables them to understand and obey the Word of God (2 Peter 3:18; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 3:12).

5. We believe the members of the Church are the body of Christ and that Christ is the head of all who believe in Him (Ephesians 1:22-23; Romans 12:4-5). Christians are (when possible-Luke 23:42-43) commanded to be baptized upon profession of their faith (Matthew 28:19-20) and to unite with a local church for mutual encouragement and growth in discipleship through worship, nurture, service and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world (Acts 2:41-42, 47; Luke 24:45-48; Hebrews 10:23-25). Each church is a self-governing body under the Lordship of Jesus Christ with all members sharing responsibility (Acts 13:1-3; 14:26-28). The form of government is understood to be congregational (Matthew 18:17; Acts 6:3-6; 15:22-23).

6. We believe that there are two ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Communion). Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer’s identification with the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior Jesus Christ (Romans 6:3-5). The Lord’s Supper is the partaking of the bread and of the cup by believers together as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. It is an act of thankful dedication to Him and serves to unite His people until He returns (Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

7. We believe Christians, individually and collectively, are salt and light in society (Matthew 5:13-16). In a Christ like spirit, they oppose greed, selfishness and vice; they promote truth, justice and peace; they aid the needy and preserve the dignity of people of all races and conditions (Hebrews 13:5; Luke 9:23; Titus 2:12; Philippians 4:8-9; 1 John 3:16-17; James 2:1-4). We affirm the family as the basic unit of society and seek to preserve its integrity and stability (Genesis 2:21-25; Ephesians 6:1-4).

8. We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring all things to their appropriate end and establish a new heaven and a new earth (Ephesians 1:9-10, Revelation 21:1). The certain hope of the Christian is that Jesus Christ will return to the earth suddenly, personally and visibly in glory according to His promise (Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7; 3:11; John 14:1-3). The dead will be raised, and Christ will judge mankind in truth and in righteousness (John 5:28-29). The unrighteous will be consigned to the everlasting punishment prepared for Satan and his angels (Matthew 25:41, 46; Revelation 20; 10). The righteous, in their resurrected and glorified bodies, will receive their reward and dwell forever with the Lord (Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
Preparation for Baptism and the Right Hand of Fellowship

You will be baptized (if appropriate) on the **First Sunday of the month** once you have joined the church. Both baptism and the right hand of fellowship take place **only during our 11:15 service**. If you are being baptized you should arrive at the church no later than 10:30 A.M. to allow sufficient time to change into your baptism garments. The church will provide you with an appropriate baptism garment, a towel, socks, and (for female candidates) a plain white swimming cap. You should feel free to bring an additional change of under garments. If you want or need to bring your own personal swim cap or socks please make every attempt to use only white items. Our Deaconess will assist female candidates in the clothing changing process and our Deacons will assist male candidates.

Upon completion of these classes, you will receive the Right Hand of Fellowship (an act that symbolizes your full membership in the Bethlehem Baptist Church body) and become eligible to hold a leadership position in the church. You will also begin to receive your numbered envelopes in a regular mailing. These envelopes are numbered and vary in color from year to year. There is an envelope, which is used on a weekly basis for your gifts and tithes. There are also supplemental envelopes. For example, there will be an envelope that is to be used for the Radio Outreach ministries of Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Our radio program is aired on Saturdays at 2 PM on Gospel Highway 11 (1110 on the AM dial). We also have a television ministry that is aired on Wednesdays at 10:30 AM on PAX TV. You may give in support of that ministry every Sunday by indicating that you want all or some portion of your gift to go to the support of that vital ministry. In addition, on occasion, the church may take a special offering to support a special cause or a significant need, such as the American Cancer Society, or relief for a recent disaster. Such giving is not represented in the envelopes and is generally above and beyond weekly giving.

Our church does not sell tickets, charge dues, or sell dinners to finance the church needs. Just like your home, our church building must be maintained, improved, and updated. Utilities and the salaries of those on the church staff (pastor, musicians, janitors, staff, etc.) must be paid. Our giving also supports the many ministries of our church that reach into our communities and the world. The church depends on its Discipleship to sustain our budget. Giving gifts and tithes is the basis for that budget.

Each Disciple must make his/her decision about how much to give, allowing the Lord to direct us. Each Disciple is asked to do so prayerfully under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. Whatever your decision; plan to use your envelopes to give regularly so that the church has a sustained cash flow. Disciples are asked to keep in mind that God does love a cheerful giver and that giving is a form of worship. It is a tangible way that we give something back to the God who has so richly blessed each of us.

You may be assured that all of your giving and financial records will be handled with confidentiality and in accordance with the guidelines set forth for proper church
accounting. The numbered envelopes you receive provide the means for the trustees to keep accurate records regarding giving. As a result, the trustees can provide envelope-using Disciples with year-end gift giving statements (1099) on an annual basis.

**Worship**

Every Sunday at 9:00 AM and 11:15 AM, our church is involved in worship services. But what does that mean? *But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth* (John 4:23-24). Worship is an attitude, it is the Christian’s highest occupation. It is our purpose in life. When we worship God, we are giving Him the honor and glory that belongs to Him, (see Revelation 4:11). Worship is one way which we reaffirm the Lordship of God in our lives. Worship is a time when we give everything over to God. Worship is a holy and sanctified thing.

We should not come to church on Sunday waiting for someone like the choir or the preacher to ignite the spirit of worship within us. Since we each have an intimate and personal relationship with God, we can come into the church in an attitude of worship. Our spirits then contribute to the atmosphere of praise and worship. Intimacy with the Lord can only come through communion with Him. We commune or talk with God through prayer.

**The Word of God**

At Bethlehem Baptist Church we believe that the Bible bears witness to the nature and power of God to save souls and to transform lives. Because of this belief, it is necessary for us to know how to use it skillfully. There are many different translations of the Bible. Translations have to do with the language a Bible uses and how the words sound when it is read or spoken. We generally refer to this as the version of the Bible. The King James Version (KJV) is the one most traditionally heard. It is a good translation of the original transcripts and uses an older version of the English language. You will often see, read, and hear old English words like, “Thee, Thou, Wouldest, etc. It is a very poetic and beautiful translation. Other Bible versions include the New King James Version (NKJV), the Revised Standard (RSV), the American Standard Version (ASV), the Amplified Version, Contemporary English Version (CEV) and many more.

However, for clarity you may want to select another more modern and understandable translation, for example, the New International Version (NIV). To see these differences more clearly, read James 5:16 in the King James Version (KJV), the New International version (NIV), and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

You will see that the KJV is very poetic and beautiful, it also uses old English phrasing, and “ye may be healed.” Additionally it uses a masculine reference; “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” The NIV uses a more modern sounding language and retains the masculine reference; “The prayer of a righteous man...
is powerful and effective.” Finally, the NRSV also uses a modern sounding language and is more inclusive; “The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.”

The Living Bible (TLB) and the New Living Bible (NLB) are easy versions to read. However, if you are selecting a study Bible, you should be aware that the Living Bible is a paraphrase (not a direct translation from ancient scriptures). That simply means that these versions provide the readers with an approximation of the original text. They are excellent for reading and understanding, however we recommend that you do not use the Living Bible as your primary study Bible. To avoid confusion it should be used as a secondary source for follow up and clarity or simply for the enjoyment of reading and understanding the wonderful Word of God.

Whichever translation you select is ultimately your decision. Just be sure that you have picked one that works for you and provides you with greater insights to God’s Word.

Types

There are many different types of Bibles. Types of Bibles have to do with the way that the information in the Bible is arranged. For example, you may have heard of the Life Application Bible. This is a Bible that is designed to help the reader answer questions such as: What does this passage really mean, How does it apply to my life, What did this custom mean in ancient Bible times? The Life Application Bible provides readers with commentary on various scriptures, timeline outlines, vital statistics (pieces of information about the book of the Bible that is being read), an overview of the book, themes, maps, character outlines etc. It lays the Bible out in a way that is designed to help the reader understand the words more clearly.

The Life Application Bible is a type of Bible. Like all types of Bibles it comes in many different versions, that is you may obtain a Life Application Bible in the New International Version, the King James Version, the New Revised Standard Version etc.

Another type of Bible is the One Year Bible. In this type of Bible, scriptures from the Old Testament and the New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs are arranged by date so that the reader can read the Bible from cover to cover in one year. For example, the readings for January 1st are Genesis 1:1—2:25 (the Old Testament reading) Matthew 1:1—2:12 (the New Testament reading) Psalm 1:1—16 (the reading from the book of Psalm) and Proverbs 1:1-6 (the reading from the book of Proverbs). You can find this type of Bible (One Year Bible) in many different versions. Remember types are concerned about the structure of a Bible while versions are concerned about interpretation and the way the words sound.
Using Your Bible

Scriptures are often referred to by an “address.” You may often see these addresses written in a kind of shorthand that follows this format: Name of Book (or abbreviation for the name of the book) followed by the chapter of the scripture, a colon, then the verses of the scripture separated by either a comma or a dash. For example, Genesis (or Gen.) 1:1—3 is shorthand for the book of Genesis, chapter 1, verses 1 through 3. Some books are in multiple parts. You will see them referenced as 1st or 2nd or 3rd followed by the name of the book. For example, in the Old Testament there are 1st and 2nd Kings, 1st and 2nd Samuel, and 1st and 2nd Chronicles. In the New Testament sometimes persons are confused because there are four books called John. Whenever you hear someone say simply John, they are usually referring to the gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament. However, near the end of the New Testament, there are three short letters or epistles that were written by John, these are referred to as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John.

Your Bible should be “user friendly.” Take care of your Bible, but always remember it is a tool to help you get to know the living God better. Don’t be afraid to mark in your Bible. It is yours! Highlighting key scriptures and underlining words of importance are good habits to develop for quick reference and understanding.

And speaking of reference, you might want to select a Bible with a Concordance and/or center reference. These are great tools for studying on your own and also for class use. All Bibles have a table of contents. Please feel comfortable using them while you learn your way around the Bible. Even if you have been reading and studying the Bible for many years sometimes certain books may be difficult to find or you may just forget where a book is located. The table of contents is a tool to be used to help you become more comfortable with the Bible. Use it as often as you need.

Some General Information

1. The Bible is divided into 2 major parts. The Old Testament and the New Testament.
2. There are 66 books in the Bible.
3. There are 39 books in the Old Testament
4. There are 27 books in the New Testament.
5. Some scholars divide the Old and New Testaments into 4 major divisions each.
OLD TESTAMENT

The Law

- The first 5 books of the Bible.
- Also known as the Torah, which is part of the Jewish Bible.
- Books are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- Some major personalities in these books include: Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Noah, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, and Miriam.
- Some things you can read about in these books include: the creation, the great flood, the first murder, God’s promise to Abraham, a father who was willing to sacrifice his son whom he loved, Joseph’s coat of many colors, Hebrew slavery in Egypt, parting of the Red Sea, an earthquake that swallowed some rebellious leaders, a golden calf.

History

- The next 12 books of the Bible.
- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.
- The only two books in the Bible that are named for women are part of this division.
- Some major personalities include: Joshua, Rahab, King David, King Saul, Solomon, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Jonathan, Jezebel, Ruth, Queen Vashti, Deborah, Samson, Bathsheba, Delilah.
- Some things you can read about in these books include: David and Goliath, the battle of Jericho, Ruth’s love story, a contest between God and Baal, a man who out ran a horse, a king who had a tantrum over a garden he couldn’t have, a simple woman who became a queen, a woman who was a judge for Israel, a woman who killed a mighty warrior king.

Poetic

- There are 5 books of poetry.
- Job, Psalm, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon (or Song of Songs).
- David wrote many of the Psalms, some while he was a simple shepherd, others while he was living on the run from King Saul, and others once he was king.
- Solomon (King David’s son) is given credit for writing many of the Proverbs, the book of Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon or Song of Songs.
- The Song of Solomon is a love poem.
- The book of Psalm is a collection of human thoughts, prayers, and praises to and about God.
- You might be surprised to learn that many sayings you have heard come from these books. For example: “The apple of my eye,” or “There’s nothing new under the sun.”
Prophetic

- There are 17 prophetic books.
- Some things you can read about in these books include: Daniel in the lion’s den, the three young men who were thrown into the hot furnace, Jonah and the great fish, the source of the quote in the New Testament book of Matthew regarding a Messiah born of a virgin, the lesson a prophet learned from watching a potter while he made pots, the story of a prophet thrown into a deep well.

NEW TESTAMENT

The major difference between the Old and New Testament is that the Old promises a Messiah while the New Testament fulfills this promise through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Gospels

- They tell the history of Jesus’ human ancestry, His physical birth on earth, His cousin John the Baptist, the 12 disciples, the women who followed Him and supported His ministry, Jesus’ ministry of teaching, healing, and miracles while on earth, His betrayal by Judas, His brutal death by crucifixion, His glorious resurrection and ascension.

The Acts of the Apostles

- This book tells the story of the early Christian church body, how it came to be, the power of the Pentecost, how the people shared with each other, the miracles that the leaders performed, the stoning of Stephen, the conversion of the Apostle Paul from a violent persecutor of Christians to a man used mightily by God, Peter bringing Christian teachings to non-Jews as well as Jews, Paul’s wandering ministry bringing the Word of God to all nations.

The Epistles (Letters)

- There are 21 books in this division, of them 13 are generally believed to be written by Paul.
- Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon (these are all written by Paul), Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John, and Jude.
- These books are letters written by early church leaders to various people and some early Christian churches. They were written to provide doctrine (an explanation of how the Christian church ought to behave), to bring news, to tell what the author had been doing or wished to do, to bring peace when there were
fights, to correct erroneous behavior, and to inspire hope when the churches were suffering very badly.

_The Apocalypse (Meaning a vision, prophecy, or revelation)_

- Revelation.
- The last book of the Bible.
- Written by the disciple John when he was an old man.
- Tells the story of the end of evil in the world, the destruction of the devil, the second coming of Christ, the end of the world, the creation of a new world and a new heaven, the reward of saints.
Lesson 1…Who and What is God Like?

In the Holy Bible we learn so much about God such as;

I am who I am and no one is like me now or ever will be! "I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior" (Isaiah 43:11).

- **God is powerful**: "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (Colossians 1:16).

- **God is love**: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8).

- **God is perfectly righteous and just**: "He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He" (Deuteronomy 32:4).

- **God is Holy and pure**: "For thus says the High and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isaiah 57:15).

- **God is majestic**: "Why should the Gentiles say, 'So where is their God?' But our God is in heaven; He does whatever He pleases" (Psalm 115:2-3).

- **God is eminent**: "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there" (Psalm 139:7-8).
**At·trib·ute** (ə-trɪˈbjuːt)

A quality or characteristic inherent in or ascribed to someone or something.

**The Attributes of God**

God is eternal, meaning He had no beginning and His existence will never end. He is immortal and infinite (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17). God is immutable, meaning He is unchanging; this in turn means that God is absolutely reliable and trustworthy (Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:26, 27). God is incomparable; there is no one like Him in works or being. He is unequaled and perfect (2 Samuel 7:22; Psalm 86:8; Isaiah 40:25; Matthew 5:48). God is inscrutable, unfathomable, unsearchable, and past finding out as far as understanding Him completely (Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 145:3; Romans 11:33, 34).

God is just; He is no respecter of persons in the sense of showing favoritism (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:30). God is omnipotent; He is all-powerful and can do anything that pleases Him, but His actions will always be in accord with the rest of His character (Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 32:17, 27). God is omnipresent, meaning He is present everywhere, but this does not mean that God is everything (Psalm 139:7-13; Jeremiah 23:23). God is omniscient, meaning He knows the past, present, and future, including what we are thinking at any given moment. Since He knows everything, His justice will always be administered fairly (Psalm 139:1-5; Proverbs 5:21).

God is one; not only is there no other, but He is alone in being able to meet the deepest needs and longings of our hearts. God alone is worthy of our worship and devotion (Deuteronomy 6:4). God is righteous, meaning that God cannot and will not pass over wrongdoing. It is because of God’s righteousness and justice that, in order for our sins to be forgiven, Jesus had to experience God's wrath when our sins were placed upon Him (Exodus 9:27; Matthew 27:45-46; Romans 3:21-26).

God is sovereign, meaning He is supreme. All of His creation put together cannot thwart His purposes (Psalm 93:1; 95:3; Jeremiah 23:20). God is spirit, meaning He is invisible (John 1:18; 4:24). God is a Trinity. He is three in one, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. God is truth, He will remain incorruptible and cannot lie (Psalm 117:2; 1 Samuel 15:29).

God is holy, separated from all moral defilement and hostile toward it. God sees all evil and it angers Him. God is referred to as a consuming fire (Isaiah 6:3; Isaiah 6:3; Habakkuk 1:13; Exodus 3:2, 4-5; Hebrews 12:29). God is gracious, and His grace includes His goodness, kindness, mercy, and love. If it were not for God's grace, His holiness would exclude us from His presence. Thankfully, this is not the case, for He desires to know each of us personally (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 31:19; 1 Peter 1:3; John 3:16; 17:3). Read John 4:24.
Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God; the LORD is one (Deuteronomy 6:4)!

There is one God who exists eternally in three distinguishable persons, i.e., the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:16-17). A specific way of speaking about this phenomenon is to say that God is: one in essence, three in existence. In the New Testament all three (the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit) are said to be divine. The Father is clearly divine. The Son is deity (John 1:1; Titus 2:13), yet distinguishes Himself from the Father and the Spirit. The Spirit is God (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 5:3-5). The fact that Jesus commands us to “baptize...in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19),” implies that we are bringing people into a relationship with the one true God, who has revealed Himself in three persons.

While any analogy will fall woefully short; God is like a man, who is a father, a son, and a husband. He is one in essence (man), but three in existence (father, son, husband).

Read Psalm 90:2 (Isaiah 40:28; Jeremiah 10:10). What does this verse tell us about God?

Read Leviticus 11:44-45. These verses tell us that God is

Holiness means that God is pure, unimpaired, innocence, and free from all sin. Holiness also means that God is “set apart,” unlike any other. So when God says sanctify or consecrate yourselves therefore, and “be holy, for I am holy,” what kind of life is God calling upon us to live?

Read Malachi 3:6. Fill in the blank. God does not change.

God is immutable (not subject or susceptible to change) in His person or in His essence. God is not faithful one minute, then unfaithful the next. James 1:17 says, “The Lord does not change like shifting shadows.” It means that God’s promise to “never leave us nor forsake us,” can be trusted (Deut. 31:6, 8; Psalm 94:14; Hebrews 13:5).

God is also is omnipotent, omniscience, and omnipresence.

Omnipotent: having unlimited or universal power, authority, or force; sovereign. Omnipotence speaks to the fact that God is in control. "I know that you can do all things; and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted (Job 42:2).

Omniscience: having infinite and total knowledge. “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done,” saying, "My purpose shall stand, and I will fulfill my intention (Isaiah 46:9-10)."
**Omnipresence:** present everywhere simultaneously; unbounded or universal presence. 
*Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol (the world of the dead), you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast (Psalm 139:8-10).*

Read **1 John 4:8**.

Read **John 3:16**.

Attributes of God also include:

**Grace:** unmerited favor (**Eph.2: 5-9**)  
**Mercy:** concern, compassion (**Lamentations 3:22-23; James 5:11**)  
**Long suffering** (patience): self-restrained when provoked (**2 Peter 3:9,15**)  
**Justice:** God is perfectly righteous and exact in His dealings with man (**Ezra 9:15; Psalm 11:7**).

Meditate on Psalm 103. List the attributes of God found in this Psalm that should solicit your praise and thanksgiving!
LESSON 2…Sin and the Son

Sin

What exactly is sin? Do you understand how the Bible defines it? As Christians, we are to avoid sin—but how can we avoid sin if we don't fully comprehend what it is?

The Bible defines sin in several scriptures, each of which gives us a better understanding of what it is. But, before we look at these scriptures that define sin, we should first understand what the word sin means.

What is sin? It is ultimately rebellion against God and His standards. Where did sin come from? Sin entered into the world because the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, tempted by Satan, rebelled against God’s holy standard (Genesis 3). Since that time every human being has been born with a sinful nature or disposition (Psalm 51:5) and as a result, sins on his or her own accord.

We Are All Sinners

Romans 3:23 For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.

Isaiah 64:6 We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.

We Need To Confess Our Sin

Proverbs 28:13 People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

Hosea 5:15 Then I will return to my place until they admit their guilt and turn to me. For as soon as trouble comes, they will earnestly search for me.”
God Forgive Our Sin

1 John 1:7-9 But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth. But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

Forgiving One Anothers Sins

Luke 17:3-4 So watch yourselves! “If another believer sins, rebuke that person; then if there is repentance, forgive. Even if that person wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness, you must forgive.”

Examples of Sin

Colossians 3:5-6 So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming.

Galatians 5:19-21 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Victory Over Sin

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thank God! He gives us victory over sin and death through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.

Read Genesis 3:5; Isaiah 14:12-15.

Read 1 John 1: 8-10.

The word that is used most frequently in the New Testament to describe sin is a Greek word that means, “to miss the mark.” Paul used the verbal form of this word in Romans 3:23, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” Mankind has not only fallen far short of God’s righteous standard, but man is so sinful that he does not even seek after God (Romans 3:10-18), apart from God drawing him (John 6:44). All men have “missed the mark” as in an archer’s bow falling to the ground because it has come short of its target.
Human beings have failed to do what they should and what they ought (James 4:17). Therefore we are all worthy to be called “sinners.”

Because God is holy, sin separated man (Isaiah 59:2) from the One who gives life, the result being both physical and spiritual death (Genesis 2:17; Revelation 21:8). Spiritual death is not a cessation of man’s existence, but it is eternal punishment in the lake of fire (hell).

Read Romans 6:23.

Since mankind had corrupted itself, God could have chosen to abort His defective creation. Instead, He decided to save it.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)."

Only Son or Only-Begotten Son does not mean that Jesus was a created being or became a God. "Only Begotten" is from the Greek word monogenes. The word is a compound of the words, mono, meaning “only,” and gennesis, meaning “birth” or “beginning.” It has a secondary definition of “unique.” Hence, persons who wish to detract from the deity of Jesus say that because gennesis means “birth” or “beginning,” Jesus must have had a beginning, and thus He could not be God, since God is eternal. But the combination of the words is the key to understanding what John meant. Monogenes does not mean “birth” or “beginning." Monogenes is used to describe a child who is in the same “nature” or “likeness” of the parent; cut from the same mold. Jesus is the Son of God in a way in which no others are. Jesus is the “unique” Son of God, the one through whom all the promises of the Scriptures would be fulfilled. He is also of the same “nature” or “likeness” of God, because He is God. Jesus had no “beginning,” because He is the beginning (John 1:1-4, 14).

Jesus was also “unique” in the sense that He was given birth to by a virgin named Mary (Luke 1:26-35).

Read Hebrews 4:15. Jesus was “unique” because He was fully human, fully God (Philippians 2:5-8). The God-man nature of Jesus Christ is incomprehensible, but acceptable, because we have a God of the impossible. He voluntarily limited the use of His attributes (omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence), in order to fulfill His mission. God clothed Himself in flesh to die on a cross.

But the story does not end with the cross. Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 55-57.

The Resurrection proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ was God and that fellowship with God and eternal life are only found through faith in Him (John 14:1-6).

Read Matthew 16:13-17. Who do you say the “Son of Man” is?
Lesson 3...Who Am I?

According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” There are two Greek words which are translated “new” in the Bible. The first, neos, refers to something that has just been made, but there are already many others in existence just like it. The word translated “new” in this verse is the word kainos, which means “something just made which is unlike anything else in existence.” In Christ, we are made an entirely new creation, just as God created the heavens and the earth originally—He made them out of nothing, and so He does with us. He does not merely clean up our old selves; He makes an entirely new self. When we are in Christ, we are “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4 KJV). God Himself, in the person of His Holy Spirit, takes up residence in our hearts. We are in Christ and He is in us.

In Christ, we are regenerated, renewed, and born again, and this new creation is spiritually minded, whereas the old nature is carnally minded. The new nature fellowships with God, obeys His will, and is devoted to His service. These are actions the old nature is incapable of doing or even desiring to do. The old nature is dead to the things of the spirit and cannot revive itself. It is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) and can only be made alive by a supernatural awakening, which happens when we come to Christ and are indwelt by Him. Christ gives us a completely new and holy nature and an incorruptible life. Our old life, previously dead to God because of sin, is buried, and we are raised “to walk in newness of life” with Him (Romans 6:4).

Who are you? Why and for what purpose did God create you and save you? “What are human beings that You are mindful of them, mortals that You care for them (Psalm 8:4)?”

If we belong to Christ, we are united to Him and no longer slaves to sin (Romans 6:5-6); we are made alive with Him (Ephesians 2:5); we are conformed to His image (Romans 8:29); we are free from condemnation and walking not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Romans 8:1); and we are part of the body of Christ with other believers (Romans 12:5). The believer now possesses a new heart (Ezekiel 11:19) and has been blessed “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:3).

"He who seeks only himself brings himself to ruin, whereas he who brings himself to nought for Me discovers who he is." —Matthew 10:39

We must know who we are before we know what to do, when to do it, where to go, and how it's done. Identity is a first step in the Christian life. Before Jesus' public ministry, the Father proclaimed Jesus His beloved Son in Whom He was well pleased (Mt 3:17). As soon as Peter recognized Who Jesus was, Jesus announced to Peter: "You are 'Rock,' and on this rock I will build My Church" (Mt 16:18).
Paul repeatedly told believers who they were. He called us the holy ones, the chosen ones, the adopted sons and daughters of the Father (Eph 1:1-5). We are the redeemed, the forgiven, the gifted of God (Eph 1:7-8). Likewise Peter proclaimed: "You, however, are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people He claims for His own' " (1 Pt 2:9).

The first question in life is: "Who is Jesus?" The second is: "Who am I?" All the questions of life are based on these first two. Jesus asks each one of us, "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15) When we recognize Jesus as Lord and Messiah, we reverse the situation and ask Him, "Who do You (Jesus) that say I am?" We tell Jesus who He is, then He tells us who we are.

It is in entering into this relationship with Jesus that we begin to discover who we ourselves are. This is very well illustrated from the story of Peter in the New Testament. When Andrew introduced his brother Simon (Peter's original name) to Jesus, we are told that "Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas' (which, when translated, is Peter)" (John 1:42). However, when Jesus looks at us he sees not so much what we are, but what we can become if we are willing to let him manage our lives in his way. And so he gives Simon the new identity of Peter, the rock, and sets about working on him to produce the character that is in line with that identity.

You are a new creation (Ephesians 4:17-32)! God is going to create new heavens and a new earth (Romans 8:19-23; 2 Peter 3:3). God has already begun this new creative order through those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ. The kingdom of God has been inaugurated (Matthew 4:17; Matthew 12:28), and the people of God have been empowered to proclaim it and live it (Acts 1:8).

We have God living inside of us through the person of the Holy Spirit.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. 17 This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you (John 14:16-17).

26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you (John 14:26).

Saints: persons who have been separated from the world and consecrated to the worship and service of God. Believers are called "saints" (Rom 1:7) and "saints in Christ Jesus" (Phil 1:1) because they belong to the One who provided their sanctification.

Disciple: One who embraces and assists in spreading the teachings of another; an active adherent, as of a movement or philosophy. Often, Disciple means one of the original followers of Jesus.

Belief in God makes us saints; obedience to God makes us disciples
"If you love me, you will keep my commandments **(John 14:15)**.

Saints and disciples should be synonymous. If we believe in God, we should obey God.

We are capable of bringing glory, honor, and praise to God because He has enabled us to do so.

**Meditation verse: Colossians 3:8-11**
Lesson 4…Assurance of Salvation

Christians who have repented and experienced rebirth by the Holy Spirit often wonder whether they can be sure of salvation. Human frailty gets between God’s words of assurance and our own thoughts and feelings. The question of assurance often arises when adversity strikes, illness occurs, plans go awry, or when we succumb to temptation and fall into sin. How can believers hold on too and cultivate God’s “blessed assurance” in order to live joyful lives and be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ?

What is repentance?

Repentance is turning away from sin and turning toward God. It is a radical change in attitude toward sin and God. It implies a conscious, moral, and personal decision to forsake sin and to enter into fellowship with God (see Acts 26:19-20).

What is salvation?

Salvation is the act of God whereby He has delivered (through the shed blood of Jesus Christ) believers from the penalty, power, and presence of sin. There is a three-fold division of salvation:

Justification—is the means through which we are rescued from the penalty of sin (death). It is the judicial (judgmental) act of God, by which He declares men righteous and pardons all the sins of those who believe in Christ. He accounts, accepts, and treats them as righteous in His sight. God can declare a believer justified because He credits to the believer the perfect righteousness of His Son, Jesus Christ. The vehicle or means through which righteousness is credited is called faith (Romans 3:22-25). The act of faith secures forgiveness of sin, justification, sanctification and glorification.

Sanctification—is the means through which we are being delivered from the power of sin. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, acting to bring the whole person more and more under the influence of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11). Sanctification is the process by which God is making the believer more like Christ (Romans 8:29).

Glorification—is when we will be delivered from the presence of sin. It is an idealized state, when the presence and power of sin will be totally eradicated forever. Glorification has not occurred yet; it will occur at the second-coming of Christ, when we receive our glorified bodies and dwell in the full presence of the Lord forever (Romans 8:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-57; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Glorification is the fulfillment of justification and sanctification.
God has not only saved us, but according to Deuteronomy 31:8 He says, “The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

The Word of God assures our salvation. Philippians 1:6 says “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

The assurance of our salvation does not rest in our hands; it rests in the hands of God.

Christ assures us of our salvation. In John 6:40 Jesus says, “For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The Holy Spirit assures us of our salvation. “Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory (Ephesians 1:13b-14).”

We did not earn salvation (Ephesians 2:1-10); therefore we cannot lose it. However, this does not mean that we should take our salvation for granted. If ”God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16), then Paul’s plea in Romans 12:1 is reasonable:

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.”

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16).

The Word of God, the promises of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit assure our salvation. But salvation is not to be taken for granted; we are to live lives that are pleasing to God. We are called to be lights in a dark world, so that others may ask, “What must I do to be saved.”

Meditation verse: Galatians 2:20