

Limestone Bible Camp

Bible Class Lessons

Series 9

Ephesians 3:10-11

“...the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church . . . according to the eternal purpose, Which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

INFORMATION SHEET FOR CAMP LESSONS

The lessons follow a sequential theme. That theme is that: 1. God has always had a plan for redeeming mankind, even though that plan has had various stages of development through the ages. 2. That plan is an offering of grace on the part of a God who loves us but owes us nothing. 3. There is a plan of salvation for the Christian age, that is, what is required for one to become a child of God's initially. 4. Each Christian must realize that they face the challenge of remaining faithful to God. The charts are meant to be handouts to which the students may refer as the lesson is taught. The questions may be used during class time, or as (they were intended to be) out of class assignments. However, the questions should probably be given out in class the day before the class to which they apply is taught.

LESSON 1: Lesson 1, Chart 1 goes with points 2, a and b. Just as individuals develop during their lifetime in various ways from a very low level of ability to a very high level of ability, so has mankind's spiritual development been since the days of Adam. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to Moses, to now. You give people what they are ready for at the time in all aspects.

Lesson 1, Chart 2 goes with points 2c and 3. This chart elaborates on the final column of the preceding chart. Really, the rest of Lesson 1 simply teaches what this chart depicts. Make every effort possible to finish this lesson because most of our young people have only the vaguest notion of any of this. It might be helpful to provide them an information sheet with some of the verses or points included so that you can progress faster through the lesson.

LESSON 2: Lesson 2 chart goes with the points made in II. The chart is attempting to make plain for the students the difference in a law of works, and a law of grace. Obviously, it does not show that the grace of God is contacted through our acceptance of the blood of Christ in baptism. This is a point that is made at another time in this lesson and elaborated on by means of the questions offered with this lesson and in lesson 3, so don't do more than mention it while using the chart, or time will be wasted. Our young people also need to understand what it really means to be saved by works as opposed to saved by grace so that they will be able to answer scripturally when challenged with this concept.

LESSON 3: If the questions are answered by the students the day before class the lesson can be gone through quickly enough to leave time for the class together completing the "Conversion in Acts: worksheet. This is a powerful tool to help young people see the emphasis placed on baptism in the Bible.

LESSON 4: There are three charts with this lesson. Chart 1 goes with the introduction. Chart 2 goes with point I.B.5. Chart 3 goes with point 1.D. The questions are quite extensive and could consume more than the time allotted for the class. The teacher will have to be careful to pace him/herself in order to accomplish the most important material in the amount of time available.

Any questions over any of the material should be addressed to Jeff Woods. Please note that each one of the lessons probably contains enough material to last through the entire camp, but must be taught in one session. Choose carefully to cover the most important material first. While it is expected that each teacher will alter the lesson (very little) to match their individual style and personality, understand that the lessons work together in a series to help our young people understand God's plan for their salvation, and insure that that message cannot be missed as you present the lessons. Thank you for the work you are doing.

LESSON 1: The Three Dispensations

[At the conclusion of this lesson students should understand that God has had a plan for the salvation of man since before time began and that plan has never changed. Students should also have a basic understanding of the different ages and that the Christian age (which we are now in) is the last age.]

Introduction: Ask the students questions such as: “What are some ways that the Old Testament is different from the New? Have you wondered why God changed from the Old to the New Testament? Why do you think he did? Have you wondered if maybe God wasn’t sure what to do and discarded the Old Testament when it seemed not to be working?”

[Encourage students to speak their mind freely. The point is to promote participation and to stimulate thinking. Only the first question has a right or wrong answer and that is not important to the discussion that follows. Commend responses, then point out – “Today’s Lesson will help us understand the answers to questions such as these.”

I. God knew he would need a plan (II Tim. 1:9)

[It would be good to spend some time discussing how this week’s theme verse ties in with this point, as well as emphasizing that the plan is according to God’s purpose, and That it existed before the world.]

A. God created man as a “free moral agent.”

[Much discussion has arisen from the question, “Is mankind basically evil by nature, or basically good?” You might wish to pose this question. Have students support their answers, especially with Biblical passages if possible. The

only

answer compatible with the Bible is that man is free to choose. (Josh. 24:15, Jas. 1:14-15, I Cor. 9:27)]

1. We glorify God when we choose to serve him.

2. We are neither a puppet, nor a robot.

B. God knew that man would yield to temptation.

[Man had only two rules in Eden: tend the garden and don’t eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. These were the only two areas in which he could be tempted.]

C. God was ready to save man before man committed the first sin. (II Tim. 1:9, I Pet. 1:18-20, Eph. 1:3-4) [The idea of predestination is a possible sidetrack here. If it comes up, be sure to point out that what was foreordained was

the plan

by which man could be saved. The only individuals that God predestined or foreknew to be saved are those individuals who follow His plan. He predetermined that those people would be saved.]

II. The unfolding of God’s plan (Eph. 1:9-10)

A. We learn bits and pieces and thus accumulate knowledge.

1. Numerically

2. Verbally

3. Spiritually

B. God realized that all of mankind's spiritual development would necessarily follow the same pattern. (Gal. 3:22-24.) [Refer to Development Chart.]

C. God's plan has never changed, it has simply unfolded bit by bit. [Refer to Dispensations Chart.]

1. Patriarchal Age

a. Creation to Sinai (about 2500 years) [Ussher]

b. God revealed His will to heads of families (Gen. 7:1, 12:1, etc.)

c. Worship performed in regard to specific events rather than on set days (Gen. 8:20, 22:13, 28:18)

d. Nomadic tribes and clans, no well organized society/civilization.

e. Man learned – There is a God. He has expectations of His creation. He is not pleased when those expectations are not met.

2. Mosaical Age

a. Sinai to Cross (about 1500 years)

b. God revealed His will to priests and prophets, and was not accessible to most people (I Sam. 8:21-22, I Kings 21:17-19, Ezek. 1:3)

c. The Law instituted a system of feast days, sacrifices, etc. and a system of morals or rules of conduct.

d. God's people were a 'nation' in a world of nations.

e. Man learned – God's expectations are defined and exact. No human can meet the expectations of God. Without help, we are

doomed.

3. Christian Age

a. Cross to present (about 2000 years)

b. God revealed His Son as a sacrifice. His will was further revealed by New Testament writers. (Heb. 1:1-2, I Pet. 1:3)

c. Christ has made the supreme sacrifice once and for all. A sacrifice that no man could make. (II Cor. 5:21, Rom. 6:10, Heb. 10:1-14)

d. All people can belong to God. (Acts 10:34-35) [This is the very thing which God foreordained.] Christ is the only mediator. (I Tim. 2:4-5.) [Make sure that students understand what a mediator is and that all priests and other officials are

removed from

our relationship with God.]

e. Man learned – Even though we cannot overcome our limitations in meeting God's expectations, God's love is great enough to find a way. Our salvation is totally dependent upon God's grace and our submission to His plan/will. (Rom. 5:6-11, 20-21.)

III. The Christian Age is the final age.

A. All other ages look forward to the Christian age.

1. Patriarchal Age

a. Genesis 3:15 – a prophecy about the salvation of man arising through the sacrifice of Christ.

- b. Genesis 12:3 – All nations would be blessed through the salvation offered by Christ.

2. Mosaical Age

- a. Isaiah 53 – prophecy concerning Christ
- b. Joel 2:28-32 – According to the inspired Peter, this prophecy speaks directly about the day of Pentecost, in the Christian age.

[Point out

that Peter says “last days.” i.e. the Christian age is the climax of God’s plan.]

B. The Christian Age looks forward only to Heaven.

- 1. Acts 2:17 – it is referred to as the “last days”
- 2. Heb. 10:26 – if we reject the sacrifice of Christ (thus the Christian age) we have nothing more to hope for from God. This is the final age judgement. [If you are unfamiliar with the teaching of Hebrews, it be very good to spend some time familiarizing yourself with this

before
would
book, the

whole point of which is to compare the Christian and Mosaical ages and point out the superiority of the Christian. The context of almost any verse selected only makes the point more firmly.]

- 3. II Tim. 4:8 – Heaven awaits the faithful Christian. (Rev. 2:7,17,26; Rev. 3:5,12,21)

Conclusion: It has always been God’s plan that mankind would be saved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This “mystery” was revealed in “steps” as mankind was ready. We Are living in the culmination of God’s eternal purpose (the Christian Age.)

LESSON 2: EARNING WAGES OR RECEIVING GIFTS?

[At the conclusion of this lesson students should understand that the Old Law offered no hope for salvation in and of itself. It was merely a system of rules. No man could keep them perfectly, therefore no one was deserving of salvation. The purpose of the Old Law was to establish this fact. The student should also understand that the New Law is a rule of grace by which God allows us to escape the condemnation of our imperfection if we accept the sacrifice that Christ made in our place.]

Introduction: Ask questions such as, “What is at least one course a person would have to take before taking Algebra II? What are three courses a person would have to take

before taking Calculus IV?” We must work our way to more difficult concepts by studying subjects which prepare us for what is to come. Yesterday we learned that God used this approach to prepare the way for Christ. Today we will learn how the Old Law of the Mosaic Age is different from the New Law of the Christian Age and how it prepared the way for Christ and the Christian Age.

I. God’s Purpose in the Old Law

- A. It was not to bring salvation (Rom. 8:2-4, Heb. 10:1-4)
- B. It was to convict man of sin (Rom. 7:7,13; Rom 3:19)
- C. It was to prevent man from boasting (Rom. 3:23-28, Rom. 7:24)

[In connection with this verse note the entire chapter and at least the first part of chapter 8. The point is made that a person will not always keep the law (perfectly) even when that is their sincere desire. Since through the Old

Law the

only way to be saved is to be perfect, there is no hope. Ask: “Have any of you ever desired in your heart to avoid temptation and then found yourself giving in anyway? Have you known of something God wanted you to do and you would have liked to have pleased Him by doing it, but for whatever reason, when

it got

right down to it, you didn’t do whatever it was? What are some examples?” If students are honest with themselves, then they must realize that under the law there is no hope for them because one little slip and you are no longer

perfect.

(Deut. 27:16, Gal. 3:10, James 2:9-11)

- D. It was to demonstrate the need for God’s grace. (Rom. 7:27-8:3, Rom. 5:20-21)

[For the next section refer to the Contrasting Covenants chart.]

II. Biblical contrasts between the Old and New laws.

A. The contrast between works and grace.

1. Salvation by works of merit must be earned and when earned must be paid. But one sin means we fall short and God owes us nothing. (Rom. 4:4, Rom. 3:23, Rom. 6:23)
2. Salvation by grace is a gift. It does not have to be (cannot be) earned. We are allowed to be imperfect. (Rom. 6:23, Rom 5:17-18, Rom. 4:5-8)

B. The contrast between condemnation and salvation

1. The Old Law condemns us before God. (Gal. 3:10-11)
2. The New Law delivers us from the condemnation of sin (Gal. 5:1, Rom. 6:14, Rom. 6:1-4, 17-18)

C. The contrast between actions and attitudes

1. The Old Law specified actions, thus concerned itself with the flesh (the physical body of man performs these actions, i.e. that part of man

which

is carnal and tied to this earth) (Exodus 20:3-17)

2. The New Law concerns itself with the attitude of the heart, thus it deals with The spirit of man (the eternal part of man, the image of God, which has an existence separate and apart from this physical world.) (Matt. 5:22,28,39-42; Gal. 5:22-25)

III. What is involved in the concept of GRACE?

A. Grace is unmerited favor, or what you need instead of what you deserve.

[Illustration: A girl dresses in her favorite outfit to go to school. Upon arrival a boy (a real jerk) knocks her down into a mud puddle. If you are that girl how would you react? (Invite responses) Most people would want to retaliate

by

knocking him into the same mud puddle. This is not grace. It may be what he deserves (punishment) but it is not what he would like. It is not how God reacts to us. If the girl gets up and says, "Ralph, may I carry your books for you?" then she is responding with grace. If this seems unbelievably nice, please realize that it is how God responds to us. It is unmerited, undeserved favor. It is grace.]

B. God owes us nothing (but death, Rom. 6:23) but gives us salvation

1. If a sweepstakes is held and I hold the winning number, what must the sponsor do? Can we try this with God?
2. If an employer assigns me a 40 hr. task, and I complete it, what must the employer do? Does this work with God? [Why? There is no

lucky ticket.

I have fouled up the task. God does not owe me anything.]

C. What does God's grace mean to me?

1. It means that God loves me. (Rom. 5:6-10)
2. It means I don't have to be perfect. (Rom. 6:14-15, Rom. 7:23-25)

3. It means salvation from the wages of sin. (Eph. 2:5-9)
- D. Is God's grace automatically applied to all sinners?
 1. There are those who have not obtained it. (Rom. 11:7)
 2. There are those who have fallen from it. (Gal. 5:4)
 3. We must gain access to this grace through Christ. (Rom. 5:1-2)
This is done through baptism. (Rom. 6:3-4, 17-18)
 4. We must have proper attitude. (I Jo. 1:7-9, Rom. 8:1) This attitude is a sincere desire to do the will of God, a sincere sorrow at any failure to please Him, and a determined effort to improve our weaknesses.

Conclusion: God knew man would sin and need God's help in salvation. Through His grace and because of His love, Christ provided the necessary payment (sacrifice) as determined by God before the world was created. His grace is a free gift but we must reach out and take hold of it as we will see tomorrow.

LESSON 3: WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

- I. Things that should lead up to the question.
 - A. Realize we have sinned and are therefore separated from God. (Rom. 3:23, Isaiah 59)
 1. How did the Jews of Pentecost express this realization? (Acts 2:37)
 2. How did Saul of Tarsus express this realization? (Acts 9:9)
 3. Ditto for the Phillipian jailor. (Acts 16:27-29)
 - B. Realize that we need a Savior.
 1. What was the main topic Christians of the Bible preached and taught to non-Christians. (Acts 2:22-24; Acts 8:5, 35; Acts 10:34-43)
(Also read: I Cor. 1:17; I Cor. 2:2)
 2. Should our motivation to ask the question be love of Christ/God, or fear of hell? (II Cor. 5:14-15)
- II. The question and the answer.
 - A. [Now that the class understands what God has done for all of us to save us from the quicksand of our sins, stress to them that we should naturally want to accept God's free gift of salvation through the acts of our obedience.]
Use the story of Naaman to prompt a discussion of obedience. (II Kings 5)
 - B. Ask the class these general, "easy" questions.
 1. What are the 5 steps God has asked us to take in order to access his gift?
 2. What must we believe? (John 3:16; Heb. 11:6)
 3. What must we confess: (Rom. 10:9-10; Phil. 2:11)
 4. What 2 things are involved in repentance? (stating your repentance and Turning from all sinful practices, Acts 3:19, II Cor. 7:9-10)
 5. What is involved in baptism? (Rom. 6, also see Salvation Chart)
 6. Must we be baptized in order to be saved? (Mark 16:16, John 3:5, Also see Conversion Stories in Acts Chart.)
 7. Is there anything magical about the water? (I Pet. 3:20-21, I Kings 5)
 8. In the conversion stories in Acts, why do you think the people were baptized immediately?

- III. Other ideas for discussion (especially in advanced classes.)
 - A. Relationship between works and grace. (Eph. 2:4-10)
 - B. Original sin versus accountability (Ezek. 18:20; Rom. 7:7-9)
 - C. Being baptized “because” you are saved versus being baptized so that you can become saved. (Acts 2:38, Col. 2:11-12)
 - D. Rebaptism (Acts 19:1-5)

Additionally: Use the worksheet “What Must I Do To Be Saved?” by encouraging students to fill this out before class. You may wish to take up the sheets, review them and write helpful comments in response to their answers on their sheets.

LESSON 4: “HOW CAN I REMAIN FAITHFUL?”

Introduction: Mention to the class that a Christian can fall from God’s grace. Ask them how they think one can fall. You may need to review one of these passages: Gal. 5:1-4; Heb. 6:4-6; II Pet. 2:20-22; Rev. 22:18-19. Afterwards, have one of the students read Luke 8:4-15 and start a discussion of the reasons why some were faithful and others were not. [Use Parable of the Soils Chart.]

- I. Biblical Concepts that Help us Strive to Remain Faithful
 - A. “New” Christians are “babies in Christ.”
 - Discuss how a new Christian can benefit from knowing that he is a “baby.” (I Pet. 2:1-3)
 - B. The Christian life is a walk. A baby in Christ will stumble, but can be comforted from knowing that Christ is always there to help. (I Jo. 1:5-10; I Jo. 2:1-2) Discuss the following:
 1. Must a Christian be baptized again when he/she sins?
 2. What must we do, then, to have our sins erased?
 3. Once a person becomes a Christian, will he/she automatically never do anything wrong again?
 4. Should a Christian strive to be perfect?
 5. Explain what it means for Jesus to be an “advocate” and the “propitiation” for our sins. [Show Judge-Lawgiver Chart.]
 6. Discuss how a Christian who sins against others is to confess faults. (private fault = private confession, public fault = public confession Matt. 18:15, James 5:16)
 - C. A baby in Christ must grow. [Have class discuss the following.]
 1. What do Christians “put to death” in order to grow? (Col. 3:5-10)
 2. What are Christians to put on? (Col. 3:1-4,12-14)
 3. How can we best determine what is right or wrong? (Col. 3:17)
 - D. Christian growth is gradual (not instant perfection, though some Christians act like they have reached it, either by arrogance and/or by not doing anything.) Therefore all Christians should constantly seek ways to

improve their speech, conduct, etc. (Heb. 5:11-6:1)
[Christian Growth Chart]

- II. Necessary things that help a Christian remain faithful. {Discuss each.}
- A. Prayer (Matt. 6:5-15)
 - B. Study (II Tim. 2:15; II Tim 3:15-17)
 - C. Worship (John 4:23-24)
 - D. Work (Matt. 25:31-46)
 - E. Keeping your eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:1-4)

[Share practical, helpful ways of improving prayer, study, etc. Discuss how young people can take the initiative to involve themselves in works of the church. Use the worksheet, “How Can I Remain Faithful” by having them fill it out before class and then discussing it. Use the Remaining Faithful Chart.]

EVENING LESSONS SCHEDULE

DAY	SPEAKER	TOPIC AND BRIEF OUTLINE
Sunday –		<u>Not Everyone That Saith Unto Me, “Lord, Lord”</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Salvation by God’s hand is on God’s terms2. Man’s attempts to find salvation will fail3. God’s way works every time
Monday –		<u>Why Does God Need a Plan?</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Isn’t He Omnipotent?2. His Holiness can’t keep company with our sinfulness3. His love for us demanded/provided a way to reconcile
Tuesday –		<u>God’s Holiness, Man’s Imperfection</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God’s ways are above our ways.2. It is our sins that separate us from God3. Man sins every time, some Biblical examples
Wednesday –		<u>Jesus Sacrifice and Man’s Baptism</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sacrifice in the Old Testament2. Christ’s Sacrifice is perfect.3. We take advantage of Christ’s sacrifice through baptism
Thursday –		<u>Faithful Service</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Baptism is just beginning of active Christian Life2. There is no future starting point. If you’re dedicated to Christ, it must show now.3. You are accountable for yourself regardless of your age

