



Gateway To Life Bible Studies

"And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified." (Acts 20:32)

LESSON 15

In our love for people and our desire to please Christ, we are faced with formidable obstacles. Presenting the Gospel not only confronts the truth of 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 (³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.), but it also confronts the very nature of fallen man. We refer to this as original sin¹.

1. First read the following verses of Scripture: Isaiah 64:6; Jeremiah 17:9; John 6:44; John 8:34; John 15:5; Rom. 3:9–20; Romans 8:8; Titus 1:15 Ephesians 2:1–2; and Ephesians 4:18. Now come up with your definition of the effects of original sin (or total depravity).

2. All of us are in this horrible condition before we have been born of the Spirit and given new life in Christ. We can all be called "spiritually dull." Jesus described such people in Matthew 13:13 (NASB95), "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they _____." And in Matthew 13:15 (NASB95) it says:

15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL,
WITH THEIR EARS THEY _____ HEAR,
AND THEY _____ THEIR EYES,
OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES,
HEAR WITH THEIR EARS,
AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN,
AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

¹ Original sin is humanity's state of sin resulting from the sin of Adam and Eve. This condition is characterized in the Bible as total depravity that incurs the automatic guilt of all humans.

3. The dullness of the children of Israel is described in Isaiah 1:3 (NASB95)

“An ox knows its owner,
And a donkey its master’s manger,
But Israel _____
My people _____.”

4. King Saul was such a person! In 1 Samuel 15 we learn that King Saul was given something, but he rejected it! He was given a command (1 Samuel 15:1-3) but he disobeyed this command (1 Samuel 15:9) and the Bible says that Saul “_____ the word of the LORD” (1 Samuel 15:23,26).
5. What did Samuel do when he met King Saul after the King had disobeyed God's Word? What did Samuel say to Saul in 1 Samuel 15:

Verse 19--"You did not _____ the voice of the LORD"
Verse 19--"You did _____ in the sight of the LORD"

6. The world is filled with people who have been born with a sin nature and as a result we all sin. This is not an unfair judgment. We are all in the same boat except for the grace of Christ (Romans 3:23). Think of your unsaved friends. Most of them are blind when it comes to salvation. For example, if you were to ask them, “What kind of person goes to heaven and what kind of person goes to hell?”, they would probably say something like this: GOOD PEOPLE GO TO HEAVEN AND BAD PEOPLE GO TO HELL. Is this really true? Take the following quiz:

- 1) If only good people go to heaven, would there be any hope for sinners apart from Christ ? _____
- 2) Does the Bible offer any hope for sinners (1 Timothy 1:15)? _____
- 3) If only good people go to heaven, then how many people would go to heaven according to Romans 3:12? _____.
- 4) If bad people go to hell, then how many people would go to hell according to Romans 3:23 and Ecclesiastes 7:20? _____
- 5) According to John 3:16-18, who goes to heaven? _____
According to these same verses, who goes to hell? _____

Natural man is in the darkness and we need light. Before Paul was saved, he was unaware of his darkness (see 1 Timothy 1:13). He thought the Christians were wrong and he did not know that Jesus was the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of God. God gave Paul more light the day he was saved (the light of His risen Son--Acts 9:1-9).

7. Although the Bible teaches that no one seeks God (Romans 3:11) we know that everyone is seeking something or someone. In Acts chapter 8 we find a man who was seeking. He had traveled all the way to Jerusalem to _____ (Acts 8:27).
8. But even in the city of Jerusalem he did not find what he was looking for because when he left that city he was still seeking. How do we know that this person was seeking something (Acts 8:30)? _____
9. This man was searching for something, but did he need help (Acts 8:30-31)? _____ Who was able to help this seeker (Acts 8:34-35)? _____
10. From the passage that the eunuch was reading, who did Philip point him to?

11. In Acts chapter 10 we read of another man who was seeking. This man's name was _____ (Acts 10:1).
12. Who helped this seeker and pointed him to Christ (Acts 10:34)? _____

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#1. The same God can direct us to people who are seeking and searching for help. They don't know what they need, but we, by God's grace, do. We can even make this our prayer: "Lord, direct me to those who are seeking to know You. Help me to be the right person in the right place at the right time so that I may talk to the right person and point him (or her) in the right direction!"

Please take time as a group to pray for our church-wide evangelistic effort and pray that we all we be led to the right people to invite.

All men are lost and all men are spiritually sick (with sin). The problem is that most people do not realize how lost they really are and how sick they really are. Before they can be saved, they must first realize they are lost. Before they can be healed, they must first realize they are sick. Only God can really convince a person that he is sinful, lost, spiritually sick and needy. Our job is to help people see what the Bible says about their true spiritual condition. People need to see themselves as God sees them!

*Thank you for your participation over the last few months. This ends our small group studies until after March 2012. On January 29 we will be preaching on the topic of Prayer and Evangelism from the Book of Acts. The week following that, we will be conducting a special prayer meeting in Elk Point and in St. Paul. Both meetings will be on Thursday, February 2nd at 7:30 p.m. Please plan to attend.
God bless you.*

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