

The Everlasting Gospel Bible Study

Introduction

Welcome to Lesson Two. I pray that you had a great experience with Lesson One, *The love of God*. We understand by the word of God that He loves His created human family, but a question that needs to be answered is how did we become separated from Him in the first place? The gospel narrative addresses this topic, and it also shows us the way to reconciliation with God.

In Lesson One we discovered the well-known text of John 3:16, that God gave His only Son to this world because of His great love for us. But a bigger question to ask is why did He give us His Son? The death of Jesus is the most widely known story in written human history. However, often what is not so widely known is *why* did this magnanimous figure of human history have to *die*, and what does His death have to do with being reconciled back to God?

Lesson Two: The Cross of Christ

Earth needs a Saviour:

1. In the beginning after God had created our first parents, Adam and Eve He gave them one commandment to obey. If they would be obedient to God's command then they were promised an eternal life of bliss and joy, but if they should ever disobey God then a terrible curse would be the result.
 - a. What was that curse? Read Genesis 2:16-17. "*And the Lord God _____ the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall _____ eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely ____."*

Something to consider:

At this point it may sound harsh for such a small offense to pack such a terrible punishment. However, we must look at a bigger picture. Whenever God creates He creates things to operate within certain kinds of laws. For instance, God created electricity, and when electricity was discovered by man, the laws that govern electricity, such as Ohm's law, were also discovered, and thus it is true with all laws of physics, mechanics, and nature. Therefore, the human race was created to live within the boundary of law, and as long as Adam and Eve obeyed the Law of God they could have lived for eternity. But instead, they sinned against God, or what we call disobeyed Him, and when they broke the Law of God something happened that could not be immediately fixed.

Adam and Eve were created with the power of choice. True love is always free to obey or disobey, and Adam and Eve held that power in their hand. When they exercised the power of choice to disobey, the curse of death was unleashed on the human race. Once divine Law was transgressed, the penalty of death was the only way to stop its spread throughout the entire universe. God's punishment was not an unreasonable punishment, but rather a heart-breaking result that was executed to save the rest of His universe from the train of misery and suffering that we have come to know intimately on this planet!

- b. The Bible calls disobedience, or breaking God's Law, sin. What are some of the results of sin?
 - i. Isaiah 59:2 *But your iniquities have _____ you from your God; and your sins have _____ His face from you.*
 - ii. Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is _____, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - iii. 1 John 3:4 *Sin is _____*

c. Read Exodus 20:1-17.

This is the Ten Commandments, but also called God's Law, and it should be noticed that His Law is comprised of primarily two sections. The first four commandments address our relationship with God, and the next six deal with our relationship with one another. These Laws were given to keep the human race within God's boundaries of love.

i. Consider these texts:

- 1. Romans 13:10 *"Love does no harm to a neighbor, therefore _____ is the fulfillment of the _____."*
- 2. John 14:15 *"If you love me, keep My _____"*

In these texts we see that Sin separates us from God; sin brings death. And when we break His law, we are in some way hurting God, or we are hurting our fellow man or woman. The law was put in place to protect us and keep us in right relationship with God and each other.

- d. It is clear that mankind has a problem with sin, and a date with death. What did God do to save us from this sin problem? In the book of Genesis, right after Adam and Eve sinned, God gave them a wonderful promise. When they were preparing to meet the punishment for their sin, instead, God promised to send them a Saviour.
- e. Read Genesis 3:15: *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*

2. This is a promise that God will not allow humanity to be completely overtaken by the serpent. In fact, God promised to put enmity between good and evil, and between evil and the Seed. The word "seed" is used to mean the children born to Adam and Eve and that there would be a struggle between the righteous and the wicked, but God would ultimately destroy Satan and all the wicked through the coming of The Seed. The "Seed" is spelled with a capital "S" whereas the other "seeds" in the sentence are not. This is because the Seed is referring to a promised coming Saviour that will destroy sin and Satan, and make it possible for the human race to be restored to God, and have eternal life. Who is this Seed?

- a. Read Galatians 3:16: *"Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "and unto seeds," as of many, but as of one, "and to your Seed," who is _____."*
- b. How did the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah, describe this promised coming Saviour? Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a _____ is born, Unto us a _____ is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, _____, _____, _____, _____.*

- i. Isaiah 7:14: *Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name _____.* Isaiah describes the miraculous birth of the One promised to come from the Garden of Eden. How does the prophet describe Him? Do you notice that He is described both as man and God?
 - ii. Read Matthew 1:21
All through the history of the Old Testament, the Jewish people waited for this coming Saviour to save them from their sins and the penalty of death. In the New Testament, some 4000 years after the garden of Eden, a very special Child (Seed) is born into the human family. What was His name and what did it mean?
- f. The drama has now been set: Finally, after 4000 years, the promised Saviour has been born into the world. The New Testament goes on to describe scenes from His childhood, and then the narrative picks up when He is ready to begin the process of saving the world from their sins. God raised up a prophet named John the Baptist to announce to the world that the Messiah, or Saviour, had arrived, and was beginning His public ministry to save the world. How does John the Baptist describe Jesus?
 - a. Read John 1:29: The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, *“Behold the _____ of _____ who takes away the sin of the world!”*
 - i. Why do you think John called Him the Lamb of God? What happened to lambs used in the Temple services? What do you think this says of how He would take away our sins?
 - ii. Isaiah 53:5 What was He wounded for?
 - iii. Isaiah 53:6 What did the Lord lay on Him?
 - iv. Isaiah 53:10 What was His soul made?
 - v. Isaiah 53:12 what did He bear, and for what did He make intercession?
- 3. Isaiah, in this amazing prophecy, says that when the Messiah comes that He would pay the price for our sins! What was the price for our sin, and how did He pay it?
 - a. Read John 19 and Matthew 27; the whole chapters, then write down your thoughts about how you feel about what Jesus did for you.
- 4. How does Paul describe the importance of what Jesus did for us? Ephesians 2:5. *“even when we were _____ in trespasses, made us _____ together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”*
Christ took us from a state of death to life. How did He do this?
 - a. Ephesians 2:13. *“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the _____ of Christ.”*
 - b. Read Romans 3:25: *“whom God set forth as a propitiation (covering) by His _____, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the _____ that were previously committed”*

- c. Read Leviticus 17:11: The Bible is obsessed with the idea of blood having power to cleanse us from sin. Blood was a symbol of life. Leviticus says life is in the blood. The plan of salvation allowed for Innocent Blood to be shed for guilty man, and then God would justify or proclaim the guilty as innocent. The sacrificial system in the Old Testament was set up to teach us this lesson. The animals that were slain on the sinner's behalf were "innocent blood" being shed for the "guilty sinner". In this way the symbolic sacrificial system was pointing forward to, or prefiguring, the coming of the "Lamb of God" His blood was "Innocent Blood" because He never sinned, and He had no guilt, so God allowed for His Innocent Blood to be shed for the guilty sinner.

"In His infinite love Christ devised the plan of salvation. This plan He stands ready to fulfill on behalf of all who will cooperate with Him. In their behalf, He says to the Father, Do not impute their sins to them, but lay them on Me. Be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities remember no more. They have accepted My merits and made peace with Me.... My righteousness is theirs, and for My sake bless them with all spiritual blessings." In Heavenly Places (HP)12.6.

Summary:

In the beginning, God created the human family with the intention that they should live forever; so long as they remained loyal and obedient to His Law. However, God also created them with a free will and the capacity to choose if they would obey or not. Unfortunately, our first parents chose disobedience and rebellion, and the ensuing result was sin and death to the race. However, God graciously had a plan in place to meet such an emergency; it was called the gospel. The gospel plan was for the Son of God to come to the earth and also become the Son of man. His mission was to live a perfect life, innocent of any sin. Then He would be taken by sinners and killed. God allowed our sins to be imputed (accredited or placed) upon Him, and His Innocent Blood would make atonement for our sinful lives. In other words, His Blood had the power to save us from the curse of the Law (death).

Do you – today – accept this Innocent Blood shed on your behalf?