

Bible Studies

Year 12

Term 1

God is...	Pages	Number of weeks	Number of studies
Love (9 studies)	2 - 19	5	9
Provider (14 studies)	20 - 36	5	13

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God is Love

Introductory study

The greatest expression of love ever shown, is summed up in John 3:16 – 18

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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

And John 15:13:

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

The full story – why Jesus had to die

God created a perfect world, where there was no sin, sickness, pain or death. Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, were God's perfect creation. However, because they failed the obedience test – by eating the fruit they were told not to eat – sin, sickness, pain and death came into the world. Now the human race was separated from the Holy God. This meant that there would also be eternal death – separation from God – following physical death.

However, Father God chose to make a way, through His Son Jesus. He sent Jesus into the world to die a terrible death, whereby He took on the sin of the human race, offering forgiveness for sin. But because God does not force Himself upon anyone, He gave everyone the *option* of accepting the forgiveness made available through Jesus. The human race now had a choice – to believe in Jesus and follow Him and receive eternal life, OR to reject Jesus and face eternity separated from God, (see John 3:18).

How does a person become a believer?

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

This is the basic secret of becoming a Christian - you have to *want to follow Jesus*.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Everyone, absolutely everyone, has fallen short of God's glorious holy standards for their lives. People may think they are 'good', but no one can be good enough in their own strength, to be accepted by a holy God.

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Jesus took our punishment for sin when He died upon the Cross. The Bible tells us that God saw that everyone had sinned and was in danger of Hell. He decided to rescue them by sending Jesus to die instead of them. Jesus died on the cross, went down into the world of the dead to give those people a chance as well, took our punishment on the cross and was raised from the dead three days later. For those who believe, our sins are "nailed to the cross" and dealt with through Christ's death.

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The way to become a Christian is by living by two key truths. These key truths are:

1. Believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead.
2. Accept that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Making Jesus Christ Lord of your life means putting Him in charge of your life. Jesus Christ is the "ultimate authority". He must be obeyed. So when you read the Bible and see a commandment of Jesus, you must obey it. Once you become a Christian you are like a soldier under the command of Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:9 &13

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. {13} For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.

The Importance of Love

Study 1: John 13:34,35

Topic: A New Covenant & a New Commandment

John 13:34-35 *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

2 John 1:5-6 *And now I ask you, not as writing a new commandment to you, but one which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.*

In John chapter 13 Jesus gives the New Covenant at the Last Supper. After Judas leaves the room he announces the New Commandment – the only commandment of the New Covenant "...that you love one another as I have loved you!".

The Jewish Law, which was the Old Covenant had around 613 commandments which could now be summed up in two commandments – loving God and loving one's neighbour. In fact, Paul says loving one's neighbour fulfilled the entire Jewish law!

Matthew 22:37-40 *Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

Romans 13:9-10 *For, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not kill," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, in this word it is summed up, namely, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

Galatians 5:14 *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, in this: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."*

The difference between the Old and the New Covenant:

The Jewish Law was fulfilled by neighbourly love, helpfulness and harmlessness (Good Samaritan style). That is the Old Covenant. The Good Samaritan could help his neighbour then get on with his life and yet still fulfill the Law.

The New Covenant tells us to love one another as Jesus loved us – that is with sacrificial love. The Christian community is knit together in Christ, with an everlasting bond.

This takes love to a much higher level, a level that can only be fulfilled through the Holy Spirit. This is not a complete break from the Old Covenant, but an expansion of it. "Love thy neighbour as thyself", takes on a new level: "Love one another as I have loved you"..

1 John 2:7-10 *Brothers, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which you heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I am writing to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shines. He who says that he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.*

We are to love one another, to love the community of God, with such intensity that: "the world will know that you are my disciples". Jesus calls us to "love one another".

The apostle Peter tells us that our love is to be "fervent":

1 Peter 4:8 *And above all things have fervent love for one another, because "love will cover a multitude of sins."*

Fervent love is much more than a polite smile on Sunday morning! God is very, very serious about us loving one another. It's not optional.

"Love one another as I have loved you" is the mark of being a real Christian! Life is not about just about personal goals and destiny (which can be selfish). It's about loving "one another". Indeed, if we don't love our brother we have not even begun to love God!

1 John 4:20-21 *If anyone claims, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how is it possible for him to love God whom he has not seen?) And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God should love his brother also.*

Activities

1. What is the New Commandment, (or new Covenant)?
2. What does John mean by 'walking' in the New Commandment'? **2 John 1:5-6**
3. Compare the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.
4. What are some examples of laws from the Ten Commandments that the New Covenant sums up?
5. What is the difference between following the New Covenant and just being a Good Samaritan?
6. What is the meaning of 'fervent'?

7. How does this apply to loving others?
8. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our instruction to love others?
9. What does **1 John 4: 20-21** tell us about the consequences of hate.

The Importance of Love

Study 2: 1 John 4:7-8

Topic: Love proves that we know God.

1 John 4:7-8 *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; and everyone that loves has been born of God and knows God. He that does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

There are 21 verses about “loving one another” in the New Testament and not a single verse about “loving one another” in the Old Testament. “Love one another” is the new commandment of the New Covenant and absolutely proves that we know and love God.

The 21 “love one another” verses are:

John 13:34, John 13:35, John 15:12, John 15:17, Romans 12:10, Romans 13:8, Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, 2 Thessalonians 1:3, Hebrews 10:24, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 Peter 5:14, 1 John 3:11, 1 John 3:23, 1 John 4:7, 1 John 4:11, 1 John 4:12, 2 John 1:5.

Agape Love

Agape love is the highest form of love, characterized by selflessness, unconditional care, and sacrificial commitment for the well-being of others. Agape is a Greek word for this love.

Now let’s look at the claims made about agape love in 1 John 4:7,8:

- a) We are to *love one another* because love is of God
- b) Everyone that loves has been born of God
- c) Everyone that loves knows God
- d) He that does not love does not know God
- e) God is love

God is agape love, which is the very core of His being, and the motivation for His covenants, His mercy and faithfulness and His reason for sending Christ into the world to save us. This love is part of the Trinity. The Father is love; the Son is love and the Holy Spirit is love.

If we have true, selfless, caring agape love in our hearts then we are truly a new creation because we have God's nature implanted in us, and we are "putting on" Christ (who is love.)

Colossians 3:14 says, *"And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."*

Loving one another proves that we know God, love God and are Christ's disciples. Agape love shows that we do not belong to this world because agape love is not found in the world. By "the world" the Bible is referring to people who do not know God.

1 John 2:15-17 *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever*

If you have love, you have the Holy Spirit. If you don't have love, you don't really have the Holy Spirit because love is the first of His fruit (Galatians 5:22,23) and without love you are nothing (1 Corinthians 13:1-4).

Religious zeal and doctrinal purity cannot replace the need for God's love in your heart! The Pharisees and Scribes and Sadducees had a deep belief in God, Judaism and the Bible but they did not accept Jesus. They managed to completely memorize and study the Hebrew Old Testament and were zealous for its laws, and for their nation, without ever genuinely knowing God.

The Samaritan woman (John 4), on the other hand, found salvation because she willingly received God's love and straight away began to share that love with her village.

Christian leaders who accumulate vast amounts of power, wealth and the good things of this world unto themselves and who refuse to share them with their brothers and sisters in Christ who are in obvious need, do not know God's love:

1 John 3:16,17 *By this we have come to know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives in behalf of our brothers. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother having need, and shuts off his compassion towards him, how does the love of God abide in him?*

And it's not just church leaders that this applies to. If any so-called Christian goes to church and envies and hates everyone around him or her, then they do not have love.

The sign that you know and love God is to have a new nature that belongs to the new "born-again" creation of God, and that new nature is a truly loving nature. Mercy and kindness are more important than sabbath-keeping, tithing and theology (see Matthew 23). Christianity is not an institution, philosophy, a theology or a Sunday-morning ceremony, it is a new creation lifestyle of love!

Every time you have been disappointed with Church it is generally because of a lack of love, either on their part, or on your part. A church should be an agape love community and if it's not an agape love community then it's not God's community, because God is love!

If you are truly born of God and if you truly love God then you must love other people, even very flawed and difficult people. If God loves you, then you must love them.

Love is a choice. The things of this world are passing away but the things that are from God abide forever, including faith, hope and love and the greatest of these is love.

Activities

1. Choose two of the claims made about love in **1 John 4:7,8** and in a paragraph, expand on the deeper meaning.
2. What is 'agape love'?
3. The Pharisees were full of religious zeal but did not have love. Give evidence to substantiate this claim.
4. What is the difference between worldly love and agape love? **1 John 2:15-17**
5. In the ideal church, what should the expression of agape love look like?

The Importance of Love

Study 3: 1 John 3:14-24

Topic: Loving one another demonstrates that we have eternal life.

1 John 3:14-24 *We know that we have passed over from death to life, because we love the brothers. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. (16) By this we have come to know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives in behalf of our brothers. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother having need, and shuts off his compassion towards him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And in this we know that we are from the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. Because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we should ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and we do the things pleasing before Him. And this is His commandment: that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and should love one another, just as He gave commandment.*

And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, from the Spirit whom He gave us.

The bible passage above is one of the most radical passages in the entire New Testament, because it states that:

1. We know we have passed from death to life if we love the brethren
2. On the other hand, if we don't love other Christians we abide in death.
3. If we hate our brother, we are a murderer and are without eternal life
4. We know love because Jesus laid down His life for us.
5. We should lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters in Christ.
6. A true Christian will lay down the good things of this life that others may have need of.
7. If we refuse to help the needy (with our goods) and have no compassion, we do not have God's love.
8. Love is to be active and practical not just verbal.
9. God's commandment is that we should believe in the name of Jesus and should love one another.
10. If we do these two things, (which are actually one thing), we abide in God and He in us and have eternal life.

God wants us to be generous, and to have genuine human connection and compassionate interaction with Christians in need.

3 John 1:5-8 *Dear friend, you are faithful in whatever you do for the brothers, especially when they are strangers. They have testified before the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. After all, they went on their trip for the sake of Christ's name, accepting no support from the Gentiles. Therefore, we ought to support such people so that we can become their helpers in spreading the truth.*

However, in the following passage we read that reaction of some power-hungry and selfish Christians (such as Diotrephes in the NT) was to deny such workers even their most basic needs:

3 John 1:9-11 *I wrote a letter to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be in charge, will not accept us. For this reason, when I come I will call attention to what he is doing in spreading false charges against us. And not content with that, he refuses to accept the brothers. He even tries to stop those who want to accept them and throws them out of the church. Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The person who does what is good is from God. The person who does what is evil has never seen God.*

Diotrephes threw the missionaries out of church and was hostile to those who wanted to be kind to them! Lack of support for missionaries is still evident today.

Loving one another means meeting the practical needs of missionaries (as much as we can within our resources) and standing with them through the trials of life.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (below) tells us that there are two kinds of 'works' in the New Testament, religious works and good works. *Religious works*, known as 'works of the Law' are done to earn righteousness, these are man-centered, religious and unnecessary and we are not obliged to do them at all. On the other hand, *good works* are our works done out of love for others, they are absolutely necessary, are a sign of true living faith, and are what we are made to do as new creations in Christ:

Ephesians 2:8-10 *For by such grace you have been saved through faith. This does not come from you; it is the gift of God and not the result of (religious) works, lest anyone boast. For we are his masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared long ago to be our way of life.*

But faith without good works, done out of love, is not true faith at all:

Galatians 5:6 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters. What matters is faith that is active through love.*

James 2:14-26 *What good does it do, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith but does not have any works? This kind of faith cannot save him, can it? Suppose a brother or sister does not have any clothes or daily food and one of you tells them, "Go in peace! Stay warm and eat heartily." If you do not provide for their bodily needs, what good does it do? In the same way, faith by itself, if it does not have any works, is dead. But someone may say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without any works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. That's fine! Even the demons believe that and tremble with fear. Do you want proof, you foolish person, that faith without works is worthless? For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.*

In fact, faith and love are mentioned together, as partners in the same verse, at least 21 times in the New Testament. Some examples:

2 Timothy 1:13 *Hold on to the pattern of healthy teachings that you have heard from me, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

2 Thessalonians 1:3 *At all times we are obligated to thank God for you, brothers. It is right to do this because your faith is growing all the time and the love of every one of you for each other is increasing.*

There is simply no such thing as true Christian faith without practical Christian love. This especially applies to how we help out members of our own family who may be in financial distress:

1 Timothy 5:8 *If anyone does not take care of his own relatives, especially his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Philippians 2:4 *Do not be concerned about your own interests, but also be concerned about the interests of others.*

These good works are a true sign that you have eternal life, that you know God, and that you truly love God and that you believe in His Son Jesus Christ.

Activities

1. Out of the 10 points listed by the author, summarizing **1 John 3:14-24**, which two do you find the most challenging and why?
2. What was the problem with Diotrephes in **3 John 1:9-11**?
3. While our Salvation is not dependent on 'good works' what does God expect from Christians regarding good works?
4. Apart from missionaries, who else does God expect us to look after and provide for?
5. Explain how generosity and Christian love are connected.

The Importance of Love

Study 4: 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:3

Topic: God personally teaches us how to love one another.

If loving one another is absolutely essential to our spiritual growth, how do we get it? You cannot go and buy it from a supermarket. You do not get love through bible study plus self-effort, and you don't become loving by being "extra good".

The correct answer is that:

- a) Love comes from God who is love and
- b) The God who is love, teaches those who are born of God how to love.

1 John 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God.*

This is well illustrated by the spiritual growth in the lives of the Thessalonian Christians:

1 Thessalonians 3:12 *And may the Lord make you to increase and abound in love toward one another and toward all men, as indeed we also do toward you,*

1 Thessalonians 1:3 *We are obligated to give thanks to God always for you, brothers, and rightfully so, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all increases towards one another.*

1 Thessalonians 4:9 *Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for me to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.*

In 1 Thessalonians 3:12 Paul prays that their love may increase and abound, in 2 Thessalonians 1:3 we find this has happened and their love is increasing, both individually and as a whole group! The “secret sauce” is revealed in 1 Thessalonians 4:9 - God Himself was personally teaching them to love one another, and to such an extent that Paul had no need to write any instructions to them about loving one another!

God the Holy Spirit is the instructor. He abides deep in your conscience, and reveals to you the paths of righteousness and love. Indeed, the Holy Spirit reveals the things “that eyes have not seen”:

1 Corinthians 2:9-12 *But as it is written, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard," nor has it entered into the heart of man, "the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." (10) But God has revealed them to us by His Spirit; ...(12)so that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God.*

Indeed, the things of the Old Covenant were written in a book but the things pertaining to the New Covenant are written on our hearts by the Holy Spirit:

Hebrews 8:10-11 *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My Laws into their mind and write them in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not each man teach his neighbour, and each man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest.*

God is our personal spiritual coach, who guides us into all truth!

John 16:13-15 *However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself, but whatever He hears, He shall speak. And He will announce to you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will receive of Mine and will announce it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and will announce it to you.*

The Spirit of Truth will take the things of Christ and speak and announce them to us. The Holy Spirit will do this in order to glorify Jesus Christ! All the things of the Father are Christ's and they are, in turn, revealed to us personally through the Holy Spirit. Here are some more verses along the same line:

1 John 2:20 *But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.*

1 John 2:27 *But the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true and no lie, and as He has taught you, abide in Him.*

John 6:45 *It is written in the Prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." Therefore everyone who hears and learns from the Father comes to Me.*

Isaiah 28:26 *For his God instructs him to do right; his God teaches him.*

Now the Holy Spirit is given to fill each of us with the love of God (Ephesians 3:19), pouring it out into our hearts (Romans 5:5). So it makes sense that one of the main tasks of the Holy Spirit, would be to teach us how to obey Christ's New Commandment, that is the commandment to love one another as He has loved us!

1 Thessalonians 4:9 *Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for me to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.*

The Holy Spirit is the free gift and blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant (Galatians 3:14) and this blessing is given that we might fulfill the Law and live a life of love.

Galatians 3:14 *He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

1 Peter 1:22 *Purifying your souls in the obedience of the truth through the Spirit to unfeigned love of the brothers, love one another fervently out of a pure heart,*

The life of love which is created within us by God, is made manifest in answer to our prayers. In fact, Paul often prays that people would grow in love, because it works (as it did with the Thessalonians)! One of Paul's greatest prayers for the saints to grow in love is in Ephesians 3:14-21

Ephesians 3:14-21 *For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, forever. Amen.*

The Bible tells us that if we ask something that is God's will, then we will receive it. And what is more in God's will than desiring to obey the command to love one another as Christ has loved us?

1 John 5:14-15 *And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.*

God will freely give you the ability to love others, for nothing is impossible with God!

Activities

1. How do we get the ability to love others?
2. List three verses that explain the role of the Holy Spirit in helping us to love others.

3. **1 Peter 1:22** instructs us to love others out of a pure heart. Give an example of this.
4. Give an example of the opposite: showing love out of a selfish motive.
5. Who are the Gentiles and what was promised to the Gentiles? **Galatians 3:14**
6. If we are finding it hard to love others, what should we do in the light of **1 John 5:14-15**?

The Importance of Love

Study 5: Ephesians 4:2

Topic: Bearing with one another in love

Ephesians 4:2 *Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*

Romans 15:1-2 *We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. 2 Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

Love is patient and puts up with much! Deep patience is a sign of true grace and it is God's patience that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Bullies are impatient. However great men and women of God are forbearing.

If you want to destroy all your relationships, just be impatient and put up with nothing, go and point everything negative out, and do so in public! Resentment breeds inside of children with impatient parents and workers with impatient bosses. (Then resentment turns into rejection and rejection into revenge).

So patience, forbearance and long-suffering are essential to maintaining "peace in the household". We have to "bear with" our families, leaders and close friends. We have to work at those relationships and decide to preserve them at almost any cost. Irritability in key relationships is like sandpaper; it rubs them thin!

However Proverbs tells us that there are some people we should NOT be patient with: the violent, the corrupt, the persistent fool, the prideful and scornful person, the immoral temptress, the chronically lazy "sluggard", the flatterer, the toxic gossip, and so on. These people need to either be avoided or rebuked.

Jesus says in Matthew "beware of men." There are some people we should be very wary of, and if possible, disconnect from.

But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues (Matthew 10:17)

We need to be patient and careful with those we love. We stand with them, love them, mend the fences, grant grace and find them forgiveness seventy times seven!

On the other hand, even Jesus did not forbear with the Pharisees but rebuked them.

We love the person but hate the sin, and pray for grace! Remember God is patient with you so you ought to be patient with others!

Activities

1. Describe love as outlined in **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**
2. What is the meaning of 'bearing with one another'?
3. What is a recipe for destroying relationships?
4. What kind of people should we NOT be patient with?
5. Who SHOULD we be patient with?
6. What do you think it means when the authors says that God has been patient with us?

The Importance Of Love

Study 6: Matthew 6:12-15

Topic: love forgives debts

Matthew 6:12-15 *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Verse 12 could be expressed as:

"And forgive us all that we owe to God, both financially and legally and morally because we are also forgiving others of everything they owe us, financially, legally and morally".

This verse tells us that if God forgives us, we should forgive others.

God will treat us as we also treat others. For example, "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy."

Matthew 18:32-35 – The parable of the unforgiving servant

Then his lord, after he had called him, said to him, O wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have pitied your fellow servant, even as I had pity on you? And his lord was angry, and delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due to him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also to you, unless each one of you from your hearts forgive his brother their trespasses.

In this parable a servant who owed an immense amount of money - ten thousand talents - (one talent was about 34 kilos of gold). The servant is forgiven and has his debt cancelled, but he attacks and imprisons a fellow servant who owes him about a hundred dollars. The king is furious and throws that wicked and unforgiving servant into jail because he did not also cancel fellow servant's debt.

Remember that Matthew had been a tax-collector. In fact, Matthew was probably the chief tax-collector at Capernaum and one of the three chief tax collectors in all Israel (also along with Zaccheus the chief tax collector at Jericho). He would certainly know a lot about the paying of debts.

Matthew had previously made his living by taking "the last penny" from people and "handing them over to the jailers" if they refused to pay! But Matthew's conversion transformed him from getting as much as he could out of people, to offering forgiveness!

For Matthew this was very real, as it is for us today. We should never use our power over others to exact every last cent from them. We should forget about the fifty dollars that was never paid back. We should let family grudges pass on by, and we should not go around constantly saying "but you owe me". Christians should be soft-hearted! Besides the things that are not repaid now will be repaid later at the resurrection of the just:

Luke 14:13-14 *But when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and you shall be blessed, for they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.*

Luke 6:34-36 *And if you lend to those of whom you hope to receive, what thanks do you have? For sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return. And your reward shall be great, and you shall be the sons of the Highest. For He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. Therefore be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

Christians should not take legal actions against their churches and pastors or against one another. Scripture clearly forbids this:

1 Corinthians 6:1-8 *Does any of you, having a matter against another, dare go to court before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we will judge angels? Let alone ordinary matters! If then you have ordinary lawsuits, you appoint those who are disdained within the church to judge. I*

say this to your shame. So is there not among you a wise man, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brother and another? But brother goes to court against brother, and this before unbelievers!

Already therefore, it is actually a defeat for you that you have lawsuits against one another. Why not rather accept wrong? Why not rather accept being defrauded? But you wrong and defraud, and these things to your brothers!

Christians are to be tender-hearted, cancelling debts that can't be paid and forgiving each other, in the love of God!

Ephesians 4:30-32 *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed until the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and tumult and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.*

Philippians 2:1-4 *If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tenderness and mercies, then fulfill my joy, that you may be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Do not let each man look upon his own things, but each man also on the things of others.*

Colossians 3:12-14 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender feelings of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving yourselves, if anyone has a complaint against any. As Christ forgave you, so also you do. And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.*

We should treat others tenderly and mercifully just as God in Christ treats us, "forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you".

Prayer: *Lord teach us to forgive others as You indeed have forgiven us!*

Activities

1. What can we learn from the parable of the unforgiving servant?
2. Describe the change in Matthew's life – before and after he became a follower of Christ.
3. What is the meaning of 'merciful'?
4. What is an example of a Christian being 'tender-hearted'?
5. When do you think you should cancel a person's debt to you, and when should you insist on being paid back?

The Importance of Love

Study 7: Luke 6:35

Topic: Love vs. Relationship

Love versus relationship? Are not the two identical? Not quite! Let's look at this logically, then Scripturally:

1. You can love someone you don't even know e.g. by sending a gift to an orphanage in Africa; thus, you can show love without having any relationship whatsoever.
2. You can love your enemies (people you have an awful relationship with) and do good to them, pray for them and bless them.
3. You can love someone who is unresponsive, say in a coma, and sit by them, pray for them, and ensure optimal care for them.
4. Some people have imaginary relationships, with AI "friends". You cannot love (agape love) a person who does not really exist!

Love and relationship are often intertwined, but they are not the same thing. Love is a deep and intense feeling of affection and care for someone, while a relationship is the connection and bond that two people share. Love can exist without a relationship, as it is a feeling that comes from within, while a relationship requires mutual understanding, communication, and commitment from both parties. In a relationship, love is expressed through actions, words, and gestures, creating a strong and lasting connection between two individuals.

Love should lead to and flow out of relationship, but we also have to love even in the absence of a positive relationship! For instance, we have to love our enemies and our difficult relatives, or people who annoy us!

Love is a completely free gift which requires no return and that can be given even to the "evil and ungrateful":

Luke 6:35 *Love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because He is kind even to ungrateful and evil people.*

If God was not kind to evil people none of us would be saved! (Romans 3:23, 5:8, 6:23)

Love and relationship are separate and independent concepts. Love is under our control but relationships sometimes do not go the way we want. Even when our relationships fail, we are still called to show God's agape love, even to our enemies, persecutors and betrayers. Jesus let Judas Iscariot kiss Him and even called Judas "friend" (Matthew 26:47-50). Our demonstration of God's agape love in and throughout such trials will prove our faith and result in either the repentance or in the stern judgment of our enemies.

So here is the big question: Will demonstrating God's agape love improve your relationships? The answer is a definite maybe but probably not! Jesus was filled with God's agape love and he just got betrayed and crucified and his close friends fled from him when he needed them most. In Isaiah 52:1-5 we read that Jesus was despised, rejected, and turned away from. The most loving person in the world seems to have had lots of enemies and some very disappointing friends!

Don't assume that I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.

Activities

1. Can you love someone without having a relationship? Give example.
2. Can you have a relationship without having love? Give example.
3. What do you think it means to love your enemies? Give at least one example.
4. How can you try to improve a bad relationship?
5. When might the Gospel create a sword? **Matthew 10:34-36** Describe a possible scenario.

Final Study: Our love for God

Read John 11:55 – 12:19

The background to this passage is that one of Jesus' best friends, Lazarus had died. The two sisters of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, had called for Jesus to come, because they believed that Jesus could heal Lazarus when he was sick, but Jesus chose to delay his coming because he wanted to demonstrate something greater than physical healing. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus had been dead for four days, and was in a burial tomb wrapped in burial cloths. Jesus stood at the tomb and commanded: "Lazarus come forth!" and Lazarus came out of the tomb, raised from the dead.

Now the Pharisees were afraid of Jesus and his power, and wanted to get rid of Lazarus, who was evidence of Jesus' power. In today's passage, Lazarus, Mary and Martha had arranged a dinner, to which Jesus was invited.

1. What was Martha's role?
2. What did Mary do for Jesus? (Note that the ointment was worth a year's wages in value.)
3. How does Mary's expression of love for Jesus challenge the Christian?

God is Provider

Introduction

Christians often talk about “end times” but what is meant by that?

To acknowledge such a thing as “end times” we must believe that the Bible is true, and just as there was a beginning to the world, there will be an end. The Bible gives us some information about what it will be like shortly before Jesus comes again, and this earth as we know it is wrapped up.

Most people who are not Christians do not believe in “end times”. They believe that the world will go on forever and therefore many have a sense of fear about the future. Will the earth be over populated? Will there be enough food for everyone?

As Christians we do not have to worry, because we know that God has everything under His control He will provide for and make a way for us.

Study 1: Signs of The End

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 24:1-51

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the main lesson Jesus wants us to learn from the parable of the ten virgins? (v.13)
2. Who is the bridegroom? (v. 1,5)
3. Who are the wise virgins? What happened to them? (v.4,10)
4. Who are the foolish virgins? What happened to them? (v.3, 11-13)
5. What is the main lesson Jesus wants us to learn from the parable of the talents? (v. 29)
6. What did the Master do? (v. 14,15)
7. What did the two and five talent servants do? What was their reward? (v.16-23)
8. What did the one talent servant do? What happened to him? (v.18, 24-31)
9. What is the main lesson Jesus wants us to learn from the parable of the sheep and the goats? (v. 40, 45, 46)
10. What did the “sheep” do – and what was their reward? (v. 34-40)

11. What did (or didn't) the goats do – and what happened to them (v. 41-46)

12. Why do you think it will be so important for Christians to be practical and compassionate during the end-times?

Study 2: The Tribulation – The Deceivers

BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What event must happen before the Lord returns? (v.1-4)

2. In the light of this what should our attitude be? (v. 2,3)

3. What will the Man of Sin be like? (v. 4,8,9)

4. What will Jesus do to him? (v. 8)

5. What is the “mystery of lawlessness”? (v. 6-8)

6. How will the Anti-Christ deceive people? (v. 9-12 – see also Matthew 7:21-23, 24:24, Mark 13:22, Revelation 13:13,14, 16:14,19:20)

7. What sort of people will be deceived? (v. 10-12)

8. How does Paul reassure the Thessalonians? (v. 13,14)

9. What are the Thessalonians to do? (v.15)

10. How can we “stand firm” amidst the many false teachings that abound today?

11. How can God be our comfort in the end-times? (v. 16,17)

12. God can “establish us in every good word and work” (v.17) – list some “words and works” that you would like God to establish for you.

Study 3: The Tribulation – Persecution

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 12 & 13

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. The woman in Rev 12 is believing Israel/the Church who gives birth to Christ. What is the Devil's reaction? (12:1-4)
2. What is the destiny of the male child? (12:5)
3. What happens to the Church? (12:6)
4. What happens to the Devil? (12:7-9)
5. When the Devil is forced down to earth what does he do? (12:12-13:9)
6. How do the saints overcome Satan? (12:10,11)
- 7.
8. What does God do for the woman? (Rev 12:13-17)
9. Who does Satan go off to make war with? (Rev 12:17, 13:8-10)
10. Who are the beast, the dragon and the false prophet and what do they do? (13:1-18)
11. What do they compel people to do? What do they do to those who resist? (13:8,12-17)
12. What is the mark of the beast? What does it allow people to do? (13:16-18)
13. What sort of hard choices will Christians have to make in the end times? (13:10,15,17)

Study 4: The Tribulation – Babylon and World Trade

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 12 & 13

Question: What do you know about world trade at this current time?

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who is the woman? What city is it? What power does it have? (17:1-6, 18)
2. (Note” The Greek word for city is polis from which we get politics and means a clearly defined political unit – which can sometimes be broadly applied to a whole civilization.)
3. What do predatory cities of empire - like Babylon, Nineveh Rome have in common? Are there any such cities today?
4. What is this spirit of worldly empire opposed to? (17:4-6, 18:24)
5. How does international trade oppose or encroach on: the gospel, sacred spaces, the Sabbath, prophetic people and the environment, which is God’s creation?
6. What is the effect of such power on the kings of the earth? (17:2, 9-13)
7. How are the merchants part of Babylon? What sorts of things are traded? (18:3, 9-19, 23)
8. What is God’s attitude to this blasphemous, luxurious and unjust city? (18:1-8)
9. What does the voice from Heaven tell Christians to do? (18:4,5 – see also 13:16-18)
10. What happens if they don’t obey? (18:4,5)
11. What are the apostles and prophets told to do? (18:20)
12. How is Babylon allied with the occult? (18:13,23)
13. How does wealth deceive us? Will the end times involve a spiritual war between God and Mammon? (18:23,25, Matthew 6:24, 1Timothy 6:6-10)

Study 5: The Tribulation – The Final Plagues

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 15 & 16

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What do the seven angels carry? (15:1,4-8)
2. Where are the saints now? Why must the Rapture have occurred prior to this? (15:2-4)
3. What is the first plague? Who does it affect? (16:1,2)
4. What is the second plague? What does it affect? (16:3)
5. What is the third plague? Why is it just and right? (16:4-7)
6. What is the fourth plague? What is the people's reaction? (16:8,9)
7. What is the fifth plague? What is "the kingdom of the beast"? (16:10,11)
8. What is the sixth plague? Where is Armageddon? (16:12-16)
9. What is the seventh plague? What happens to "the great city"? (16:17-21)
10. What is the warning Jesus gives in verse 15? (see also Matthew 24:34, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-4, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 3:3)
11. What are the spiritual influences that proceed from the dragon, the beast and the false prophet? (v.13,14)
12. What does it mean that Babylon was remembered before God? (v.19)

Study 6: The Tribulation – The Seven Churches

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation chapters 2 & 3

STUDY QUESTIONS

(Note: *The seven churches were real churches in Asia Minor (mostly in Turkey), may have been mostly Jewish Christians. They also represent seven states a Church can be in, and also seven ages of Church History. Locate them using your bible's maps.*)

1. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Church in Ephesus? (2:1-7)
2. What did Jesus want them to do? How can we apply that today? (2:4,5)
3. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Church in Smyrna? (2:8-11)
4. What promises does Jesus give to them? (2:10,11)
5. What was the consequence for the church in Pergamos of dwelling where Satan's throne was? Can churches in dark places expect trouble? (2:12-17)
6. What was the spiritual and moral problem with the church in Thyatira? (2:18-29)
7. What is promised to those who overcome in Thyatira? (2:26-29)
8. The church in Sardis was the opposite of what it appeared to be. How is man's judgment often incorrect about the Church? What was Jesus' command to them? (3:1-6)
9. What is the key of David and what does it do? (3:7,8)
10. Why did Jesus commend those in Philadelphia? What did He promise them? (3:10-12)
11. What was wrong with the church in Laodemia? (3:14-17)
12. What did Jesus counsel them to do? (3:18-21)

Study 7: The Tribulation – The Two Witnesses

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 11: 1-19

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How long do the two witnesses prophesy for? (v.1-3)
2. What is the significance of the olive trees and lampstands? (v.4. & Zechariah 4:11-14)
3. What powers do these prophets possess? (v.5,6)
4. What happens when they complete their testimony and confront the Anti-Christ? (v.7)
5. How does this support the idea that God keeps His servants from harm until their job is done and their testimony completed?
6. In which city are they killed? (v.8) What is the spiritual significance of this?
7. What is the reaction of unbelievers to the death of the two witnesses? (v.9,10)
8. What is God's response? How does He justify His servants? (v.11-13)
9. What was the effect of the earthquake? (v.13)
10. What occurs in Heaven? What happens to the kingdoms of this world? (v.15-17)
11. Who were full of wrath? Who were rewarded? Who were destroyed? (v.18)

Study 8: The Tribulation – The Martyrs & The 144,000

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 7:1-17, 14:1-5, and 6:9-11

STUDY QUESTIONS

[Note: There seems to be a group of Jewish Christian martyrs – the 144,000 and a larger Gentile group of martyrs - “a multitude than no man can count”.]

1. What is the scene that is unfolding in 7:1-3?
2. What does this tell us about the role of angels in implementing God’s judgments?
3. What nationality are the 144,000? (7:4)
4. Look at the twelve tribes – Joseph is added and Dan is omitted. Some commentators say this is because Dan was spiritually wayward and introduced idolatry to Israel. What else do you notice? (7:58)
5. How are they sealed by God? List the similarities and the differences from the mark in Revelation 13:16-18? (7:4, 14:1)
6. What are the spiritual characteristics of the 144,000? (7:3, 14:1-5)
7. What is the nationality of the great multitude? (7:9)
8. What does this tell us about a) the scope and b) success of world missions? (5:9, 7:9 & Matthew 24:14) Where should missionaries be focusing their efforts?
9. What activity is taking place in 7:10-12? How can we best praise God?
10. What are the spiritual characteristics of the great multitude? (7:13-15) See also:
11. Titus 3:5,6; 1 Cor 6:10,11; Eph 5:26,27; John 15:3; Hebrews 10:22; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 John 1:7-9
12. For those who believe, suffering and evil always comes to an end – to affect them no more. (6:9-11; 7:16,17; 21:1-7) How is this promise of God meaningful to you?
13. What are the fountains of living waters? (7:17, 21:6) See also: Jer 17:13, John 4:10,11; 7:38

Study 9: A Glimpse of Heaven

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation chapters 4 & 5

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why did God command the apostle John to visit Heaven? (4:1,2)
2. “And behold a throne” – what does this signify? How is God like a King?
3. What is happening here? Use some spare paper to draw a picture of the scene in Heaven in chapter 4. What is the significance of the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures?
4. Why is God described as being like precious gemstones? (4:3 see also Exodus 28:15-21)
5. How can Christians come before the throne? (Hebrews 4:14-16, Revelation 3:21)
6. Why do they worship “Him who sits upon the throne”? (4:10, 11) What does this say about the importance of God being our Creator?
7. What is the problem with the scroll/book that is sealed? (5:1-5)
8. Why is Jesus worthy to open the book? (5:9,10)
9. What titles are used of Jesus in this chapter and what is their significance? (5:5,6)

What do the symbols used in the description of the Lamb of God mean? What are the seven spirits of God? (5:6)

10. What does the incense represent? (5:8, 8:4,5 see also Psalm 141:2 and cross-references)
11. What is the significance of 5:10 for believers? (also check your cross-references)

Study 10: The Lake of Fire

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 19:11-20:15

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Who is the rider on the white horse and what are His attributes? (19:11-13)
2. How is the picture in 19:11-16 so vastly different from the Jesus of the gospels?
3. What happens to the armies of the beast? (19:17,18,21)
4. But what happens to the beast and the false prophet? (19:20)
5. What happens to Satan- the dragon? (20:1-3)
6. How are the faithful saints rewarded? What does it mean to “reign”? (20:4-6)
(Note: This does not contradict the bible’s other teaching where all Christians are raised at His coming. It is the unbelieving dead that are later judged by their works in 20:13-15.)
7. Describe Satan’s last stand. (20:7-9)
8. What is the fate of the Devil and the final rebels against God? (20:10,14,15)
9. What happens to the dead that are in Hell (Hades/the grave) (20:13-15)
10. What then happens to “Death and Hell” lit. *Thanatos and Hades*? (20:14) also see 1 Corinthians 15:25,26,54,55
11. The Lake of Fire represents the place of permanent destruction of all evil, which is removed from the experience of the saints and dumped there – Spiritual evil (Satan), political evil (the beast), religious evil (the false prophet), physical evil - death (Thanatos), and existential evil - the grave (Hades) and various evil persons (20:14,15). In other words – evil comes to a complete end – but we do not - for Christians have eternal life. What impact does his truth have on you?
12. What is the book of life? (13:8, 17:8 20:12-15 see also Psalm 69:28, Philippians 4:3)

Study 11: Satan's Downfall

BIBLE PASSAGE: Ezekiel 28:1-19, Isaiah 14:12-20, Ephesians 2:1-4, Revelation 20:1-15

Background

The Bible describes eight main spiritual realms:

Above the Heavens – where God's glory dwells and where Satan once aimed to be. (Psalm 8:1, 108:4,5, Ephesians 1:20, 4:10, Isaiah 14:12-14)

Third Heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2) – the Throne, where Paul went and heard holy things.

Second Heaven (Revelation 12:4-12, 14:6,7) –Where Satan and fallen angels first fell to. Demons are fighting to regain it now.

First Heaven (Genesis 1:20, Psalm 104:12, Daniel 2:38) – birds dwell, Satan dwells as prince of the power of the air since the cross.

Earth esp. "The Face Of The Earth" (Genesis 6:1, Acts 17:26, Job 1:7,2:2, 1 Peter 5:8) – the place of human habitation, also where Satan prowls, and will be cast down to in the end times.

The Grave/Under The Earth /In The Sea/The Deep (Genesis 1:2, Exodus 20:4, Deuteronomy 5:8, Job 28:14, Philippians 2:10, Revelation 5:3) – the place human bodies, some righteous souls before the cross e.g. Samuel, and creatures of the deep dwell.

Abyss/the Bottomless Pit/Hell (Isaiah 14:11-15; Numbers 16:33, Ezekiel 32:15-18, Luke 8:31, 10:7, Revelation 9:1,2; 20:1-3) – presently where the souls of the disgraced dead and confined demons dwell

The Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20, 20:10-15) – a future place of eternal punishment prepared for the Devil and his angels and those who accept the mark of the Beast.

Satan initially fell from the **third heaven** where he was an *anointed cherub* (Ezekiel 28:1-19, Isaiah 14:12-20), to the **second heaven** during the OT, then after the cross and the disciples ministry Satan "**falls from heaven like fire**" (Luke 10:17,18) that is - from second heaven to the first heaven become "the prince of the power of the air" – in Ephesians (Ephesians 2:1-4). After the battle with Michael the archangel in Rev 12 (where Satan tries to retake the second heaven) he is **cast out of the heavens entirely** (Revelation 12:9). He is **forced to Earth** (Revelation 12:9,12) and **incarnates as the Anti-Christ**. (Revelation 13) He **was with God and is cast to the Pit**. (Revelation 19,20:1-3) After 1000 years Satan tries to retake Earth and loses yet again and his final place of punishment in the **lake of fire**. (Revelation 20) It seems that Satan can go "down a level" any time he likes – say from first heaven to earth, but he cannot go up a level without God's permission.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What was Satan's original status before God? (Ezekiel 28:1-19, Isaiah 14:12-20)
2. Why was Satan cast out from the immediate presence of God? (Ezek 28:13-18)
3. During the time of Job Satan could be summoned to heaven (Job 1:6,7; 2:1,2) but where did the Devil spend most of his time? (Job 1:7, 2:2)
4. What happened to Satan during the ministry of the disciples? (Luke 10:17,18)
5. Were there any exorcisms recorded in the Old Testament? Why so many in the New Testament? What was the change? (Matthew 11:11-13)
6. What power was given to the apostles? (Matthew 10:1,8)
7. What happened to Satan at the cross? (Colossians 2:13-15, 1 Peter 3:22, 1 John 3:8)
8. Where was Satan during the time of Paul? (Ephesians 2:1-4)
9. What happens after the battle with Michael the archangel? (Revelation 12:7-12)
10. What is the name of the battle on earth that Satan organizes? (Revelation 16:14-16)
11. When Satan loses where is he confined for a thousand years? (Revelation 20:1-3)
12. What is Satan's final destination? (Revelation 20:11-15)

Study 11: The Millennium

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation 20:1-4; Acts 3:20,21; Matthew 19:27-30, Isaiah 11:1-10

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How long is Satan bound for? (Rev 20:1-4) Do you think he is bound today? (1 Peter 5:8)
2. What events lead to Satan being bound? (Revelation 19:19-20:4)
3. What did Jesus promise the apostles? (Matthew 19:27-30)
4. What will the restoration of all things be like? (Isaiah 11:1-10, 60:11-21)
5. What is creation doing now? (Romans 8:17-23)
6. What will happen when the sons of God are revealed? (Romans 8:17-23)
7. Who spoke of the Millennium? (Acts 3:21)
8. Who rules during the Millennium? (Revelation 2:26,27; 20:4)
9. Are Christians “destined for the throne” as Billheimer says in his small book by that name?
10. If we are destined to rule with Christ what sort of character traits should we develop?
11. How does prayer help in achieving God’s rule? (Matthew 6:10, Luke 11:2)
12. Why does the Millennium come to an end? (Revelation 20:7)

Study 12: The New Jerusalem

BIBLE PASSAGE: Revelation chapters 21, 22:1-5, 2 Peter 3:3-13

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the Bride of Christ? (Revelation 20:2, John 3:29, Ephesians 5:25-30)
2. What happens to the present universe? (Revelation 20:1)
3. How will this come about? (2 Peter 3:3-13)
4. What is the chief characteristic of the new universe? (2 Peter 3:13)
5. What does Peter mean by “one day is as a thousand years” (2 Peter 3:8)
6. What are the “first things” that pass away? (Rev 21:4)
7. What does God promise Christians? (21:3-7)
8. What happens to unrepentant sinners? (21:8)
9. What are the physical characteristics of the New Jerusalem? (21:10-23)
10. What are the social and spiritual characteristics of the New Jerusalem? (21:24-22:5)
11. What is the water of life? (22:1,2) What make us fruitful? (Gal 5:22,23)
12. What happens to curses including the curse on Creation? (Revelation 22:3)

Study 13: The Reward of the Saints

BIBLE PASSAGE: Corinthians 3:8-15, 2 Corinthians 5:9-11, Hebrews 11:6, Rev 2 & 3

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What happens to a Christian whose works are faulty? (1 Corinthians 3:15)
2. Can a born-again Christian be condemned by God? (John 3:18, 5:24, Romans 8:1,2)
3. What then is Christ judging? (1 Corinthians 3:10-15, Matthew 16:24-28)
4. What should Christian's lives be like? (2 Corinthians 5:9-11)
5. What rewards are listed in Revelation chapters 2 and 3? (list them all)
6. What sort of people are greatly rewarded by God? (Daniel 12:1-3)
7. What are some of the things that Christians will be rewarded for?
(Matthew 5:5,12, 6:1-4, 10:39-42, 16:24-28, 19:29 Luke 6:22-24, 35, 1 Corinthians 9:16-18; Colossians 3:22-24; Hebrews 10:35, 11:6, 11:26; 1 Peter 1:4, 3:9; 2 John 1:8)
8. Is it important to believe that God rewards the saints? (Hebrews 11:6)
9. What is the advantage of heavenly rewards? (Matthew 6:19-21, 1 Peter 1:4)
10. When are rewarded? (1 Corinthians 15:50-53, Matthew 19:28)
11. Our reward is also called an inheritance (Colossians 3:24) why is this so and what do we inherit?
(Revelation 21:7)?
12. What does it mean to "overcome"? (Romans 12:21; 1 John 2:13,14, 4:4, 5:4,5)

Study 13: Reigning with Christ

BIBLE PASSAGES: Matthew 20:20-28, 24:45-47, 25:21-23, 2 Timothy 2:12, Revelation 5:10, 20:4-6, 22:5

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What were the disciples expecting Christ's kingdom to be like? (Matthew 20:20-28)
2. How did Jesus correct them?
3. How does God reward faithful service? (Matthew 24:45-47)
4. What is the present price of faithful service? (2 Timothy 2:12)
5. What are you a "steward of" at the moment? (Matthew 25:21-23)
6. What has Jesus made us to be? (Revelation 5:10 – see also Matthew 5:5)
7. When do we first start to reign with Christ in a tangible way? (Revelation 20:4-6)
8. Do we still reign in the New Jerusalem? (Revelation 22:5)
9. A person who reigns is in control of their circumstances and their destiny. Why is this not true of Christians today?
10. What are we struggling against in order to reign now? (Ephesians 6:10-18)
11. Why are we "heirs" – what kind of inheritance is it? (Romans 8:16-25)
12. Why are hope and patience important (Romans 8:24,25)

Study 13: Living in Hope

BIBLE PASSAGES: 1 Peter 1:10-25, Romans 5:1-5, 8:20-25, Colossians 1:5,23,27; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How are hopeful living and holy living connected? (1 Peter 1:10-25)
2. What are we to hope in? (1 Peter 1:13, 21)
3. What process forms a strong and hopeful person? (Romans 5:1-5)
4. Who pours out hope into our hearts? (Romans 5:5)
5. What is Creation hoping for? (Romans 8:20-25)
6. What specifically are Christians hoping for (Romans 8:20-25)
7. Where is our hope located? (Colossians 1:5)
8. How do we hear about it? (Colossians 1:23)
9. How is the indwelling Christ a source of hope? (Colossians 1:27)
10. What happens when we have no hope? (1 Thessalonians 4:13)
11. What is the Christian's hope? (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17)
12. How should this alter the way we live our lives? (1 Thessalonians 5:18, 1 Peter 1:13-16)