

Bible Studies

Year 12

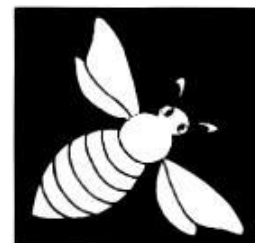
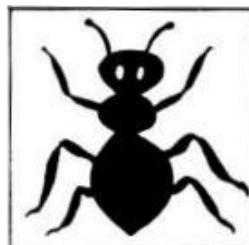
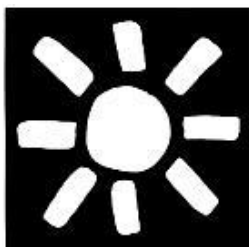
Term 3

God is...	Pages	Number of weeks	Number of studies
Creator (Part 2)	2 - 9	2	2
Wise	10 - 13	4	6
A Servant	14 - 20	4	6

Studies on Creation: Creation.com and Answers in Genesis

Studies on Proverbs: <https://everyday scripture.org/proverbs/study> (Wise)

Studies by Lawson Rd Church of Christ, Rochester, NY. (Servant)



God is Creator

Facts about the Great Flood

Read Genesis 6:9 - 9:17

Noah was righteous

Gen 6:1 – 8 and Gen 7:1

Noah born 2,948 BC

The beginning of the world was about 4000 BC (approx. 6000 years ago)

By the time of Noah, the population of sinners had grown to such an extent that God had to do something drastic.

Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives were the only righteous people on earth, (8 people).

Noah found grace / favour in the eyes of the Lord, (Gen 6:8).

Noah was old when God called him.

Gen 5:31-32

Noah was 600 years old when God chose him to be his servant. His role was to save human and animal life, (Gen 7:6.) He lived to around 900 yrs.

Noah's children

Noah had only three children, (three sons): Japeth, Shem and Ham. Japeth was the eldest and Ham the youngest. Shem, the middle son, was 98 when he entered the ark. His son Arpachshad was born 2 years after the Flood. He also had other sons and daughters after that, (Gen 11:10). Remember that people lived much longer then and the age period for bearing children was much longer.

If Noah's children were of child bearing age when they entered the ark, did they have children, and if so, why didn't they bring their children aboard?

The Bible doesn't tell us the answer to this, but it is clear that there were only 8 people on the ark. Either God chose not to give them children pre-Flood, or, their children may have been lost in the flood because they did not follow God's ways.

The Great Flood

Gen 7:6 - 24

Gen 8: 1 – 21

The flood occurred in 2,348 BC, (4,362 years ago).

The period of time from Creation to the Flood was 1,600.

The water came not just from the rain, but from underground springs.

So in 40 days it was possible for the whole earth to be covered with water.

What evidence do we see of a world-wide flood today?

1. The sea – made of water from the flood – salty. The huge upheaval of the earth caused mountains and valleys. As the flood receded it washed the minerals from the

land down into the valleys. Sea now covers 70% of the planet. Before the flood most of the world was land.

2. Fossils – caused by the flood and were not formed over millions of years. Fossils require sudden burial. If the animals had died naturally they would have either been eaten, or decomposed. The fine details we see in fossils don't occur in animals that slowly decompose. There are examples of fossils having lunch and giving birth.
3. Land formations – mountains, valleys, canyons, rock outcrops such as Uluru in the centre of Australia

Noah was a faithful obedient servant

The Bible tells us that Noah was obedient:

Gen 6:22 and Gen 7:5 – Noah did according to all that God had commanded.

He listened to God and heard accurately what God was saying.

Noah was chosen by God as His servant to bring about a special event in history.

Noah obeyed.

Noah delivered a prophetic message:

The message that God wanted to tell the world through Noah:

- God judges sin with death.
- God always judges sin with death.
- No one will get away with sin.
- There will be a day of judgment when all sin will be judged with death.
- Only those who escaped into the ark were saved.
- Only those who escape into God's salvation plan will be saved.

Noah was diligent, intelligent and skillful

Making of the ark:

Ch 6:14 – 16 – God's instructions for building the ark

The ark was not a bath tub or a cute little ark depicted in a children's story.

The proportions were for a most stable vessel: 30 x 5 x 3

This formula has proved to be the most stable dimensions for a water going vessel and there are 2 Nordic ferries made to these dimensions.

It was impossible to capsize,

It was massive in volume.

Noah and his sons had the technology. They were not ape-like men with low intelligence.

The size of the ark

A cubit is 1.5 feet, (46 cm). The boat was: 140 metres x 23 m x 13.5 m

Its volume was 43,500 cubic metres.

This is the equivalent of 522 standard railroad stock cars

(One railroad car holds 240 sheep.)

The fact that Noah's ark is plausible shows us that the Bible can be trusted as a historical document.

How did all the animals fit in?

God sent young or baby animals.

Only 11% of animals are bigger than sheep.

God sent only one pair of each kind – e.g. the horse family included zebra and donkey.

The boat had 3 levels.

These levels could represent:

Father

Son

Holy Spirit

The door was on the second level.

Jesus says, "I am the door, by Me if any one enters in he shall be saved."

Only 7 people believed Noah.

But he kept on believing even though he was in the minority.

Noah was strong and courageous.

He kept moving ahead with what he knew God had told him to do. He didn't doubt in the face of scoffers.

What similarities are there between God's calling on us and God's calling on Noah?

Noah kept preaching the same message even though people didn't listen.

God wants us to tell people that there is an escape route. It doesn't matter if people don't listen.

What similarities / applications are there to end times?

Matt 24: 37 – 39 As in the days of Noah, so will the world be at the time of His coming. As God saved Noah from the disaster, He will save us.

Noah was blessed for his obedience.

Genesis chapter 9 v. 1

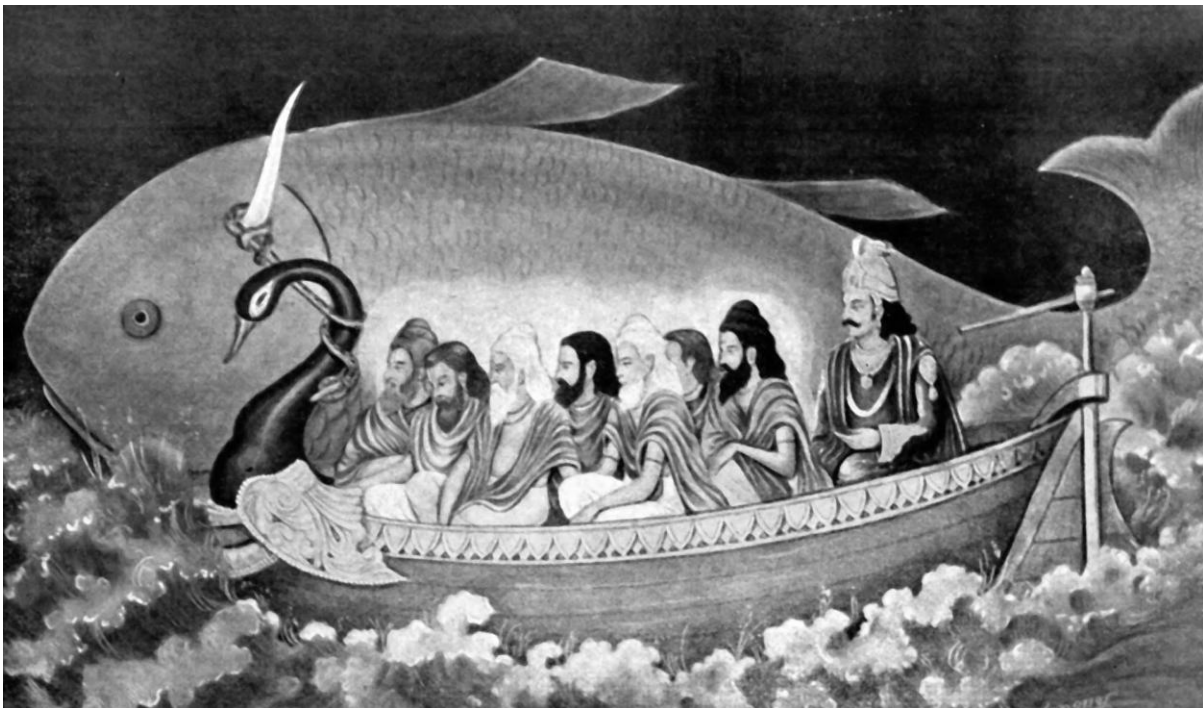
Noah was a history maker.

Why could we say that this event was the most important so far in human history?

- It's remembered in the history of all cultures.
- Before the continental shift, all people in the world knew about the true God.
- There are Flood stories in every culture – even in Tibet, which has the highest mountain in the world.
- After the Flood, Noah's three sons went in different directions: Japeth to Europe, Ham, to Africa and Shem to Asia.

Note that the history from Adam to Noah was recorded by Moses in the Jewish culture. But the same history was recorded in other cultures as well.

Flood stories around the world



Secular sources from the internet give details of a Great Flood, shared by many cultures. Because secular sources cannot accept the bible are true history, the stories are referred to as “myths”. But as Christians we know that there is more to it! See the following sources:

Stories about massive floods destroying the world appear in cultures across every continent. From ancient Mesopotamia to remote Pacific islands, people tell remarkably similar tales of great waters wiping out civilization.

What if these aren’t just myths, but memories of a real catastrophe that changed our planet forever?

<https://greekreporter.com/2026/08/27/flood-myth-various-civilizations-greece/>

Over 200 Cultures Share Flood Stories

Researchers have documented flood legends from more than 200 different cultures worldwide. Despite being separated by vast oceans and mountain ranges, these stories share striking similarities.

Each tale features a divine flood, chosen survivors, and humanity starting over. The consistency across isolated societies suggests something more than coincidence at work.

A Story Shared Across the World

One of the most widespread and enduring stories in human history is the “myth” of a great flood. Across continents and civilizations, ancient cultures told remarkably similar tales of a

catastrophic deluge that swept across the land, destroying much of humanity and reshaping the world.

What makes these stories especially fascinating is not just their dramatic nature, but their consistency. Despite vast distances and cultural differences, many societies developed flood myths with shared themes—divine warning, survival against overwhelming odds, and the beginning of a new world.

Global Variations

Flood “myths” appear in regions such as Mesopotamia, India, China, and across the Americas.

One of the earliest known written versions comes from Mesopotamia, in texts like the Epic of Gilgamesh. In this story, a man named Utnapishtim is warned by the gods about an approaching flood and instructed to build a vessel to save himself, his family, and living creatures.

In the Indian tradition, the figure of Manu is similarly warned of a great flood and guided to safety. (See painting above)

In Chinese mythology, stories speak of great floods that required heroic efforts to control and restore balance.

Across these versions, the pattern remains consistent: a chosen individual receives a warning, prepares for disaster, survives the flood, and helps restore life afterward.

Shared Narrative Elements

- Although details vary, most flood myths include several key elements:
- A divine or natural cause for the flood
- A warning given to a specific individual or group
- The construction of a vessel or refuge
- The preservation of life, often including animals or seeds
- A renewal or rebuilding of the world after the flood

<https://www.thearchaeologist.org/blog/myths-of-the-great-flood-across-ancient-cultures>

The link between the Great Flood and people’s understanding of Creation

The Great Flood is largely responsible for the earth’s landforms as we see them today. Mountains, valleys, canyons, plateaus and rock formations were formed quickly over a short period of time due to the upheaval of the earth, and the “fountains of the deep” from beneath the earth. Because evolutionists believe that the earth is millions of years old, they will always say that landforms like the Grand Canyon were carved out over millions of years. They have not gone to the Bible for the true history of the earth, which is just over 6,000 years old.

Timeline: Creation to Babel

4004 BC The Creation Adam was created. His son Seth was born 3874 BC.	2348 BC The Great Flood Noah born 2948 BC. Noah's sons: Shem, Ham Japeth	2242 BC - The Tower of Babel
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Activities

1. Make a character study of Noah. Make a list of his character qualities.
2. Make a drawing of the Ark according to the description given, Remember that it's not like a bath tub.
3. Who were the 8 people aboard the Ark and why only 8?
4. How did the animals get to the Ark?
5. How many of each, and why were there seven of some?
6. What similarities are there to the end times? Find out more information from Matthew 24:27-29.
7. Is the Hebrew culture the only one that has a record of the Great Flood? Give example of Flood stories in other cultures.
8. How many people in the boat in the painting above?
9. Explain what this ancient Chinese character writing tells us?

船
boat

舟 八 口
vessel eight people

The Discovery of Genesis, C.D. Kang and Elzel Betson, p. 55



Creation Questions

1. What is 'evolution'?

The word 'evolution' actually means 'change'. When most people hear the word today, they think of Charles Darwin, who wrote the book 'The Origin of the Species'. Darwin believed that one kind of animal evolved into a totally different kind, and eventually ape-like creatures developed into human beings over millions of years. This is totally against God's word which records that God created all living things according to their kind. (That means that dogs would only produce dogs and cats would only produce cats, and so on.). God's word also states that the first man was made from dust and the first woman from a rib from his side. There has never been any scientific evidence to show that one kind of animal has ever turned into another totally different kind of animal.

2. Why do many people want to believe in evolution rather than creation?

We are all born sinners. Because of that, many people don't want to admit that a powerful all-knowing God created them. They don't want to admit that God is in control of all things – even them. They would rather believe that they are evolved from slime over millions of years. If this were true, then it means they don't owe God anything. They don't have to obey Him or be grateful for His many gifts. But the Bible makes it very clear that God is our Creator, we are His, and He has a plan for our lives. He is the One we need to listen to and obey.

2. What Is the Big Bang Theory?

The Big Bang Theory is an idea that explains how the universe began and evolved over billions of years. According to this idea, the universe was once in an extremely hot, incredibly dense state. Around 13.8 billion years ago, it began expanding. As space expanded, the universe cooled. This cooling allowed particles to form, then atoms, stars, galaxies, planets, and eventually the conditions necessary for life.

What does the Bible say? There is only One who can create life. Life is a miracle from God Himself, and life cannot be created by itself.

3. What happened to the dinosaurs?

Before the Flood, dinosaurs and people lived together. Extinction of the great marine reptiles, along with other sea creatures would have been caused by the violent upheavals of the Flood, many being buried and preserved as fossils.

Two of each kind of land-dwelling dinosaurs survived by being taken aboard the Ark, probably as babies. After the Flood they faced a radically different and more hostile world, and became extinct, along with countless other spectacular creatures at the same time. There is some evidence that people knew about dinosaurs before they became extinct. There are descriptions of behemoth (Job 40:15) and leviathan (Job 41:1) which quite possibly refer to some of the few post-Flood giant reptiles still in existence at that time.

4. What is carbon-14 dating?

This is the dating method used to date ancient things like fossils. The whole dating method is dependent upon knowing what the carbon-14 ratio was at the time of the organism's death. It is based on the amount of carbon entering the atmosphere compared to with the amount leaving (decay). The method has been shown to be unreliable, especially when soft tissue has been found in dinosaur bones. Dinosaur bones could not possibly contain soft tissue if they were millions of years old. It would have broken down in that amount of time.

5. Where did all the water go after the Great Flood?

The water for Noah's Flood came from the release of great underground sources of water, (the fountains of the great deep), which continued pouring forth for 150 days.). In addition, there were 40 days of rain. Psalm 104 indicates that after the Flood, the mountains were upthrust to their present positions, with associated deepening of the ocean basins, which now hold the water of the Flood.

6. What was the 'Ice Age'?

The onset of the Flood would have produced a profound and permanent change in the earth's immediate post-Flood climate. Rapid cooling at the poles and warming at the equator would have induced excessive snowfalls and the build-up of vast ice-sheets, until after a few centuries, conditions stabilized and the ice sheets retreated. There is reference to ice in the book of Job.

7. How did animals get from the Ark to places such as Australia?

After the Flood there were major tectonic upheavals, accompanied by substantial rising and falling of sea-floors. This created land-bridges for centuries following the Ice Age. Animals such as kangaroos and other marsupials may have used these land-bridges to get to Australia. Not that one kangaroo didn't have to hop all the way. As they bred, each subsequent younger kangaroo took on the journey. The continents were once one large land mass, but gradually drifted apart. This would have also made it easier for animals (and people) to migrate because there were not so many seas to cross. Many people think that marsupials only live in Australia and this is evidence of evolution. But this is not the case. There are marsupial possums living today in North America and fossils of marsupials in Europe.

Activity

Hold a Q and A session with another class, (Year 11 or below), who will be your guests.

Prepare questions on slips of paper. You can prepare some of your own questions in addition to the seven above. Give each of your guests a question slip. They take it in turns to ask their question. Your Year 12 class can form a panel to answer the questions.

God is Wise

Bible Studies on Proverbs

SESSION ONE: PROVERBS 1-4

WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, + UNDERSTANDING

1. Read 1 Kings 3:4-14. What did Solomon choose as his request from God? What did God give him in addition to his request?
2. Throughout the Proverbs, the wise are compared to the foolish and the simple. How is foolishness different than simple-mindedness?
3. Read Proverbs 1:7. What does the author say is the beginning of knowledge? Why would this be a prerequisite for gaining wisdom?
4. Read Proverbs 1:32-33. How does wisdom often lead to experiencing less dread and more peace?
5. Proverbs 2:6 states that God is the source of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. How do these three terms differ from one another?
6. How does Proverbs 2:20-22 relate to the Israelites and the inhabitants of the Promised Land?
7. Read Proverbs 3:1-4. What does it mean to “bind [love and faithfulness] around your neck” and “write them on the tablet of your heart”?
8. Why do you think wisdom is personified as a woman? How does this honour women in a culture that highly favoured men?
9. Proverbs 4:23 says to “keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.” What does this mean? How can you practice this regularly?

SESSION TWO: PROVERBS 5-9

THE VALUE OF GOD’S WORD

1. Proverbs 5 serves as a warning against adultery. How could Solomon and David both have benefitted from following this advice (see 1 Kings 11:1-6 and 2 Samuel 11:2-4)?
2. Throughout Proverbs 6, what practical warnings does the father offer his son? How is this advice still relevant today?
3. In Proverbs 6:6-8 What does God tell us about the wisdom of the ant? What can we learn from this?
4. According to Proverbs 6:16-19, what does God hate? How does knowing what God hates reveal what He loves?
5. How do Proverbs 6:23 and Psalm 119:105 similarly describe the wisdom of God’s Word?

6. Proverbs 7 contains similar warnings to Proverbs 5-6 that urge against adultery. Why do you think sexual sin is emphasized so heavily in this book of wisdom literature?
7. Read Proverbs 8:10-11. In your own life, can you think of a time when wisdom proved to be more valuable than silver or gold?
8. Read Proverbs 8:32-36. How is wisdom connected to life and ignorance to death? Does this seem like a fair or harsh comparison?
9. According to Proverbs 9:7-12, how do wise people respond to correction?

SESSION THREE: PROVERBS 10-15

SEEKING WISE COUNSEL

1. How do the books of Old Testament poetry differ from the books of law? Do these proverbs serve as wisdom from God or promises from God?
2. Proverbs 10:12 says that love covers all offenses. How does this verse relate to the love of Jesus?
3. Read Proverbs 10:28. How would you define having hope as opposed to having expectations?
4. How does Proverbs 11:8 describe intentional sin? Can you think of a time when you have “walked towards” trouble?
5. Read Proverbs 11:22 and Matthew 7:6. How are these two passages similar?
6. How does Proverbs 11:24-25 encourage generosity and contentment?
7. Read Proverbs 12:15. What does it mean to be “right in your own eyes”? Can you think of a time when you were thankful for someone's advice?
8. Proverbs 13:12 teaches that “hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.” How does this verse encourage delayed gratification?
9. How does Proverbs 13:20 contrast wise company and foolish company?
10. Read Proverbs 14:13. How have you seen joy and grief coexist?
11. Read Proverbs 11:14 and 15:22. What do these verses advise us regarding wise counsel?

SESSION FOUR: PROVERBS 16-21

THE POWER OF WISE WORDS

1. How have your own plans differed from God’s plans for your life? Which plans ultimately prevail (see Proverbs 16:9 and 19:21)?
2. Read Proverbs 17:5 and Matthew 25:37-40. What do these two verses reveal about how we treat those in need?

3. Proverbs 17:22 says, “a joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.” How can your attitudes, positive or negative, affect your physical well-being?
4. How does Proverbs 18:2 highlight the value of listening over speaking? In Proverbs 18:21, what does it mean that the tongue holds the power of life and death?
5. What do Proverbs 19:2 and 21:5 say about haste? Why is eliminating hurry an important aspect of wisdom?
6. Throughout Proverbs, how are sluggards and lazy people described? How does God value both rest and hard work?
7. According to Proverbs 20:22, what do the wise do instead of seeking revenge?
8. Read Proverbs 21:3 and Hosea 6:6. According to these verses, what does God desire more than sacrifices?
9. Read Proverbs 21:23. Can you think of a time when you were glad that you held your tongue? Can you think of a time when your words got you in trouble?

SESSION FIVE: PROVERBS 22-26

WISDOM + FOOLISHNESS

1. Read Proverbs 22:3. Can you think of a time when wisdom allowed you to see danger before it arrived? Can you think of a time you willingly walked into trouble?
2. What do you think Proverbs 22:7 means when it says, “the borrower is slave to the lender”?
3. Proverbs 23:4 says, “Do not toil to acquire wealth.” How does this verse challenge culture’s emphasis on chasing wealth and success? What does it look like to balance ambition with contentment?
4. How does Proverbs 23 address overindulgence and drunkenness? What warnings does this chapter provide?
5. What does Proverbs 24:17 say regarding the failure of your enemies? What does Jesus say about your enemies in Matthew 5:44?
6. Proverbs 25:28 describes a person without self-control as “a city broken into and left without walls.” What does this metaphor suggest about the importance of caution and restraint?
7. How does Proverbs 25:20 relate to Romans 12:15? What are these two verses advising?
8. What does Proverbs 26:4–5 reveal about when to respond to foolishness and when to remain silent?
9. How does Proverbs 26:11 describe someone who continually makes the same mistakes?

SESSION SIX: PROVERBS 27-31

WISDOM + THE FEAR OF THE LORD

1. What does Proverbs 27:1-2 advise about boasting? Why is the praise of others more meaningful than self-praise?
2. How does Proverbs 27:5-6 describe the rebuke of a friend? How can correction and confrontation be done lovingly?
3. Proverbs 27:17 says that “iron sharpens iron.” How have you experienced growth and refinement due to the influence of wise people in your life?
4. Proverbs 28:5 says, “Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it completely.” How has faith influenced your understanding of justice?
5. Read Proverbs 28:14. What does it mean to have a hardened heart?
6. Proverbs 28:19 says that “those who follow worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.” What are some common examples of “worthless pursuits”?
7. What do Proverbs 29:23 and Luke 14:11 say about the prideful and the humble?
8. Read Proverbs 29:25. How would you contrast “the fear of man” and “the fear of God”?
9. Proverbs 30:6 warns against adding to God’s Word. What does this mean? Have you ever seen or experienced this?
10. What qualities of the woman in Proverbs 31 stand out to you? What makes these traits admirable? How does Proverbs 31:30 describe beauty and charm?

<https://everydayscripture.org/proverbs/study>

God is A Servant

Jesus was the greatest servant who ever live. Discipleship is following in His footsteps and obeying Him whatever the cost.

What is Discipleship?

When we say the word “disciple”, most of us think of The Twelve Disciples.

How would you define the word disciple? Read Acts 6:1-2; Matthew 4:19; John 21:22 – (Note that Jesus’ first and last word to Peter, “Follow Me”).

True & False Disciples: Read Matthew 7:15-23

- What form might the “wolf” take, and what damage might result? NOTE: The wolf is a false teacher/prophet. However, his falsehood is not revealed by his teaching, but by his fruit!
- In verse 21-23 Jesus warned of the destiny of certain false disciples. What is their fault, and why does Jesus reject them?

NOTE: Nothing these false disciples claim to have done is challenged by Jesus. It seems their description is accurate. They did real prophecy and miracles in Jesus’ name. So what did they do wrong? These false disciples do not live their lives in accordance with the teachings Jesus has just given in His sermon on the Mount, regarding the kingdom of God.

Read Matthew 7:24-27

What contrasts did Jesus draw in the parable in verses 24-27?

NOTE: *Hears* and *does*, as opposed to just *hears*.

What’s something in your life that you would say is building on the rock while other people are building on the sand?

Christianity means to abandon all, or we abandon Jesus.

- Luke 9:57-58 True disciples commit to Jesus.
- Luke 9:59-60 True disciples focus on Jesus. (They don’t use the law as an excuse not to follow.)
- Luke 9:61-62 True disciples give all to Jesus.

Free Grace vs Cheap Grace

Read Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 5:17, 20-21; 6:21-23; Acts 15:11

- We are saved by grace.
- Grace is a gift.
- Grace cannot be earned or it becomes wages.

Read John 5:24 – confidence of salvation

When do we receive grace?

What does God’s grace cover in our lives?

Explain the meaning of this statement: “Sinners are justified by faith, and Christians by works.”

Cheap Grace

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross.

- Grace = “unmerited favour”

Cheap grace requires no feeling sorry for our sins; or maybe even no desire to be delivered from our sins. We just want to be forgiven.

God’s grace is personal. Read Philippians 2:8.

Did Jesus die just so we could follow a belief system or a religion?

We see a prime example of cheap grace in the ease that anyone in a “Christian nation” can call themselves Christian.

How would you summarise the difference between “free grace” and “cheap grace”?

How does this influence the way we present the Gospel to people? (Is it “Come to Jesus and you will get a happy life? OR come to Jesus because He is the Truth, and you might have to change some of the things in your life.”)

Read Psalm 51:1-4 and 10. What is the essence of the prayer that David is praying here?

Costly Grace

God's Grace Costs Us Something Everything.

Read:

- MATTHEW 13:44-46; The Pearl of Great Price – Costly grace will prompt us to give up everything to receive it.
- MATTHEW 5:27-30; Pluck out Your Eye – A person will cut off their hand to ensure they receive costly grace.
- MATTHEW 7:7-8; Ask, Seek, Knock – Costly grace requires some effort on our part to receive it.

God's Grace Cost Him.

Read:

1 CORINTHIANS 6:20 - "Bought with a price"

ROMANS 6:3,6-9 - Grace = baptized in Christ Jesus; Cost = obedience to Him

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11 - Jesus humbled himself to the point of death.

JOHN 12:23-26 - A grain of wheat must die to bring a harvest.

ROMANS 6:20-22 - Grace means we freely become slaves. We gain the freedom to give up our freedom. Then we realize that our prior freedom was only an illusion anyway.

One way to distinguish between grace and mercy is that grace costs while mercy does not.

Costly grace is closely linked to discipleship. Accepting costly grace means accepting the call to follow Jesus.

Grace is a transforming power.

Grace allows people to make choices and assumes they'll make the best choice. Grace is free and flowing and not held down by guilt or shame, or fear. The grace that Jesus offers says, "I know all about you, and I still love you."

READ John 4 – Woman at the well.

How did the grace that Jesus showed the woman transform her? How did it transform the disciples? What did Jesus' grace cost the disciples?

READ Philippians 3:7-11. The whole passage describes costly grace. How has God's grace transformed Paul? How do verses 10-11 illustrate costly grace?

Grace helps us become other-centred

When we try to give grace to ourselves, it can only be cheap grace. We rationalize our behaviour and decide it wasn't a sin. Or we say to ourselves "we're not that bad". We tell ourselves that "nobody's perfect". We comfort ourselves with the reminder that "God will forgive me".

We can't give grace to ourselves. For grace to exist, it must be given. We can give it to others. How does Philippians 2:1-4 encourage us to be gracious?

READ Matt. 5:9-12 and Matt. 5:38-48

Costly Grace – Quiz

Match the Pairs

1. If we died with Christ
2. Sell what you have, give it to the poor
3. God so loved the world
4. You have become slaves of God
5. Those who are persecuted
6. Freely you have received
7. And that's what some of you were

- a. ...he gave his only begotten son
- b. ...freely give
- c. ...you shall have treasure in heaven.
- d. ...theirs is the kingdom of heaven
- e. ...but you were washed, you were sanctified
- f. ...you were bought
- g. ...we will also live with him.

Disciples Obey (Single-Focused Obedience)

SUMMARY SO FAR

Free Grace: Grace offered freely to us by God, but it cost Jesus his life. It is free because of the cross.

(Fake) Cheap Grace: “Grace without the cross”. Receiving forgiveness without discipleship, without the call to follow.

Genuine Costly Grace: Grace that calls/inspires us to give up everything to obtain it. (Matt 13:44-46)

READ Matthew 19:16-22 – The Rich Young Ruler

1. The Rich Young Ruler approaches Jesus seeking a discussion regarding eternal life.

Jesus’ response: Jesus confronts him with the authority of God.

2. Unwilling simply to obey Jesus and “keep the commandments” the Rich Young Ruler turns to reasoning. Of all the commandments, which ones must I keep to get eternal life? (He means “What must I do to be saved?” He thinks he himself can pick and choose which commands to obey.

Jesus’ response: Jesus challenges the life and behaviour of the Rich Young Ruler. “Go and obey the commandments.”

3. He has kept all the commandments, but yet he wonders about eternal life.

Jesus’ response: Jesus’ commandment is plain and straightforward: “Follow me.” First the young man must go and sell all that he has and give to the poor, and then come and follow.

The life of discipleship is not the hero-worship we would pay to a good master, but obedience to the Son of God.

For this man, the call to discipleship involved letting go of his possessions. The choice Jesus requires isn’t about the young man’s possessions; it’s about the things that possess him.

READ John 4:1-29 – Jesus talks with a Samaritan woman

What does Jesus require of the woman?

Luke 10:25-37 – The Good Samaritan

What is Jesus’ answer to the questions about how to receive eternal life? Note verse 37.

Discipleship & the Cross

KEY TEXT: Mark 8:31-38

What Does Jesus Say About Suffering? READ Mark 8:31-38

In this passage we begin with a decision. Even when speaking to the Twelve at this point in his ministry he begins with, “*if* a person is to follow me...” Jesus never coerces his followers.

Jesus’ call for us to “take up our cross” is a call to suffering and rejection.

Forgiveness carries with it Christlike suffering which is the Christian’s duty to bear.

Everyone’s cross is different but it’s the same. It’s a call to obedience. A call to follow. For some, a call to die. The rich young ruler was called to sell everything.

Loyal Disciples

READ Luke 14:26

Jesus’ demand in Luke 14:26 seems extremely harsh, particularly throwing in the word “hate”. But compare it to one’s wedding vows... When we “forsake all others” our relationships with our parents, siblings, friends, hobbies, and career all change.

Similarly, our encounter with Christ changes the way we view people and the world. Immersed in Christ, everything looks different. When we decide to follow Jesus, our view of the world changes.

The Visible Community

Matthew 5: 1-12 – The Beatitudes (or the Sermon on the Mount)

Matthew 5:13-16 – Salt and light

The Beatitudes emphasize the change produced in the character of disciples who are transformed by the arrival of the kingdom. Living as salt and light in the world requires us to be alert to the stark difference between our discipleship and the world’s values and habits, and to live out the kingdom values summarized in the Beatitudes.

“You ARE the salt of the earth.” We do not “have” the light, or “teach” the light, or “know” the salt. As Jesus’ disciples we *are* the salt. As a disciple, we *are* salt. We are not the salt because of our actions, but because of who we are. Because we have absorbed the character of Christ as laid out in the Beatitudes; because of our connection to Jesus.

What are the virtues of salt that Jesus might be talking about when calling his disciples “salt”?

Possible Answers:

Salt in the ancient world represented many things: a preservative; flavour enhancer; essential part of diet; even a fertilizer. It's perhaps most likely that Jesus here refers simply to salt and light as something that is "good and necessary for everyday life".

Do you think the world views of Christians are "good and necessary for life"?

Another element of this passage is that the salt/disciples are IN the world. Our saltiness includes, but is not limited to, the fundamental Gospel message.

How can we as spiritual salt lose our flavour? One way our saltiness is lost, is when it never leaves the saltshaker. Another is when we compromise the role of Jesus in favour of doing good in our own strength, or from pride.

READ 2 Cor. 4:6; Phil 2:15-16; John 8:12

Note in each of these that although we ARE the light, in another sense we're not. Our light comes only from God.

Since you are that light, you can no longer remain hidden, even if you want to.

The city on a hill is a discipleship community. It's the collective glow of our individual lights. It is the collective glow of Christians. Are we a city on a hill, or many candles across the landscape?

READ John 13:34-35

What does this say about being a disciple?

As much as we individually need to be salt and light, we can't "love one another" unless we're together.

Note that Jesus says we are to let our light shine so that others can see our good works, but those good works are seen, not to show *us* to be good, but to bring praise to our Father in heaven. (Eph 2:10 Created for good works...)

SUMMARY: This illustration is intrinsically linked to the Beatitudes. When we become a disciple of Christ, when we absorb his character as described in the Beatitudes, we become salt and light. We then have the responsibility to be salt in light in the world.

Studies by Lawson Rd Church of Christ, Rochester, NY.