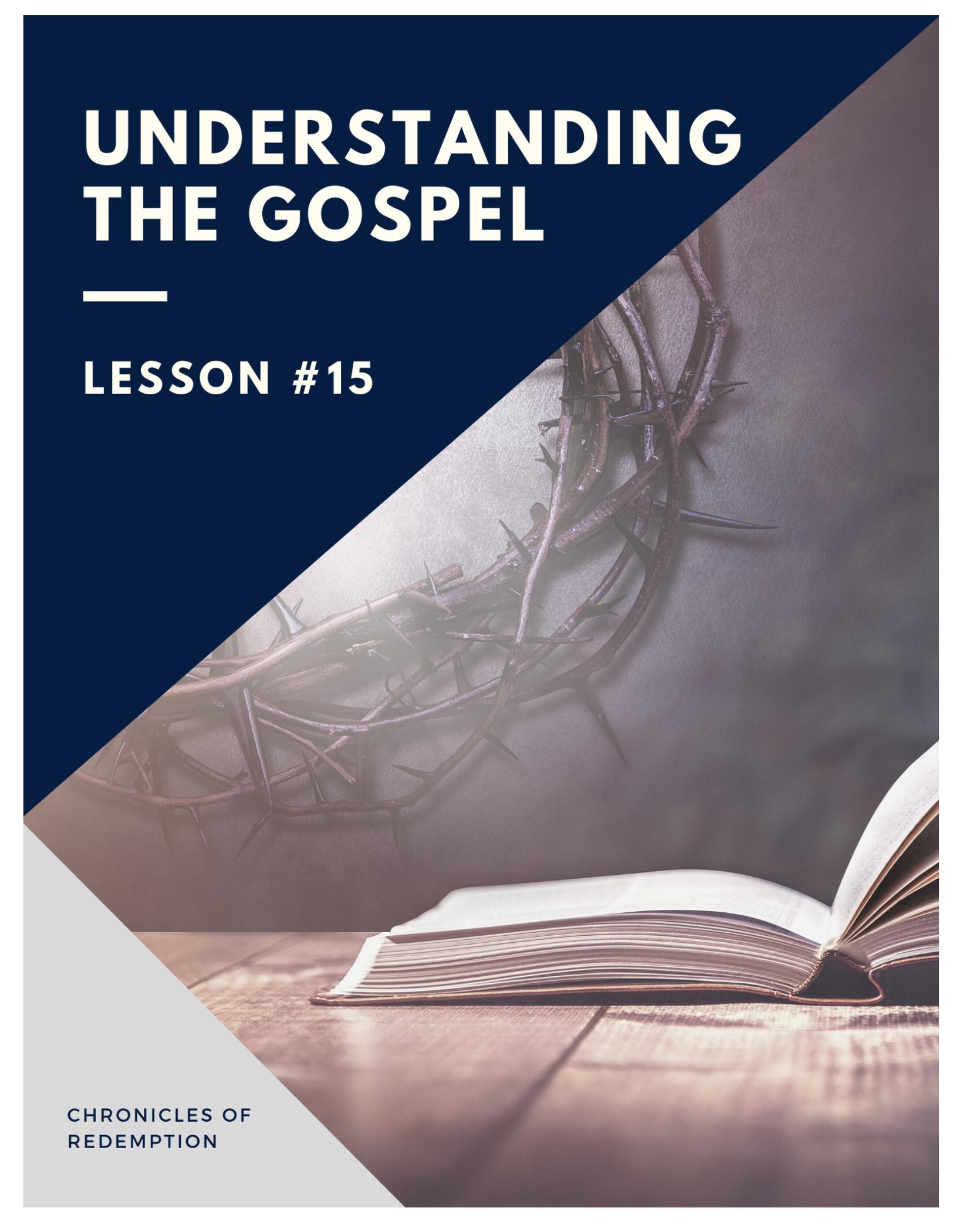


# UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL

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## LESSON #15

CHRONICLES OF  
REDEMPTION

A photograph of a crown of thorns and an open book. The crown of thorns is made of several dark, sharp, and intertwined branches, resting on a light-colored, textured surface. Below it, an open book with many pages is lying flat on a wooden surface. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a contemplative atmosphere.

# Understanding the Gospel

## Selected Scriptures

### INTRODUCTION

After the resurrection of Jesus, two of His followers who hadn't yet seen Him made a journey to a nearby village. As the two walked, they talked, discussing the suffering and death of the Man they had hoped would reestablish the kingdom of Israel. Jesus interrupted them.



#### Luke 24:13-27, 31-32

*"And behold, two [disciples] were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were conversing with each other about all these things which had taken place. And it came about that while they were conversing and discussing, Jesus Himself approached, and began traveling with them. But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. And He said to them, 'What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?' And they stood still, looking sad. And one of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, 'Are You the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?' And He said to them, 'What things?' And they said to Him, 'The things about Jesus the Nazarene, Who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He Who was going to redeem Israel. 'Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who said that He was alive. And some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see.' And He said to them, 'O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?' And beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures..."*

*...And their eyes were opened, and they recognized Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?'"*

Understanding their confusion, Jesus explained—as none other could—why it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and die. Speaking from the Old Testament Scriptures, He revealed predictions and promises, types and shadows, all pointing to Him and His work as Messiah.

# 1 Christ in the Scriptures

## ➤ PROMISE OF HOPE

God uniquely created Adam and Eve in His own image, with the capacity to love, worship, and obey Him. He lovingly provided for their every need by placing them in Eden, the beautiful garden where they could enjoy the creative works of God and commune with Him. Yet when given the command to obey, the first couple was lured to disobedience by Satan. Their sin of casting off God's \_\_\_\_\_ severed their relationship with Him, barred them from eternal life, brought a curse of devastation and death upon the earth, and plunged the entire human race into the bondage of sin and Satan.

The ruined race is the backdrop for God to accomplish a magnificent work—He would reclaim a people for Himself. Even as God announced His terrible judgment on their disobedience, He graciously promised to send a \_\_\_\_\_. God's words to the serpent, "*He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel,*" (Gen. 3:15) were a veiled prophecy speaking of the future male Descendant of Eve, Jesus Christ. By causing Christ to suffer, Satan bruised Him "*on the heel.*" But by enduring His suffering and accomplishing God's will by purchasing redemption on the cross, Jesus bruised Satan "*on the head,*" crushing his power and freeing the redeemed from bondage forever.

## ➤ GARMENTS OF SKIN

Immediately after their sin, Adam and Eve experienced \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Attributing their guilt for sin to physical nakedness, they covered themselves with fig leaves. But God soon re-clothed them with skins from a slain animal.



### Genesis 3:21

*"The LORD God made garments of skins...and clothed them."*

Why did God do this? Adam and Eve had sinned and should have died immediately for their rebellion. They were helpless and unable to restore their broken relationship with God. It was not clothing for the body they needed, but forgiveness for their souls. God granted them forgiveness by mercifully sacrificing a substitute to take their punishment—the life of an innocent in exchange for their lives, an act pointing to the ultimate sacrifice of \_\_\_\_\_ on the cross, the perfect Substitute.

## **ABEL'S BETTER SACRIFICE**

Both of the brothers Cain and Abel brought offerings to God, but God clearly accepted one and rejected the other. Abel's offering of an animal was acceptable to God because it demonstrated his obedient \_\_\_\_\_ in bringing a blood sacrifice, a sacrifice requiring the death of an innocent substitute. Abel's "better sacrifice" was but a shadow of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. While the blood of Abel's animal provided a temporary covering for his sin, the blood of Jesus grants \_\_\_\_\_ cleansing and forgiveness to all who believe (cf. Gen. 4:3-7; Heb. 11:4; 12:24).

## **ARK OF SAFETY**

As God gave Noah a way to escape judgment through the ark, so today He has given men and women a place of safety in His Son, Jesus Christ. As the floodwaters pummeled the ark and purged the earth of corruption, so the awesome wrath of God beat upon the body of Jesus as He received the penalty for all sins on the cross.

Moreover, as in the days of Noah there were only \_\_\_\_\_ groups of people—those who were safe within the ark and those without—so it is today. Whoever would come to God must take heed to the words of Jesus, "*I am the way... No one comes to the Father but through Me*" (John 14:6). Whoever would flee destruction must enter by faith the Living Ark to find safety and salvation (cf. Gen. 6-8; 1 Pet. 3:18, 20-22).

## **THE SEED OF ABRAHAM**

One of the promises God made in His covenant to Abraham was that through one of his descendants "*all the nations of the earth shall be blessed*" (cf. Gen. 22:18). The promise was fulfilled in Jesus Christ Who is referred to in the New Testament as Abraham's Seed. The blessing was one of reconciliation. By paying sin's debt, Jesus restored \_\_\_\_\_ between God and man. "*While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son*" (Rom. 5:10; cf. Acts 3:25-26; Gal. 3:16).



## THE SUBSTITUTE RAM

### NOTES:

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Abraham's great test of faith, that of offering up his long-awaited son \_\_\_\_\_, provided yet another shadow of the coming Christ. Prefiguring Jesus, Who willingly endured the cross, Isaac \_\_\_\_\_ to his father's authority by allowing himself to be placed upon the altar of sacrifice. But God graciously provided a life-saving substitute—a ram who died in place of the boy. Abraham's words of faith, "God will provide Himself the lamb for the burnt offering" (cf. Gen. 22:8) find fulfillment in the sacrifice of Jesus, as God gave Himself, the perfect substitute Lamb offered up in place of sinners. (cf. Gen. 22:1-14; Heb. 11:17-19; 2 Cor. 5:21).



## SACRIFICE OF THE PASSOVER LAMB

One of the clearest Old Testament pictures pointing to the death of Jesus Christ was the \_\_\_\_\_ lamb. The lamb, sacrificed to spare the lives of Israel's firstborn in the final plague of judgment against the Egyptian Pharaoh, was God's appointed substitute. The details involved in its choice and manner of sacrifice were given with an intricacy which can only be fully appreciated looking back from the cross of Christ. Consider the parallels:

- 1** **The sacrifice was \_\_\_\_\_.** The chosen animal was to be a male lamb or goat, a yearling without defect or blemish. Jesus, the perfect Man, was born holy and lived His life undefiled by sin. "...You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold...but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18-19; cf. Ex. 12:5; Heb. 4:15; 7:26).
- 2** **The sacrifice was killed at a \_\_\_\_\_ time.** The lamb was kept until the fourteenth day of the month and slaughtered at twilight, the time the sun began to set. In like manner, the multitude of events leading up to the trial and execution of Christ were divinely orchestrated so that His time of death would take place precisely on the day of the annual Passover sacrifice. It is quite possible that Jesus died the very hour the Passover lamb was slain. No wonder the New Testament declares that Jesus Christ is the true *Passover Lamb* sacrificed for sinners (cf. Exod. 12:6; Luke 23:44-46; 1 Cor. 5:7).

**3** **The sacrifice could have no \_\_\_\_\_ bones.** The family was to eat the Passover meal without breaking any of the lamb's bones. At the crucifixion site, the Roman soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves who were executed with Jesus according to their custom. Yet true to type as well as prophecy, not one bone of the Christ was broken. *"The soldiers...came and broke the legs of the first man, and of the other man who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break his legs...These things came to pass, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'Not a bone of Him shall be broken'"* (John 19:32-33, 36; cf. Exod. 12:46; Psa. 34:20).

**4** **The sacrifice became a \_\_\_\_\_.** After the lamb was slain, its blood was used as a sign to mark the doorway of every home. *"When I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt"* (Exod. 12:13). As Israel's firstborn were spared the judgment of death by the substitute sacrifice of the Passover lamb, so people today may escape God's judgment, find forgiveness and eternal life through the blood of the Lamb of God (cf. Lev. 17:11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:22).

**5** **The sacrifice was \_\_\_\_\_ applied.** Each household was responsible to mark *their own door* with the blood of the sacrifice signifying their individual faith in the saving work of God. So it is today: the faith of one cannot save another. *"...As many as received [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name"* (John 1:12).

## **GOD DWELLS WITH MAN**

The tabernacle, the sanctuary ordained and designed by God Himself, was built so that God could *dwell* or take up a literal residence with His people. This was yet another shadow of the coming God-Man, Jesus Christ, who had existed as God from all eternity. His name *Immanuel*, meaning \_\_\_\_\_, emphasizes the truth that Jesus took on humanity to "*tabernacle*" among men thus setting the stage for the purchase of world redemption (cf. Exod. 25:8; John 1:14).

## **THE TORN VEIL**

The thick linen veil, which barred the entrance into the sacred *Holy of Holies* was a constant reminder that men and women were shut out from God's presence because of sin. When Christ completed His atoning sacrifice on the cross, the huge temple veil in Jerusalem *"was torn in two from top to bottom"* (Matt. 27:51). This graphic act of God symbolized the \_\_\_\_\_ or body of Christ, torn for sinners, once and for all opening their way to God.



## Hebrews 10:19-20

*"We have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh."*



## THE BRONZE SERPENT

During the forty years of wilderness wanderings, Israel was given another shadowy prediction of the death of Christ on the cross. After God judged Israel's rebellion by sending a plague of poisonous snakes, Moses was instructed by God to *lift up* an image of the serpent on a pole. *"If a serpent bit any man, when he looked to the bronze serpent, he lived"* (Num. 21:9). Jesus referred to this page in Israel's history when predicting His Own death.



## John 3:14-16, 18

*"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life... He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in that name of the only begotten Son of God."*

Just as those perishing under the weight of God's judgment could look to the bronze serpent and live physically, so Jesus declares that all who with the eyes of faith look to Him—*lifted up* on a cross—would escape judgment and live \_\_\_\_\_.

What God revealed in the Old Testament through types and shadows, promises and prophecies, He has now shown clearly in Jesus Christ. No wonder John the Baptist, forerunner to Messiah, and the last Old Testament prophet, looked upon Jesus and cried, *"Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world!"* (John 1:29).

When we consider the mind of God and His providential orchestration of world history to unfold His eternal purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ man, we can only echo the words of the New Testament writer who said:



## Romans 11:33-36

*"Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and unfathomable His ways!... For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen."*

# 2 Elements of the Gospel

Since Jesus Christ is the focus of both the Old and New Testaments, the Cornerstone of all true biblical faith, it is imperative to understand the meaning of His life, death, and resurrection. There is an unalterable body of truth, which must be understood and believed for the Gospel, the *good news* of Jesus Christ, to bear fruit in a person's life.

## † God is the Sovereign Creator

God is perfect in holiness and supreme in power. There is \_\_\_\_\_ before Him, \_\_\_\_\_ after Him, \_\_\_\_\_ beside Him, and \_\_\_\_\_ like Him.



### Isaiah 46:5, 9

*"To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal and compare Me, that we should be alike?  
...For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me."*



### Colossians 1:16-17

*"...By Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created by Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."*

As God is the Life-Giver, Creator, and Sustainer of the universe, He therefore expects and deserves complete allegiance from man.



**Understanding the Gospel requires the humble recognition that God has complete authority over my life.**



## Man is sinful and helpless before His Creator

God created man to be dependent upon Him. This is the precise point at which our first parents broke away. When Adam and Eve chose to cast off God's \_\_\_\_\_, exchanging dependence for independence, they destroyed their relationship with Him.

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ of all sin. The manifold consequences of sin recorded in Scripture and history, the misery and suffering all too apparent in our world today, are the results of man's broken relationship with God.

Furthermore, man's prideful independence has brought God's just wrath upon his head. He declares that all people are *"dead in trespasses and sins...the sons of disobedience...children of wrath"* (Eph. 2:1-3). God has passed a sentence of condemnation upon the human race.



### Romans 3:10-12, 19

*"There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God... There is none who does good, there is not even one... [So] that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God."*



**Understanding the Gospel requires a humble recognition that I am utterly helpless to escape the condemnation of God.**



## Jesus is the Savior

God did not leave man without \_\_\_\_\_. The garments of skin God used to clothe our first parents demonstrated that the penalty of sin could be paid by the death of a substitute, an innocent dying in place of the guilty. This vital fact was demonstrated throughout the Old Testament as millions of animals were sacrificed on altars to temporarily cover the sins of those making the offering in faith.

All of this pointed to Jesus Christ, the incarnate God-Man, Who came to this world to redeem it by becoming the once-for-all Sacrifice for \_\_\_\_\_. In this way, God is both just and the Justifier of anyone who has faith in Jesus. He is just in upholding His perfect standard by condemning sin, yet He is the Justifier by providing the perfect Substitute to pay for sin (cf. Rom. 3:26).



## Romans 6:23

*"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*



**The Gospel requires the humble recognition that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross is sufficient to pay my sin debt before God.**

NOTES:

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**Man responds to God in repentant faith**



## Mark 1:15

*"Repent and believe in the Gospel."*

Repentant faith is the only acceptable response to the salvation available in Christ. It is vital to understand the meaning of these terms:



### REPENTANCE:

*A radical re-evaluation of oneself before a holy and righteous God. It is hatred and grief over the awfulness of sin, and a \_\_\_\_\_ from all sin and idols of the heart. It is not an attempt to clean up the life in order to earn acceptance with God, for no amount of good works performed by a sinner could ever please Him.*

### FAITH:

*When the sinner realizes that he has nothing to contribute to his redemption but the sin that made it necessary, he is moved to trust in Christ alone for his salvation. The sinner casts himself on the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and appeals for forgiveness. Faith reaches out to God with empty hands to receive the gift of eternal life.*

Only through *repentance* and *faith* is a person able to find \_\_\_\_\_ from all his sin and enter into a new relationship with God that will last forever.



**The Gospel requires the recognition that I must repent and believe that all my sins can be forgiven through Jesus Christ alone.**

# 3

## God's Call to Man

God sent us His Son for one grand purpose: *"The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"* (Luke 19:10). In the pages of Scripture, God calls to those who are lost, offering reconciliation, the gift of \_\_\_\_\_. God calls to those He has made, with an intense love, to *turn—to come—and to be cleansed*. Whoever hears the call of God and comes, will find forgiveness and peace.

### Isaiah 1:18

*"Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD, "though your sins are as scarlet, they will be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool."*

### Isaiah 45:22-23

*"Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other."*

### Isaiah 55:1-3

*"...Every one who thirsts, come to the waters... Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live."*

### Mathew 11:28-29

*"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls."*

### John 6:35, 37

*"I am the Bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst... And the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."*

### John 11:25-26

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"*

