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GREAT PASSAGES

of the Bible

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CHAPTER 1

IN THE BEGINNING GOD

SCRIPTURE - Genesis 1:1-2:3.

Memory Verse: *"In the beginning God created
the heavens and the earth."
Genesis 1:1*

INTRODUCTION:

When people ask you who made the world, how do you answer them? When people ask you if God made bad things, how do you answer them? Let us look in our Bible to find answers to these questions. Let us think together about the subject, "IN THE BEGINNING GOD."

Who made the world? People have always wondered about the answer to that question. After they have thought and thought, they come to the conclusion that man could not have made the world.

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

The world is too big and too wonderful for man to have made. Someone more powerful than we are must have made the world.

Since people have not always known who made the world, they have made up many strange stories of how the world was made. Many years ago the Chinese people said that the maker of the world was four times bigger than a man. They said that he grew bigger and bigger as he worked. They said that for eighteen thousand years he worked with his hammer and chisel carving out the world.

GOD SPEAKS TO A PERSON TO WRITE DOWN THE TRUE STORY OF CREATION

Why did people make up such strange stories? They did not really know who made the world. When the world was being made, no one was there except the Maker. No one could see exactly what happened. No one could tell exactly when it happened. No one could tell exactly how it happened.

Then, one day the Maker of the world, the true God, instructed a man to write down the true story of creation. No one knows that man's name because he did not sign his name. Some people think he was Moses; others do not. However one thing is sure: He did not make up the story of creation. Instead, he wrote what God instructed him to write.

THE ONE TRUE GOD IS THE CREATOR OF ALL THINGS

Look how the story of creation begins. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1. It is very plain to us now. If God made all the heavens and all the earth, this means God made everything.

God instructed the writer of the creation story to tell about the making of darkness and light, the sea and the dry land, sun and moon, plants and animals, and all the rest.

GOD'S GREATEST CREATION IS MAN

After this God helped the writer to understand how to tell about the creation of man. God instructed the man to write, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." Genesis 1:26

Now we see that people are different from everything else God has made. People can think and choose and decide. People can rule the other things God has made. People are made in the image of God. People are different from the other things that God created. People can worship God. People can pray to God for guidance. People are responsible to God in the way that they conduct their lives.

EVERYTHING THAT GOD MADE IS GOOD

At the end of the creation story, God instructed the writer to make it clear that everything made was good. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day." Genesis 1:31

God is good. Everything that God created is good. However, many times people use the things that God created in a wrong way.

Look at these illustrations. A knife can be used by a doctor to help a person to live. That same knife can be used by another person to kill. Is there anything wrong with the knife? No. It is the manner in which the knife is used that makes the deed good or bad. You will say, "It is according to the person who is using the knife."

God gives a person one life. That person has a choice. He can either obey God and be blessed, or disobey God and destroy his life.

WHY EVIL CAME INTO THE WORLD

We must remember what we said earlier. God made everything good. This means that he made man good in the beginning. Man was made different from animals. Man was given a choice. He could either choose to obey God or disobey him. He chose to disobey God. Evil came into the world because man disobeyed God. Adam was

the first man that God made. Adam disobeyed God. His sin caused all people to be lost in sin.

WHY JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD

Even though all people entered sin through Adam, God has made a way for every person to be saved from sin. "If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." Romans 5:17.

Through Adam, sin came into the world and all people entered sin. Through Jesus Christ all people can be saved from their sin to eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16.

CHAPTER 2

TEN LAWS FOR LIFE

SCRIPTURE - Exodus 20:1-21.

Memory Verse: *"You shall have no other gods before me."*

Exodus 20:3

INTRODUCTION:

God spoke and the world was created. God spoke and man was created. In our lesson for today, we shall read again from our Bible that, "God spoke." This time God spoke and gave us certain laws to live by.

GOD GAVE THE TEN LAWS FOR LIFE

Yes, God gave the ten laws for Living. This was one of the most important things that has ever happened. God gave these laws because he knew that people needed them very much. God gave these laws to live by so that people would follow his will for their lives. If people obey these laws they will live according to God's plan and be happy. If people disobey these laws, they will always be confused. They will never find the happiness that God wants to share with them.

God gave these laws to live by now, today, and so long as we shall live on the earth.

LAWS CONCERNING MAN'S RELATIONSHIP---TO GOD

1. Read in your Bible, Exodus 20:3.

What does this first law teach us?

Do not worship other Gods.

God is teaching us that he is the only true God.

His power will satisfy all our needs.

2. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:4.

What does this second law teach us?

Do not make images for the purpose of worship.

We should worship God directly and not through images.

We cannot make things with our hands and worship God through them.

3. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:7

What does this third law teach us?

It is dangerous to think we can worship only with our lips. We must worship God with all our hearts.

As we sing hymns we should be worshipping God in our hearts.

As we teach the Bible, it should be done with all our heart.

As we preach, we must do so believing in God.

As we visit, we must do so truly in the name of our God.

It is not a small thing to worship the living God.

4. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:8.

What does this forth law teach us?

Work is very important. It is a religious duty. Rest is very important. It is also a religious duty. God has set aside a day to be kept holy.

Most Christians today have chosen Sunday, the first day of the week, to rest and worship God. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, so every Sunday we should remember the risen Lord.

We must remember to worship God every day during the week, and especially on Sunday.

THE LAW THAT CONCERNS GOD
AND MAN--THE FIFTH LAW

5. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:12.

What does this fifth law teach us?

Children are to honour their parents.
The home was planned by God.
The members of a family must live to please God. Not only the children, but the father and mother must live good lives in their homes.

LAWS CONCERNING OUR RELATIONSHIP--
TO OTHERS

6. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:13.

What does this sixth law teach us?

Murder must not be committed.
Have respect for your neighbour's life.
Human life is a very sacred thing.
God's law is broken when you murder someone.

7. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:14.

What does this seventh law teach us?

The sexual relationship between husband and wife is sacred. The husband and the wife must always be faithful to each other.
When a husband or a wife sleeps with someone else, this is sin. God will not change this law for anyone.

Man cannot change this law from God concerning marriage.

8. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:15.

What does this eighth law teach us?

Taking something from someone against that person's will is sinful.

A person has a right to own the things for which he has worked.

Stealing is sinful in the eyes of God.

9. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:16.

What does this ninth law teach us?

You must not speak lies against anyone. This is a sin before God.

10. Read in your Bible Exodus 20:17.

What does this tenth law teach us?

You should not want what belongs to your neighbour. It is a sin to worry concerning the things of another.

THE TRUE MEANING OF ALL THESE LAWS

God gives these laws for living to us. He commands all people to obey them. If our people keep these laws, our country will live according to the will of God. The people here will live good lives. The homes will be blessed.

People cannot live together unless they respect the rights of others. In order to respect the rights of others, people must first respect God. These laws given by God lead us to please God. These laws give personal happiness and many blessings from God.

CHAPTER 3

SALVATION THROUGH SUFFERING

SCRIPTURE - Isaiah 52:13-53:12.

Memory Verse: *"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with his stripes we are healed."*

Isaiah 53:5

INTRODUCTION:

Today we shall study the greatest Scripture in the Old Testament. As we study we shall learn that Isaiah, Chapter 53, is really teaching about the good news of the coming of Jesus Christ. We shall think together how bad sin is, and what it cost God to provide a way for our salvation. We shall see that good can come from suffering.

ISAIAH SHOWS US A PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST

Isaiah was one of the great prophets of God. Many times God spoke to his prophets. In these verses we are studying today, we shall find many interesting things.

Isaiah heard from God many things concerning Jesus Christ many years before Jesus came to earth. This is why we are saying Isaiah shows us a picture. He is showing us a picture of Jesus Christ with his words.

1. Read Isaiah 52:13-15.

What do these verses teach us?

We human beings look on suffering as a

very awful thing. We sometimes think that nothing good can come out of suffering. God is showing us that through his servant, Jesus Christ, suffering can be used of God for good. Pain, in God's service, will lead to great reward. Jesus suffered and died and this led to our salvation.

Sometimes we become sick and suffer. Maybe at these times we become very upset. If we know that we are in God's will, God can turn our sorrow into a wonderful blessing.

2. Read Isaiah 53:1-3.

What do these verses teach us?

These verses show us a picture. Here is the picture. The prophet is saying that when Jesus suffers on the cross people will not believe in him. Isaiah is saying that the people would fail to see God working in Jesus Christ. Isaiah says that the people will reject Jesus as he dies on the cross. Isaiah says that as Jesus dies on the cross the people will blame Jesus for being so weak.

We know that these sayings from Isaiah really came true. Jesus was rejected. Some spat on him, even though he was the Son of God.

3. Read Isaiah 53:4-6

What do these verses teach us?

These verses teach us the true reason for the suffering of Jesus Christ. The true reason for Jesus's suffering on the cross was to save people from their sin. Through his suffering on the cross salvation was made possible for all who would accept him as their Saviour.

4. Read Isaiah 53:7-9.

What do these verses teach us?

These verses teach us that Jesus Christ had no sin of his own. Yet, he was silent and received all the bad treatment from those who rejected him and crucified him. Jesus was murdered. Yet we must understand that Jesus wanted to die on the cross for our sin. Our Bible teaches us that God sent Jesus to die on the cross for our sin.

5. Read Isaiah 53:10-12

What do these verses teach us?

These verses teach us that Jesus Christ will be raised from the dead. Also, Jesus will be forever glorified.

IMPORTANT FACTS TO REMEMBER

1. Jesus did come to earth as Isaiah said he would.
2. Jesus did die in our place on the cross of Calvary.
3. Jesus, who had no sin, took our sin upon himself because he loves us.
4. The life of Jesus was not taken away from him; he gave it up. He followed the will of God.
5. Now we must continue the work of Jesus.

A GREAT WORK FOR ALL CHRISTIANS

1. All Christians must witness to the world that Salvation comes through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Even though we are Christians already, we cannot sit down. We must continue to place our lives in God's service for the salvation of the world.
3. Those of us who are Christians, who have had so much sin forgiven by God should be patient with the faults of others.

CHAPTER 4

CHRISTIAN LOVE - THE BEST WAY

SCRIPTURE - 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13.

Memory Verse: *"Love is patient and kind;
love is not jealous or boast-
ful; it is not arrogant or
rude. Love does not insist
on its own way; it is not
irritable or resentful."
1Corinthians 13:4-5*

INTRODUCTION:

Today our lesson is on the subject of love. This type of love is different from the kind of love that the person who is not a Christian understands. So we must call this type of love, Christian Love.

The Christians in the church at Corinth were acting in the wrong way. Many of them were jealous of one another. Others were boasting about themselves. They were very proud. So Paul wrote to them concerning their problems. Paul said, "You are going in the wrong way. I will show you the best way, the way of Christian love."

SOME PROBLEMS AMONG THE CHRISTIANS AT CORINTH

1. The Lord's Supper - Read 1 Corinthians 11:26-29. The church was not taking the Lord's Supper in the manner of love.

2. Some members claimed themselves to be better than the others because they could speak in tongues. They were saying that real Christians, those filled with the Spirit, must prove it by speaking in tongues. They were saying that only the ones who speak in tongues were

the true Christians. This attitude showed they needed to know a better way. They needed the way of Christian love.

PAUL'S ANSWER TO THESE PROBLEMS

1. Paul said Christians should want the ability for better service to God in the church.

2. Paul told them the highest type of Christian service was not the speaking of tongues.

3. Paul said that the highest type of work for God was serving with Christian love in your heart. Paul said to make Christian love the most important thing. Otherwise, whatever is done will not count for Christ.

THE NEED OF LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Paul said that without love all other gifts of the Spirit and all other signs of power have no meaning.

Read verse 1. What does it teach?

Paul said. "Even if I had the highest of the gifts of tongues, this would have no meaning without love."

Read verse 2. What does it teach?

Paul said that church members could have gifts to prophesy, to know many things, and even faith so strong to remove mountains, but if they do not have Christian love these things would amount to nothing.

Read verse 3. What does it teach?

A person can give away all he owns, and even give his body to be burned. This will not

count in God's service if there is no love.

HOW LOVE EXPRESSES ITSELF

Read verse 4.

Love is the best way. Love is patient. Love is kind. Love is not boastful. Love should be the Christian's way.

Read verse 5.

Love is not rude. Love does not insist on its own way.

Read verse 6.

Christian love does not rejoice at things that are wrong. Christian love rejoices at good things.

Read verse 7.

Christian love bears all things. Christian love forgives others. Christian love believes and trusts and hopes for the best.

CHRISTIAN LOVE WILL LAST FOREVER

Read verses 8-13. What do these verses teach?

1. Love is the best gift that any Christian can have. It will remain with the Christian forever.

2. Prophecy will end when this life is over. There will be no more need for preaching.

3. Some day those people who have the gift of speaking in a strange tongue to God will no longer need that gift. When they meet God in Heaven, they can speak to Him face to face.

4. Knowledge, which is now being used to understand God, will be useless when Christians one day stand in the presence of God.

PAUL USES TWO ILLUSTRATIONS TO
EXPLAIN HOW LOVE WILL LAST

1. When I was a child. Read verse 11.

Paul said that as a child, we were forced to think in childish ways and use childish language. Our understanding of ourselves and the world around us was so limited then that we did not really know quite how to explain life. Now that we are grown up, we no longer use childish language and childish thought.

In this world, we are still like little children. Our knowledge and our prophecy are like childish thought and childish language. However one day, when we meet God face to face, our limited knowledge and our limited language will not be needed. Yet, love will continue to go with us even to Heaven.

2. Now we see through a mirror dimly. Read verse 12.

The mirrors in the days of Paul were made of polished metal. Therefore they were imperfect. A person could not see himself plainly as he can today. Paul told us that in this world we cannot understand everything about God. Only some things do we understand. One day we will see him face to face.

So no one must boast and say, "I know all things." No one must say, "I am special in the eyes of God." No Christian should say that his knowledge and his experience with the Lord is complete in this world.

CHAPTER 5

GOD WITH US

SCRIPTURE - John 1:1-18.

Memory Verse: *"And the Word became flesh
and dwelt among us, full of
grace and truth; we have be-
held his glory, glory as of
the only Son from the Father."
John 1:14*

INTRODUCTION:

In our lesson today, we shall learn about how God came to earth to be with men. John began his story by referring to the very beginning of time. When we read, "In the beginning was the Word," we notice that this word has a capital letter in front. This word is capitalized because when we read it, it always means Jesus Christ. God came to earth through Jesus Christ, the Word.

1. Read John 1:1-5. What it teaches:

John teaches us that Christ was in the beginning with God. Even during the time God created the heavens and the earth, Christ was there. Later Christ came to be on earth. He came to dwell among men. He had first been with God.

All things were created through him. The Bible says, "Without him, nothing could have been made."

Jesus Christ is the source of all life. He is the source of all truth. He is the source of all things.

Because men were living in darkness, they failed to receive Jesus Christ, the Light of the World.

2. Read John 1:6-13. What it teaches:

John the Baptist was sent to preach to all people. John was not the Light. Jesus was the Light. John the Baptist was to prepare the way for Jesus. When Jesus finally came, most people rejected him. Some believed. This is still true today. His own people, the Jews, did not welcome him. Even though they had read the Old Testament that tells of his coming, still they did not give him a reception.

There were some, however, who did receive Jesus Christ. Jesus gave them his power. Those who believed on him became the children of God. To receive Jesus Christ means to believe in him fully. To receive Jesus Christ is to accept all that he is and all that he stands for.

When people receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour, they are spiritually born. The spiritual birth makes them a real child of God.

3. Read John 1:14-18. What it teaches:

When the Word, Jesus Christ, became flesh he did not lose his power. The Bible teaches us that God poured himself into a human being like us. Our Bible also teaches us that Jesus Christ was perfect God and perfect man at the same time. We must read our Bible, pray to God, and accept this fact by faith.

Jesus actually came and dwelt among us. Yes, Jesus Christ came and lived a perfect life. He came to live among men on earth. He came in order to save man from his sin and join man and God together.

John said, "We saw his glory." You notice that John said, "We". The very man, John, who wrote, actually saw Jesus Christ with his own eyes.

John said Jesus Christ was full of grace and truth.

In verse 15 John spoke again of John the Baptist. He said, "John the Baptist also identified Jesus Christ."

Out of the life of Jesus Salvation has come to us. Believers in Jesus Christ in that day and, even now, have always found their spiritual needs met. Jesus never fails.

GOD IS SPIRITUAL

No one with the eyes of human beings has ever been able to see God. God is spiritual and it takes more than physical eyes to understand spiritual things.

Even though God is not seen by ordinary human eyes, yet the Son of God has shown us the Father. This way men are able to see God. Jesus told Philip, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." John 14:9.

Jesus Christ came from the Father. He came in order that men could look at him and see the Father in the life of the Son.

God came to this earth through Jesus Christ. Today we can repent of our sins and put our faith in Jesus Christ. Today God will be with us if we open our hearts.

CHAPTER 6

CHRISTIAN PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITY TO TEACH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE - Deuteronomy 6:1-25.

Memory Verse: *"And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."*
Deuteronomy 6:6-7

INTRODUCTION:

The great Laws of God were given to be kept. Also God commanded that the parents pass these Laws on to their children.

In our lesson for today, forty years had passed since God gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Now, Moses spoke to men and woman who were only children when God gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. These people that Moses spoke to were commanded to pass on to their children the great laws of God.

So every generation of people is responsible to pass on the teachings of God's power and love to their children.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

The Commandments of God were first on two large tables of stone. These stones were carried with the people of Israel wherever they went. Even on their long marches in the wilderness, they would carry these Commandments.

Not only did they carry the Commandments, they taught them to their children.

THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD

Back in the early days mentioned in our Bible, the Jews would begin their daily worship of God with the statement, "The Lord our God is one Lord."

TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS

Read Matthew 22:35-40.

Jesus met a lawyer who asked him which was the great commandment in the law. Jesus got the answer from Deuteronomy 6:5.

The Bible of Jesus was the Old Testament. So he said from memory Deuteronomy 6:5, "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."

When we become the children of God, we must love God with all our heart. Love begins in the heart. We must open our hearts to God. We must invite God to remain in our heart. We must put God first in all things. Then we shall be obeying the first and greatest commandment.

Jesus said the second greatest commandment was, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." Matthew 22:39

When a person loves God with all his heart, he will always find it easier to love his neighbour. His relationship to other people will be determined by his relationship with God. If he really loves God, he will teach him to love all people. It does not matter if some people are black, brown, or white, God can cause them to love one another. It does not matter whether the person is rich or poor, God will teach the Christian to love all people.

What a wonderful country we shall have in Zambia when all the Christian parents teach these truths to their children! The children can best learn by watching their parents. If the parents will put God first, and love God with all their hearts, then the children will have an example. The parents must also teach from the Bible.

These great commandments must first be accepted by the parents and then taught to their children.

TWO LESSONS THAT ALL CHILDREN NEED

1. First, the sin of not obeying God.

The parents were instructed to teach their children very carefully. They would write parts of the law and place these on different parts of their bodies. Or they would write some of the laws on the door post of their houses. When the children would ask questions concerning these laws the parents would then teach them their meaning. They would tell the children how disobeying God caused them to be slaves down in Egypt.

Disobeying God is sin. This was a very important lesson to teach the children.

Even today, this same example can be used. When we refuse to do what God's word says, we are disobeying God. When we try to live our lives without God, this is also sin.

2. Second, the joy of deliverance from sin.

The parents then told their children how God delivered them out of the awful hand of Pharaoh. God is able. God is powerful. God can deliver a person from suffering. He can deliver a person from sin. Even though a person has refused God for a long time, yet God will forgive and deliver that person from his sin.

CHAPTER 7

FAITH GIVES SECURITY

SCRIPTURE - Psalm 23

Memory Verse: *"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Psalm 23:1*

INTRODUCTION:

All of life is lived in the middle of danger. We face dangers every day. People driving recklessly on the roads of our country cause many deaths. Sometimes there are riots where innocent people are injured or killed. Fires may destroy families while they are sleeping. Wars may break out between nations. Diseases may take our lives any time.

All people everywhere feel a real need of security. People want very much to feel prepared for these awful moments. Many people have not found the answer to their needs. So they become very confused. They may try the witchdoctor, but the answer is not there. They may trust their closest friend. Their friend may do many nice things, but the person in trouble or danger knows that he needs even more than all his friends may offer.

Today, in our lesson we shall learn that a true follower of Jesus Christ has the greatest security. The Christian knows that Jesus Christ is with the children of God at all times to help and protect them.

Read verse 1. What does it teach?

The Lord is the Christian's shepherd. The Christians are like sheep. The shepherd loves the sheep. The shepherd protects the sheep. The shepherd goes with his sheep. This is

exactly how our Lord and His children live together. God continuously feeds his sheep with spiritual food.

The sheep who are truly following the shepherd will never lack the necessary things of life.

Every child of God knows that Jesus never fails. Sometimes we may be without food for a while. Sometimes we may suffer. Sometimes we may suffer very much. Jesus passed through these things. Jesus overcame all things. Now he offers his power in order that we too can overcome all things.

Read verse 2. What does it teach?

The shepherd leads his sheep to a quiet place. The sheep will have plenty to eat and find rest.

God's greatest gift to his children is a mind that is at peace with God.

Even when we are in the midst of suffering, dangers, or death, we can still have peace. The real peace of the Christian comes from knowing that the Lord is his shepherd. The Lord will be with his child. The Lord will always put his protecting arms around those who are in danger and they will have peace.

Read verse 3. What does it teach?

When we are very very tired, God will send his power. When we are in need or feel that we are very far from God, then He will supply our need.

God will give us guidance.. He will lead us in the right paths. He will direct our lives according to his will. Our God is able to forgive us. He will lead those of us who have wandered away from him back into His way.

Read verse 4. What does it teach?

Even though we may face death, God will always be with us. If he is with us, we will not fear. No one can escape death. One day we will all die. But, if we are truly the children of God, we will not fear that time. Jesus has promised to be with us always.

We get ourselves into troubles many times. God will bring comfort to us. God will deliver us from our dangers, if it is his will. Most of all, when he is with us, we should not fear.

Read verse 5. What does it teach ?

God will always supply us with spiritual food. We are his special guest. Even though God is giving us spiritual food, God knows that our enemies are near. God will not stop feeding and directing us when our enemies are near. His power overcomes the enemies.

Because God is all powerful, he fills our hearts with great joy. We are happy to be on God's side. Our enemies cannot control us when we have the spirit of God.

Read verse 6. What does it teach?

Things giving great pleasure will come to the Christians. God's presence will fill the Christian's heart until it spills over.

The love of God will continue to be with the person who invites that love.

If a person does not feel the love of God in his heart, then something is blocking the way. That person can ask God's love and God will answer his prayers.

God sends us his power. God is not busy just on Sunday morning. Every day is one of

God's days. He tries to get his love into our lives while we are in Sunday School. He tries to enter our lives during the preaching of a sermon. He tries to come into our hearts in our homes. He tries to come into our hearts in the place where we work.

The greatest thing to know is that we shall be in the presence of the Lord forever.

CHAPTER 8

WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE?

SCRIPTURE - Micah 6:6-8.

Memory Verse: *"He has showed you, O man,
what is good; and what does
the Lord require of you but
to do justice, and to love
kindness, and to walk humbly
with your God?"*

Micah 6:8

INTRODUCTION:

Today's lesson teaches us about God's plan for us. This Scripture teaches us about how to truly worship God. God has done many wonderful things for us. Now, what does he require from us?

The prophet Micah had a vision. He saw that in the future all nations would have a chance to be blessed. The joy would come to all nations as they learned God's ways and walked in the paths of God.

WHAT DOES THE LORD WANT?

Chapter 6 reminds us of a court room. The case is between God and the people. God has been good and merciful to Israel, yet they have disregarded his commands. Then God asked, "How have I mistreated you? Wherein have I fallen short?"

The people answered, "What does God want?" Read verses 6 and 7. Here the people talked about many things they had given to God. Sacrifice cannot take the place of living right before God. It is not just what a person is willing to give to God that pleases God. It is rather what type person that individual is willing to become. First a person must be right inside. Then the

things he does will please God. In our relationship to God, the condition of the heart is always first, if we are to please God.

GOD'S REQUIREMENTS

The word "requirement" is a very strong word. God has certain basic requirements for all people. Every person must face the test of God's requirements.

God is a personal, living God. God has the right to make these requirements. God has all power. God will certainly bring each one of us into judgment.

FIRST REQUIREMENT - DO JUSTLY.

This means to be honest. This means to abide by the law of the land. This means to take time to consider the rights of others. It means to be generous. You must have an open heart when you deal with others. Before something is done, the question, "Is it right?" will come.

Sometimes people say, "I know that this thing will be wrong, perhaps I can get away with it." Of course this is not following the first requirement of God.

1. The politician should not use racial prejudice, ignorance or fear to stir up people to follow him.

2. The preacher must not just say the nice things that please the church. He should warn them also of the bad things. He must be honest. He must help the Christians grow in their relationship to God.

3. The newspaper or the radio and television man must not use his position to cause bitterness, or tell half-truths.

4. The businessman must not cheat by telling lies concerning the things in his store.

5. The man who is working for a salary must give honest labour in return for his pay.

To do justly means to favour quality. We should not demand for ourselves something which we are unwilling to grant to others.

SECOND REQUIREMENT - LOVE KINDNESS

This second requirement shows concern for others. It means that we should try to understand others. It means that we should show mercy to others. We should always be willing to forgive.

1. We should be kind to the very people in our home. God has given them to us.

2. We should be kind and helpful to our neighbours.

3. We should be kind to every Christian brother or sister in all the churches, not just our own.

4. We should be kind to our enemies.

THIRD REQUIREMENT - WALK HUMBLY WITH YOUR GOD.

To walk humbly with God is not just another privilege of man. It is a requirement of God. A person living out of fellowship with God is living in sin against God.

Humility will come when we consider how great God is and what great things he has done.

1. There is a real need to walk with God.

Many people worship God with their lips and some things they may give. The real need is a daily walk with God. This means to know that God is present every step you take. This means not only to know that God is present, but to call on him all through the day.

2. There is a real need to walk humbly with God.

We must always remember he is our Creator. He is the one who sent his Son, Jesus Christ to die on the cross for our sins. He is the one we will face in the judgment. God has the power. Without him we can do nothing.

CHAPTER 9

TRUE HAPPINESS COMES FROM GOD

SCRIPTURE - Matthew 5:1-12.

Memory Verse: *"Blessed are those who hunger
and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied."
Matthew 5:6*

INTRODUCTION:

What is happiness? We may answer this question in many ways. So there may be many types of happiness. Some will say, "When I have much money, I am happy." Others say, "When I have many friends around me, I am happy." Perhaps another will say, "When I receive a very high position in a certain job, I shall be very happy."

As we look at each type of happiness, we will notice that it only lasts for a while. Someday all these will come to an end. So, there must be another type of happiness. There must be a certain kind of happiness that each of us can enjoy on this earth and take with us when this life is over.

Today we shall study about true happiness. It is very important for all people to find this true happiness, because they have only this life on earth in which to find it. Their time may be spent gaining only temporary happiness, and miss the true happiness.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Jesus took the disciples on a mountain and taught them. He taught them concerning their present and future lives. He was telling them that all of his true followers have many advantages in this life as well as in heaven. When a person truly repents of sin and follows

Jesus Christ by faith, he, at that moment, becomes a member of the family of God and a citizen of the kingdom of God.

Read verse 3 - The poor in spirit.

A person who is poor in spirit is a person who admits to himself that he is unworthy. This person feels very humble in the presence of God. This person may say, "I am a sinful man."

Well, you may wonder, how can a person like this be happy? The answer to that question is simple. Happiness comes to a person like this because he is not proud. This person is very honest about his sinful condition. He is nearer the kingdom of God than the man who tries to cover up his sin.

Many times Jesus told the people that he came to seek and to save sinners. Now, those people who admit their sin are near to the forgiveness of God. These people know their weakness and realize that there is hope nowhere else. So with burdened hearts they turn to the love and forgiveness offered in Christ Jesus. True happiness comes to the person who is pardoned of his sin. The person is very happy because Jesus has met his deepest need.

Read verse 4 - The happy mourner.

Everyone knows about mourning, tears, sorrow, and heartbreak. Even for the Christians, how can there be happiness in tears?

Christians can find happiness in the midst of sorrow and tears because some day these will all come to an end. There is no permanent sorrow for the person who is in the kingdom of God.

Jesus answered Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." We know that true happiness comes when we accept the promise of Jesus, our Lord, by faith.

Read verse 5 - The happy meek.

The meek are those who suffer wrong and injustice without becoming bitter. These people do not try to pay their enemies back with wrong. Do not think that this is a weak person. The meaning in this verse is just the opposite. This person lets God's power control his action. Therefore he is truly happy.

Read verse 6 - The happy hungry.

The person who is mentioned in this verse is one who wants with all his heart to please God. It is his desire to always do right. This person wants to behave in such a way that God will be happy. This person wants to do God's will.

When a person desires to do right, happiness comes into his heart. Then day by day he invites God to help him make the right choices.

Read verse 7 - The happy merciful.

This verse tells how a Christian is always willing to forgive. The Christian receives mercy from God. Then he is happy to show mercy to others.

When someone has wronged you, show mercy. Forgive that person because God has forgiven you. This causes true happiness to come into your heart.

Read verse 8 - The pure in heart.

This verse speaks concerning the person who has had the spiritual birth. This person's heart is kept clean. His mind and heart are not always changing. He seeks the will of God in all things. His heart is kept pure by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Read verse 9 - The peacemakers.

Christians should all be peacemakers. These are people who are busy helping to establish peace between God and man. The peacemaker tries to lead men to the cross. Here they can find understanding, equality, and brotherhood among men.

Read verse 10 - The persecuted.

When a Christian tries to follow all these teachings in verses 3-9 surely he will be persecuted. Satan will work against the Christian as he tries to follow all these teachings. The Christian must have courage to continue.

The Christian can find strength to continue through the Holy Spirit. Also the Christian knows that his reward will be great in heaven. Read Matthew 5:11-12.

CHAPTER 10

THE FORGIVING FATHER

SCRIPTURE - Luke 15:11-24.

Memory Verse: *"I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.'"*
Luke 15:18

INTRODUCTION:

What is the central teaching of the Bible? What is God trying to do? God is making himself known to man for a very important reason. God wants to prove that he is a loving God who is interested in all sinners. He wants very much that all sinners be saved.

In the New Testament times, the people criticized Jesus because he moved among sinners. The Pharisees and scribes could not understand why Jesus wanted to be with sinners. They were saying, "How does he see any hope in these sinners?"

In our lesson for today, Jesus answers those people who wondered about why sinners seemed important to God. Jesus uses a story about how a son was forgiven by his father.

OUR FATHER KNOWS

Just like the father in the story forgave his son, God also forgives. The father knew the son's failure and sin. The son announced that he wanted his belongings. The son did not stop to consider his father. The son was interested only in himself.

This is so much like some of us in our day. We become so interested in ourselves we forget God. As we follow this young man in the

story we notice that he spends all his money in a bad way. The young man was destroying himself. This is what always happens when people turn away from God.

Jesus used this story because he wants us to know that God forgives us even when he knows that we have committed awful sins. Jesus knows all about every man. No one can hide his sin from God.

This is why Jesus Christ had to die on the cross. Our sins were so bad God made a great sacrifice. God sent his Son to die on the cross for all our sins.

FORGIVENESS AND REPENTANCE

Jesus taught that repentance is absolutely necessary. He said, "Except you repent, you shall all perish." Forgiveness can only come to people who are willing to repent.

Verse 17 tells us that the young man "came to himself." Repentance is a change of mind. The young man had left home thinking of his own life and sin. He changed his mind. He admitted that what he had away from the father was less than what he had with the father.

Repentance means that a person discovers that he is a sinner and that Jesus Christ is a Saviour. The person gets a true picture of what is best. He is able to put the proper value on things. He learns that living a life away from home can be very costly and dangerous. His mind is made up to return to the father.

THE FATHER'S HEART

This story helps us to look into the heart of God. Read verse 20. This verse teaches us that God is already looking for us to return from our sin to him. The heart of God suffers until we return back into his arms. God is expecting the return of sinners who repent.

God's heart is full of love. God wants to forgive every sinner.

We learn from the Bible that we need to repent. But is it not wonderful to know that God wants us to repent and came home to him?

GOD'S LOVE GOES ALL THE WAY

The father did not say to the returning son, "Well, I shall punish you for your wrong doing. I will wait for a time to see if you have really repented." The father accepted the son fully. The father's love went all the way. The father fully forgave his son.

When we repent of our sin and come home to God, his forgiveness and love is ours. So from the moment we are forgiven by our heavenly father we begin to serve him with willing obedience.

CHAPTER 11

LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED

SCRIPTURE - John 14.

Memory Verse: *"Let not your hearts be
troubled; believe in God
believe also in me."*
John 14:1

INTRODUCTION:

Many times Jesus had told the disciples that he would be going away from them. They had been very slow to believe.

Now, in this scripture today, we notice that Jesus is explaining once more. Jesus was trying to prepare his disciples for a very bad thing. Jesus was shortly to die like a common thief on a cross. The disciples were probably asking, "How can the one in whom we have placed all our hope be put to shame by dying on a cross in public?"

It was at this time that Jesus said to them, "Let not your hearts be troubled." This message is for all people who are Christians today.

BELIEVE IN GOD

"Let not your hearts be troubled," Jesus said, because "you believe in God." To believe in God and to believe in Jesus Christ is the same thing. Jesus had come to earth to make the Father known through himself.

Now, the big question for everyone is: Do you believe in God? If you believe in Jesus Christ, you must trust him. You must accept his promises in your heart.

For a person to believe in Jesus Christ he must put his entire life in the hand of God.

Do you want someone to whom you can turn in your hour of deepest need? Would you like someone who is stronger than you can ever be? Then, this is Jesus Christ. Jesus is powerful and able to do all things.

A PREPARED PLACE

Read verse 2 and 3.

This teaches us that Jesus is preparing a place for all who belong to him in faith. It is very good to see that Jesus personally is preparing this place for Christians. Jesus is speaking here of heaven. All Christians look forward to being in heaven. This is where we want our loved ones who have gone on before and who will come later to be. What a great moment! We shall be with our loved ones who died as Christians, and we will be with Jesus Christ forever.

THE THINGS THAT WE CAN KNOW NOW

Jesus told the disciples they knew the way which he was going. Thomas said, "Lord we don't know where you are going and how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way." If a person knows Jesus, then he will know the way. Jesus is the way from earth to heaven. He is the way from death to life eternal.

Then Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied." Jesus answered him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'show us the Father.'"

We can know now that everything our hearts need we find in Jesus Christ.

Read verses 13 and 14. What do they teach?

Jesus said that we must ask. He wants us to pray. We must pray in his authority. We must pray that God's will be done. The purpose of all our prayers should be to glorify our heavenly Father and not ourselves.

Read verse 15. What does it teach?

Jesus said that if we love him we will keep his commandments. We will always want to follow the teachings that Jesus has left for us. Also we should help others to know the teachings of Jesus.

CHAPTER 12

MORE THAN CONQUERORS

SCRIPTURE - Romans 8:26-39.

Memory Verse: *"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."*
Romans 8:37

INTRODUCTION:

The desire to win is born in human beings. No one wants to lose. 'If you follow Christ, you need not fear anything on the outside. Neither do you have to fear anything on the inside. You do not have to fear anything now or in the future, because the final victory is in Jesus Christ. The Christian has many victories through the power of Christ.

In this eighth chapter of Romans, we discover that Christians are more than conquerors.

OUR GO-BETWEEN SPIRIT

A secret of the Christian victory is found in the fact that the Spirit also helps our weaknesses. The Holy Spirit is our Go-between. The Holy Spirit presents our deepest need to our Heavenly Father. This brings God's power to help us.

The Holy Spirit knows what we need to do for God.

GOD'S POWER OVERRULES IN ALL THINGS

Do you believe that all things, good and bad, can work together to bring good to people who love God? The death of Jesus on the cross was a very bad thing to happen. But God uses it to bless any person who wants to be saved from their sins.

IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?

This is a very good question. If God is on our side, does it matter so much about how many enemies we have? Of course not! Now this does not mean that we can go out and see how many enemies we can make. But it does mean that regardless of the number of enemies, our God is greater.

The cross of Calvary on which Jesus died reminds us that God will freely give us all things. God did not spare his only Son.

Then the question is asked. "Who can condemn the child of God?" The answer is found in Romans 8:1. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

NO SEPARATION

When a person becomes a child of God through repentance and faith nothing can separate him from the love of Jesus Christ.

Paul says in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

We must remember that we were saved through Jesus Christ. We must remember that we overcome temptation through Jesus Christ. It is through Jesus Christ that our weaknesses are healed. It is through Jesus Christ that we must talk with our Heavenly Father.

Without Jesus Christ in our lives we can do nothing.

CHAPTER 13

CHRIST IS RISEN

SCRIPTURE - Mark 15:42-16:1-7.

Memory Verse:

"And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him."

Mark 16:6

INTRODUCTION:

We know that Jesus Christ did die on the cross for our sin. If Jesus had been just an ordinary man, we would agree that his death would be the end. We know that Jesus was the Son of God. The greatest thing to happen to him would be after his death.

Today we will study together the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Read verse 42.

Jesus died at about three o'clock on Friday. The Jewish Sabbath began six o'clock on Friday and continued until six o'clock the following day. The Jews had a law that no dead body could hang on a cross over Sabbath day. Friday was also the day of preparation. The Jews were always very busy on this day preparing for the Sabbath day. So, if Jesus was to receive a nice burial, there was little time to wait.

Read verse 43.

At the cross there were none of Jesus' close friends who were willing or able to take care of his body when he died. But one man named Joseph of Arimathea, came forward for this task. The Bible says that he was a wealthy man.

This man, Joseph of Arimathea, went and asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. Now this took much courage. No one wanted to be near Jesus because they were fearing the mob that crucified him.

Read verse 44.

Sometimes men would hang on the cross for twenty hours before they would die. Pilate called the guard and found out from him that Jesus was already dead.

Read verse 46.

Joseph brought some graveclothes for Jesus. Jesus was wrapped in strips of fine linen. Then Jesus was placed in a new tomb. See Luke 23:53. So the prophets of the Old Testament were right. Jesus died on the cross between two thieves; he was buried in the tomb of a wealthy counselor. A large stone was rolled against the door.

Read verse 47.

The women had been more faithful than the men. The men got scattered because they feared the mob that crucified Jesus. The women were there near the cross all the time. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw the place where they laid Jesus' dead body.

Read verse 16:1.

It seems that these women waited until the Jewish Sabbath passed in order to prepare the dead body of Jesus. They did not know that Joseph and Nicodemus had already taken care of those arrangements.

Read verse 16:2

Very early on Sunday, the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb. Those who went were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome, the mother of James and John.

Read verse 16:3

Along the way these women started worrying about who would roll away the stone in front of the tomb. The custom in that day was to seal the front of the tomb with a large heavy round stone. This would protect the grave from animals and people who might want to enter. These stones were far too much for a man to lift and certainly too much for these women.

Read verse 16:4

When the women arrived at the tomb, they discovered that the large stone was already moved away. They had been worrying needlessly. So they entered the tomb. They had their spices and clothes and were still planning on preparing the body of Jesus.

Read verse 16:5

As the women entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in white. Everything was very strange to them. They did not know quite what to think.

Read verse 16:6

Then came the glad announcement that filled their hearts with amazement. It was an announcement that has lasted down through the years and has brought hope to the hearts of all who, by faith, have received it.

This person dressed in white was a messenger sent from heaven. The messenger pointed to the place where Jesus had laid. He wanted to prove that Jesus had actually been raised from the dead. John made it clear that the grave-clothes were still lying there as though the body of Jesus had been lifted out of them in some miraculous manner. See John 20:5-7.

Today the living Christ is ever with us. The Bible says where two or three are gathered together he is in the middle of them. We do not worship and serve a dead God, but we serve a risen, living Saviour. All power is given to him. Through the Holy Spirit this power can come into our hearts today.