

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living Study Guide

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

LESSON 3: KNOWING MAN ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

INTRODUCTION

This Study Guide is part of a Discipleship Essentials module titled *Understanding Salvation*. This series of lessons examines the very foundational idea of salvation, and what occurs in the life of a person who becomes a Christian. These lessons are critical for every believer to understand before they can effectively share the Gospel with others. Each lesson examines a concept from a Biblical perspective, and includes time for discussing these principles as well as how to effectively apply them to your life. This module is ideal to use when discipling new believers to ensure they fully understand these concepts.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

All other content is © 2019 Trans World Radio Canada, and may be used in any way you like as long as you use it with the purpose of reaching the world for Christ and do not charge for the use of the material. See more license details at www.discipleshipessentials.org/licensing.



UNDERSTANDING SALVATION

LESSON 3: KNOWING MAN ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Christianity has a particular view of people, and who we are in relationship to God. Sin has affected our ability to fulfill the intended purpose of our life. Did you know God had a purpose and a design when He creating you? Wouldn't you like to know who you were meant to be? Read on to learn what God made you for, and how you can live your life for God. In this lesson we will use the word 'man' to refer to both male and female persons.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

There is a commonly held idea that people are nothing more than highly evolved animals. When you look at animals around you – maybe livestock, pets or wild beasts, do you think we are just like them? We might have some needs and behaviours in common, but we are very different in our ability to reason, plan, organize and understand concepts beyond what we see around us. Some worldviews believe that people descended from the body of a god – and that we are divine in nature but temporarily housed in the physical world. The Christian idea of man is that we are a precious creation of God and that we are broken by sin. In this lesson we will look at what the Bible says about people and our current state before God. When we know why God made people, what sin has done to us then we can take steps towards reconciliation with God and fulfill the plan God designed us to fulfill.

GETTING STARTED

1. What are some of the viewpoints (scientific, world, or religious) about how mankind came into being? How do they compare to the Bible's account? How are they different? (These may include evolution, reincarnation, etc.)

2. Do people around you feel that humans are generally good but capable of doing evil, or generally evil but capable of doing good? Or do they think we are rather neutral? What does the Bible say about this?



❖ **THE CREATION OF MAN:**

The Bible gives us a comprehensive picture of how man came into being. It includes every detail, including God’s nature and His purpose. It is important to consider the purpose we were created to fulfill when we are looking at a Biblical view of man.

- The human ability to think and reason, to express emotion and language, far surpasses the ability of any animals. This gift was bestowed when God’s image was imprinted on us. People were a special part of God’s creation. We were created in His Image! What does this mean? Look at the following verses and explain what this means to you.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Genesis 1:26 | |
| Genesis 5:1 | |
| Genesis 9:6 | |
| Ephesians 4:24 | |
| Colossians 3:10 | |

❖ **IN THE IMAGE OF GOD**

We were created in the image of God, which means we share some of God’s attributes. His attitudes, which describe who God is, can be divided into communicable attributes (those we also possess) and incommunicable attributes (those which are unique to God).

- Can you think of some attributes of God that people also have?

You may have thought of different attributes like having compassion, reason, creativity, love, desire, appreciation for beauty, goodness, mercy, and wisdom. Incommunicable attributes, those that belong only to God, are explained in Scripture. For example, God is infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, sovereign, immutable, and perfectly holy.



❖ **OUR PURPOSE**

The Bible tells us that God made people as a special part of His creation. There are some reasons that the Bible gives for the creation of man, and we will look at these together.

❖ **FOR HIS GLORY:** God wanted to share His nature with a creature that could appreciate it. He had love and compassion to offer. We were created for God’s glory. God is glorified through us when we share His love with others. When we see God for who He is, He is glorified.

➤ See what the Bible says about God’s Glory:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Isaiah 43: 7 | |
| 1 Peter 4:11 | |
| 1 Corinthians 10:31 | |
| Matthew 5:16 | |

❖ **TO HAVE DOMINION:** We were also created to have dominion over the earth. We must remember that dominion comes from God and that He is the ultimate authority. Dominion means to rule over or wisely manage. God wanted to share in the appreciation of this world with us – we who are His special creation!

➤ What do these verses say we should do to care for God’s creation?

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Genesis 1:26-28 | |
| Psalms 8:6-8 | |
| Romans 13:1-5 | |

❖ **BROKEN BY SIN**

When Adam and Eve (the first people) were created by God, they were perfect. They were without sin. You can read in Genesis 3 the story of how Adam and Eve first broke God’s rules. Although God had given Adam and Eve dominion over the earth and their purpose to glorify Him was clear, they made a choice to do exactly what God had told them not to do. From this



moment on, the relationship between man and God was tarnished. Romans 1:25 tells us that man has been making decisions against God’s will ever since. “They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.”

- What does the Bible say about our sinful state?

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Romans 5:12 | |
| Ecclesiastes 7:20 | |
| 1 John 1:10 | |

This has left all people, everywhere on earth, sinful. Our natural state is to sin. Our natural desires are sinful, selfish and against God. We also must give account to God for the choices we have made. Anything we do that harms our self or others is a sin. Anything we do that is against God’s law is sin. Anything we know we should do and don’t do is a sin. It is clear that even as children we are not innocent. We can never be right before God on our own.

- What do these verses tell us about our accountability for our actions?

| | |
|--------------|--|
| John 3:36 | |
| Romans 14:12 | |
| Hebrews 9:27 | |

The Bible tells us that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). We deserve death for our disobedience to God. Every person will someday die – but we have hope to spend eternity with God if our sins have been forgiven. With God’s help we can make the choice not to sin and be freed from slavery to our sinful nature! God has created us with:

- The freedom to choose not to sin (Romans 1:25)
- A conscience (Romans 2:15, Romans 9:1)
- The power of discernment (Hebrews 5:14)



Not only that, but we can be freed from sin!

- Even though all of us are sinners, there is hope! What is God's amazing promise to us?

| | |
|------------|--|
| 1 John 1:9 | |
|------------|--|

IN SUMMARY

- ❖ God created men and women. The Book of Genesis in the Bible tells us how this came to be.
- ❖ God made people in His image and likeness, different from animals. He made them to express emotion and language, think and reason, feel and dream.
- ❖ God created us for His glory. We glorify God when we display His nature, and use the abilities He has given us to serve Him.
- ❖ God created us to have dominion over the earth. We must appreciate and care for the world God has given us to live in.
- ❖ Every one of us is sinful. That is the state of mankind. The only escape from this is forgiveness and salvation through Jesus Christ. God has given us the freedom to choose not to sin, a conscience to know the difference between right and wrong, and the ability to discern our actions.
- ❖ We must all give account of ourselves to God. Without forgiveness we will be punished for our sins. But we can be forgiven!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1.

Does it change the choices you make and how you view yourself to know that you have a purpose and are made in the image of God?

2.

Summarize what mankind's God-given purpose is. What choices will you make in order to fulfill your purpose? What is your personal responsibility toward God?