

12 *Foundation Stones*



For Younger Children

The Word of God

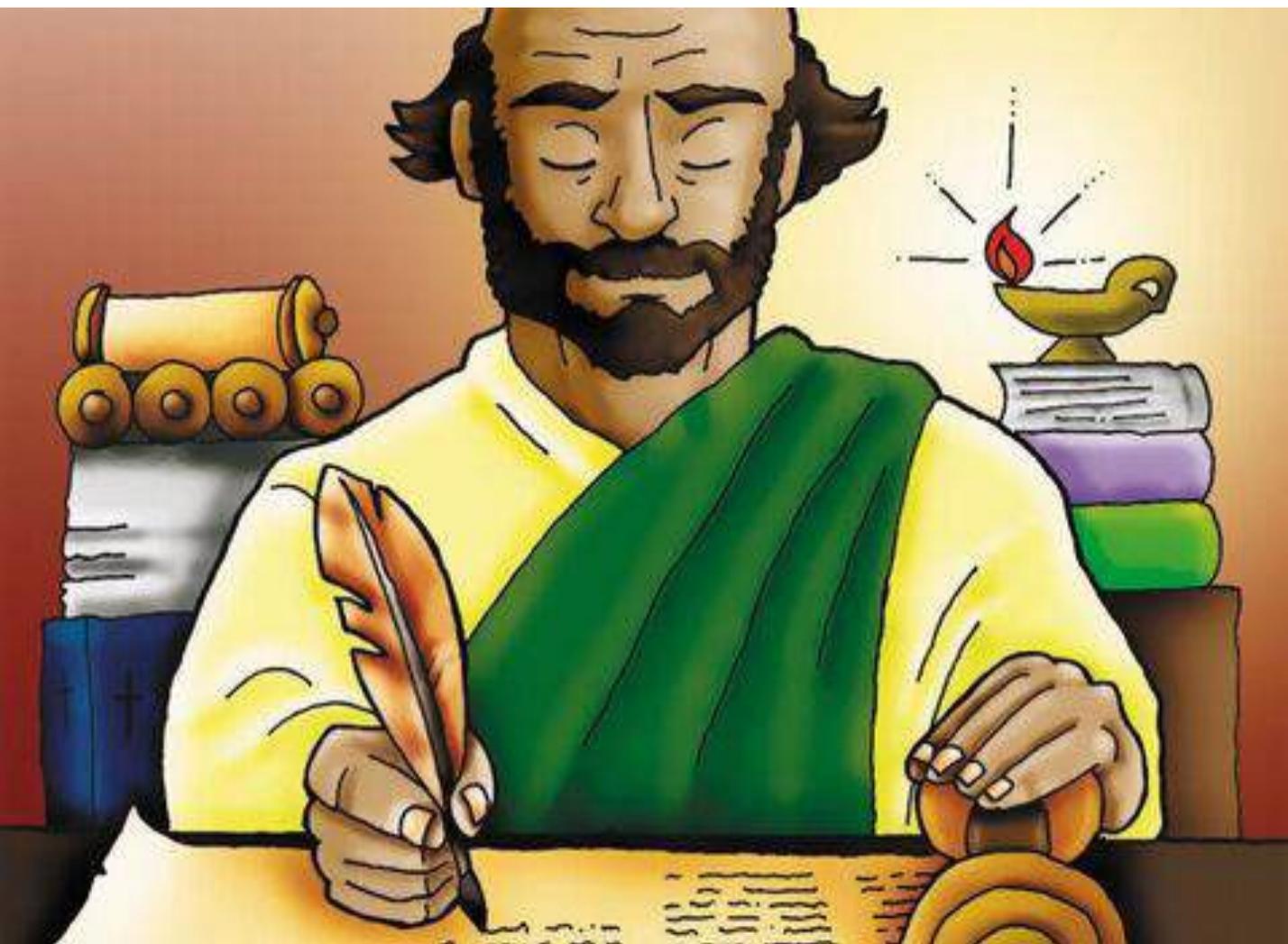


The Bible was given to man by God

The Bible is a collection of 66 books that are the written record of messages God gave to about 40 people whom He chose as His spokesmen. Although the Bible was recorded by men, it was written by God.

2 Timothy 3:16—All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

2 Peter 1:21—No prophecy ever came from what some person wanted to say. But people were led by the Holy Spirit and spoke words from God.



God's Word is true and never fails

Psalm 119:89—Your eternal word, O Lord, stands firm in heaven.

Isaiah 40:8—The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of our God stands forever.

Matthew 24:35—Heaven and Earth will pass away, but My Words will by no means pass away.

The Bible works!

A skeptic, talking about the Bible, said that it was quite impossible these days to believe in any book whose author was unknown.

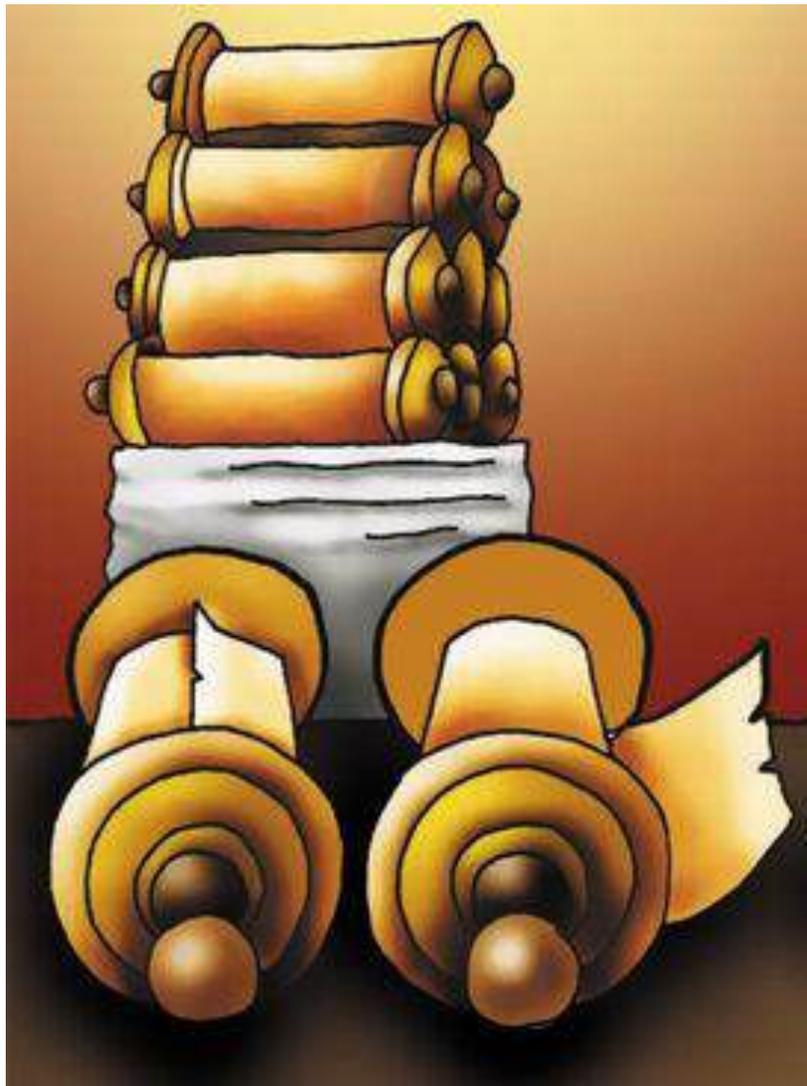
James, who believes in Jesus, asked him if the compiler of the multiplication table was known.

"No," he answered.

"Then, of course, you do not believe it?" asked James.

The skeptic replied, "Oh, yes, I believe in it because it works."

"So does the Bible!" responded James.



The Bible tells us that Jesus is the "Word made flesh."

John 1:1,14—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 11:3—By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

God has always spoken to people in many ways:

- **through the beauty and wonder of His Creation,**

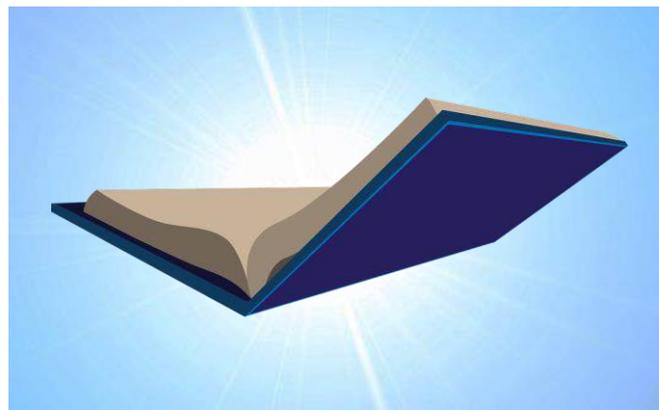


- **through His prophets and messengers,**



- **and through His written Word.**

But the clearest revelation of Himself—of His character, of His Love—is found in His Son, Jesus, Whom the Bible calls "the Word."





Words are the means by which we express ourselves, by which we reveal our thoughts, our feelings, our character.—And Jesus is the means by which God expresses Himself to us. God's most outstanding means of communication with us, the way that He chose to communicate His love to the world, was by His Son, Jesus.

The Bible was written for our benefit

John 19:35—And he [John] who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

1 Corinthians 10:11—These things happened to them [Bible characters] as examples for us. They were written down to warn us.

The Water of Life

Water is the most valuable commodity on earth, outside of life itself, which is why God symbolizes the Word with water, calling it the Water of Life.



It's important to keep the Word

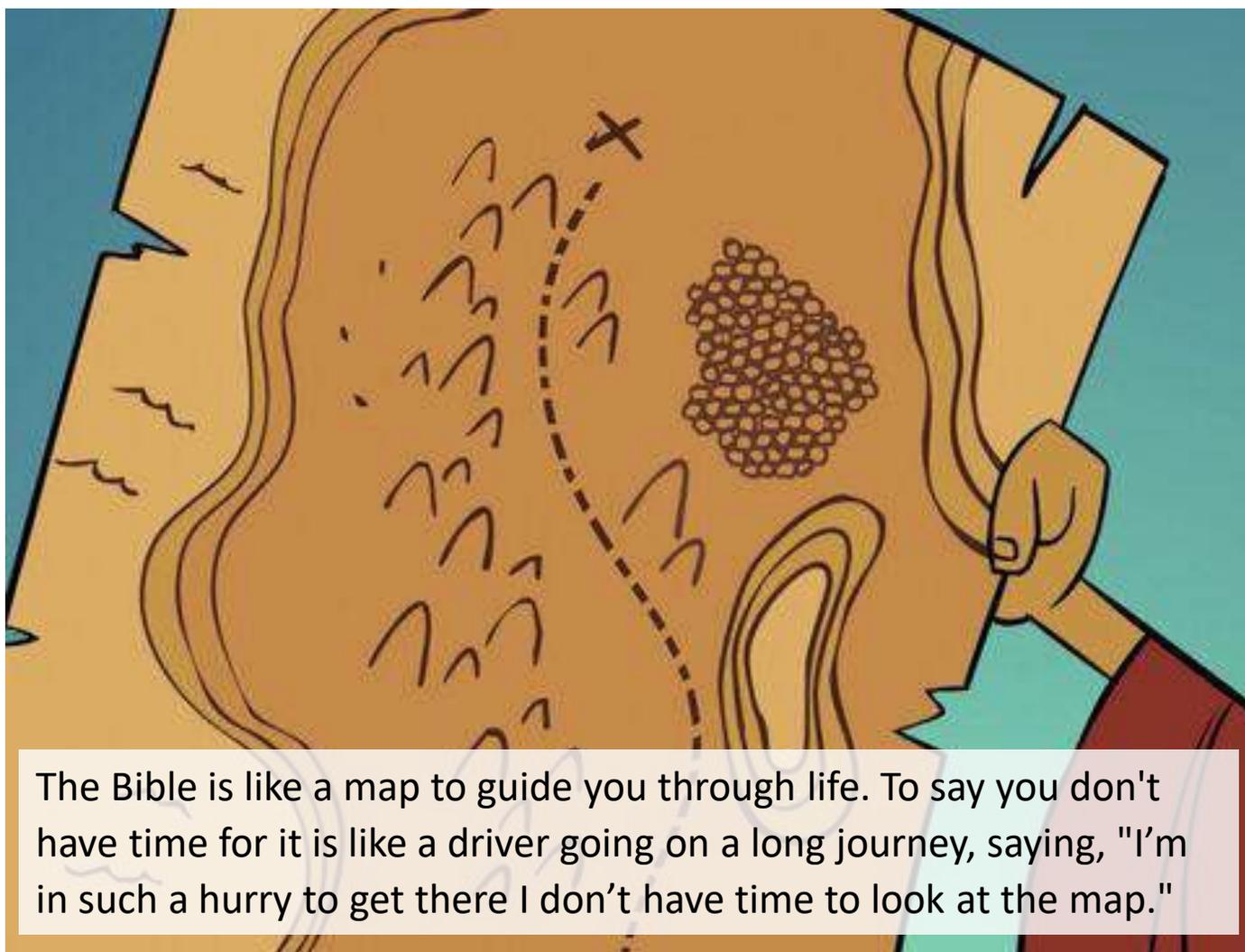
Obedying the Word proves we know and love Jesus. As a result, we receive benefits!

John 8:31-32—Jesus said, "If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Luke 11:28—Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!

John 15:7—If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

John 14:15—If you love Me, keep My commandments.



The Bible is like a map to guide you through life. To say you don't have time for it is like a driver going on a long journey, saying, "I'm in such a hurry to get there I don't have time to look at the map."

Benefits of the Word

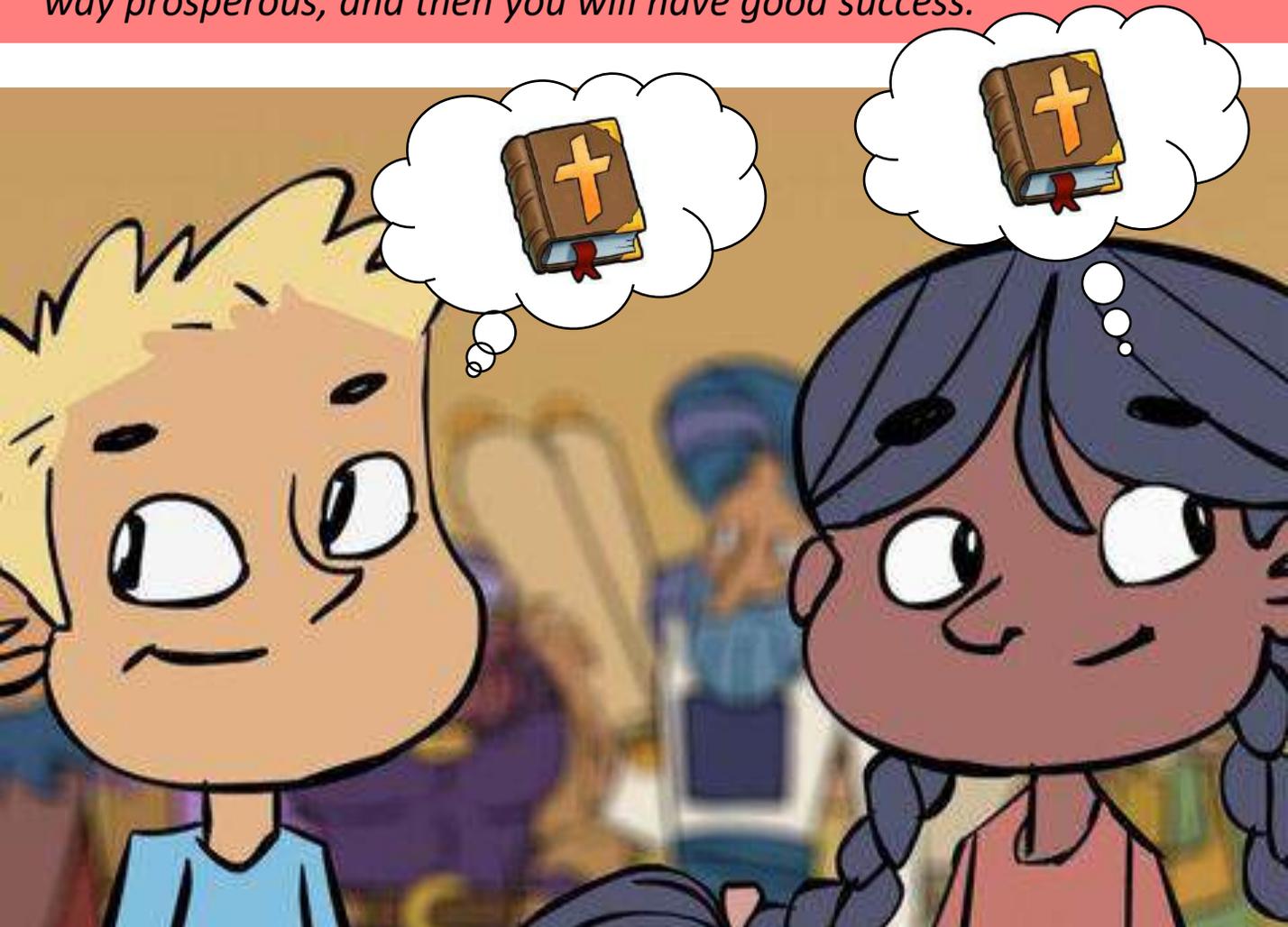
The Word gives us faith, truth, wisdom and strength!

Psalm 19:7—The LORD's teachings are perfect. They give strength to his people. The LORD's rules can be trusted. They help even the foolish become wise.

Romans 10:17—Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

Meditating on the Word brings blessings and success:

Joshua 1:8—This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.



The Word cleanses us, heals us, makes us happy, gives us peace!

John 15:3—“You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you.”

Psalms 107:20—He sent His Word and healed them.

Psalms 119:165—Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.

Jeremiah 15:16a—Your Words were found, and I ate them, and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

How to Read God’s Word

When you sit down to read, the first thing you should do is pray and ask the Lord to bring the Word alive to you by His Holy Spirit. As David prayed,

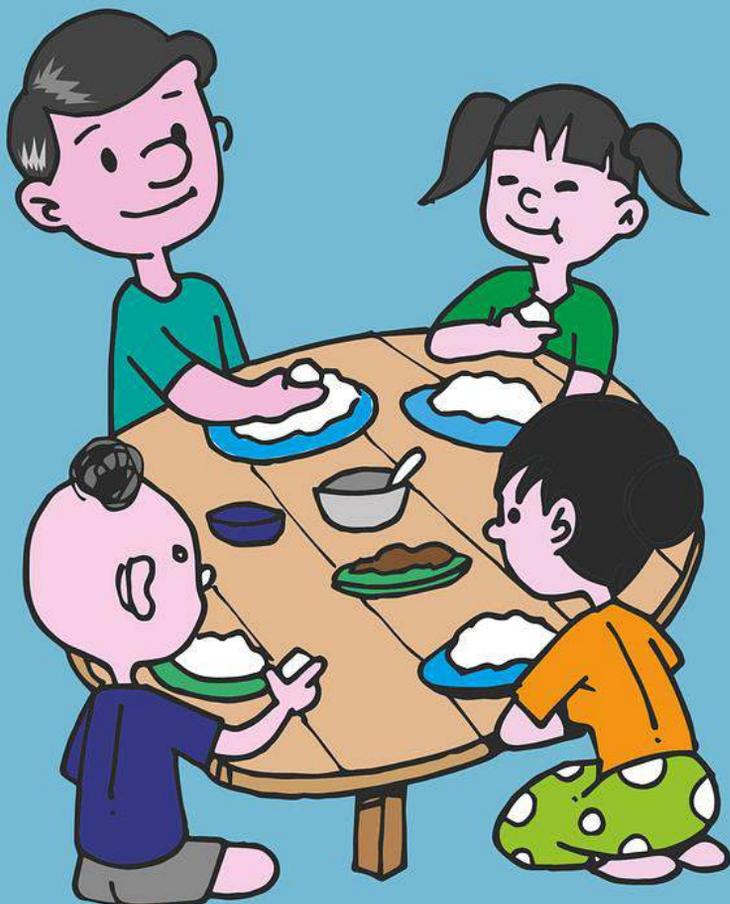


*Psalms
119:18—Open
my eyes, that I
may see
wondrous
things from
Your law.*

Don't just read—study, question, and apply

2 Timothy 2:15—Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

If every time you sat down to eat a meal, you gobbled and gulped it down as fast as you possibly could, you wouldn't digest or absorb it nearly as well as if you had eaten it a little more slowly.— Nor would you enjoy it as much!



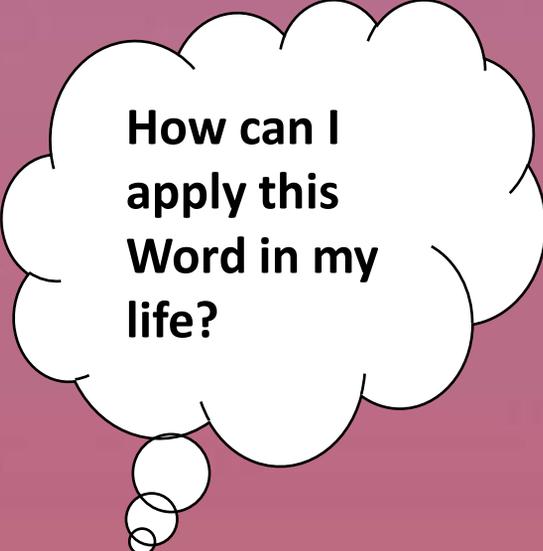
This same principle applies to your spiritual food as well. You can miss a lot of the meaning, the real depth of what the Lord's talking about, unless you stop to think about it and apply the Word to your personal situation, and ask, "How is that true and how does that apply to me?"—

knowing that you can learn even more lessons if you search further and dig deeper.

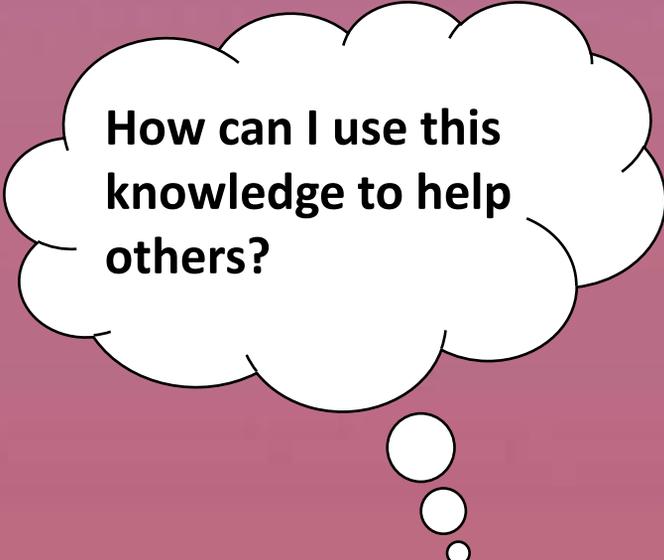
Doers of the Word

James 1:22—But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only.

When you are reading the Word, pray and ask the Lord to help you apply what you are studying and show you specifically what He wants you to do. Ask the Lord to show you:



**How can I
apply this
Word in my
life?**



**How can I use this
knowledge to help
others?**

John 13:17—If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

What to do when you don't understand something

When reading through the Bible, pray for the Holy Spirit to help you understand what you read, but don't worry if you don't understand everything the first time you read it; no one does. Keep at it. The more you read the Word, the more you will understand, and often when going back to reread a certain passage, you'll find new meanings and "treasures" that you hadn't noticed before.

We do not have to understand everything

St. Augustine was once walking by the seashore. He was greatly perplexed about a particular aspect of faith and doctrine. He saw a little boy with a seashell running to the water, filling it and then pouring it into a hole that he had made in the sand.

"What are you doing, my little man?" asked Augustine.

"Oh," said he, "I am trying to put the ocean in this hole!"

Augustine learned his lesson, and as he walked away, he said, "That is what I am trying to do. I am trying to get into this little finite mind of mine things which are infinite." Let us be content to let God know some things that we cannot know.



Now it's up to you to put this into action!

You can think of this as being like a cookery class. We've given you a recipe, but if you don't go home and pull out the ingredients and try to cook it, you'll never find out how delicious a meal you could enjoy!

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Text adapted from the original 12 Foundations Stones classes

Memorization



12 Foundation Stones Class 1B for Younger Children

Why Memorize?

1. For your spiritual strength

The mind can be compared to a computer database: It has to be filled with something, good or bad.

Jesus, by His Word, spiritually cleanses us and gives us something positive with which to fill it.

Romans 12:2a—Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Psalm 37:31—The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.



2. God speaks to you through His Word that you have learned

John 14:26—But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

God knows His own Book better than anybody, and He can bring verses to your remembrance by His Spirit when you need it. If you've faithfully read, studied, and memorized, He'll pop the verses up in your little computer (mind) whenever you need them.



3. To help you share God's Word with others

Knowing specific passages and Scriptures also helps us in sharing our faith with others, as Peter advised:

1Peter 3:15b—Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.



4. A weapon in your walk of faith

Hebrews 4:12—For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,

God has given us His Word to use as our spiritual weapon to fight the battles that beset us. It's up to us to memorize and use it.



Class Section 2: How to Memorize



- **Your memory can be developed like a muscle**

The more you use it, the stronger it gets, but lack of use causes it to weaken.



- **The more you concentrate, the easier it is to memorize**

Finding a quiet place, free from distractions, will help a lot.

- **Sight, sound, and action**

Most people remember best what they see, while others remember best what they hear, and another portion best what they do in actual motions.



For example, by reading, you use your sight. If you quote your memory work out loud, you hear it too, as well as use your mouth to speak it. Then by writing the same verse to be memorized, it is often better remembered.

- **Memory work is work**

Don't worry if it seems to take quite awhile, especially at first, to memorize a verse. It's not a contest to see how quickly you can learn. The goal is to get it down, and keep it in your heart.

The law of memory is repeat, repeat, repeat!



Psalm 1:1-2—Great blessings belong to those who... they love the Lord's teachings and think about them day and night.

Class Section 3: Advice For Memorizing Scriptures

*** Our decision to memorize shouldn't be based on our feelings**

Feeling enthusiastic about memorizing verses is great, but it's not a good enough motivation because those feelings may not last.

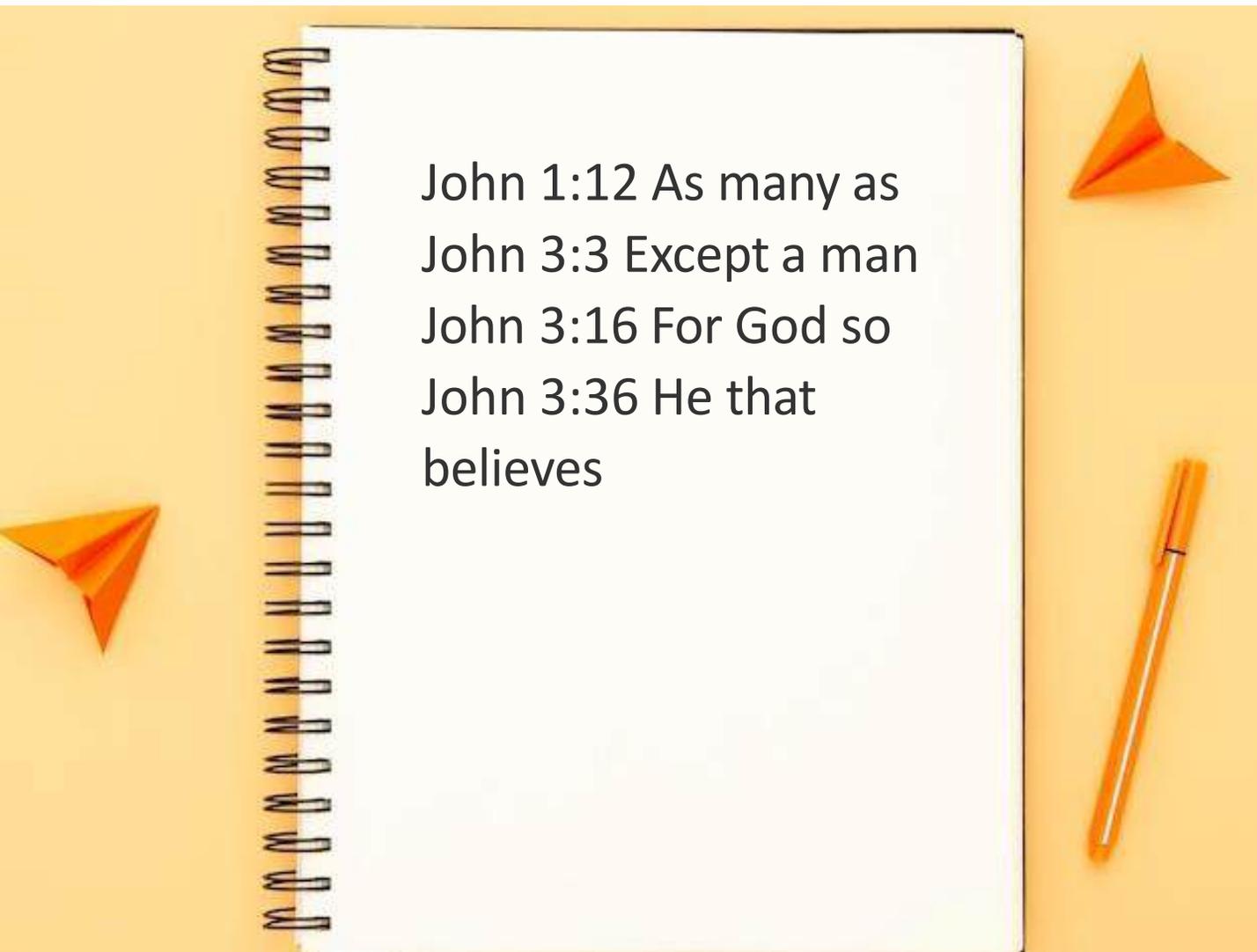
What are some of the facts about memorizing upon which we should base our decision?

- God's Word tells us to hide the Word in our heart.
- It helps us in our spiritual walk with the Lord.
- It helps us to help others.

Reviewing

You can write out your memory verses in a small, sturdy notebook. If you carry it with you wherever you go, you can pull it out to review in spare moments.

- In a notebook, you can write down the references and first few words of each verse you memorize and then use this for reviewing.



John 1:12 As many as
John 3:3 Except a man
John 3:16 For God so
John 3:36 He that
believes

Thank You, Lord, for Your Word and its power. Please do help us all to be faithful to memorize Your Word, so we can quote it for our own benefit and for the sake of others. Amen.

Selecting verses to memorize

Illustrated memory verses and chapters for children:

- [Feed My Lambs: Memory Verses for Children](#)
 - [Psalm 1](#)
 - [Psalm 8](#)
 - [Psalm 19](#)
 - [Psalm 23](#)
 - [Psalm 91](#)
 - [Psalm 100](#)
 - [Psalm 121](#)
 - [Psalm 150](#)
 - [John 1:1-14](#)
 - [John 3:1-8; 14-17](#)
 - [John 14](#)
 - [John 15](#)

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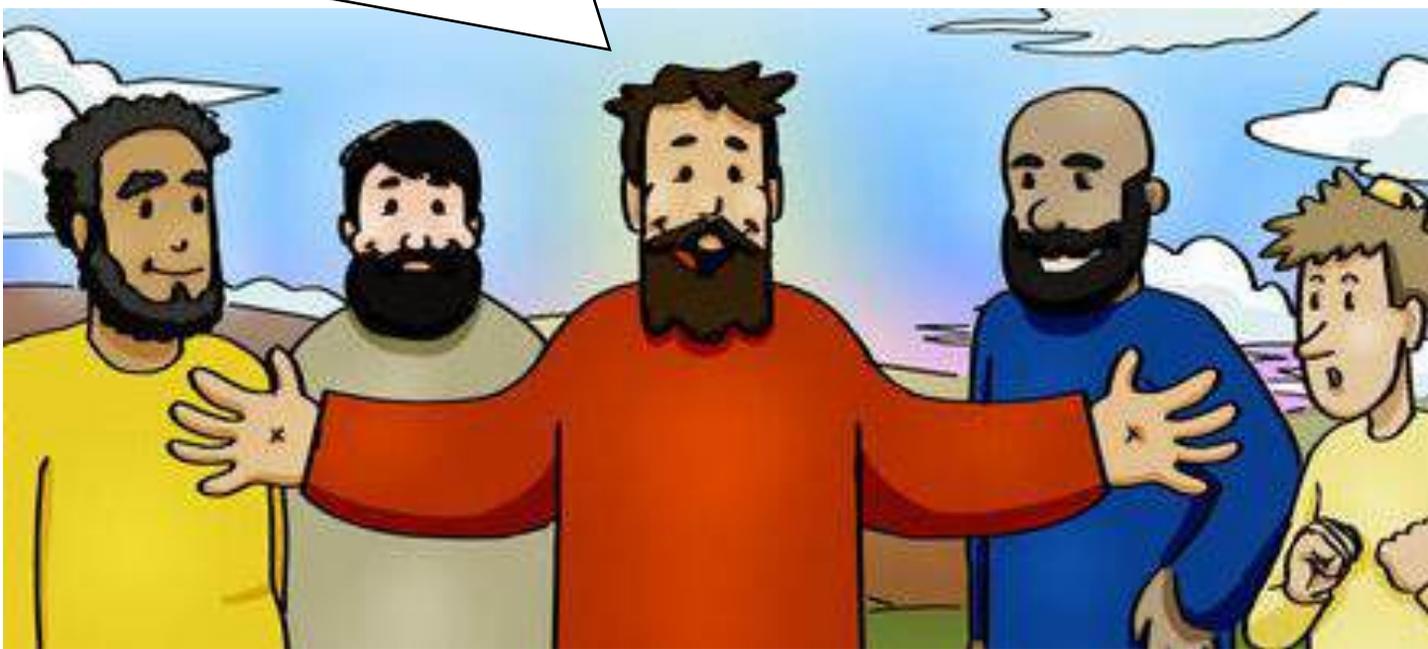
The Holy Spirit

Bible Class: Acts Chapters 1-4



Chapter 1 begins with a reminder of what Jesus had told His followers to do before He ascended.

Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:4,5,8)



Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem ... They all met together and were constantly united in prayer...When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all in one place. (Acts 1:12,14; Acts 2:1)

Pentecost was the Feast of the Harvest.

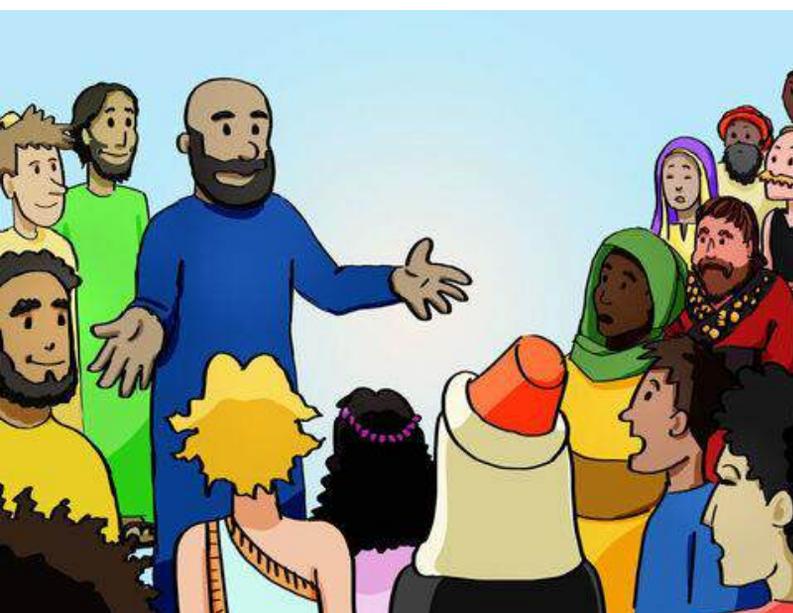
Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and



settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.



At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. (Acts 2:2-6)



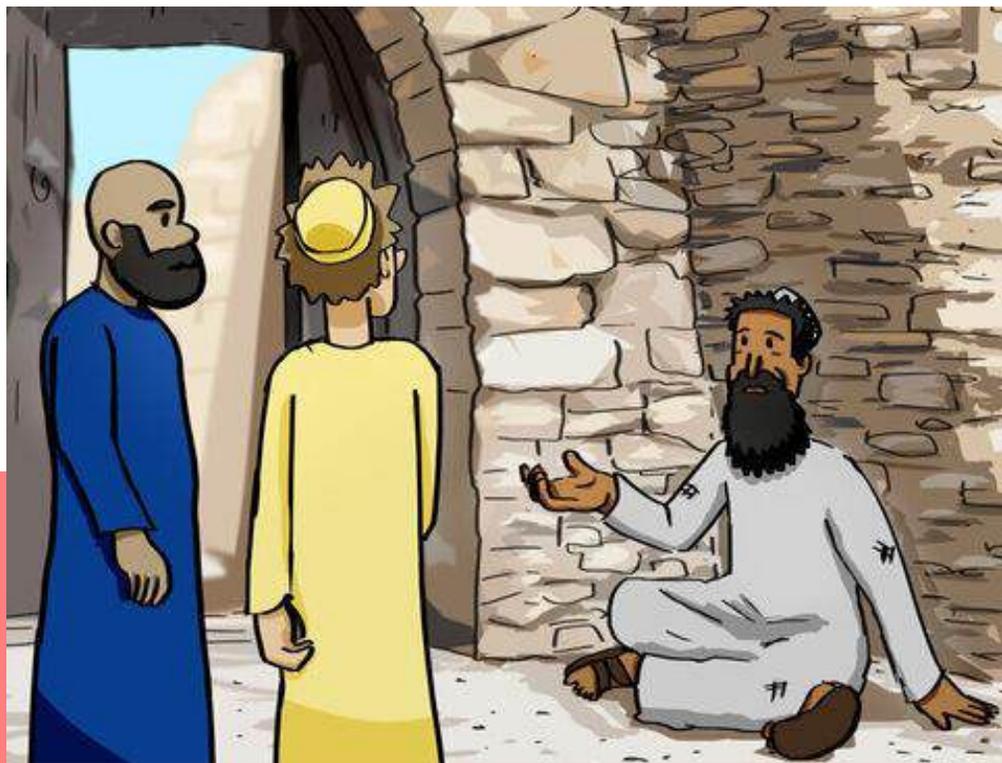
Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! ...What you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: 'In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy. (Acts 2:14-18)

The greatest, most important thing that happened that morning was not the outpouring of the power and a lot of people talking in other languages! It was the end result:

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all. (Acts 2:41)

In Acts Chapter 3 and 4 we read more about the results of the disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Peter and John went to the Temple one afternoon to take part in the three

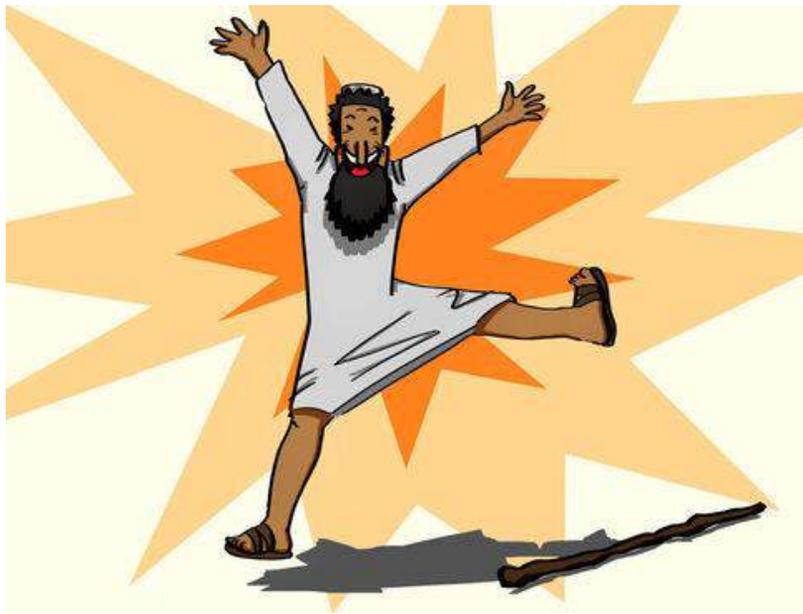


o'clock prayer service. As they approached the Temple, a man lame from birth was being carried in. Each day he was put beside the Temple gate, the one called the Beautiful Gate, so he could beg from the people going into the Temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for some money.

...Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" (Acts 3:1-6)

Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man's feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened. He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk!

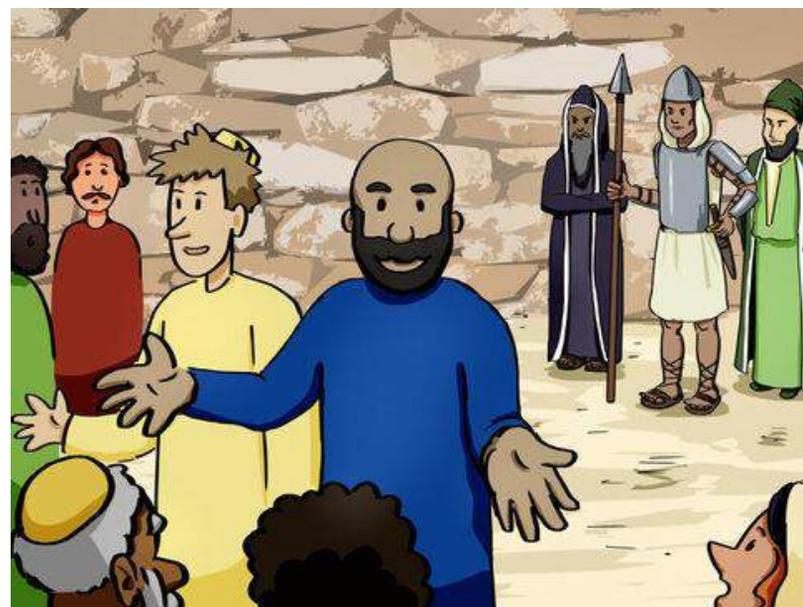
All the people saw him walking and heard him praising God. When they realized he was the lame beggar they had seen so often at the Beautiful Gate, they were absolutely astounded! They all rushed out in amazement to Solomon's Colonnade, where the man was holding tightly to Peter and John. (Acts 3:7-11)



After the healing of the lame man, Peter preached and five thousand were saved.



While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were confronted by the priests, the captain of the Temple guard, and some of the Sadducees. These leaders arrested them and, since it was already evening, put them in jail until morning. (Acts 4:1-3)



The next day the council of all the rulers and elders and teachers of religious law met in Jerusalem. They brought in the two disciples and demanded, “By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?”



Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.”

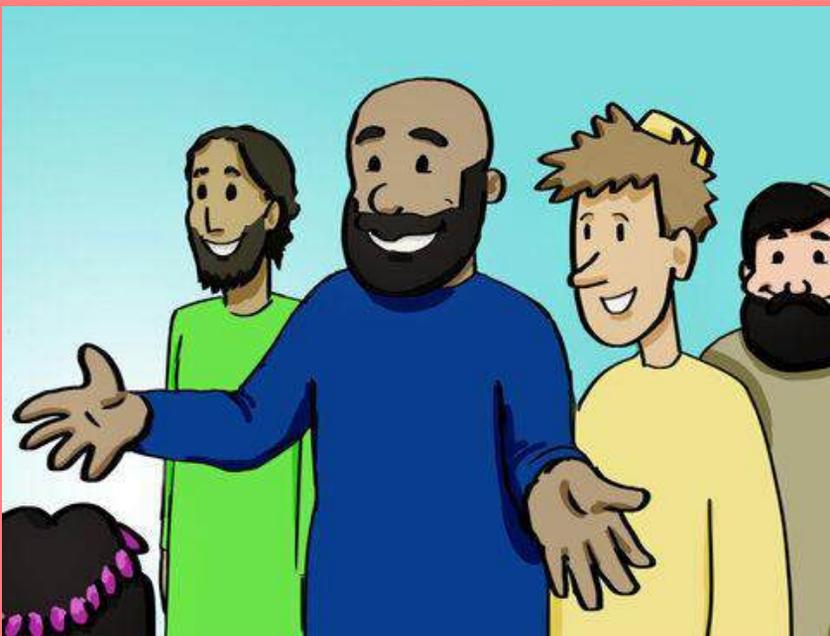
The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:5-10,13)

Think a bit about Peter. This was the same man who some weeks earlier had denied Jesus. What brought about such a transformation? The Holy Spirit!

[The council] commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard."



As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. When they heard the report, all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God.



After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4:18-24, 31)

The Believers Share Their Possessions

All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need. (Acts 4:32,34-35)

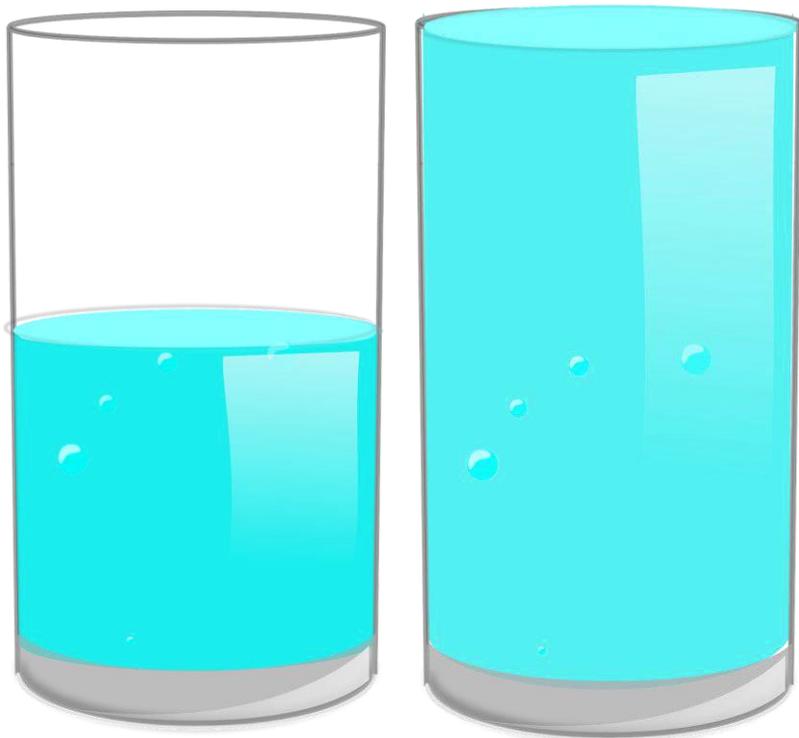
God is the very Spirit of love itself (John 4:24; 1 John 4:8), so when He fills you with His Holy Spirit, your heart overflows with love—love for Him and love for others.



Do you get automatically filled with the Holy Spirit when you get saved?

If you have received Jesus as your Savior, then you have already received a little of that Holy Spirit power. But that doesn't mean that you've received the full measure of the Holy Spirit.

A glass of water makes a good illustration. If the glass has at least some water in it, you could say that it's a glass of water, even though it's not a full glass. But those who have prayed for an infilling of the Holy Spirit are like glasses that have been filled till they overflow.



Thank You, Lord, for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Please give us all a greater measure of Your Holy Spirit, that Your mighty power can fill and inspire us!



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The Holy Spirit

Gifts and Benefits



Class Section 1: The Benefits of the Holy Spirit

* Love

Galatians 5:22-23—But the fruit of the Spirit is love,...

* The Holy Spirit helps and strengthens us

Ephesians 3:16—He [the Father] will give you that strength through his Spirit.

John 14:16—The Father...will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.

* The Holy Spirit guides us and gives us understanding of God's Word

John 16:13—However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth;

John 14:26—But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.



***The Holy Spirit empowers our witness to others**

Acts 1:8— You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses.



Class Section 2: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

In the [previous class](#) you read how the Lord sent the Holy Spirit to His first disciples and the effect it had in their lives. Now we're going to look at the gifts of the Spirit and how these can make a difference in your life.

1 Corinthians 12:4-10 - There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all.

The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak with wisdom. And the same Spirit gives another person the ability to speak with knowledge. The same Spirit gives faith to one person and to another he gives gifts of healing. The Spirit gives to one person the power to do miracles, to another the ability to prophesy, and to another the

ability to judge what is from the Spirit and what is not. The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak in different kinds of languages, and to another the ability to interpret those languages.

There are nine basic gifts of the Spirit:

- Discernment
- Knowledge
- Wisdom
- Faith.
- Prophecy
- Healings
- Miracles
- The ability to speak in different kinds of languages (tongues)
- The ability to interpret those languages



The Lord chooses which gifts to give to whom.

1 Corinthians 12:11—It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.



1. Discernment

Discernment is defined as "keenness of insight or judgment"—the ability to perceive the spirit and intent behind what others say or do.



2. Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge goes far beyond mental knowledge; it's getting a glimpse of the heart and mind of God. You know things you wouldn't otherwise know.

3. Wisdom

What is wisdom?—How to use the knowledge of God! It's one thing to know things, that's knowledge, and that's good, that's one of the gifts of the Spirit, but it's another thing to know how to use that knowledge, and that's wisdom, another gift of the Spirit.



4. Faith

The gift of faith is not very obvious. You can't see it; you can't tell what color it is; you can't hear it. But you can certainly tell by the way people act how much faith they've got.

Every child of God is given a measure of faith. Our faith grows every time we read, absorb, and act upon the Word of God. But to have especially great faith for certain things is a gift of the Holy Spirit.



5. Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is that of receiving messages from the Lord. The Lord wants to speak to us to guide and encourage us.



6./7. Healing and miracles

Jesus still performs miracles for and through His followers today—miracles of healing and other events.



8. Tongues

The gift of tongues is the ability to speak, pray, or praise God in one or more unlearned languages.

9. Interpretation of tongues

Sometimes tongues are meant to be understood by the Lord alone, but other times they convey messages that the Lord wants you and possibly others to understand and benefit from. The Lord can give you the interpretation of the message in tongues if you ask Him.



* Using God's gifts with the right motives

The main purpose of the Spirit's gifts is to help others and ourselves to be closer to the Lord. These are gifts from a loving heavenly Father to His children to help communicate understanding of Himself and His Will.



Class Section 3: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Questions and Answers

*** Are the gifts of the Holy Spirit simply there for the asking, or does the Lord decide who gets which gifts, and when?**

Sometimes the Lord will give someone a certain gift without them having specifically requested it. Most often, however, He'll give it in response to our request.

* How and when can I expect my new gift to first show itself?

If you ask for a gift, the Lord will answer, but He will choose which are the most important gifts for you in your life and also the right timing to manifest those gifts.



* What is the most important gift?

Love is the most important thing! Look what Paul says in 1 Corinthians:

1 Corinthians 12:31, 13:8 — You should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts. But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all...

Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!

Prayer

Principles and Practice



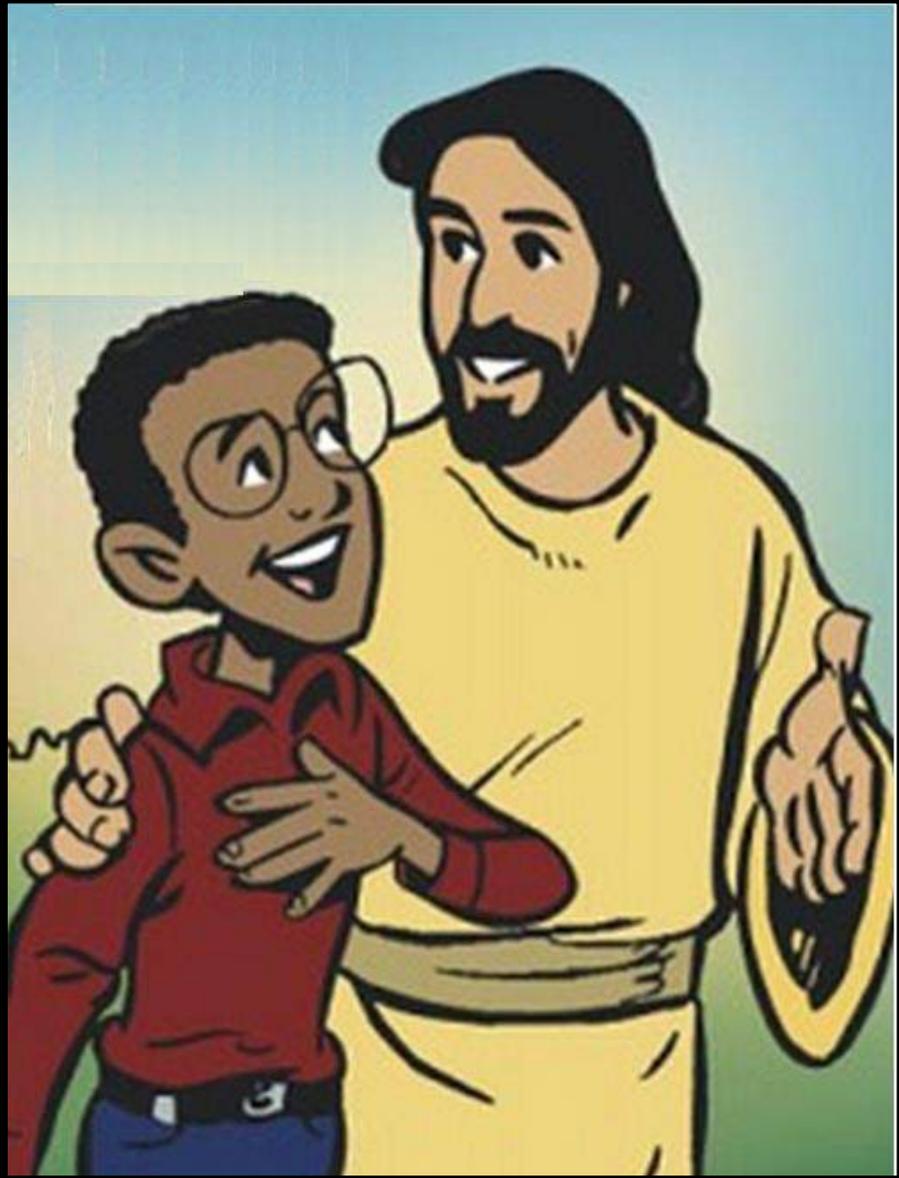
Class Section 1: Prayer Principles

Prayer is simply communicating with Jesus, just like you would talk to a good friend.

Just tell Jesus what's on your mind. He loves to listen to you. He'll either solve the problems that you face, or give you the strength to make it through them.

You don't have to follow any routine for Him to hear you. Prayer doesn't depend on the position of your body, but the position of your heart.

Jesus came to save us for eternity, and He also came to be our companion through life. You can picture Jesus as a constant Companion Who is always beside you and to Whom you can go for counsel and comfort.



"Jim, It's Jesus!"

The story is told of a certain minister who was disturbed to see a shabby old man go into his church at noon every day and come out again after a few minutes. What could he be doing? He informed the caretaker and asked him to question the old man. After all, the place contained valuable furnishings.

"I go to pray," the old man said in reply to the caretaker's questioning.

"Come, come now," said the other, "you are never long enough in the church to pray."

"Well, you see," the shabby old man went on, "I cannot pray a long prayer, but every day at twelve o'clock I just come and say, 'Jesus, it's Jim,' and wait a minute and then come away. It's just a little prayer, but I guess He hears me."

When Jim was injured some time later and taken to the hospital, he had a wonderful influence on the ward. Grumbling patients became cheerful and often the ward would ring with laughter.

"Well, Jim," said the nurse to him one day, "the men say you are responsible for this change in the ward. They say you are always happy."

"Aye, that I am. I can't help being happy. You see, it's my Visitor. Every day He makes me happy."

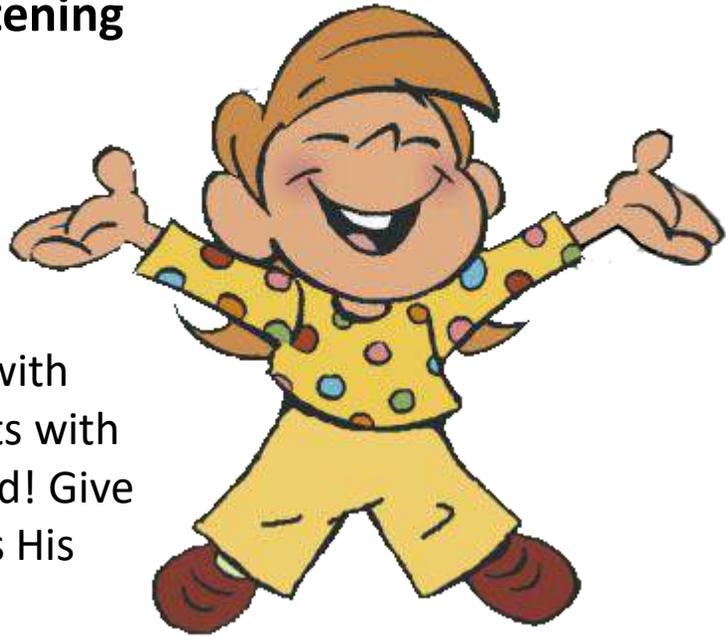
"Your visitor?" The nurse was puzzled. She always noticed that Jim's chair was empty on visiting days, for he was a lonely old man, with no relations. "Your visitor? But when does he come?"

"Every day," Jim replied, the light in his eyes growing brighter. "Yes, every day at twelve o'clock He comes and stands at the foot of my bed. I see Him and He smiles and says, 'Jim, it's Jesus.'"

Prayer is praise, petition, listening

1. Praise

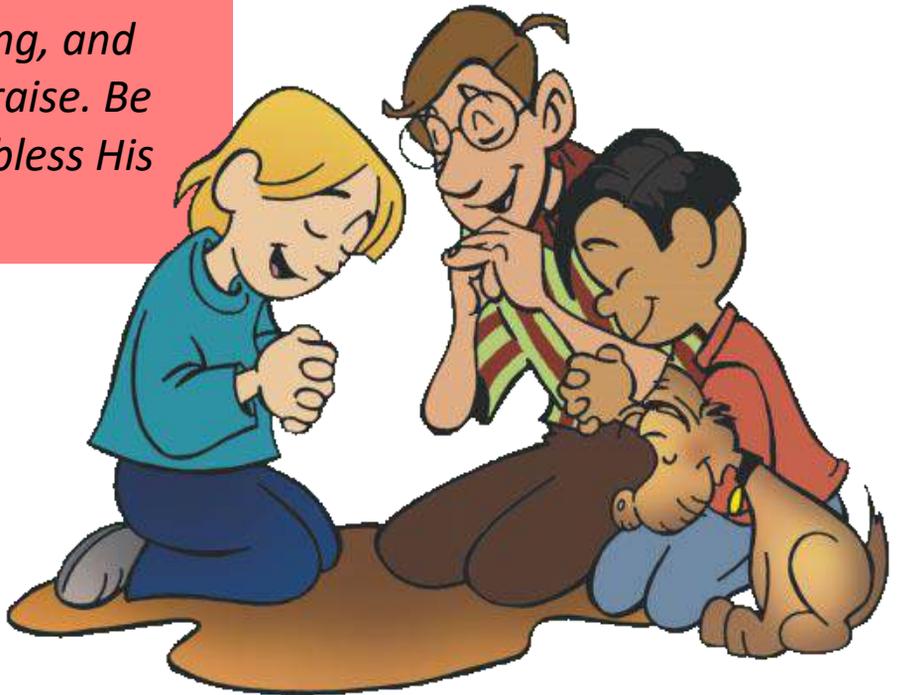
The Lord gives a lot of instruction in His Word that you should come into His presence with thanksgiving and enter His courts with praise. Thank and praise the Lord! Give Him the praise and honor that is His due.



Psalm 100:4—Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

2. Petition

After you've thanked the Lord for what He has already done for you and given you, then you can pray for what you still need. He encourages us to ask:



John 16:24b—Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.



3. Listening

Prayer is not just speaking your piece, but most of all letting God speak His piece, and waiting in quietness and confidence until He answers. Take time to hear from God, and He'll take the time to straighten out your problems.

Mark 4:2-3—Then He ... said to them in His teaching: "Listen!"

Mark 7:14b—He said to them, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand."



Class Section 2: Twelve Steps of Effective Prayer

1. Have a praiseful, thankful attitude

Before you begin to list all the things you would like God to do, take a minute to praise and thank Him for all He has already done.

Philippians 4:6—With thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.



2. Start with a clean heart

Psalm 66:18 - If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

1 John 3:22— Whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

If you have done wrong, ask the Lord to forgive you. Once you do that, the Lord is quick to forgive, and to hear and answer your prayers.

1 John 1:9—If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

3. Pray for God's will to be done

When you are
doing your
best to please
the Lord, then
it pleases Him
to grant you
your heart's
desires.



*Psalm 37:4—
Delight
yourself also in
the Lord, and
He shall give
you the desires
of your heart.*

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



4. Put the needs of others ahead of your own

God expects us to pray not only for ourselves, but also for others.

Job 42:10—And the Lord restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.

Psalms 31:1—Blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.

5. Be specific

Specific prayers get specific answers. Jesus wants us to be definite in our requests. He asks us,

Mark 10:51 — "What would you have Me do for you?"



6. Be wholehearted

It's not how long you pray or how much you pray, it's how much you believe.

It's true that God knows what you need before you even ask Him, but He still expects you to pray. It shows that you are depending on Him, that you need Him.

Jeremiah 29:13—You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

7. Exercise your faith

What is faith? It's taking God at His Word. It's believing that what He has promised, He will do.

Matthew 9:27-30—When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." And their eyes were opened.



8. Pray in the name of Jesus

We approach God via Jesus.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:13-14—And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

9. Claim God's Word

Quote Scripture when you pray. Hold God to His Promises.

2 Peter 1:4—There have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.

Here are a few promises that have been favorites for many over the years:

- John 15:7—If you abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.
- Mark 9:23—Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes."
- Jeremiah 33:3—Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.



10. Refuse to doubt

James 1:6-7—Ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.

Mark 11:24—Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

11. Count it done

Every prayer that is in line with God's will and according to what God wants and knows is best for everyone involved, is answered—as far as God is concerned—before the prayer itself is even finished.

Isaiah 65:24—It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.



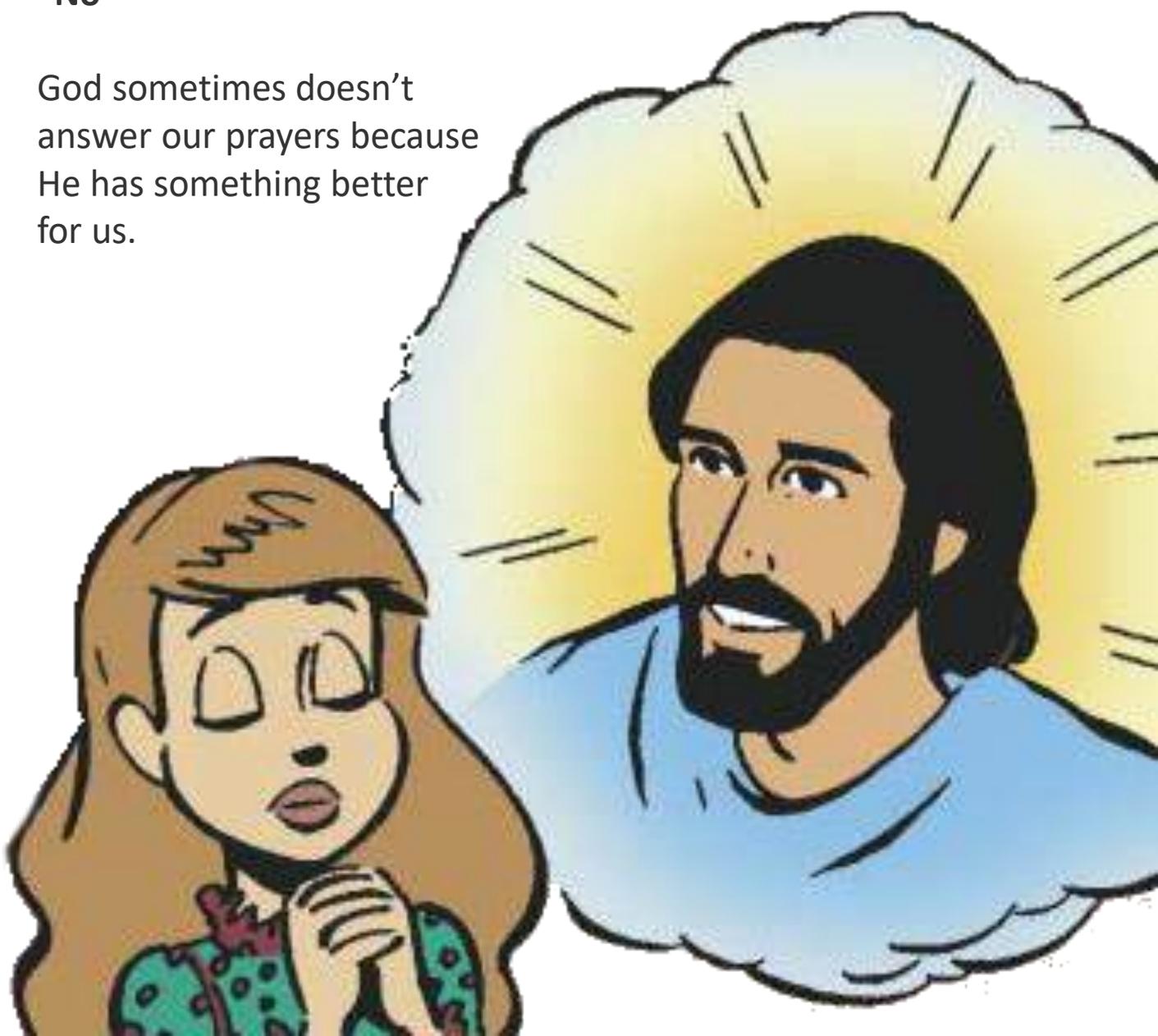
When It Seems God Isn't Answering

Why do some prayers take longer to be answered than others, and why do some seem to go unanswered? There are a number of reasons.

God always answers our prayers, but not always right away and not always in just the way we expect Him to. Sometimes He says “yes,” sometimes He says “no,” and sometimes He says “wait.”

“No”

God sometimes doesn't answer our prayers because He has something better for us.



“Wait”

Abraham in the Old Testament was over a hundred years old and still without a promised heir. God had promised that his wife Sarah would bear a son, but she was now ninety and long past childbearing age. But Abraham continued to believe God’s promise and sure enough, God came through. Sarah miraculously conceived and gave birth to a son, Isaac, who through his son Jacob became the forefather of the Hebrew people.



12. Thank God for answering

It's just as important to end your prayers with praise and thanksgiving, as it is to start them that way.

Just like we get specific with God in the things we ask for, we should be just as specific in thanking Him for the things He gives us. Let's get just as enthusiastic in thanking Him, as we were desperate in asking Him!



Review of the Twelve Steps

1. Have a praiseful, thankful attitude.
2. Start with a clean heart.
3. Pray for God's will to be done.
4. Put the needs of others ahead of your own.
5. Be specific
6. Be wholehearted
7. Exercise your faith.
8. Pray in the name of Jesus.
9. Claim God's Word.
10. Refuse to doubt.
11. Count it done.
12. Thank God for answering.

Prayer & Praise



Class Section 1: Our Relationship with the Lord

We should talk to Jesus as we would to our best friend. In a good friendship, one person doesn't do all the talking! So we need to be sure to not only talk to Him, but most importantly, listen to Him.

If you love Jesus, then He will certainly "draw close unto you" when you call out to Him.

Psalm 145:18—The Lord is near to all who call upon Him.

James 4:8 – Draw close to God and He will draw close to you.

The Lord loves each of us very much and promises to be with us.

Hebrews 13:5b—For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Isaiah 54:10—"For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," says the Lord, who has mercy on you.



Class Section 2: The Prayer Habit

* The good habit of prayer

Luke 18:1—Men always ought to pray and not lose heart.

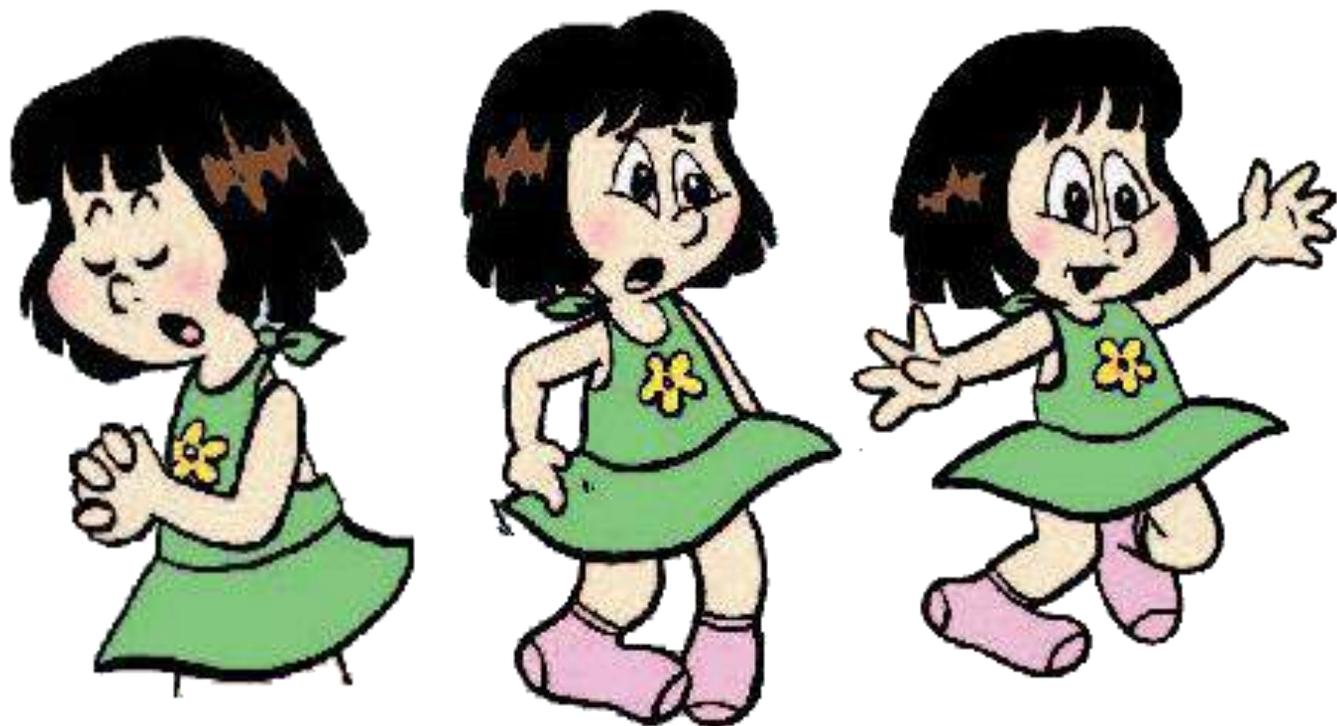
1 Chronicles 16:11—Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face evermore!

1 Thessalonians 5:17—Pray without ceasing.



* Waiting for the Lord to work

We can't always see how the Lord is going to answer prayer, and we can't always see why He may delay answering. Whatever happens, we need to remember that the Lord will never fail. He will bring what He knows is best to pass. Sometimes when we pray He answers with a "yes"; sometimes with a "no"; and sometimes with a "wait"!



Even if we can't always see with our eyes what the Lord is doing, He's promised to answer prayer.

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

Mark 11:24—Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

* The importance of praying for others

1 Samuel 12:23a—I would never stop praying for you. If I stopped praying for you, I would be sinning against the Lord.

Romans 15:30—Now I beg you, brethren, ... that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me.

James 5:16 – Pray for each other that you may be healed.

For you to do: Write up a prayer list and keep it in your Bible or next to your bed to remind you to pray for those people and situations.



Class Section 3: Praise

* The importance of thanking and praising the Lord

1 Thessalonians 5:18—In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Psalm 34:1—I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalm 118:21—I will praise You, for You have answered me.

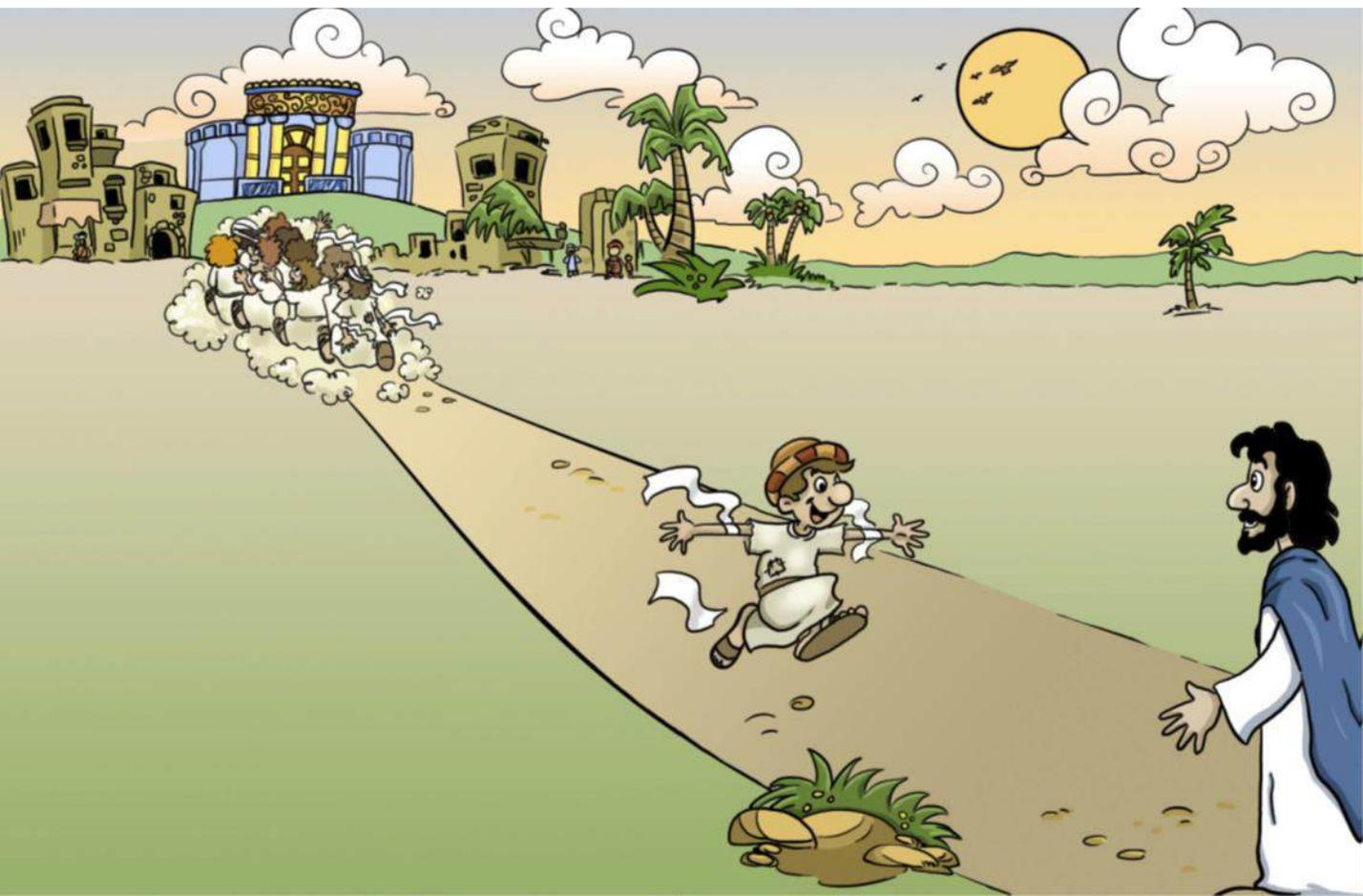


The Lord certainly doesn't mind our taking all that He has for us, but in return He looks for our thanks and appreciation. He wants us to acknowledge that we are pleased with all the gifts that He has given us and how He takes care of us so well! He delights in taking care of us, but part of His pleasure is receiving our gratitude.

The story of the leper who returned to praise God

Luke 17:12-19—As Jesus entered a village there, ten men with leprosy stood at a distance, crying out, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!” He looked at them and said, “Go show yourselves to the priests.” (According to the custom of the Jews, after a leper had been healed, he was to present himself to the priest to verify his healing.) And as they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan. So Jesus answered and said, “Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? “Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?” And He said to him, “Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well.”



* Taking time to say "thank you" to Jesus

Often we keep asking for our needs, but then we almost get too busy gathering up all our blessings that we don't take time to thank Him for them!

A good relationship also needs lots of appreciation and thankfulness and not taking the other for granted. We need to thank the Lord for what He gives us and does for us.

Here are some ideas of what to do:

- Sing a song of praise to the Lord.
- Close your eyes and thank Him for specific blessings.
- Read a poem of thanks.
- Write a written "praise."



The banquet

There was once a king in Spain called Alfonso XII. Now it came to the ears of this king that the pages at his court forgot to ask God's blessing on their daily meals, and he determined to rebuke them.

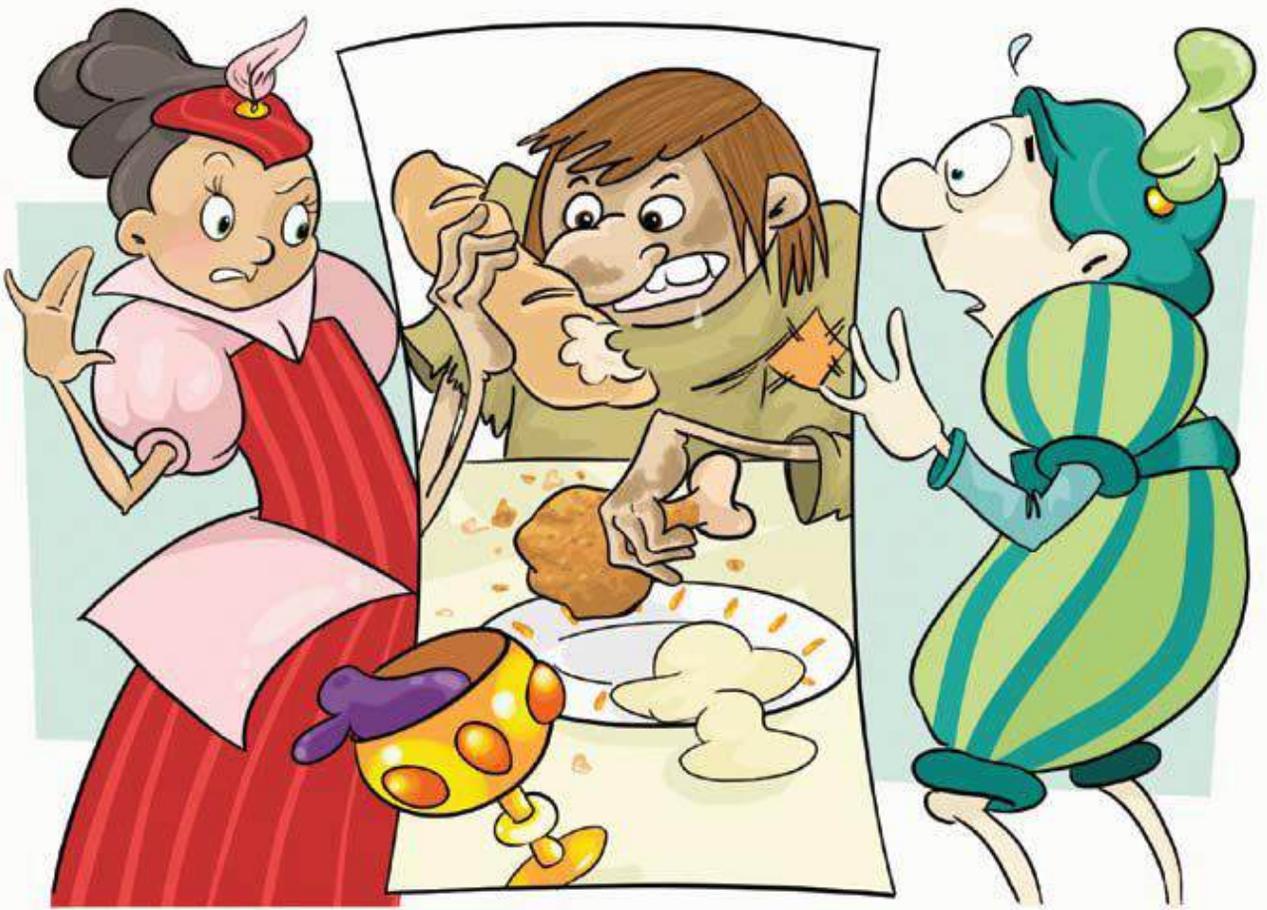
The king invited them to a banquet that they all attended. The table was spread with every kind of good thing, and the boys ate with evident



relish; but none of them remembered to ask God's blessing on the food.

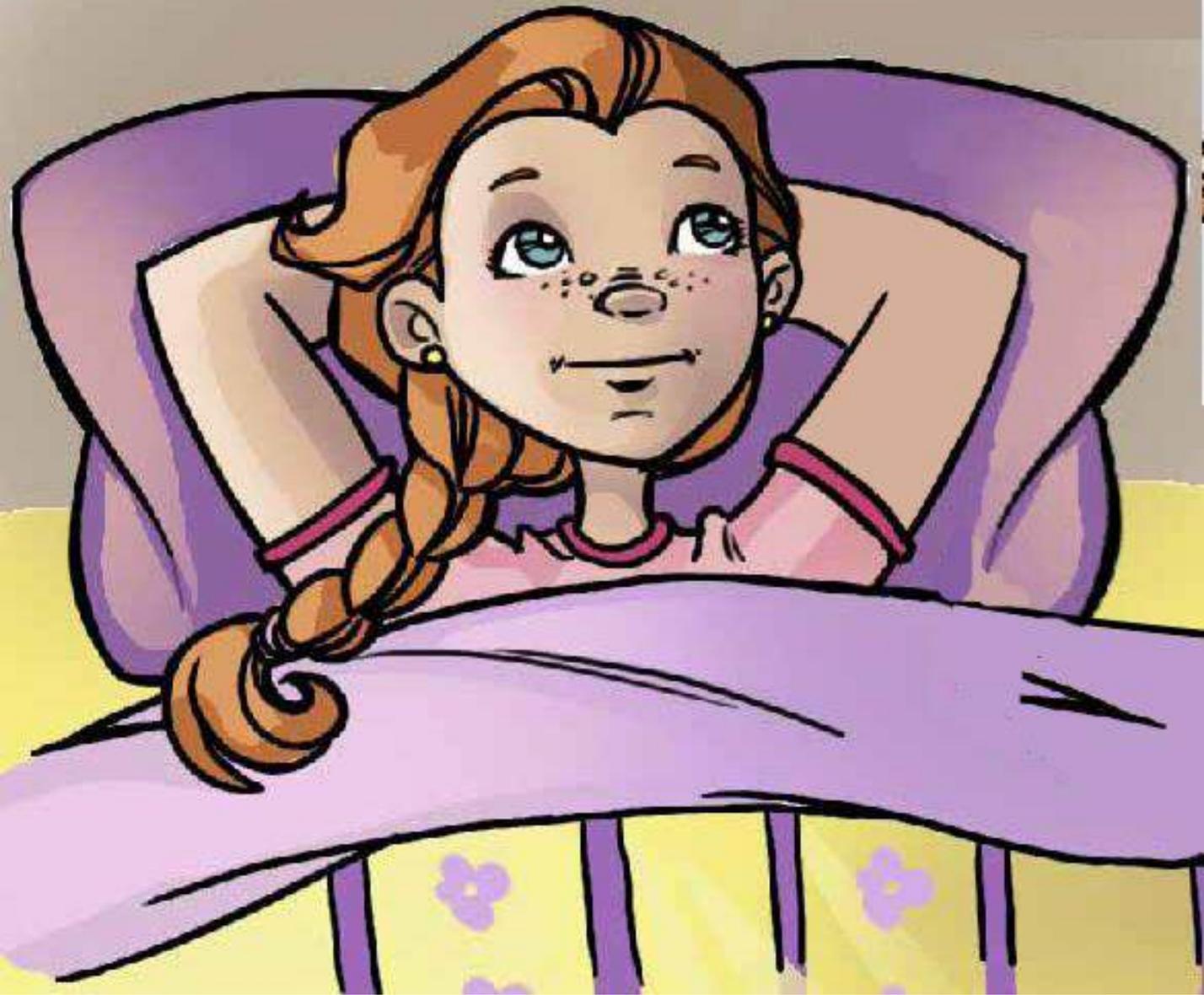
During the feast a beggar entered, dirty and ill-clad. He seated himself at the royal table and ate and drank to his heart's content. At first the pages were amazed, and they expected that the king would order him away. But King Alfonso said never a word.

When the beggar had finished, he rose and left without a word of



thanks. Then the boys could keep silence no longer. "What a despicably mean fellow!" they cried.

But the king silenced them, and in clear, calm tones he said, "Boys, bolder and more audacious than this beggar have you all been. Every day you sit down to a table supplied by the bounty of your Heavenly Father, yet you ask not His blessing nor express to Him your gratitude."



I am Here to Help

From Jesus with Love

I care about how you feel. I care about what you think. I care about the difficulties that you face. I care about your needs. I care about your struggles. There is not one detail of your life that does not concern Me, and I am here to help.



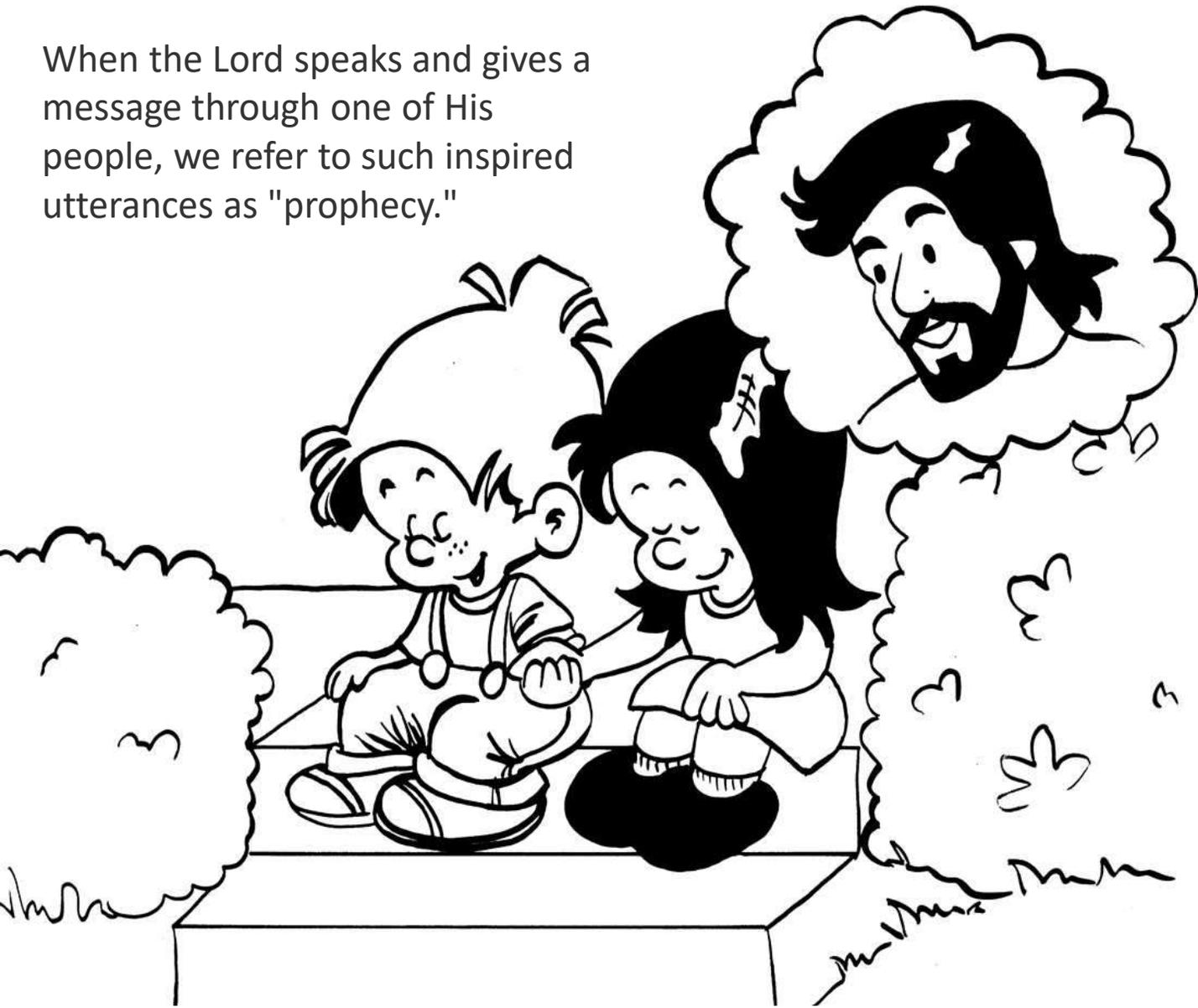
Every time you look up to Me, I am there. I hear your prayers, and My heart is moved with compassion. I never get tired of listening to you. I am never distant. I am never too tired or too busy for you. I never turn away. I never sleep. I never hang a “Do Not Disturb” sign on My door. I always hear and answer your prayers. Sometimes I don’t answer in the way you ask Me to or think I should, and sometimes you don’t see the answer immediately, but I always hear and I always answer.

Hearing from Heaven



Class Section 1: What Is Prophecy?

When the Lord speaks and gives a message through one of His people, we refer to such inspired utterances as "prophecy."



* "Forthtelling"

Many people think of "prophecy" as predicting the future, but this is not always the case. The word "prophecy" is taken from a Greek word *propheteia* that means "the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God."

Prophets do a lot of foretelling under the inspiration of God's Spirit. But a further meaning of prophecy is to simply give God's Word, whatever it may be.

Class Section 2: About Prophecy in the Bible

Let's look at some of the ways God has used the gift of prophecy to speak to His people through history.

Genesis 12:1-2, 4 - The Lord said to Abraham, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you."...So Abraham departed as the Lord had instructed,

Genesis 31:3, 18 - The Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your father and grandfather, and I will be with you." He [Jacob] packed all the belongings he had acquired in Paddan-aram and set out for the land of Canaan, where his father, Isaac, lived.



1 Samuel 3:9-10—Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

Jeremiah 1:4-9 - The Lord gave me [Jeremiah] this message: "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."

"O Sovereign Lord," I said, "I can't speak for you! I'm too young!"

The Lord replied, "Don't say, 'I'm too young,' for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you."... Then the Lord reached out and touched my mouth and said, "Look, I have put my words in your mouth!"



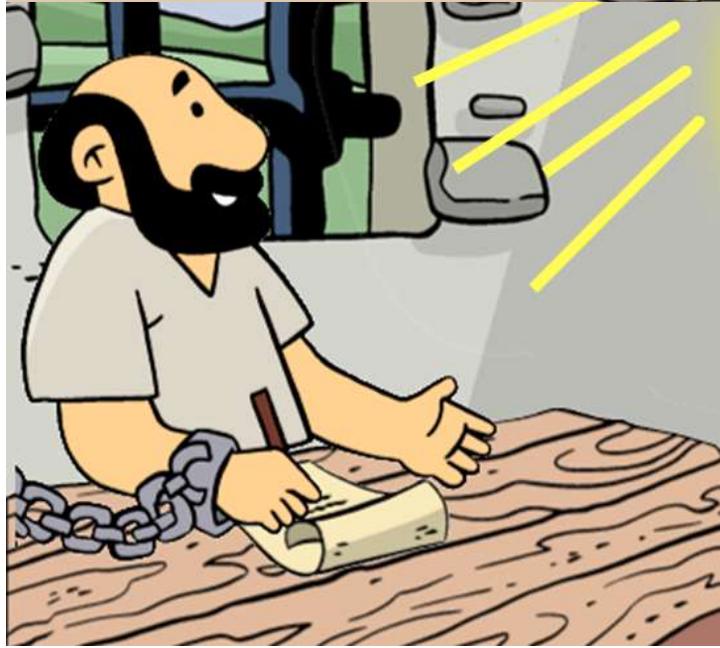
Matthew 10:5, 19-20 - Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: ... Don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.



Acts 8:26-27 - An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went.



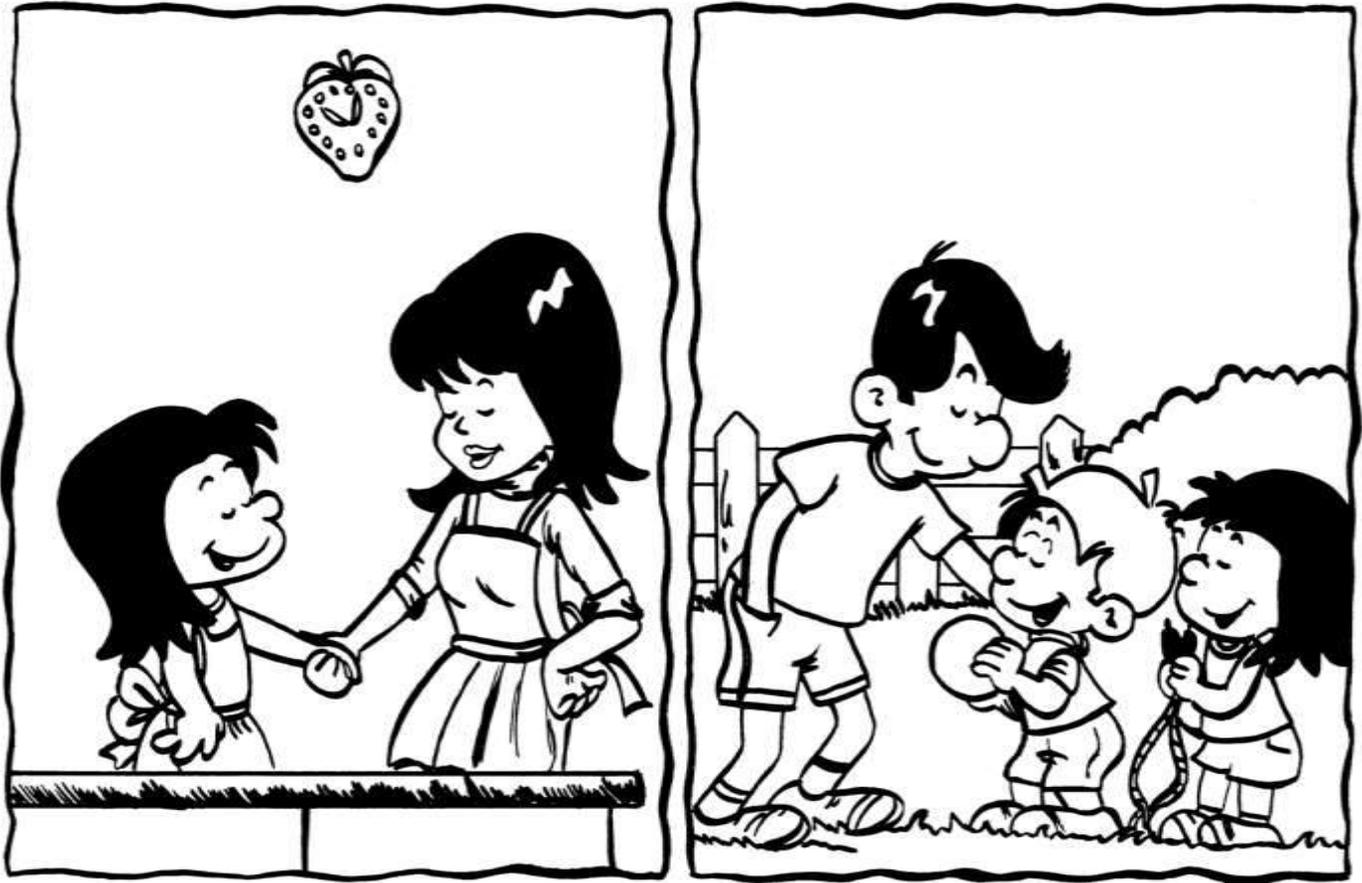
Acts 23:11 - That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, "Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well."



Class Section 3: God Speaks Today

We have a permanent, written record of God's unchangeable Words in the Bible, but God is still speaking today, through prophecies, visions, and signs.

You should get as many answers from the recorded Word as you can, but often the Lord wants to give you specifics for your particular situation through speaking to you directly in prophecy.



The Lord wants to speak to us to guide and encourage us. He promises:

Psalm 84:11—No good thing will [God] withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Psalm 138:3—In the day when I cried out, You answered me

Isaiah 30:21—Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it."

Jeremiah 33:3—Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

Listen to the Voice of God

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965, Nobel Prize winner, missionary doctor in Cameroon and French Equatorial Africa [now called Gabon]) was a great musician and doctor who went to Africa to be a missionary and help the sick. One time he was traveling up a river with a boat loaded with supplies for a hospital he had built. As they were traveling he noticed a big tree had fallen in the water. If they hit it, the boat could sink and they would drown.

After his visit to the hospital, Albert returned back down the river. It was late at night and very dark. He warned the men not to go too near the bank of the river but to stay out closer toward the middle.

Suddenly the Lord gave Albert a check in the Spirit that they were getting too close to the shore. All the men said they weren't and that it was fine where they were, so Albert sat down again. *I guess they know*



best, he thought. After all, they go up and down this river all the time and their eyes are trained to see into the dark forest. My eyes are not as good as theirs!

Suddenly the Lord spoke again to Albert's heart, this time with a much stronger warning. *You need to obey Me or you'll all drown!*

Albert jumped up and commanded the men to instantly move the boat farther out to the middle of the river. They had no sooner obeyed than suddenly they saw the huge, dark mass of a giant tree that had fallen in the water. Had they not turned aside at that instant the boat would have rammed it and sunk!

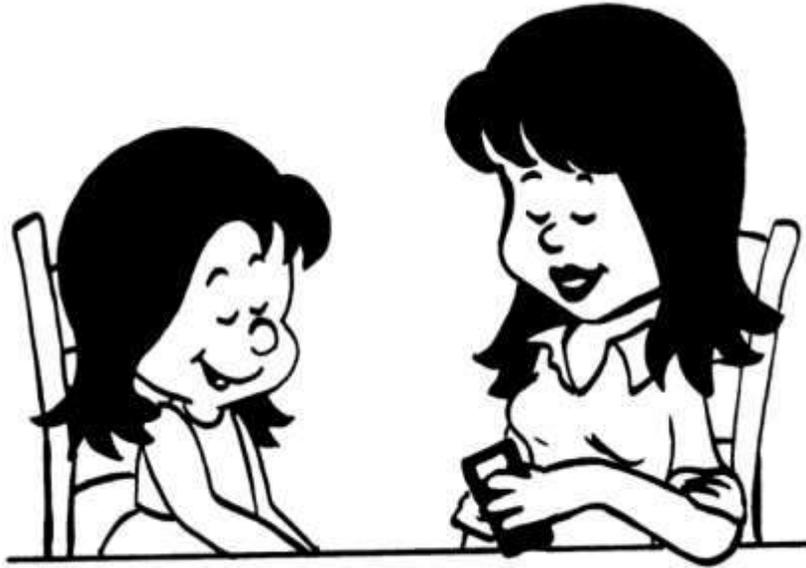
Class Section 4: How To Hear From God in Prophecy

*** How to Hear from the Lord**

- ❑ Find a quiet place.
- ❑ Begin your time with the Lord by praising Him and/or by reading His Word. Then, either ask the Lord a specific question or just generally ask Him what He wants to tell you.
- ❑ Closing your eyes will help eliminate distractions.
- ❑ Be still and focus your mind on the Lord. Concentrate on Him.



□ Sometimes the Lord may speak by bringing to mind a verse or passage from the Bible. He brings it to life or He applies it to a particular situation or decision you are faced with. If He reminds you of something like this while you are praying, then look it up and read it right then, asking the Lord to help you apply it.



□ Sometimes the Lord may speak a new message that you've never heard before. The words will probably not be audible, but a "still, small voice" in your mind.

As you continue to study His Word, letting it fill your heart and mind, the more your ability will grow to recognize His still, small voice when you ask Him to speak to you.

John 10:27a—My sheep hear My Voice.

Jesus, I come before You now as young Samuel of old, waiting patiently and quietly for You to speak to Me. Please help me to hear Your voice.

The Golden Rule



Class Section 1: The Golden Rule

Matthew 22:37-40—Jesus replied, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

Matthew 7:12—Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.



There are many ways to show love to others:



Forgiveness



Kindness



Consideration



Loving actions

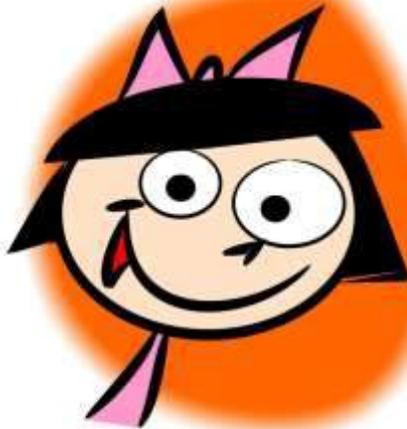


Now let's talk about what makes you feel God's love. Think about the things that happen in your life that reassure you that He loves you and others love you.

When someone takes time to help me

A warm greeting

A smile



The list does not really have an end, for God's love is endless and without limit and without bounds. The ways that we can show His love are also limitless!

* Love Loves Whom?

God's love can love anybody, even your enemies!

Matthew 5:44—But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.



Class Section 2: Nine Tips

The verses we've just read tell us that love is important in our relations with others. Now we're going to talk about how to apply this in our daily lives.

1. Speak to people

Colossians 4:6—Let your speech always be with grace,

Proverbs 10:11a—The mouth of the righteous is a well of life.

Proverbs 15:23—A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

Courtesy, kind words, loving and considerate language are all part of showing love.



2. Be Courteous

Courtesy is showing politeness and consideration to others. It is being aware of the feelings of others, and being mindful of what will make them happy.

When you show kindness to people in little ways, when you are courteous and well mannered, it's also a way of showing love to Jesus, because you're showing love to the people He created. It is also an example to others of what Jesus is like.



3. Smile at people

Proverbs 15:13—A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance.

Actions speak louder than words, and a smile says, "I like you. You make me happy. I'm glad to see you."



4. Be friendly and helpful

Friendliness, helpfulness, kindness, generosity, and unselfishness are all part of love.

The Lost Shoe

This story is told of Mahatma Gandhi. He was standing in the doorway of an open railway carriage as it moved slowly out of an Indian station, when one of his shoes slipped off and fell on to the track. Quickly he took off his other shoe and dropped that on to the track, too.

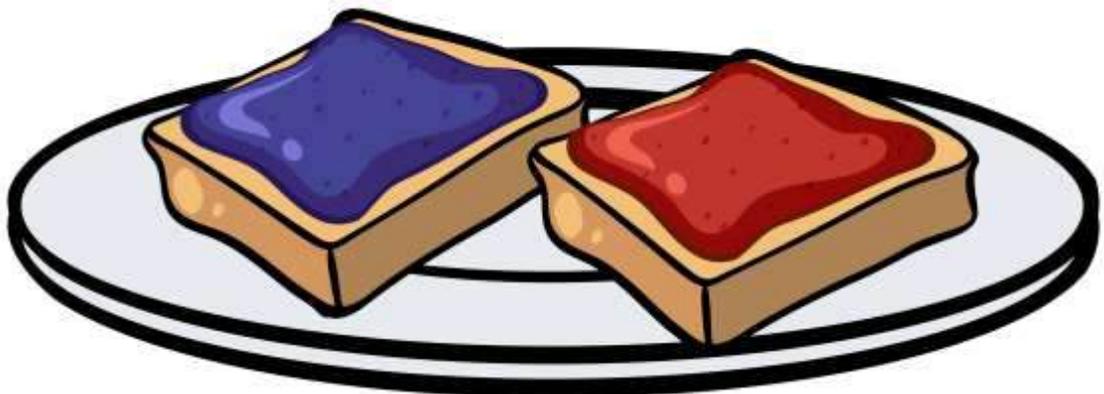
Seeing the puzzled look of a fellow passenger, Gandhi said, "A poor man may find a pair of shoes now. One wouldn't be much good to him."



It's wonderful to think not only in terms of how things affect ourselves, but also in terms of how they affect others.

Loving-kindness

A class of eight-year-old boys was asked to explain the meaning of loving-kindness; one youngster replied, "If I were hungry and someone gave me a piece of bread and butter ... that would be kindness, but if they put lots of jam on it ... that would be loving-kindness."





5. Be concerned

Galatians 6:2—Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Romans 12:15—Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

* 6. Be generous with praise, encouragement and appreciation

Philippians 4:8—Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy— meditate on these things.

How many people do you admire for certain qualities or accomplishments but have never bothered saying so? Why not practice praise?

8. Be genuinely interested in the feelings of others

James 1:19 - Always be more willing to listen than to speak.



8. Avoid arguments

2 Timothy 2:24—A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all,

James 1:19-20—So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

By choosing your words wisely, you can avoid provoking an argument

Proverbs 15:1—A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Colossians 3:13—Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.



9. Be alert to give service

John 13:13-15—(Jesus said:) You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Luke 22:24-26—Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves."

Summary of the Nine Tips

1. Speak to people
2. Be considerate
3. Smile at people
4. Be friendly and helpful
5. Be concerned
6. Be generous with praise, encouragement and appreciation
7. Be genuinely interested in the feelings of others
8. Avoid arguments
9. Be alert to give service



Giving to Others

From Jesus with Love

Embrace new opportunities to give. Try to find something to give every day—whether a smile, a compliment, your time, a listening ear, an item you don't need, or a kind word. There is always something you can share or give to others.

Never be content with what you gave from your heart yesterday. Imagine each day as a fresh new opportunity to give as much as you can.



Even simple acts of kindness and care will go a long way in helping to bring My love and blessings into the lives of others. Reach out and drop a little sunshine into the lives of those you come in contact with today. The love you give is not wasted. It's not unnoticed. Each small deed and kind action make a difference, so let Me work through you to share My love with those in need.

Pour out My love; give it freely to those around you. Give it in encouragement, in praise, in a helping hand wherever you can.

The Golden Rule

Love is the Answer



Class Section 1: The Greatest Commandment

Let's turn to Matthew 22. The religious leaders questioned Jesus:

Matthew 22:36—Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?

Of the hundreds of commandments in the Mosaic law, this is what Jesus picked:

Matthew 22:37-39—Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."



Jesus proceeded to shock these Pharisees by telling them that if you love, you are fulfilling all the laws of God! He proclaimed,

Matthew 22:40—On these two commandments [to love God and your neighbor] hang all the Law and the Prophets.

A lawyer Jesus was speaking to then asked Him, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered,

Luke 10:30-37 - "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.



“Then a Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, ‘Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I’ll pay you the next time I’m here.’”

“Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?” Jesus asked.

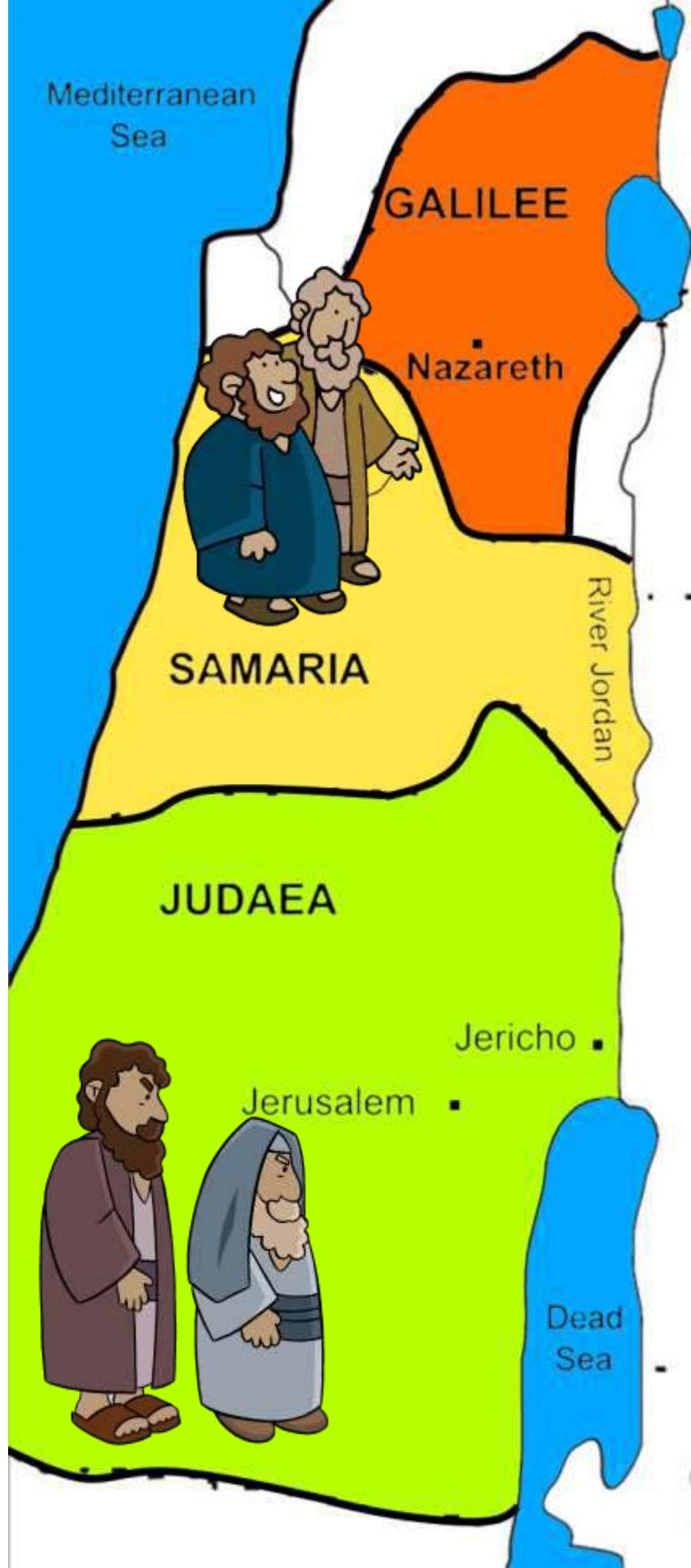
The man replied, “The one who showed him mercy.”

Then Jesus said, “Yes, now go and do the same.”



The Samaritans were a people whom the Jews hated and despised. If they even touched a Samaritan they'd have to wash afterwards! They would avoid traveling through Samaria. Rather than taking the shortest route to Galilee that went through Samaria, they would go clear across the Jordan River and around it just to keep from going near the Samaritans!

Jesus was as good as telling the Jews, "Listen, you know who your neighbors are. Those Samaritans up there in Samaria, the ones you hate and you won't even touch and you won't even go near and have nothing to do with, they're your neighbors. You'd better get busy and love them!"



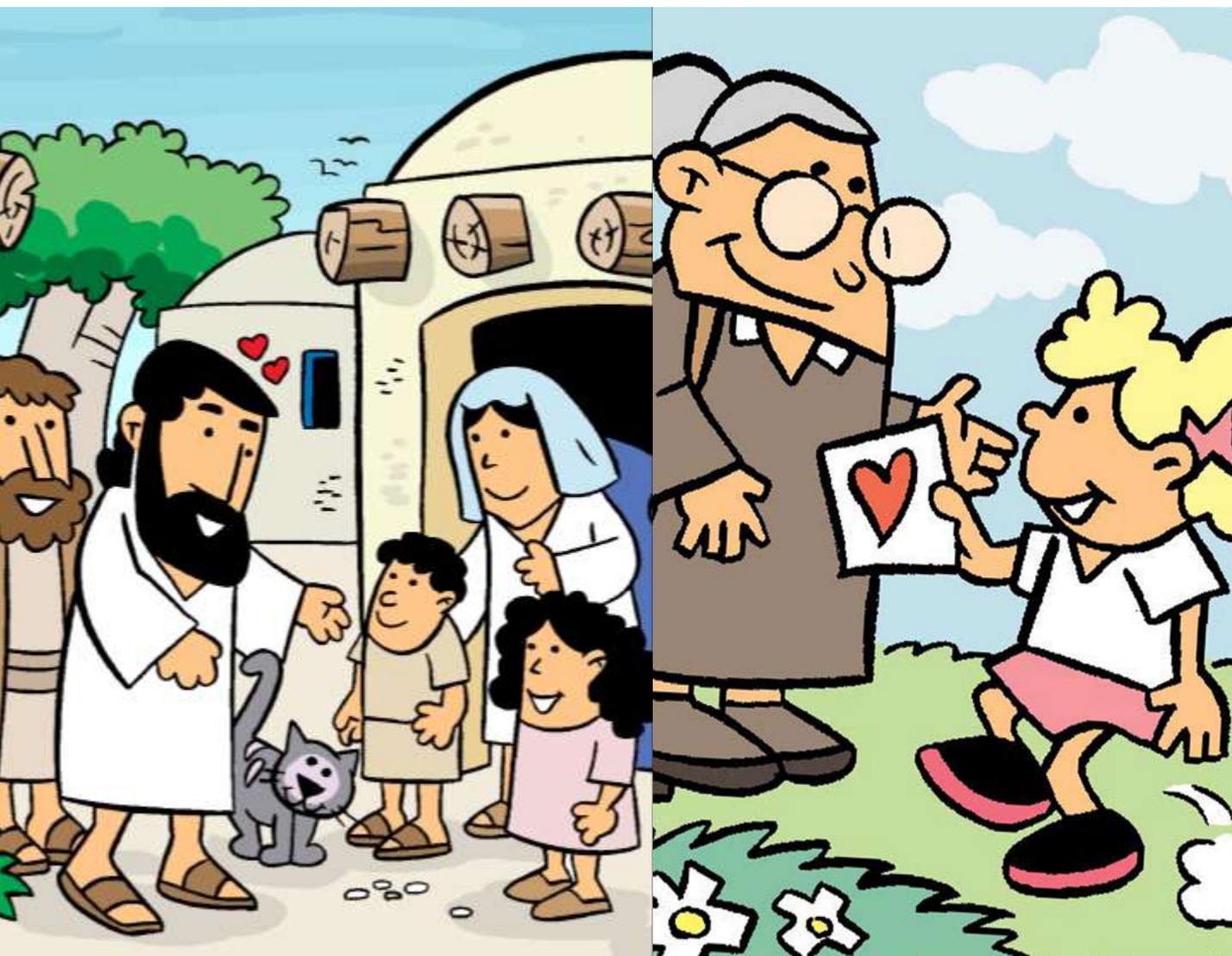
Your neighbor is anybody that needs your love. He may not live next door, but if he lives on this earth he's your neighbor.

*** Followers of the Man of Love should be loving!**

Jesus was the Man of Love who went about everywhere doing good, loving and caring for those He met. How can we prove that we are His followers?—By following in His steps and being loving.

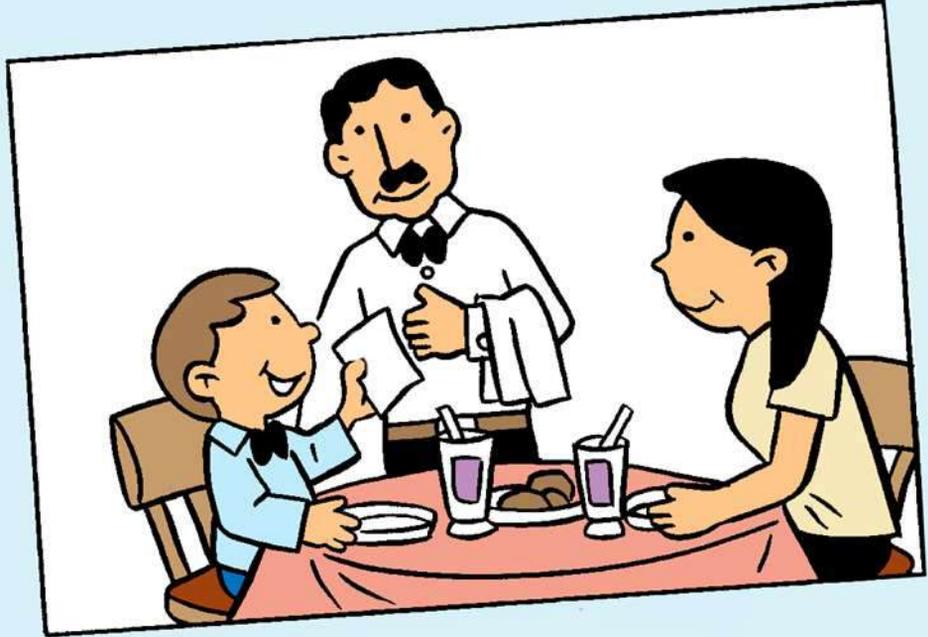
John 13:35—By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

Ephesians 4:32—And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.



Giving love to others isn't always a matter of going out of your way to do some outstanding action like feeding the homeless, but it also means being a sharing person with those around you.

If you see someone who needs help, pitch in to help for a few minutes. Smile and thank the waitress in the restaurant, That's love.



Class Section 2: Strength to Love

Jesus says,

John 15:5—Without Me you can do nothing.

We also know that:

Philippians 4:13—I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

The Lord understands that we don't naturally have enough love to live in the loving manner that He's asking us to. But He's promised that He can give us the love we need,

Matthew 7:7—Ask, and it will be given to you.





Love at Work

From Jesus with Love

There is a special happiness and contentment that comes from putting others and their needs above your own. When you're doing something kind for someone, it doesn't just benefit them, it also benefits you. You are letting My Spirit of love into the world around you, into the lives of others, and into your own life.



Where love is at work, there I am at work. It's human nature to look out for yourself first, to be selfish, even demanding, and to expect to be treated well by others before you treat them well. But it is My way to give. Doing something kind and generous for someone else often takes effort, and yet each time you do it, you realize that it's the best way to live.



Look for ways to make someone else's day or week a little brighter, a little more enjoyable, a little more fun. As you do, you're making your own day or week the same. Look for Me in others, and let them see Me in you too.

Bible Knowledge

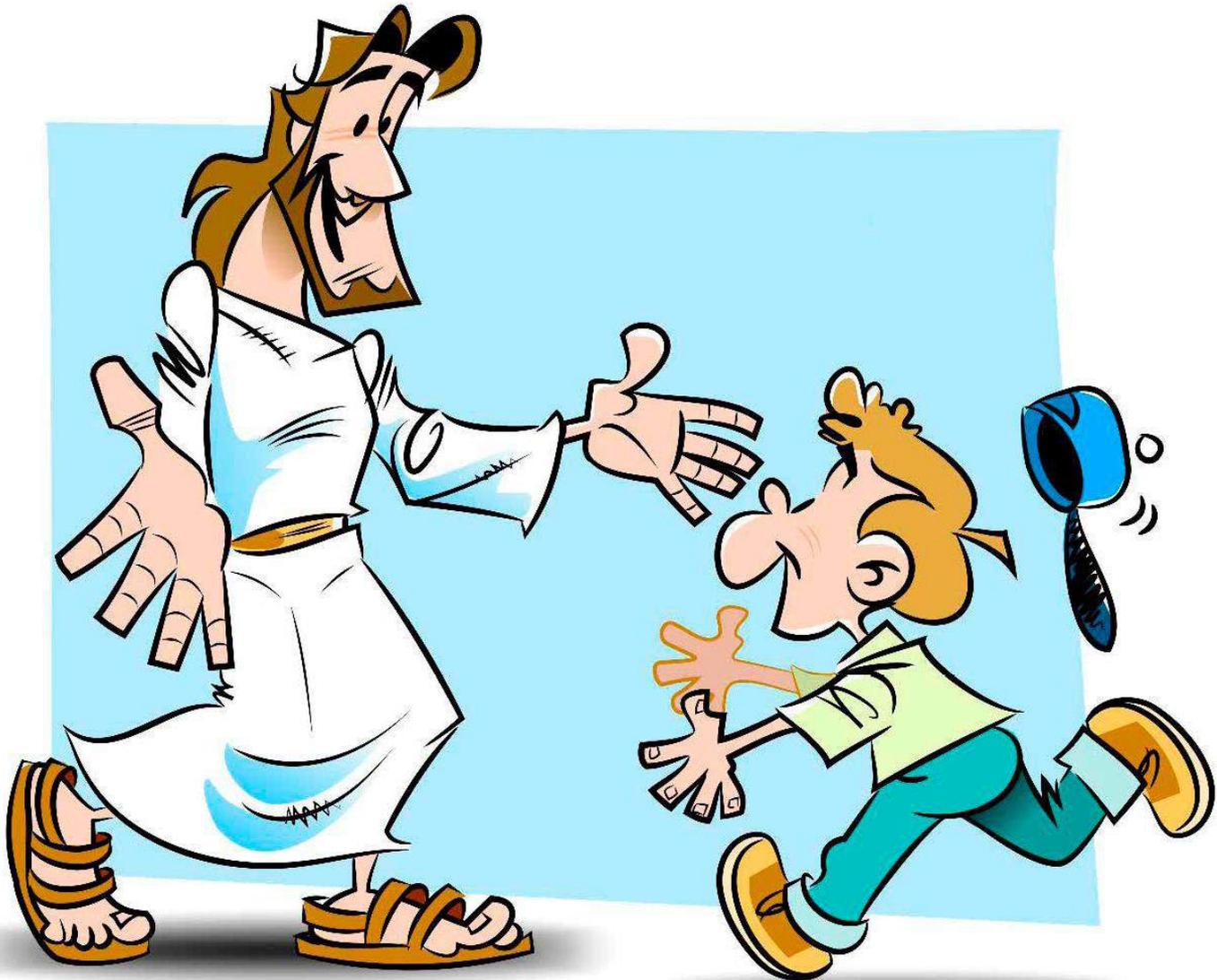
Know the Book



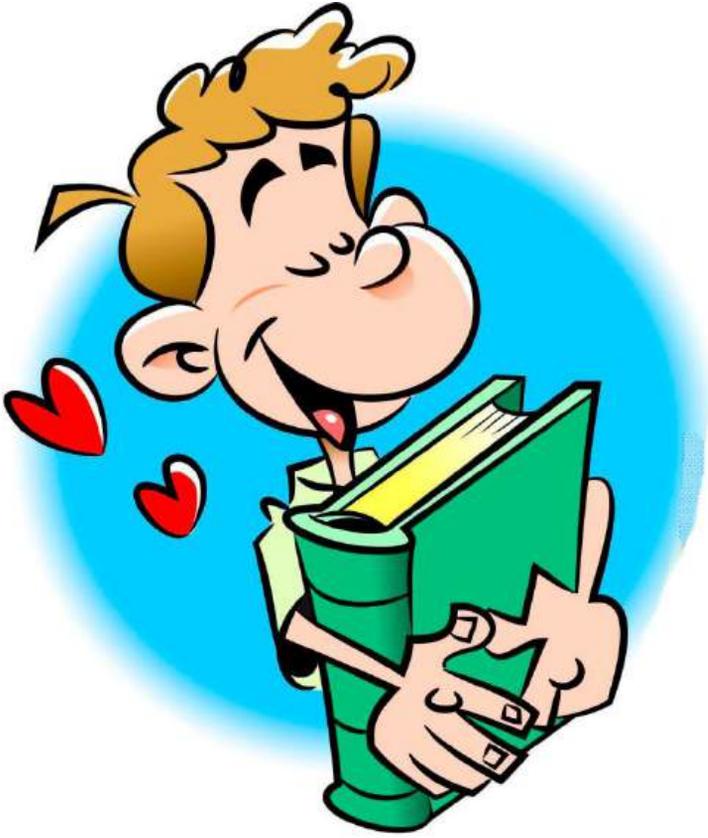
12 Foundation Stones Class 6A for younger children

Class Section 1: Why Study the Bible?

The Bible is the most marvelous book in the whole world. It tells us: how we got here, why we're here, how to be happy while here, and how to have love, happiness, joy, and peace forever. And the most wonderful thing about the Bible is that through its words we can get to know its author: Jesus



Soul food



The Bible tells us:

1 Peter 2:2 Like newborn babies hungry for milk, you should want the pure teaching that feeds your spirit. With it you can grow up and be saved.

Like a baby needs milk to be healthy and grow or even survive, you must be fed spiritually in order to stay healthy and grow spiritually.

The Bible tells us what's going to happen!

The Bible contains hundreds of specific prophecies about people, nations, places, times, and events that have already been fulfilled down to the smallest detail. Some of these were fulfilled almost immediately, others took hundreds of years, but each came to pass exactly as God said they would. There are also many other prophecies in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled, which will be fulfilled just as surely.

Class Section 2: Basic Bible Knowledge

Who wrote the Bible?

The Bible is a collection of 66 books. God used about 40 men to write the Bible. In some cases quite a few books were written by the same man.—But that's not really the most important thing because God is the Author of the Bible!

2 Timothy 3:16—All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true ... It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.

2 Peter 1:21b—Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

The books of the Bible were written during a 1,500-year period. That 1,500-year period began with Moses about 3,400 years ago and ended with the book of Revelation over 1,900 years ago.



* Difference between Old and New Testaments and what they are

The Bible contains two major sections: the Old Testament and the New Testament.



The Old Testament is a compilation of the Holy Scriptures of the Jews, written over a 1,100-year period. The Old Testament has many prophecies about the Messiah. These prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus Christ was born.

The New Testament contains the writings of the early Christian period. The 27 books of the New Testament tell of Jesus' life and ministry and the growth of the Early Church, and present the basics of Christian faith.



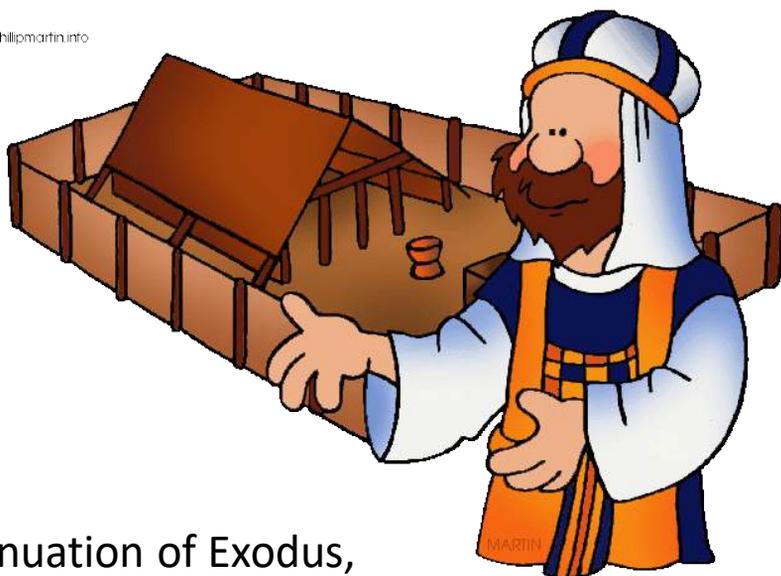
* Old Testament Books

Genesis. The first part of the book covers the history of early mankind, narrating the events of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, and the people scattered across the world following the Tower of Babel. The second section concerns the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.



Exodus. The bondage, deliverance, and beginnings of the history of Israel on the way to Canaan, under the leadership of Moses.

Leviticus. The book of Mosaic laws. Those who are saved are no longer under these laws since Jesus died.



Numbers. The book is a continuation of Exodus, describing the forty years' wanderings in the wilderness.

Deuteronomy. A repetition of the laws given shortly before Israel entered Canaan.

Joshua. This tells the story of Joshua, Moses' successor. It was Joshua who led the people into the Promised Land after the death of Moses.

Judges is so called because it relates of the times of various rulers, or judges, of Israel from the possession of Canaan until the time of the prophet Samuel.

Ruth. A beautiful story of how Ruth, a widow, goes to Judah with her mother-in-law, Naomi. There Ruth meets and marries Boaz.

1 and 2 Samuel. The history of Samuel (priest and prophet) and the beginning and early years of the reigns of Saul and David.

1 and 2 Kings. The early history of the kingdom of Israel, and later of the divided Kingdom. (Israel and Judah split.) Includes the lives of Elijah and Elisha, prominent prophets.

1 and 2 Chronicles. Largely a record of the reigns of David, Solomon, and the kings of Judah up to the time when they were conquered by Babylon and carried away to Babylon.

Ezra. A record of the return of the Jews from captivity in Babylon, and the rebuilding of the temple.



Nehemiah. An account of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

Esther. The story of Queen Esther's (Jewish wife of the Persian king) deliverance of the Jews from the plot of Haman in the courts of the king of Persia.



Job. The problem of affliction, showing the malice of Satan and the patience of Job. This is generally accepted as the oldest book in the Bible, and probably was written before the time of Moses.

Psalms. A collection of 150 spiritual songs, poems, praises, prayers, and prophecies.

Proverbs. A collection of moral and religious maxims, and discourses on wisdom.

Ecclesiastes. Solomon's reflections on man's duties and obligations to God, etc.

Song of Solomon. A beautiful love poem.





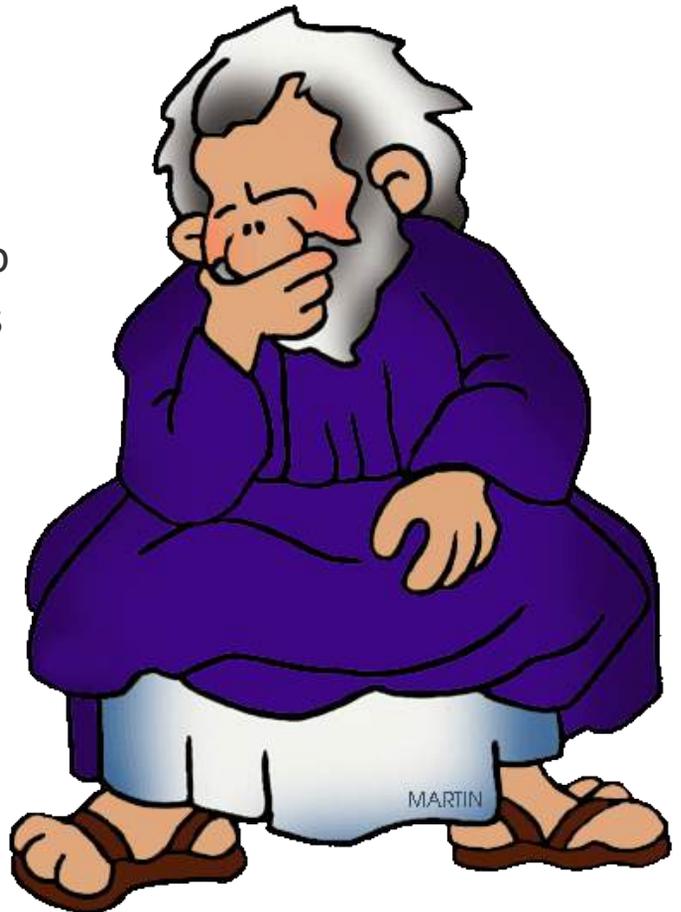
Isaiah. A book rich in Messianic prophecies, and other prophecies of the future, mingled with woes pronounced upon sinful nations.

Jeremiah. Jeremiah received the call to prophesy while very young. It was his mission to predict doom upon his nation for its many sins. For this the priests and the people hated him. Jeremiah warned the Jews not to fight Babylon, but to surrender.

Lamentations. Also written by Jeremiah. A dirge over the desolation of Jerusalem.

Ezekiel lived during the exile (in Babylon). The book is divided into two sections: The first denounces the sins of Jerusalem and the second looks to the future with the hope that the city will be restored after it has been cleansed. It also contains prophecies about the coming Kingdom of Heaven and of Jesus.

Daniel. Prophecies of the future.



Hosea. Lived at the same time as Isaiah and Micah. He urges a return to God.

Joel. This book contains discussion of repentance and its blessings, and predictions of the Holy Spirit.

Amos was a herdsman prophet who denounced selfishness and sin. The book contains a series of five visions and predicts the ultimate universal rule of the Lord. Amos proclaimed that God was the ruler of the whole world.

Obadiah. Leading topic—the doom of Edom and final deliverance of Israel. The shortest book in the Old Testament, it has only one chapter.



Jonah. The story of the "reluctant missionary" to the great city of Nineveh. This is the man who was "swallowed by the great fish" or whale.

Micah. This book foretells the establishment of the Kingdom of the Lord in which righteousness shall prevail.

Nahum. The destruction of Nineveh, capital of Assyria.

Habakkuk. It was revealed to Habakkuk that the Babylonian armies were to be God's means of punishing the wicked and that evil would destroy itself. The book ends with a poem of thanksgiving and great faith.

Zephaniah. This book is filled with God's threatenings to the rebellious, but ends with a vision of the future glory of God's people.

Haggai. A colleague of Zechariah. He reproves the Jewish people for slackness in building the second temple.

Zechariah. He had a series of eight visions, and saw the ultimate triumph of God's kingdom. Zechariah gives very specific predictions about the coming of Jesus the Messiah: His death to remove sin, Christ as King and Priest, His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, being betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, His hands pierced at the crucifixion, and more.

Malachi. He shows the necessity of reforms before the coming of the Messiah. The final message to a disobedient people.



New Testament Books

Matthew. Matthew had been a tax collector and became one of the apostles. His book was written mostly with the Jews in mind, to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah.

Mark was a companion of Peter, as well as Paul. His Gospel contains what he heard Peter recount. He emphasized the supernatural power of Jesus over nature, disease, and demons.

Luke was a Greek physician (the only non-Jewish author in the New Testament) and was a companion of Paul. He wrote the most complete biography of Jesus, portraying Him as the Son of man, full of compassion for the sinful and the poor.

John was one of the original 12 apostles. John understood the spiritual depths of the Love of God and His salvation and what Jesus meant to the whole world. The book of John contains more of the actual quoted words of Jesus than any other book.



Acts tells what happened to Jesus' disciples after His resurrection, then going on to explain the history of the Early Church, the conversion of Paul and his journeys, etc.

Romans. Addressed to Roman Christians. Chapters 1-11 discuss the plan of salvation. Chapters 12-16 are largely exhortations relating to spiritual, social, and civic duties.

1 Corinthians. Addressed to the Corinthian church. Leading topics—the cleansing of the church from various evils, together with doctrinal instructions.

2 Corinthians. The characteristics of the ministry and Paul's apostleship.

Galatians. Important book because it explains clearly the concept of salvation by faith, not works.

Ephesians. The plan of salvation.



Philippians. A letter to the Philippian church. It reveals Paul's devotion to Christ and his experience in prison.

Colossians. Counsel to abandon worldly philosophy and sin. Jesus is the head of the Church.

1 Thessalonians. Exhortations and counsel.

2 Thessalonians. More about Jesus' Second Coming and warnings to believers.

1 Timothy. Counsel to a young pastor concerning his conduct and ministry.

2 Timothy. Paul's last letter, written shortly before his death, giving counsel to his beloved "son in the Gospel."

Titus. Counsel given to a trusted friend.

Philemon. A private letter written to Philemon, beseeching him to receive and forgive Onesimus, a runaway slave.

Hebrews. Author is most likely Paul. Written to Jewish Christians, this explains the doctrine of salvation. Also contains very inspiring history of God's people (Chapter 11).

James. Probably written by James, the brother of Jesus. The main theme is practical religion, manifesting itself in good works.

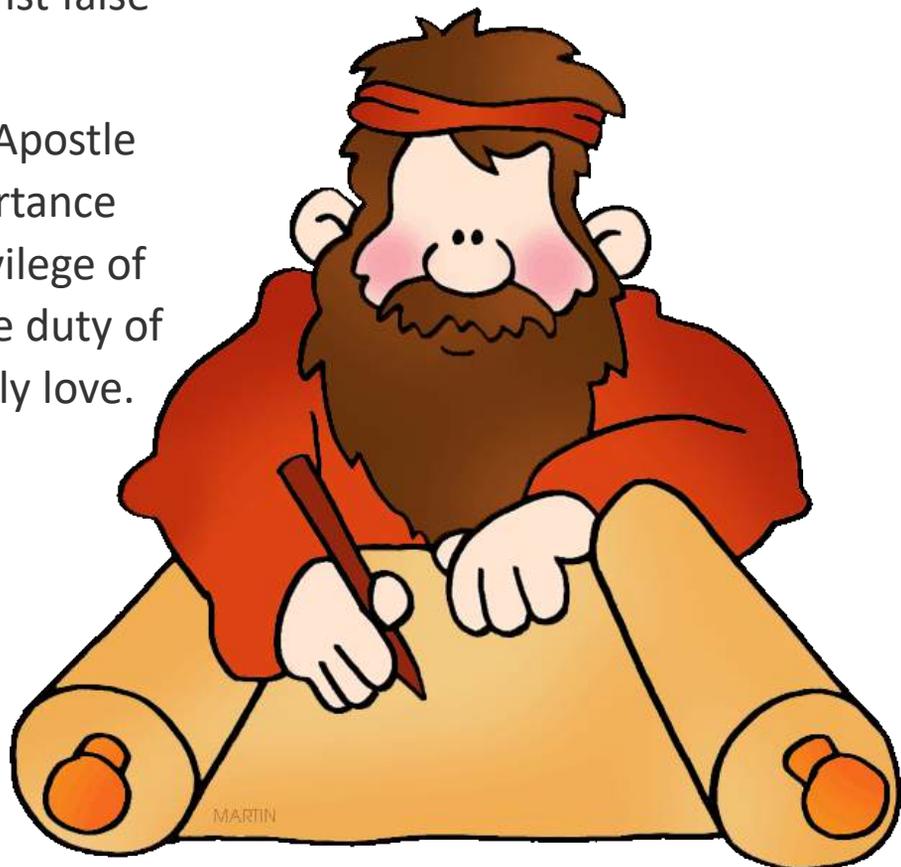
1 Peter. A letter of encouragement written by the Apostle Peter.

2 Peter. A warning against false teachers and scoffers.

1 John. Written by the Apostle John. It lays great importance upon the believer's privilege of spiritual knowledge, the duty of fellowship, and brotherly love.

2 John. A brief message on divine truth and worldly error.

3 John. A letter of commendation written to Gaius.

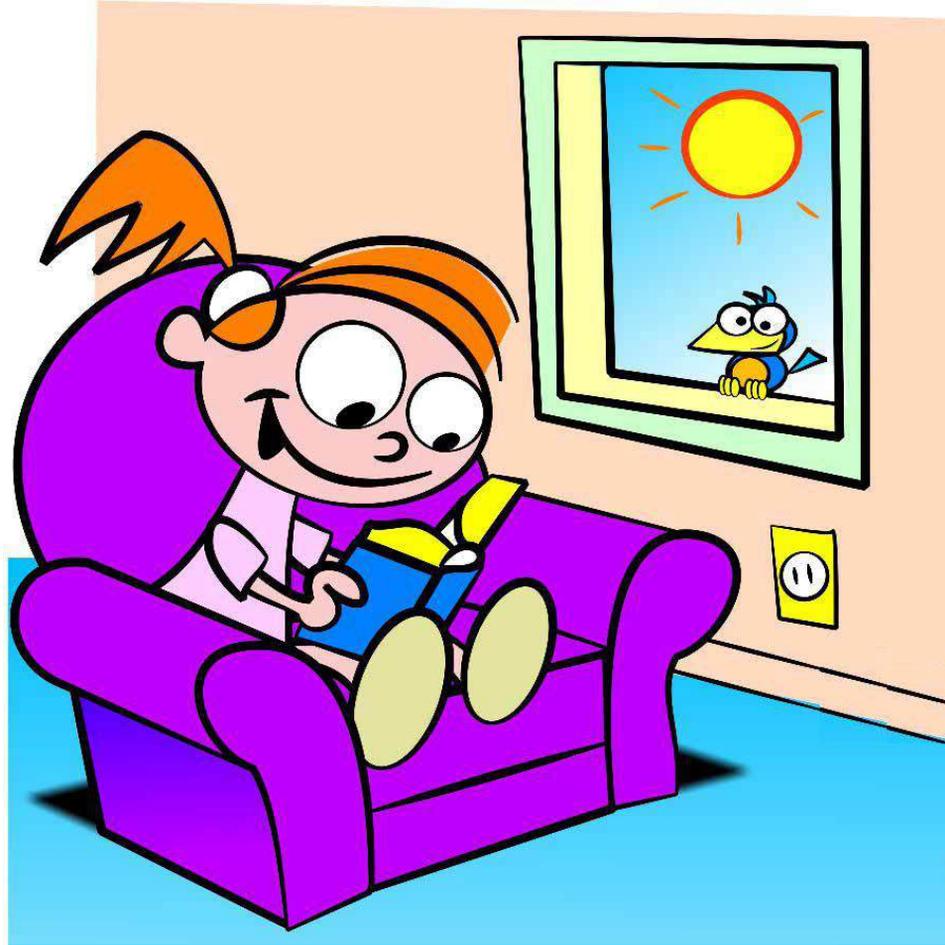


Jude. The writer was probably the brother of James, and brother of Jesus. Historical examples of apostasy and divine judgments upon sinners.

Revelation. It was written by the Apostle John (while in exile), who was also the author of the Gospel of John and three Epistles. The book of Revelation contains complex and detailed prophecies about the future, with much detail on the events preceding and following Jesus' Second Coming. It concludes with a wonderful description of Heaven.



It's quite amazing when you realize that here is a Book that was written over a 1,500-year span—40 generations. It was written by over 40 authors from every walk of life including kings, shepherds, philosophers, fishermen, poets, statesmen, scholars, etc. Yet the Biblical authors wrote in harmony and continuity from Genesis to Revelation. There is one unfolding story: God's redemption of man.



* Points to Ponder

- How can reading the Bible help us?
- What do you like most about the Bible?
- What do you think God's purpose was in giving us the Bible?

Bible Knowledge

Prophecies



Class Section 1: Fulfilled Prophecy about Jesus

In the first books of the Bible, known as the Old Testament, over 300 such predictions about the “Messiah” or “Savior” can be found. Here is a small sampling of these specific predictions:

* **Born of a virgin**

Nearly 750 years before Christ's birth, the Old Testament prophet Isaiah prophesied:

Isaiah 7:14—Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a Son, and will call His name Immanuel.



Fulfillment: Mary was a virgin engaged to be married to Joseph, a carpenter of Nazareth, when the angel Gabriel appeared to her.

Luke 1:26-35 (excerpts) - God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "...You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High."

Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God."

Immanuel means "God with us," and that's who Jesus is when we receive Him; God is with us!



* Born in Bethlehem

Micah, prophesying in the eighth century B.C., predicted:

Micah 5:2—But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

Fulfillment: The Gospel says Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea.

Matthew 2:1— Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king.



* Triumphant entry into Jerusalem

Around 450 B.C., the prophet Zechariah commanded the people by the Spirit of the Lord to:

Zechariah 9:9—Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Fulfillment: Five days before his crucifixion, Jesus returned to Jerusalem.

Matthew 21:2-10—“[The disciples] brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him (Jesus) on them. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'"



* His betrayal

In 450 B.C., Zechariah also prophesied:

Zechariah 11:12-13—Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter"—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.



Fulfillment:

Matthew 26:14-15—Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver.

Matthew 27:3-7—Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. ...the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood." And they consulted together and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

* His crucifixion

About 1000 B.C., King David prophesied:

Psalm 22:16-18—For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet.

Fulfillment: That was written by King David, who died a natural death (recorded in 1 Kings Chapter 1), so he wasn't talking about himself. But being a prophet, he predicted the type of death that Christ would die! It says in the New Testament:

John 19:23-24—Then the soldiers crucified Jesus [pierced His hands and feet]



* His burial

Isaiah 53:9—And they made His grave with the wicked— but with the rich at His death.

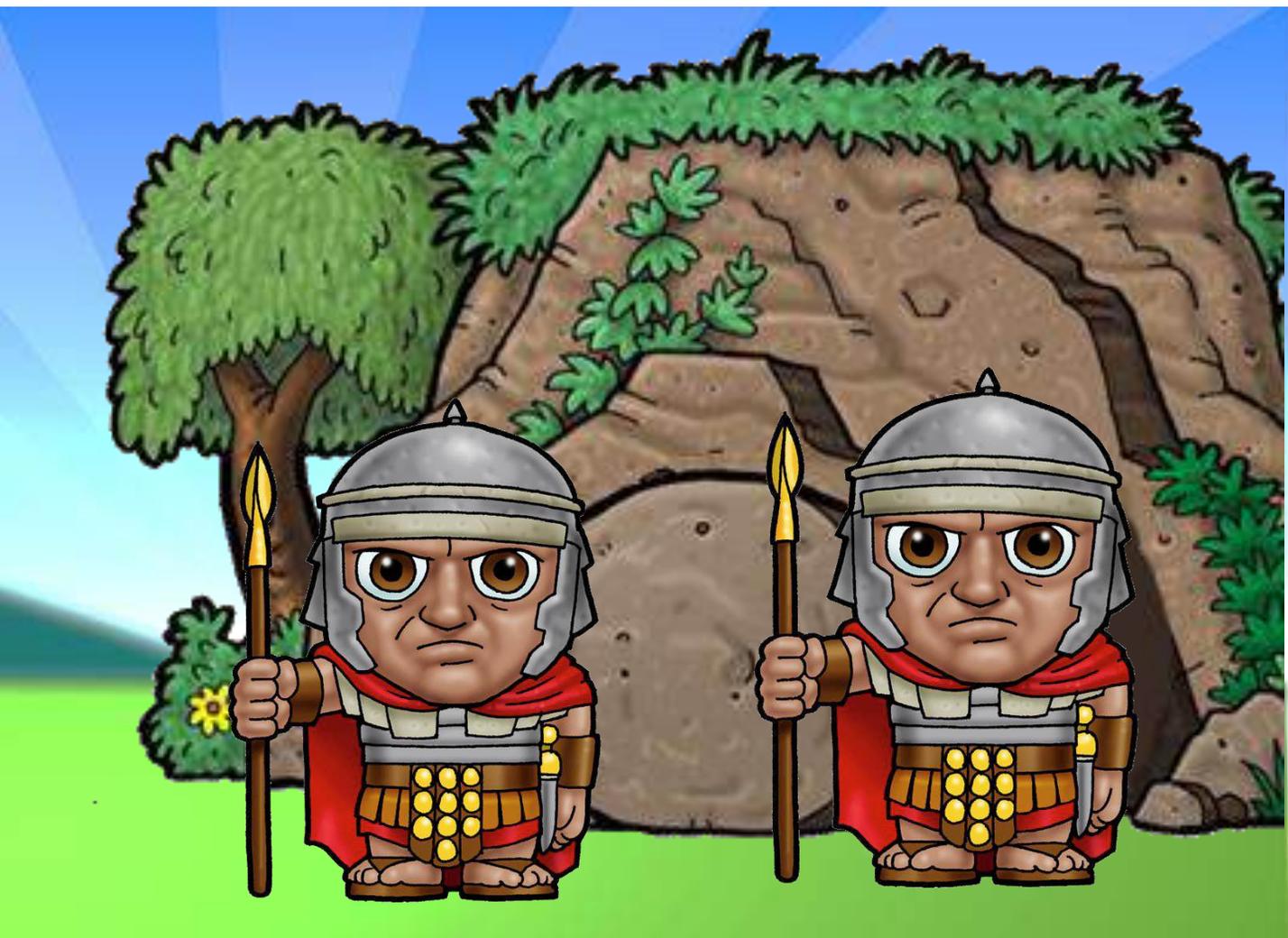
Fulfillment: Jesus died as a criminal ("with the wicked") in the eyes of the world, as there were

Matthew 27:38—Two robbers were crucified with Him.

And after His death—

Matthew 27:57-60—A rich man named Joseph went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ...When Joseph had taken the body, he ... laid it in his new tomb.

—a grave with the rich!



* His resurrection

Mark 8:31—Then Jesus began to tell them that the Son of Man must suffer many terrible things ... He would be killed, but three days later he would rise from the dead.

As the angel said to the mourners who came to Jesus' tomb,

Luke 24:5-6 — Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen!



Class Section 2: Other Fulfilled Prophecies

* Sarah conceives and bears Isaac in her old age

Genesis 18:13-14 - Then the Lord said to Abraham, "...I will return about this time next year, and Sarah will have a son."

Genesis 21:1-2 – [Sarah] gave birth to a son for Abraham in his old age. This happened at just the time God had said it would.

* Abraham becomes the father of many nations

Genesis 17:4 - Then God said to him, "This is my covenant with you: I will make you the father of a multitude of nations!"

Abraham's son, Isaac, became the forefather of the Jews; and Abraham's son, Ishmael, became the forefather of the Arabs.



*** Joseph reigns over his brothers:**

Genesis 37:5-8 - One night Joseph had a dream, "Listen to this dream," he said. "We were out in the field, tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood up, and your bundles all gathered around and bowed low before mine!" His brothers responded, "So you think you will be our king, do you? Do you actually think you will reign over us?"

Genesis 42:6 - Since Joseph was governor of all Egypt and in charge of selling grain to all the people, it was to him that his brothers came. When they arrived, they bowed before him with their faces to the ground.



* The destruction of Jerusalem, and captivity of the Jews by the Babylonians

Jeremiah 25:9,11 - I will gather together all the armies of the north under King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will bring them all against this land and its people. I will completely destroy you. ... This entire land will become a desolate wasteland. Israel and her neighboring lands will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.

2 Kings 25:1, 9 - King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon led his entire army against Jerusalem. ... He burned down the Temple of the Lord, the royal palace, and all the houses of Jerusalem. He destroyed all the important buildings in the city.



Fulfilled prophecy is one of the greatest proofs of the Bible! Who else but God could have revealed the future thousands of years before it would unfold? Who else but God could have foretold the future in perfect detail, long before it happened?

Ezekiel 12:25 - I am the Lord! If I say it, it will happen.

Bible Prophecy

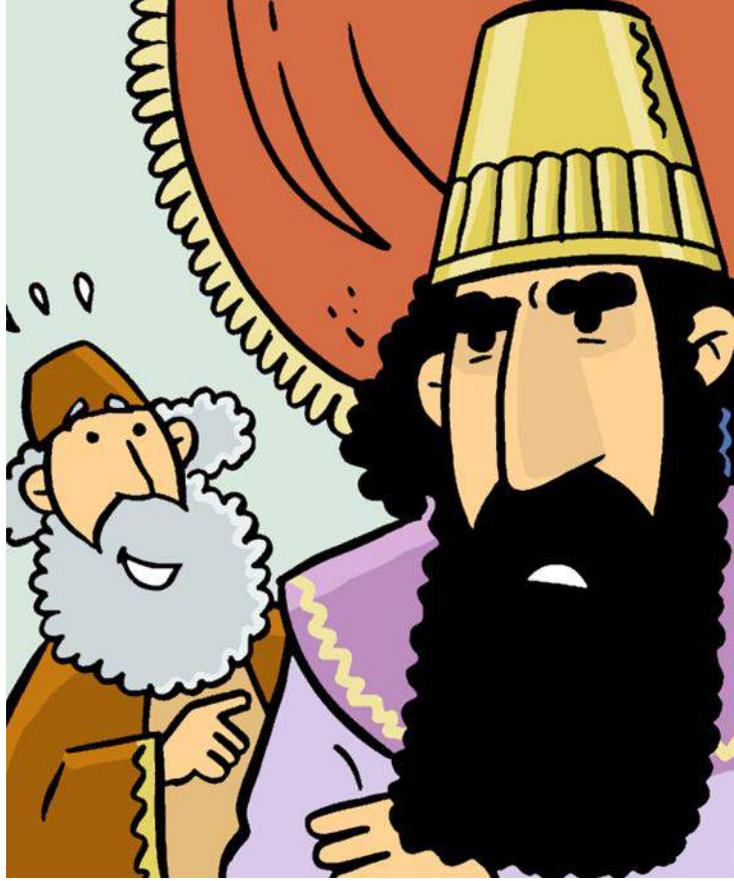
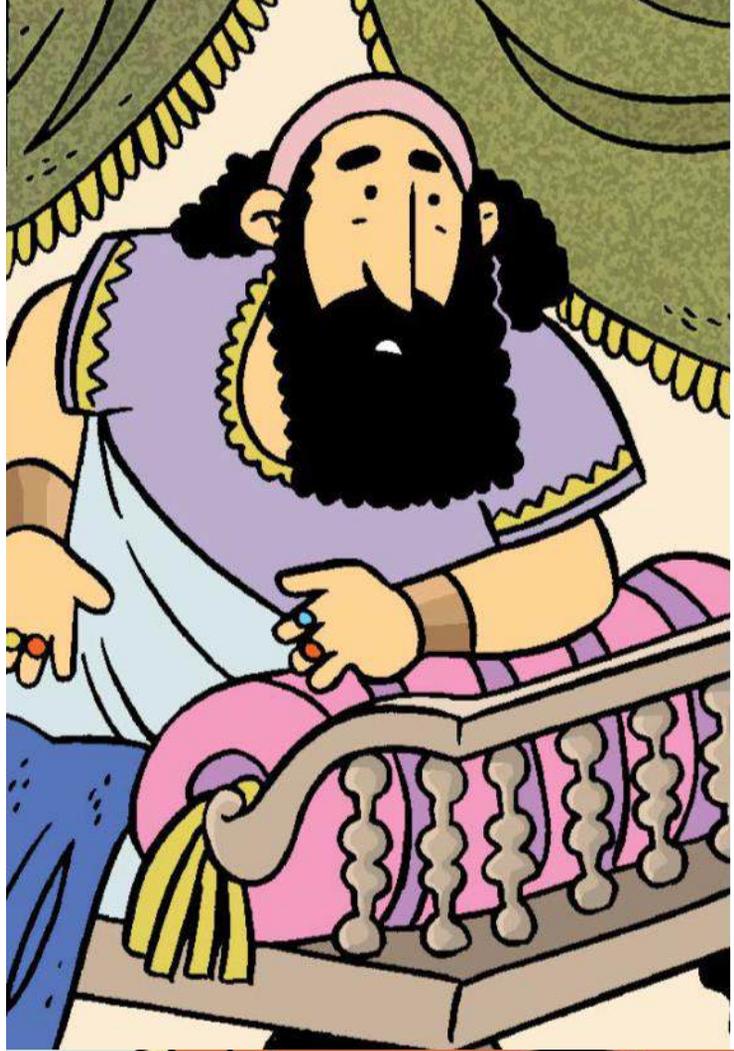
The Future Foretold



Class Section 1: Daniel 2

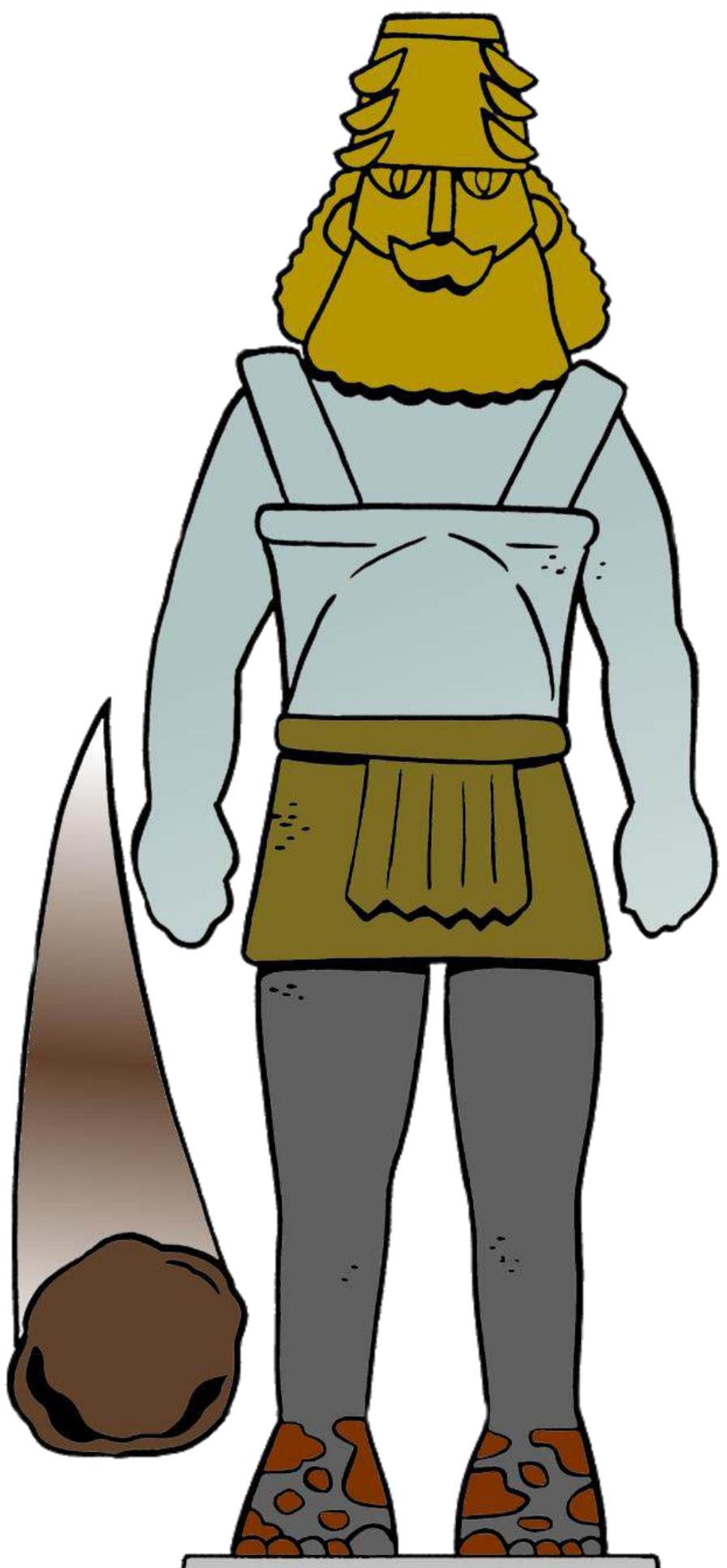
One night, Nebuchadnezzar had such disturbing dreams that he couldn't sleep. He called in his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers, and astrologers, and he demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed.

The men replied, "The king's demand is impossible. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they do not live here among people." The king was furious when he heard this, and he ordered that all the wise men of Babylon be executed.



That night God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel in a vision. Daniel told the king,

Daniel 2:31-39 - "King, in your dream you saw a large statue in front of you that was very large and shiny. It was very impressive. The head of the statue was made from pure gold. Its chest and the arms were made from silver. The belly and upper part of the legs were made from bronze. The lower part of the legs was made from iron. Its feet were made partly of iron and partly of clay."



While you were looking at the statue, you saw a rock that was cut loose, but not by human hands. Then the rock hit the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold broke to pieces all at the same time. The wind blew them away, and there was nothing left. No one could tell that a statue had ever been there.

Then the rock that hit the statue became a very large mountain and filled up the whole earth.

That was your dream. Now we will tell the king what it means.



King, you are the most important king. The God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory. He has given you control, and you rule over people and the wild animals and the birds. Wherever they live, God has made you ruler over them all. King Nebuchadnezzar, you are that head of gold on the statue.

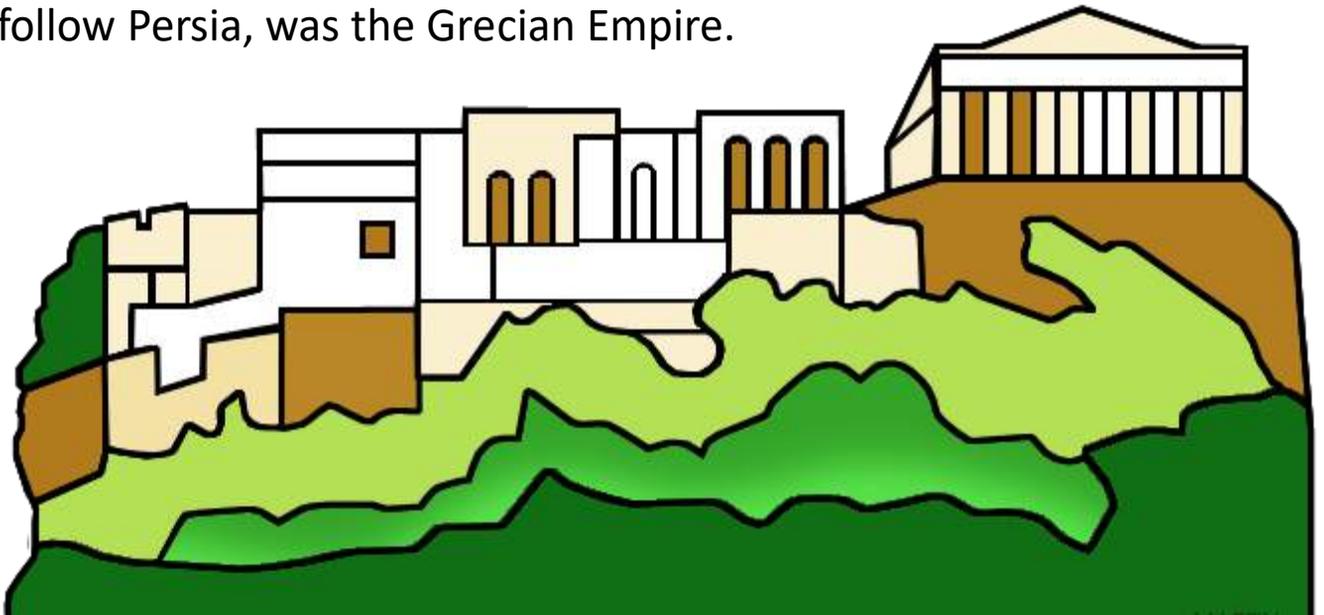


“Another kingdom will come after you, but it will not be as great as your kingdom.

According to world history, the kingdom of Medo-Persia followed Babylon.

Next, a third kingdom will rule over the earth—that is the bronze part.

We know from history that this third kingdom of bronze, the one to follow Persia, was the Grecian Empire.





Daniel 2:40 - Then there will be a fourth kingdom. That kingdom will be strong like iron. Just as iron breaks things and smashes them to pieces, that fourth kingdom will break all the other kingdoms and smash them to pieces.

Since we already have the fulfillment of actual history, we know that this fourth kingdom was Rome.

Daniel 2:41-43 -The feet and toes you saw were a combination of iron and baked clay, showing that this kingdom will be divided. Like iron mixed with clay, it will have some of the strength of iron. But while some parts of it will be as strong as iron, other parts will be as weak as clay.

After its fall, Rome was broken up into the "iron" and "clay" countries of the feet and toes.

Daniel 2:44 - During the reigns of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever.

The stone that "struck the image" (Daniel 2:34) is Jesus, and this "great mountain" that "filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:35) is Christ's Kingdom on Earth!

Micah 4:1-4 - ... The mountain of the Lord's house will be the highest of all—the most important place on earth. It will be raised above the other hills, and people from all over the world will stream there to worship.

People from many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, ... There he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths."

...Everyone will live in peace and prosperity, enjoying their own grapevines and fig trees, for there will be nothing to fear. The Lord of Heaven's Armies has made this promise!



Class Section 2: When Jesus Returns

When Jesus returns, the bodies of all of the saved people who have ever died will be instantly resurrected and come bursting out of their graves, and all of us believers who are still alive will be raised with them to meet Jesus in the air.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 - The Lord will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.



Then we will all fly away with the Lord to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in Heaven. It will be the greatest party ever held—a wonderful reunion with the Lord and all of our loved ones, our victory celebration.

Revelation 19:6-9 - Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: "Praise the LORD! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.



Christians will be rewarded for their works.

Revelation 22:12 - Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.

Our King Jesus Christ, will take over the world and set up the Kingdom of God on earth.

In that day the wolf and the lamb will live together; the leopard will lie down with the baby goat. The calf and the yearling will be safe with the lion, and a little child will lead them all.

The cow will graze near the bear. The cub and the calf will lie down together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. The baby will play safely near the hole of a cobra. Yes, a little child will put its hand in a nest of deadly snakes without harm. Nothing will hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain. (Isaiah 11:6-9)



Text adapted from the original 12 Foundations Stones course. Featured on www.freekidstories.org

The Greatest Love

The Love of Jesus



12 Foundation Stones Class 8th for younger children

Class Section 1: The Gift of Getting to Know Jesus

It's too difficult for people to grasp the idea of God. He's just spirit and they can't see Him, they can't feel Him, they don't know where He is. He's everywhere, He's all-powerful, all-knowing and everywhere. He's in everything and around everything and everywhere. That's just too big an idea for most people to grasp, so God had to show what He was like by making His Son in the form of a man so we could see Him and we would see what God is like because He's like Jesus in the spirit.

*Hebrews
2:14 -
Because
God's
children
are
human
beings—
made of
flesh and
blood—
the Son
also
became
flesh and
blood.*



Jesus left the Halls of Heaven for our sakes! Jesus Himself temporarily renounced the rights of His citizenship in Heaven and became a citizen of this world, and though He was rich, for our sakes He became poor that we through His poverty might become rich. He was human—He got tired, He got hungry, He got weary. He was subject to all these things even as we are, yet without sin, that He might know how we feel.

Hebrews 4:15—For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.



Class Section 2: God's Great Love for You

Jesus' love is so great that He died on the cross for us. His love is so great that He hasn't expected any one of us to earn our salvation, but He gives it to us as a great gift. No matter what mistakes and sins we've committed, we receive forgiveness. We can receive His blessings, all the goodness that He offers to us freely.



Romans 8:38-39 - Nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

* Jesus calls us His friends

John 15:15—No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

James 2:23b—"Abraham believed God, ...And he was called the friend of God.

Hosea 2:23b—I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'



*** Jesus loves each of us personally, and cares about us as individuals**

Luke 12:7a—The very hairs of your head are all numbered.

John 10:2-3—The sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

Isaiah 43:1b—"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine."



*** He holds our hand. He holds us in His arms. He is always with us!**

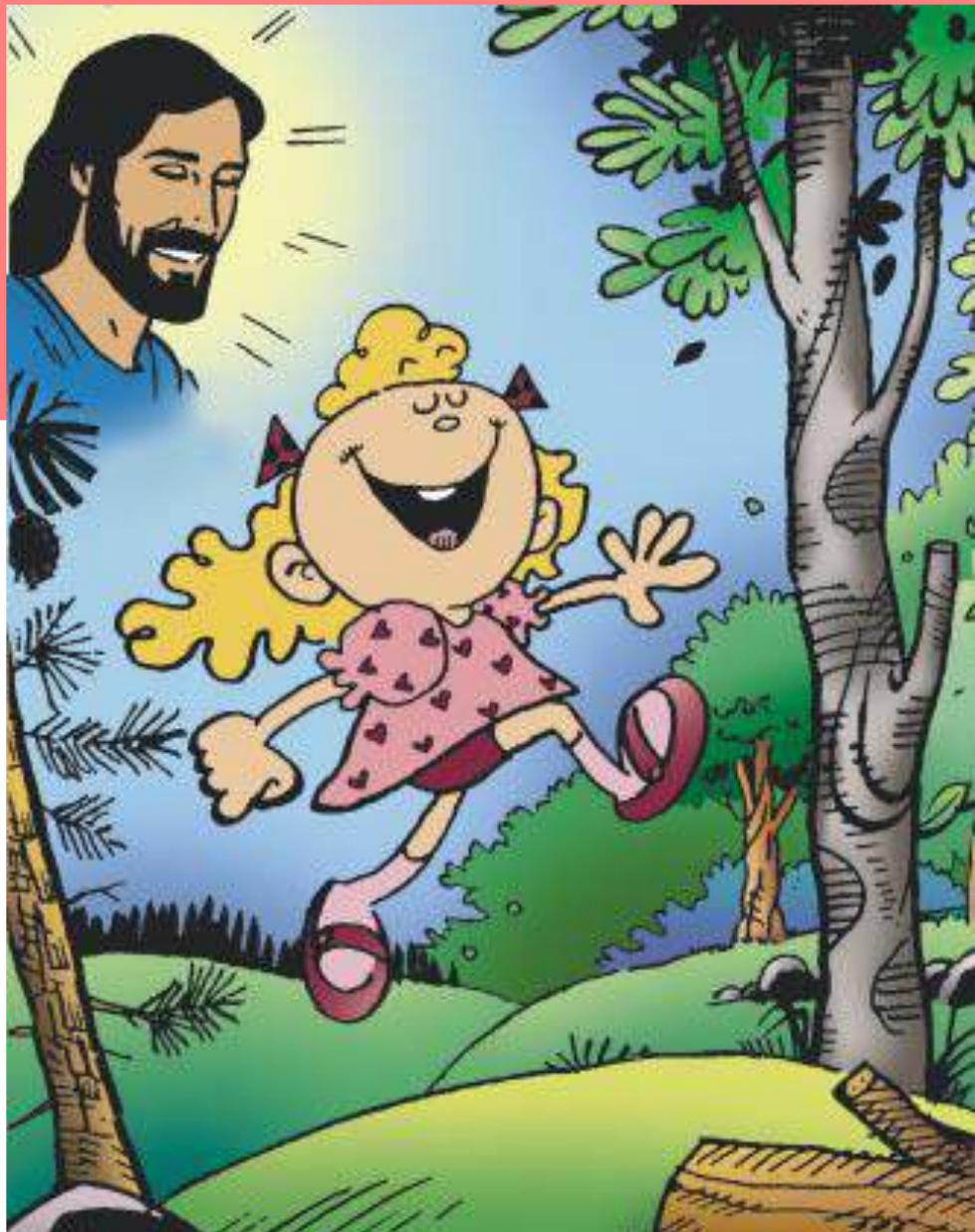
Psalm 139:7-10—Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into Heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.

Isaiah 41:13—For I, the Lord your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, 'Fear not, I will help you.'

Isaiah 42:6a—I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness, and will hold Your hand; I will keep You...

Matthew 28:20 - I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

You'll never walk alone if you have Jesus in your heart. No matter where you are, you are in His hands and He'll take care of you.



* Jesus hears our cries and answers our prayers

Exodus 22:27b—And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious.

Psalms 66:19—But certainly God has heard me; he has attended to the voice of my prayer.

Isaiah 65:24—It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.

* The Lord not only listens, but talks to us too—a faithful Counselor

Psalms 85:8a—I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people and to His saints.

Jeremiah 33:3 - Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great things you do not know.

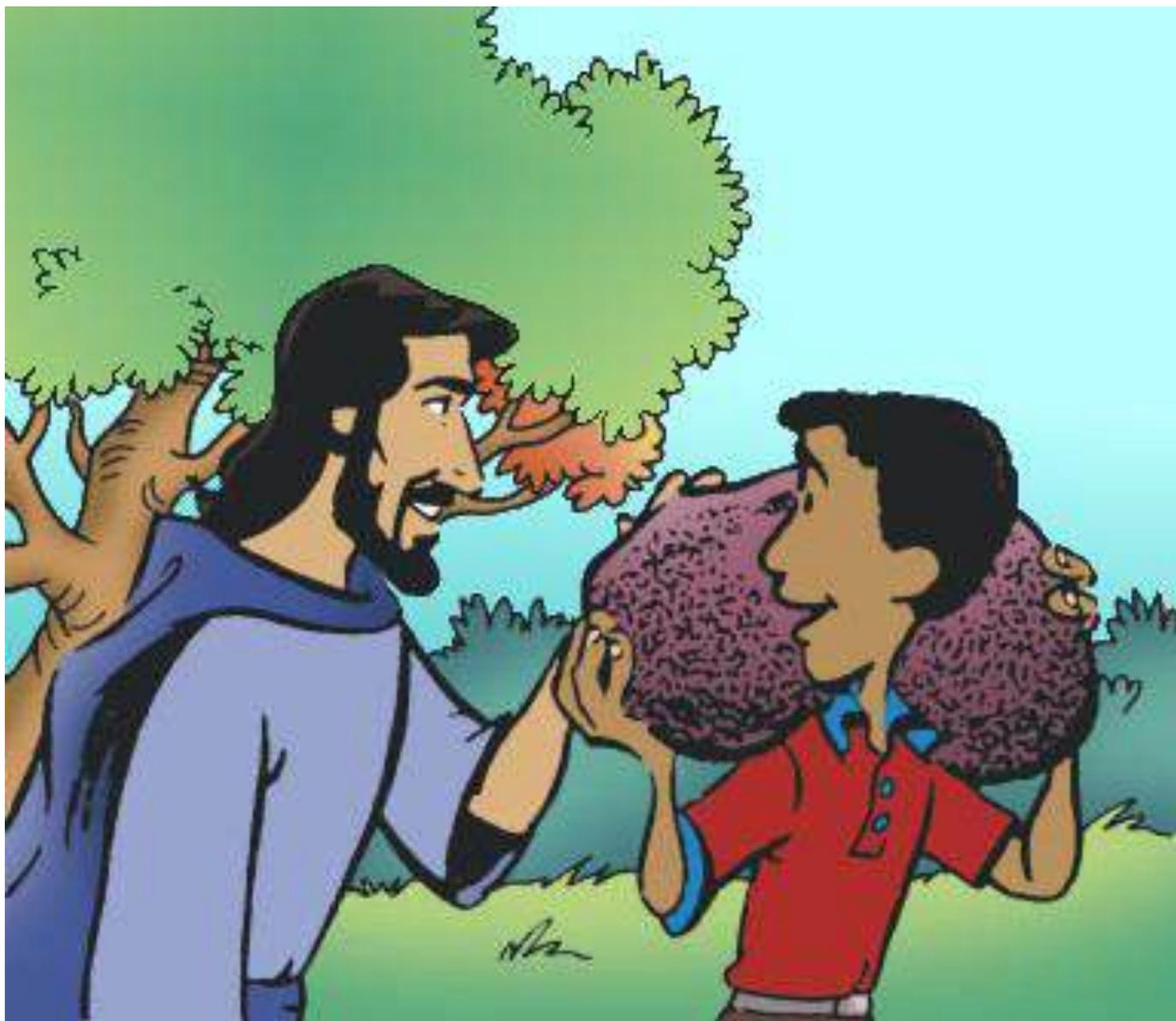


* He carries our burdens

Matthew 11:28-30—Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

* He comforts us

Isaiah 30:19b—You shall weep no more. He will be very gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you.



*** He strengthens us. We can depend upon His help.**

Exodus 15:2—The Lord is my strength and song.

2 Samuel 22:33—God is my strength and power, and He makes my way perfect.

Psalms 28:7a—The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped.

Isaiah 40:29—He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength.



* In Jesus we find peace

Psalm 29:11—The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Isaiah 26:3—You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

John 14:27—Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you.



* He takes care of our needs

John 14:13-14—And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Philippians 4:19—And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

* He wants us to be happy

Nehemiah 8:10b—The joy of the Lord is your strength.

Psalms 144:15—Happy are the people whose God is the Lord!

John 15:11—These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.



*** He brings solutions to our problems**

1 Peter 5:7—Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

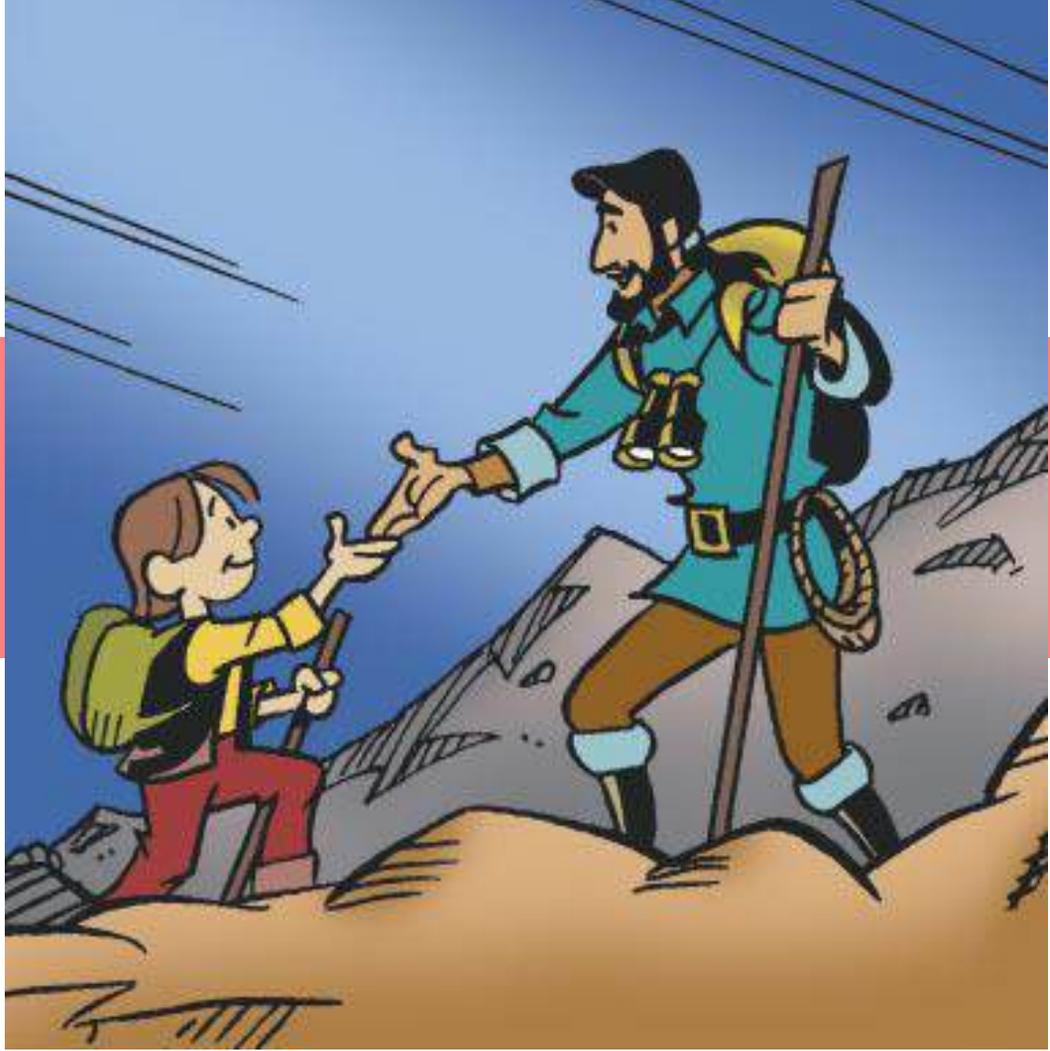
Whatever our problems are, Jesus has the answers.

This doesn't mean that

you'll never have any problems again, but the Lord helps us with our problems and makes them easier to solve, easier to bear, and He does dissolve some of them entirely and completely delivers us from them.

*** He works things out for our benefit**

Romans 8:28—And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.



* Through Jesus we receive forgiveness

Psalm 86:5—For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in mercy to all those who call upon You.

1 John 1:9—If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 2:12—I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.



* His love is unchanging and never-ending

Matthew 28:20b—Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Isaiah 54:10 - For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. My covenant of blessing will never be broken, says the LORD, who has mercy on you.

Hebrews 13:5b—Be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."



The Greatest Love

Eternal Salvation

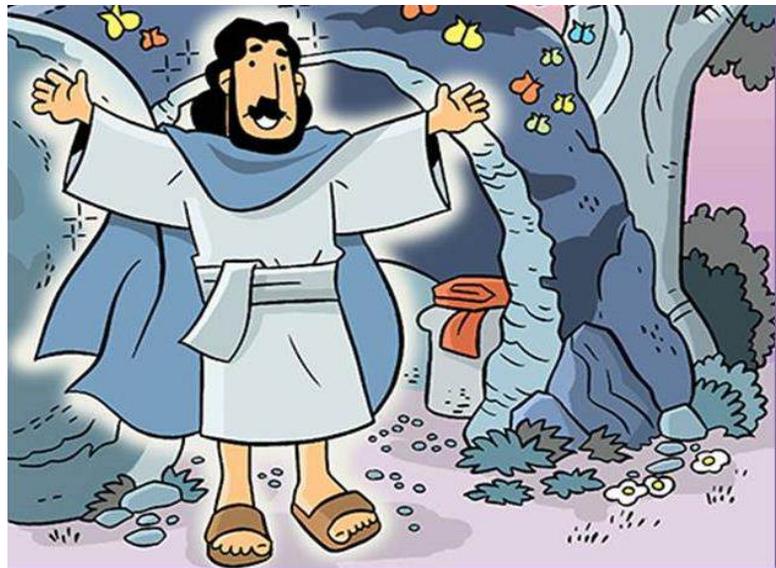


12 Foundation Stones Class 8B for younger children

Class Section 1: Eternal Salvation by Grace

* Salvation—Eternity in Heaven with the God of love

God knows that none of us could be good enough to earn our way to Heaven. It's only Jesus' sacrifice in our place that makes it possible for us to obtain salvation, the blessing of spending eternity in Heaven with the loving Creator.



Receiving Jesus guarantees eternal life in Heaven

John 11:26a—And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

John 14:3—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.





*** We can only get saved by receiving Jesus**

We don't deserve to go to Heaven. We are all sinners, and sin brings about spiritual death; but Jesus died in our place, taking our punishment:

Romans 6:23a—For the wages of sin is death.

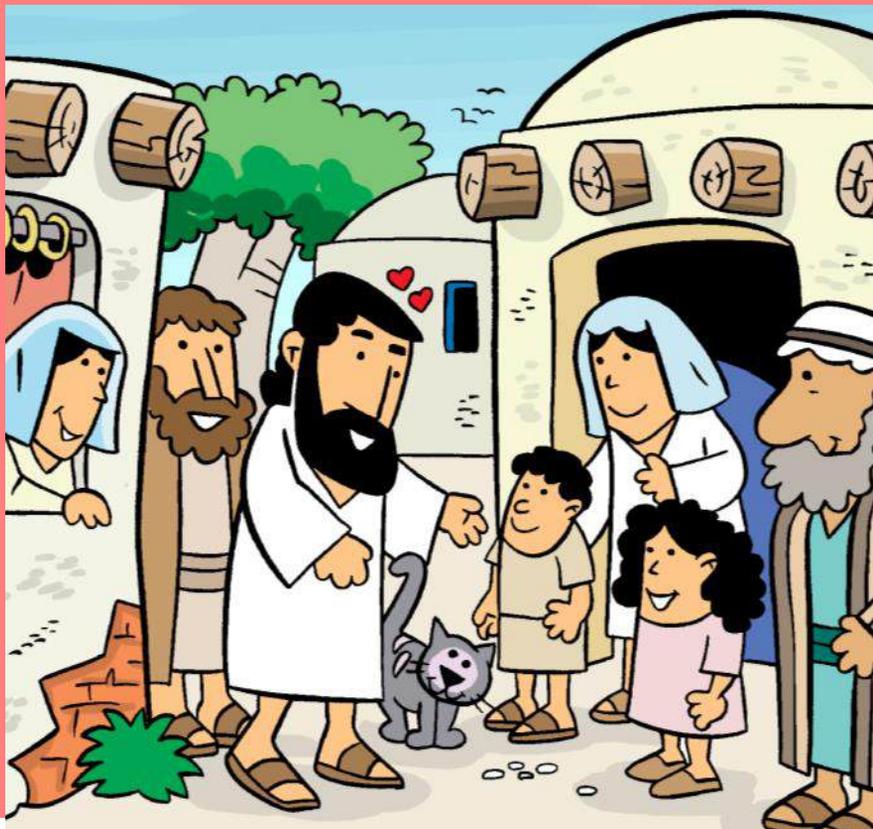
But the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 5:8— While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2 Corinthians 5:21—For He made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for [instead of] us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

John 14:6 – Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me.”

Acts 4:12—Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved.





*** We can't work for our salvation. It is by grace, a gift of God, and cannot be earned.**

Ephesians 2:8-9— For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 3:5a—Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

Only Jesus was perfect and that's why He could pay the price of our sins and God could forgive us, because He took our punishment for us. He gives us salvation as a gift, because we could never earn it.

Cleansing for ALL sins

No matter what your sins are, if you are sorry, Jesus will forgive you!

1 John 1:7—The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

It doesn't matter how bad you are, or what you've done. If you'll just confess your sins, ask God to forgive you and take Jesus into your heart, He'll save you.

* You cannot lose your salvation: Once saved, forever saved!

John 6:37—All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

John 10:28 — I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand

Romans 8:38–39 - Nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Salvation is forever! Once you are "born again" as His child, you will always be His child. You can't be unborn!

John 3:36a—He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.

You are more likely to receive His daily blessings upon your life if you conduct yourself in the way that He wants you to, if you do the things that please Him. But you can't keep yourself saved. Jesus did that once and forever, and His gift is eternal life.



* What about sin?

Although your sins won't result in you losing your salvation, you may lose some of God's blessings in your life if you walk on the wrong paths.

Revelation 3:19 — I correct and punish the people I love. So show that nothing is more important to you than living right.

As a loving Father, the Lord will try to help you learn from your mistakes and discontinue from taking the wrong paths in life.

Hebrews 12:5–8 — Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are not really his children at all.

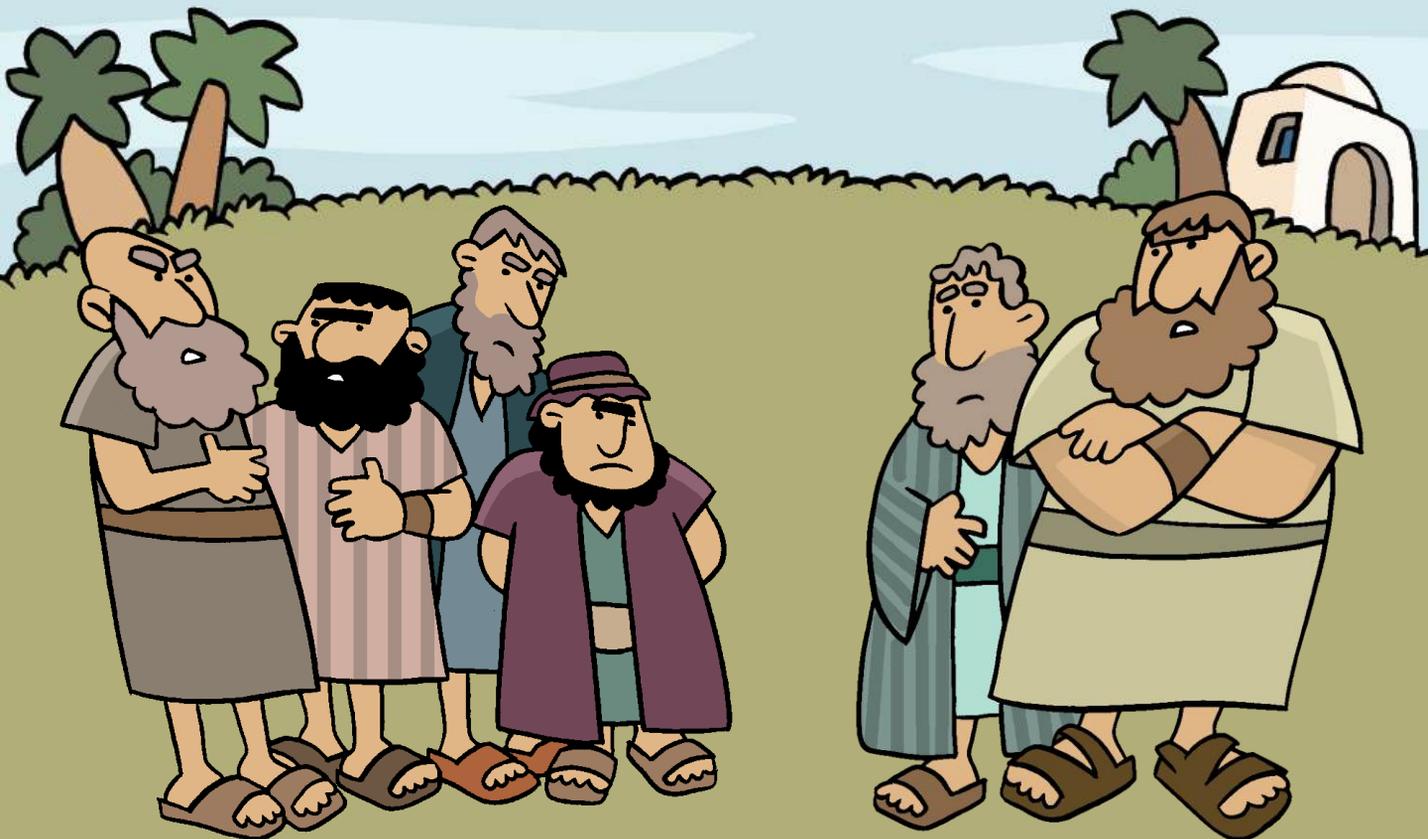


Class Section 2: Jesus' death ushered in the era of grace

In the beginning, God created man to freely and willingly choose to love and obey Him as His thankful children. There were very few rules, very few laws, everything was to be done voluntarily out of love.—That was His original plan.

But as man became more and more disobedient and wicked, God had to give him more and more laws and rules and regulations. The Laws were given for the people who do not have love, who do evil, unloving, harmful things. The Bible says that:

1 Timothy 1:9—For the law was not intended for people who do what is right. It is for people who are lawless and rebellious, who are ungodly and sinful.



But the rules couldn't save man, they only showed him where he was wrong.

In fact, it is impossible for anyone to be good according to the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law makes every one of us a sinner, because not one of us can keep all the law!

James 2:10 - The person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God's laws.

Romans 3:20—No one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are.

Jesus' death ended the Mosaic Law and ushered in the era of grace

Romans 10:4—For Christ is the end of the law to everyone who believes.

Hebrews 10:9—He takes away the first [law] that He may establish the second.

Galatians 3:24-25—Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

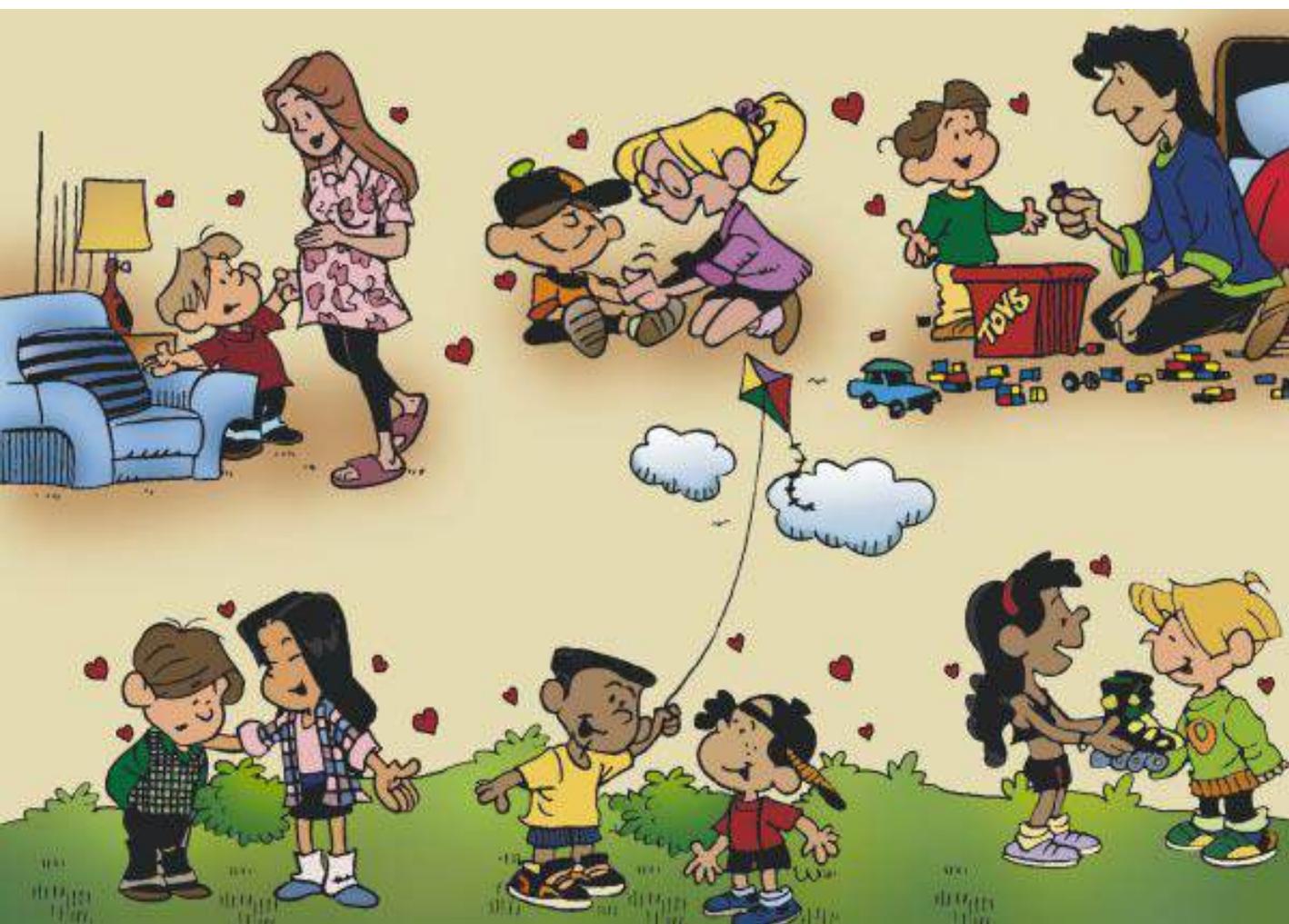


The Lord far prefers that we willingly and cheerfully do what He asks with the right loving motivation, because we want to do what's right and because we love Him and others, rather than just because we have to obey because it's the law or because of fear of punishment or fear of judgment.

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

Matthew 7:12—Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Romans 13:8— He who loves another has fulfilled the law.





Let's Live!

*From Jesus with
love*

I am far more than a historical character who lived and died 2,000 years ago. Because I rose from the dead, I am even more alive and active today than I was when I walked the earth. And because I live, you too can experience life and love as they were

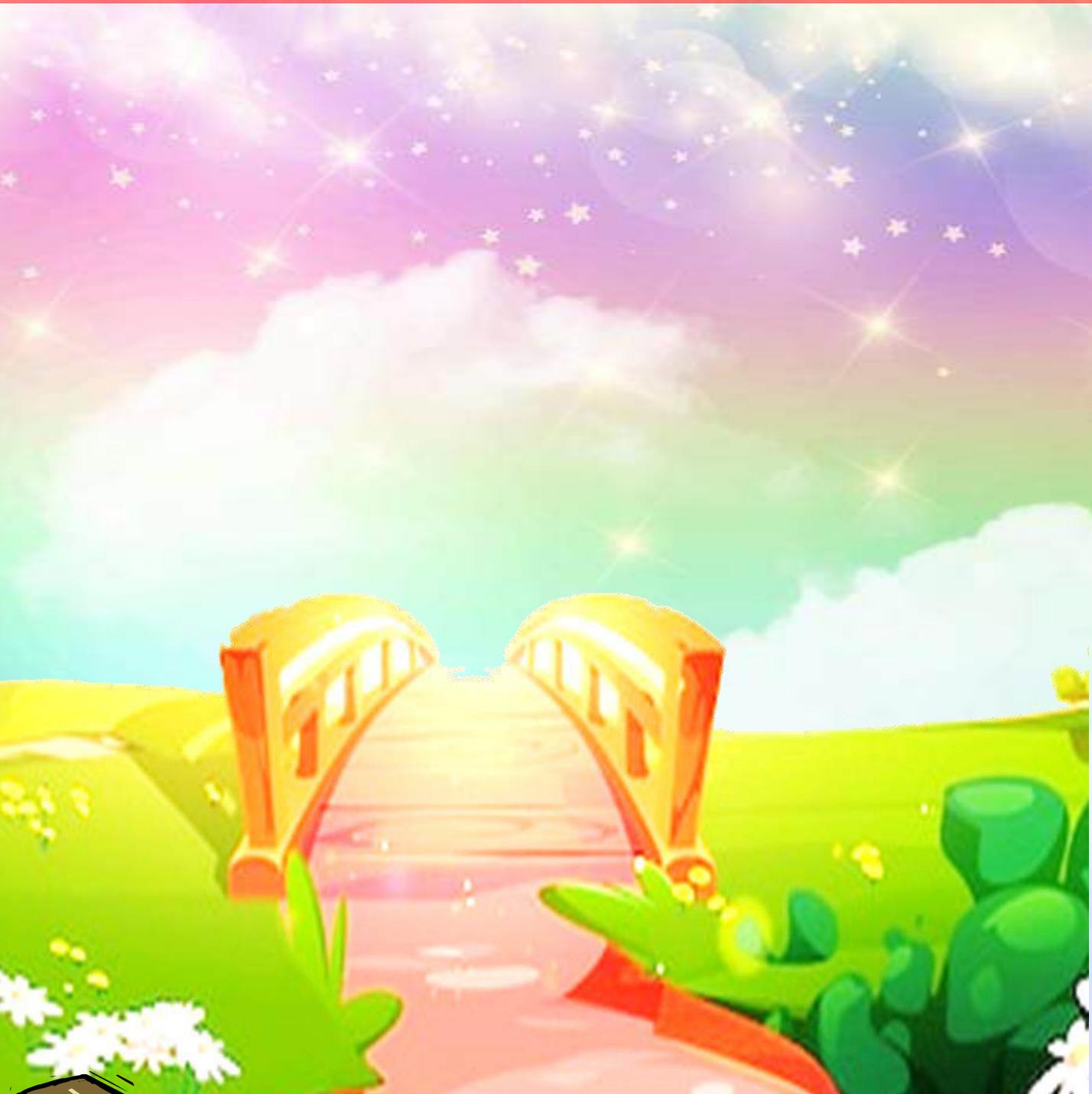
meant to be experienced, both here and now, and forever—boundless and eternal.

There is no hurt that I can't heal, no sadness that I can't turn to joy, no need that I can't provide, no void that I can't fill.

I am alive today in each heart that welcomes Me. I am active and at work, making everything better and more beautiful whenever I am given a chance. Let Me live in you!

Heaven

What it's Like



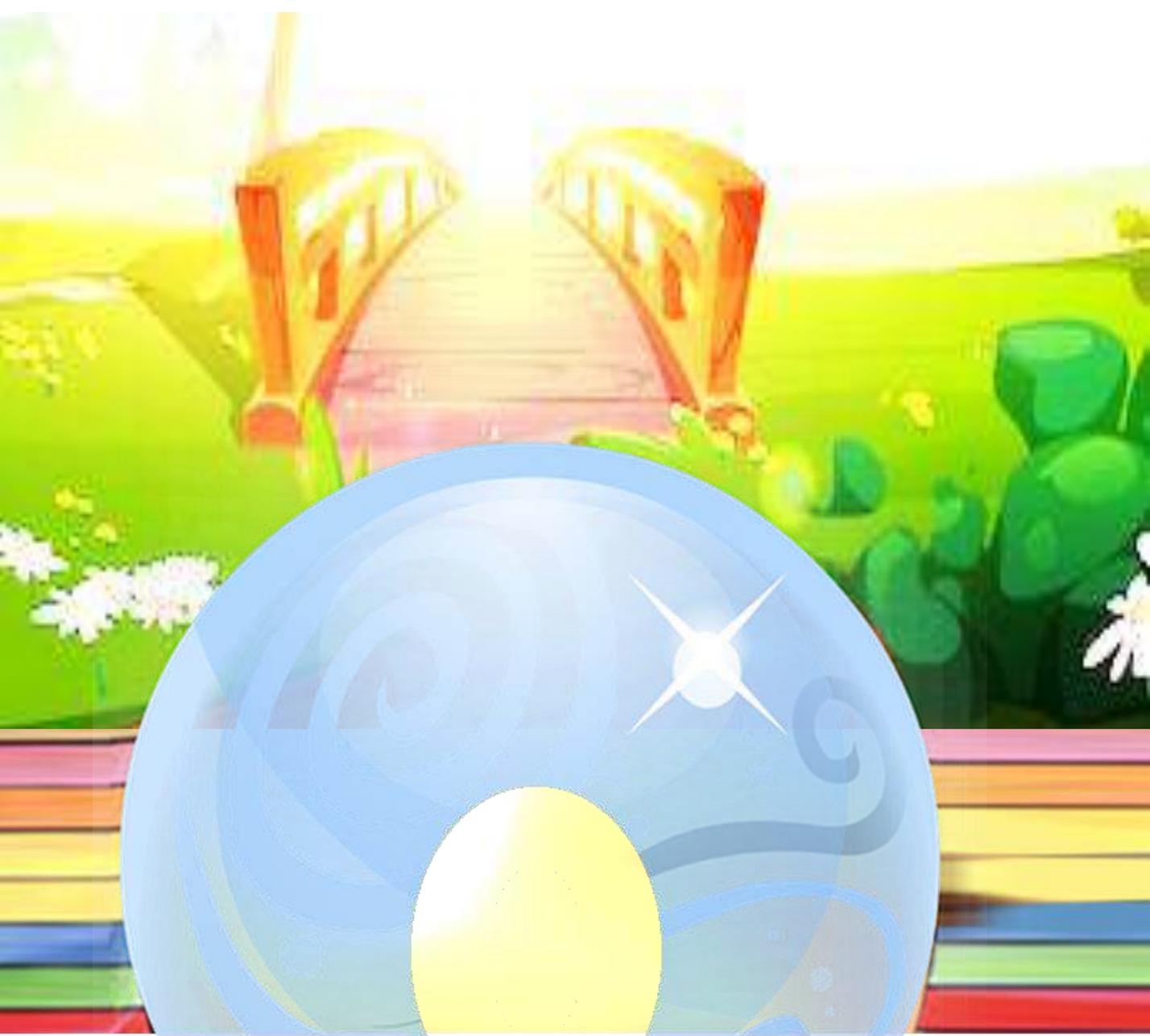
John gives us an amazing, specific, detailed description of our future Heavenly home itself, the great Space City, New Jerusalem!—Including its exact measurements, colors, materials, etc:

Revelation 21:9-21— [One of the seven angels] took me in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, ...It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal....



The wall was made of jasper, and the city was pure gold, as clear as glass. The wall of the city was built on foundation stones inlaid with twelve precious stones: the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.

The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass.



Revelation 22:1-2—And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month.

The Prophet Ezekiel also caught a glimpse of this wonderful river and these heavenly trees and described them thus:

Ezekiel 47:12—Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary.



* Eternity with the Lord

Heaven is a perfect realm, a place filled with God's presence. It will be filled with love, beauty, peace, comfort, understanding, joy, compassion, and most of all, will be enveloped in the love of the One who loves us more than anyone—God Himself.

Revelation 21:3 - God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.

John 14:2-3 - My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.



***No more tears**

Revelation 21:4—And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.

Isaiah 35:10—And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, ... with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Psalms 16:11—In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.



Heaven Awaits Us

Many people in the world say that when you pass through the doors of death, it is over, it is finished, it is the end. They are wrong! You enter into a new life!

Through believing in and receiving Jesus, anybody can enter into the kingdom of heaven and experience the joy, fulfillment, and everlasting love that God wants to give each of us in the life to come.

Dear Jesus, we thank You that we will be able to spend all eternity with You and with our loved ones who have received You, that we will never be apart. We will never be alone, and with each passing day we will grow to know You more and more, and see You more clearly and understand You more deeply. Amen.

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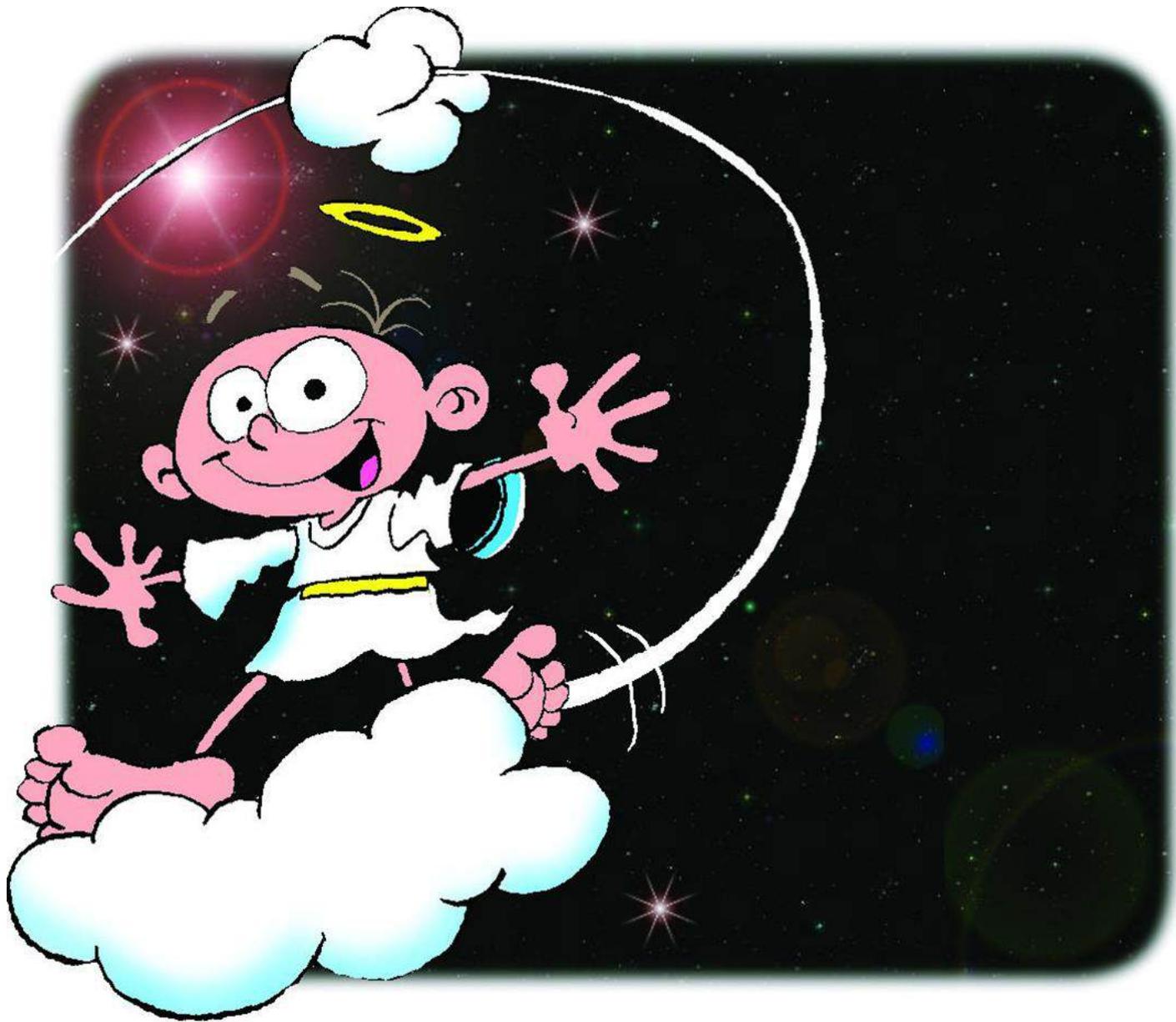
Page 5: Image of Jesus with children adapted from image in the public domain; accessed from [Pixabay](https://www.pixabay.com/). Image of meadow designed by Zale via Freepik

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Heaven

Now and Forever



Class Section 1: What Will You Be Like in Heaven?

You can hardly appreciate Heaven and what it will be like unless you know what *you're* going to be like! Of course, we don't know all the details, as it is somewhat a mystery, but here are some verses and ideas on the subject.

We will be like Jesus after His resurrection

Philippians 3:21— He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own.

1 John 3:2— We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.

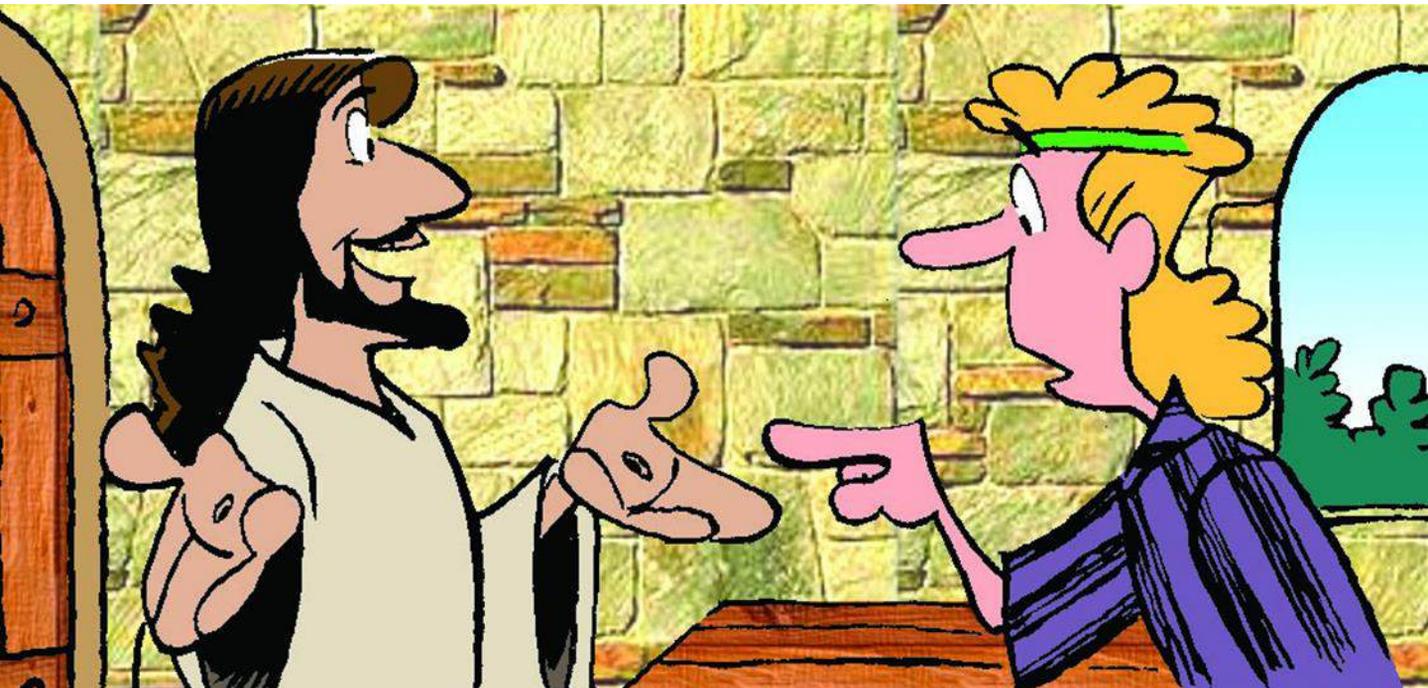


We're going to be like Jesus! We're going to look like Jesus did when He rose from the dead. We are going to be much the same as we are now, except that we're going to have supernatural bodies.

Let's look at the qualities that Jesus had when He was resurrected.

- **A new kind of body**

When Jesus was resurrected, He was not purely spirit.



Luke 24:36-39— Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you... Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

We are going to have a new kind of a spiritual, resurrected, marvelous, eternal, glorified body; and yet it's going to be material enough and natural enough and recognizable enough and seeable, feel-able, enjoyable enough to actually be constructed as we now are of flesh and bones—but eternal flesh and bones, incorruptible, immortal flesh and bones.—Flesh and bones! Think of it! And that kind of marvelous glorified Heavenly body is going to be able to enjoy all the pleasures that our body enjoys here and now.

- **Recognizable**

1 Corinthians 15:49—And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man.

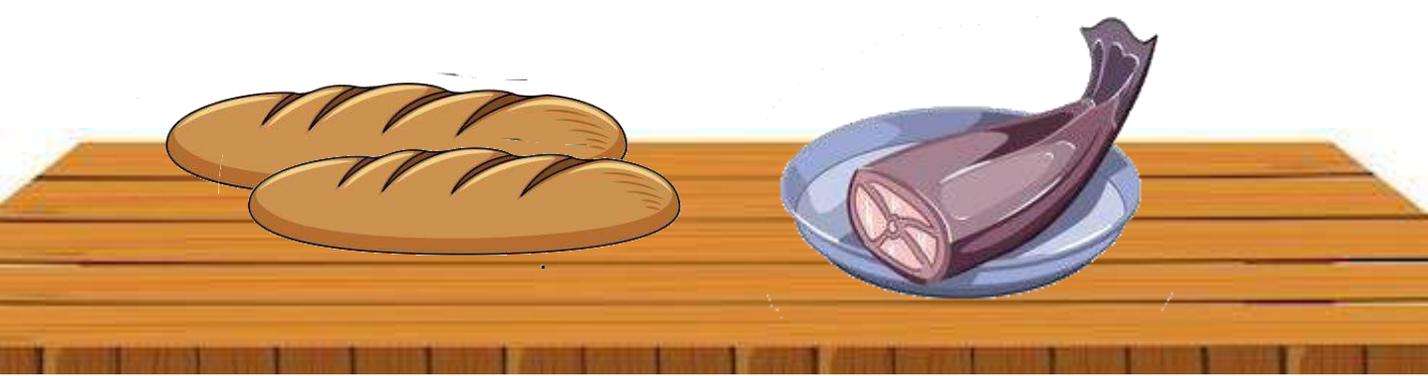
Even as we have looked on Earth, we will resemble that same image in Heaven. We will bear the same looks and general appearance—here called "image"—as we have here on Earth, but much more glorious.



- **Powers of movement**

When the disciples were in a locked room with the doors all barred, all of a sudden Jesus came walking right through the door without unlocking it! Jesus could appear or disappear; He could walk right through walls or locked doors.

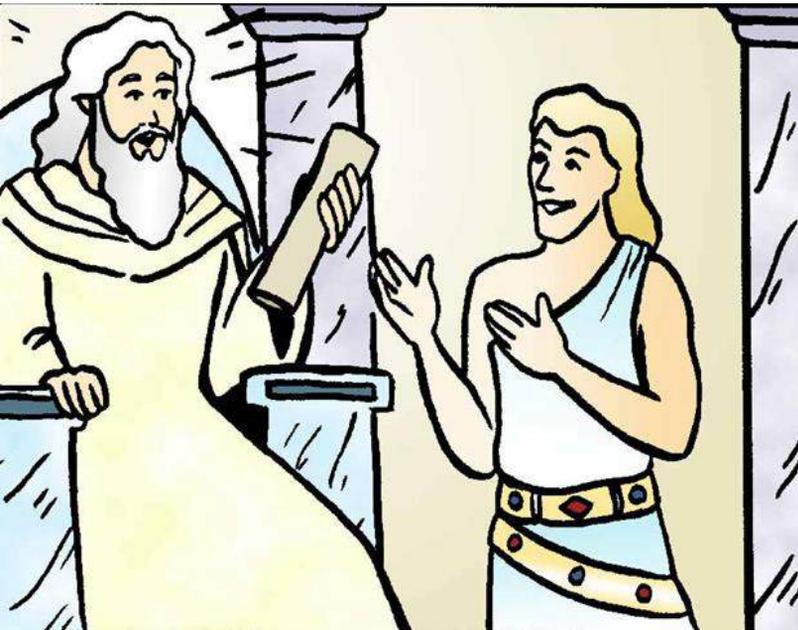
John 20:19—When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled... Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."



- **Still able to eat, although it won't be necessary**

Luke 24:42-43—So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took it and ate in their presence.

Luke 24:30—And it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.



Class Section 2: Heaven is a Busy Place

When you read the book of Revelation, you'll see there are lots of things happening!—People coming and going, trumpets blowing,

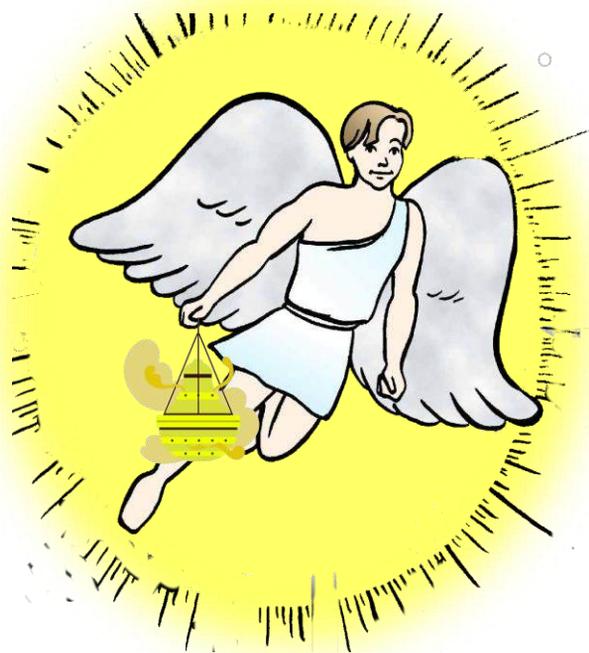
singing, praising, people being called in for audiences, sent on assignments, and more!

Revelation 7:9-10 - After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. And they were

shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

Revelation 8:3 - Another angel with a gold incense burner came and stood at the altar. And a great amount of incense was given to him to mix with the prayers of God's people as an offering on the gold altar before the throne.

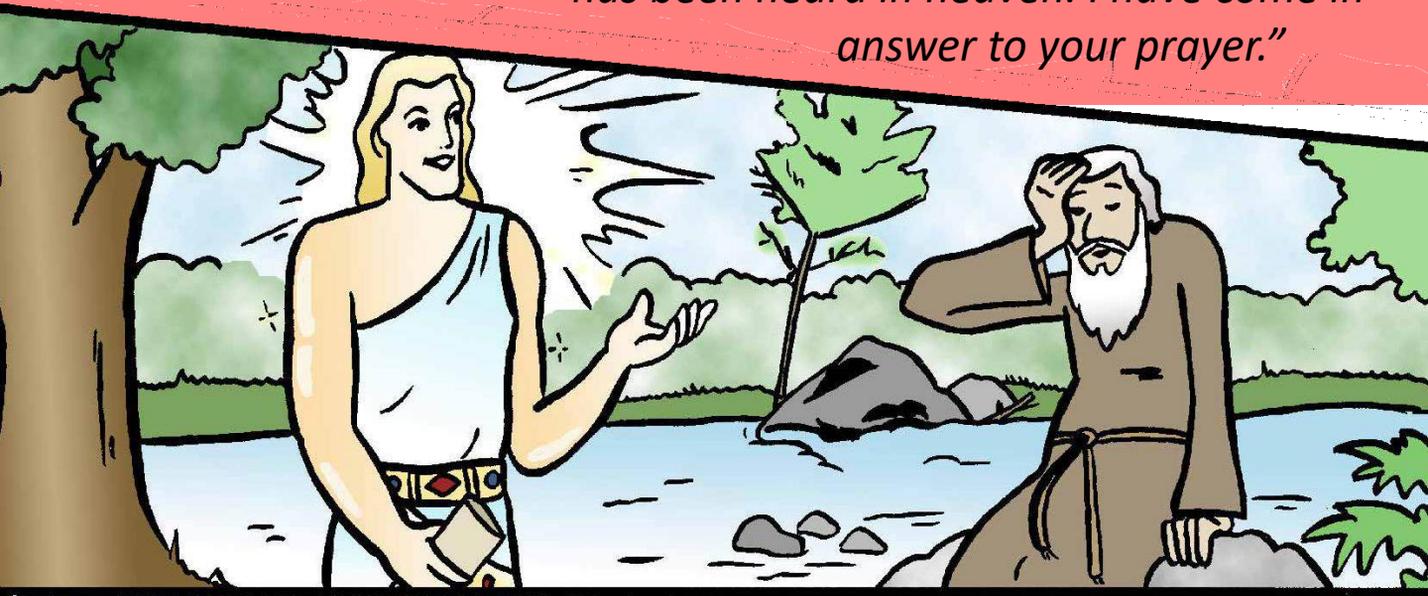
Revelation 8:6 - Then the seven angels with the seven trumpets prepared to blow their mighty blasts.



Helping those on Earth

Those in Heaven are not only observing our activities, but they are assigned by the Lord to actively assist and sometimes communicate with us on Earth.

Daniel 10:11-12 - And the man said to me, "Daniel,.. your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer."



Luke 1:26-33 - God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High."



Matthew 1:20-21 - After this, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Joseph," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit."

Luke 9:28-30— Jesus took Peter, John, and James up on a mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly, two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared and began talking with Jesus.

Revelation 22:8-9— Now I, John, ...fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets."

Class Section 3: Getting Ready for Heaven

If you have received the Lord into your heart, that's what counts!
You're saved!

John 6:37b—And the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

However, if we want the Lord to rejoice at our arrival and if we want rewards, then we need to do the things that please Him.

We have already prepared for Heaven by receiving the Lord. Now our lives need to show and manifest our faith. Remember what Jesus told us:

Matthew 16:27—For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Psalms 62:12—You render to each one according to his work.

Revelation 22:12—And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.



What We Take

We are told that when Alexander the Great was on his deathbed, he commanded that when he was carried forth to the grave, his hands should not be wrapped, as was usual, but should be left outside the bier, so that all men might see them, and might see that they were empty; that there was nothing in them.



Alexander, during his lifetime, had possessed two worlds, the East and the West, and the treasures of both; yet now when he was dead he could not retain even the smallest portion of these treasures. In this matter, the poorest beggar and he were upon equal terms.

If we live for this world, we shall go out of it empty-handed, but if we live for the next world we shall depart full-handed, "rich in faith" and soon to enter upon an eternal inheritance.

Rewards in Heaven

Matthew 6:19-21—Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on Earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

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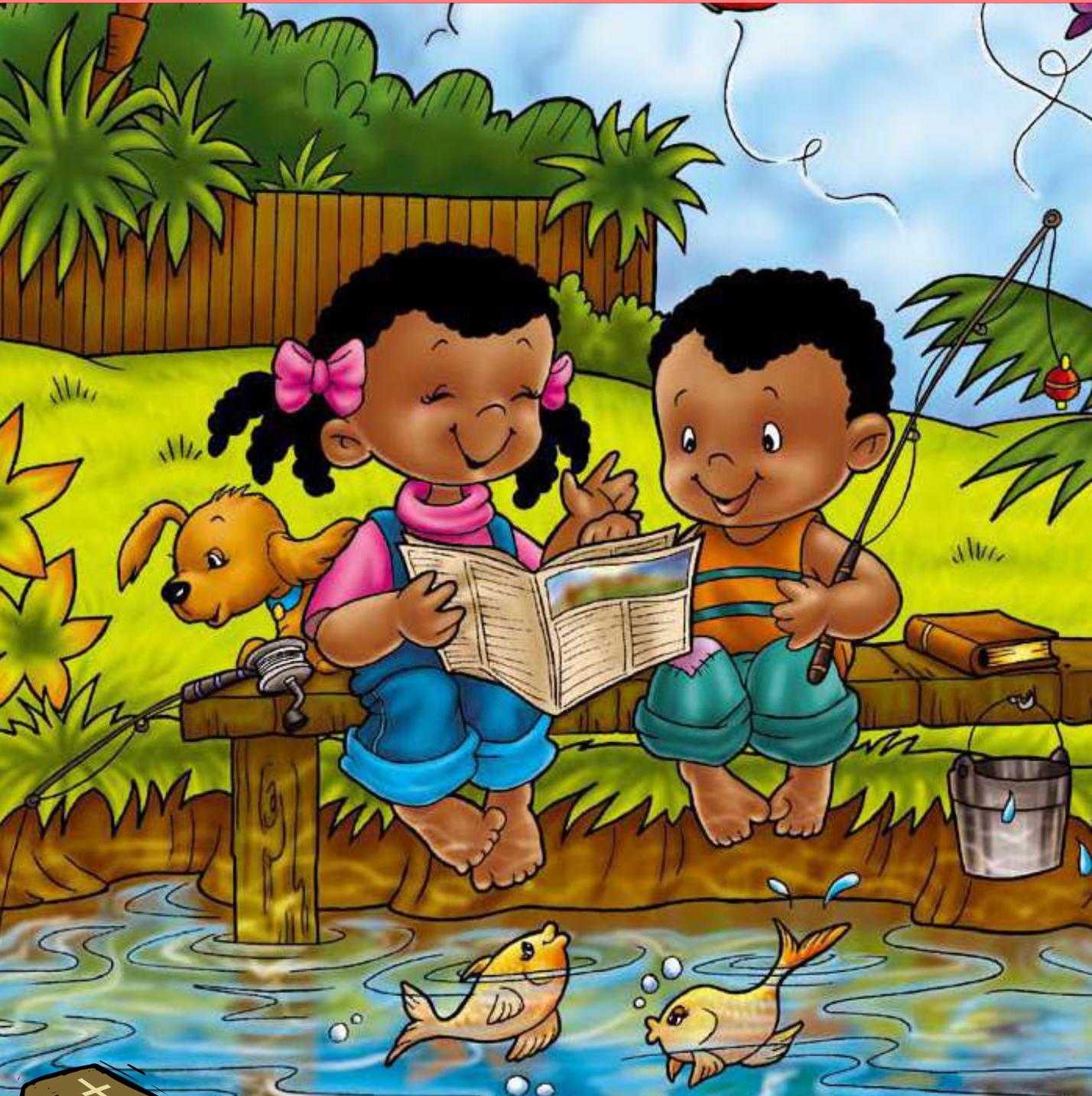
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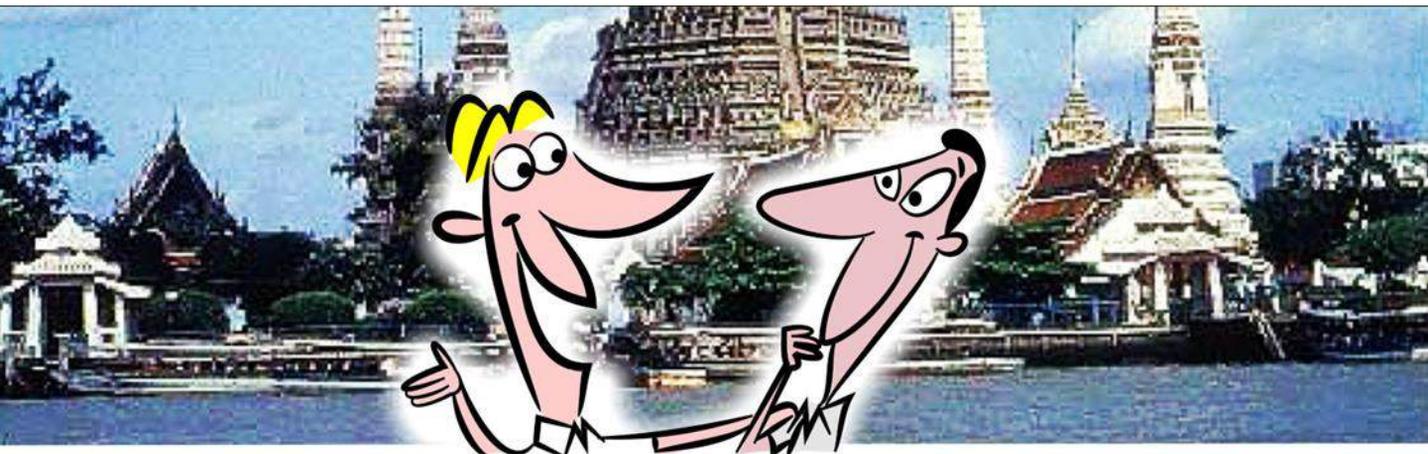
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Share Your Faith



Class Section 1: Making a difference

Jesus has entrusted us with the responsibility of passing on His love to those who share the planet with us today.

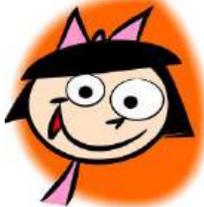


John 20:21—“As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”

2 Corinthians 5:20 - We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.

Romans 10:14-15—How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ... As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"

There are millions, even billions, of people who do not know God personally, who have never heard of Jesus and who have no knowledge of the gift of salvation and the treasure of eternal life that awaits them at their acceptance of Jesus as their Savior. Our privilege is to share that good news, to introduce people to Jesus.



The words of God's prophets have crossed the ages and swept around the earth and changed the course of nations! Their messages have changed the hearts of men and given hope for a better world.

But whether you change a nation or not, if you have changed even one life by the power of God's love you have changed a part of the world!



Class Section 2: Shine Your Light



Matthew 5:14,16 - You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. ...In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

John 13:35—By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.



We have the recorded example of Jesus' life on earth that shows us how much He loved us. We know from the Bible how He interacted with people in His day.

Following in Jesus' footsteps means putting faith into action and caring for others. No matter what the circumstances, we try to discern how to best be an example of God's love.

As you let Jesus work in your life, you should find that some aspects of your character and behavior are changing. Perhaps you don't get so anxious or angry when things are difficult, or you are more cheerful or more considerate. Those who are around you daily will notice.



The first Christians turned the world upside down with the love of God. The way they lived convinced others that their faith was real. The Roman author Tertullian (c.160–c. 225), when speaking of the early church, reported that the pagans would exclaim, “See how they love one another!” Clearly the Christians’ concern and care was visible in their actions, attitudes, and words.

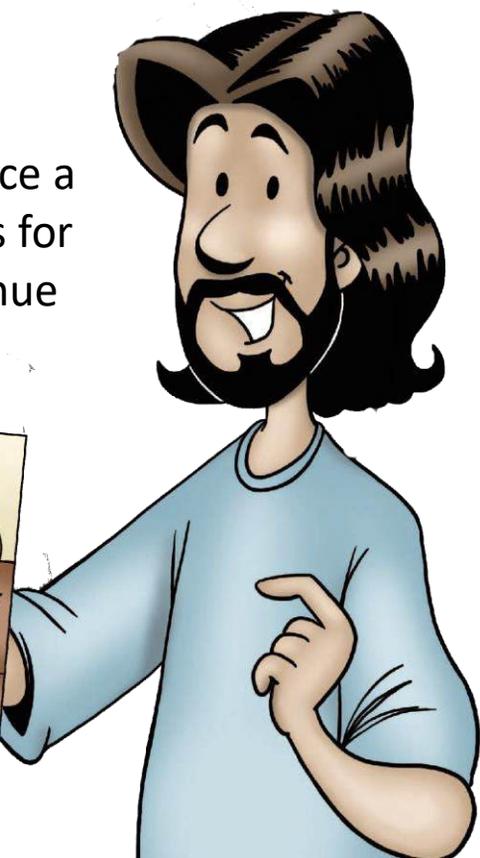
As My Father sent Me

Message from Jesus

As My Father sent Me, so send I you. Freely give of My love, compassion, and understanding to those who need it.

Wherever you are and whatever situation you’re in, there are people nearby who need My love. I not only want to give them eternal life, I also want to give them life more abundant here and now—love, peace, understanding, and fulfillment. I want to transform their lives both on earth and in the hereafter.

Everyone has influence, and when you influence a person for good, that person influences others for good as well, and the ripples of My love continue outward.



Overcoming Problems

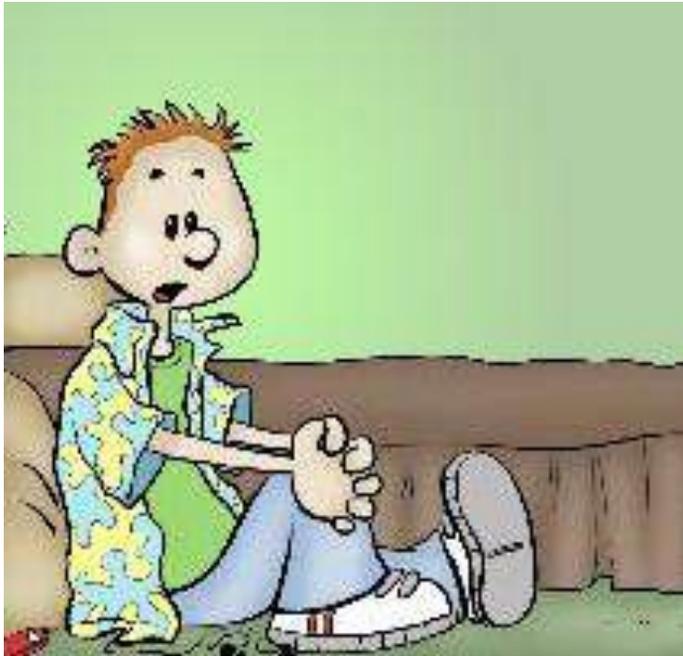
Steps to Victory



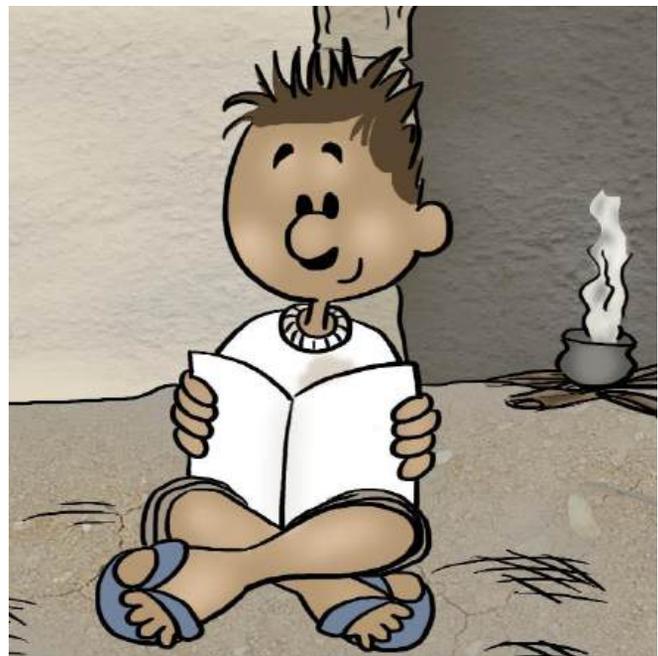
The Ups and Downs of Life

Even though the Lord wants us to be happy, there are times when it isn't so easy.

Everyone has battles of one type of another:



Sickness



Material lack



The actions of others

Steps to Victory

Step 1: Ask for Help

Psalm 55:22—Give your burdens to the Lord, and he will take care of you.

Hebrews 13:5—He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

John 14:18 - I will not abandon you ...—I will come to you.



When any of us face any kind of a crisis or dilemma, test or privation—whatever the trouble or problem—what is the first thing we should do?—Complain? Get upset and angry that things aren't going just the way we would like them to?—Of course not!

When things go wrong in your life, take the time to pray. When you're in trouble and call out for help, God answers!— No matter what you go through, He is there to help, comfort and bring meaning to it all.



Step 2: Accept your responsibility

Even if you were not directly to blame for something, you still need to take responsibility for your situation and work toward a solution.

No matter who caused the problem, blaming others will not resolve it. Concentrate not on placing blame but on finding solutions.



Galatians 6:5 - We are each responsible for our own conduct.

Step 3: Seek godly counsel.

Sometimes it can be difficult to resolve some issues on your own.— The more you worry about them and think about them, the more confused you're likely to become. Whereas if you let someone help you, you may be able to get help much sooner.

Proverbs 11:14—Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Proverbs 19:20—Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise.

A small boy was trying very hard to lift a heavy object. His father coming into the room and noting the son's struggle asked him. "Are you using all your strength?"

"Yes, of course I am," the boy impatiently exclaimed.

"You are not," the father answered. "You haven't asked me to help you."

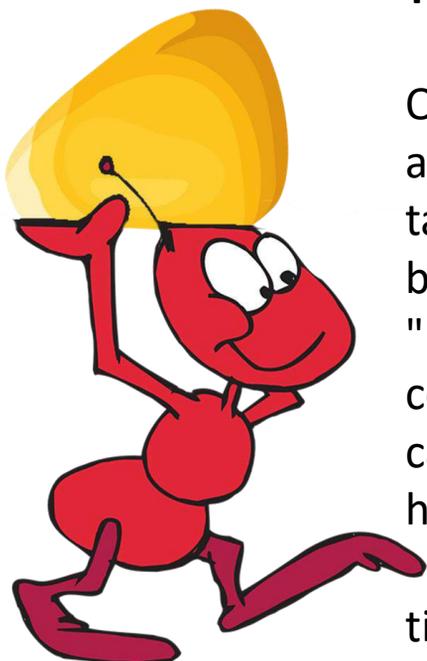
Step 4: Don't give up!

The Lord will be faithful to answer prayer and do His part. But then you've got to do your part.

Galatians 6:9—And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

Proverbs 24:16a—For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again.

The Ant



One king used to relate to his friends an anecdote of his early life. "I once was forced to take shelter from my enemies in a ruined building, where I sat alone many hours," he said. "Desiring to divert my mind from my hopeless condition, I fixed my eyes on an ant that was carrying a grain of corn larger than itself up a high wall. The grain fell 69 times to the ground; but the insect persevered, and the 70th time it reached the top! This sight gave me courage and I never forgot the lesson."

Step 5: Be positive

Philippians 4:8—Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Philippians 4:11—Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.

We all need to learn to count our blessings! The Lord wants us to think on the positive things, and try not to set our minds on all the negative things.

One of the greatest things in the world that anyone can learn is to be content in whatsoever state you're in.





The Climb to Victory

From Jesus with love

The rugged climb doesn't dissuade the determined mountain climber; he revels in the challenge. Nothing can stop him from pressing on until he

reaches his goal. No adversity can cause him to turn back. When he looks at the steep cliffs ahead, he doesn't focus on the danger but on the toeholds and narrow rock ledges that will take him to the peak. He isn't held back by the harshness of his surroundings or the toll the climb is taking on his body; he is propelled onward and upward by the thought of triumph.

There are many obstacles to surmount in life, but each one you conquer is another one behind you. When the going gets tough, lean on Me. Let Me lead the way and guide you up the rugged cliffs. I know all the danger spots and how to get past them. Together we will surmount each obstacle, together we will reach the summit, and together we will plant the flag of victory!

Overcoming Problems

Spiritual Growth

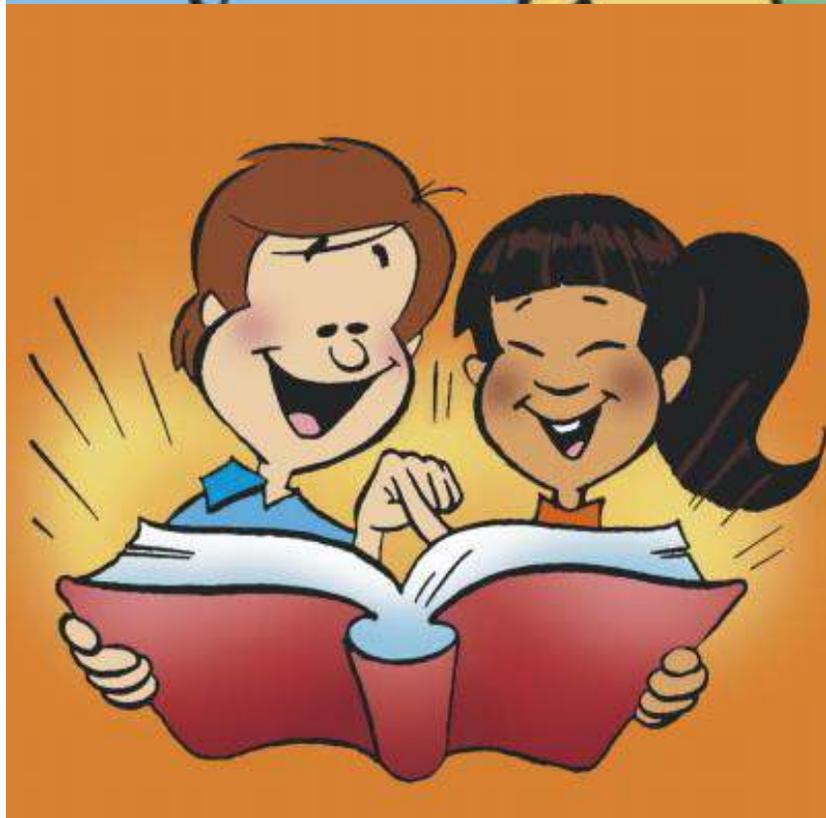


Class Section 1: A Constant Learning Process

Life is a constant learning process. Receiving Jesus as your Savior is just the beginning of becoming what God wants you to be.

The Lord made each of us differently, and has allowed each of us our own particular imperfections—lacks like selfishness, pride, laziness and envy.

Nobody's perfect, and that's what life is all about! — It's about not being perfect. It's about learning and growing.



Perhaps one of the best ways to understand this is to look at the illustration that Jesus gave in John 15. It is the fruit-bearing branch that is pruned.

John 15:1-2,4-5 - I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ...Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.



Just as we must eat, breathe, and exercise in order to grow physically, there are three essentials to spiritual growth.

1. We grow by eating. Reading and studying God's Word and other edifying material is food for our souls.

John 6:63 - The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

Jeremiah 15:16 - When I discovered your words, I devoured them.

They are my joy and my heart's delight.

2. We grow by breathing. Prayer has been called the breath of the soul.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 - Pray always.

Romans 12:12 - Keep on praying.

3. We grow by exercising. We exercise by actively following in Jesus' footsteps, doing what we can to help the needy, relieve the burdened, and encourage the downhearted.

John 13:34 - Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

1 John 4:12 - If we love each other, God lives in us.



The apostle Paul often compared the Christian life to a race. He said:

Philippians 3:14 - I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Hebrews 12:1-2 - Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.



Class Section 2: Spiritual attacks

God, Jesus, the good angels and departed saints, are not the only inhabitants of the spiritual world! There is also a dark side, headed up by the Devil, who is our arch-enemy, and is assisted in his evil tasks by his minions, lesser devils and demons.

The Devil is the fallen angelic being who is the supreme enemy of God and man. He is in direct opposition to everything God is or all He wishes to do. Starting in the Garden of Eden, the Devil has attempted to deceive every living soul.



The Bible cautions us:

Ephesians 4:27—Do not give place to the Devil.

1 Peter 5:8-9a—Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith.

Ephesians 6:11-12—Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the attacks of the Devil.

We'll be talking more about how to defeat the Devil's devices later in the class but for now, remember we are already victors.

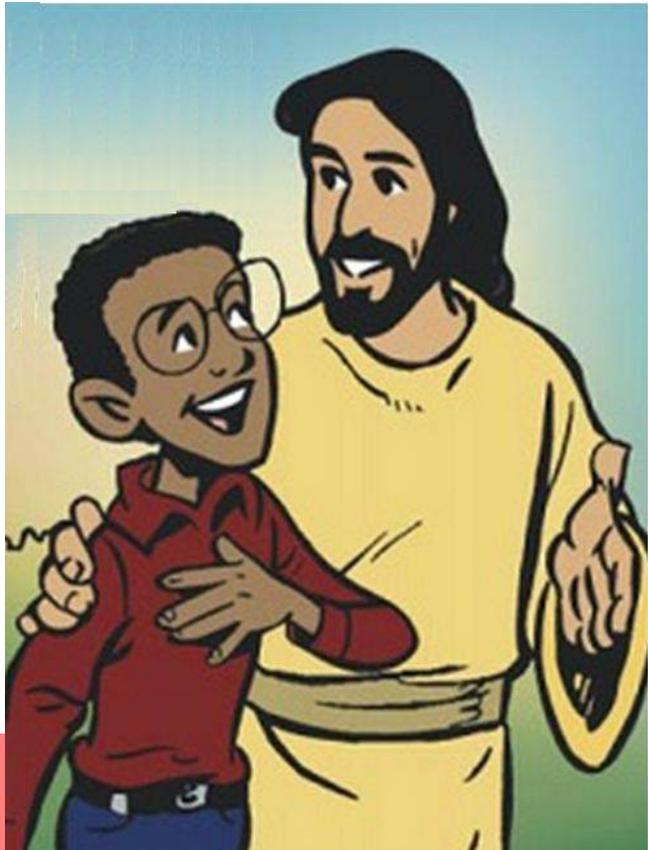
1 Corinthians 15:57—Thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:4 - Whatever is born of God overcomes the world.

Isaiah 59:19b—When the Enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

Luke 10:19—Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the Enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.





Get your eyes on Jesus

Jesus is your best friend and He is the One who can help you get the victory, whether over your personal problems or whatever obstacles you face.

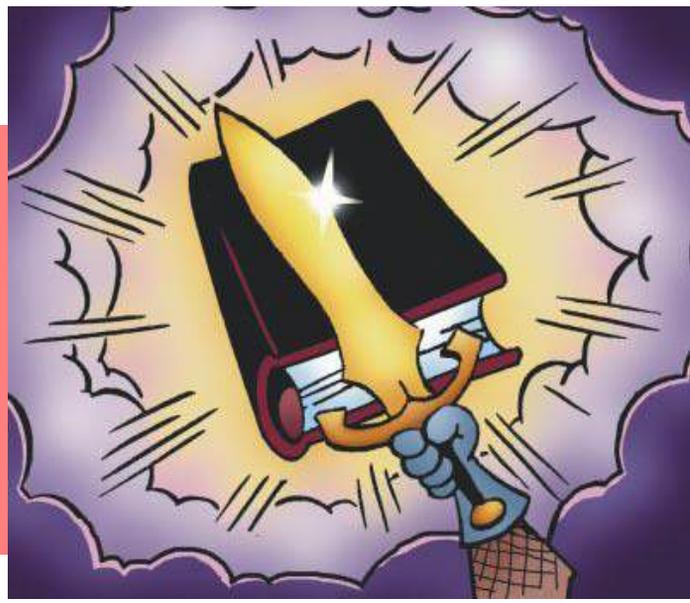
Peter walks on the water—and almost sinks when he takes his eyes off the Lord!

Matthew 14:28-32—And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!” And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

The “Sword of the Spirit”

Ephesians 6:17 - Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 – The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.



The Temptation of Jesus

Matthew 4:1-11—Jesus had fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward He was hungry. The Tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Then the Devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.' " Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

Again, the Devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.'"

Then the Devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.





Patiently wait on the Lord

We don't always get answers to our prayers right away. This doesn't mean we're doing something wrong, but the Lord is expecting us to have patience.

Psalm 40:1—I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry.

Hebrews 10:36—For you have need of patience, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise.

James 1:3-5—Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Adventures Ahoy!

From Jesus with Love

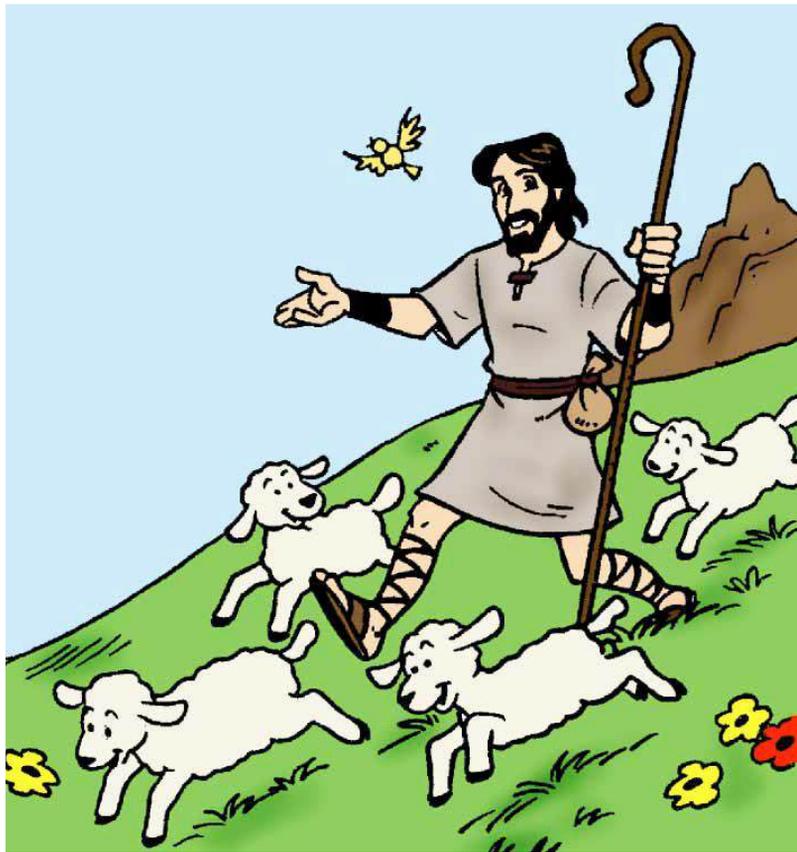
I am your Good Shepherd and you will not lack for anything that is within My will to give you.

I will bring you to green pastures and restore your spirit every time it is weary and tired, and let you rest beside still and peaceful waters.

I will lead you in the paths of My righteousness, with My truth and promises by your side. Even if you walk through dark valleys, or face the possibilities of danger, I will give you the power to not fear.

I will be with you through everything—the hard times and the happy times. I will instruct and guide you and comfort you.

My goodness and mercy and love and strength will follow you everywhere! You will dwell in My house forever—first My spiritual house on earth, and then forever with Me in heaven.



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Going God's Way

What are the Standards?



Class Section 1: What are the Standards?

A disciple is defined as a “follower of Jesus,” “a learner,” “one who follows in the master’s footsteps,” “someone who is aiming to be like Jesus.” Disciples seek to learn, study, and then follow and apply what their teacher tells them.

We are students of Jesus—our Master. We seek to not only learn about His life on earth, the truths of God’s Word, and His nature and character, but we seek to follow His example and to live as He taught us to live, to love as He loved, and to live a life of faith.

What should we strive to be like? The following Bible passage provides some insight:

“The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).



Love

When Jesus was asked which was the most important commandment, He answered,

Matthew 22:37-39 - You should love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You should love your neighbor as yourself."



Jesus also said

John 13:35 - By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus intends for every true Christian to be a reflection of His love, so that others can find and experience that love too.



Joy

The Holy Spirit can help us be happy and cheerful in spite of circumstances. It also helps greatly to count your blessings, to think about all the good things the Lord has given you and done for you.

Philippians 4:8 - Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—think on these things.”



Peace

Just as Jesus calmed the stormy sea when His disciples thought their ship was sinking and they were about to drown, He can calm the storms of life and give you inner peace.

Isaiah 41:10 - Don't worry—I am with you. Don't be afraid—I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will support you with my right hand.



Longsuffering

"If my brother offends me, how many times shall I forgive him?" someone once asked Jesus, and then offered a hopeful guess. "Seven times?"

"No, seventy times seven!" was Jesus' reply. In other words, we should never stop forgiving.



Kindness

Kindness is love in action. It's being considerate of others. It's living the Golden Rule:

Matthew 7:12 - Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Kindness is being as tenderhearted and forgiving toward others as God is with you.

Ephesians 4:32 - Be kind and loving to each other. Forgive each other the same as God forgave you through Christ.





Goodness

Goodness of the heart is shown in honesty, empathy, helpfulness, and a multitude of other ways. Jesus told His first followers,

Matthew 5:14-16 - You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Faithfulness

Faithful people are dependable. They're faithful to Jesus, faithful to the work He has called them to, whatever that may be, and faithful to keep their word and fulfill their obligations to others.



Gentleness

Jesus is pictured in the Bible as a lamb, a mother hen, and a gentle, concerned shepherd. He said of Himself,

Matthew 11:29 - I am gentle and lowly in heart.

John 13:15 – You should serve each other just as I served you.



Self-control

Paradoxical as it may seem, the secret to self-control is giving up control. It's in yielding to God and letting His Holy Spirit take control of your thoughts, your actions and your life.

1 Corinthians 10:31 - So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17 - And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus.

Class Section 2: God's Ways vs. Man's Ways

God's ways are often different from those of the world.

Isaiah 55:8-9—For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

The Lord wants us to discern between what is of Him and what is not

Romans 12:9b—Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

Isaiah 7:15—Know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

1 Peter 3:11—Let him turn away from evil and do good.

There are many examples of contrasting values. We're going to look at just a few.

Money

Society promotes the acquisition of wealth as being most important. Is that really so? Does having enough money to obtain the latest gadgets, the fastest car, the most fashionable clothes, the biggest house, the most advanced computer, or the widest-screen TV bring happiness?



It's not that there's something wrong with money, riches, or wealth. It is as the Bible says,

1 Timothy 6:10 - The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.



Bigger barns

*Luke 12:16-21—
Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What*

shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The rich man in this parable wanted to build bigger buildings, which was not so bad in itself if he had wanted to do it for the right reasons, but his purpose was to increase his goods for himself, not to share with others.

God blesses us when we give, rather than keeping selfishly for ourselves.

Proverbs 11:25—The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.

Acts 20:35b—It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Proverbs 11:24—There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty.

Proverbs 28:27—He who gives to the poor will not lack.

The Media

Does what you watch, read, or listen to motivate you to be loving and helpful to others? Does it encourage you and leave you with positive, happy feelings?



The Lord counsels us to avoid negative influence:

Psalm 101:3—I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me.

Psalm 119:37—Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way.

Solving Arguments

2 Timothy 2:24—And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient.

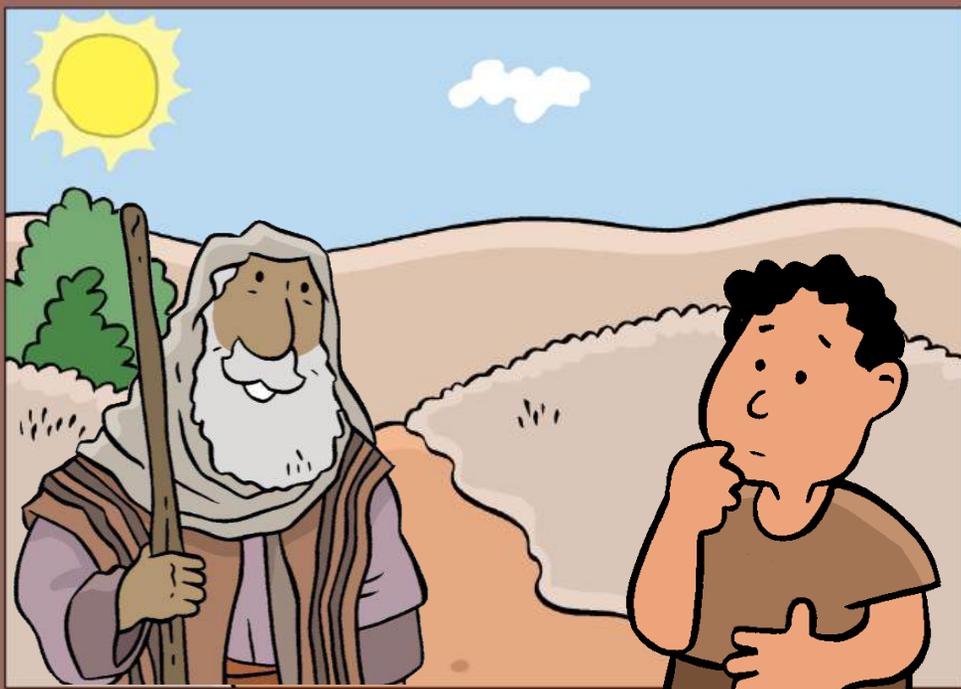
Ephesians 4:32—And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Abraham's good example

Genesis 13:7-11—There was strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's livestock and the herdsmen of Lot's livestock. So Abraham said to Lot, "Please let there be no strife between you and me, and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen; for we are brethren. Is not the whole land before you? Please separate from me. If you take the left, then I will go to the right; or, if you go to the right, then I will go to the left."

Lot lifted his eyes and saw all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere.

Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.



True Greatness

Luke 22:24-27—Now there was also a dispute among them [Jesus' disciples], as to which of them should be considered the greatest. And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves."

Matthew 23:11—But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.





The Path of the Righteous

From Jesus with Love

The wisdom of the world declares that you need to forge your own path and follow your own desires to figure out what is the right thing for you. But true wisdom is found in placing your hand

in Mine and letting Me lead you in the way you should go, rather than trying to find your own way, or stumbling down the wrong roads and having to backtrack. The path of the righteous—all those who love Me and seek to walk in My ways—is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day. (Proverbs 4:18)

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Going God's Way

What is His Will?



Class Section 1: God's Will for You

*** We should desire to please the Lord**

John 14:15—If you love Me, keep My commandments.

2 Corinthians 9:7—So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

1 Chronicles 28:9a—Serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind;

God has gifted each of us with certain qualities and abilities. When we are making decisions and seeking God's will, we should ask ourselves, what are we doing with the gifts we've been given?



For Christians, success is about living in a way that is pleasing to God and blesses others. It includes things such as:



- Having a relationship with God that results in the manifestation of the fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-23 – The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- Being a good coworker, friend, and neighbor.

Matthew 7:12 - Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.





- Being a faithful ambassador of Christ in our interactions with others.

2 Corinthians 5:20 - So we have been sent to speak for Christ. It is like God is calling to people through us.

- Manifesting honesty, integrity, generosity, and reliability

2 Peter 1:5-8 - Do all you can to add to your life these things: to your faith add goodness; to your goodness add knowledge; to your knowledge add self-control; to your self-control add patience; to your patience add devotion to God; to your devotion add kindness toward your brothers and sisters in Christ, and to this kindness add love. If all these things are in you and growing, you will never fail to be useful to God.



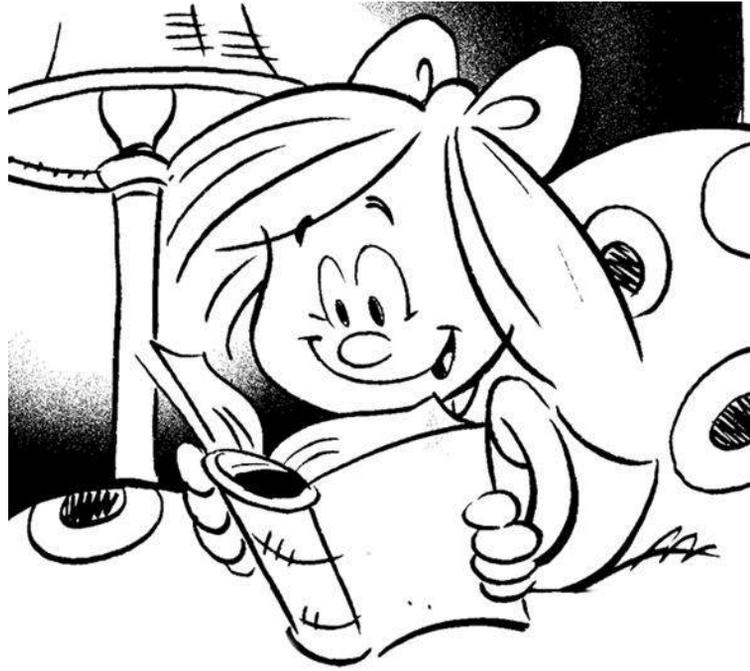
Class Section 2: Seven Ways to Know God's Will

If you sincerely ask God to show you what is best, He will. His answer will probably come through one or more of the following means.

1. God's Word

The first place to look for the will of God is in His words recorded in the Bible.

Psalm 119:165 - Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).



2. The voice of God's Word

Have you ever been thinking or praying about something when the Lord brought to mind a certain verse or passage from the Scriptures? Or have you ever been reading the Bible when all of a sudden a verse or passage spoke directly to you, as though it had been written just for you? That is the voice of the Word.



3. Direct revelation

God also speaks to us through dreams and visions, as well as messages we receive directly from Him when He speaks to our hearts, which the Bible calls "prophecy."

Jeremiah 33:3—Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

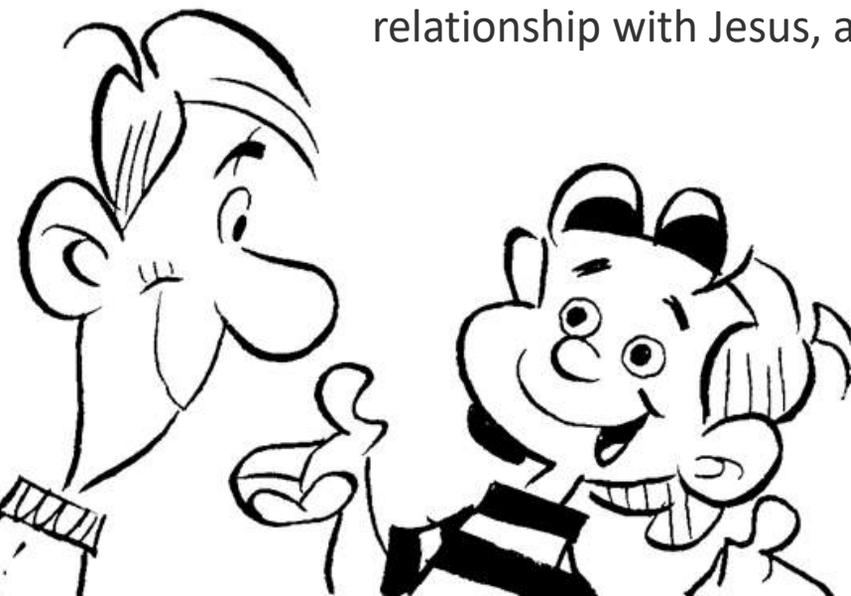
Isaiah 30:21—Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it."

Proverbs 1:23 - I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.



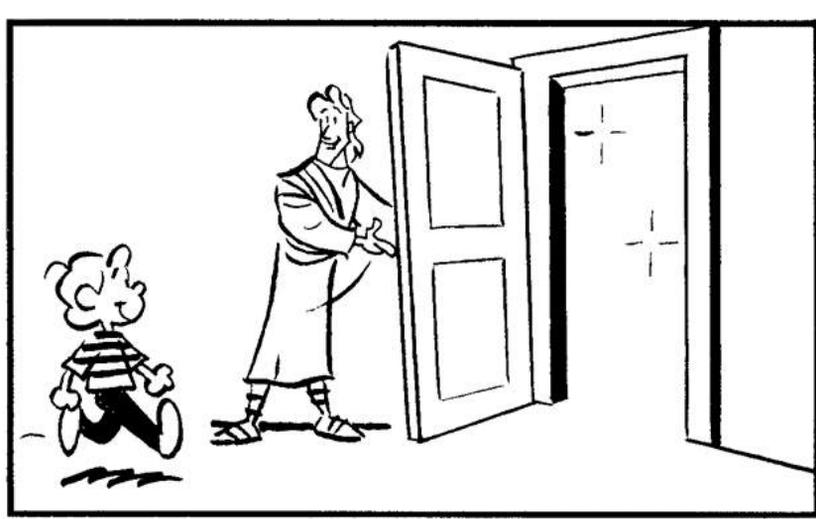
4. Godly counselors

If you want to learn to play the piano, ask an accomplished pianist to teach you. If you want to learn to cook, ask somebody who knows how to cook, whose meals you've enjoyed. If you're trying to find God's will in a situation, ask others who have a strong personal relationship with Jesus, and are wise in His ways.



Proverbs 11:14—In the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Proverbs 15:22—Without counsel, plans go awry, but in the multitude of counselors they are established.



5. Circumstances and conditions

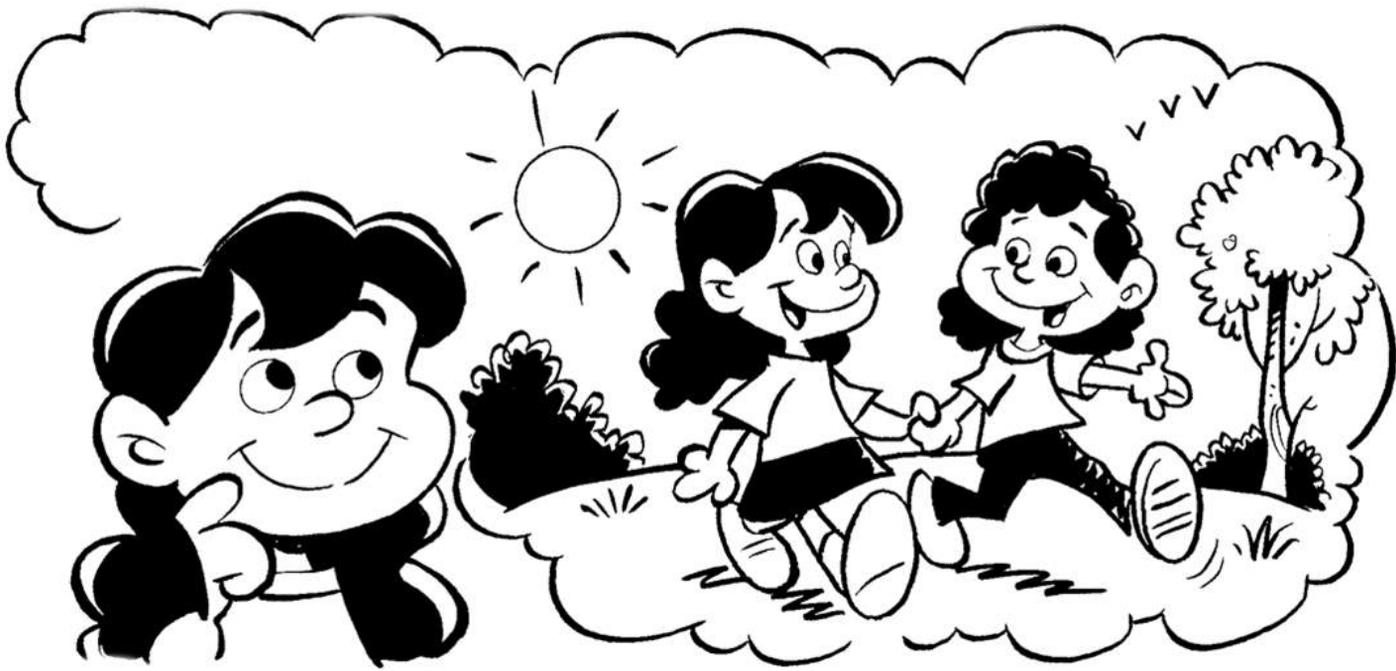
Sometimes obvious circumstances indicate God's leading. Imagine a long hallway lined with doors. Which room are you going to enter? You walk down the hallway knocking on doors and trying the doorknobs. You can only go through the door that opens. If something is God's will, He will usually open a door of opportunity that makes it possible.

2 Corinthians 2:12—[Paul wrote:] Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord. Revelation 3:8 - I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it.

6. Strong impressions or desires

When you are pleasing the Lord, He often puts the desire within your heart to do the thing that will make both you and Him happy.

Psalms 37:4 - Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.



If you have a special dream or desire that you want to fulfill in your life, if you're following God, your wishes may very well be within His will. Why not ask Him?—He'll show you what to do! He'll show you what's best!

7. Specific predetermined signs

You can sometimes check or double-check your decision by asking God to give you a specific sign, like Gideon did in the Bible's book of Judges.



Judges 6:36-40 - Gideon said to God, 'I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.' And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water. Then Gideon said to God, 'Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.' And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground"



Let's do it!

May God help us all to not only find His will, but to do it!

John 13:17—If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.



My Plan

From Jesus with Love

I have answers to your questions, solutions to your problems, and insight into the situations you encounter.

When you ask for My guidance, I will give it. “If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me.” (Jeremiah 29:13)

I understand your needs and desires. I know everything about you. The more you learn to seek and follow My plan for your life, the more you will find lasting fulfillment.

www.freekidstories.org

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