

LESSON 1

# SHIPS

## OF THE BIBLE



**ship**

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*scip* / cut

– **ship**

---

– *scipe* / shape

**A relationship is  
a connection between  
one person and  
another.**

# **Ships of the Bible**

**THE  
ARK**

A picture of God's  
salvation

# **Ships of the Bible**

## **THE FISHING BOATS**

- A Picture of Outreach
- A Teaching Platform
- A Place to See Christ's Power
- A Refuge to Leave Behind

# **Ships of the Bible**

## **THE SHIP TO TARSHISH**

When a ship carries us away from God, sometimes we should jump ship and trust Him.

# **Ships of the Bible**

**THE  
PRISON  
SHIP**

God works through  
shipwrecks.

**God can use both  
good ships and bad ships  
for our good.**

**Some people use ships to  
pull us away from God.**

**When our ships sink,  
we can still trust God.**



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LESSON 2

GOD OUR  
**CREATOR**



# The Other Gods

- Ra
  - The sun god
  - Created the other creative gods
  - Sailed his sun-ship
  - Father to the Pharaohs

# The Other Gods

- Baal
  - Word means “lord” or “ruler”
  - Generic god with many forms
  - Often the god of storms and/or fertility

**What if we knew  
Someone better?**

DESCRIBING  
**JEHOVAH**

Yahweh

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Jehovah

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**I AM**

# God Is **Powerful**

- He calls Himself **Almighty** (Gen. 17:1).
- He **sees** everything  
(Ps. 139; Prov. 15:3).
- He **knows** everything  
(Ps. 33:13–15; Heb. 4:12–13).
- He **created** the universe and gave  
humanity His image (Gen. 1).

# God Is Holy

- Our Perfect God (1 John 1:5)

**Sin is the rejection of  
God and His goodness.**

# God Is Holy

- Our Perfect God (1 John 1:5)
- Our Exalted God (Isa. 6)

**God Is Good**

PICTURES OF  
**GOD'S CARE**

**A Shepherd**

Psalm 23

**A Rock**

2 Samuel 22:3

# A Bear, a Lion, and a Hen

Hosea 13:4–8;  
Matthew 23:37

**Our Rescuer**

2 Timothy 4:18

**God's goodness should  
be the model for all our  
relationships.**



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LESSON 3

GOD OUR  
**SAVIOR**



**A messiah is an  
“anointed one”—  
someone chosen to fulfill  
a special purpose.**

**God's promised  
Messiah is  
Jesus.**

# The Messiah

- His Purpose

**Jesus came to Earth to  
connect us back to God.**

# The Messiah

- His Purpose
- His Identity

**We call Jesus the  
“Son of God” because He  
is of the same essence as  
God.**

# The Messiah

- His Purpose
- His Identity
- His Ministry
  - Teaching God's Truth
  - Teaching God's Love

# The Messiah

- His Purpose
- His Identity
- His Ministry
- His Sacrifice

THE GOSPEL  
**OF CHRIST**

We are lost and powerless  
in our sin.

We deserve death, judgment,  
and separation from God.

But Jesus died  
to pay for our sin,  
and He rose to show  
His power over death.

If we trust Jesus  
as our Lord and Savior,  
God will forgive our sin  
and consider us as righteous  
as Christ.

We don't need to fear  
the penalty for our sin.

We can now be  
holy and acceptable to God.

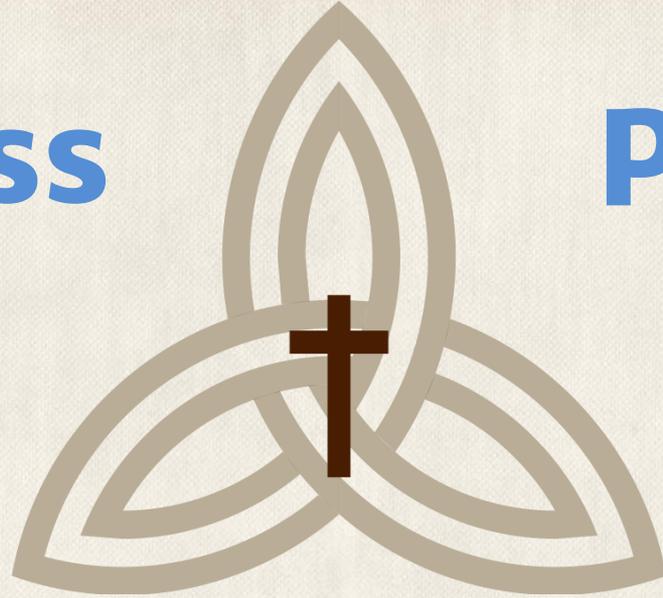
**THE GOD**  
OF THE GOSPEL

**Holiness**



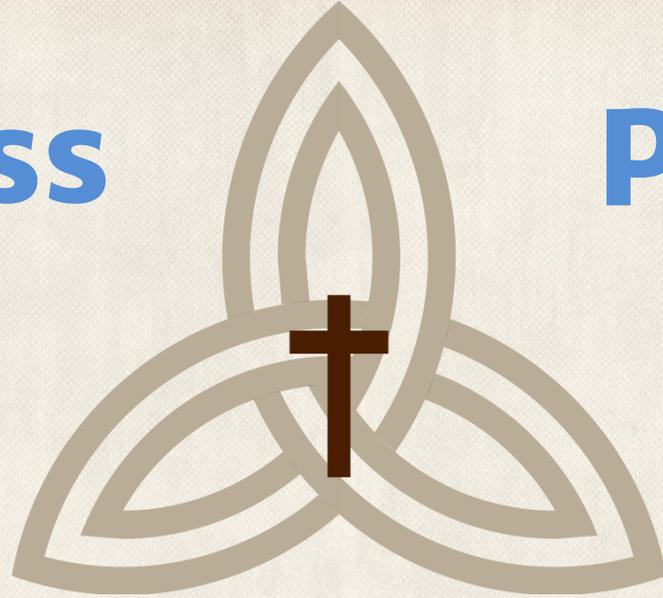
**Holiness**

**Power**



**Holiness**

**Power**



**Love**



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LESSON 4

GOD OUR  
**SUSTAINER**



APPEARANCES OF THE  
**HOLY SPIRIT**  
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

# THE MAJESTIC PLURAL

“Let **us** make . . .”  
(Gen. 1:26)

# Appearances of the Holy Spirit

- In the **Life of Christ**
  - The **Virgin Birth** (Matt. 1:18)
  - The **Baptism** (Matt. 3:13–17)

# Appearances of the Holy Spirit

- At Pentecost (Acts 2:1–5)

# **THE ROLE**

## OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

# The Holy Spirit as a Person

- He has emotion.
- He has thoughts and an intellect.
- He has a will.
- He spoke directly to believers.

# The Role of the Holy Spirit

- Our **Guide** (John 14:26)

God guides us with  
wisdom and care.

# The Role of the Holy Spirit

- Our **Guide** (John 14:26)
- Our **Caretaker** (Gal. 5:16–26)

**THE FRUIT**  
OF THE SPIRIT

# The Role of the Holy Spirit

- Our **Guide** (John 14:26)
- Our **Caretaker** (Gal. 5:16–26)
- Our **Seal** (Eph. 1:13–14)

He will uphold our faith  
until we cannot possibly  
doubt Him.



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LESSON 5

REFLECTING  
**GOD'S LOVE**



# **A New Commandment:**

Love each other  
as Christ loved you.

ALL MINISTRY IS  
**WORTHLESS**  
WITHOUT LOVE

**Love is the decision  
to reflect God's goodness  
to others.**

WHAT LOVE  
**IS NOT**

**Love is not a feeling.**

**Love is not a god.**

**Love is not lust.**

**Lust is the desire to possess something regardless of the hurt it may cause others— including oneself.**

**Love is not abuse.**

**Abuse is using something  
for a hurtful purpose  
that its maker  
did not intend.**

# The Perfect Example

- God—The Origin of Love
- God—The Personification of Love

# Self-existence

God loved us **before the foundation of the world**—  
and not for anything we did.  
(Eph. 1:4)

# Eternality

God will love us **forever**.  
(Ps. 100:5)

# Justice and Righteousness

God's love is true, equitable,  
and **offered to all.**

(Ps. 116:5; John 3:16)

# Infinity

God's love is **great** and  
**boundless.**

(Eph. 2:4–7)

# Holiness

God's love is **spotlessly  
pure.**

(1 John 1:5–9)

# Omniscience

God loves us despite His  
**perfect knowledge of our  
sin.**

(Ps. 139:1–6; Rom. 5:8)

# Omnipresence

God's love **can reach us**  
**anywhere** we go.

(Ps. 139:7–10)

# Omnipotence

**Nothing can separate us  
from God's love.  
(Rom. 8:31–39)**

# **Mercy and Grace**

He loves us **not because of anything we have done.**

(Titus 3:5)

# Immutability

God's love **never changes.**  
(Ps. 136; Jer. 31:3)

We find the clearest  
expression of love  
in the Person of  
**Jesus Christ**



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LESSON 6

# REFLECTING GOD'S TRUTH



THE TRUTH  
**OF CHRIST**

# The Living Word

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word **was with** God,  
and the Word **was** God.

# The Path to **Salvation**

# Our Freedom

- From Sin and the Law
- To Love and Serve
- To Know and Worship God
- To Become like Christ

REFLECTING  
**THE TRUTH**

# Study the Truth

- Dive into God's Word, and study His character and work
- Study what God says about you
- Study God's truth in science and culture

**Live the Truth**

**Share the Truth**

The highest truth reflects  
the character and work  
of God.



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LESSON 7

# FAMILY AND THE HOME



ENVIRONMENT

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**Home is the environment  
for the relationships we  
build with our family.**

**What should  
the home be?**

# A Place of Care

# A Place of Security

**DANGERS**  
INSIDE AND OUTSIDE  
**THE HOME**

# A Place of Hospitality

# A Place of Growth

# A Place of Hope

**You never have to  
be alone.**



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LESSON 8

THE DUTY OF PARENTS  
**PART 1**



**TO OBEY**  
AND  
**TO HONOR**

# **THE NATURE**

OF GODLY PARENTAL LOVE

**It's Representative**

**How do parents and  
guardians impact our  
idea of God?**

**It's Unconditional**

**It's** **Asymmetrical**

**It's Wise**

# **THE FORM**

OF GODLY PARENTAL LOVE

# Provision

Even imperfect  
parents want to give  
good things to their  
children.

# Protection

Godly parents keep their children from corruption and serious danger.

**How much protection  
is too much?**

# Preparation

Godly parents help their children grow into godly, mature adults.

Nurture gratitude  
for the good that your  
parents or guardians  
provide you.



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LESSON 9

THE DUTY OF PARENTS  
**PART 2**



**INSTRUCTION**

# Theology

A parent must teach  
God's character—by  
word and by deed.

# Remembrance

A parent must teach  
the works of God.

# Everything Else

A parent sorts,  
prioritizes, and shares  
the most helpful truth  
for their children.

**DISCIPLINE**

**Discipline is wisdom  
applied to everyday  
activity.**

**Disciplined Feeling**

**FEELINGS ARE NOT OUR ENEMY.**

THEY ARE THE  
**BATTLEGROUND.**

# Disciplined Thought

# Disciplined Action

DISCIPLINE  
**IS NOT**  
MOTIVATION

**THE TOOLS**  
OF DISCIPLINE

# Personal Example

The best way to  
teach truth is to be  
truth.

# Words

Parents should encourage  
and challenge their  
children.

# Consequences

Parents use punishment and reward to teach children about life's true consequences.

Punishment should be careful, firm, and loving.

It should not discourage a child's walk with God.

Rewards celebrate good.

They should match  
privilege with  
responsibility.

**Ask God to help you  
understand and  
appreciate His work  
through your family.**



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LESSON 10

THE ROLE OF CHILDREN:  
**PART 1**



**Obedience is choosing to  
submit your own will to  
another.**

**Honor is giving a person  
all due respect, despite  
their failures.**

**Why honor  
and obey?**

**God Commands Us  
to Do So**

**It's Practical**

# It's Good Preparation

- We Learn When to Trust
- We Learn How to Resolve Conflict

**We Must Reflect Christ**

**FORM**  
AND  
**APPLICATION**

**Obedience and honor  
involve submission.**

# Obedience is not . . .

- Breaking your will
- Giving up your identity
- Mindlessly following someone else

**Obedience and honor  
involve trust.**

**Obedience and honor  
support the home.**

# Two Warnings

- We can't support our parents entirely.
- We must submit first to God.

Treasure the good  
in their legacy.



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LESSON 11

THE ROLE OF CHILDREN:  
**PART 2**



**UNDERSTANDING**  
YOUR PARENTS

**They're Human**

**They're More Experienced**

**They Hurt, and They Fear**

True wisdom grows  
from a fear of God.

**They're Not God,  
and God Is Not Them**

SUPPORTING  
**YOUR PARENTS**  
BEYOND THE HOME

If we marry, how should we  
“separate” from our parents?

# Honor

As adults, we must  
still honor our  
parents.

**Respect the good that  
God gave you through  
them.**

**Learn from their  
mistakes.**

**Do not overreact  
to their failures.**

Don't become a copy.  
Don't become a rebel.

**Instead, build your life  
around Christ.**

# Physical Care

Your parents may need you more in the future.

# Friendship

Over time, you and your parents may relate over shared experiences.

# Other Responsibilities

Supporting your family requires loyalty, patience, wisdom, and love.



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LESSON 12

WHY  
**FRIENDSHIP?**



**THE NEED**  
FOR FRIENDSHIP

# **TRANSACTIONAL** RELATIONSHIPS

**Our friends are the  
people with whom we  
share goodness.**

Friendship is  
another form of

**LOVE**

# Fun

We often spend time with people simply because we enjoy their company.

# Support

We can help friends  
when they struggle.

# Community

We find belonging with Christians from different backgrounds—but are all God's children.

# Growth and Development

We can learn from  
wiser, more mature  
friends.

How can friends  
**sharpen** each other?

**THE TYPES**  
OF FRIENDSHIP

# Acquaintances

- **Number:** 100
- **Interaction:** Superficial, mainly about light, positive topics
- **Dependency:** Low

# Good Friends

- **Number:** 20–50
- **Interaction:** Some depth, with the possibility of encouragement and correction
- **Dependency:** Medium

# Close Friends

- **Number:** 10
- **Interaction:** More vulnerability, with emotional depth and intimacy
- **Dependency:** High, with emotional distress if separated

# Best Friends

- **Number:** 1–3
- **Interaction:** Absolute vulnerability and intimacy; often in marriage
- **Dependency:** Extreme; critical

# The Purpose of Friendship

- A good friendship will reflect God's love and truth
- It will celebrate His character and work.
- It will help bring His children closer to Him.



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LESSON 13

# CHOOSING **FRIENDS**



HOW FRIENDSHIPS  
**HAPPEN**

# Through Proximity

Ex: Adam and Eve

# **Through Necessity**

Ex: Daniel and his friends

# **Through Commonality**

Ex: Deborah and Barak;  
Paul and Barnabas

# Through Attraction

Ex: Ruth and Boaz

**OUR CHOICE  
OF FRIENDS**

What kind of person  
should we **not** rely on?

# **Who Not to Choose**

## The Violent

**Who Not to Choose**

The Angry

**Who Not to Choose**

The Addicted

Stimulants

---

Depressants

---

Hallucinogens

# **Who Not to Choose**

## The Foolish

**Who Not to Choose**

The Mocking

**Why do we want  
close friendships  
with bad friends?**

# Who to Choose

We choose friends that  
encourage our walk  
with our greatest  
Friend.



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LESSON 14

BUILDING  
**FRIENDSHIPS**  
PART 1



BEING  
**FRIENDLY**

**We Must Love**

**We Must Trust**

**We Must Accept**

Do not mock someone  
looking for help.

**We Must Reach Out**

We can't call ourselves  
friendly if all our  
friendships are accidental.

**We Must Serve**

**We Must**  
**Remain Loyal**

THE VALUE OF  
**SOLITUDE**

# **Silence helps us consider**

- Where we are
- What God is doing
- Where we're going

FIGHTING  
**LONELINESS**

LONELINESS

≠

BEING ALONE

**Spend more time with  
your closest Friend.**

**Find ways to  
guide your thoughts.**

# **Disciplining Thought**

Take a walk in a  
place with fresh air  
and greenery.

# **Disciplining Thought**

Do something quiet  
and enjoyable that  
helps your mind stay  
in the moment.

# **Disciplining Thought**

Read, re-read, and  
memorize passages  
of Scripture.

# **Disciplining Thought**

Keep a small, private notebook in which to write your thoughts.

**Build deeper friendships  
with good, safe people.**



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LESSON 15

BUILDING  
**FRIENDSHIPS**  
PART 2



LEARN HOW TO  
**LISTEN**

**Why should we listen?**

# Listening Well

Watch Your Body  
Language

**What non-verbal signals  
are helpful?**

# Listening Well

Focus

# Listening Well

Don't Get Defensive

# **Listening Well**

Ask Questions

# Listening Well

Re-State Their Views

# Listening Well

Agree to Disagree

LEARN HOW TO  
**ENCOURAGE**

# Encouraging Well

Show an **Interest** in  
Them

**Encouraging Well**

**Identify** with Them

**Encouraging Well**

Edify Them

A FEW  
**REMINDERS**

**Friendships Take Effort**

**Friendships Need a Little  
Space from Time to Time**

**Friendships Can Change**



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LESSON 16

# DESTROYING **FRIENDSHIPS**



# A Picture of Love

- 1 Corinthians 13
- John 13:35

A PICTURE  
**WITHOUT LOVE**

**What's the opposite  
of love?**

**Hate** despises others—it  
refuses to see the image  
of God in them.

**Selfishness** seeks good  
only for itself.

# **Useless Ministry**

(1 Cor. 13:1–3)

**What good is skill,  
privilege, or sacrifice  
without love?**

**FUNCTION**  
**VS.**  
**PURPOSE**

**Function** is what our  
work accomplishes here  
on Earth. It's the  
immediate result of our  
effort.

**Purpose** is what  
motivates us. It's the  
mission that animates  
and drives us.

# Functions of Friendship

- Companionship
- Having fun
- Support and survival
- . . . and much more

The highest purpose  
for all relationships  
is to reflect the  
**love and truth of God.**

If we rely on Christ,  
we will fulfill our  
purpose—even if every  
function fails.

# **Self-Centered Friendship**

(1 Cor. 13:4-8)

**I'm impatient.**

**I'm mean-spirited,  
hurtful, and critical.**

**I'm envious,  
yet I'm also boastful,  
arrogant, and rude.**

**I insist on my way.**

**I'm short-tempered.**

**I assume the worst  
in you.**

**I love to see others sin—  
because I can't stand  
the truth.**

**I shirk my  
responsibilities.**

**I reject and disbelieve  
others.**

**I'm negative,  
demeaning, and  
downhearted.**

**When you need  
me the most,  
you won't find me.**

**This kind of love  
will stop one day.**



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LESSON 17

HEALING  
**FRIENDSHIPS**



**FORGIVENESS**

# **The Foundation (Matt. 18:1–14)**

We reach out to others  
because God reached out to  
us.

# The Process (Matt. 18:15–20)

**Attempt 1:** Try to resolve the issue with the person **privately** (v. 15).

# The Process (Matt. 18:15–20)

**Attempt 2:** Try to resolve the issue again, but with one or two **witnesses** present (v. 16).

# The Process (Matt. 18:15–20)

**Attempt 3:** Tell the church about the offense, and let the assembly address the person (v.17).

# The Process (Matt. 18:15–20)

**Attempt 4:** Treat the person as if he or she were an **unbeliever** (v.17)

A FEW  
**REMINDERS**

**Be Humble**

**Don't Take Offense  
Too Easily**

**Externalize the Problem  
and Treasure the Person**

**Prevent Further Harm**



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LESSON 18

**CHRIST**  
AND HIS  
**CHURCH**



# Don't Forget

- Lordship
- Kinship
- Friendship

BUILDING  
**HIS CHURCH**

Christ Builds His Church  
**On This Rock**

You are **Petros**,  
and upon this **Petra**  
I will build my church . . .

No one should claim the authority, inerrancy, and pre-eminence of Christ.

Christ Builds His Church  
**With His Death**

Christ Builds His Church  
**To Make Us His Children**

We are no longer  
slaves to sin,  
but **children of God**,  
and therefore His heirs.

Christ Builds His Church  
**For His Glory**

TYPES OF  
**CHURCH**

We say “church” to mean  
**a building**

We say “church” to mean  
**the universal body of  
Christ**

We say “church” to mean  
**the local assembly of  
believers**

WHY THE  
**CHURCH**  
EXISTS

The Purpose:  
**To Glorify God**

The Function:  
**To Make  
Disciples of  
Christ**



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LESSON 19

THE WORK OF  
**THE ASSEMBLY**



PRINCIPLE  
**vs.**  
APPLICATION

How can the assembly  
**magnify God?**

# Bible Study

We ground ourselves  
in the Word, which  
helps us grow closer  
to God.

# Prayer

Together we talk with God, not as a show of pride, but to praise Him and depend on Him.

# O.T. Rituals Taught . . .

- God is absolutely, completely holy.
- Humans are broken, sinful creatures.
- Therefore, we need a Savior.

Christ became the  
ultimate sacrifice, and so  
fulfilled the Law.

# Ordinances

## Baptism

Using a public symbol, we testify that the Holy Spirit has placed us in the universal body of believers.

# Ordinances

## Communion

We fellowship over food that reminds us of Christ's sacrifice.

# Outreach

We reach and disciple people to be followers of God.

# **Fellowship and Support**

## **Public Remembrance**

We commemorate

God's work in our lives.

# Fellowship and Support

## Rites of Passage

We mark changes in our lives by re-affirming the eternal, unchanging grace of God.

# Fellowship and Support

## Charity

We reach out to the sick,  
the poor, the lost, the  
forsaken, and the broken.

# Fellowship and Support

## Financial Support for Ministry

We support and honor those who teach God's truth well.



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LESSON 20

THREATS TO  
**THE ASSEMBLY**



# **Persecution**

Groups have opposed believers, but God will preserve His church from extinction.

THREATS  
**WITHIN**

THE DENIAL OF  
**CHRIST**

# **The Denial of Christ**

Denying His Deity

# The Denial of Christ

Denying His  
Humanity

# The Denial of Christ

Denying His Work

# **Misunderstanding Liberty and Grace**

**Disunity**

# Desire for Wealth

# Focus Drift

As an assembly,  
we should both  
**reach out** and **lift up**.

# Our Response

- Trust God.
- Love others.
- Keep in the Word.



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LESSON 21

# SCHOLARSHIP



**What does God care  
about my mind?**

**He asks us to know Him.**

- He asks us to recognize Him as Lord and Messiah.
- He asks us to view others in love, kindness, and compassion.
- He asks us to think, consider, study, and compare.
- He asks us to teach what we learn to others.
- He asks us to use our gifts for His glory.

**He asks us to love Him.**

# What and How We Think Affects

- Our actions and attitudes right now
- Our feelings and emotions over time

ON  
**FOOLISH**  
THINGS

# 1 Corinthians 1:27

- God uses **weak** things against the strong.
- God uses **foolish** things against the wise.

EXAMPLES OF  
**SCHOLARSHIP**

# Moses

(cf. Heb. 11:23–29)

# Skilled Artisans

(cf. Exo. 35:30–35)

# David

(cf. Ps. 119:97)

# Others

- Deborah
- Solomon
- Daniel
- Esther
- Nehemiah
- Gospel writers
- Aquila & Priscilla
- Christ Himself

**CHURCH CHALLENGES**  
THAT REQUIRE  
**SCHOLARSHIP**

# Understanding Scripture

## Theology

What can I see of God's character and work?

# Understanding Scripture

## Context

What was originally  
meant by this passage?

# Examining Context

- Note the author's background.
- Study the cultural and historical context.
- Reference the original language.
- Understand the rhetorical mode.

# Understanding Scripture

## Redemption

What light does the gospel shine on this passage?

# Understanding Scripture

## Application

How should this passage impact the way we think and act?

# Teaching

(James 3:1–2;  
1 Pet. 3:14–17)

# Teachers must know how to

- **Inspire** different kinds of students
- **Encourage and challenge** students with different strengths and weaknesses
- Show them **loving truth** and **truthful love**

# Service

(John 13:12–17)

Discover,  
learn,  
develop,  
and grow  
**by His grace.**



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LESSON 22

# WORK AND CHARITY



THE MEANING OF  
**WORK**

# Reflecting Our Creative God

# We work to reflect . . .

- The **God** who made Earth and the stars
- The **Great Shepherd** who watched over His people
- The **Great Rabbi** who taught with parables and metaphors
- The **Great Architect** who is building a New Jerusalem

# Preparing for Our Eternal Future

PRINCIPLES OF  
**WORK**

**Work in Submission  
to Christ**

**Work as a Steward**

# Stewardship

- We care about the wellbeing of others, especially those needing special care.
- We do not abuse God's creation, nor do we waste or overtax the land.
- We plan our spending carefully.
- We make the best use of our time.

**Work Hard**

**Work to Care for Others**

Love grants work  
**dignity** and **purpose**,  
even when the work  
seems humble and trivial.

# Caring for Others

Care for Emotional  
Needs

# Emotional Care

- Recognize the blessings God gave us.
- Recognize the image of God in others.
- Listen to people and understand their needs.

# Caring for Others

Care for Physical  
Needs

SERVICE  
**IDEAS**

# Caring for Others

Care for Spiritual  
Needs



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LESSON 23

# CIVIL DUTY



THE THEOCRACY OF  
**ISRAEL**

**Theocracy is rule by God.**

# **The Theocracy of Israel**

It Maintained Some  
Justice

# **The Theocracy of Israel**

It Regulated the **Army**

# **The Theocracy of Israel**

It Regulated **Worship**

# **The Theocracy of Israel**

It Helped the **Needy**

# The Law gave Israelites . . .

- Equal legal standing, whether rich or poor
- A limit on debts
- A reset of all debts every seven years
- Opportunities to work, even for those not tied to a household

THE AGE OF  
**GRACE**

Christ alone will establish  
a perfect kingdom.

# **Civil Context of the Early Church**

They Were **Diverse**

# **Civil Context of the Early Church**

They Were a **Minority**

# **Civil Context of the Early Church**

They Were **Persecuted**

Despite the challenges facing  
the early church, God used  
those believers to spread His  
gospel across the world.

TEACHINGS ON  
**CIVIL DUTY**

# Taxation (Matt. 22)

We give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar.

We give to God what belongs to God.

# **Conscription / Military Service**

## **Matthew 8:5–13**

Jesus commended the faith of a centurion.

# Conscription / Military Service

## Luke 3:14

John warned soldiers not to use their position to harm or to extort.

# Conscription / Military Service

## Matthew 5:38–42

If pressed into service, we can redeem the situation by showing others the love of God.

# Prayer

## 1 Timothy 2:1–3

We should pray and give thanks for all people, including kings and other civil authorities.

Remember—we are **pilgrims**.

No government can  
offer us ultimate security,  
and some people will  
always oppose us.



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LESSON 24

# GENDER AND **THE GOSPEL**



For the purposes of this study, **courtship** is the relationship leading up to marriage.

GENDER IN THE  
**BEGINNING**

THE CREATION OF  
**MAN** AND **WOMAN**

Both man and woman  
bore God's image,  
and together they  
reflected Him  
**even better.**

DEFINING  
**SEX** AND **GENDER**

**Sex**, as a designation, is the division of people into male or female categories.

As a species, humans are  
**sexually dimorphic.**

Some people are **intersex**,  
meaning their anatomy  
doesn't exactly match  
either male or female  
norms.

**Gender** is the cultural  
expression of our sex  
designation.

# **SEX** *VS.* **GENDER**

PERFECT  
**FELLOWSHIP**

Gender differences  
**spark** and **focus** our desire.

Our spouse's gender helps us  
understand what God called  
“good” in the garden.

GENDER  
**CORRUPTED**  
BY THE FALL

**Because of sin, we face**

## **Hard Labor**

Men would toil through difficult and often fruitless work, just to survive (3:17–18).

**Because of sin, we face**

**Suffering**

Women would endure  
difficult childbirth (3:16).

**Because of sin, we face**

## **Conflict**

Men and women would  
try to dominate each  
other (3:16).

# Because of sin, we face

## Death

This fate would curse their lives until they returned to dust (3:19).

The curse created a  
**gender gap**—a cultural  
chasm between  
men and women.

**How far does  
the curse reach?**

**GENDER**

IN LIGHT OF

**THE GOSPEL**

# Christ's Ministry Across Barriers

- He pointed back to **God's ideal** for marriage.
- He taught that **unmarried people have a place** in God's kingdom.
- He reached **across cultural barriers** to teach and serve women.

# **Our Perspective as Believers**

Men and Women Are  
Different

Marriage as  
a **cultural bridge**

# **Our Perspective as Believers**

Men and Women Are  
Unique

Neither **virtue** nor **vice** is  
gender-specific.

Enjoy and celebrate  
your spouse for  
**who they really are.**

# **Our Perspective as Believers**

Men and Women Are  
Unified in Christ

**OUR REDEMPTION**  
FROM THE  
**CURSE**

**Through Christ, we can have**

**Purpose**

Our labor on Earth is no  
longer futile  
(1 Cor. 15:58).

# Through Christ, we can have

## Hope

God sent us His Messiah through childbirth, and children are not born into a hopeless world (cf. 1 Tim. 2:13–15).

# Through Christ, we can have

## Unity

Men and women are one in Christ (John 17:21; Gal. 3:23–29). Gender may create barriers between people, but not between believers and God.

**Through Christ, we can have**

**New Life**

Death has lost its sting  
(1 Cor. 15:55). We can live  
forever with God.

# Our differences are

- Significant, helpful, and good
- Not uniform across all men and women
- Not crucial or vital to our spiritual identity



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LESSON 25

BUILDING A  
**GODLY MARRIAGE**  
PART 1



**CHRIST**  
AND THE PHARISEES'  
**QUESTION**

# The Question (v. 3)

Is it lawful for a man  
to divorce his wife  
for any reason?

# The Answer (vv. 4–6)

God made Adam and Eve male and female, two people who would become **one flesh**.

What God joins together should not be torn apart.

# The Justification (vv. 7–9)

God allowed divorce because of the hardness of people's hearts.

Anyone who breaks this bond and marries another—except in marriage broken by immorality—commits adultery.

# The Implications (vv. 10–12)

This teaching is difficult,  
but those who can receive  
it should do so.

DEFINING A  
**GODLY MARRIAGE**

# The Purpose of Marriage

A godly marriage exists to reflect the love and truth of God.

Our marriages should show the grace, unity, and support that Christ offers to His church.

# **As spouses, we . . .**

- Submit our needs to each other
- Sacrifice for each other
- Build up each other
- Point each other back to God

# The Form of Marriage

Ideally, marriage exists as an exchange of vows between a man and a woman.

A **vow** is an unbreakable  
promise made by a person  
with an informed, free will.

Governments and cultures  
may define marriage  
differently.

A **civil marriage** is an  
economic and sexual union  
endorsed by a community.

# The Form of Marriage

A vow can lay the foundation for **security** and **intimacy**, and it reflects the enduring **love of Christ**.

# The Form of Marriage

Marriage can form an **existential** bond—one that changes how we think about our identity.

# **The Functions of Marriage**

- Support and Companionship
- The Perpetuation of Society

Even if a marriage  
does not always  
meet these functions,  
it can still fulfill  
**God's purpose.**

THE COMBINED  
**DEFINITION**

# Marriage is ideally . . .

- An exchange of **vows** between a **man and woman**
- To reflect God's **love and truth** to each other
- Thereby forming an **existential** bond
- That can often **support** both spouses
- While also perpetuating **society**



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LESSON 26

BUILDING A  
**GODLY MARRIAGE**  
PART 2



# Review from Lesson 25

The **purpose** of marriage is to reflect God's love and truth.

# Review from Lesson 25

Marriage takes its truest **form** as an exchange of vows between a man and woman.

# Review from Lesson 25

The **function** of marriage is to provide support, companionship, and the best means to perpetuate society.

WHAT MARRIAGE  
**ISN'T**

**Marriage isn't  
a solution to  
all your problems**

When is marriage  
**not** the best idea?

**Marriage isn't  
for everyone**

**Marriage isn't**  
**the only way to love**

Don't judge everyone by  
whether you'd date them.

Treat every believer  
as your brother or sister  
in Christ.

**THE FOUNDATION**  
OF A  
**GODLY MARRIAGE**

**Submit your  
marriage to God**

Any good thing  
can lead us astray  
unless we submit it  
to God.

**Love each other**

Give thanks to God, and  
submit to each other out  
of reverence for Him  
(cf. Eph. 5:18–21).

**Understand** each other

# **Strong marriages will build a community where . . .**

- The voices of both men and women are appreciated
- Neither side shouts down the other
- Both sides celebrate how everyone can reflect our shared values—though sometimes in different ways

True intimacy involves  
sharing every part of you.

- Submit your marriage to God.
- Love your spouse—submit your needs to them.
- Understand your spouse—be intimate, and draw close together.



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LESSON 27

# INTIMACY

PART 1



# **Review from Lesson 26**

We submit our marriage  
**to God.**

# Review from Lesson 26

We **love** our spouses and submit our needs to theirs.

# Review from Lesson 26

We are intimate with our spouses—we seek to **understand** them better.

AREAS OF  
**INTIMACY**

# **Our** Spiritual Growth

What keeps us from  
sharing our spiritual life?

# Our Emotions

**OLD TESTAMENT LAW  
AND  
MARITAL DUTY**

# **Our Time, Energy, and Interests**

**AQUILA**  
AND  
**PRISCILLA**

# **Our Dreams and Goals**

**ISAAC**  
AND  
**REBEKAH**

# **Our Physical Affection**

**SOLOMON**  
AND  
**THE SHULAMITE**

ENCOURAGING  
**INTIMACY**

Find someone with whom  
you can share all of  
yourself.

Intimacy celebrates truth.



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LESSON 28

# INTIMACY

PART 2



# Imbalanced Outlooks

Sex is  
**everything.**

Sex is  
**shameful.**

THE  
**DEFINITIONS**

**Sexual activity** includes the acts by which people express physical attraction toward each other.

**Sexuality** is our capacity  
to express sexual desire  
and respond to sexual  
activity.

THE  
**PURPOSE**

# **The Purpose**

Sexual activity must be an expression of loving intimacy.

# The Purpose

Sexual activity is the physical dimension of the **one-flesh** relationship.

# The Purpose

We should focus our sexual desire on **our spouse.**

# The Purpose

We do not use our spouse to enjoy sex. Rather, a husband and wife should express their sexuality to enjoy each other.

# The Functions

- Procreation
- Pleasure

Show **gentle love**  
and **gentle truth.**

THE  
**CONTEXT**

# **TOUCH** AND **CHOICE**

# Privacy

Spouses show care for each other by helping conceal each other's sexual activity—not because it's bad or shameful, but because it's meant only for each other.

# Fidelity

Intimacy grows through commitment. Spouses should not have reason to worry about future betrayal.

# Safety and Trust

Spouses should convince each other that they can be vulnerable together.

# Cooperation

The fundamental expression of intimacy is sharing. This is complete openness and oneness on all levels.

To encourage this context,  
God designed sexual activity  
to take place only within  
a loving, intimate marriage.

THE  
**COMMITMENT**

# Our sexuality can be harmed when

- People **abuse or demean us**, whether physically or emotionally
- People **tear away from us** after we've tried to be vulnerable and intimate
- We are exposed to **unhealthy, sexually-charged situations** that distort our thinking about sex

God can redeem and heal us.

Our scars need not prevent us  
from reflecting His grace or  
enjoying healthy intimacy.

# The Commitment

We assure our spouse  
that we will love and  
accept all of them.

# The Commitment

We assure our spouse that we will not force them to do what they should not do—or do not want to do.

# The Commitment

We assure our spouse  
that they can open up  
to us completely.

# The Commitment

We assure our spouse  
that we want to attune  
our sexuality to theirs.



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LESSON 29

# SEEKING A SPOUSE

PART 1



What are the priorities of  
an unmarried believer?

**Pursue God**

God will uplift us  
**before, during, and after**  
any marriage.

**Pursue God's  
Purpose for You**

**SINGLENES**  
AND  
**FLEXIBILITY**

# **Pursue Good Relationships**

How can godly family  
and friends prepare us  
for courtship?

PREPARE FOR  
**INTIMACY**

# **Prepare for Intimacy**

Cherish Your  
Relationship with  
God

# Manipulative people often begin relationships by . . .

- **Isolating** a person
- Making that person feel **ungodly shame** so that they're grateful for the manipulator's "help"
- Making that person **dependent** in an unhealthy way

# **Prepare for Intimacy**

Appreciate  
Commitment

# **Prepare for Intimacy**

Explore Your  
Emotions

# **Prepare for Intimacy**

Discipline Your  
Sexuality

Do not submit to lust.

Rather, exercise your body  
with **honor, dignity,** and  
**holiness.**

# **Prepare for Intimacy**

Learn to

Communicate

APPROACHES TO  
**COURTSHIP**

# The **Systems** Approach

# General Courtship Systems

- Arranged Marriage
- Ritualized Courtship
- Recreational Dating
- Animalism

# The Principles Approach

Does Scripture give us a  
specific system?



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LESSON 30

# SEEKING A SPOUSE

## PART 2



**COURTSHIP**  
IN A  
**HOSTILE CULTURE**

BUILDING  
**INTIMACY**

**Reflect Love and Truth  
First**

How do we handle  
differing expectations?

**Ask God to Direct  
Your Attention**

# Directing Your Attention

To a person that God  
is growing

# We watch out for . . .

- An **angry outlook** or spirit
- **Bitterness**—either a refusal to acknowledge hurt or to seek God's grace
- A **constant disrespect** for the views of others
- A **lack of discipline** or self-control
- Anything else that **violates our trust** and sense of security

# Directing Your Attention

To a person who  
supports good  
relationships with your  
family and friends

# Directing Your Attention

To a person who has shown that he or she is ready for the responsibilities of godly, mature adulthood

**Seek the Other Person  
in Love**

# Seeking in Love

Seek the Person's

Good Above All Else

# Seeking in Love

Be Honest About  
Your **Interest**

# Seeking in Love

Accept Rejection

How do people pressure  
others into a relationship?

# Seeking in Love

Navigate Cultural  
Expectations

What cultural expectations  
are unhelpful?

# Seeking in Love

Love Your Future In-  
Laws

**Learn About Each Other**

How can we make dates  
meaningful?

What is **success** for a dating relationship?

**Build Up Each Other**

**Guard Each Other**

THE ROOTS OF  
**LUST**

**Marry Each Other**

Follow God's will for you  
now, and He will continue  
to guide you.



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