

Bible Correspondence Fellowship



FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

Lesson 1

Dear student,

Congratulations on completing the Introductory set of lessons. Right now your own spiritual growth and Christian walk are being strengthened by your willingness to study God's Word. I believe you will truly be blessed by your continued study.

Enclosed with this letter you will find the first lesson from our Foundations of Faith Bible study. This Bible study has two lessons. They are designed to be a little more in-depth than the Introductory course and should prepare you for a much more thorough study, Understanding the Bible (UTB), which you will receive after completing both lessons from this set.

By now you should be getting more comfortable looking up passages in the Bible. Starting with UTB you may find references abbreviated. Example: 1 Thes. 2:7b stands for the book of First Thessalonians, chapter two, verse seven; the "b" at the end indicates the latter half of the verse. Some abbreviations are easier than others. Do your best to find the passage, but if you have trouble, don't be afraid to seek help from another Christian brother.

Keep up the good work and may God bless you richly as you remain faithful to Him!

In Him,

Don Sommer

Don Sommer
Executive Director

BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE FELLOWSHIP

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH BIBLE STUDY

(formerly Preparatory Bible Studies)



Session One

This lesson sets forth the basic truth of the gospel in a non-denominational manner. It is designed to direct students toward God's plan for their lives and to encourage fellowship in Christ Jesus.

NOTE: At the beginning of each question will be found a "Scripture address." This address is the chapter and verse in the book of the Bible referred to and will help you in answering the question. For example: John 3:16 refers to the Gospel of St. John, Chapter 3, and Verse 16. Find the correct answer from the verse, and in clear printing, fill in the answer space. You may know of another verse with an answer to a given question; but for this study, the student is requested to follow the references given. If you have any questions about a lesson, feel free to write and ask them.

Determine how to be a noble Berean (Acts 17:10,11). "They (the Bereans) heard the Word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily to see if the things which he (the apostle Paul) said were true."

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15)."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16)."

NOTE: Be sure to pray, asking God to open your eyes toward understanding. The apostle Paul prayed for the believers in Colossae and Ephesus. We can make these prayers ours (Ephesians 1:16-18; and Colossians 1:9,10).

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS IN THIS FIRST SECTION ARE FOUND IN ROMANS 3:9-24.

FROM HEAD TO TOE MAN IS A SINNER: THIS IS WHAT IS MEANT BY "TOTAL DEPRAVITY"

1. (Romans 3:10,11) How many are righteous? None
How many are seeking after God? None
2. (Romans 3:13-15) How is the unrighteous man described?
Throat Open sepulcher (KJV), Open Grave (NIV)
Tongue Used or practiced deceit

Lips Poison of Asps or Vipers

Mouth Full of cursing and bitterness

Feet Swift to shed Blood

3. (Romans 3:9-11) Is there anything about the unrighteous man with which God is pleased? Nothing

4. What is man's natural standing before God? (Romans 3:23) _____

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

5. How does the unrighteous man become justified? (Romans 3:24) _____

Freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

THIS NEXT SECTION DEALS WITH EPHESIANS 2:1-3

6. (Ephesians 2:1) In what ways are men dead spiritually? They are "dead in Transgressions and Sins

7. (Ephesians 2:2; 4:27; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 4:4) Who is the "prince of the power of the air"? Satan

8. (Ephesians 2:3) What are men by nature before they are "quickened," or "made alive," in Christ?

Children of wrath

STOP HERE!

We will go on with our study in a moment, but would you stop and consider what the Scripture portions you have just studied say about each of us? We ask you to do this because it is necessary for a person to see his need for a Savior. Have you faced your lost condition? Have you seen your need to receive Christ as your Savior from sin? We pray that your answer is YES!

Read the gospel (good news) in 1 Corinthians 15:1-6, then read Ephesians 1:7 and 2 Corinthians 5:17. Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the price for your sin. Through faith in him, his blood will cleanse you from sin and make you a new creature in Christ.

FOR THIS SECTION WE WILL CONSIDER ROMANS 6:23.

9. A. What is the wages (payment) of sin? Death

B. What is the gift of God? Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord

Death means separation from God - Hell. Eternal Life means to be with God - Heaven.

10. Through whom does the free gift of God come? Christ Jesus
11. Have you received this free gift? _____

FOR THIS SECTION WE WILL CONSIDER 2THESSALONIANS 1:7-11.

12. (2 Thessalonians 1:8) Upon whom will Christ's vengeance come? _____
Those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus
13. (2 Thessalonians 1:9) How long will they be punished? Forever
14. In Verse 9 we read of sinners who shall be punished, while in Verse 10 we read of the blessings to the saints (believers). What was the prayer Paul prayed for the believers in 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12?
That they would be worthy of God's calling and that He would fulfill every good purpose of theirs and every act of faith by His power and that the name of Jesus might be glorified.

FOR THIS SECTION WE WILL CONSIDER ROMANS 5:1-8.

15. (Romans 5:1) What do we have by being justified by faith? Peace with God
16. (Romans 5:2) In what do we rejoice? In the Hope of the glory of God
17. (Romans 5:3) As believers we are to Glory or Rejoice in tribulation or trouble.
18. (Romans 5:3) What does God use to bring about patience? Tribulations or Sufferings
19. (Romans 5:6,8) What was our condition when Christ died for us? We are powerless ungodly sinners

The devil delights in keeping us uncertain about our salvation. God, through His Word, offers positive assurance of salvation and eternal life.

(1 John 5:13) "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

20. 1 John 5:13
- A. To whom was John writing? Those who believe in the name of the Son of God
- B. What was his purpose? That believers might know that they have eternal life

21. 1 John 5:11,12
- A. Who gives eternal life? God
- B. In whom is eternal life found? His Son
- C. Who has eternal life? Those who have the Son
- D. Who does not have eternal life? Those who do not have the Son
22. According to Romans 8:38-39, what can cut us off from Christ's love? Circle the right answer:
- (1) Death (2) Danger
- (3) Supernatural powers (4) Nothing

Session Two

1. Romans 3:9-24 reveals that man is totally depraved; that the LAW has brought condemnation upon sinful man; and that all have sinned and come short of God's glory.
 2. Ephesians 2:1-3 and Ephesians 5:6 describe even further that man by nature is a child of wrath (God's wrath) and spiritually dead. Only Jesus Christ can make a person spiritually alive.
 3. Romans 6:23 tells us that the penalty for sin is death and that God's gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ.
 4. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-12 discloses that mankind can be divided into two classes: those who are destined for God's wrath and those who are destined for God's glory.
 5. Romans 5:1-8 explains how God demonstrated His love toward us while we were still sinners when Christ died in our place, and that we have peace with God through faith in Christ.
 6. Romans 8:35-39 tells us that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
1. (2 Timothy 3:16a) How were the Scriptures given to us? By inspiration of God or God-breathed
2. (2 Peter 1:21b) What is meant by the words, "an inspired Bible"? Holy men were moved or carried by the Holy Spirit
3. (1 Corinthians 2:14) The natural man without the Holy Spirit cannot understand the things of God. Why not? The things of God are foolishness to the natural man, he is unable to understand spiritually
4. How does Romans 8:9 describe the spiritual man? He is controlled by the Holy Spirit of God who lives within him

How does this verse describe the natural man? _____

He is controlled by his sinful nature and does not belong to Christ

5. What must happen for the natural man to become the spiritual man according to John 3:3? _____

He must be born again

6. What happens when the natural man becomes the spiritual man according to 2 Corinthians 5:17? _____

He becomes a new creature or creation

7. To be changed from the natural man to the spiritual man, what does Acts 16:31 say we should do? _____

Believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God

8. What does Romans 10:9 say we must do to be saved? **Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord**
and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead

9. What does John 1:12a say we must do to become “sons of God”? _____

Receive Him and believe in His name

10. (Romans 8:9) Which are you, a spiritual man or a natural man? _____

Answers will vary

READ THE GOSPEL, THE “GOOD NEWS” - 1 Corinthians 15:1-6

11. (2 Corinthians 4:3) From whom is the gospel hidden from? (2 Corinthians 4:3) **Those who are lost or perishing**

12. Who has blinded unbelievers? (2 Cor. 4:4) _____

Satan or the “god of this world”

13. Read 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 and Romans 5:12. _____ (Check)

Who brought sin and death into the world? **Adam the first man**

Why has death been passed on to all men? **Because of sin**

14. (Romans 5:8) How did God show His love for us, even while we were still sinners? _____

Christ died for us

15. (Ephesians 1:17,18) How is God able to open the eyes of your understanding? _____
By giving the spirit of wisdom and revelation
16. (James 1:5) How can we receive wisdom and understanding from God? By asking God for them
17. According to Titus 3:5, can we work to be saved? No. Why did He save us? Because of His mercy
 Through what means did He save us? By the washing and regeneration of the Holy Spirit
18. Read Ephesians 2:8,9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-6; Romans 1:16, and then think about the last few questions you have answered before you answer TRUE or FALSE to the following:
- a. To be saved one must first join a church. True _____ False XX
 - b. To be saved one must first be baptized in water. True _____ False XX
 - c. To be saved one must promise to live a good, clean, moral life. True _____ False XX
 - d. To be saved one must keep the Law of Moses. True _____ False XX
 - e. To be saved one must live by the Golden Rule. True _____ False XX
 - f. To be saved one must believe and receive the Gospel of Christ. True XX False _____

Memory Verse for this lesson: Ephesians 2:8,9 - "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Many people believe that God requires them to be righteous, living a good, moral life before they can be saved. Jesus said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Matthew 9: 13b)." He said this while He was here on earth. Later, from heaven where He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father, He sent word to the Church, the Body of Christ, through Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. He spoke of justification.

19. Romans 5:1) How are we justified? Though faith in Christ Jesus
 What do we have when we are justified? Peace with God though our Lord Christ Jesus
20. (Galatians 2:16) On what basis is it impossible to be justified? By works of or observing the law
21. Read Romans 3:28. What conclusion can be drawn from this verse? _____
That we are justified by faith alone and not by good works or observance of the law

SHARP Or DULL TOOLS?

by Irving D. Larson

“For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword... (Hebrews 4:12).”

One of the problems with a lot of us do-it-yourself carpenters is that we try to do our jobs with tools that are not as sharp as they should be. Any first-class workman knows that a sharp tool is the first step in doing a good job, and also makes the work much easier, and as a result, much more pleasant. I like the story about the big old woodsman who was given a chain saw for the first time, and he cut two cords of firewood with it on his first day out. However, the next day he cut a lot more with it after someone had shown him how to start the engine. Anyone who has ever tried to chop wood soon learns that it is hard to make up with muscle for the lack of a sharp blade on the axe. There is a verse, Ecclesiastes 10:10**, which says, “If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.”

There is a lesson for us as believers in this. We have a sharp tool at our disposal, for the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword. And yet, how often do we try to convince and convert people with our own arguments and logic, rather than just using God’s Word and letting the Scriptures penetrate into the heart! Paul’s letter to Timothy talks about “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed...” May we be that kind of workmen.

** “If the axe is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.”

We have learned the following so far in this lesson

1. That God’s truth is revealed in His Word.
2. That Scripture reveals there is a natural man and he can become a spiritual man.
3. That the change from a natural to spiritual man is to become a “new creature.”
4. That our justification is by faith in Jesus Christ.
5. That God revealed this “justification by faith” to man through the apostle Paul.

After we accept Jesus Christ as Savior, we are “babes” in Christ needing to develop and grow in our new life. God has given us the Bible to help us spiritually mature. In studying the Bible the wise student will remember to pray, asking the Father to open the eyes of his understanding.

THE IMPACT OF SIN

Session Three

1. Refer to Romans 5:12
 - a. How did sin enter into the world? Through one man, Adam
 - b. What was the result of sin’s entrance into the world? Death came to all men

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; (Romans 3:23) ”

2. Refer to Romans 6:23
 - a. What is the wages of sin? Death
 - b. What is the gift of God? Eternal life
 - c. Through whom do we receive this gift? Christ Jesus our Lord

SPECIAL READING: Stop here and read the entire first chapter of Romans. Note God's statement concerning sinful man, and the condemnation of those who "suppress (or restrain) the truth in unrighteousness."

3. Refer to Romans 1:21-25. In your own words explain what happens to the person whose focus is not on God. His thinking becomes futile and his heart is darkened. God gives him over to his sinful desires and to idolatry Note: answers may vary
4. (Romans 6:21) What is the fruit (result) of the life of self and sin? Death
5. (Galatians 5:19-21) What are the works of the flesh as listed in the Scriptures? sexual immorality, impurity, and debauchery: idolatry and witchcraft: hatred, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions factions, and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like
6. (Galatians 5:22-23) What is the fruit of the Spirit? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control
7. If someone asked you how to become a Christian, that is, how to have eternal life, what verse or verses could you use to share with him? Circle your choice or choices:
1 Corinthians 15:3-4 Romans 5:8 Matthew 7:12 Romans 10:9

NOTE: To be "quickened" according to the Scriptures, means to be "made alive." The Word of God speaks of the act of being "made alive" with several different expressions - "being born again" (John 3:3), "receiving Him" (John 1:12), and "believing" (Romans 10:9 and John 3:16).

8. (1 Thessalonians 2:12) After a person is “quickened,” or “made alive,” what does God expect of him?
to live a life worthy of God
9. (1 Thessalonians 2:13) For the Thessalonian believers, the “worthy walk” began when they “received the Word of God.” What does God’s Word do for those who believe? The word is at work in them
10. What instructions does 2 Timothy 2:15 have for us? It instructs us to diligently study God’s word in order that we might not be ashamed but be able to correctly handle or divide the Word of truth when tested

Would we be “walking worthy of God” if we obeyed these instructions? Yes X No _____

NOTE: To “rightly divide,” or “correctly handle,” Scripture, one must recognize that God has not always dealt with people in the same way throughout history. There are certain changes that have taken place over time as God progressively reveals His plan to man. The Old Testament Jews had the prophets, the New Testament Jews had the Twelve Apostles, but the Gentiles had another example to follow.

11. The Lord, Jesus Christ, has appointed a “pattern” or “example” for us to follow.
- a. Who is speaking? (1 Timothy 1:1) Paul
 - b. Who is the “pattern” or “example” Christ has given us? (1 Timothy 1:16) Paul
 - c. What does he call himself? (1 Timothy 1:15) The worst of sinners
12. a. What does Paul say he is? (Ephesians 3:1) A prisoner of Jesus Christ
- b. Who was made the minister to the Gentiles? (Romans 15:16) Paul
 - c. Who made him the minister? (Romans 15:15,16) God
13. What is the instruction for believers in 1 Corinthians 11:1? Paul’s example as he follows Christ’s
14. In what way are we to follow Paul? Explain Philippians 4:9 in your own words. Put into practice those things we learn from Paul’s writings and from his Life

- 15 Why must the “pattern,” or “example,” be Paul instead of some other apostle? Read all of these verses before you answer: Romans 11:13; Romans 15:15-16 Galatians 2:7-8 and Ephesians 3:1-3, 7-9.

Paul was the apostle called by God to minister to the Gentiles

NOTE: In past times God appointed certain men to be the leaders of His chosen people, Israel. One of the greatest of these leaders was Moses, who brought the people out of Egypt by way of the Red Sea. The Old Testament tells how the people often rebelled against this chosen man of God. They were disobedient to God, refusing to follow His appointed leader. Observe that Moses was chosen of God to be the Lawgiver to Israel. Paul was chosen to reveal a special new message which is called “the revelation of the mystery.” Compare Exodus 20:1-17 with Romans 16:25.

16. (Ephesians 3:8,9) What is God’s divine purpose in having a special messenger for the Gentiles? _____

To preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain the administration of the mystery which God had kept hidden in past ages but had now revealed to Paul

17. What is the “mystery of Christ” according to Eph. 3:6? **That through the gospel Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, fellow-partakers in the promise in Christ Jesus**

NIV users: The word, “Israel,” does not appear in the Greek. What is implied is that Gentiles are now equal with believing Jews.

18. Compare Ephesians 3:8,9 with Matthew 10:5,6. Christ, in His earthly ministry, commanded the Twelve Apostles not to go where? **among the Gentiles or any place of the Samaritans**

Even in the early chapters of the Book of Acts, Peter and the other apostles preached to the Jews only (Acts 2:14, 22; 3:12). By revelation from the risen Christ, Paul wrote for all men. This is a change in God’s relationship with mankind.

19. God had a different plan for Israel than he does for the Church of today. The commission for the Church of this age is clearly revealed in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20. What do these verses say? _____

Having been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, God has made us ambassadors of Christ to pass on the message of reconciliation to the world

GOD’S MESSAGE FOR TODAY: “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek (Gentile); for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him (Romans 10:12).”

Remember that the Bible is not a book we can read casually in idle moments and so learn the will of God and the purpose of God for us.

We must “STUDY TO SHOW OURSELVES APPROVED UNTO GOD,” and this means a daily, regular, consistent study of the greatest book ever written.

Use the space below for any questions or comments:

Which version(s) of the Bible did you use to complete this lesson. _____

☐ I would like to be contacted by a minister in my area that can help me better understand God's Word. If checked please include a telephone number _____

RETURN COMPLETED LESSON TO:

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Port Orchard WA 98366-0690**

Date: _____

Name: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

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