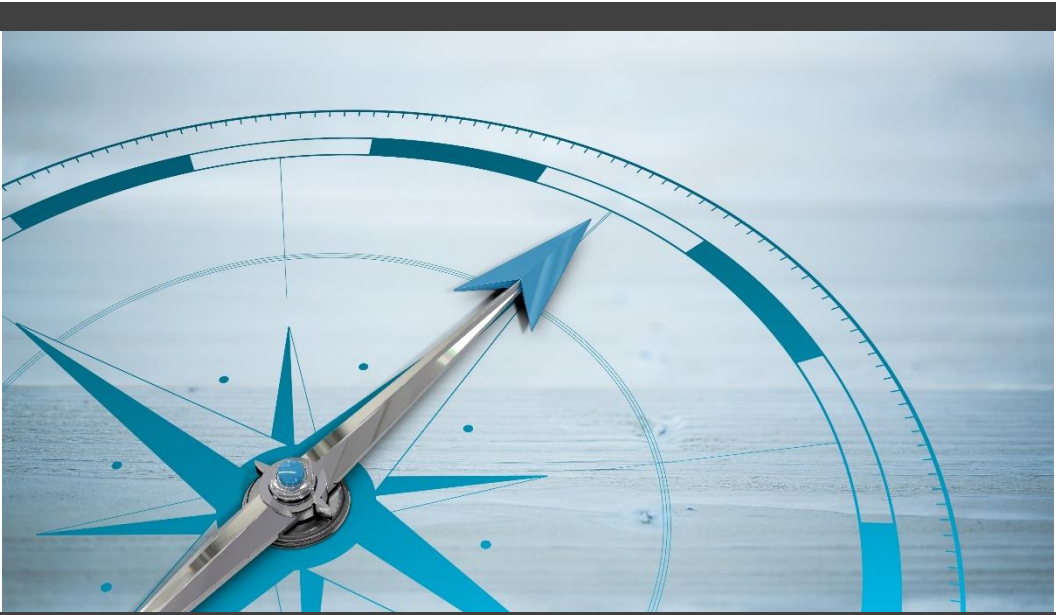


Jesus Is The Way

Lesson 4: Jesus Is The Way To Victory Over Sin And Death



Discovering God's Word
Bible Study Series

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Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

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Lesson 4: Jesus Is The Way To Victory Over Sin And Death

Introduction

A. Jesus is the way to everything that is important and worthwhile. As we have already seen, Jesus is the way to truth. Now, we need to recognize Jesus is the way to victory over sin and death (John 14:6).

B. There are consequences for refusing to follow God's word of truth. To do so is to sin – and there are serious consequences for sinning against God!

C. This is all the work of the devil. Through his deceptions, sin has ruined the paradise God has created on this earth so we now experience evil, suffering, and death. And, as he tries to deceive us, he does so to pull us away from God so that we sin against Him.

1. While many joke about sin, the consequences of sin are devastating! Not only does sin have a devastating impact on people physically, but even more spiritually!

2. One common trait of sin and death that makes them the two greatest enemies we have is that we cannot overcome them by ourselves. For, death happens to everyone and those who die do not have any power over death. Then, whenever people choose to sin, they have no ability to undo the sin (or the consequences of the sin) they have committed. Thankfully, Jesus has provided victory over both!

D. Purpose: To learn how sin and death are your greatest enemies and how Jesus provides the victory over them.

1. Sin And Death Enter The World

A. How God created the world

1. Genesis 1 details God's creation on each of the six days (v. 1). When God had finished His work, He declared it was all very good (v. 31).

2. Genesis 2 describes how God planted a garden in Eden for the man He had created (v. 9). Later, God also created the woman and they lived in this wonderful place.

- This was a true paradise on earth! There was no evil, suffering, or death. Mankind had access to the tree of life to live forever and enjoyed a wonderful relationship with God.

3. God also gave them free will so they could choose between right and wrong. He did not create them as mindless robots who were forced to obey God against their will. So, He gave them a law to obey and warned about the consequences if they did not obey (Genesis 2:16-17).

B. The temptation and sin

1. As Satan enters the Bible story, we should recognize that he has positioned himself as the enemy of God and people (choosing to sin himself).

2. We can see Satan's work to deceive Eve in Genesis 3:1-5. You can see how Satan attacked God's words of truth. First, he tried to get Eve to question whether God really said what He said. Then, Satan claimed God's words were not true and that God was trying to keep them from something that was desirable and useful!

3. After hearing Satan's deception, Eve looked at the tree differently and made her decision (Genesis 3:6).

- Sin was now in the world. Sin occurs anytime a person violates God's words of truth. So, when they ate of the tree God said not to eat from, they sinned.

C. The consequences of sin

1. God kept His promise regarding the consequences for eating from the tree (Genesis 2:17) – among other things!

- Immediately after they sinned, you can see the loss of innocence and guilt entering the world (Genesis 3:7-8). There were many consequences given – to the serpent, to the woman, and to the man (Genesis 3:14-19). Among these were pain in childbirth for the woman and painful labor when man would work the ground for food. So, we can see the introduction of suffering to the world.

2. Genesis 3:22-24. The dying process had begun. Evil, suffering, and death had entered the world. This is even demonstrated in the next chapter when Adam and Eve's son (Cain) murdered his brother (Abel). Later, Genesis 5:5 records Adam's death.

3. As bad as these physical consequences for sin and death are, the worst consequence for sin was the spiritual death they experienced.

- This is how they died on the day they ate from the tree (Genesis 2:17). They were separated from the wonderful relationship they enjoyed with God that day and were now in need of being forgiven and saved!

2. Sin And Death As Enemies Today

A. The enemy of sin

1. Everyone who reaches an age at which they are morally accountable for themselves (having the ability to know right from wrong and make decisions for themselves) decides to sin against God (Romans 3:23). So, sin does not hold back against anyone!

- Everyone Satan has ever attacked with his deceptions has chosen to live for themselves rather than for God at some point – except for Jesus!

2. Satan appeals to your physical desires so that you choose to please yourself rather than God (James 1:14-15). But, he does not tell you what the outcome of your actions will actually be. He just wants you to focus on feeling good now, getting what you want, and pleasing yourself.

- Satan does not tell you about the physical consequences of your sin – even though sin often has physical consequences (i.e. death, jail time, broken relationships, guilt, shame, regret, etc.).
- He certainly does not want you to think about the spiritual consequences of your sin. These consequences are far more devastating than the physical ones (James 1:15)! This is spiritual death (separation from God).

3. When you sin, you separate yourself from all the spiritual blessings God has made available to you. This is how the Bible can talk about someone being alive physically but dead spiritually (1 Timothy 5:6).

Then, the Bible warns about the consequences of dying physically while you are in sin as being eternal punishment in Hell (Revelation 21:8).

4. As you think of these things, recognize you have been guilty of sinning by living to please yourself rather than God and brought consequences on yourself (Romans 6:23). Now, you must consider how you can escape this horrible reality since you cannot undo what you have done and earn your way into God's good favor. Therefore, if there was no answer to the problem of sin, you would be hopelessly separated from God and headed for eternity in Hell!

B. The enemy of death

1. Although each person makes his/her own choice to sin, physical death is one of the ongoing consequences of Adam and Eve's sin.

2. The Bible promises that all people will experience physical death (Hebrews 9:27; James 4:13-16). So, while you might want to accomplish many things during your earthly life, death can happen at any time and put a stop to all these plans!

3. Not only is death a great enemy of humanity because it affects everyone, but also because no one can beat or overcome it by themselves. Everyone has failed to find the "secret" to youth and fight against the aging and dying process.

- No person has the power to escape or rescue anyone from death. The rich, the poor; the young, the old; the powerful, the powerless; the king, the servant – they all die!

3. Jesus's Sacrifice And Resurrection

A. Jesus left Heaven to come to earth

1. Jesus was with the Father in Heaven. Think about this place Jesus left – the place where the streets are paved with gold, the walls are made of precious stones, and the gates are made of pearls. The place that does not even need the sun or moon to shine in it, where nothing evil can enter, where there is no suffering or death, and we should all desire to go! Yet, Jesus left that place to come here (2 Corinthians 8:9).

- He came here for you (and everyone) because he wanted you to go to Heaven. He knew the only way that could be possible was to give Himself as the ransom sacrifice for sin.

- Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen to Him. He knew He was coming to sacrifice Himself. He knew He would be severely flogged, blasphemed, and mistreated. Yet, He came anyways!

2. Jesus was sent to this earth as God's sacrificial Lamb to provide the only sacrifice that could be made to remove sin (a perfect and sinless sacrifice). Through Jesus, God would demonstrate both His justice in demanding payment for sin and His mercy in providing the ransom through Jesus you could never provide for yourself!

3. Jesus was mistreated throughout His life. Many people hated Him and desired to kill Him. Then, He was betrayed by one of His apostles and delivered to His enemies to be arrested. He was denied by one of His closest followers. And, after being put through two rigged and unfair trials, Jesus was sentenced to death by crucifixion.

B. Jesus gave His life on the cross

1. After receiving this death sentence, Jesus was flogged (Matthew 27:26). The Roman practice of flogging (scourging) was brutal. The prisoner would be stripped of his clothing and stretched over a frame, exposing the backside. Then, the soldier would use a whip that had strands of leather at the end (often with pieces of bone or metal interwoven that would tear at the flesh and cause severe blood loss and pain – and sometimes death).

2. Matthew 27:27-31 then describes the mockery Jesus was put through after this.

3. Crucifixion was considered the most horrible form of death and was reserved for the worst criminals. The individual would be stripped of his clothing and laid upon the cross, with his hands and feet fastened by nail-like spikes. The process was full of agony and humiliation and was intended to be prolonged torture rather than a quick execution.

4. After all His suffering, Jesus died on the cross. His sacrifice had been made. After this, Jesus's body was taken down from the cross and secured inside a tomb.

C. Jesus rose from the dead

1. Thankfully, Jesus's story does not end there. After Jesus's burial, the Jewish leaders went to the Roman governor because they were concerned that Jesus's followers would steal His body and claim He

had risen (since Jesus said He would rise, Matthew 16:21). So, the governor told them to make the tomb as secure as they knew how by setting a seal on the stone and place the guard at the tomb (Matthew 27:66).

2. Yet, none of this stopped what would happen next (Matthew 28:1-10). Jesus had risen from the dead by the power of God!

3. After He rose, He did not disappear, never to be seen again. Instead, He left no room for doubt about His resurrection by allowing many people to see Him and recognize Him as the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)!

4. Victory In Jesus!

A. Victory over death

1. As you think about your struggles against the enemies of sin and death, recognize the importance of what Jesus has done! Without a way to overcome sin and death, your life is hopeless. But, because of Jesus, you have a new opportunity to hope!

2. While Jesus was on this earth, one of His dear friends (Lazarus) died. As Jesus was about to prove His power over death by raising him from the dead (John 11:38-44), He taught a powerful lesson about the future victory over death He would provide (John 11:25-26).

- Although people do experience physical death, Jesus knew that souls continue to exist and that there will be a day on which all the dead will be raised – and those who truly believed in Him so as to keep His commandments will be welcomed into eternal life in Heaven (John 5:28-29)!

3. Physical death is not the end – for anyone! But, this is only possible for two reasons. First, God has created people in His image (as spiritual beings, Genesis 1:26-27). When this body dies, the soul continues to live on. Second, Jesus Christ defeated death by raising from the dead. Through Jesus's resurrection, God demonstrated that death has no power over Him!

- 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 explains the connection between Jesus's resurrection and the hope His followers have for the future resurrection (note that those who do not follow Christ have no

hope in their resurrection – as they will be sentenced to eternal punishment in Hell at that time).

4. Jesus has emerged victorious over death and brought victory over death to all who will believe and obey Him (Hebrews 2:14-15). Those who follow Jesus can eagerly anticipate their deaths, being assured of the victory that will follow (Philippians 1:21-24; Revelation 14:13; 1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

B. Victory over sin

1. Since we have all sinned, this victory over death through the promise of a future resurrection would not give you any hope if there was no way to be forgiven of your sin. For, you would only be able to anticipate a future eternal punishment in Hell (John 5:28-29).

2. Romans 6:23; John 3:16. Although you have earned eternal punishment in Hell, Jesus Christ has provided the ransom sacrifice that was needed to escape the wrath of God you deserve to experience. Now, by Jesus's blood, you can be forgiven of your sins. And, by His life, you can have eternal life in Heaven (Romans 5:6-11).

3. You must obey the conditions God has placed on your salvation to be saved. You must hear His word (Romans 10:17), believe in Jesus as His Son (John 8:24), repent of your sins (Acts 17:30), confess Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10), and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). Then, you must remain faithful to Christ throughout your life (Revelation 2:10). If you do these things, He promises to save you!

Conclusion

A. Jesus is the way to victory over sin and death! Sin and death are in the world today. Death comes to everyone. Sin is committed by everyone who becomes accountable to God.

B. These are the two greatest enemies you can ever face. But, through Jesus's sacrifice and resurrection, you can experience victory over sin and death if you will believe and obey Him!

Study Questions

How are sin and death your two greatest enemies?

1. Sin And Death Enter The World

How did God create the world?

How did Satan tempt Eve? How did Eve (and later Adam) respond?

What were the consequences of sin?

2. Sin And Death As Enemies Today

Why is sin an enemy?

Why is death an enemy?

3. Jesus' Sacrifice And Resurrection

What did Jesus do in leaving Heaven to come to earth?

What did Jesus do in giving His life on the cross?

What did Jesus do in raising from the dead?

4. Victory In Jesus!

How has Jesus made victory over death possible?

How has Jesus made victory over sin possible?

