

Jesus Is The Way

Lesson 5: Jesus Is The Way To God



Discovering God's Word
Bible Study Series

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Lesson 5: Jesus Is The Way To God

Introduction

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

B. There are severe consequences for choosing not to follow Jesus and deciding to go your own way. When you sin, you separate yourself from God.

C. Although there are eternal consequences for sinning against God (which we'll discuss in the next lesson), you need to recognize there are also consequences for you while you live on this earth.

1. Your life on earth is far different when you are separated from God than it is when you live in His fellowship. For, those who are separated from God in their sins are separated from some truly wonderful things that work to make life worth living!

2. After you have sinned a single time, you cannot undo the separation by yourself. Jesus is the only one capable of providing a bridge back to God!

D. Purpose: To learn what sin does to your relationship with God, how reconciliation is possible through Jesus, and the spiritual blessings that are available for you to enjoy through Jesus.

1. What Sin Does To Your Relationship With God

A. Causes a spiritual separation

1. First, sin causes a spiritual separation between you and God. When you sin, something drastically changes to your relationship with God.

- When Adam and Eve sinned, they experienced spiritual death that day (Genesis 2:16-17). That is, their relationship with God was changed that day.
- Romans 6:23 states that the wages of sin is spiritual death (separation from God). Physical death occurs when the physical body and spirit separate (James 2:26). Spiritual death occurs when a person is separated from God due to sin (Isaiah 59:1-2).

2. What is it about sin that causes a separation between you and God? Why is it so bad to please yourself rather than God? 1 John 1:5-7 explains.

- The Bible teaches that God is “holy.” To be “holy” is to be separated from everything evil and devoted to everything good. It is illustrated in this passage as God being light and having absolutely no darkness in Him at all! So, there is no evil in God!
- Not only is God holy, but He is the standard for what is holy. Anything contrary to His holiness is darkness. When you commit sin (violate God’s instructions), you cannot remain in fellowship with this holy God because God cannot have any participation with evil/darkness. But, it is not God who leaves you; it is you who leaves God!

3. The seriousness of this separation while you live on earth is that you are separated from all the spiritual blessings God makes available.

- All the spiritual blessings God has made available are hidden from those in sin. In fact, the opposite of those blessings is true. Rather than having peace, sinners should be anxious. Rather than having hope, sinners should have fear and dread. Rather than having true joy, sinners should have misery. Rather than being children of God, sinners are children of the devil. Rather than knowing God hears their prayers, God is against those who do evil. All these things make a big difference in the quality of life on this earth!

B. Makes you His enemy

1. Second, sin makes you God’s enemy. Of all the people you may make enemies with during your life, God is not the one you should choose!

- Think about a few examples of what God has done to His enemies. In Genesis 6, God destroyed all the wickedness on earth by a flood. In Genesis 18-19, God destroyed the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by raining burning sulfur on them. In Exodus 7-14, God brought ten terrible plagues on the land of Egypt for refusing to let God's people go and destroyed the army who later pursued them in the Red Sea. In Numbers 16, God caused the ground to split open and swallow those who rebelled against Him. In Acts 12, King Herod was eaten by worms and died for not giving glory to God.

2. It is not just those who are guilty of some extreme wickedness (from a human perspective) who are God's enemies. Instead, anyone who is a friend of the world is God's enemy (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).

- Most people in this world live for themselves – their own lusts and pride. So, they are not focused on living to please God. They are focused on the temporary pleasures and treasures of this life rather than the eternal joys and treasures of living for God (Philippians 3:18-19).

3. Although God is a loving God who is patiently giving people the opportunity to repent of their sins (1 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Peter 3:9), God will bring a punishment on His enemies that is far worse than any punishment He has ever given before – the eternal punishment in Hell (as we'll discuss in the next lesson)!

- Such a fearful expectation of being an enemy of God should impact you every day. Rather than being able to call God your friend and looking forward to meeting Him face-to-face, you can only be terrified of this meeting (Hebrews 10:30-31)!

2. Reconciliation Is Only Possible Through Jesus

A. Reconciled by Jesus's blood

1. Romans 6:23 demonstrates that only Jesus can bring you back to God after you have sinned against Him. Thankfully, this is exactly what He has done.

2. To be "reconciled" is to go from a state of hostility to being in harmony with another. Think about two nations that have hostility

between them coming to the negotiating table and working out their differences in a way that is agreeable for them to end the dispute.

- In the case between you and God, though, it is all one-sided. While God has only acted in your best interest, you were selfish and hurtful to Him, separating yourself from Him. And, there is nothing you could ever offer God that could restore yourself to a condition of holiness so as to be in fellowship with Him.

3. Because God loves you and wants you to be in fellowship with Him, He has provided the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, to reconcile you to Himself (Colossians 1:15-23).

- You could not offer the sacrifice necessary to get back into a right relationship with God! Nothing you had to offer could suffice in appeasing God's wrath and bring yourself back into His favor. It was only the sinless sacrifice of Jesus Christ that could accomplish this!
- God does require that you believe and obey Him to be reconciled to Him (taking the steps discussed in lesson 2). Then, you must remain grounded and steadfast in the faith, not being shifted away from the hope of the gospel (Colossians 1:23)!

B. The resulting relationship with God

1. When you comply with the conditions God has placed on your reconciliation, there is a wonderful relationship that results. Consider two points.

2. You will be counted as God's friend (James 2:21-23). If you have the same kind of obedient faith Abraham had, you will be counted as one of God's friends.

- You can go from having the terrible expectations involved with being the enemy of God to having the wonderful expectations involved with being the friend of God. For, just as the Bible is full of examples of God's vengeance being poured out on His enemies, the Bible is full of examples of God's kindness being poured out on His friends.

3. You will be counted as a child of God (1 John 3:10). If you believe and obey God, He will adopt you as one of His sons or daughters through Jesus Christ (Romans 8:14-17).

C. All spiritual blessings are in Christ

1. These changes in relationship with God should dramatically impact your earthly life in every way! Rather than fighting a losing battle against God, you live in submission to Him and experience some wonderful spiritual blessings.

2. Ephesians 1:3. God only blesses certain people with spiritual blessings. These are those who have obeyed the gospel and are “in Christ”!

- These spiritual blessings are far superior to the physical blessings God provides. Physical things come and go. However, spiritual blessings are based in eternal things and provide true meaning and satisfaction for your earthly life.

3. Galatians 3:27. Baptism is the point at which you go from being outside of Christ and excluded from God’s spiritual blessings to coming into Christ and accessing all these blessings.

- Without Jesus, you would still be separated from God and be God’s enemies. But, being reconciled to God by the blood of Jesus, you can access all the spiritual blessings God has made available through Christ!

3. The Spiritual Blessings In Christ

A. Forgiveness of sins

1. Ephesians 1:7. Though God has made His grace and mercy available to all mankind (Titus 2:11), only those who are Christians actually receive the forgiveness of sins.

2. When God forgives sin, He forgives them completely – with no trace remaining to be counted against the Christian (Isaiah 1:18; Hebrews 8:12).

- Acts 3:19 uses the phrase “wiped out.” This idea comes from the practice of creditors having wax covered tablets recording the debts of their debtors. Then, when the debts were paid, the wax would be smoothed so no trace of the debt would remain. This is the way God forgives the Christian – with no trace of the sin remaining (Matthew 18:21-35)!

3. All the past sins you have committed when you chose to live for yourself rather than God are no longer remembered or held against you by God! Although there may still be physical consequences of your

sins (i.e. broken relationships, regret, etc.), God no longer views you as being guilty of those sins!

- Having God's forgiveness will enable you to push forward in serving Him throughout your life, not being shackled to your past mistakes!

B. Hope for an eternal inheritance

1. Ephesians 1:11-12. Just prior to identifying the inheritance obtained by those in Christ, Paul said these have been adopted (Ephesians 1:5-6). This is essential to be heirs of the Almighty Father.

2. As an adopted child of God, you have gained access into the inheritance of your Heavenly Father.

- He is the Creator of the universe. The one from whom all blessings flow. The one who dwells in the Heavenly city that is beautiful beyond human comprehension.

3. Through Jesus, you can live with the knowledge that something much better is waiting for you when your earthly life is over (1 Peter 1:3-4)!

- This living hope for an eternal inheritance in Heaven as one of God's children can serve as an anchor to help you live faithfully for God through all the temptations, trials, and hardships of this life (Hebrews 6:19)!

C. Joy and peace

1. Romans 5:1-2. The true joy and peace you have as a Christian results from having fellowship with God – and is not dependent upon any external factors. In fact, any type of “joy” or “peace” that is based on something temporary is not true joy and peace because it can be taken away from you by some external thing.

2. The joy and peace you can have in Jesus is based on the unwavering promises of God! Since your hope is in the promises of God, you can find joy and peace in any and every circumstance of life – even when your earthly conditions are not ideal (Romans 8:28).

- This is not a promise that everything will turn out for the good physically for the Christian. Instead, this is a promise that everything will work out for the good spiritually for the Christian. No matter what you go through during your life, you know that God's promises are true – and you will receive the everlasting

home in Heaven if you are faithful to Him! Then, as you endure difficult situations throughout your lifetime, you can know that they will only make you stronger in your faith and service to the Lord – because there is nothing and no one who is strong enough to separate you from the love of Christ if you are faithful to Him (Romans 8:31-39)!

3. You can live a truly joyful life on this earth because you are at peace with God and have the hope of eternal life in Heaven (Philippians 4:4)!

D. Prayer

1. James 5:16. God has not left you alone as you fight your battles on earth against Satan and his army (1 Peter 3:12).

2. Prayer is the avenue God has provided His people to communicate with Him (your Heavenly Father), through your Mediator (Jesus Christ), and with the help of the Holy Spirit! All these have a role in prayer and demonstrates how much God wants to hear your prayers.

- Through prayer, you are taught you can find help in times of need (Hebrews 4:14-16). Regardless what troubles you experience, you can find help by coming to the Almighty God in prayer! He can relieve your burdens, provide strength for the weak, help you out of temptations, provide according to and beyond your needs, etc.!

3. You can approach the throne of God at any time to praise Him, confess your faults to Him, give Him thanks, and petition His loving care!

- Notice how this spiritual blessing is connected with experiencing peace in Philippians 4:6-7. Rather than worrying about things you cannot control, you can give all your concerns to God in prayer and trust in Him. Then, the peace of God will guard your heart and mind through Jesus Christ!

Conclusion

A. Jesus is the way to God! Sin has caused you to be separated from God and be counted as one of His enemies. As a result, there was nothing you could do to get back into a right relationship with God by yourself.

B. Through Jesus, though, you can be reconciled to God and access all God's spiritual blessings if you will believe and obey Him!

Study Questions

Why do you need a way back to God?

1. What Sin Does To Your Relationship With God

What does it mean to be separated from God and how does sin cause this separation?

What does it mean to be the enemy of God and how does sin cause you to be God's enemy?

2. Reconciliation Is Only Possible Through Jesus

What does it mean to be "reconciled"? What is the significance of Jesus' blood in being reconciled to God?

What relationship can you now have with God?

What blessings are only available in and through Jesus Christ?

3. The Spiritual Blessings In Christ

What is the blessing of being forgiven of your sins?

What is the blessing of having a hope for an eternal inheritance?

What is the blessing of having joy and peace?

What is the blessing of prayer?

