

# EN GARDE!

## SYLLABUS

January 5 .....	Introduction
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April 19 .....	The New Heaven
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## LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION

“En Garde!” is a fencing term that I learned from a previous tenant who was on the fencing team at the University of Illinois. It is a call to a fencer to adopt a defensive stance, taking up his sword, in readiness for an attack or bout.

It is staggering to realize all that God has done in order to provide for our ability to stand firm, ready for the attack from the enemy. God has proven Himself to be sovereign and wise, a God who is totally trustworthy! If we are going to learn to honor God in times of attack and adversity, we must trust Him. There is more at stake than just our own peace during trials or difficulties. The honor of God should be a primary concern!

There are responses that show when we are trusting God. Today, to begin our study this semester, we will look at some of them.

### **THANKSGIVING**

1 Thessalonians 5:18 \_\_\_\_\_

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Obviously, giving thanks during times of adversity or spiritual attack is not a natural virtue. It is a fruit of the Spirit which the unbeliever does not understand. One of the most forthright rebukes against mankind is offered by Paul in Romans 1:21. Read this verse and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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Giving thanks admits dependence. Read the story of the lepers in Luke 17:11-19. Record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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Often our problem is deeper than just forgetfulness. We have a spirit of ingratitude because of our sin nature. Of course, we don't have so much trouble with the need to give thanks when the circumstances are good (someone has been healed.) But, we have much more difficulty when the circumstances are bad.

Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Romans 8:28 \_\_\_\_\_

Do a word study on "purpose." \_\_\_\_\_

Thanksgiving is a response to the trustworthiness of God.

## **WORSHIP**

Worshipping God in times of adversity also shows our response to God's trustworthiness. Read Job 1:20-21 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Worship involves a two-directional view. Looking upward, we see God in majesty, power, glory, and sovereignty. Looking inward, we see our dependence on God and our sinfulness in His sight. We see God as sovereign Creator and ourselves as the creature. We deserve nothing from God but eternal judgment.

Read Matthew 20:15 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

God has absolute power to do what pleases Him and absolute control over His actions. Read Exodus 33:19 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Worship in times of adversity implies an attitude of acceptance on our part of God's right to do what He pleases. It is an acknowledgment that anything we have is a gift of sovereign grace and may be taken away at His pleasure.

God does not wield His sovereign power tyrannically. God acts toward us in love, mercy, and grace. As we worship before Him, we can bow in confidence that His power is used for us and not against us.

## **HUMILITY**

Humility is a response to adversity and trials as well as its fruit.

Read 1 Peter 5:6-7 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Compare to 2 Corinthians 12:7 \_\_\_\_\_

Also compare to James 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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## **FORGIVENESS**

Adversity and trials often come because of the deliberate hurtful actions of others. The natural tendency is to harbor resentment and seek revenge. Forgiving shows that we have learned two important truths:

1. **We are all sinners.** Believers are forgiven by the grace of God. We have all acted selfishly or uncaringly at some time.

Read Ecclesiastes 7:21-22 recording your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Compare with Ephesians 4:32 \_\_\_\_\_

2. **The hurtful person is just the instrument of the hurt.** Read the following verse and record what you learn:

Lamentations 3:37 \_\_\_\_\_

## **PRAYER FOR DELIVERANCE**

Humility, worship, thanksgiving, and forgiveness do not mean that we should not pray for deliverance from the adversities and attacks that we experience. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Matthew 26:39 \_\_\_\_\_

Job 1:12; 2:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 22:31 \_\_\_\_\_

James 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_

### **SEEK GOD'S GLORY**

Above all, our response to adversity, trials, and attacks should be to seek God's glory in the circumstances. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Philippians 1:14-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Philippians 1:18 \_\_\_\_\_

### **Now, ask yourself if you have experienced any of the following issues:**

1. Do you feel compelled to do something that you know is not of God?
2. Do you doubt God and His love and goodness toward you?
3. Have you thought of quitting because Christianity is too hard?
4. Do you doubt the truth of God's Word?
5. Do you live with feelings of condemnation despite confessing sin?
6. Have you been overwhelmed with depression?
7. Have you thought about suicide?
8. Are you tormented by a derogatory remark, thought, memory, or desire that you can't shake?
9. Have you heard voices?
10. Are you filled with anger, bitterness, or unforgiveness?
11. Are you sick and the doctor can't tell you why?

Spiritual warfare may be the causative issue in some of these problems.

1 Timothy 4:1 tells us that warfare will become much more pronounced as the end time close in. Keeping in mind all that God has done for us, we are ready to begin our study with our feet firmly planted: En Garde!

## RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY

Spiritual warfare is the causative agent in many of the problems faced by believers individually and the church corporately. 1 Timothy 4:1 clearly indicates that the overt activities of Satan and his helpers will be much more pronounced as the end times approach. Read this verse, recording what you learn here:

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Unfortunately, many in the church are ignorant of this fact. Believers have been lulled into an attitude of passively assuming their victory over Satan instead of aggressively applying it. The more wicked man becomes, the more open and obvious Satan's display of power will be to believers. This is particularly true of sins that involve sexual error and false religion. A society that is deeply characterized by pornography, drugs, sexual error, satanism, and false religion will see much open and obvious demonic activity.

But it isn't obvious to everyone. In fact, the witness of the Spirit in the lives of believers causes us to recognize the sin around us and the battle associated with it. Are we prepared to meet the challenge? Do we know how to fight the battle?

Since we know we're engaged in warfare, it seems logical that we would seek intelligence on our enemy so that we can make strategic decisions. We need to know the enemy's position, weapons, and defenses. This week we will be engaging in gathering intelligence! We're in the Lord's army.

**Because Satan is a deceiver, one of his primary tactics is to keep us ignorant of the warfare. You don't take up arms if you don't know there's a war. When you do begin to understand the truth, your study will not go unchallenged. Satan wants you to be ignorant, misinformed and fearful.**

Begin today by reading John 8:31-36. In the space that follows, discuss who Jesus was speaking to; also note the "if" portions and the "then" portions of His statements.

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Continue your study by checking out some of the ways that sin is manifested:

Romans 6:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Romans 8:5-7 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_

We will begin with some basic truths:

1. Our struggle isn't against flesh and blood (Ephesians 6:10-20)
2. Satan is a liar (John 8:44)
3. Satan deceives the whole earth (Revelation 12:9)
4. The whole world is under the influence of the evil one (1 John 5:19)
5. Satan cannot change your position in Christ (Ephesians 2)
6. Jesus' death and resurrection triumphed over and disarmed rulers and authorities of the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 2:15)

Scripture often speaks of the warfare that is going on. Here are just a few examples:

- A. Mankind was plummeted into spiritual and physical death because Eve was deceived by Satan and Adam followed what she did.
- B. Saul's kingdom fell when he consulted the witch of Endor
- C. David and the nation of Israel suffered when Satan enticed him to number the children of Israel
- D. King Ahab died on the battlefield after he heeded a deceiving spirit speaking through the mouth of a prophet
- E. Daniel fasted and prayed for three weeks, unaware of a spiritual battle between God's angelic messenger, sent to answer his prayer, the a demonic

prince of Persia. Satan was determined to keep Daniel in the dark, but God's angels prevailed.

So as we begin intelligence gathering about our enemy, we will begin with scriptures that tell us about him.

Satan first appears in Genesis 3. List what you learn about the devil in this passage...particularly note his tactics, and his future: \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Revelation 12:9 to convince yourself that the serpent in the garden is really Satan! \_\_\_\_\_

Where did Satan come from? Was he created, or has he always existed? Was he created by God? Created evil?

Begin your reading for today with Ezekiel 28:2-19. This is admittedly a controversial passage. Some people believe that it is only a lamentation against an earthly king. Here are some points of consideration:

Ezekiel 28:2 makes it clear that the "leader" (Hebrew *nagid*) is a man. I believe that the first part of Ezekiel is speaking of an earthly king.

Ezekiel 28:12 uses the word "king" (Hebrew *melek*) and continues to show us that this "king" is a cherub. Cherubim are angels. I believe that the focus changes to a spiritual ruler and is no longer speaking of an earthly king. There are some specific reasons that I believe this.

Read Ezekiel 28:12-19 and record everything you learn about this "king:"

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Clearly the "king" we have been defining was a cherub, not a man. He was in the garden of Eden. He started well, but ended up thrown off of the mountain of God. This king was "created," and placed in the garden by God. Does this sound like a man to you? Now things are getting complicated!



We can get further insight into how Satan became the adversary of first God, and later man. Continue your study by reading Isaiah 14:3-15 and record the five "I wills" here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

The next obvious question is where demons came from. Where did rulers and spiritual forces of wickedness originate? Continue gathering intelligence by reading Colossians 1:15-16 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

It seems obvious that these powers were created, but were they created as evil? Genesis 1 repeatedly tells us that God saw what He created and it was good. However, angelic beings are not mentioned as being created in these verses. But from what we have read, it is apparent that the anointed cherub from Ezekiel was perfect until he sinned.

In Isaiah 14, we saw the "king" called the "star of the morning." Do a word study on this phrase and record what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue gathering intelligence by reading Job 38:4-7. Write what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Note the literary device of stating the truth in two ways. In verse 7, "sons of God" and "morning stars" probably refer to the same thing. There are other places where "sons of God" (ben elohim) is used. (Job 1:6; Job 2:1).

Cross reference to Revelation 12:4 \_\_\_\_\_

We have now seen a "star" who wanted a throne above the stars! Were these literal stars? Read the following verses, noting what they teach about God's throne, power, and the angels:

Psalm 103:19-22 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 1:7-9 and 13-14, especially noting 1:4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now that you have gathered intelligence, answer this question:

Where did evil spirits (demons, fallen angels) come from? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Here is my interpretation:

**I believe the angelic host was already in existence and sang for joy (Job 38:7) when God created the heavens and the earth. At some point, one of the highest cherubim, haughty and proud because he was so splendid and beautiful, decided to try a heavenly "coup" so he could assume God's position on the mount of assembly in the north. This cherub was Satan, originally called "Lucifer." This cherub "fell" as a result and a third of the angelic host fell with him. These became what we call demons.**

The Bible mentions no redemption for fallen angels. God prepared a lake of fire for them, although they won't be the only ones going there. Satan was placed in Eden and tried to gain control over another empire—humans. He succeeded for the moment—sin entered humanity, and death by sin. Man lost ownership of the earth, which God had given to man to oversee. Man lost eternal life, spiritually and physically. From that time, there has been enmity between demonic forces and humanity. But praise God! He had a plan! God had already decided how people, trapped in sin, could be saved. And the way is Jesus.

## SATAN'S METHODOLOGY

1 Peter 5:8 gives us some important information on Satan's methodology. Read this verse and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

Now, read this verse in its context: 1 Peter 5:1-11 and write what you learn about specific action that we should take when confronted by this tactic:

What I am to do \_\_\_\_\_

What God will do \_\_\_\_\_

Last week, we looked at the origin of Satan. Today we will look at Satan's character. The word "Satan" is used fifty-four times in the Bible. The word "devil" is used thirty-four times and is only in the New Testament. The Greek word for devil is *diabolos*, which means "accuser, slanderer." The Hebrew word is exactly translated Satan which means "adversary, accuser."

The book of Job gives us insight into Satan's strategies and shows us the limits of Satan's power. Read Job 1:1-22, answering the following questions:

1. Where was Satan when he conversed with the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who called Satan's attention to Job? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How could Satan have known about the hedge? \_\_\_\_\_

Now, read on in Job 2:1-10. Notice that Satan didn't overstep God's limitations because he could not. God alone is sovereign. If Job could withstand the attack of the enemy and come out a conqueror, how much more should we with the indwelling Holy Spirit, be able to do the same.

Since the Garden of Eden, Satan has tried to deceive and blind men to the truth of the gospel. As the ruler of this world and the prince of the power of the air, legions of angelic beings serve under him in capacities such as rulers, authorities, powers, and dominions. He has seduced Kings, prophets, and regular people. He seeks the downfall of righteous men, devouring all that he can. He is served by demonic spirits that spread false doctrines, causing some to fall from the faith.

To learn more of his strategy, read the following verses:

Matthew 16:23 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 22:31 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Thessalonians 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Thessalonians 3:5 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Thessalonians 2:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 13:24-30, 38, 39 \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 12:12 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 3:8 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:2, 6:12 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

The mind is the devil's primary target, but he also attacks the body as well. The day is soon coming when the devil can no longer accuse us day and night before the throne of God. He will be cast down to earth with his demonic host. The following years of his unthinkable wrath will be short-lived.

However, we need not fear the enemy. We do, however, need to know how the devil operates. The very presence of sin causes us to see truth in a distorted manner. When this happens, we see the evidence in corrupted worship, depraved body, and depraved mind. The list of negative results just goes on and one, with things getting worse and worse. Those who know Jesus as personal savior and Lord have been provided with a way out of this dilemma. But Satan wants to keep us captive. He works by discrediting what God has done. If he can only make us think that we can't possibly be worth what God has done, he has won a big victory.

Satan is an accuser. He likes to remind us of our sin. He does everything he possibly can to keep us blind to the grace of God and keep us ignorant of God's working in us. He tries to convince us that God can't use us or help us because of sin.

If Satan tries to tell you that, remind him that Jesus saved us while we were still sinners!

Read the following verses and record what you learn about the grace of God:

2 Corinthians 12:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 2:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Continue your study by reading Romans 5:9, writing your reflections on God's grace and Satan's accusations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

God has also extended to us his infinite mercy. Mercy can be defined as not giving us the punishment we deserve. Mercy assumes need on the part of the one who receives it, and resources sufficient to meet the need on the part of the one giving it. Satan's strategy is to make us believe that what we need from God is not deserved.

Read what you learn about mercy in the following verses:

Titus 3:5 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_

James 2:13 \_\_\_\_\_

Grace and mercy are benefits of salvation. It is really important to remember some aspects of grace and mercy:

1. You cannot have the benefits of salvation apart from the commitment of salvation. Read Acts 19 and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Grace doesn't give us the right to deliberately continue in sin. Read Romans 6:1 for more information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The combined results of Satan's perversions of grace and mercy result in a loss of peace in our lives. If you are experiencing a loss of peace, there is a problem. Read Philippians 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_

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Do a word study on "guard" in the above verse, recording what you learn:

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Loss of peace can stem from unbelief. Read Romans 14:23 and write what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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Continue reading in Hebrews 3:18-19 \_\_\_\_\_

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Loss of peace can also stem from guilt. If the devil keeps discussing your guilt, remember the following:

1. Remember that your sin is between you and God. Read Psalm 51 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. If you have godly sorrow leading to repentance, then confess your sin to God. Read 1 John 1:9 \_\_\_\_\_

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Do a word study on "confess" and record what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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**If it's the enemy who parades your guilt down the main street of your mind, remind him that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed you from all sin. Stop the parade. Your guilt is gone. However, if the devil doesn't stop, then do what Jesus did: command Satan to get behind you...**

A correct understanding of mercy and grace results in an inner peace. Now we know why so many of Paul's letters begin, "grace, mercy, and peace!"

Do not let Satan's methodology deprive you of the privileges and authority of your salvation. Read Ephesians 2:11-22: \_\_\_\_\_

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We belong! We are no longer aliens or strangers. We are part of God's family. We have come home. God chose us! We didn't choose Him first. He chose us before the foundation of the world. Our crummy, rotten sins didn't change His mind.

Complete your reading for today by turning to Isaiah 49:14-16: \_\_\_\_\_

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## OUR POSITION IN CHRIST

As we begin our study for this week, read through the following verses, which will reinforce what we have learned so far.

Romans 12:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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2 Corinthians 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 Timothy 1:12-18 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Micah 7:19 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 38:17 \_\_\_\_\_

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In your own words, write what you know about your position in Christ: \_\_\_\_\_

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People were created in the image of God. Read Genesis 1:26 and do a word study on "image" \_\_\_\_\_

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When Adam sinned, the image of God in him was marred, skewed by sin. God is sinless; Adam was not. Not only that, but Adam's sin was intentional – defiant—



and required that he be cut off from his inheritance—living in the presence of God, and ruling over his land. Things went from bad to worse when we realize that Adam procreated in a fallen image. Read Genesis 5:3 and write what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

All people born thereafter, were born with Adam's intentional sin imputed to their nature.

The Law, when given to Moses approximately 2500 years later, defined what had happened more clearly. Eve claimed deception, which was considered an unintentional sin under the Law. Adam, however, had sinned defiantly. Read the following verses and record what you learn here:

Number 15:30-31 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 9:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

People were stuck in a position of being cut off from God until Jesus came to redeem us from this fate.

## OUR DEFENSE AND WEAPONRY

We have spent four weeks developing the concept of biblical truth with regard to our position in Christ and Satan's strategy to destroy. This is critical. Our culture has lost touch with truth in many areas, and spiritual warfare is fought with the truth.

As we begin to look at our defense, we need to remember that we don't operate in our own power. We have armor and weaponry because of our relationship with our covenant partner, Jesus Christ.

Few people in scripture speak to my heart like Jonathan, the son of Israel's first king. Jonathan might have reasonably believed that he would succeed his father as king. But God anointed David. Jonathan could have been bitter or angry. But he accepted God's desire. In fact, he even entered into a covenant relationship with David to protect him from King Saul's wrath.

Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4, noting specifically what Jonathan gave David because of covenant: \_\_\_\_\_

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From this section, we learn what archaeology bears out: certain covenants of protection involved the exchange of robe, armor, and weaponry. In light of this, reflect on the following verses:

Romans 13:14 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue by reading Ephesians 6:10-17. Note specifically who the battle is against: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

First, we struggle against "rulers," alternately translated principalities. The word is "*arche*" with the idea of being chief, first or highest. (consider archangels). The word is particularly associated with angels.

Second, we struggle against "powers" alternately translated "authorities." This carries the idea of someone who has the right to act that has been granted by a higher authority.

Third, we struggle against "world forces of this darkness." "World forces" is *kosmakratos*, a word strongly associated with pagan gods, and used in astrology for the planets. This phraseology is very reminiscent of the devil's claim to be able to give Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world." It also explains how Jesus could call Satan the "ruler of this world" and how John could say "the whole world is in the power of the evil one." This doesn't deny that Jesus defeated these principalities and powers when He rose from the dead; however, it does indicate that they have NOT conceded defeat.

Finally, we are struggling against "spiritual forces of wickedness" in heavenly places. This is a close struggle, defined better by wrestling. The fight involves strategy and trickery. Wherever Satan wages war, lies are sure to found. Satan has four objectives:

1. prevent people from being saved
2. destroy unity among people who are saved
3. entice people to sin
4. lead people into false teaching

It is no wonder then that Ephesians tells us to put on the belt of truth. Remember these principles:

A. Jesus is the person of truth. John 14:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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B. The Bible is the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15 \_\_\_\_\_

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C. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth. 1 Corinthians 2:10-14 \_\_\_\_\_

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D. The church is the pillar and foundation of truth. 1 Timothy 3:14-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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It is no wonder that we are told to put on the belt of truth. Satan's strategy is to lead us away from truth. 2 Corinthians 11:2-15 \_\_\_\_\_

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What can happen to people who aren't wearing the belt of truth?

1 Timothy 4:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

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Believers can also be plagued by wrong thinking which results from learning or believing untruths. The shield of faith is a defensive action that uses specific truths from God's word to counteract the devil's lies and accusations. When the enemy attacks, the shield extinguishes the lie or accusation with an appropriate truth or promise that you choose to believe instead of what the enemy has said.

The shield of faith, in its fullest meaning, is the sovereign presence of God. What percentage of the fiery missiles of the enemy can be extinguished? Who does the extinguishing? \_\_\_\_\_

If we don't learn to control our thoughts, we can be ensnared by the devil. This is why we must put on the helmet of salvation, the assurance and confidence that we are saved. To put on the helmet means to know with certainty that you belong to Jesus, and to actively embrace your position in Christ. You realize that you belong to God and the enemy cannot crush you, touch you, or do anything without permission from your Father. The helmet covers three areas of salvation:

**I have been saved: justification**  
**I am being saved: sanctification**  
**I will be saved: glorification**

The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Christ and He will rule forever and ever! If you feel the weight of the world, if doubts are plaguing you, if your self-image is in the pit, if thoughts of vengeance keep pushing through, if you want to throw up your hands and quit.....IT'S WAR! Make sure you are wearing your shoes! This verse doesn't mean the spreading of the gospel, because Ephesians 6:1-16 pictures Christians as standing, not advancing. Instead this refers to a believer's stability or surefootedness **from the gospel** which gives him **peace** so he can stand in the battle.

In this battle, the believer has essentially two offensive weapons: the Word of God and prayer. Prayer, however, isn't pictured as a part of the weaponry. The responsibility of every believer is to carry the battle to the enemy and invade his gates. Read Matthew 16:18 and record what you learn:

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In His encounter with Satan, Jesus resisted the devil with proper respect for his created role. Acts 19:13-20 gives an example of those who went presumptuously into battle with the devil and were overcome. There is a clear message: don't trifle with Satan! A careless, ill-advised advance may prove disastrous. Read Matthew 12:43-45, and write your thoughts here:

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The sword of the Spirit is the "*rhema*" word of God. This is not referring to the whole Bible. Rhema denotes that which is spoken, uttered in speech or writing. The rhema word is a passage of scripture which the Spirit brings to our mind that is useful to a given circumstance. One of the obvious requirements for using the sword is to know the Word. In times past, Jews used to memorize the entire first five books of the Old Testament! Jesus refuted the devil by speaking scripture to him accurately.

The word for "sword" in Ephesians 6 is "*machaira*" which means a short sword used for hand-to-hand combat. Special skill was needed to use it effectively.

So we see that becoming skilled in the teachings of the Word is critical. Read 2 Timothy 2:15 \_\_\_\_\_

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Consider this quote from Neil Anderson, author of Bondage Breaker:

"Why is it so important to speak God's Word in addition to believing it and thinking it? Because Satan is a created being and he doesn't perfectly know what you're thinking. By observing you, he can pretty well tell what you are thinking, just as any student of human behavior can. But he doesn't know what you're going to do before you do it. He can put thoughts into your mind, and he will know whether you buy his lie by how you behave."

Only God knows the thoughts and intentions of your heart and mind and only He completely knows the future. Never, never, never ascribe divine attributes to Satan. Read the following verses, recording your thoughts:

Hebrews 4:12 \_\_\_\_\_

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James 4:7 \_\_\_\_\_

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When we pray and resolve to stand, the Lord will show Himself strong. We can resist evil when:

1. We realize our position in Christ (Ephesians 2:6)
2. We pray, repent of known sin, and ask for God's wisdom (James 1:5-6)
3. When we ask for discernment (1 John 2:20,27)
4. When we rely on the sufficiency of Jesus' name (Philippians 2:9-11)
5. When we rely on Christ's atoning blood (Revelation 12:11; Colossians 1:13-20)

So, remove the ground of oppression, ridding yourself of moral compromise, deception, or the urge to exploit the weaknesses of others. You have been equipped by your covenant partner with what you need to stand!

## THINKING RIGHTLY

The problem with humans is that we have the innate desire to do things our own way. Frequently, even those who begin their stand for righteousness in earnest begin to wane in enthusiasm over time. Like little lost sheep, we wander off a little at a time. The flesh, those ingrained, self-centered habits that we have learned before conversion, war against our commitment to walk in the Spirit. This is why Paul says we must run the race to the end!

The enemy doesn't usually tempt believers to commit big, obvious sins like murder; but he begins by causing us to take something good beyond the boundaries that God establishes. Like the frog in the kettle, we don't realize we're in hot water and past the boundary of God's will. For example:

Communication can become gossip  
Anger can become rage  
Cautiousness can become unbelief  
Self-respect can become self-centeredness

We must take our thoughts captive in obedience to Christ. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

John 8:32 \_\_\_\_\_

Hosea 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 11:52 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 16:19 \_\_\_\_\_

Now compare these thoughts with insight into false knowledge:

1 Timothy 6:20 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 10:5 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Corinthians 2:14 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:15-17 identifies three areas of sin. After reading those verses, record the three here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Reread Jesus' temptation Luke 4:1-13. What were the examples of the three areas you noted above that the devil used in tempting Jesus:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Now read Genesis 3:6, and record how the devil used these three areas in the temptation of Eve:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture warns us to be on the alert for false teachers and prophets as well as deceptive spirits that operate in the world and in the church. The following steps help in thinking through some of these sorts of issues.

**ASK THE QUESTION:** In spiritual matters, a paralysis often develops in the church. Christians hesitate to question anything for fear of grieving the Spirit of God and contributing to dissension and division. But God actually does intend for Christians to question some things. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

1 Thessalonians 5:21 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_

1 John 2:18 \_\_\_\_\_

We have to realize that everything that happens in church may not originate from the Holy Spirit. Also, we have to understand that everything done in the name of Jesus is not necessarily authored by Him. It is not carnal or unspiritual to ask the question; in fact, failure to do so may short-circuit the process of discernment.



**SIDE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Scripture warns us not to grieve or quench the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19) But, there is also a danger that we may become so preoccupied with discerning that we fail to see the overall view of what God is doing. There may be groups of believers who do things differently than we do. Read Luke 9:50 and record what you learn:

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**RECOGNIZE THE MEANING OF CONFUSION:** 1 Corinthians 14:33 tells us that God is not the author of confusion. The author of confusion must then be either the flesh or the devil. Therefore, we can say with authority that we oppose confusion because it is certainly not from God. But we CANNOT SAY that all order necessarily comes from God.

**THINK THINGS THROUGH:** Many scriptures are directed to the mind. We have looked at many of them in this study. Christians are created by God, and we are magnificent, creative thinkers. Discerning believers must not despise the educational disciplines. The ability to reason and logically deduce are God-given gifts which quicken the mind and propel us toward greater understanding. At the same time, we must not become so enamored with education and logic that we are unable to believe anything that is supernatural and not logically explained. To pursue education as an end unto itself is wrong; however, the Christian who appreciates and welcomes the mental processes is likely to be more discerning.

**GOD CARES ABOUT THE CHURCH:** In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, "I will build my church." The church is marvelously diverse, tenacious, and durable. Although heresies and schisms have arisen, and persecutions have occurred, the body has continued to grow. A key attitude is asking the question, "what does this teaching, idea, etc. do to the church? Does it build it up, tear it down, threaten it, divide it, or bless it?" It is valid to realize that creative tensions sometimes are for the benefit of the church. But something that willfully fails to build the church must be looked at very carefully.

**MONITOR HOLINESS:** Hebrews 12:14 tells us that "without holiness, no one will see the Lord." 2 Corinthians 7:1 urges us to be "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Many discerning decisions can be made about many issues by simply asking, "does this attitude, action, practice, etc. contribute to personal holiness in the life of the believer?"

**KNOW THE WORD:** All questions must finally be examined in light of what the Bible says because it is the pulsating heart of Christian discernment. Read Acts 17:11 and see what the Berean church did: \_\_\_\_\_

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**ASK ANOTHER BELIEVER:** Since the body of Christ is made up of many members, and since no one has all of the gifts, an interdependence exists. We help each other with discernment, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, and many times contribute very directly in the struggle of another believer. Read 1 Kings 3:9 and discuss the motive for discernment:

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True discernment is never to promote self or to secure an advantage over another person—even an enemy. Discernment means only to make a distinction. Christian discernment has one motive—to distinguish right from wrong so that wrong can be eliminated and right can be promoted.

Discernment is not a function of the mind, but rather of the Holy Spirit in union with our spirit. When the Spirit sounds a warning, our mind, which is designed to deal with objectivity, may not be able to perceive what's wrong. In fact, if you try to interpret the warning objectively, you may miss the point entirely. Rather, when you recognize that something is wrong, stop and pray. Ask God to help. Then allow God to bring conviction as only He can.

Besides the deception of false prophets or teachers, and the deception of evil spirits, scripture warns us against self-deception. The Word reveals several patterns of behavior through which Christians become vulnerable to self-deception. Read the following verses and record the self-deception mentioned:

James 1:22 and 1 Peter 1:13 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 John 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 Corinthians 3:18, 19; Romans 1:22; 1 Corinthians 2:16 \_\_\_\_\_

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James 1:26 \_\_\_\_\_

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Galatians 6:7 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 Corinthians 6:6-10 \_\_\_\_\_

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1 Corinthians 15:33 \_\_\_\_\_

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## WHO ARE ANGELS?

We often speak of angels helping believers – or fallen ones doing the opposite. We rarely take time to ask ourselves the question: exactly who ARE the angels?

The word “angel” is translated from both Greek and Hebrew words. Going to the Old Testament, do a word study on the word “malak” and record what you learn here:

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Continue your reading in the New Testament and do a word study on the word “angelos.” Write the results: \_\_\_\_\_

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Both words have a common meaning. What is it? \_\_\_\_\_

In a course on angelology, angels are customarily divided into three groupings or choirs. Many of these have developed over time and lack clear association with scripture insofar as it pertains to actual divisions. Some sort of hierarchy of angelic beings is indicated in the Bible, although it doesn't give specific details. Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Lord of Hosts. Locate some verses that speak of the heavenly host in both the New Testament and Old Testament. Record the verses and do a word study on the word translated “hosts” here:

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As you read through the following verses, write all of the names or designations of angelic beings here:

Colossians 1:16 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 6:12 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

1 Peter 3: 22 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

These verses and others like them has led to a classification of angelic beings that I don't feel is entirely biblical. However, I do feel that it is important to know that this classification exists:

**Choir one:** Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones (alternately called "wheels" and "many eyed")

**Choir two:** Dominions, Virtues (shining ones), Powers

**Choir three:** Principalities, Archangels, Angels

In my mind, this classification may confuse types of angelic beings with tasks of angelic beings. Furthermore, Ezekiel seems to equate Cherubim with "wheels" and "many eyes." Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Ezekiel 1: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Ezekiel 10:15-22 \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Isaiah 6:1-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Cross reference to Revelation 4:8 \_\_\_\_\_

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Probably more important to people than the actual divisions of angels is what they actually do!

Read the following verses and record what the angels are doing:

- **Created by God and Christ.** Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:16
- **Worship God and Christ.** Nehemiah 9:6; Phillipians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:6
- **Are ministering Spirits.** 1 Kings 19:5; Psalm 68:17; Psalm 104:4; Luke 16:22; Acts 12:7-11; Acts 27:23; Hebrews 1:7, 14
- **Communicate the will of God and Christ.** Daniel 8:16-17; Daniel 9:21-23; Daniel 10:11; Daniel 12:6-7; Matthew 2:13, 20; Luke 1:19, 28; Acts 5:20; Acts 8:26; Acts 10:5; Acts 27:23; Revelation 1:1
- **Obey the will of God.** Psalm 103:20; Matthew 6:10
- **Execute the purposes of God.** Numbers 22:22; Psalm 103:21; Matthew 13:39-42; Matthew 28:2; John 5:4; Revelation 5:2
- **Execute the judgments of God.** 2 Samuel 24:16; 2 Kings 19:35; Psalm 35:5-6; Acts 12:23; Revelation 16:1
- **Celebrate the praises of God.** Job 38:7; Psalm 148:2; Isaiah 6:3; Luke 2:13-14; Revelation 5:11-12; Revelation 7:11-12
- **The law given by the ministration of.** Psalm 68:17; Acts 7:53; Hebrews 2:2

- **ANNOUNCED.**
  - **The conception of Christ.** Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:31
  - **The birth of Christ.** Luke 2:10-12
  - **The resurrection of Christ.** Matthew 28:5-7; Luke 24:23
  - **The ascension and second coming of Christ.** Acts 1:11
  - **The conception of John the Baptist.** Luke 1:13, 36
- **Minister to Christ.** Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43; John 1:51
- **Are subject to Christ.** Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16; Colossians 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22
- **Shall execute the purposes of Christ.** Matthew 13:41; Matthew 24:31
- **Shall attend Christ at his second coming.** Matthew 16:27; Matthew 25:31; Mark 8:38; 2 Thessalonians 1:7
- **Know and delight in the gospel of Christ.** Ephesians 3:9-10; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Peter 1:12
- **Ministration of, obtained by prayer.** Matthew 26:53; Acts 12:5, 7
- **Rejoice over every repentant sinner.** Luke 15:7, 10
- **Have charge over the children of God.** Psalm 34:7; Psalm 91:11-12; Daniel 6:22; Matthew 18:10
- **Are of different orders.** Isaiah 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Peter 3:22; Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7
- **Not to be worshipped.** Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:9
- **Are examples of meekness.** 2 Peter 2:11; Jude 1:9
- **Are wise.** 2 Samuel 14:20
- **Are mighty.** Psalm 103:20
- **Are holy.** Matthew 25:31
- **Are elect.** 1 Timothy 5:21
- **Are innumerable.** Job 25:3; Hebrews 12:22

Angels are called "sons of God" in that in their unfallen estate they are God's sons by His creation. Read the following verses and journal your thoughts:  
Job 1:6 and 38:7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Angels are also referred to as "holy ones" in the sense that they are "set apart" by God and for God as attendants to His holiness.

Read Psalm 89:5-7: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## WHERE IS GOD'S THRONE?

Thrones are usually regarded as the symbol of kingly power and dignity. Solomon's throne was noted for its splendor and magnificence.

1 Kings 10:18-20 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Clearly, a throne describes an exalted position either of earthly kings, rulers, judges, or the power with which they can act in governing judicially. Sometimes a throne is the equivalent of a reign.

In the case of God, He is also pictured as on a throne. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

1 Samuel 4:4 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Samuel 6:2 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Kings 19:15 and 1 Chronicles 29:23 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Jeremiah speaks of a different time. Read Jeremiah 3:17 and 49:38. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Continue reading Ezekiel 43:7 and note the location: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Zechariah 6:13 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thus, the permanence of the throne of David is promised. Read the following verses and journal your thoughts:

Isaiah 9:7 \_\_\_\_\_

1 Kings 2:33 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 16:5 \_\_\_\_\_

The New Testament points to Jesus as this promised king. Luke 1:32 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:30 \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews 12:2 \_\_\_\_\_

Christ Himself refers to His future state of glory. Read Matthew 25:31 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 19:28 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 22:30 \_\_\_\_\_

God's throne also speaks of His matchless glory, transcendent power and absolute sovereignty. Read 1 Kings 22:19 and 2 Chronicles 18:18 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah and Ezekiel had similar visions: Isaiah 6:1 and Ezekiel 1:26 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Compare to Daniel 7:9 and Revelation 4:2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Bible tells us that God's throne is in heaven and that heaven itself is His throne.

Psalm 11:4 \_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 66:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:34 \_\_\_\_\_

His reign is founded on righteousness and justice.

Psalm 89:14 and Psalm 97:2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

God's reign has eternal duration. Read Psalm 45:6 and compare to Hebrews 1:8 and Lamentations 5:19. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

He acts justly and kindly. Psalm 9:4 and Psalm 89:14 \_\_\_\_\_

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God defends His glory. Jeremiah 14:21 \_\_\_\_\_

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God manifests His holiness. Psalm 47:8 \_\_\_\_\_

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God distributes His grace. Hebrews 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

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The throne of God is mentioned in the following verses: 2 Chronicles 18:18; Psalm 9:4; Psalm 9:7; Psalm 11:4; Psalm 47:8; Psalm 89:14; Psalm 97:2; Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 6:1; Isaiah 66:1; Matthew 5:34; Matthew 23:22; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 12:2; Revelation 14:3; Revelation 14:5

The throne of Christ is mentioned in Matthew 19:28; Matthew 25:31; Acts 2:30; Revelation 1:4; Revelation 3:21; Revelation 4:2-10; Revelation 7:9-17; Revelation 19:4; Revelation 21:5; Revelation 22:3.

## SATAN AND GOD'S THRONE

Satan first appears as a serpent in the book of Genesis, in the Garden of Eden. Read Genesis 3 and write what you learn about the serpent: \_\_\_\_\_

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To convince yourself that this serpent is Satan, read the following:

Revelation 12:9 \_\_\_\_\_

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Revelation 20:2 \_\_\_\_\_

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Now, read through Ezekiel 28:1-10. Is this leader of Tyre a man or an angel? \_\_\_\_

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Continue reading in Ezekiel 28: 11-19. Is this king of Tyre a man or an angel?

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Where had this "king" of Tyre been? \_\_\_\_\_

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Many people believe Satan is also described in Isaiah 14:12-14: \_\_\_\_\_

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Another appellation of Satan, Lucifer, comes to us from the Latin translation of "star of the morning" or Hebrew "helel" in the Isaiah passage above. This translation was put forward in the Latin Vulgate by Jerome. It was probably never intended to be a proper noun, the actual name of Satan.

From these verses, we learn that Satan is an angel, from the order of Cherubim. He is called a "covering cherub." Search scriptures for other places where covering cherubim are mentioned and record the results here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Satan was created as a good angel but fell, sometime before the story of the fall of Adam and Even in Genesis 3. Apparently, one-third of the angels chose to follow Satan in his rebellion against God. Read Revelation 12:4 and record your thoughts here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Since we don't know the number of angels, we don't know exactly how many chose to follow Satan in this rebellion. However many it is, it is too many! Do a word study on "Satan" and record the result here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Continue reading in Job 1: 6-12 and Job 2:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_

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For more of Satan's activity, read also the following:

Zechariah 3:1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 4:1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

John 8:44 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 13:19 and 39 depict Satan as an enemy and falsifier of God's word.

Satan also played a role in the betrayal of Jesus. Read John 13:27, John 6:70 and Luke 22:53: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The whole history of the world subsequent to Christ is a struggle against the empire of Satan. Thus the Apocalypse especially depicts the history of Satan, particularly in the future as he affects the church the Jew, and the Gentiles.

Complete your reading for this session in the following verses:

Revelation 2:9 \_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 2:13. 2:24 and 12:9 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT ARE DEMONS?

Demons are depicted often in scripture, and are clearly spiritual beings. Many people differentiate them from "unclean spirits." Read the following verses and journal your thoughts:

Matthew 8:16 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 10:1 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:43-45 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Demons work in opposition to God and have allowed power over people. James 2:19 and Revelation 16:14 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Demons know who Jesus is! Matthew 8:20 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Luke 4:41 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Demons are apparently among the one-third of angels who chose to follow Satan in his rebellion against God. Because they were originally created to be good, they have actively chosen sin. They clearly have organization just as the two-thirds of angelic beings who did not choose rebellion.

Many believe they are the "sons of God" mentioned in Genesis 6:2-4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Those same “sons of God” are believed to be those mentioned in the New Testament as not keeping their own domain:

Jude 1:6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 2:4-10 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue your reading in the following passages:

Deuteronomy 32:17 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Psalms 106:37 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In Ephesians 6, demons are clearly the “principalities and powers” against which we must “wrestle.”

Now, read the perspective of Christ:

Matthew 10:8 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 12:27 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scripture frequently describes demons as “unclean spirits” who seek to oppose, afflict and deceive Christians and non-Christians alike and to incite humans to rebel against God and God’s good purposes for humankind and creation. They have the capability to harass believers and unbelievers alike. He has the ability to possess unbelievers.

Many times in the course of His ministry, Jesus cast demons out of people. As we close our study for today, find four such occasions in the New Testament and list them here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## WHERE IS HELL?

Hell is the abode of the dead, especially a place of punishment for unbelievers awaiting the second resurrection, judgment at the Great White Throne, and eternity in the Lake of Fire. Hell is an Anglo-Saxon word used to translate one Hebrew word and three Greek words in the Old and New Testaments.

The Hebrew word that translates as "hell" is *Sheol*. The word *Sheol* occurs sixty-five times in the Hebrew Bible. *Sheol* is alternately translated as "grave" or "pit." Some translations just use the word "sheol" without translation. The Old Testament uses the word to refer to a place in the depths of the earth. The expressions "go down" or "brought down" are used twenty times in connection with *Sheol*. The "depths of *Sheol*" are mentioned six times, and four times *Sheol* is described as the farthest point from heaven.

*Sheol* is described in terms of overwhelming floods, water, or waves. Read Jonah 2:2-6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Sometimes, *Sheol* is pictured as a hunter setting snares for its victim, binding them with cords, or snatching them from the land of the living. Sometimes *sheol* is called a prison with bars, or a place of no return.

The three Greek words often translated "hell" are *hades*, *gehenna*, and *tartaroo*. *Hades* was the name of the Greek god of the underworld and the name of the underworld itself. The Septuagint—the earliest Greek translation of the Old Testament—used *hades* to translate the Hebrew word *Sheol*.

Whereas in the Old Testament, the distinction in the fates of the righteous and the wicked was not always clear, in the New Testament *hades* refers to a place of torment opposed to heaven. In Matthew 16:18 *hades* is not simply a place of the dead but represents the power of the underworld.

Jesus said the gates of *hades* would not prevail against His church.

*Gehenna* is the Greek form of two Hebrew words *ge hinnom* meaning "valley of Hinnom." The term originally referred to a ravine on the south side of Jerusalem where pagan deities were worshiped. It became a garbage dump and a place of abomination where fire burned continuously and a place for the worship of

Molech, which involved infant sacrifice. *Gehenna* became synonymous with "a place of burning."

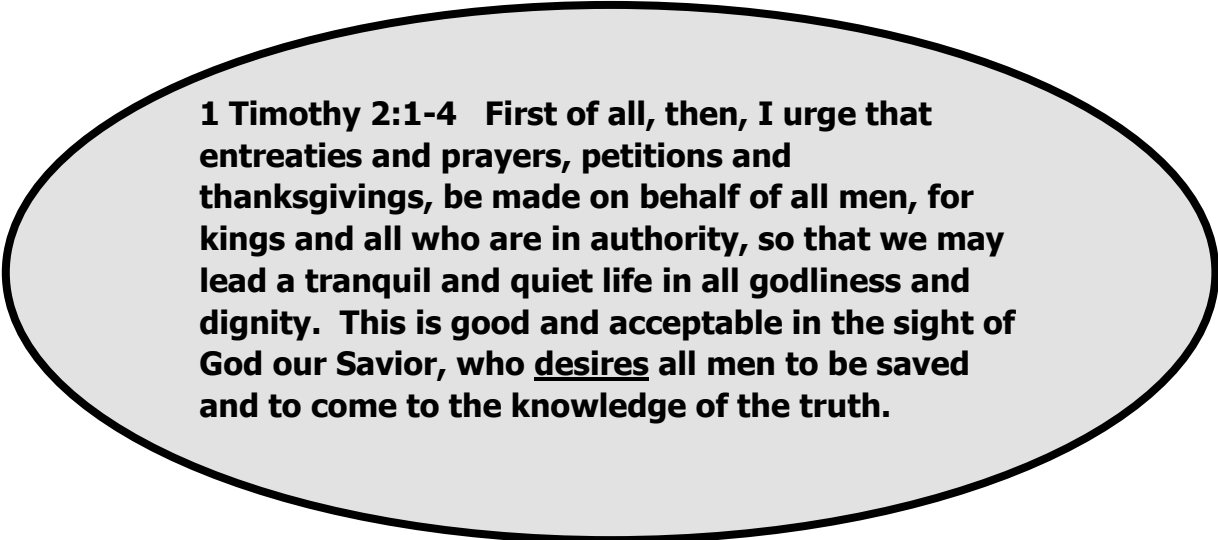
One time the Greek word *tartaroo* "cast into hell" appears in the New Testament.

Read 2 Peter 2:4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The word appears in classical Greek to refer to a subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead. It was thought of as a place of punishment. In the sole use of the word in the New Testament it refers to the place of punishment for rebellious angels.

In recent years, many teachers in the church have begun to minimize the concept of hell, arguing that a good God wouldn't condemn anyone to hell. They also cite the following verses:



**1 Timothy 2:1-4 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

Do a word study on "desires" in the verses quoted above and write your findings here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notice that this word is in the indicative mode and is presenting an active option from a subjective impulse.

In recent years, several evangelical writers have decided that hell is a place of purification where people are prepared to spend a life with God. In other words, after purification, everyone is eventually saved. This is very like the Catholic concept of purgatory. This viewpoint is called "Universalism." The most famous person arguing in favor of universalism was an early church leader named Origen (185-254 AD). The church later called his beliefs heretical, but that didn't stop others from adopting them. Most recently Thomas Talbott, Gregory MacDonald, Clark Pinnock, and Rob Bell have written compelling articles and books embracing the concept that all will eventually be saved.

The most compelling argument against their position that I have read comes from Francis Chan and Preston Sprinkle in a book called Erasing Hell. The introduction to this book starts like this, "If you are excited to read this book, you have issues." Clearly I do have issues with universalism, and I can recommend Chan and Preston's book because it is well researched biblically and accurately footnoted.

Jesus clearly had no problem standing against the beliefs of the religious leaders while He was on earth. The following verses are helpful in understanding the perspective of Jesus on hell:

Matthew 25:31-46 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 23:33 \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 13:30-50 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 18:8-9 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 8:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 22:13 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 25:30 \_\_\_\_\_

So, from careful study, my position on hell is as follows:

1. Hell is a real place; it is not somewhere that we see, but it is real nonetheless
2. Hell is the place where the soul/spirit of people who have not received Christ as savior go at death
3. Before the death of Christ, all people seem to have gone to hell, which seems to have been divided into three parts:
  - A. Abraham's bosom or Paradise
  - B. Another location on the other side of a "gulf" where people went who had never loved God while living
  - C. The abyss or tarterus, where angels who did not keep their domain are bound

Read the following verses that support this position:

Luke 16:20-25 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I believe that at the death of Christ, He descended into Paradise, gave the gospel message to those who had loved God but had died prior to the death of Christ, and led them out of Paradise to heaven.

Read Ephesians 4:1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

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So, my thoughts are that the "Paradise" side of hell is now vacant, and that the side "across the gulf" is still occupied and growing in occupancy as people die who have not received Christ.

You have your copy of God's Word, so you should read it carefully. If you are struggling with some of the positions that deny hell, I will be glad to talk with you further.

## WHAT IS THE ABYSS

Now, we will turn our attention to the abyss and those that inhabit it. When we look at Genesis 6:1-4, we see what many Bible scholars believe is a discussion of fallen angels, demons, having sexual relationships with human women. It is believed that these are being described in the following verses:

Jude 1:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

This verse seems to discuss improper sexual relationships, whether angelic/human or same sex human.

2 Peter 2:4-5 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

These verses seem to tie the flood during the time of Noah to the actions of these angelic beings.

Clearly, demons know that there is an abyss prepared for them. Read the following verses and record what you learn here:

Luke 8:30-31 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

There is a point during the tribulation when the abyss seems to be opened and demons released to participate in judgment on the earth. Read the following verses and record what you learn:



Revelation 9:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In the space provided, carefully note characteristics of those coming out of the abyss:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Note also the name and nature of the ruler of these beings coming out of the abyss: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do a word study on his Greek and Hebrew names and write the result here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## WHERE IS THE NEW JERUSALEM

Although believers usually think of heaven as their eternal abode, scripture seems to indicate that believers will instead be living eternally in the New Jerusalem, which descends to earth after the Millennium.

Read the allegory that Paul develops in Galatians 4:21-26 and record what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Continue your reading in these verses:

Hebrews 11:10 \_\_\_\_\_

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Hebrews 12:22 \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Isaiah 52:1-2 and note the contrast that is being made: \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Revelation 3:12 and journal what you learn about the New Jerusalem here:

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Revelation 21:2 also represents the New Jerusalem as coming down out of heaven. Read this verse and write what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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Now continue reading through Revelation 21:1-21 and write here all of the characteristics of the city that you see, including where it is located:

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Read Revelation 21:22-24 and note that there is no temple in the New Jerusalem. That is directly contrasted with heaven, where a temple is pictured. Read the following:

Revelation 7:15 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 11:19 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 14:15-17 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 15:5-8 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 16:1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Revelation 16:17 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The New Jerusalem seems to come down from heaven to be on earth and serve as the permanent home of those who have believed in Christ. Remember that there is a new heaven and a new earth at this time. This may give more meaning to Jesus words:

Matthew 5:5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Although inheriting the earth may not seem so good right now, when it is placed in this context, it seems like a really good thing!

Complete your reading for this session in Revelation 22:1-6, noting everything you learn about the New Jerusalem here: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## THE NEW EARTH

As we look at the duties of our kinsman redeemer, Jesus, we find that there are four duties that He must perform. We know that he has paid the price for all four; but He has not yet transacted business with everything He has purchased. HE WILL!

1. Duty one: redeem relative in slavery
2. Duty two: redeem land relative lost
3. Duty three: participate in levirate marriage when required
4. Duty four: serve as avenger of blood

Today we are looking at duty #2. God had given the earth to mankind to superintend. Read the following verses and record what you learn:

Genesis 1:28 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

After sin entered the picture at the fall, mankind clearly lost control of the earth. Read the following verses:

John 12:31 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

John 16:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A few years ago, I watched a documentary that promoted the concept of the earth being destroyed by water—massive flooding caused by global warming.

Read Genesis 9:13-16 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Scripture does, however, tell us how the earth will be destroyed. Read 2 Peter 3:7 and journal what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue your reading in Isaiah 24:3-6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Jesus indirectly speaks of the earth passing away in Matthew 5:18 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

And a similar statement in Mark 13:31 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continue your reading in 2 Peter 3:10-16 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Over 2700 years ago, Isaiah saw the new heaven and new earth coming.

**Isaiah 65:17**

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;  
And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind."

**Isaiah 66:22**

"For just as the new heavens and the new earth  
Which I make will endure before Me," declares the Lord,  
"So your offspring and your name will endure."

Although we see the seas mentioned many times in the book of Revelation, particularly in regard to judgments on the earth, we find in Revelation also that the new earth has no sea.

**Revelation 21:1-4**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

Complete your reading for this session in Revelation 21:5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do a word study on "new" in the above passage and record the results here: \_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

## WHAT IS THE NEW HEAVEN?

It isn't really too hard for us to figure out why we need the new earth. We know that people have pretty much messed up this one. But, why do we need a new heaven? After all, we think of heaven as God's place.

Clearly, sin is what has rendered the earth in need of replacement. We might make the same argument for heaven. The angels who followed Satan in sin have a domain in the heavens. And they also apparently have access to the area of heaven where God's throne is. (or at least they have had in the past)

Read Job 1:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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Job 2:1 \_\_\_\_\_

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If we think of a tri-part heaven as we discussed earlier, it is clear that the heaven immediately adjacent to the earth changes dramatically in the future.

During the tribulation period, the sun and moon are changed. Read the following verses and write what you learn:

Matthew 24:29 \_\_\_\_\_

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Mark 13:24, 25 \_\_\_\_\_

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And, in the New Jerusalem, on or over the New Earth, there is no sun or moon at all. Read Revelation 21:23 and write what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Revelation 21:1 makes it very clear that the first heaven has "passed away." Do a word study on this phrase, and record what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

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It is interesting to note, however, that scripture speaks of the new heavens as a plural.

**Isaiah 65:17**

"For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;  
And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.

**Isaiah 66:22**

"For just as the new heavens and the new earth  
Which I make will endure before Me," declares the Lord,  
"So your offspring and your name will endure.

**2 Peter 3:13**

But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

This is in keeping with Genesis 1:1, where God created the "heavens and the earth."

Continue your reading in Isaiah 66:22 \_\_\_\_\_

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2 Peter 3:7-12 describe not only the end of the present earth, but also the present earth. Reread these verses, particularly noting what they say about the heavens: \_\_\_\_\_

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The nature of the "new heavens and earth" is variously described in the Bible; however, clearly God is the cause of this new creation.

Read Hebrews 12:28 and write a description of the new heaven and earth: \_\_\_\_\_

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Read Isaiah 66:22 and note how long the new heavens last: \_\_\_\_\_

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In 2 Peter 3:13 the new world is described as one "in which righteousness dwells." In Revelation, the nature of the new heaven and earth stands in marked contrast to the old heaven and earth. The Greek word translated "new" designates something which already exists, but now appears in a new way.

The new world is the old world gloriously renewed in several ways:

Purity (Revelation 21:27)

Freedom from the wrath of God (Revelation 22:3)

Perfect fellowship of the saints with God

## THE LAKE OF FIRE?

Although we generally think of hell being the eternal abode of the unsaved, scripture tells us that their eternal abode is actually the lake of fire. Read Revelation 20:13-14, and journal what you learn here: \_\_\_\_\_

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Christians speak of the rapture, the glorious resurrection of the bodies of believers from the grave and the transformation of those bodies into glorious heavenly ones. Scripture also speaks of a resurrection of the unsaved dead. Read the following verses and write what you learn:

Revelation 20:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_

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Daniel 12:1-2 \_\_\_\_\_

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Those who are going to everlasting contempt seem to be the same ones going into the lake of fire, once they have been shown that their actions do not warrant salvation and therefore their names aren't in the Lamb's book of life.

Read Revelation 20:15 \_\_\_\_\_

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This judgment and sentencing seems to occur immediately before the new heavens and earth are revealed leading many Bible scholars to believe that the earth cannot be renewed as long as it is polluted by the bodies of unbelievers.

Scripture tells us that in addition to the unsaved dead, there are notable others in the Lake of Fire.

Read Revelation 19:20 and write what you learn: \_\_\_\_\_

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After reading through Revelation 13, write who the beast and the false prophet are in terms of Satan's end-time trinity: \_\_\_\_\_

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In addition to these, someone else spends eternity in the Lake of Fire. Read Revelation 20:10 and record your thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

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Revelation 20:14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire.  
**This is the second death, the lake of fire.**

Revelation tells us that the lake of fire is the second death. But there is good news for believers! Read the following verses and record the good news:

Revelation 2:11 \_\_\_\_\_

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Revelation 20:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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But there is bad news for others:

Matthew 25:41 \_\_\_\_\_

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Revelation 14:11 \_\_\_\_\_

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Jude 1:7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Isaiah 66:24 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Scriptures indicate that the unsaved dead will spend eternity in the same place as the devil, the antichrist, and the false holy spirit. This is also the permanent resting place of death and hell. It doesn't sound like a good place to be hanging out forever. No matter how much we may dislike someone, or how badly they may have treated us, no believer can truly want this destiny for another person. Christians should make every effort to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those around them.

The old saying is eternally true:

**Born once, die twice  
Born twice, die once**

The lake of fire is the second death. As we conclude this study, read John 3:5-8:

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