

Lesson 96

TEXT Ephesians 2:1-8; 1 John 1:9

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 45:22; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Revelation 22:17

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that salvation is the gift of God's grace by which we receive forgiveness of sins.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. — Titus 2:11

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. — Ephesians 2:8

RESOURCE MATERIAL Tract No. 30 — The New Birth

**ANSWER
TITLE: Changed
SEARCH
TITLE: Salvation**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

On the Epistle to the Ephesians: This magnificent epistle was evidently addressed to the church in Ephesus, but intended also as a circular letter to neighboring churches. The omission of the phrase, "at Ephesus," (Ephesians 1:1) in two of the oldest manuscripts suggests that early copyists shied away from localizing the letter when it was also intended for reading in other churches in the vicinity. Paul had spent three years in the Ephesian metropolis. He wrote this letter about A.D. 61 or 62 from prison in Rome, the first of his so-called Prison Epistles, and sent it to Asia, together with Colossians and Philemon.

The word, "grace," occurs twelve times, showing that this epistle is an exposition of the Grace of God.

Salvation is the principle theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Without any allusion to salvation, the Bible would be a very small book. God first stated His plan of redemption in the Garden of Eden. From then on, we have many types and shadows in the Scriptures that point to the coming Redeemer. Many of the prophets foretold details of His coming and of His death, and they were accurately fulfilled as prophesied.

YOUR OPENER

Salvation

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RESPONSES

1. Ask your students for their definitions, and use these to establish that all who are not saved are spiritually dead and that salvation brings spiritual life. Discussion should bring out that to be saved a person must first be convicted. See John 6:44. This conviction is evidence of God's grace, for God would not be obligated to convict a sinner. Conviction helps lead the sinner to repentance, which is also necessary before receiving salvation. See 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.

2. Allow time for students to give their responses. Hopefully they will bring out that walking according to the course of this world means following the trends and fashions of this present life. In 1 John 2:15, we read that if a man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Discuss with your students that a person need not be a lawbreaker or someone very wicked to be walking according to the course of this world. The Bible says that if a man is not for God, he is against God. See Matthew 12:30. Salvation brings about a change.

3. In discussing the answers to this question, the students should conclude that if we do what 1 John 1:9 says—confess our sins to the Lord—He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. The key verse brings out that we obtain salvation through faith. Unless a person believes that the shed Blood of Jesus actually avails for him, he cannot receive this experience. The necessity for doing this is that we might have eternal life. See John 3:16. The students should be aware that the soul will spend eternity in one of two places, and salvation is absolutely essential to reaching Heaven. See Matthew 18:3 and Romans 6:23.

After a person has been convicted of his sins and is truly repentant, he must believe that the Lord will save him. He will then receive an experience of Bible salvation, an act of God's grace by which he receives forgiveness of sins. This is not just a mental assent or a hope-so or guess-so type of Christianity, but His Spirit will witness with that one that he is a child of God. See Romans 8:16.

1. Give the meaning of the word *quicken*, as used in the first verse of our text. Review the last two lessons which deal with conviction and repentance. How do these two words relate to the word *quicken*?

2. Explain in your own words what walking "according to the course of this world" might mean.

3. Peter tells us that our salvation has been purchased through the shedding of the Blood of Jesus on Calvary. He speaks of this as redemption, and explains that this was God's plan for our salvation before the world was created. These words are precious to us when we consider that Jesus gave His own life to be our Redeemer. *Redemption* means literally, "the buying back and freeing of our souls from sin and its penalty, death," which was brought upon the world by Adam's transgression. Jesus paid the ransom price in the only way possible to satisfy God's justice, by the shedding of His innocent Blood. How can this great salvation be obtained, and why is it necessary?

11

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. If after one has been converted he then returns to sin, is that person still a Christian? Using Ezekiel 33:12; 2 Peter 2:20,21; and 1 John 3:8,9; 5:18, explain your answer.

5. Our text states that God is merciful and has great love for us. Do you think He might overlook just a little sin in our lives? Explain.

6. Who is the prince of the power of the air? What influence does he have in the lives of sinners? How does he attract the Christian?

7. Who are the children of disobedience? Who are the children of wrath?

8. Tell in your own words the meaning of verses 6 and 7 of our text.

4. Discuss with the class that when a person sins he is no longer a Christian. If he returns to sin (backslides) he breaks his relationship with God, and would need to repent and do his first works again in order to be restored. Some religious organizations have established a doctrine called "eternal security," saying that once you are saved, or become a child of God, you are always saved no matter what kind of life you live. This is not according to God's Word. Jesus said, "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). Continue the discussion bringing out that this endurance is a life being lived without sin.

5. In referring to the former question, continue your discussion concerning God's great love and mercy even to the extent of giving His Son to die on the cross. If one commits even one sin, he must repent and seek God's forgiveness. If not, he will go to a lost eternity because of the rejection of God's love and mercy. When His love comes into the heart, all sin goes out.

6. The prince of the power of the air is Satan. He is the spirit that works and rules in the lives of the disobedient. Ask the class to enumerate different ways that Satan might approach a person to bring about his spiritual downfall. Probably the class will bring out that sometimes Satan appears as an angel of light while at other times as a roaring lion. He may come in the form of temptation to evil, maybe as a doubt, fear, or discouragement. He may come as flattery or a lie, or as false accusation against a Christian. Discuss with the students how to obtain the victory against the devil: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

7. The students should understand that the reference to "children of disobedience" does not refer just to lawbreakers or those disobedient to parents or teachers. All who are disobedient to God become part of this category. In discussing the phrase "children of wrath" the students should conclude that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23) and thus are subject to the wrath of God until they are saved.

8. Encourage the students to give their responses which should point out that these verses summarize the results of taking advantage of God's salvation. In concluding this lesson discuss with the class that verse 6 seems to speak of Christian fellowship here on earth. Verse 7 focuses on the ultimate reward of everlasting life in ages to come.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is sin?

Name the advantages of having salvation. What are the advantages of being a sinner?

What does it mean to "confess our sins"?

What does it mean to be saved? Saved from what?

How do we get saved? What do we have to do first?

Why do we need to be saved?

How can we tell when God saves us? How will our lives be changed afterwards?

Our ANSWER story brought out that sometimes people pretend to be something they are not. Why will it eventually show up if we pretend to be a Christian, if in fact we have never had a change of heart?

What does *quicken* mean in Ephesians 2:1? (It means, "to restore life.")

Although we are still breathing and are still very much alive, why do you think we need to be brought back to life as Paul says in Ephesians? What make us dead spiritually?

Discuss what the grace of God is.

Name some differences between a person who is saved and one who is still in sin.

THINGS TO DO

Present a beautifully gift-wrapped box to the students. In the box put a sign that says "salvation." Before opening the gift box, discuss with the students what a gift is (i.e. a token of love to someone you care for). Make sure that the students understand that this beautiful gift from God is for everyone, regardless of nationality or merit.

Material needed: Black paint and paint thinner (use oil paint).

Presentation: "The other day, I was painting and I got some paint on my finger, just as you see I have today. We are going to let this paint represent sin. Everyone born into this world has a sinful heart, for "all have sinned" the Bible says. The question is how to get rid of sin. There are people who try to cover it up like this. (Close hand.) You see what happens—it spreads. (Paint will be

on the palm of your hand.) Perhaps you can cover up sin from the sight of others, but not from the sight of God. I can try to wash it off, but it won't wash off—by our own efforts we can't wash sin away. People try to remove sin in many different ways but they all fail. Let's try this paint remover. The paint comes off. Just as there is only one way to remove paint, so there is only one way to remove sin—by the Blood of Jesus which was shed on Calvary. Use a small cardboard box (shoe-box size) and fill it with dirt to represent a person's life. Pull several dandelions out of the ground (roots and all if possible) and transplant them into the box of dirt. The dandelions represent sin (they keep multiplying and they choke green grass and beautiful flowers). For this lesson, chop off the top of the dandelions (leaving the roots) to show that when Jesus saves us from sin, He takes the sin out of our lives.

Use a manual-winding wrist watch that is stopped. This watch represents someone who does not have Jesus in his heart. Life just does not seem to be going anywhere and there is no purpose to his life. (Wind the watch.) When Jesus comes into the heart, it begins to tick—it has new life. It is no longer the same.

Answers for ANSWER

A New Beginning

Salvation is a new beginning — the most important beginning of all. Below is a list of sentences with a word hidden in each. Jenny has listed all the hidden words for you. They are things we gain and things we are rid of when we are Born Again. We've found the first one for you. Have fun finding the others.

1. All the activity is in school and not at home.
2. That horse likes grain, but alfalfa it hates.
3. We all agree Diane is beautiful.
4. She was told that everyone had gone home.
5. A real oven will get hot, but not a toy one.
6. Why did Mom tape a cereal coupon to her purse?
7. Bring your stuff early or you'll be left behind.
8. That frog would hop everywhere if we let it.
9. There is nothing more yucky than germs.
10. The clerk told us that if we went down to aisle J, oysters would be on the left.

FAITH
HATE
LOVE
ANGER
PEACE
SINS
JOY
FEAR
GREED
HOPE

Jenny

Next divide the words and write them on the correct sign at the bottom of the page.

GAIN
Faith
Love
Peace
Joy
Hope

RID
Hate
Anger
Sins
Fear
Greedy