



THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

Forever with the LORD

Introductory Bible Study and for Urgent Situations

Guidelines:

This Bible study was created for two purposes:

1. As an introductory study presenting the big picture of God's plan for humankind and creation. Areas of concern may then be addressed by the appropriate bible studies.
2. *Urgent situations*—where someone wants to be right with God but the time available may be very short.

Generally, the guidelines for any Bible Study also apply here, particularly the following:

- *Prayer*: Apart from Christ we can do nothing (John 15:5); no one comes to Jesus unless the Father draws them (John 6:44, 65); all spiritual growth is from God (1 Corinthians 3:7); and faith itself is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). We must pray therefore that God will open a door to clearly proclaim the mystery of Christ (Colossians 4:3-4), and that our family member's or friend's heart will be responsive (1 Thessalonians 3:1).
- *Simplicity*: The focus is Faith, Repentance, and Baptism.
- *Flexibility*: As with any study, this is merely a tool and guideline. The actual Scriptures used/personal sharing/cultural considerations/etc. should be adapted to each situation and to those involved.
- *Urgency*: If you're dealing with an urgent situation (e.g., rapidly deteriorating medical condition) the objective is conversion as soon as possible. This may mean as few as one or two bible study sessions and, assuming an appropriate response, baptism immediately afterwards.
- *Any disciple can successfully lead this study*. We suggest however you coordinate with your ministry leader or evangelist with help from your small group.

THE HOPE OF HEAVEN: FOREVER WITH THE LORD

1. GOD LOVES YOU AND WANTS A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOU.

Matthew 22:37-40 **The Greatest Commandment**

Genesis 1:26 **Made in the Image of God**

John 3:16 **God Loves You / God Has a Plan for You**
Jeremiah 29:11-13

These Scriptures reveal God's desire for an extraordinary, loving relationship between *you* and *Him*. But, there is a big problem...

2. HUMANITY IS SINFUL AND SEPARATED FROM GOD.

Romans 3:23 **The Sinfulness of the Human Race**

We were created to glorify God, but because we have chosen to go our own way (like Adam and Eve, Genesis 3)—failing to obey, honor and give thanks to God—humankind's relationship with Him is *broken*. Our tendencies towards selfishness, unresponsiveness, active rebellion, and passive indifference are all evidence of what the Bible calls **SIN**.

Isaiah 59:1-2 **Humanity Is Separated**
Sin has created a barrier between us and God



Romans 6:23 **Death is the Consequence of Humanity's Sin**
Not merely physical death. "Death" implies *eternal separation from God*.

Next, we learn the *only* way to undo our separation from God...

3. GOD SENT JESUS TO REMOVE HUMANITY'S SIN

Colossians 1:13-20 **Forgiveness and Peace Through the Cross**

Romans 5:8 **Proof of God's Love for You**

Philippians 2:9-11 **Jesus Christ is LORD of Heaven and Earth**
Romans 14:7-12 The name above every name; every knee, everywhere will bow
All will stand before the judgment seat of God. Are you ready?

Acts 4:11-12 **Jesus Is the Only Way**
John 14:6

4. WE MUST HAVE FAITH IN WHAT GOD HAS DONE THROUGH JESUS

John 3:16 **Belief (faith) In the Son Guarantees Eternal Life**

Ephesians 2:8-9 **We Are Saved by Faith**

Your FAITH is expressed in two important ways:

1) By turning away from sin

2 Peter 3:9 **God Wants Everyone to Repent**

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 **Godly Sorrow** (an attitude of repentance) **Leads to Salvation**
Your desire is no longer to please yourself but to please God

2) By your baptism

Acts 2:38 **For the Forgiveness of Sin**, a promise for all
From *being separated from God* to being united with Him

IN SUMMARY:

1. God loves you and wants a relationship with you.
2. But the human race has fallen into sin and is separated from God.
3. Therefore God sent his Son, Jesus, to remove Humanity's sin against God.
4. We must have FAITH in what God has done through Jesus.

Romans 10:8-13 **Jesus Your LORD and Savior**
All who come to Jesus to be saved must make Him LORD of their life

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

The Bible says if you call on the name of the Lord you will be saved:

Q: Do you want to be saved?

Calling on the name of the LORD means confessing Jesus as your LORD and believing that God raised him from the dead:

Q: Are you willing to confess Jesus as your LORD?

Q: Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sin and that God raised Jesus from the dead?

FAITH—believing in your heart—is expressed by 1) turning away from sin, and 2) being baptized in Jesus' *name* (meaning: "by His authority" and "on behalf of His character and reputation"):

Q: Are you willing to turn away from your sin?

Q: Are you willing to be baptized in Jesus' name?

If so, God has promised you forgiveness of sin (removal of eternal separation) and restoration of God's plan for an amazing relationship with *you*—here on Earth and forever in the age to come.

WHAT TO DO NEXT (for the Study leader):

1. If this is an Introductory Study, specific concerns may now be addressed by appropriate further Bible studies.
2. If this is an Urgent Situation and the candidate is ready and willing to be baptized:
 - If conditions allow, give the candidate an opportunity to confess unconfessed sin.
 - You may proceed with the baptism.

<p>Remember: Prayerfully adapt each study accordingly. Possible alternate passages to consider:</p> <p>1. God's love and plan</p> <p>Genesis 1:10-31 Original design of Man and Creation is very good"</p> <p>Proverbs 8:31 Delighting in humankind</p> <p>Luke 12:32 Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom</p> <p>John 10:10 Life to the full</p> <p>2. Man is sinful and separated</p> <p>Ecclesiastes 7:20 No one does not sin</p> <p>Psalm 143:2 No one living is righteous</p> <p>Romans 3:9-19 The entire world is sinful and accountable</p> <p>Ephesians 2:1, 12; 4:17-18 Alienation from God</p>	<p>3. God sent Jesus to remove sin</p> <p>Isaiah 53:5 Punished in your place. God alone is able to remove sin against God</p> <p>John 1:1,14 The Word was God; the word became flesh</p> <p>1 John 4:9-10 Jesus was sacrificed for your sin</p> <p>Titus 2:11-14 Salvation, deny godlessness, cleansed by Christ</p> <p>Hebrews 1:3 Christ is the radiance of God's glory; purification of sin</p> <p>4. Saved by faith in Jesus</p> <p>John 6:40 Faith In the Son guarantees eternal life</p> <p>Galatians 5:6 Faith expressed through love</p> <p>Isaiah 55:7 Faith expressed by repentance leads to forgiveness</p> <p>Mark 16:16 Faith and Baptism</p> <p>Galatians 3:26-27 Faith expressed by Baptism: clothed with Christ, sons of God</p> <p>Colossians 2:12 Faith expressed by Baptism: buried with Christ; raised through faith</p>
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Follow-up: After baptism, if time permits, consider *teaching to obey* (cf. Matthew 28:20) via the appropriate Bible study series (e.g., Foundations of Faith). If the (medical) situation worsens, prepare our new brother or sister to meet God. Should the situation improve, follow-up may emphasize a repentant lifestyle/living the Christian life/and discipleship.