

LESSON 1

MARCH 2, 2008

FATHER, FORGIVE THEM

BIBLE BASIS: Lesson Scripture: Christ on the cross says, “Father, forgive them.” Luke 23:33-34; Colossians 1:13-22

BIBLE TRUTH: Christ’s death on the cross makes it possible for God to forgive the sins of all who believe in Christ as Savior.

MEMORY VERSE: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

Colossians 1:13-14

LESSON AIM: That your students will believe in Jesus as their Savior and accept God’s forgiveness for their sins.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles, Student Books, Teaching Aids, paper, pens, dry-erase board, markers, and index cards.

**OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED/
TEACHER’S NOTES:**

LESSON OVERVIEW

**LIFE NEED FOR
TODAY’S LESSON**

FOCUS

Read and discuss the feature in the Student Book.

Answer questions about forgiveness.

BIBLE LEARNING

BIBLE STUDY

Complete a study of Colossians.

View the meaning of salvation.

BIBLE APPLICATION

Develop a three-step outline of

forgiveness based on the Scripture for today.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE

ACTION

Read a testimony from the Student Book.

Student responds to Christ's offer of salvation.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

LUKE 23:33-34

COLOSSIANS 1:13-22

LUKE 23:33-34

33. And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots

COLOSSIANS 1:13-22

13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15. Who is the image of the invisible

God, the firstborn of every creature: 16. For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

19. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20. And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

21. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

22. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Luke 23:33-34; Colossians 1:13-22. After Jesus was taken to Golgotha, which is Aramic for the Place of the Skull, He was nailed to a cross to die with two criminals. This fulfilled the

prophecy that He would be “numbered with the transgressors.” (Isaiah 53:12) Jesus asked God to forgive those who were responsible for His crucifixion. Jesus’ executioners did not realize they were killing the man who would one day be their judge. The Book of Revelation says when Jesus returns, “every eye will see him, even those who pierced him.” (Revelation 1:7)

According to Paul, God made a “kingdom transfer” with the Colossian Christians, delivering them from the dominion of darkness into His reign of light. When Paul described Jesus as the “firstborn over all creation” (Colossians 1:15), he was not saying Christ is a created being as the Jehovah’s Witnesses claim. He described Jesus as the Creator of all things (He did not create Himself). Being the firstborn means He holds the inheritance rights of the eldest son. Because of this, He is the supreme ruler over all things: thrones or powers or rulers or authorities (verse 16).

Paul also referred to Christ as the firstborn from among the dead (verse 18), meaning that he was the first to rise from the dead and remain alive forever. Several people in the Bible were raised from the dead, only to die again. Christ’s Resurrection is eternal; the same power that raised Him from the dead will raise believers. (I Corinthians 6:14)

Paul apparently responded to a heresy that emerged in the Colossian church that questioned the deity of Christ. That is why Paul emphasized God’s fullness dwelling in Christ (Colossians 1:19). Paul wanted to make it clear that Jesus Christ is one with God, and is God.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS

In their efforts to discover their identity, teens are often impulsive and make poor choices. Carrying the crippling weight out of guilt for some of these actions is one consequence they’re not usually prepared for. Teens feel guilt as an intense personal feeling of failure. It can be a wedge that stands between them and relationships they cherish.

Forgiveness is a difficult concept for teens to accept in their world of black and white justice. Some will try other routes around their guilt. Their denial or shifting blame to others only dulls the ache within. Likewise, shame over sin will not save them. It’s only when teenagers receive Christ as Lord and Savior that these painful walls of guilt are torn down. Forgiveness does not mean the misdeed (or even its consequences) disappears, but rather that the resulting guilt no longer has a stranglehold on their happiness.

TEACHING TIPS AND IDEAS

Some students are paralyzed by the shame of their sins, especially if they have been caught. Expect to see a lot of masks this morning when the topic comes around to personal sin. There may be a lot of turmoil behind those serene faces, so don’t let them fool you. In the Life Need For Today’s Lesson section of this lesson, emphasize the concept of taking responsibility for personal sin – not blaming others or the cultural environment for their wrongdoing. It is only when a person accepts

responsibility for sin that he or she can experience the forgiveness of God.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

FOCUS

AIM: That your students answer questions about forgiveness.

During this quarter, you will be studying portions of the Epistle of Colossians. Each of the four lessons on Colossians will be coordinated with one of the statements Christ made from the cross. This lesson deals with Luke 23:34 when Jesus says, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Begin this lesson by picking four volunteers to read the feature article, "It's an Outrage" from the Student Book. After each student reads a section of the article, have the class respond to the preceding question or statement.

Have a student read the introduction to the lesson. How can He say, "Father, forgive them"? Who is He? What does He mean? Jesus is God in the flesh. Jesus took the punishment for the sins of the world, so we could be forgiven and restored in relationship to God.

Choose a volunteer to read the next section, "What didn't they know? What don't we know?"

How come the people didn't realize they were crucifying the Messiah whom God

sent to save us? They were hoping for a different kind of Messiah. They wanted someone who would overthrow the oppressive Romans, not save them from oppressive sin. They were shortsighted, selfish, and close to God's wisdom.

Have the other volunteer read the next section. I'm glad I didn't have any part in this crucifixion. The soldiers and the Pharisees are the ones who need to be forgiven – not me, right? We have all sinned (Romans 3:23); it does not matter that we were not actually present at the Crucifixion. Sin was the reason we needed forgiveness and the reason Christ was crucified.

Now have a student read the last section, What is Forgiveness? Why did Jesus have to die? Jesus had to die because God loved us so much and wanted to have a relationship with each one of us. The only way He could have a relationship with us was to provide a sacrifice for our sins.

No matter how we feel about ourselves – whether we feel like we've never committed any serious sin or whether we feel so sinful that no one will forgive us – the fact remains; we are all sinners and Christ died on the cross so that our sins might be forgiven.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will examine God's plan to reconcile sinners to Himself.

You might read the Scripture from several Bible versions.

As you prepare for class, work through the Bible Study completely on your own. Anticipate questions and problems that might come up. Then as you teach, decide which of the supplementary questions you need to guide students toward the Bible Truth.

Depending on how much time you have, you may want to use all of them or none of them. Pace yourself so you have time for all four steps of the lesson. There are also optional activities for those who have more time, or for those who want to take a different approach. Use your own discretion as to which activities are most appropriate for your class, and pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you in the communication of God's Word to your students. Now on to the lesson.

FROM THE STUDENT BOOK

Real Forgiveness For Real Sins

Contrary to how some artists depict the Crucifixion, Jesus' death was gory and bloody. He felt real pain as He suffered a slow, torturous death. But something else was happening as Jesus died. Something about sin and forgiveness. Read about the realities of Jesus' death in Luke 23:33-34 and Colossians 1:13-22.

Choose a student to read these passages slowly and clearly.

1. Give the students a sheet of paper and pen. In ten words or less, write your first impression of what these passages are about. **(There's a good chance that students may prefer to answer this question orally. If so, call on two or three**

to answer. Say something like this: "What did you get out of these verses?" Make this quick and informal. Don't try to fill in with your own answers yet.)

2. Go back and look at Colossians 1:13-22 more closely. Draw a wavy line under each statement that says something about who Jesus Christ is. **(Answers may vary here. That's OK. The important thing is for you to encourage students to talk about what they have marked.)**

Summary: Jesus Christ is God's "dear Son" in whom we have redemption. He is the firstborn of every creature, meaning the supreme heir. All things were created by Him and for Him.

You might want to point out to students that Christ is not only over creation as we know it (visible things). He is also over things in Heaven and over the spiritual world (invisible things). The words "thrones, powers, rulers or authorities" may refer to the various orders of angels.

Imagine you are talking to a soldier who has just seen Jesus die. The soldier says, "You saw Him die; I saw Him die. Does that mean God is dead? If so, who is going to lead the followers He gathered?" Judging from what you have underlined, how would you answer the soldier? **(According to verse 18, the important thing to know about Christ is that He is not dead now. He has risen from the dead, and He is the head of His church just as He is the source of all life.)**

3. Put a double line under each

statement that tells something about what God has done.

4. Take a look at the statements you just put a double line under. How many of these things did God do through Jesus Christ? Give an example. **(Everything God did here was done through Jesus Christ. One example is in verse 20. Through Christ, God brought peace between Himself and us.)**

What do you think Paul meant by saying that God did these things through Jesus Christ? Why is it important to point this out? **(Paul was explaining how God reconciled us to Himself - He did this through Jesus Christ. No one else could have accomplished what God demanded here. It's important to point this out because people are always trying to invent ingenious ways for finding salvation.)**

5. Make a list of all the things Christ has done for you through His death on the cross. **(Students should note that through Christ's death on the cross, God not only turned us from enemies into friends, but He paid the penalty for our sins and will present us "free from accusation.")**

6. Create a simple drawing that expresses the main idea of this Bible Study. Your drawing can be funny or serious, symbolic or realistic. Be prepared to explain it. **(This is an opportunity for your more visually oriented students to express what they feel about this passage. Don't let any wisecracks about any lack of artistic abilities go too far.)**

How could this passage be used to

explain the meaning of salvation? Allow students a few minutes to give their ideas. When your students finish with their answers, paraphrase the following summary for them.

The heart of the Gospel is this: God stands ready to forgive you of your sins. God's forgiveness, however, did not come cheap. It cost God the life of His Son. Christ's death on the cross made it possible for God to forgive the sins of all who believe in Christ as Savior.

Have the students read the Memory Verse and tell what it means to them.

List the steps we go through to receive God's forgiveness.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students realize how a person can be forgiven and receive God's salvation.

We understand God's role in salvation. God offers us redemption through Christ's work on the cross. As the Philippian jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30), what must we do to be saved?

Distribute index cards to each student and ask them to work together in small groups developing a three-step outline for forgiveness. Be sure to point out that these steps usually occur at the time one receives Christ as Savior.

Write the following references as a guide for finding each step. Suggested answers follow each set of references.

Step 1: Romans 3:23 (Recognize your sinfulness and the need for forgiveness.)

NOTES

Step 2: Colossians 1:13-14 (today's text); Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:9 (Believe that through the risen Christ, your Savior, God has the power to forgive you. He has already paid the penalty for your sins on the cross so you can have a relationship with God. Furthermore, in rising from the dead, He offers you a new life that lasts forever.)

Step 3: I John 1:8-10 (Confess your sins to God and ask for forgiveness, and He will forgive you.)

Assemble together as a class and go over the steps.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE

AIM: That your students have an opportunity to respond to Christ's salvation message.

Every one has a different story about how they received Christ in their lives.

Read the story of "Ben" from the Student Book.

Some of your students might like to share their experiences. Allow time for sharing. Close with time when others can accept Christ.

LESSON 2

MARCH 9, 2008

IT IS FINISHED

BIBLE BASIS: Lesson Scripture: Christ on the cross states, "It is finished." John 19:28-30; Colossians 2:6-15

BIBLE TRUTH: Through His death on the cross, Christ completed the work necessary for our salvation.

MEMORY VERSE: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Colossians 2:8

LESSON AIM: That your students will be able to recognize and refute non biblical teachings about Christ's work on the cross.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles, Student Books, Teaching Aids, paper, pens, dry-erase board, markers, and index cards.

**OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED/
TEACHER'S NOTES:**

LESSON OVERVIEW

**LIFE NEED FOR
TODAY'S LESSON**

FOCUS

Discuss what Christ meant when He said, "It is finished."

Practice conversations.

BIBLE LEARNING

BIBLE STUDY

Complete the Bible Study about the finished work of Christ on the cross.

BIBLE APPLICATION

Compare views of salvation with the Scripture.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE

ACTION

Make a list of different ideas people have about salvation.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

JOHN 19:28-30; COLOSSIANS 2:6-15

JOHN 19:28-30

28. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

COLOSSIANS 2:6-15

6. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7. Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the

rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

9. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

10. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

11. In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

13. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

14. Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

John 19:28-30; Colossians 2:6-15. Before Jesus died on the cross, He uttered, "I am thirsty" (John 19:28), which may refer to Psalms 22:15 and 69:21. He was then given wine vinegar, a cheap wine.

Finally He cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Those who witnessed His execution might have thought He referred to the end of His life or bemoaned the death of His ministry. In fact, Jesus expressed the completion of God's plan of salvation.

In Colossians 2:6, Paul states that a believer's life is in Christ and shouldn't be taken in by "the basic principles of this world." (verse 8) Instead, faith should be placed in Christ, in whom all the fullness of the Deity dwelt (verse 9). Paul wrote the Epistle of Colossians to refute false teachings - heresy - that infiltrated the early Colossian church. Paul never described this heresy; however, seeds for Gnosticism [NAHS-tih-sihz-uhm] were present and already making inroads into churches.

In Colossians 2:9 and 1:19, Paul emphasizes the fullness of the Deity, of God, being in Christ. For Paul, this meant the totality of God with all His powers and attributes was present in Christ. Paul declared that Christians are spiritually circumcised (2:11). In Judaism, circumcision is a sign that a man is joined in covenant with God. Paul used this in a spiritual sense and pointed to a new covenant, based on Christ's work on the cross, which "canceled the written code" (verse 14), the Mosaic law.

God not only nailed the old accusing law, which stood against humankind, on the cross, but He "disarmed the powers and authorities" (verse 15), the spiritual forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12). Although Christ's death on the cross

appeared to be a victory for all that is evil, it was actually good triumphing over evil.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS

Often, teens feel as if they live in a world where they never seem "good enough" for something - biology, varsity basketball, or even being a part of a particular group at school. Some young people feel they have to earn the approval and become the classic overachievers. Sadly, this quest for perfectionism takes its toll on youth in different ways, such as substance abuse, depression, or other ways of acting out. Too many young people, as well as adults, carry over this approval mind-set into their spiritual lives. The good news for your high school students is that they don't have to be their own savior, straining each day to be "good enough" to get to Heaven. In fact, they can't be their own savior. When Christ died on the cross, He accomplished everything that was required for salvation. Your students don't have to worry about earning God's approval, because "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

TEACHING TIPS AND IDEAS

In Bible Application, you'll be using a Teaching Aid poster of Colossians 2:8. This poster discusses some of the basic beliefs of four religions concerning salvation: New Age, Spiritualism, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Nation of Islam. While you want to clearly communicate the wrong views of salvation these groups have, don't poke fun or criticize these groups in the Word of God.