



My Start

INSTRUCTIONAL CLASS



THE FALL

The Bible shares a perfect time in our story when God first created everything — with no brokenness, damage, or rebellion. God placed Adam and Eve in the middle of perfection and designed them to have a relationship in harmony with Him.

But God didn't want them to have a relationship with Him out of obligation; He wanted their love for him to come freely by their choice, so he gave them the option to choose.

Adam and Eve had the choice to obey God and be in a right relationship with Him or to disobey Him and live life the way that they desired.

Adam and Eve ignored God's boundaries, and through their actions. Sin (a willful choice to prioritize their desires above obedience to God) entered the world which brought emptiness.

Genesis 3:6-9 *"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom... she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked... they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"*

The consequence of sin is death (separation from God) which cannot be removed by good deeds.

Romans 6:23 *"For the wages of sin is death..."*

Adam and Eve were tempted to believe that God didn't really love them, so they ignored God's boundaries. They disobeyed what God asked of them, and with disobedience came heavy consequences. Because God is holy, he can't have a relationship with sin.

God's response could have been to wipe the slate clean and start over with another creation. But instead, God chose to have mercy on Adam and Eve by letting them live in a way that was profoundly affected by their sin with things like death and pain.

TALK ABOUT IT

- Why is sin such a big deal?
- What does it take for God to accept someone?

JESUS

John 3:16-17 (NIV) *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

Jesus lived a sinless life and offered himself as a sacrifice in our place to take upon himself the death that we deserved so that we could have a relationship with God. Even though he died on a cross, the grave could not hold him; instead, he rose from the dead in victory over sin, death, and the grave! Jesus has made it possible, through his sacrifice for us, to have a relationship with God.

Colossians 2:9 (NLT2) *"For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body."*

RESPONSE

Repentance: Turn from Sin.

Faith: Turn to God.

- Trust in Jesus' sacrifice.

Romans 10:9 *"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

- Follow Jesus' example.

Ephesians 5:1 (NLT2) *"Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children."*

Giving ourselves to God means that we first, turn from sin as we trust Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. And second, we commit to follow him all the days of our life. If we have repentance without faith, we will easily fall into a sort of legalism where we do right just because. If we have faith without repentance, we will easily fall into a misguided Christianity where we say we believe in Jesus but don't do what He desires for us to do.

Saying "Yes" to Jesus opens up the way for God to give us new blessings in our lives.

1. God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us live a fulfilled life.

When we repent and have faith, that's not the end of the story – we don't have to try to obey God on our own! God gives us his Holy Spirit in our lives to guide and transform us.

John 14:26 (NLT2) *"But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you."*

2. God gives us freedom — We are no longer bound by the power of sin.

Romans 6:6-7 *"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been free from sin."*

3. God gives us a new future — We are now adopted as sons and daughters of God.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT2) *"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."*

Unlike our physical life where we grow up by becoming independent, in our spiritual life we grow up by becoming dependent on the Holy Spirit. As we continually give ourselves and our lives to the Holy Spirit, we will find ourselves becoming more like Jesus which leads to a fulfilling life being closer to God.

LIVE IT OUT

Admit the need for God.

Turn from sin in our lives.

Accept Jesus as Savior and Lord.

BAPTISM

Baptism is a public declaration of your death to your old way of life and rebirth to new life in Christ. Baptism clearly tells the world that you are a child of God!

Galatians 3:26-27 *"So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."*

Baptism is a visible representation of what Jesus did for us in His death and resurrection.

Romans 6:3-4 *"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."*

Y2J

Present opportunity to say "Yes" to Jesus.

YES TO JESUS (Y2J): Salvation is more than a decision or a prayer or a moment. Salvation is the story of God providing a rescue plan to bring broken people into a relationship with him. In a world where there are many opinions about how to enter into a relationship with God, we want you to be confident in the truth of the Bible, how it reveals the story of God's rescue, and how you can begin and maintain a relationship with Him.



PURPOSE OF THE BIBLE

1. To reveal who God is and what He has done.

In the Bible we find examples of God's character; we learn how he has revealed himself to individuals and groups of people since the beginning of time. Without this written record of God's interactions with the world we would not be able to understand who God is or how he works.

2. To share the story of our connection to God.

The Bible provides us with context for our lives. It tells about creation, sin, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and how God wins in the end! It is awesome to see how God has been working His plan for our reunion with Him for thousands of years.

3. To provide instructions for a full life.

Life is complex with many daily decisions that need to be made involving people and situations. God gave us the Bible to give us instructions of how to live life to the full.

The reason we read the Bible is not to grow our head knowledge. The purpose is to grow our walk as we mature in our relationship with Jesus.

Here is a simple starting point from Rick Warren. This is so good!

- **S:** Is there a **SIN** to confess?
- **P:** Is there a **PROMISE** to claim?
- **A:** Is there an **ATTITUDE** to change?
- **C:** Is there a **COMMAND** to obey?
- **E:** Is there an **EXAMPLE** to follow?
- **P:** Is there a **PRAYER** to pray?
- **E:** Is there an **ERROR** to avoid?
- **T:** Is there **TRUTH** to believe?
- **S:** Is there **SOMETHING** to praise/thank God for?

LIVE IT OUT

- Start a Bible reading **PLAN** that helps you encounter the Bible at your pace.
- YouVersion, Devotional Plan
- Designate a **PLACE** where you will read the Word.
- Find a **PERSON** to keep you accountable.

Prayer

To put it simply, prayer is connecting with God. Some people find prayer daunting, and some find it easy. We want you to know how much God wants to hear from your heart, and help you understand not only what prayer is designed to be, but also some tools to aid you in experiencing intimacy with God through prayer.

Prayer is connection with God that happens through dialogue!

WHY DO WE PRAY?

- Prayer moves the heart of God, and prayer aligns the heart of man with God.
- Through prayer we receive God's guidance. (James 1:5)
- In prayer we address our needs and concerns (1 John 5:14-16).
- Prayer gives strength to fight sin and temptation (Matthew 26:39-41).

Life is difficult, and prayer is our way of reaching out to God to tell him that we need Him. To make the right decisions in life, we need God. To handle all of our needs and concerns, we need God. To resist or fight temptation and stay away from sin, we need God. Simply put: we need God. Prayer is admitting dependence on God. We go to prayer because God's voice and presence is what matters most.

TALK ABOUT IT

- What is your experience with prayer?
- When is it easiest and when is it most difficult to pray?

WHAT IS A SIMPLE WAY TO PRAY? P.R.A.Y.

P: Praise

- We praise God for his character and attributes.
- Praise is first in prayer because it focuses our attention on God.
- Praise is to verbally value and lift up God.

Psalm 150:6 *"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."*

R: Repent

- Admit to God any part of your life that is out of line with the Bible.
- Commit to turn from that sin in your life by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 3:19 *"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord..."*

A: Ask

- Ask for the needs of others (intercession).
- Ask for your needs (petition).

Matthew 7:9-11 *"Which one of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him."*

Y: Yield

- Surrender your plans, wants, and desires for your life.
- Ask God for his plans, wants, and desires for your life.

Psalm 143:8 *"Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life."*

When you pray, be intentional about spending quality time as well as quantity time. Imagine what it would be like to see God work in every area of your life! Prayer makes it possible for God to do amazingly above what we could ask or even imagine.

LIVE IT OUT

- Eliminate distractions that draw your attention elsewhere.
- Establish a time for prayer.
- Establish a place for prayer.

When we don't have a regular place and time for prayer, we'll find ourselves distracted. Setting aside a place for prayer helps us remember that this is a place that we focus specifically on prayer. We don't allow our cell phones or life to get in the way of this moment.

Worship

Worship is giving ourselves completely to God. Worship involves a continuous outpouring of all we are, all we do, and all we will become. Worship exists in everyone's heart. The question is who or what you worship. Whatever gets the priority of our attention and the majority of our affection is the object of our worship.

Weekend worship is an overflow of our weekday worship. It's easy in our culture to see Sunday church as our time of worship, which it is. However, we were created to worship seven days a week, not just one. Let's explore some of the ways that we can give ourselves away to God.

LIVE IT OUT

- Our Lifestyles

1 Corinthians 10:31: *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."*

- Our Relationships

John 13:34-35: *"A new command I give to you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

- Our Jobs

Colossians 3:23-24: *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."*

- Our Finances

2 Corinthians 9:7: *"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

TALK ABOUT IT

- Are there areas that are easier for you to worship God in?
- Are there areas that are more difficult for you to worship God in?