

LESSON 8 Jesus, the Savior

You have learned that Jesus heals and baptizes with the Holy Spirit. These are wonderful truths. But there is something else He does that is the most important work of all: Jesus saves! Jesus died for us and rose again, gaining victory over death, sin, and hell forever. Who is Jesus? He is the only Savior of the world.

The Bible says that Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. This simple statement is the meaning of the Christian religion. Other religions attempt to offer high ideals for life. They tell people why they suffer, how they should live, and how they will be punished if they fail. But they lack the most important thing of all: They do not give their followers any real power to overcome evil.

In striking contrast, Christianity offers God's own solution to man's inability to save himself. To each man and woman, Jesus says, "You have failed God's plan for you, but you can succeed. You are stained with the guilt of sin, but you can be made clean." How God saves us through Jesus is the subject of this lesson.

The Plan

- A. Jesus, the Savior of the World
- B. Jesus, the Lamb of God

The Goals

1. Discuss what the name *Jesus* tells us about God.
2. Explain why every person needs to be saved.
3. State how the title “Lamb of God” helps us understand the mission of Jesus.

A. JESUS, THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

Goal 1. Discuss what the name *Jesus* tells us about God.

The good news of the gospel is that Jesus has come to be a Savior for all humankind. When Jesus was born, an angel told the shepherds:

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10–11)

The Name of Jesus

The name *Jesus* means “Jehovah will save”, or “Savior.” God the Father chose this name for His Son. He sent an angel to tell Joseph (Jesus’ foster father) what to name the baby that Mary would give birth to. The name Jesus would remind them constantly of who Jesus was and why He had been born. He was the Son of God, coming down to earth to save us from sin. The angel said, “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

When you speak or hear the name of Jesus, remember its message of good news for you: Jehovah, the eternal, self-existing God came into the world to save you. God will save you. This is the promise that we claim when we pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. Whisper the name of Jesus in worship and in prayer. Sing about Jesus the Savior. Tell others about Him. He is the only Savior—the One whom the Father has sent to save us. Peter and John healed a crippled man through the power in Jesus’ name. Peter explained:

“By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.” . . . “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”
(Acts 3:16; 4:12)

Application

- 1** The name of Jesus tells us that God is the one who
 - a)** creates.
 - b)** judges.
 - c)** saves.
- 2** The name of Jesus was chosen by
 - a)** Gabriel.
 - b)** God the Father.
 - c)** Joseph.
- 3** Memorize Matthew 1:21.
- 4** Some people use the name of Jesus as a curse or swear word. If you have done this, ask God to forgive you. Thank Him for Jesus and for what His name means to you.



Nature of Salvation

Goal 2. Explain why every person needs to be saved.

The word *salvation* in the Bible is a great, inclusive word. To save is to rescue from danger, to deliver from captivity or judgment, to keep in safety, and to heal. Jesus, our Savior, rescues us from the power of Satan, frees us from the captivity of sin, takes our place and guilt in the judgment, brings us to a place of safety, and gives us health for body and soul.

Jesus came to save us from the lost-ness and dangers of a life separated from God. Sin has separated us all from God. We have lost our way. We wander in circles in the darkness of a purposeless, wasted life. Without God, eternal death closes in on us. But Jesus has come to save us, to bring us back to God. He turns us in the right direction, gives us the light of His presence, and brings purpose and meaning into our lives. Jesus calms our fears, gives us joy and peace, leads us away from the destruction that threatens us, and takes us to our eternal home. Jesus said, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

Jesus came to save us from guilt and punishment for our sins. We have all broken God’s laws and face the penalty of eternal separation from Him. But Jesus took the blame for our sins and willingly died in our place so that we could be forgiven.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of
God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 6:23)

Jesus came to save us from the power of sin and Satan. He sets us free from our own sinful, rebellious, selfish nature and gives us the new nature of the children of God. He breaks the power of temptation and frees us from desires and habits that destroy our health and harm our souls. In Jesus we find safety from the attacks of Satan. We still have battles, but Jesus gives us victory.

When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. . . . But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. (Romans 6:20, 22)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Jesus has come to save us from the effects of sin and even from its presence. He brings us health for body and soul. And someday He will give us a new body that will not be subject to disease. He is preparing a home in heaven now for all those that He saves from sin. When we die, or when Jesus comes back to earth for us, He will establish His rule on earth and purify the earth from all sin. Even nature itself will be freed from violence and destruction. Everything will be perfect. What a great salvation!

“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” (Revelation 21:3–4)

B. JESUS, THE LAMB OF GOD

Goal 3. State how the title, “Lamb of God,” helps us understand the mission of Jesus.

The title *Lamb of God* refers especially to Jesus’ mission as Savior of the world.

Sacrifice of the Lamb

When Jesus was going to begin His public ministry, John the Baptist presented Him to a crowd saying, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29).

Those who heard John could interpret his words in only one way. Lambs were killed as a sacrifice for sin. Sinners confessed their guilt to God and asked Him to accept the death of the lamb in their place. Jesus was the sacrifice that God had sent to die for all sinners—the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!

The great prophet Isaiah had written about how God would make the Messiah a sacrifice for our sins. He would falsely take the guilt for all our sins. He would die in our place, as our substitute, so that we could be free from sin. Later He would come back to life, see the results of His sacrifice, and be satisfied.

All this happened to Jesus exactly as Isaiah had said.

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.

After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:3–12)

All four gospels tell how Jesus died for our sins. The religious leaders did not want to accept Him as the Messiah. They were jealous of Him and determined to kill Him. They accused Him before the governor and hired witnesses to tell lies about Jesus at His trial. Pilate, the Roman governor, knew that Jesus was not guilty, but gave in to the demands of the religious leaders and the mob they had incited.

They called for His death, and Pilate handed Him over to be crucified. This was the sentence for the worst criminals.

Some have asked, why did Jesus have to die to save us? He had to die because God could not simply lay aside the punishment we deserved. What could bring the solution? Only the death of Jesus, the Son of God. God's justice required a sacrifice for sin, and God's mercy provided it.

Jesus gave His life willingly. Though wicked men gathered against Him, they had no power to kill Him. He could have called on His Father to judge them, but He did not. He freely chose to fulfill His mission.

On that fateful day, His enemies led Him out to the place called "The Skull." They nailed His hands and feet to a cross and lifted Him up for all to see. There, hanging between two thieves, He died, the Lamb of God, the sacrifice for our sins.

Application

- 5** Circle the letter before each TRUE statement.
- a)** The prophet Isaiah said that people would despise and reject the Messiah.
 - b)** Pilate was convinced by the religious leaders that Jesus was guilty.
 - c)** The Gospel of John is the only Gospel that tells how Jesus died for our sins.
 - d)** Though wicked men crucified Jesus, God made Him an offering for sin.
- 6** To fulfill His mission as the "Lamb of God," Jesus
- a)** died as a sacrifice for sinners.
 - b)** explained the law of God more fully.
 - c)** showed a perfect example of purity.
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Attitudes Toward the Lamb

The people who saw the crucifixion of Jesus show us a picture of the whole world. Some looked at Him with hatred, making fun of Him and His claims. Some seemed indifferent, gambling for His clothes while He was dying. Others watched with disappointment. But some looked at Jesus with faith, hope, and love.

Three crosses stood there on the hill. Three men died that day. In their attitudes, we may find the key to our own.

When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals--one on his right, the other on his left. Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: "Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:33–34, 39–43)

The three crosses speak of rebellion, redemption, and repentance. On one a man was dying *in* sin (rebellion). On the second, the Lamb of God was dying *for* sin (redemption). On the third, a sinner was dying *to* sin (repentance).

Rebellion. On the cross of rebellion hung a man dying in his sins. He had wasted his life in doing wrong. Life had made him bitter and hard. Now he faced death—a final defeat. If he

had only believed, there was help right by his side. He was in the very presence of God. But the rebellion in his heart blinded him to spiritual truth. Within reach of the Savior he died in bitter agony of spirit—full of hate, resentment, and hopelessness.

Redemption. On the cross of redemption, Jesus died for our sins. We were under God's just sentence of death because of our rebellion against Him. We had become slaves of Satan, the enemy of God. The death of Jesus changed everything. When He died, He paid the price for our pardon. He defeated Satan completely. God accepted Jesus as our substitute, and Satan was forced to let us go.

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (1 Peter 1:18–19)

Repentance. On the third cross a sinner died to his sins, and was freed from them forever, by trusting in Jesus. This man was willing to face himself and the truth; he confessed his wrong. He recognized Jesus as Savior, the Messiah. Jesus was dying but the repentant thief believed that He would rule the world someday. So he asked the Savior to remember him (have mercy on him) when he came as King. What faith! One of the last things Jesus did before He died was to forgive the sins of the dying thief and give him eternal life.

Every person decides his or her own eternal destiny by what he or she does about the Savior. Both thieves had the same opportunity. One clung to his rebellion and hate, mocking the only One who could save him. The other repented and asked for mercy. One went to hell—a place of eternal suffering. The other went to heaven (Paradise)—place of eternal happiness. These men are a picture for us all. One was rebellious and lost. The other repented, confessed his need to Jesus, and was saved. Which one's example will you follow? You can find eternal life, forgiveness, peace, and help by calling on Jesus in prayer. He is near you now.

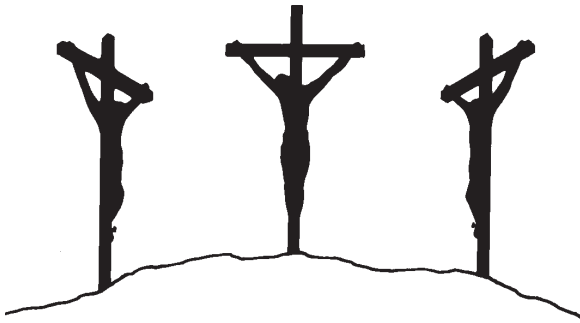
To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace. (Ephesians 1:6–7)

He [Christ] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. (1 Peter 2:24–25)

Application

7 Suppose someone says, “I have been taught that I must be baptized or receive forgiveness from a priest before I can be sure that I will go to heaven when I die.” Do you agree? Why, or why not?

8 Write the titles over the three crosses below. Add your name under the cross that represents your position. Explain the drawing to a friend or a member of your family.



First cross

Second cross

Third cross



Check Your Answers

- 5** a) True
d) True
- 1** c) saves.
- 6** a) died as a sacrifice for sinners.
- 2** b) God the Father.
- 7** Your answer. You have studied about the thief on the cross who repented and believed in Jesus. He did not have time to be baptized or talk to a human priest. But Jesus told him that he would be in Paradise “today.”
- 8** The center cross should be titled, “Redemption.” The other two (in any order) are titled “Rebellion” and “Repentance.”