

**Life's Greatest Questions:
Part I--Investigating Answers from the Bible**

Lesson 1—*What are life's greatest questions? Where do I turn for answers? How can I know if my answers are correct?*

Lesson 2—*Why do some people turn to the Bible to answer life's greatest questions? What's so great about the Bible? How can I trust the Bible?*

Lesson 3—*Who, or what, is God? What does the Bible say about the world's beginning?*

Lesson 4—*If God made the world, did He make me?*

Lesson 5—*Who am I?*

Lesson 6—*Am I essentially good or bad? What is wrong with the world?*

Lesson 7—*What is God's solution to the world's problems? Who is Jesus?*

Lesson 8—*Why did Jesus die?*

Lesson 9—*What happened after Jesus died?*

Lesson 10—*How am I supposed to respond to Jesus?*

Life's Greatest Questions (Teacher)
Lesson 1—What are life's greatest questions?

Socrates once said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." When you examine your life, what are the greatest questions that come to your mind?

Suppose there is a God: If you could ask Him one question and you knew it would be answered, what would it be?

Why am I here? What is the purpose of life? What happens after you die? Is there a God?

More questions to stimulate discussion:

How would you define a successful life?

What do you want to be remembered for after you die?

What is the most important thing in life?

There are two questions that religion seeks to answer:

1. Is there a GOD? If there is, how can I know Him?
2. Is there a heaven? If there is, how can I get there?

Circles of knowledge: Draw a circle representing how much knowledge there is in the universe. Then, draw a second circle within the first one representing how much you know.

Where do we turn to answer life's greatest questions? How do I know if my answers are correct?

Lesson 1—What are life's greatest questions? Where do I turn for answers? How can I know my if my answers are correct?

Lesson 2—Why do Christians turn to the Bible to answer life's greatest questions? What's so great about the Bible? How can I trust the Bible?

Lesson 3—Who, or what, is God? What does the Bible say about the world's beginning?

Lesson 4—If God made the world, did He make me?

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Lesson 6—If I am good, or bad, how did I become this way? What is wrong with the world?

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3. Is there a _____? If there is, how can I _____?
4. Is there a _____? If there is, how can I _____?

Circles of knowledge: Draw a circle representing how much knowledge there is in the universe. Then, draw a second circle within the first one representing how much you know.

If there is so much we don't know, where do we turn to answer life's greatest questions? How do I know if my answers are correct?

Lesson 1—What are life's greatest questions? Where do I turn for answers? How can I know my if my answers are correct?

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Life's Greatest Questions (Teacher)
Lesson 2—What's so great about the Bible?

Review: What did we decide were some of the greatest questions in life? What is the purpose in life? Where do we go to answer life's greatest questions?

If you created all things and knew all things, how would you make yourself known to people? You would *reveal* yourself in some way. God has made Himself known through *general revelation (the world and our conscience)* and *specific revelation (Jesus and the Bible)*.

Christians turn to the Bible to understand God, themselves, and the world.
But why do Christians trust the Bible?

II Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is breathed out by God."

II Peter 1:20,21: "no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Is the Bible reliable?

1. **The biographical test.** Are the manuscripts reliable? Original manuscripts were written and then copied and recopied and recopied. Now only a handful of manuscripts exist. How reliable are the manuscripts of ancient books? Aristotle's *Poetics* _5_ manuscripts. Homer's *The Illiad* _643_ manuscripts, New Testament of *The Bible* _24,000+_ manuscripts. Scholar F.F. Bruce: "The evidence for our New Testament writings is ever so much greater than the evidence for many writings of classical authors, the authenticity of which no one dreams of questioning."
2. **The internal evidence test.** Can the testimony of the writers be trusted? Did the disciples really know Jesus? If the apostles had lied as they wrote the Bible, thousands of living witnesses would have exposed them as frauds and Christianity would have ended before it began. The New Testament is reliable because the authors were actually eyewitnesses.
3. **The external evidence test.** Sources outside of the Bible—from other authors to archeological evidence—confirm the reliability of the Bible. Archaeologist Sir Fredric Kenyon: "It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: especially is this the case with the New Testament."
4. **The test of fulfilled prophecy.** The biblical standard for a true prophet was 100% accuracy. Many Old Testament prophets spoke of the Messiah to come. Over 300 prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. Peter Stoner (*Science Speaks*, Moody Press) said, "the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th power."

There are two parts of the Bible: the Old Testament and the New Testament. *Show the Table of Contents from Bible and explain the divisions and main categories.*

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 2—What's so great about the Bible?

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Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 3—Who, or what, is God?
What does the Bible say about the world's beginning?

What are your impressions of God? How would you describe him?

When did you first begin to wonder about the origin of the physical world? What ideas did you have about it? What did others teach you?

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3

What do we learn about God from 1:1-2?

How did God create the universe?

What patterns do you notice in the story of God creating the world?

What did God think of each thing after making it?

How does the creation of humans and the rest of the world differ?

What do you think it means for humans to be created “in the image of God”?

How is the seventh day different from the other days of creation (2:2-3)?

SUMMARIZE: What does Genesis 1 teach us about God? About the physical world?

From Genesis 1 we learn that God is real and has great power. First, He created the world and, then, man in his own image.

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 4— If God made the world, did He make me?

Review: What did you learn about God last week? About the world?

Read Psalm 139:1-24

List the things we are told about God in verses 1-6.

What aspects of every human's life does God know about?

Where can the writer go to flee from God in verses 7-12? How does it make you feel to read that you can't hid from God?

What more do we learn about how God looks at us from verses 13-16?

How does the author respond God in verses 17-18?

In verses 19-24 there are very different response to God. Summarize each one.

SUMMARY: From Psalm 139 I learn that God is powerful and personal. Also, I learn that I am valuable and watched by God.

Does Psalm 139 change your understanding of God?

How have you seen evidence of God's involvement in your life?

Do you think it is possible to know God personally?

Next week: What prevents us from knowing God personally?

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 5— Who am I? Am I essentially good or bad?

What prevents us from knowing God personally?

Do you think man is essentially good or bad? Why?

The Good World. Read Genesis 2:15-25

What commands did God give to man?

Why did God create a tree that He forbids man to eat from?

What kind of relationships existed between God and man?

In the two things that God commands, we see that man has freedom and responsibility.

Where the trouble began and the consequences. Read Genesis 3:1-24

How is the serpent described? Who is the serpent?

When the serpent tempted Eve, did he quote God accurately? (Compare 3:1 with 2:16)

What did Satan claim the eating of the fruit would bring?

What motivated the woman to eat (v. 6)?

What happened to Adam and Eve after they ate the fruit?

What happened to their relationship with God? (v. 8-10)

In verses 23-24, what was the result of their disobedience? In what sense are these actions of kindness?

Think about a time when you seriously hurt another person or were hurt by someone. How did it affect the quality of your relationship?

Life's Greatest Questions

Lesson 6— *Am I essentially good or bad? What is wrong with the world?*

Do you think there will ever be a time when there are not wars in the world? What is wrong with the world?

Why do some people and nations have so much and yet in other nations millions of people die of starvation?

Isaiah 6:3-7: The separation between God and man.

What does “holy” mean? What about “glory”?

Who is “the Lord of Hosts”? What is Isaiah’s attitude toward him? Why?

What does “unclean lips” (v. 5) mean?

Why does the fire (“a burning coal”) do to the man? What is “sin”?

Read Romans 1:18-25: How the trouble spread.

What does “wrath of God” mean?

What do verses 21-22 describe?

What does man worship instead of God (v.25)?

Read Romans 1:28-32: The world around us and our hearts.

When you look at this list, do you see these characteristics in our world? In your heart?

The world is in this condition because man continually chooses to rebel against God and experiences the consequences of this rebellion: death .

Read Isaiah 59:1,2: Our problem

Because of God’s holiness and our sinfulness, there is a gap (or separation) between us and God.

What does it mean that God has hidden his face from us (verse 2)?

Can the separation between God and man be repaired?

Life's Greatest Questions

Lesson 7—What is God's solution to the world's problems? Who is Jesus?

Review: God created a perfect world where He had a perfect relationship with Adam and Eve. God created man with freedom which man used to rebel against God.

Read John 1:1-18: The Word.

In verse 1, who is “the Word”?

Did the people recognize Him (verses 10-11)?

What happens to those who believe in the Word (v. 12)?

Verse 3 says the Word created the world then verse 14 says He became part of creation.

What is the relationship between God and Jesus? (*Explain the Trinity: God is 3-in-1 and 1-in-3. One essence or substance—God—but three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*)

Read John 1:29-34.

John calls Jesus the Lamb of God. Why?

The Lamb of God. Read Isaiah 53.

How did people treat the man described (v. 3)?

Explain verses 4,5.

Who is being described in verses 6-10.

Read John 10:31.

How could Jesus take away the sins of the world?

(*Explain that Jesus was fully God and fully man in one person.*)

Read I Peter 2:22.

Jesus can take away sin because He was sinless. Why is this unusual?

Next week: What happened at the end of Jesus' life?

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 8—Why did Jesus die?

Review: What do you remember from our lesson last week?

Read Luke 23:13-25, 32-56

Both Roman leaders (Pilate and Herod) found no basis for charges against Jesus so why did Pilate grant the people's demand (v. 24)?

What is crucifixion?

Given his circumstances, why is surprising about the way Jesus prays (v. 34)?

Jesus is crucified between two criminals.

One soldier insults him; the other asks in verse 40 "Don't you fear God?" Why should someone in this situation fear God?

Describe the attitude of the two criminals toward Jesus. What do you think they believe about him?

If the criminal is guilty and Jesus is innocent, how can Jesus say that they will be together in paradise (v. 43)?

In verses 44-49 Luke records a number of unusual things that occurred after Jesus died. What do you think caused these changes?

Joseph asks for the body of Jesus (vs. 50-54), what risks was he taking?

What does his risk-taking tell you about him?

People had different opinions about Jesus. Some changed their opinion when they saw how Jesus died. Which person in this story most closely reflects what you think about Jesus?

What new understanding of Jesus' death have you gained?

Next week: What happened after Jesus' death?

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 9—What happened after Jesus died?

Review: What kind of death did Jesus die? How did the people around him respond?

Read Luke 24:1-12.

Why did the women take spices to the tomb? What happened when they got there?

The women returned to tell the other followers of Christ. What differences were there in the way the women react and how the men react?

Read Luke 24:13-35.

The story moves to two men walking to a village called Emmaus. How do the two men describe Jesus and their hope in him?

What process did the men go through before they could recognize Jesus (vv. 25-35)?

Read Luke 24:36-53.

What is the response of Jesus followers when he appears to them? Why?

How does Jesus answer their questions and doubts?

Why does Luke tell us that Jesus asked for food (v. 41)?

Jesus explains (vv. 46-49) that what has happened was exactly what was supposed to happen. According to Jesus, what can happen now because he suffered, died and rose from the dead?

Read I Corinthians 15:3-6.

Why was it important for Jesus to appear to so many people?

Today we have examined three groups of people (women, two men, disciples) moved from doubt to faith. Which of their attitudes best represents your current thinking about Jesus?

Next week: How am I supposed to respond to Jesus?

Life's Greatest Questions
Lesson 10—How am I supposed to respond to Jesus?

Review: What most impressed you about the resurrection of Christ?

Read Isaiah 59:1,2: Our problem

What causes the separation between God and man?.

What does it mean that God has hidden his face from us (verse 2)?

Read Romans 6:23: God's solution

What is a wage? What is death?

How does God give us the free gift of eternal life?

Read John 3:16: But how do we get this gift?

What does it mean to believe in Him?

How does this reverse our state (from death to life)? (*Read I Peter 2:24*)

Read Ephesians 2:8,9: What saves us?

What saves us?

What can we do to earn this?

Read Acts 3:19,20: So, how do I express my trust in Christ?

What does it mean to repent?

What happens when we repent and trust Christ?

But what must I do to be saved from my sin? Is it that easy?