AAC DISCIPLE-MAKING JOURNEY

DMJ-E01 | ELECTIVE SMALL GROUP STUDY

F.I.R.E.

ENCOUNTERING JESUS

A Small Group Bible Study Guide

FOCUS **INVESTIGATE** **RELATE** **EXECUTE**

Engage the Word • Understand the Truth • Apply the Truth • Respond in Action

LEADER'S GUIDE

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AAC Disciple-Making Journey

Alicia Alliance Church – CAMACOP

Empowering Disciples. Transforming People.

F.I.R.E. = Focus • Investigate • Relate • Execute

Foreword: Encounters with Jesus: The Path to Salvation

(*F.I.R.E. Format for Small Group Bible Study by: Rev. Ricardo H. Obida*)

Focus - Start with a key verse or question.
Investigate - Read the passage and discuss its meaning.
Relate - How does it apply to daily life?
Execute - Set an action step and pray for guidance.

In this series, we embark on a transformative journey through the Scriptures, focusing on key encounters with Jesus that reveal God's plan for salvation. From His words of compassion to His call for action, these encounters provide us with a deeper understanding of who Jesus is and how His presence changes lives. Each lesson is framed using the **F.I.R.E. format**—Focus, Investigate, Relate, and Execute—designed to help you engage with the Word of God in a practical and impactful way.

Focus begins each lesson by highlighting a key verse or truth, allowing us to center our attention on the core message of salvation.

Investigate invites you to explore the deeper context of these biblical passages, offering insights into Jesus' mission and the transformative power of His love.

Relate connects these truths to your own experiences, helping you see how the encounters with Jesus in Scripture can speak to your life today.

Finally, **Execute** challenges you to take action, responding in faith to what God has revealed, whether by growing in your relationship with Him or by sharing His message with others.

Throughout this study, you will walk through significant encounters Jesus had with individuals, such as the Samaritan woman at the well, the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda, and Matthew the tax collector. Each story shows us how Jesus meets people where they are, offering healing, forgiveness, and a new life. These encounters illustrate the heart of Jesus' mission—to seek and save the lost—and offer a glimpse into the transformative power of encountering Him.

From understanding God's love and grace to the call to share the good news, these lessons reveal the core of salvation and how our lives are shaped by our encounter with Christ. Each encounter invites you to examine your own relationship with Jesus, to reflect on the changes He desires to bring into your life, and to respond in faith.

As you go through these lessons, may you deepen your understanding of Jesus' love and power, be encouraged by His willingness to heal and restore, and be inspired to share His message with the world. Let each encounter with Jesus in this study guide you into a deeper relationship with Him and a more vibrant expression of your faith.

Lesson 1: The Need for Salvation

🔥 **Focus:** Why do we need salvation?

📖 **Bible Verse:** Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

🔍 **Investigate:** Sin separates us from God, and we cannot save ourselves.

- **Q1: What is sin, and how does it affect our relationship with God?**
  A: Sin is any thought, word, or action that goes against God's will. It separates us from God because He is holy and cannot tolerate sin in His presence (Isaiah 59:2).

- **Q2: Can human efforts or good works restore our broken relationship with God? Why or why not?**
  A: No, good works cannot restore our relationship with God. Ephesians 2:8-9 teaches that salvation is by grace through faith, not by works, so that no one can boast. We need Jesus' sacrifice to be reconciled with God.

- **Q3: How does Romans 3:23 apply to every person, regardless of background or deeds?**
  A: This verse reminds us that everyone, regardless of status, culture, or morality, has sinned. No one meets God's perfect standard on their own (Romans 3:10).

- **Q4: What are some consequences of sin that we see in the world today?**
  A: Sin results in broken relationships, suffering, death, and separation from God. It affects individuals, families, and societies, leading to conflict, injustice, and despair (Romans 6:23).

- **Q5: What does our inability to save ourselves tell us about our need for a Savior?**
  A: It shows that we cannot rely on ourselves but need Jesus to rescue us. Just as a drowning person needs a lifeguard, we need Jesus to save us from sin and eternal separation from God (John 14:6).

🤝 **Relate:** Have you ever faced a situation where you needed rescue? Just as firefighters save lives, we need God to save us spiritually.

- **Discussion Prompt:** Think of a time when you were in a dangerous or helpless situation. How did it feel to be rescued, and how does that compare to God’s act of saving us?

🚀 **Execute:** Reflect on areas where sin affects your life and pray for forgiveness.

- **Challenge:** Identify a habit or action in your life that reflects separation from God. Write a prayer asking God for forgiveness and help in overcoming it.

- **Closing Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Thank You for revealing our need for salvation through Your Word. We acknowledge our sin and are grateful for the grace You offer through Jesus. Forgive us for the ways we've been separated from You, and help us trust in Jesus' sacrifice to restore our relationship. Strengthen our faith and empower us to overcome sin, knowing You are always ready to forgive and redeem. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 2: God's Love and Plan for Salvation

🔥 Focus: God's Plan for Our Redemption

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Ephesians 2:8-9*
"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

🔍 Investigate: Salvation Is Not Our Doing; It Is God's Free Gift of Love

Q1: What does it mean that salvation is a "gift of God"?

- **Answer**: Salvation is a gift in that it is given to us freely, without any merit on our part. We cannot earn it through good deeds or self-effort. It is God's grace that offers us forgiveness and eternal life, based solely on His love for us, not on what we have done or can do (Romans 6:23, Titus 3:5).

Q2: Why is it important to understand that salvation is "not by works"?

- **Answer**: If salvation were based on our works, no one could be certain of their salvation because it would depend on human effort, which is always flawed. This truth shows us that we cannot earn God's love, but it is only by His grace that we are saved. This removes any room for pride or boasting, as our salvation is entirely the work of God (Romans 3:28, Philippians 3:9).

Q3: What role does faith play in salvation according to this verse?

- **Answer**: Faith is the means by which we receive God's grace. While grace is the gift, faith is how we accept that gift. It is through faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior that we are saved. Faith involves trusting in God's promises and the completed work of Jesus on the cross (Romans 10:9, John 14:6).

Q4: How does this verse emphasize God's love in the context of salvation?

- **Answer**: This verse emphasizes God's love by showing that salvation is entirely His initiative. We did nothing to deserve it, yet God, out of love, freely offers us grace. His plan for salvation was not based on our worth but on His mercy and kindness, reflecting the depth of His love for humanity (John 3:16, 1 John 4:10).

Q5: How does understanding that salvation is a gift affect the way we live as Christians?

- **Answer**: Recognizing that salvation is a gift leads us to humility and gratitude. We no longer live in fear of not doing enough to earn God's favor, but we live in the freedom that comes from knowing our salvation is secure in Christ. This motivates us to live lives of thankfulness and to extend God's love to others, knowing we are recipients of His grace (Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 4:32).

🤝 Relate: Just as Firefighters Risk Their Lives to Save Others, Jesus Gave His Life to Save Us

Discussion Prompt:
Firefighters put themselves at risk to save others from danger, often sacrificing their own safety for the sake of others. In the same way, Jesus gave His life on the cross to save us from the consequences of sin. How does this analogy help you understand the depth of God's love for us?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on how Jesus' sacrifice motivates us to live for Him. How can we, as believers, demonstrate that same sacrificial love to others?

🚀 Execute: Accept God's Love and Commit to Trusting in His Plan

Challenge:

- Reflect on the incredible truth that your salvation is a free gift from God, given out of His love. Commit to living with gratitude, fully trusting in God's plan for your life and salvation.
- **Action Step**: This week, share this message of God's love with someone who may not yet understand it. Encourage them to accept God's free gift of salvation and to trust in His plan. Be a living example of what it means to live by grace.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of salvation, which we do not deserve but freely receive because of Your great love for us. Help us to live in response to this incredible grace, trusting in Your plan and sharing Your love with others. May we continually reflect on the magnitude of Your sacrifice, just as Jesus gave His life for us. Empower us to live humbly and share the message of salvation with those around us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 3: Jesus, Our Only Savior

🔥 **Focus: Why is Jesus the only Savior?**

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Acts 4:12*

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

🔍 **Investigate: Understanding Jesus as the Only Savior**

Q1: What does Acts 4:12 mean when it says, "Salvation is found in no one else"?

- **Answer**: This verse highlights that salvation can only be found through Jesus Christ. No one else has the power to save us from sin and eternal separation from God. Jesus is the unique mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5). He is the only one who lived a sinless life, died for our sins, and rose again to provide eternal life.

Q2: Why can't salvation be found in other religions or philosophies?

- **Answer**: Acts 4:12 makes it clear that there is no other name by which we must be saved. While many religions teach good moral principles, they do not provide a means of atonement for sin. Only Jesus' death and resurrection are sufficient to reconcile us with God (John 14:6). Other paths do not address the fundamental need for a Savior.

Q3: What does this passage teach us about the exclusivity of Jesus in salvation?

- **Answer**: This passage teaches that Jesus is the only way to salvation. In a pluralistic world that promotes tolerance and inclusivity, the Bible affirms that salvation is exclusive to Jesus alone. This does not mean other people are without value, but it emphasizes that reconciliation with God is only possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Q4: What role does the resurrection of Jesus play in making Him the only Savior?

- **Answer**: Jesus' resurrection affirms His divinity and the acceptance of His sacrifice for sin. His victory over death confirms that He is the Son of God, and through Him alone can we have eternal life (Romans 6:4). Without the resurrection, Jesus would merely be another teacher or martyr, but through His rising, He proved His power to save.

Q5: How does recognizing Jesus as the only Savior impact our view of other people and their needs for salvation?

- **Answer**: Recognizing Jesus as the only Savior leads us to compassion for those who do not know Him. It compels us to share the gospel with urgency and love, knowing that apart from Jesus, they are lost (Matthew 28:19-20). It drives us to take the message of salvation to the world because Jesus is the only hope for humanity.

🤝 **Relate: Jesus' Role as the Only Savior in Our Daily Lives**

Discussion Prompt:

Think of a time when you encountered a situation where you needed someone to rescue you—perhaps physically, emotionally, or spiritually. How did it feel to be helped, and how does that relate to the rescue that Jesus offers to us spiritually?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on the exclusive role Jesus plays as the only Savior. How can this truth shape how you view the world and the people around you?

🚀 Execute: Applying the Truth of Jesus as the Only Savior

Challenge:

- Reflect on your own understanding of Jesus as the only Savior. How does this truth affect your actions and relationships?

- Pray for boldness and opportunities to share the exclusive truth of Jesus with those around you who do not yet know Him.

- **Action Step**: Identify one person in your life who may not know Jesus as their Savior. Pray for them by name, asking God to open their heart to the gospel, and consider how you can personally reach out to them with the good news.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we acknowledge that You are the only Savior, and there is no other way to be reconciled to God except through You. Thank You for Your sacrifice on the cross and for the hope of eternal life through Your resurrection. Help us to live with the urgency of sharing this truth with others. Guide us in reflecting Your love and grace in all we do, so others may come to know You as their Savior. In Your name, we pray. Amen

Lesson 4: The Power of the Cross

🔥 Focus: Jesus' Sacrifice Paid for Our Sins

📖 **Bible Verse**: *1 Peter 2:24*
"He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed."

🔍 Investigate: The Cross—Where Jesus Took Our Punishment

Q1: What does it mean that Jesus "bore our sins in His body on the cross"?

- **Answer**: This phrase means that Jesus took upon Himself the full weight and penalty of our sins. He became the sacrificial lamb who paid the price for our transgressions. Jesus bore the punishment that we deserved, enduring separation from God and death in our place (Isaiah 53:5). His death on the cross was not just physical but also spiritual, as He carried the sins of the world.

Q2: Why was it necessary for Jesus to bear our sins, and why couldn't we pay for them ourselves?

- **Answer**: The penalty for sin is death (Romans 6:23), and as human beings, we are incapable of paying the price for sin on our own. Jesus, being sinless, was the only one qualified to take our place. He was both fully God and fully man, which allowed Him to bear the weight of the world's sins and restore our relationship with God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Q3: What does Peter mean by "by His wounds you have been healed"?

- **Answer**: The healing referred to in this verse is both physical and spiritual. While Jesus' wounds brought about the healing of our sin-sick souls, His sacrifice also opened the door for physical healing, as He took on not only sin but also the effects of sin, including sickness and suffering. His stripes bring healing to all areas of our lives (Isaiah 53:5).

Q4: How does Jesus' sacrifice on the cross show God's love for humanity?

- **Answer**: The cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's love. While we were still sinners, God sent His Son to die for us (Romans 5:8). Jesus' willing sacrifice, bearing the full wrath of God for sin, shows the depth of God's love and mercy. He paid a price we could never pay to bring us back to Him.

Q5: What changes in our lives because Jesus bore our sins?

- **Answer**: Jesus' sacrifice calls us to die to sin and live for righteousness. His atonement not only forgives us but transforms us, freeing us from the power of sin and offering us a new life in Him (Romans 6:6-11). We are called to live in gratitude, living in alignment with God's will and sharing the message of salvation with others.

🤝 Relate: Jesus Took the Heat for Us, Just Like Firefighters Take the Heat for Others

Discussion Prompt:
Think about the way firefighters wear protective gear to endure the heat of a fire to save lives. How does this relate to the way Jesus took on the full weight of sin on the cross for our salvation?

- **Follow-up**: In what ways does Jesus' sacrifice change how we view His love for us? How should we respond to this ultimate act of love?

🚀 Execute: Meditate on Christ's Sacrifice and Express Gratitude in Prayer

Challenge:

- Reflect on the immense sacrifice Jesus made for you. Spend time considering the depth of His love as shown on the cross.

- Pray, expressing heartfelt gratitude for the forgiveness you have received through His sacrifice.

- **Action Step**: Identify one area in your life where sin has held you back, and ask God to help you live more fully in His righteousness. Take a step toward that change this week.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we are overwhelmed by the depth of Your sacrifice. Thank You for bearing our sins on the cross, for enduring the punishment we deserved, and for offering us healing and new life. Help us to live in gratitude for what You have done, and empower us to walk in righteousness. May we never forget the price You paid for our salvation, and may it compel us to love and serve You more. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 5: The Resurrection – Victory Over Sin and Death

🔥 Focus: Jesus Conquered Death, Giving Us Eternal Life

📖 **Bible Verse**: *1 Corinthians 15:57*
"But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

🔍 Investigate: Christ's Resurrection Proves His Power to Save

Q1: What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection in relation to sin and death?

- **Answer**: Jesus' resurrection is the ultimate proof that He conquered both sin and death. Through His death, He paid the penalty for our sins; through His resurrection, He defeated death and its power over humanity. His victory ensures that death is no longer the final word for those who believe in Him. As believers, we share in His victory, knowing that we too will be resurrected to eternal life (Romans 6:5).

Q2: How does Jesus' victory over death affect our lives today?

- **Answer**: Jesus' resurrection gives us hope beyond this life. It assures us that our sins are forgiven, and it guarantees our future resurrection. We live with confidence, knowing that death does not have the final say, and we have eternal life in Christ (John 11:25-26). This victory also empowers us to live victorious lives, free from the fear of death and filled with hope (Romans 8:37).

Q3: How does the resurrection of Jesus demonstrate God's power?

- **Answer**: The resurrection of Jesus demonstrates God's ultimate power over both physical death and spiritual death. By raising Jesus from the dead, God affirmed that He has the power to give life to those who are spiritually dead in their sins (Ephesians 2:4-5). This is not just a historical event but a continual testament to God's power to bring new life and victory to all who trust in Him.

Q4: What does it mean to "have victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"?

- **Answer**: To have victory through Jesus means that we have overcome the power of sin and death through His work on the cross and His resurrection. His victory becomes our victory when we place our faith in Him. This victory is not just for the afterlife but also empowers us to live victoriously in the present, facing challenges and trials with the assurance that we are more than conquerors in Christ (Romans 8:37).

Q5: Why is it important to give thanks to God for this victory?

- **Answer**: Giving thanks to God for the victory in Christ acknowledges that our salvation and eternal life are gifts from God, not things we can achieve by our own efforts. It humbles us and helps us live in gratitude, constantly aware that it is through Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection that we are saved (Ephesians 1:7). Gratitude motivates us to live lives that honor Him and share this good news with others.

🤝 Relate: Like a Firefighter Emerging from a Burning Building, Jesus Emerged Victorious from Death

Discussion Prompt: Think of a firefighter who enters a burning building and emerges victorious after rescuing people from danger. How does this imagery relate to Jesus emerging from the grave victorious over sin and death?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on how Jesus' victory is personal for you. How does the fact that He conquered death impact the way you view your own struggles and fears?

🚀 Execute: Live with the Confidence That Christ Has Secured Your Salvation

Challenge:

- Reflect on the hope and victory you have because of Jesus' resurrection. How can you live with more confidence in the victory that Christ has secured for you?

- **Action Step**: This week, live in light of Christ's resurrection. When facing challenges, remind yourself that Jesus has already secured the victory. Share this truth with someone in your life who may need encouragement or hope.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we thank You for Your victory over sin and death. Thank You for the hope and eternal life that Your resurrection brings to us. We live in the confidence that death no longer holds power over us because of Your work on the cross and in the tomb. Help us to live as people of victory, sharing Your hope with the world. May Your resurrection empower us to live boldly, knowing that our salvation is secure in You. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 6: Salvation by Grace, Not Works

🔥 Focus: We Are Saved by Grace, Not Our Efforts

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Ephesians 2:8-9*

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

🔍 Investigate: No Good Deeds Can Earn Salvation – It Is a Gift from God

Q1: What does it mean to be saved by grace through faith?

- **Answer**: To be saved by grace means that salvation is a gift from God that we do not deserve and cannot earn. It is God's unmerited favor towards us. Through faith, we receive this gift, trusting in Jesus Christ as the one who provides it. This highlights that our salvation is not based on anything we do but entirely on God's grace and the work of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24).

Q2: Why does Paul emphasize that salvation is not by works?

- **Answer**: Paul emphasizes that salvation is not by works to guard against the temptation to rely on our own efforts or achievements to gain God's approval. If salvation were earned by good deeds, we could boast about it, and it would no longer be a gift. But God's grace removes any ground for boasting, reminding us that we are saved purely by His love and mercy (Romans 11:6).

Q3: How does the concept of grace contrast with the idea of works-based salvation?

- **Answer**: Grace is a free gift, unearned and unmerited, while works-based salvation implies that we can earn God's favor through our actions. If salvation depended on works, we could never be certain of our salvation because no amount of good deeds would ever be enough to fully satisfy God's holiness. Grace, however, assures us that salvation is secure in Christ's finished work (Titus 3:5).

Q4: What role does faith play in salvation, according to Ephesians 2:8-9?

- **Answer**: Faith is the means by which we receive the grace of salvation. It is through faith—trusting in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross—that we are saved. Faith doesn't earn salvation; it simply acknowledges that we are incapable of saving ourselves and need Jesus as our Savior (Romans 10:9).

Q5: How does understanding that salvation is a gift change the way we live as Christians?

- **Answer**: Understanding that salvation is a gift should humble us and remove any sense of entitlement or pride. It leads to a life of gratitude and worship, as we realize we have been saved despite our shortcomings. It also motivates us to extend grace to others and to live in a way that reflects God's love, not as a means to earn His favor, but as a response to His grace (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

🤝 Relate: Firefighters Don't Ask for Payment Before Saving Lives; God Offers Salvation Freely

Discussion Prompt: Consider how firefighters risk their lives to save others without asking for payment beforehand. How is this similar to God offering us salvation freely, without expecting us to earn it?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on how knowing that God's salvation is a gift impacts your perspective on your relationship with Him. How does this affect your understanding of grace and your willingness to share it with others?

🚀 Execute: Rest in the Assurance that Salvation Is God's Work, Not Ours

Challenge:

- Rest in the assurance that you are saved by grace through faith and that this salvation is secure in Christ. Reflect on how this truth impacts your daily life and your sense of worth.

- **Action Step**: This week, practice living in the freedom that comes from knowing salvation is not based on your performance. Let go of any anxiety or striving to "earn" God's love and focus on gratitude for the gift of grace. Share this message with someone who might feel burdened by the need to prove their worth to God.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of grace—undeserved and freely given. Thank You for saving us through faith in Jesus Christ and for making salvation available to all who trust in Him. Help us to rest in the assurance that our salvation is secure in You and not based on our efforts. May this truth humble us, fill us with gratitude, and motivate us to share Your grace with others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 7: Repentance and Faith

🔥 Focus: Turning Away from Sin and Trusting Jesus

📖 **Bible Verse**: *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."

🔍 Investigate: True Salvation Involves Repentance and Faith

Q1: What does it mean to "repent and turn to God"?

- **Answer**: Repentance means to change our mind about sin, recognizing it as wrong, and turning away from it. Turning to God involves not just feeling remorse but actively choosing to follow God, trusting in His mercy and forgiveness. It's a radical shift in direction—from living for ourselves to living for God (Matthew 3:8, 2 Corinthians 7:10).

Q2: Why is repentance essential for salvation?

- **Answer**: Repentance is necessary because it acknowledges that we have sinned and fallen short of God's standard (Romans 3:23). It is not enough just to believe in Jesus—repentance is the act of turning away from our sinful nature and returning to God. Without repentance, our faith would lack the foundation of genuine transformation (Luke 13:3, Acts 17:30).

Q3: How does repentance differ from mere regret or guilt?

- **Answer**: Regret or guilt focuses on the feeling of sorrow for wrong actions, but repentance goes beyond feelings to include a change in behavior. It's a decision to leave behind our old life and follow God's ways. True repentance results in a new direction and a desire to live in obedience to God (1 Thessalonians 1:9, Acts 26:20).

Q4: How does faith play a role in true repentance?

- **Answer**: Faith in Jesus is what gives repentance its power. When we turn away from sin, we are not just turning to an abstract idea or moral code, but to the person of Jesus Christ, trusting in His ability to forgive and transform us. Faith in Jesus enables us to believe that He is the only one who can wash away our sins and make us new (Romans 10:9, Ephesians 2:8-9).

Q5: What does Acts 3:19 mean when it says, "times of refreshing may come from the Lord"?

- **Answer**: The "times of refreshing" refer to the peace, joy, and restoration that come when we truly repent and turn to God. When we seek God with a repentant heart, He forgives us, restores our relationship with Him, and fills us with His Holy Spirit. This refreshing is a spiritual renewal that empowers us to live in a way that pleases God (Psalm 51:10, Acts 3:20-21).

🤝 Relate: Just as a Firefighter Must Commit to Their Duty, We Must Commit to Following Christ

Discussion Prompt:
Think about the commitment a firefighter makes to their duty, putting others' safety above their own, even in dangerous situations. How does this relate to our commitment to follow Christ—turning away from sin and trusting in Him, even when it requires personal sacrifice?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on what it means to "commit" to following Jesus. How can you demonstrate this commitment in your own life? What sacrifices might be necessary to live faithfully?

🚀 Execute: Identify Areas in Your Life That Need Repentance and Surrender Them to God

Challenge:

- Reflect on areas of your life where sin has had a stronghold. Ask God to show you any areas where you need to repent and turn to Him.

- **Action Step**: This week, identify at least one specific area where you need to practice repentance (e.g., a particular sin, attitude, or habit). Confess it to God, turn away from it, and seek His help to change. Trust that He will forgive and empower you to live differently.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of repentance and faith. We are so grateful that You offer us forgiveness through Jesus, no matter how far we've gone astray. Help us to turn away from sin and wholeheartedly follow You. Give us the strength to live lives that honor You, and refresh us with Your Holy Spirit. We trust in Your grace and power to transform us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 8: The Holy Spirit and New Life

🔥 Focus: The Holy Spirit Transforms and Empowers Believers

📖 **Bible Verse**: *2 Corinthians 5:17*
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

🔍 Investigate: Salvation Brings Spiritual Rebirth Through the Holy Spirit

Q1: What does it mean to be a "new creation" in Christ?

- **Answer**: Being a "new creation" means that when we accept Christ, our old sinful nature is replaced by a new life in Him. This transformation is not just about outward behavior but a change in our hearts and desires. We are given a new identity in Christ, one that is defined by His righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24, Romans 6:4).

Q2: How does the Holy Spirit play a role in making us new creations?

- **Answer**: The Holy Spirit is the agent of transformation. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us, empowering us to live a life that reflects the character of Christ. He helps us grow in spiritual maturity, convicting us of sin and guiding us into righteousness (John 3:5-6, Galatians 5:22-23). Through the Spirit, we are equipped to live out our new identity in Christ.

Q3: What is the connection between salvation and spiritual rebirth?

- **Answer**: Spiritual rebirth, or being "born again," occurs when we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is the Holy Spirit who makes this spiritual rebirth possible by regenerating our hearts and giving us a new nature. We are no longer slaves to sin, but we are made alive in Christ, with a new capacity to live according to God's will (John 3:3-8, Titus 3:5).

Q4: What are the practical signs of being a new creation in Christ?

- **Answer**: The signs of being a new creation include a changed heart, a transformed mindset, and new desires that align with God’s will. Believers will begin to reflect the character of Christ more clearly—showing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There should be noticeable growth in holiness and a desire to follow God’s Word (Romans 12:2, Galatians 5:22-23).

Q5: How does 2 Corinthians 5:17 give hope to believers who are struggling with sin or past failures?

- **Answer**: This verse offers great hope because it reminds us that in Christ, our past does not define us. We are not bound by our old mistakes or sinful nature. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome sin and live a new life. The old self has passed away, and we are continuously being transformed into the likeness of Christ (Philippians 3:13-14, Romans 8:1-2).

🤝 Relate: Like an Oxygen Mask that Helps Firefighters Breathe, the Holy Spirit Sustains and Strengthens Us

Discussion Prompt:

Firefighters rely on oxygen masks to sustain them in dangerous environments, enabling them to do their work. In the same way, the Holy Spirit sustains and empowers us as we live out our Christian walk. How does the Holy Spirit act as a source of strength and guidance for you in your daily life?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you felt the Holy Spirit's strength or guidance. How did He help you through a difficult situation?
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🚀 Execute: Seek the Holy Spirit's Guidance in Daily Life

Challenge:

- Reflect on areas of your life where you need the Holy Spirit's help to experience transformation. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in making Christ-like decisions and to empower you to live out your new identity in Christ.

- **Action Step**: This week, invite the Holy Spirit into your daily decisions. When facing challenges, pause to ask for His guidance. Reflect on how His presence can change your responses, actions, and attitudes throughout the day.

Closing Prayer:

Holy Spirit, thank You for making us new creations in Christ. Thank You for transforming our hearts and empowering us to live the life that reflects Christ's love and holiness. We invite You into every area of our lives, asking for Your guidance, strength, and wisdom. Help us to live out our new identity in You, and may we continually grow in the fruit of the Spirit. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 9: The Assurance of Salvation

🔥 Focus: Can We Be Sure of Our Salvation?

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Romans 8:38-39*

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

🔍 Investigate: Those Who Trust in Christ Can Have Full Confidence in Their Salvation

Q1: What does Romans 8:38-39 tell us about God's love for us?

- **Answer**: This verse assures us that God's love for us is unshakable and unwavering. No circumstance—whether physical or spiritual—can separate us from His love. It is constant and unchanging, regardless of what we face in life. God's love is secure, and it is in Christ Jesus that we find our salvation and safety (John 10:28-29).

Q2: Why is it important to be convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love?

- **Answer**: Being convinced of this truth gives us confidence and peace in our salvation. Life can be filled with uncertainties, trials, and doubts, but knowing that nothing can separate us from God's love helps us to remain steadfast. It allows us to persevere through challenges, knowing that God's love will never fail us (1 John 5:13).

Q3: How does this verse relate to the idea of assurance of salvation?

- **Answer**: Assurance of salvation is rooted in the promise that God's love is unconditional and permanent. We don't have to fear losing our salvation because it is not based on our performance but on God's steadfast love and grace. The certainty of God's love gives believers full confidence that their salvation is secure in Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14, Philippians 1:6).

Q4: What do "neither death nor life" signify in this context?

- **Answer**: "Neither death nor life" represents the extremes of existence. It affirms that no matter what happens—whether we face the fear of death or the challenges of life—God's love remains constant. It highlights that God's love transcends all experiences and circumstances (Philippians 1:21, 2 Corinthians 5:8).

Q5: How does understanding this truth impact our daily lives as believers?

- **Answer**: Understanding that nothing can separate us from God's love brings peace, joy, and security. It enables us to face trials with hope and to live confidently, knowing that God is with us. We can trust that, even in moments of doubt or difficulty, His love will never change or be taken away (Isaiah 41:10, Hebrews 13:5).

🤝 Relate: Firefighters Have Confidence in Their Training and Tools; We Have Confidence in Christ's Promises

Discussion Prompt:

Firefighters rely on their training, tools, and experience to carry out their duties with confidence, even in dangerous situations. In the same way, we can rely on Christ's promises to give us confidence in our

salvation, no matter the circumstances. How does this analogy help you understand the security of our salvation in Christ?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you faced uncertainty or fear. How did knowing God's promises help you stand firm in your faith?

🚀 Execute: Stand Firm in Faith and Encourage Others with God's Assurance

Challenge:

- Stand firm in the truth of Romans 8:38-39. Remind yourself daily that nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Let this assurance strengthen your walk with God and deepen your trust in His promises.

- **Action Step**: This week, encourage someone who may be struggling with doubts or fears about their salvation. Share Romans 8:38-39 with them and remind them of the unshakable love of God. Help them stand firm in the confidence that nothing can separate them from God's love.

Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for the assurance of salvation that we have in Christ. We are grateful that nothing in all creation can separate us from Your love. Help us to stand firm in this truth, trusting in Your promises and finding peace in Your unchanging love. May we live confidently, knowing that we are secure in You, and may we encourage others to find the same assurance in their relationship with You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 10: Sharing the Message of Salvation

🔥 Focus: Our Responsibility to Share Salvation with Others

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Matthew 28:19-20*

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

🔍 Investigate: Salvation Is Too Precious to Keep to Ourselves; We Are Called to Share It

Q1: What does it mean to "make disciples of all nations"?

- **Answer**: Making disciples means not just preaching the gospel but also teaching others to follow Christ. This includes helping others understand the message of salvation, baptizing them, and guiding them to grow in their faith and obedience to God's Word. "All nations" emphasizes that the gospel is for everyone, regardless of culture, background, or location (Acts 1:8, Revelation 7:9).

Q2: Why is it important for us to share the message of salvation with others?

- **Answer**: Salvation is a gift from God, and it is too precious to keep to ourselves. Jesus commands us to spread the gospel because He wants all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). As believers, we have the responsibility to be His witnesses and share His love with others so that they too can experience eternal life (Romans 10:14-15).

Q3: How do we make disciples in our daily lives?

- **Answer**: Making disciples involves both sharing the gospel verbally and living out the teachings of Christ. Our actions should reflect our faith, providing an example for others to follow. Additionally, we can build relationships, answer questions about the faith, and invite others to join us in community. Discipleship is an ongoing process of growth and teaching (Colossians 3:16, Matthew 5:16).

Q4: What is the significance of baptism in the Great Commission?

- **Answer**: Baptism symbolizes the believer’s identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is an outward expression of an inward transformation and marks the beginning of a new life in Christ. It also serves as an act of obedience to Jesus' command and a public declaration of faith (Romans 6:4, Acts 2:38).

Q5: How does Jesus promise to be with us as we go and make disciples?

- **Answer**: Jesus' promise to be with us always provides encouragement and assurance. As we step out in faith to share the gospel, we can be confident that we are not alone. The Holy Spirit empowers and guides us, and Jesus’ presence gives us the strength and wisdom we need to fulfill the Great Commission (John 14:16-17, Acts 1:8).

🤝 Relate: Just as Firefighters Educate Others on Fire Safety, Believers Must Share the Gospel

Discussion Prompt:
Firefighters not only respond to emergencies but also educate the public on fire safety to prevent harm. In the same way, we are called to educate others about the salvation found in Jesus Christ. How does this analogy challenge you to be more proactive in sharing the gospel with others?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on the importance of sharing the message of salvation. How can you take a more active role in making disciples, both through words and actions?

🚀 Execute: Commit to Sharing the Message of Salvation with at Least One Person This Week

Challenge:

- Commit to sharing the gospel with someone this week. Whether through a conversation, an invitation, or sharing your testimony, look for an opportunity to share the hope you have in Christ.

- **Action Step**: Pray for boldness and for God to open doors for you to share the message of salvation with others. Prepare to answer questions and share how Christ has changed your life. Also, consider following up with someone you share the gospel with, encouraging them in their next steps.

Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for the great commission to go and make disciples of all nations. We are grateful for the salvation we have received through Jesus Christ and the privilege of sharing this good news with others. Empower us by Your Holy Spirit to be bold witnesses for You. Help us to live out the gospel and teach others to follow You. May we remain faithful in fulfilling this mission, knowing that You are always with us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

PART 2: Encounters With Jesus

Lesson 1: Finding Rest in Jesus

🔥 Focus: Finding Rest in Jesus

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Matthew 11:28*
"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

🔍 Investigate: Understanding the Rest That Jesus Offers

Q1: Who is Jesus inviting to come to Him in this verse?

- **Answer**: Jesus is inviting those who are weary and burdened—those who are tired from the struggles, worries, and burdens of life. This includes anyone feeling overwhelmed, whether physically, emotionally, or spiritually. It's an open invitation to all who recognize their need for rest and relief from life's pressures (Isaiah 55:1-2, John 6:37).

Q2: What does it mean to be "weary and burdened"?

- **Answer**: Being weary and burdened refers to feeling worn out, exhausted, or overwhelmed, often due to the weight of life's challenges, sin, or trying to live up to impossible expectations. Jesus is offering a solution to these burdens, promising spiritual rest and peace for those who come to Him (Matthew 23:4, Galatians 6:2).

Q3: What does Jesus mean by "I will give you rest"?

- **Answer**: The rest Jesus offers is not just physical rest but a deep, spiritual rest. It's the peace that comes from surrendering our burdens to Him and trusting in His sufficiency. This rest comes from knowing that He carries our burdens, forgives our sins, and provides strength for our weary souls (John 14:27, Philippians 4:7).

Q4: How does coming to Jesus bring rest, and what role does faith play in this?

- **Answer**: Coming to Jesus means trusting Him with our burdens and relying on His strength, not our own. Faith is key in receiving this rest—believing that He is able to take away our worries and give us peace. As we trust in Him, we find relief from anxiety and weariness because we no longer have to rely on our own efforts to handle life's challenges (Matthew 6:33-34, 1 Peter 5:7).

Q5: How does this invitation relate to other aspects of life, such as our emotional, mental, and spiritual health?

- **Answer**: Jesus offers rest not only from physical exhaustion but also from the emotional and spiritual struggles we face. In a world full of anxiety, fear, and stress, His invitation offers relief. He gives us a new perspective, helps us handle stress, and restores our peace by focusing on Him instead of our problems (Isaiah 41:10, Romans 15:13).

🤝 Relate: Just as Firefighters Offer Relief and Help to Those in Crisis, Jesus Offers Rest to the Weary

Discussion Prompt:
Firefighters offer help, safety, and relief to those in dangerous or overwhelming situations. In a similar way, Jesus offers rest and peace to those overwhelmed by life's pressures. How does this comparison help you understand the depth of what Jesus is offering in Matthew 11:28?

- **Follow-up**: Think of a time when you felt physically or emotionally exhausted. How did Jesus' invitation to rest speak to you in that moment?

🚀 Execute: Respond to Jesus' Invitation for Rest

Challenge:

- Take time this week to come to Jesus with your own burdens. Whether it's stress, worry, sin, or anything else weighing you down, give it to Him and trust in His promise to provide rest.

- **Action Step**: Reflect on areas of your life where you feel weary or burdened. Take a moment to pray and surrender those worries to Jesus, asking Him to give you His peace and rest. As you face challenges this week, remember that you can turn to Him for help.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your invitation to come to You with our burdens. We are grateful that You offer rest for our weary souls. Help us to trust You with the struggles we face and to rely on Your strength and peace. Give us the courage to surrender our worries to You and to live with the confidence that You are carrying our burdens. We receive Your rest and thank You for Your unending love. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 2: The Gift of Living Water

🔥 Focus: The Gift of God and Living Water

📖 **Bible Verse**: *John 4:10*

"Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.'"

🔍 Investigate: Understanding the Gift of God and Living Water

Q1: What does Jesus mean by "the gift of God"?

- **Answer**: The "gift of God" refers to the salvation and eternal life that God offers through Jesus Christ. It is a free, unearned gift of grace, not something that can be bought or earned. This gift is given out of God's love for humanity and is available to all who come to Jesus in faith (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23).

Q2: What is "living water," and why does Jesus offer it?

- **Answer**: "Living water" symbolizes the Holy Spirit, who provides eternal life and spiritual satisfaction. While physical water quenches thirst temporarily, living water satisfies the deepest needs of the soul, offering eternal fulfillment and peace. Jesus offers this living water to all who believe in Him, as He is the source of spiritual life (John 7:37-39, John 4:14).

Q3: Why does Jesus ask the Samaritan woman for a drink of water?

- **Answer**: Jesus' request for a drink is a way to initiate a conversation and reveal deeper spiritual truths. While the woman is focused on physical water, Jesus uses the opportunity to introduce her to the concept of living water, showing that He offers something far greater than what she initially seeks (John 4:7-9).

Q4: What does this verse teach us about how we should approach Jesus?

- **Answer**: This verse teaches us that we must recognize Jesus as the source of everything we need—spiritual fulfillment, eternal life, and peace. Just as the woman needed physical water to live, we need Jesus' living water to quench our spiritual thirst. We must ask for it, knowing that He is the one who can satisfy our deepest needs (Matthew 7:7-8, John 6:35).

Q5: How does knowing the "gift of God" and the "living water" impact our daily lives?

- **Answer**: Understanding the gift of God and the living water impacts how we live day to day. It encourages us to seek spiritual nourishment from Jesus rather than the temporary pleasures or pursuits of the world. It also motivates us to share this gift with others, knowing that only Jesus can provide lasting fulfillment (John 4:14, John 10:10).

🤝 Relate: Just as a Thirsty Person Seeks Water, We Seek Fulfillment in Jesus

Discussion Prompt:

Think about how people often search for water when they are thirsty. In the same way, many people look for satisfaction in life through various things, but only Jesus can offer the true fulfillment we need. How does this analogy help you understand the importance of Jesus offering "living water"?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on areas in your life where you may have sought fulfillment elsewhere. How can you turn to Jesus, the true source of living water, to satisfy your soul's deepest desires?

🚀 Execute: Seek Jesus for Living Water and Share It with Others

Challenge:

- Spend time reflecting on the living water Jesus offers. Ask yourself how often you turn to Jesus for spiritual fulfillment rather than relying on temporary solutions.

- **Action Step**: This week, make a conscious effort to turn to Jesus in prayer, Bible reading, and worship, seeking His living water to fill you. Additionally, think about someone in your life who may be spiritually thirsty and pray for an opportunity to share the message of Jesus and the living water He offers.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for offering us the gift of living water. We are grateful that in You, we find eternal satisfaction, peace, and life. Help us to seek You daily for the fulfillment our souls long for. Give us the courage to share this gift with others, so they too can experience the life that comes from You alone. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 3: Finding Courage in Jesus

🔥 Focus: Finding Courage in the Midst of Fear

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Matthew 14:27*
"But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'"

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus' Words of Comfort

Q1: What situation were the disciples in when Jesus spoke these words?

- **Answer**: The disciples were in the middle of a storm on the sea. They were terrified, fearing for their lives. The wind was against them, and they were struggling to make progress in their boat. In the midst of this fear, Jesus approached them, walking on water (Matthew 14:22-26).

Q2: Why did Jesus say, "Take courage! It is I"?

- **Answer**: Jesus' words were meant to comfort and reassure His disciples. "Take courage" encouraged them to not be afraid and to have faith in His presence and power. By saying, "It is I," He was revealing Himself to them, showing that He was the source of their peace and security, even in the midst of chaos (John 16:33).

Q3: What does it mean for us to "take courage" in difficult times?

- **Answer**: Taking courage in difficult times means choosing faith over fear, trusting in God's presence and His ability to calm the storms of life. It means recognizing that Jesus is with us in our struggles, and we can rely on His strength to face challenges. Courage comes from knowing that God is sovereign and in control (Joshua 1:9, Psalm 23:4).

Q4: How does knowing "It is I" help us overcome fear?

- **Answer**: Knowing "It is I" assures us that Jesus is present with us, and His presence brings peace. When we remember that Jesus is with us, fear loses its grip. We can have confidence in His power and authority, knowing that He is the one who calms storms and brings peace into our lives (Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 28:20).

Q5: How can we apply Jesus' command to "not be afraid" in our own lives?

- **Answer**: We can apply this command by choosing to trust Jesus in the midst of our fears. When facing uncertainties, challenges, or fears, we can remind ourselves that Jesus is with us and that He is greater than any fear or obstacle we may face. This means surrendering our worries to Him and resting in His peace (Philippians 4:6-7, 2 Timothy 1:7).

🤝 Relate: Just as Firefighters Calm People in Crisis, Jesus Brings Peace in Our Storms

Discussion Prompt:
Firefighters often provide comfort and calmness to those in distress during a crisis. In a similar way, Jesus brings peace and courage to us when we are facing life's storms. How does this analogy help you understand the role of Jesus in calming our fears and bringing us peace?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you felt afraid or overwhelmed. How did Jesus speak into that situation? How did His presence change your perspective or calm your fears?

🚀 Execute: Choose to Trust Jesus and Take Courage

Challenge:

- Reflect on the storms in your life where you feel overwhelmed or afraid. Choose to take courage by trusting that Jesus is with you, just as He was with the disciples in the storm.

- **Action Step**: This week, identify a fear or challenge in your life and bring it to Jesus in prayer. Ask for His courage and peace to replace your fear. Trust that He is with you and will guide you through the storm.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for Your words of comfort and assurance. In times of fear and uncertainty, help us to take courage and trust in Your presence. We know that You are with us, and that is all we need to face the storms of life. Calm our hearts, give us peace, and strengthen our faith in You. Help us to live without fear, knowing that You are in control. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 4: The Gift of Eternal Life

🔥 Focus: The Love of God and the Gift of Eternal Life

📖 **Bible Verse**: *John 3:16*
"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."

🔍 Investigate: Understanding God's Love and the Promise of Eternal Life

Q1: What does this verse tell us about God's love for the world?

- **Answer**: John 3:16 highlights that God's love for the world is immense and unconditional. God loved the world so much that He was willing to sacrifice His one and only Son, Jesus, for our salvation. His love is the foundation of the entire plan of salvation, demonstrating that God's love is not limited but extends to all people (Romans 5:8, 1 John 4:9-10).

Q2: What does it mean that God gave His "one and only Son"?

- **Answer**: The phrase "one and only Son" emphasizes the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only Son of God, and His sacrifice was the ultimate expression of God's love. God gave His Son to the world to pay the penalty for sin, offering salvation and eternal life to all who believe in Him. It was a supreme act of love and sacrifice (John 1:14, 1 John 4:9-10).

Q3: What does it mean to "believe in him" according to this verse?

- **Answer**: Believing in Jesus means putting our faith and trust in Him as the Son of God, who died for our sins and rose again. It's not just intellectual acknowledgment but a heart-level trust in who Jesus is and what He has done for us. True belief leads to repentance, surrender, and following Him as Lord (John 14:6, Romans 10:9-10).

Q4: What is the difference between "perishing" and having "eternal life"?

- **Answer**: "Perishing" refers to eternal separation from God, the consequence of sin and rejection of God's offer of salvation. It is spiritual death. In contrast, "eternal life" refers to a restored relationship with God that begins now and continues forever. Eternal life is not just a future hope but a present reality for those who believe in Jesus (John 5:24, 1 John 5:13).

Q5: How does John 3:16 assure us of God's plan for our salvation?

- **Answer**: This verse assures us that God's plan for salvation is rooted in His love. He has made a way for us to escape eternal death through faith in His Son. Jesus' death and resurrection secure our eternal life if we believe in Him. This promise is available to everyone who accepts the gift of salvation through Jesus (Romans 6:23, 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

🤝 Relate: Just as a Lifeguard Saves Those Who Are Drowning, Jesus Offers Eternal Life to Those Who Believe

Discussion Prompt:
Think of a lifeguard who saves someone drowning in the ocean. The lifeguard offers help freely, but the person must accept the lifeguard's assistance to be saved. Similarly, Jesus offers eternal life, but we must accept the gift by believing in Him. How does this analogy help you understand the importance of accepting Jesus' sacrifice?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on the life-changing impact of believing in Jesus. How does this assurance of eternal life change the way you live and view the world?
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🚀 Execute: Accept and Share the Gift of Eternal Life

Challenge:

- Reflect on the incredible gift of eternal life that God has given us through Jesus. Take time to reaffirm your belief in Jesus and His sacrifice for you.

- **Action Step**: This week, share John 3:16 with someone who needs to hear the gospel. Pray for opportunities to share the love of God and the message of salvation with others. Consider inviting someone to church or a small group to hear more about God's plan for salvation.

Closing Prayer:

Father, thank You for the incredible gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ. We are in awe of Your love, which led You to give Jesus for our salvation. Help us to believe in Him fully and trust in the promise of eternal life. Give us courage to share this message with others, so that they too can experience the life-changing power of Your love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 5: The Mission of Jesus - Seeking and Saving the Lost

🔥 Focus: The Mission of Jesus to Seek and Save the Lost

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Luke 19:10*
"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus' Mission to Seek and Save the Lost

Q1: What does it mean for Jesus to "seek and to save the lost"?

- **Answer**: "Seek and save the lost" refers to Jesus' mission of coming to earth to find and rescue those who are spiritually lost, separated from God by sin. The "lost" are those who do not know God, and His mission was to offer salvation through His life, death, and resurrection, bringing them into a restored relationship with God (Matthew 18:11-14, John 10:10).

Q2: Why does Jesus refer to Himself as the "Son of Man"?

- **Answer**: The title "Son of Man" emphasizes both Jesus' humanity and His divine mission. It reflects His role as the Savior who was fully human and fully divine, sent to redeem humanity. This title also connects to prophecies in the Old Testament (e.g., Daniel 7:13-14) that speak of the Messiah coming to establish God's kingdom and salvation for all people.

Q3: What does this verse reveal about Jesus' purpose on earth?

- **Answer**: This verse clearly shows that Jesus' purpose was to seek and save those who were spiritually lost. His mission was not to establish an earthly kingdom but to bring salvation to all people, offering eternal life and reconciliation with God. Jesus' compassion and desire to save the lost were central to His work and message (Luke 5:32, 1 Timothy 1:15).

Q4: How does this verse apply to the broader context of salvation?

- **Answer**: Jesus' mission to seek and save the lost is a foundational aspect of the gospel message. It reminds us that salvation is not earned but offered freely by God through Jesus' sacrifice. The lost are not just those far from God but anyone who has not accepted the gift of salvation through Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life for all who are lost and need to be found (John 14:6, Romans 10:9-10).

Q5: How does Luke 19:10 challenge us in our own role as followers of Christ?

- **Answer**: As followers of Jesus, we are called to continue His mission of seeking and saving the lost. This means reaching out to others who do not know Christ, sharing the gospel, and showing compassion to those who are far from God. Jesus came to save, and as His followers, we are tasked with sharing the message of His salvation with a lost world (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15).

🤝 Relate: Just as a Rescue Team Goes After Those in Danger, Jesus Came to Rescue Us

Discussion Prompt:
Think about a rescue team going after those who are lost or in danger. They search tirelessly to save lives. In the same way, Jesus came to search for and rescue those who are spiritually lost. How does this analogy help you understand the urgency and importance of Jesus' mission?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on your own journey of being "found" by Jesus. How did He rescue you, and how can you help others experience the same?

🚀 Execute: Join Jesus in the Mission to Seek and Save the Lost

Challenge:

- Reflect on the mission of Jesus to seek and save the lost. Think about those around you who may not know Christ and commit to praying for them.

- **Action Step**: This week, reach out to someone who may be spiritually "lost" or struggling. Share the message of hope in Jesus with them, offering to pray or walk alongside them in their faith journey. Look for opportunities to serve or invite others into the community of believers.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming to seek and save the lost. We are grateful that You rescued us from sin and death, offering us eternal life. Help us to continue Your mission by seeking out those who are far from You and sharing the message of salvation. Give us hearts of compassion and boldness to reach others with Your love. We commit to being part of Your mission to seek and save the lost. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 6: Jesus, the Light of the World

🔥 Focus: Jesus as the Light of the World

📖 **Bible Verse**: *John 8:12*
"When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus as the Light of the World

Q1: What does Jesus mean when He says, "I am the light of the world"?

- **Answer**: Jesus is declaring Himself as the source of spiritual illumination, guidance, and truth in a world filled with darkness. The "light" represents His divine nature and the truth that He brings to dispel the spiritual darkness of sin, ignorance, and despair. Just as light guides us physically, Jesus provides the spiritual guidance that leads to salvation and eternal life (John 1:4-9, John 12:46).

Q2: What does it mean to "follow" Jesus, according to this verse?

- **Answer**: To "follow" Jesus means to commit to living according to His teachings, to trust Him as the way, the truth, and the life. Following Jesus means accepting His guidance, living in His light, and allowing His truth to shape our lives. It's an active decision to walk in the light He offers, rather than remaining in spiritual darkness (Matthew 16:24, John 14:6).

Q3: How does Jesus' light contrast with darkness in the world?

- **Answer**: Darkness symbolizes sin, confusion, and separation from God. Jesus, as the light, brings clarity, truth, and salvation. While the world is filled with spiritual darkness—ignorance, falsehoods, and the consequences of sin—Jesus offers the truth that sets people free and brings them into a relationship with God (John 12:35-36, Ephesians 5:8-9).

Q4: What does it mean to "never walk in darkness" if we follow Jesus?

- **Answer**: To "never walk in darkness" means that those who follow Jesus are guided by His truth and light, leading them away from the destructive paths of sin and confusion. Jesus' light illuminates the way, giving us the wisdom and understanding we need to make decisions that align with God's will and to live in a way that honors Him (Psalm 119:105, 1 John 1:7).

Q5: How does having the "light of life" impact our daily lives?

- **Answer**: Having the "light of life" means that we have a new way of seeing the world and living in it. Jesus' light gives us hope, purpose, and direction. It transforms how we relate to others, how we face challenges, and how we live with eternal perspective. His light helps us to navigate life with clarity, joy, and peace, knowing that He is with us every step of the way (Philippians 2:15, Matthew 5:14-16).

🤝 Relate: Just as Light Guides Our Path, Jesus Guides Our Lives

Discussion Prompt:
Think about how we rely on light to find our way in the dark—whether it's a flashlight, street lamps, or the sun. In a similar way, Jesus, as the light of the world, provides direction and clarity for our lives. How does this analogy help you understand the significance of following Jesus?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you were uncertain or confused. How did Jesus bring light and clarity to that situation?

🚀 Execute: Follow Jesus and Live in His Light

Challenge:

- Take time to reflect on areas of your life where you may be walking in darkness or confusion. Turn to Jesus for His guidance and light.

- **Action Step**: This week, make a conscious decision to follow Jesus in a specific area of your life. Whether it's through prayer, Bible reading, or seeking His wisdom in a difficult decision, let His light guide your actions and choices. Share with someone how Jesus is guiding you to live in His light.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for being the light of the world. We are grateful that You have come to guide us out of darkness and into Your marvelous light. Help us to follow You faithfully, trusting in Your truth and allowing Your light to illuminate our lives. May we reflect Your light to those around us and live as beacons of hope and truth in a world full of darkness. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 7: The Call to Follow Jesus

🔥 Focus: Jesus' Call to Follow Him

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Matthew 9:9*
"As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him."

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus' Call to Matthew

Q1: Why did Jesus choose Matthew, a tax collector, to follow Him?

- **Answer**: Jesus chose Matthew, a tax collector, to demonstrate that His call is for all people, regardless of their past or societal standing. Tax collectors were seen as sinners and outcasts, yet Jesus offered Matthew grace, showing that He came to save the lost, not the righteous (Luke 5:32, Matthew 9:13). Jesus' call extends to anyone willing to respond, no matter their past mistakes or reputation.

Q2: What does it mean for Matthew to "get up and follow" Jesus?

- **Answer**: Matthew's decision to "get up and follow" Jesus was an immediate and radical response. It meant leaving his livelihood, comfort, and the security of his position as a tax collector. It was a complete commitment to follow Jesus and His teachings, signaling a transformation in Matthew's life. Following Jesus involves not just words but action—leaving behind old ways of living and choosing to follow Christ's path (Luke 14:27, Mark 10:28-30).

Q3: What does Jesus' invitation to "follow me" mean for us today?

- **Answer**: Jesus' invitation to "follow me" calls us to commit to living according to His teachings, to be His disciples, and to live out His example in our lives. It is not just an invitation to believe but to take action—aligning our thoughts, attitudes, and actions with His will. Following Jesus involves a lifestyle of obedience, discipleship, and love for others (Matthew 4:19, John 10:27).

Q4: How did Matthew's response exemplify true discipleship?

- **Answer**: Matthew's response showed immediate obedience and trust in Jesus. He didn't hesitate or make excuses but responded decisively. True discipleship requires not just hearing Jesus' call but acting upon it, sometimes requiring us to make difficult decisions, leave behind comfort, and step into the unknown with faith (Luke 9:23, Mark 8:34).

Q5: How does Jesus' call to Matthew reflect His mission and heart for sinners?

- **Answer**: Jesus' call to Matthew, a sinner in the eyes of society, reflects His mission to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). It shows that Jesus does not look at outward appearances or societal status but sees the potential for transformation in everyone. He came to call sinners to repentance, offering grace and redemption to all who would follow Him (Matthew 11:28-30, Mark 2:17).

🤝 Relate: Just as Matthew Left His Tax Collector Booth to Follow Jesus, We Are Called to Leave Behind Our Old Ways and Follow Him

Discussion Prompt:
Matthew was sitting at his tax collector's booth, a place of worldly security and wealth, yet he left it all to follow Jesus. How does this analogy challenge us to leave behind things in our lives that may be holding us back from fully following Christ?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on areas of your life where you may be reluctant to fully follow Jesus. What are you holding onto that Jesus is calling you to leave behind?

🚀 Execute: Respond to Jesus' Call and Follow Him

Challenge:

- Reflect on Jesus' call to "follow me." Ask yourself: In what areas of your life is Jesus calling you to respond more fully, leaving behind things that may be hindering your walk with Him?

- **Action Step**: This week, commit to taking a step of obedience in following Jesus. Whether it's starting a new spiritual discipline, reaching out to someone in need, or letting go of a particular habit or attitude, make a concrete decision to follow Jesus more closely.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for calling us to follow You, just as You called Matthew. We are grateful for Your grace and the transformation You bring into our lives. Help us to respond to Your call with the same obedience and commitment that Matthew showed. Give us the courage to leave behind anything that stands in the way of fully following You, and empower us to live as Your true disciples. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 8: Faith and the Power of Salvation

🔥 Focus: Faith as the Key to Salvation

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Luke 7:50*
"Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'"

🔍 Investigate: Understanding the Role of Faith in Salvation

Q1: Who is the woman in this story, and why is her faith significant?

- **Answer**: The woman in this story is often believed to be a sinful woman, possibly a prostitute, who anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume and wiped them with her hair in an act of deep gratitude and repentance. Her faith is significant because, despite her past, she believed in Jesus' ability to forgive and save her. Her actions reflected her belief in His mercy and power (Luke 7:36-39).
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Q2: What does Jesus mean by "Your faith has saved you"?

- **Answer**: Jesus is telling the woman that her trust in Him and His power to forgive her sins has led to her salvation. It wasn't the physical act of anointing Jesus' feet that saved her, but the faith behind it. Jesus recognizes that she has placed her trust in Him, and it is her faith, not her works, that has brought forgiveness and peace (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 5:1).

Q3: How does this verse highlight the relationship between faith and salvation?

- **Answer**: This verse emphasizes that salvation is a gift from God, received through faith. It is not about our deeds or how we appear to others but about a genuine, trusting relationship with Jesus. This salvation brings peace, as Jesus grants forgiveness and restores a person's relationship with God (John 14:6, Acts 16:31).

Q4: Why does Jesus say, "Go in peace"?

- **Answer**: "Go in peace" is Jesus' declaration that the woman is no longer burdened by the guilt and shame of her past. She is at peace with God, as her sins are forgiven. This peace is not just emotional but spiritual—it represents a restored relationship with God and the inner tranquility that comes from knowing one is forgiven (John 14:27, Philippians 4:7).

Q5: How can this story encourage us today in our own faith journey?

- **Answer**: This story encourages us by showing that no matter our past or our mistakes, Jesus offers forgiveness to all who come to Him in faith. Our faith, even if small or imperfect, is enough for God to offer His grace. We are reminded that it is not our worthiness but Jesus' mercy that brings salvation and peace (Romans 3:22, Hebrews 11:6).

🤝 Relate: Just as the Woman Found Forgiveness and Peace in Jesus, We Can Experience the Same Through Faith

Discussion Prompt:
The woman's act of faith in Jesus led to her forgiveness and peace. In the same way, our faith in Jesus leads us to peace and reconciliation with God. How does this help you understand the significance of faith in your life?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you experienced peace in your life after trusting Jesus with a situation or your struggles. How did faith play a role in bringing that peace?

🚀 Execute: Cultivate and Strengthen Your Faith in Jesus

Challenge:

- Reflect on your own faith journey. Are there areas of your life where you need to trust Jesus more fully, or where you've been hesitant to place your faith in His ability to forgive and restore?

- **Action Step**: This week, take a step to deepen your trust in Jesus. Whether it's through prayer, surrendering a particular struggle to Him, or taking time to meditate on His promises, make a conscious effort to strengthen your faith. Share your experience with someone who might need encouragement in their own faith.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for the incredible gift of salvation that comes through faith in You. Just as You forgave the woman and gave her peace, we thank You that by faith, we can experience Your forgiveness and peace in our lives as well. Help us to trust You fully, knowing that You are always ready to forgive and restore us. Strengthen our faith, and guide us to live out that faith with confidence, sharing Your love and peace with others. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 9: Jesus Came to Call Sinners

🔥 Focus: Jesus Came for the Sinners, Not the Righteous

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Mark 2:17*
"On hearing this, Jesus said to them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus' Mission to Call Sinners

Q1: Who was Jesus speaking to, and what was the context of His statement?

- **Answer**: Jesus was responding to the Pharisees' criticism for eating with tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees, who saw themselves as righteous and law-abiding, questioned why Jesus would associate with such people. Jesus, in this context, clarified His mission: He came to save those who recognized their need for healing, not those who were self-righteous (Mark 2:13-16).

Q2: What does Jesus mean by "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick"?

- **Answer**: Jesus uses the analogy of a doctor to explain His purpose. Just as a doctor is needed to heal the sick, Jesus came to heal spiritually sick people—those burdened by sin. The "healthy" represent those who do not acknowledge their need for salvation, while the "sick" are those who recognize their sinfulness and need for God's forgiveness (Luke 5:31, Matthew 9:12).

Q3: What does this verse reveal about Jesus' heart and mission?

- **Answer**: This verse shows that Jesus' mission was to reach out to sinners, not the self-righteous. He came to offer forgiveness and healing to those who acknowledged their brokenness, not those who thought they had it all together. Jesus' love and compassion extended to those marginalized by society—tax collectors, sinners, and the spiritually lost (Matthew 9:13, Luke 19:10).

Q4: How does this challenge our understanding of who Jesus came to save?

- **Answer**: This challenges us to rethink our view of who needs Jesus. Jesus didn't come to call those who already thought they were righteous, but those who recognized their need for Him. It's a reminder that no one is beyond the reach of God's grace, and we should not exclude anyone based on their past, mistakes, or status (Romans 5:8, 1 Timothy 1:15).

Q5: What does this verse teach us about how we should interact with others, especially those who may be seen as "sinners" by society?

- **Answer**: Jesus' example teaches us to extend grace and love to those whom society may reject or judge. Rather than avoiding people because of their sins, we are called to reach out, show compassion, and share the message of hope and salvation. Just as Jesus dined with sinners, we are called to be a witness to God's love for all people (Luke 15:1-2, 1 Corinthians 9:22).

🤝 Relate: Just as a Doctor Heals the Sick, Jesus Came to Heal the Broken

Discussion Prompt:
Imagine a doctor who specializes in healing the most severe illnesses. In the same way, Jesus came to heal the spiritually sick—those aware of their need for redemption. How does this analogy help you understand the depth of Jesus' love and His mission?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on a time when you recognized your need for Jesus' healing. How did that awareness shape your relationship with Him and your understanding of His grace?

🚀 Execute: Embrace Jesus' Call and Share His Love with the "Sick" Around Us

Challenge:

- Reflect on the people in your life who may feel rejected or forgotten by society. How can you be a source of Jesus' love to them, showing that no one is too far gone for God's grace?

- **Action Step**: This week, reach out to someone who may feel like an outcast or someone who is distant from God. Share the message of grace and forgiveness with them, reminding them that Jesus came for the sinners, not the righteous. Let your actions reflect the love of Jesus.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for coming to seek and save the lost. We are grateful that You did not come for the righteous, but for those who recognize their need for healing. Help us to have a heart of compassion like Yours, reaching out to those who are spiritually lost. Empower us to share Your love and grace with others, so they can experience the healing power of Your forgiveness. In Your name, we pray. Amen.

Lesson 10: Jesus' Willingness to Heal and Restore

🔥 Focus: Jesus' Compassion and Power to Heal

📖 **Bible Verse**: *Matthew 8:3*
"Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. 'I am willing,' he said. 'Be clean!' Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy."

🔍 Investigate: Understanding Jesus' Healing Touch

Q1: What is the significance of the man's condition—leprosy—during Jesus' time?

- **Answer**: Leprosy was a serious and contagious disease that led to social isolation. Those with leprosy were considered unclean and were cast out from society. They could not approach others or participate in communal life, including worship in the synagogue. The disease represented both physical suffering and spiritual alienation (Leviticus 13:45-46).

Q2: What does it mean that Jesus "reached out his hand and touched the man"?

- **Answer**: Jesus' action of touching the leper was incredibly significant because, in Jewish law, touching a leper would make a person ceremonially unclean. Yet, Jesus did not fear becoming unclean or contagious. His touch was an expression of compassion and an act of restoration. Jesus broke social and religious barriers to show His willingness to heal and restore those whom society rejected (Mark 1:41, Luke 5:13).

Q3: Why is it important that Jesus said, "I am willing"?

- **Answer**: Jesus' words, "I am willing," demonstrate His compassion and willingness to help. It is not just that He had the power to heal, but He also had the heart to heal. He wasn't reluctant or distant but eagerly willing to restore the man's health and dignity. This reveals God's heart of mercy and grace—He is always willing to heal and save those who come to Him (2 Peter 3:9, Matthew 7:7-11).

Q4: What does Jesus' healing power teach us about His authority and nature?

- **Answer**: Jesus' healing power shows that He has divine authority over sickness, sin, and every form of brokenness. His willingness to heal reflects His compassionate nature and His divine mission to restore what was lost. Jesus has the power to cleanse and restore both physically and spiritually, which points to His identity as the Son of God who brings redemption (Matthew 9:6, John 14:9).

Q5: What can we learn from this passage about how we should approach Jesus with our own struggles?

- **Answer**: This passage teaches us that we can approach Jesus with confidence, knowing that He is willing and able to heal us—whether physically, emotionally, or spiritually. Just as the leper humbly came to Jesus with his need, we too should bring our struggles before Him. Jesus' willingness to heal shows that He desires to restore us and make us whole (Hebrews 4:16, James 5:14-15).

🤝 Relate: Just as Jesus Touched and Healed the Leper, He Desires to Heal Us

Discussion Prompt:
Think about the isolation and rejection that the leper faced. Jesus not only healed him but restored his place in society. How does this reflect the way Jesus wants to heal and restore us, both physically and spiritually?

- **Follow-up**: Reflect on your own life. How have you experienced Jesus' willingness to heal and restore you, whether physically, emotionally, or spiritually?

🚀 Execute: Step Forward in Faith, Trusting in Jesus' Willingness to Heal

Challenge:

- Reflect on the areas of your life where you need healing—whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. Approach Jesus with the confidence that He is both willing and able to heal you.

- **Action Step**: This week, bring your struggles and needs before Jesus in prayer, trusting that He will respond with His healing touch. If there's someone in your life who needs healing, consider praying with them, offering encouragement, and reminding them of Jesus' willingness to restore and heal.

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank You for reaching out and touching the lives of those who are broken and in need of healing. We are grateful for Your willingness to heal and restore, and for the compassion You show us every day. Help us to bring our struggles before You with faith, trusting that You are willing and able to heal us. Give us the courage to reach out to others who need Your touch and offer them the same hope that You have given us. In Your name, we pray. Amen.