

Worksheets

Blasphemy, Grace, Quarrels & Reconciliation

The intriguing lives of first century disciples.

Book 2 – Worksheets

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Paralytic Man

lowered through roof

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL:

A1. Verse 2 says that Jesus was preaching the Word to the crowd. What do you think that means? He certainly wasn't preaching the resurrection yet!

A2. What reasons (other than great faith or paralytic's very poor health) can you think of for the dedicated determination or faith of these four men?

A3. What other access options were available to the four men other than digging a hole in roof?

A4. How difficult do you think it was to dig through the roof?

A5. Do you think anyone in the room below helped?

A6. What would have happened in today's society if something like this took place?

A7. What is Jesus saying about Himself when He tells the paralytic that his sins are forgiven?

A8. In 2:5 Mark says that Jesus saw "their" faith. Whose faith is He talking about? Faith in what? What kind of faith did Jesus see?

A9. Since the paralytic is obviously coming to be physically healed, why do you think the first thing that Jesus says is that the paralytic's sins are forgiven?

A10. If the scribes had believed that Jesus was the Messiah, would forgiving sins have been acceptable?

A11. In 2:7 the scribes said that only God could forgive sins. Does this make sense? If I am the one sinned against, can't I forgive the one who sinned against me?

A12. What do you think Jesus means in 2:9 when He asked which was easier, forgiving sins or healing a paralytic?

For God: _____

For man: _____

A13. Why does Jesus heal the paralytic?

A14. How did Jesus normally respond when the crowds asked Him to perform a sign?

A15. Why were the scribes there? [Hint: look back to 1:21-22]

A16. The people in attendance were amazed (astonished). Have you ever been truly amazed at something? What was it and how did you feel or how were you impacted? Have you ever witnessed a miracle?

A17. The Matthew version of this story says that Jesus told the paralytic to go home after he picked up his mat. Why would Jesus tell the man to go home? Is that what you would have done if you had just been healed?

A18. The Shema, a Jewish confession of faith, begins with reference to Dt 6:4 that says, "*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!*" This confession stresses the unity and singleness of God: there are not multiple Gods. Jesus quoted from the Shema in Mark 12:28-30. How would an understanding and knowledge of this confession make it easy for most Jews to reject the idea that Jesus was the Son of God or that the Messiah was the Son of God?

B. Blasphemy

B1. What is the basis for the scribes' claim that Jesus was blaspheming? [Hint: see John 10:33]

B2. Based on Mark 14:64, why was Jesus crucified?

B3. What is blasphemy?

B4. Is the reasoning of the scribes in Mark 2:7 wrong?

C. APPLICATION

C1. Have you ever been so needy or desirous of something that you took extraordinary measures to accomplish your goal? How about today? Do you need to boldly persevere in something?

C2. Is your faith equal to that of the four bearers? If not, why not? How strong is your faith?

C3. Would you have dug a hole in the roof when you arrived at the house? Why or why not?

C4. What would make your faith stronger?

C5. Do you need to dig a hole for someone?

Joseph of Arimathea

who buried Jesus

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. At this moment (the death of Jesus), what do you think the Jesus-followers, including Joseph, were thinking? What would have been your state of mind at that time?

A2. If the above is true, why would Joseph give the tomb and take the body, etc.?

A3. What would normally have been done with the bodies of criminals who had been crucified?

A4. What do you think Joseph risked by asking for the body?

A5. Do you think this identified Joseph as a disciple of Jesus?

A6. Why would Joseph take such a risk for a dead body?

A7. What might have happened to Joseph once Pilate and the Sanhedrin knew that Joseph wanted the body of Jesus to be buried in his tomb?

PILATE

SANHEDRIN

A8. Do you think there is any significance to this being a new and unused tomb?

A9. How can you explain Jesus' quick death?

A10. Why do you think Pilate gave the body to Joseph?

A11. Normally the family claimed the body. Why do you think Mary and her family did not do that?

A12. How does the fact that Joseph went "boldly" (took courage) to Pilate compare with Joseph's attitude prior to Jesus' death?

A13. Put yourself in Joseph's sandals. You have kept your faith quiet, possibly for many months. Do you think Joseph may have felt guilty for never speaking up about Jesus to the Jewish leaders?

A14. What impact do you think it would have had if either or both Joseph and Nicodemus had spoken up in front of the Sanhedrin?

A15. What do you think changed for Joseph that he would come forward now? Explain.

A16. Mark 14:64 and Luke 23:1 tell us that all of the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus and that He deserved death. Yet in Luke 23:51 it says that Joseph did not agree with the Sanhedrin's plans. How do you explain what seems to be a contradiction?

B. BEING A DISCIPLE

B1. Both John and Matthew tell us that Joseph of Arimathea was a disciple. What do you think it means that Joseph was a disciple of Jesus? How would you define "disciple"?

B2. John reports three times how Jesus described a disciple. What do these verses tell us about being a disciple of Jesus?

John 8:31 _____

John 13:35 _____

John 15:8 _____

B3. If Joseph was truly a disciple of Christ Jesus, then how does he conscientiously serve as a member of the Sanhedrin?

B4. What conflicts of interest would occur while Joseph remained a secret disciple of Jesus?

B5. Why do you think Joseph kept his belief in Jesus secret?

B6. Can you be saved and not be a disciple?

C. APPLICATION

C1. Are you a disciple of Jesus? Is there enough evidence to convict you? Do you *obey, love,* and produce *fruit*?

C2. Do you have any conflicts of interest with Christ and His teachings? For example do you disagree with or not believe some key portion of His teaching? How do you harmonize your position?

C3. Do you belong to any secular organization that inherently rejects some of the teachings of Christ or puts loyalty to the organization above all else?

C4. Do you know anyone who "played a part" or did not reveal true feelings, opinions or position about Christ (like Joseph and Nicodemus)? How did things work out?

C5. Mark 15:42 says that Joseph was looking forward to the kingdom of God. Are you? Why? Why not?

Joanna & Susanna

benefactors

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. Do you think Jesus chose the people who traveled with Him?

A2. What problem might have occurred if Jesus chose the women who could follow? What might have happened if He had told someone she could not be in the group?

A3. Do you think that this arrangement of the women following and supporting Jesus and the disciples would have been looked on with favor?

1) By friends of men with wives or daughters in the traveling band:

2) By society in general:

3) By Pharisees:

A4. If you were a women's rights activist, how would you use these passages about women to support your activist position?

FAVOR:

DISFAVOR:

A5. What conclusions can you draw from the difference in what we know of Mary Magdalene and Joanna and their status or backgrounds?

A6. List the things the "many women" might have done for Jesus and the other disciples.

A7. How important would you say Joanna and Susanna were to Jesus and the disciples?

A8. We know that Joanna was married to Chuza. How do you suppose she was able to leave home and her husband and travel around Galilee?

A9. Do you suspect that the other women were unmarried? Married? Why? If they were unmarried, what was the source of their income to support Jesus and His Apostles?

A10. How would society have looked on either married or unmarried women traveling around with Jesus?

A11. What might Chuza's friends and enemies have said about this situation with his wife?

A12. Where do you suppose all these people were sleeping when they were traveling around? There could easily have been 20+ people in the support group.

A13. Could there have been more than one group?

A14. What is the possibility that husbands of these women (or sons and brothers) were also part of the traveling group?

A15. Why do you suppose these women did all this work and gave their money? What could have been the motivation?

A16. Do you suppose this band of women became a closed group? Why? Why not?

A17. Do you think these women would have stayed with the traveling band or would they have gone home when they got tired?

A18. Do you think one of the women emerged as the leader? If so, who in the group of women might have been the leader, and why?

A19. Would the Apostles have allowed a woman to hold the money if a "treasurer" was necessary?

A20. Comparing the timelines of Luke 8 and 24, we learn that the women stayed the course. They did not leave after a couple of months and were there to the bitter end. What might you conclude from the fact that the women did not leave but stayed to prepare His body after the crucifixion?

A21. How do you suppose these women felt as they stood at a distance from the cross?

A22. Why do you think they stood at a distance?

B. APPLICATION

B1a. Women: Would you have been one of the women if you had had the opportunity? Why? Why not?

B1b. Men: If you were married and either your spouse or daughter wanted to join this traveling group, would you have permitted it:

- 1) if living in Jesus day.
- 2) today.

B2. How would you compare your own commitment to Jesus to this traveling band?

B3. Do you know anyone who is obviously sold out to Jesus and would have followed Jesus around the countryside or joined His support group?

Q. What is different about them?

B4. If you had witnessed the cross, how would you have felt? Would you have understood? Would you have watched?

Ananias

messenger to Saul (Paul)

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. What do we learn about Ananias in 9:10 and 22:12?

- a) He was a _____ of Christ.

- b) He was a _____ man.

- c) He had a _____ reputation among the local Jews.

NOTE: This is all we know about Ananias, other than the things that happened to him in this story and how he responded.

A2. What does it mean that Ananias was "devout"?

A3. What do you think it means that he was devout, according to the Law?

A4. We see both similarities and differences in Jesus' encounters with Saul and with Ananias:

Similarities:

- (a) Both heard Jesus' voice.
- (b) Both received instructions from Jesus.
- (c) Both obeyed Jesus.

Differences:

- (a) Saul saw a light but Ananias did not.
- (b) Saul didn't recognize Jesus' voice; Ananias did.
- (c) Saul was blinded but Ananias suffered no physical infirmity.

What can we learn about Ananias in observing what he did and said in these following two passages?

Acts 9

(1) He responded to the Lord _____ .

(2) He recognized Jesus' voice and responded, _____
_____ .

(3) He questioned Jesus: Are you sure? This is the man who had been _____ everyone.

(4) He went to the house where Saul was staying, entered, and addressed Saul as _____
_____ .

(5) He _____ on Saul.

(6) He told Saul that Jesus had sent him, so that:

a) he might _____ again, and

b) he might be filled with the _____ .

Acts 22:

(7) Ananias came, stood by Paul and said " _____ Saul, regain your sight."

(8) Then he said:

Acts 22:14-15 And he said, "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth; 15 for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard." ESV

(9) Ananias told Saul to get up and be baptized and wash away his _____ .

A5. Why do you think God explained His plans for Saul to Ananias?

A6. How would you have felt going to the house to confront Saul? Would you have called him brother?

A7. What is the significance of Ananias calling him "Brother"?

A8. The accounts of what Ananias said to Saul are very different in Acts 9:17 and Acts 22:14-15. Luke does not report that Ananias said any of the things that Paul described in Acts 22! In Acts 9:15-16 Luke reports that Jesus told Ananias that Saul was His chosen instrument, to take Gospel message to Gentiles, kings, and the Israelites, and he would suffer much in this service.

Why do you think the information reported about Jesus' plans for Saul in Acts 9 was so different from that in Acts 22?

A9. Did Saul fulfill Jesus' plans as outlined in Acts 22:14-15?

A10. Jesus told Ananias His special plans for Saul in Acts 9:

- (a) He was God's chosen instrument.
- (b) He would carry His name before the Gentiles, their kings, and the people of Israel.
- (c) He would suffer for the name of Jesus.

Do you think Ananias understood any of this at the time?

A11. Why did God choose Ananias for this assignment? Why didn't God heal and restore Saul without the use of a third party?

A12. How would Saul have been received by believers in Damascus if God had not used Ananias?

A13. Why was Jesus not unhappy with Ananias voicing his concerns about going to Saul? Wasn't Ananias questioning God's plans and instructions?

A14. How did God respond to Ananias' concerns about meeting with an enemy of the church?

A15. Who did Ananias say appeared to Saul and what are the implications?

A16. Based on 9:20 how do we know that Saul got the message?

A17. Do you think Saul's physical condition had any impact on him when Ananias arrived to pray for him?

A18. Verse 9:11 says that Saul was praying. If you had been Saul, what would you have been praying?

A19. Jesus chose Ananias for this job because Ananias was devout and Jesus knew he would do as He asked. This was an important task and would have considerably elevated Ananias' standing among his friends in the Christian community. Yet, we never hear about Ananias again. Why?

A20. How are the following attributes of God demonstrated in this story?

Grace: _____

Patience: _____

Power: _____

Forgiveness: _____

Mercy: _____

Sovereignty: _____

Love: _____

B. APPLICATION

B1. Do you know anyone who needs an Ananias in his or her life?

.

B2. Do you know an Ananias?

B3. Have you ever been an Ananias to someone?

B4. Is there anyone in your life who needs grace?

B5. What part of Saul's experience has happened in your life?

- Prior to conversion persecuting believers.
- Prior to conversion aggressively rebelling against God.
- Dramatic encounter with Jesus (a Damascus Road experience).
- Spent days in fasting and prayer before dramatic revelation.
- Eyes opened to the truth by another believer.

Hymenaeus

shipwrecked faith

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. What does Paul mean by the word "shipwrecked" in 1 Tim 1:19?

A2. What should you do if you have something on your conscience concerning the work you are trying to do?

A3. Do you think Paul did everything required by Mt 18:15-17?

Matt 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ESV

A4. What does it mean when Paul says he handed Hymenaeus over to Satan?

NOTE: 1 Cor 5:5 you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. ESV

A5. What do you think Paul means in 2 Tim 2:18 that Hymenaeus has "swerved from the truth"?

A6. Who else is to blame if someone "wanders" away from the truth?

A7. The "What Do We Know?" section above lists nine suggestions from 2:14 – 2:25. What do the first three and the last three have in common, and how important is that common theme?
[see James 3:5-12]

A8. What do we learn in James 3:6-10 about the "tongue"?

James 3:6-10 *And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.* ESV

Q. Do you think it is really true that man, on his own cannot tame the tongue?

Q. Do you think your tongue can set the course of your life? What important or critical life decision can you make without using your tongue?

Q. What do you think is the worst characteristic of the tongue?

B. BLASPHEME

B1. What does it mean for someone to blaspheme (1 Tim 1:20)?

B2. Can you imagine today if we had a law like this today? How would secular people react?

B3. How would Hymenaeus be taught not to blaspheme by "handing him over to Satan"?

B4. How does the Scripture Paul quoted in 2 Tim 2:19 support his argument?

2 Tim 2:19 *But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."* ESV

B5. Paul says in 2 Tim 2:21 that if a person is right with God he can be used, and then he lists four specific ways. What are they and what do they mean?

2 Tim 2:21 *Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.* ESV.

B6. In 2:22 Paul lists five more instructions. What are they and what is the significance of the phrase "*along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart*"?

C. ARMOR OF GOD

C1. Paul lays much of the blame for Hymenaeus' falling away on Satan. How does Paul tell us to fight with Satan in Ephesians 6?

C2. When you are fighting evil, who or what are you fighting based on Eph 6:10ff?

D. ARGUMENTS

D1. In 2:24 why would Paul imply that if Timothy engaged in "quarrels" he would not be able to teach?

D2. Have you ever won an argument? Who wins an argument?

E. RESURRECTION

E1. If what Hymenaeus is promoting is an early form of Gnosticism, then he does not believe in the bodily resurrection. How does Paul confront this error in 1 Cor 15? Paul examined the claim that there was no bodily resurrection and draws a number of conclusions about this false belief.

1 Corinthians 15:12-19

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. 15 We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. 18 Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.
ESV

Q. What are the problems or issues if Jesus has not been resurrected?

1. Christ has not been _____
2. Our preaching is without _____
3. Our faith is without _____
4. We are false witnesses about _____
5. Our faith is _____
6. We are still in our _____
7. Those who have previously died have also _____
8. We should be pitied.

E2. What difference does it make whether or not you believe in the bodily resurrection?

E3. What significant doctrine of the Gospel can you argue is true if you do not believe in the resurrection?

F. APPLICATION

F1. Do you believe in the bodily resurrection? Why? Can you support your belief?

F2. Do you like to argue over the meaning or interpretation of little things? Do you focus on insignificant details and fail to see the bigger picture?

FOR EXAMPLE:

(a) Do you need to know when the rapture is going to occur in the tribulation period?

(b) Do you need to know whether creation occurred in 6 days or 6 ages?

(c) Do these things matter to you?

F3. Do you have any concerns about the truth of any part of Scripture? Is there anything whose truth you doubt?

F4. If you were Timothy, what would you personally think are the two most important and relevant things Paul has told you in this passage?

F5. Do you know anyone like Hymenaeus?

Euodia & Syntyche

Paul's co-workers

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. What does "entreat" mean in 4:2?

A2. What do you think Paul is trying to convey by using the same instruction to both women?

A3. Paul asks the women to "agree in the Lord." What do you think that means?

A4. Why do you think Paul is not more specific?

A5. Do you think Paul is asking the women to absolutely agree? Why? Why not?

A6. If Paul is not saying they must come to an absolute agreement, then what is he saying?

A7. What do you think this disagreement is all about? How might you characterize it?

A8. Why would Paul bring up this issue between these two women? Why would he care if a couple of members disagreed about something, particularly when the difference does not appear to be a major problem?

A9. Paul makes a unique comment about the people these women helped. What is it and what does it mean?

A10. Why would Paul mention the faith status of Clement and the co-workers? Why do you think Paul found it necessary to say their names were in the book of life?

A11. Paul is writing this letter to the Philippians while he is in prison in Rome. How might Paul know about this disagreement between the two women? Obviously a visitor may have told him, or he may have received a letter or note from someone in the congregation. What can we reasonably conclude about the disagreement from the fact that Paul knows about it?

B. QUARRELING

Quarreling can mean different things to different people. Generally it implies that some person, thing, idea, or concept is the basis for a disagreement or conflict that could become an argument or altercation.

B1. What words or phrases might you use to describe a quarrel?

B2. What are the possible results or outcomes of a quarrel?

B3. Since Paul does not mention any moral failure or theological issue we can reasonably assume that this may be a petty disagreement. If that is true, how might this situation impact the local church at Philippi?

C. RESOLUTION

I think it is possible that Php 4:4-7 and maybe 4:8 are a direct continuation of Paul's concern about the conflict between Euodia and Syntyche. Most commentaries do not relate these two passages but a closer look at what they are saying reveals answers to the question of how to resolve situations like this which have created some level of disharmony in the church. With that purpose in mind, what are Paul's suggestions on resolution? How do each of the following fit into the scenario that they are suggestions for resolving the conflict between the two women?

C1. _____

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ESV

C2. _____

5a Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. ESV

C3. _____

5b The Lord is at hand; ESV

C4. _____

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ESV

C5. _____

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ESV

C6. _____

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ESV

D. UNITY

A quarrel or dispute can begin as a minor annoyance but escalate to an all-out war if it is allowed to fester. It might get so bad that it impacts the unity of the church. This may be the reason that Paul mentions this situation. Jesus was also concerned about unity. In John 17 Jesus prayed for Himself, His then present disciples, and last for the believers who would come after them. This prayer comes just before Jesus goes to the cross and the most important issue on His mind, relative to the church, is unity (John 17:20-26).

D1. How would you describe or define Christian unity?

D2. How did Jesus define unity in John 17:20-23?

John 17:21-23 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ESV

D3. Based on Eph 4:3-6 how might you argue that unity is a foundational tenet of the Christian faith?

Eph 4:3-6 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism. ESV

For one of the following seven characteristics, enter a description on how it relates to unity:

one body: _____

one Spirit: _____

one hope: _____

one Lord: _____

one faith: _____

one baptism: _____

one God: _____

D4. What inherent aspects of unity make it a desirable trait within the church?

D5. The purpose of unity is identified throughout Scripture. For example, we find the following:

Jn 17: 21, 23 So the world will know.

Ro 15:5-6 So God is glorified.

Eph 4:13 So we become mature.

Jn 12:44-45 So others see and believe.

Ps 133 (ESV) When Brothers Dwell in Unity

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard,

on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! 3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

What is the purpose of unity identified in Ps 133 above?

D6. Based on Eph 4:2, how are we to achieve unity?

Ephesians 4:2-3 *with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* ESV

E. APPLICATION

E1. In your opinion how important is Christian unity?

E2. Are you prone to quarreling?

E3. What one thing might be said or remembered about you?

[Note: Euodia and Syntyche's names appear nowhere else in Scripture. They are remembered for just one thing: they were quarreling and creating disharmony in the church.

What about you?

E4. Is it your nature to be argumentative or a peacemaker? Ephesians 4:3 says we are to be eager to maintain unity. Does that describe you, your friends, your church . . . ?

E5. Is there a situation in your life that needs *agape* reconciliation?

Elimelech, Mahlon & Chilion

they all died

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. If sin is the real cause of death, then how should we think about sin?

A2. What are some things about death that people worry about?

A3. What can you conclude about death by considering those who died with Saul (1 Sam 31:6)?

1 Samuel 31:6 *Thus Saul died, and his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and all his men, on the same day together.* ESV

HINT: Compare the deaths of Saul and his sons to that of the armor-bearer.

A4. Is the death of a believer any different than that of an unbeliever? If so, what is the difference?

(1) the actual death: _____

(2) the circumstances leading up to the death: _____

(3) the funeral: _____

A5. Has the impact of death on people's lives in Biblical times and now changed much?

A6. Do you think Ps 39:4 is a good prayer? Why? Why not?

Ps 39:4 *O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am!* ESV

A7. Are you fearful of death? Do you know anyone who is? How can you overcome this fear or help someone else overcome it?

A8. Do you think death is a fair, just, or reasonable sentence for sinful behavior? Why? Why not?

A9. How would you argue that the fear of death is:

Good:

Bad:

A10. What does Heb 2:14-15 bring into the discussion and what does it mean?

Heb 2:14-15 *Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.* ESV

A11. How does the devil hold the power of death?

A12. Psalms 90:12 says, "*So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.*" ESV

(1) What does this mean in general?

(2) What does it mean to you personally?

A13. How might a "bucket list" be good or bad for someone in the latter portion of their life?

Good:

Bad:

A14. How is death both the weakest and strongest element in God's salvation plan?

Weakest:

Strongest:

A15. If Jesus paid the penalty for our sin, then why must we die?

A16. 1 Corinthians 15:19 says, "*If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.*" What do you think this means?

B. FEAR OF DEATH

B1. What does Heb 2:15 say that we are freed from?

Hebrews 2:15 *and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.* ESV

B2. How could you overcome your fear of death?

Unbeliever:

Believer:

C. UTOPIA

C1. A major understanding or belief in secular culture is that dying opens the way to a higher state of consciousness where we live a better life. Why would people believe this view?

C2. How is this view in conflict with Christian belief?

C3. If a nonbeliever says, "death is nothing at all, all is well, I can handle death" how would you respond?

D. APPLICATION

D1. Are you being honest with God about your fears of death?
[or with family, friends . . .]

D2. What concerns you most about getting old? Is it something you can do anything about?

D3. What worries you most about dying?

D4. Do you think that leaving a legacy is important? Why? How could you leave a legacy that honors God?

D5. What would you personally do if you knew you were going to die 3 months from now?

D6. What might your greatest and least priorities be in D5 above?

Greatest: _____

Least: _____

Cornelius

a centurion

Discussion Questions

A. GENERAL

A1. What was a centurion?

A2. How are Cornelius and his family described?

A3. What would it mean today to say someone is "devout"?

A4. What did it mean that Cornelius was "God-fearing"?

A5. Why wasn't what Cornelius did (devotion, God-fearing, etc.) enough for Paul?

A6. What makes someone a Gentile?

A7. What does 10:4 confirm?

Acts 10:4 . . . *"What is it Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God."* ESV

A8. Cornelius was told to send for Peter who was staying with a tanner in Joppa. What is significant about this?

A9. What happened to Peter on the roof and how does it differ from what happened to Cornelius?

Peter:

Cornelius:

A10. What is significant about the animals in Peter's vision?

A11. How did these dietary laws impact the relationships between Jews and Gentiles?

A12. God gave Peter the vision three times. Why didn't He just directly communicate the acceptance of the Gentiles in some form that was absolutely clear? Why the vision of the animals, etc.?

A13. How would you explain what God told Peter in 10:15?

Acts 10:15 *And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common."*
ESV

A14. How did Peter come to the understanding in 10:28 that the wall between Jew and Gentile had been removed?

A15. What could Peter point to as evidence that all this was true?

A16. What did Peter say he had learned in 10:34-35?

A17. In your opinion what is the most important statement in Peter's sermon?

A18. Find at least one other passage in Scripture that says salvation is available to all who believe in Jesus.

A19. How did Peter and the Jews traveling with him know that Cornelius and his household should be baptized?

A20. Peter did not get angry or defensive. How did he respond? (11:4)

A21. What exactly are the truths God was communicating in this event?

B. APPLICATION




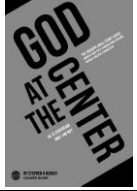



B1. There were barriers that had to be overcome to allow Gentiles to come into the church. Are there barriers of any kind in your life or in your church that need to be broken down or removed? Who in your community would think that your church is not for them?

B2. Who do you consider "unclean" or unfit to be in church? Who are you putting outside the grace and mercy of God?

B3. What would you do if a Muslim started attending your church?

B4. Cornelius was already devout and a God-fearer, but he still needed Jesus. This is because everyone needs Jesus. Nobody is worthy, nobody is without sin, and someone or something must remove the sin debt. Do you understand that there is a sin debt? Do you think there is anyone other than Jesus who can remove or pay the sin debt?

Coming in 2020

	<p style="text-align: center;">Meet Shamgar, Jethro, Manoah & Hathach</p> <p>This book of four lessons is provided at a reduced cost so that students and leaders can get a first-hand experience and introduction to The <i>OBSCURE</i> Bible Study Series.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Blasphemy, Grace, Quarrels & Reconciliation</p> <p>This book presents Joseph of Arimathea, Joanna, Ananias, Hymenaeus, and Cornelius (one of the centurions). It illustrates the nature and challenges of life as a first-century disciple. Life has real challenges, but they can be overcome.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">The Beginning and the End</p> <p>This book has four lessons from Genesis and four from the book of Revelation. It covers such topics as creation, rebellion, grace, worship, and eternity. It illustrates how God is leading us to worship in the Throne Room. This book will be a great introduction to "The Story of the Bible" (28 lessons) to be published in 2021.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">God at the Center</p> <p>This book touches on the virgin birth, worship, the sovereignty of God, prayer, compromise, and trust. In all these stories and events we find God. He is there in the shadows or openly orchestrating our lives. Regardless of the situation He is at the center of our lives – a sovereign almighty God.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Women of Courage</p> <p>This book examines the lives of Jael, Rizpah, the woman of Tekoa, Tabitha, Shiphrah, and Lydia. We see these women exhibiting great courage and faithfulness. God used them in amazing ways and we can use their example for encouragement and spiritual leadership.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">The Beginning of Wisdom</p> <p>In this book we find courage, loyalty, thankfulness, love, forgiveness, and humility. It is clear that personal character counts. It is critical to make good decisions because they have consequences. Building our lives on wisdom will help us stand firm in our faith. We don't want to follow the example of Demas who deserted Paul for the values of the world.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Miracles and Rebellion</p> <p>This book contrasts the stories of biblical characters who rebelled against God and those who trusted and believed. God hates sin and loves to heal the faithful. The rebellion of Korah, Haman, and Alexander are included to compare with the healing stories of Aeneas, a slave girl, and the crippled man at Lystra.</p>

End