

Light for My Path Youth Bible Studies

#17: Becoming a Member of Christ's Kingdom

Jesus did not come to this world to bring new truth to men. For many hundreds of years, by the Holy Spirit, He had been teaching truth through the prophets and Bible writers. Men, however, had taken these truths and changed their meaning so truth was hidden by man's traditions.

1. Did the people of the Old Testament times have knowledge of the gospel?
Hebrews 4:2.

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."



Note: When Jesus began His teaching, the people had many false ideas about the Messiah and what He would do. Because of these misunderstandings, they were not ready to receive Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. The people had been led to expect not a Saviour from sin, but a great prince who would bring them national honour, delivering them from all their enemies and causing them to rule the world. For this reason, much of Jesus' teaching was about the kind of kingdom He had come to establish, and what it meant to be a part of that kingdom.

The parable of the sower that we studied about in our last lesson, had raised many questions in the people's minds. From it, many of them began to understand that Jesus was not going to establish an earthly kingdom, as they had expected. This caused them a great deal of concern. In order to answer these questions, Jesus began to try and turn their thoughts from the hope of a worldly kingdom and earthly glory, to the work of God's grace in the heart.

2. To what did Jesus liken His kingdom? **Matthew 13:44.**

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

Note: In ancient times, there were no banks to put money and valuables in, such as we have today. To keep their valuable possessions safe, men would often dig a hole and hide them in the ground. Often, however, the treasure was forgotten, or the owner died and never returned to reclaim it. The treasure was then left for the fortunate finder to discover.

3. How much of what he owned did the man have to sell in order to purchase the treasure? **Matthew 13:44.**

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

4. In giving up all, are we to fear that we will not have the things that are necessary to life? **Matthew 6:31-33.**

"Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Note: Christians should not allow themselves to become troubled and anxious about the things that are necessary to life. If men love and obey God, and do their part, God has promised that He will supply all our needs. In giving us Jesus, God gave us the most precious treasure heaven had. If He cared that much for us, can we wonder if He will take care of all our real needs?

5. From what people is the gospel hidden? **2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.**

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Note: When sin is cherished in our hearts, we do not feel the need of trying to understand spiritual truth. The Bible is an uninteresting book, and we find little or no time to study it. Satan works to blind us so that the truths of God's Word seem difficult and hard to understand.

6. How does the natural man view spiritual truth? **1 Corinthians 2:14.**

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

7. If we lack wisdom, where may we get it? **James 1:5.**

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Note: Some Bible truth is very simple and can be easily understood. Other truths are much deeper and even what seems simple has deeper levels to it. God has promised that to all those who come to Him, seeking for a better understanding of His Word, He will give them wisdom to understand.

8. What did Jesus say the way is like that leads to heaven and eternal life? **Matthew 7:13, 14.**

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Note: If men could have the world and Jesus too, many would be ready to accept Him. However, between the world and the followers of Jesus, there is a clear and decided difference. When they find they cannot take their worldly life through that narrow gate, many turn away.

9. What may those who follow Jesus expect from those who don't know Him? **John 15:19.**

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

Note: The example of those who love and follow Jesus, makes those very uncomfortable, who chose the ways of the world. For this reason, they don't like Jesus' followers, and they persecute them.

10. Why cannot the natural man understand the things of God? **1 Corinthians 2:14.**

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Note: Jesus saw men's interest directed toward gaining the things of this world and that they were losing sight of heaven and eternal life. Their minds were filled with selfish and ambitious thoughts. Because of this, they had no real faith, and because they had no faith, they were unable to understand the truths Jesus tried to teach them. The treasures of God's Word were hidden from them.

11. What is the natural man's attitude towards God's law and His authority? **Romans 8:7.**

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

12. What must take place before we can understand spiritual truth? **John 3:3.**

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Note: When a person becomes a Christian, his life is not just an improvement of the old lifestyle, but a whole new life altogether. This entire change is a new life. The start of this new life has been compared to being born over again. In this new life, the Spirit of God takes over the heart and sinful thoughts are put away, wrong acts are given up; in their place we have peace, love, and happiness. The worldly things we once loved, we no longer want and those things we once thought boring, like Bible study, become attractive to us. This change is made by the Holy Spirit.

13. What two things are closely related to this new birth? **John 3:5.**

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

14. How do we show that we have chosen to live this new life in Jesus? **Galatians 3:27.**

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

15. What is being baptized compared to? **Romans 6:3.**

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

Note: In being baptized, we publicly declare that we choose to be crucified with Jesus that the old sinful self may die. When we go down into the water, the old person that we were is buried. The person that comes up from the water is to be a new person in Jesus. This is why there is only one kind of baptism that the Bible teaches, and that is called immersion, or being completely covered with water.

16. Where was Jesus baptized? **Mark 1:9, 10.**

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized



of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him."

Note: From these verses, we see that Jesus had gone down into the water, and that after baptism He came up out of the water. As our example, Jesus showed us how we are to be baptized.

Some Christians believe in being baptized by having water sprinkled on them, but this was not the way Jesus was baptized, nor can it represent the death, burial, and resurrection of the Christian to newness of life in Jesus. Sprinkling came from the pagan worship where people were sprinkled with blood or sacred water in the worship of the sun and idols.

17. At Pentecost, what did Peter tell those listening to him, and who had repented, to do? **Acts 2:38.**

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

18. After being united to Jesus in the likeness of His death and resurrection (baptism), what should the new Christian do? **Colossians 3:1, 2.**

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

19. After the death of the old sinful self in baptism, who is then said to be living in us? **Galatians 2:20.**

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

20. What was the last thing Jesus told His disciples to do to those they taught the gospel to? **Matthew 28:18-20.**

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Note: Notice several important points in the instructions Jesus gave His disciples.

1. All power is given unto Me. [Jesus]
2. Teach the gospel to every nation in the world.
3. After you have taught the people, be sure to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
4. When you teach the people, don't leave out anything I have told you, but teach them all things that I have commanded you.
5. Through My Holy Spirit, I will be with you to prepare the hearts of the people to receive your message, and helping you in your work of teaching and baptizing wherever you are and until the end of time.

21. What is essential before baptism? **Acts 8:36-38.**

"And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him."

Note: Before anyone is to be baptized, they must believe in Jesus Christ and in His power to save and have given their hearts to Him and made the decision to live the new life of obedience to Him.

22. What did Paul tell those to do who had been baptized before learning all of the gospel?
Acts 19:3-5.

"And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

23. If we want Jesus to acknowledge us as His followers before the Father in heaven, what must we do here? **Matthew 10:32.**

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."

Note: Does it sometimes seem difficult, or embarrassing to talk to others about Jesus, or about being a Christian? Jesus tells us, however, that if we want Him to represent us in heaven, we must represent Him before others here. It is also very important that our lives show that we have Jesus living in us, or all that we say will mean nothing. There is an old saying: "your actions speak so loudly that I cannot hear a word you are saying."

We need to also remember that all that many others will know of Jesus, will be what they learn of Him from our lives. Baptism is one very important way of showing publicly that we have chosen to represent Jesus here on earth.

24. Even though baptism is very necessary, can it be of any value without faith? **Mark 16:16.**

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Note: In giving the disciples their commission to go to all the world, teaching and baptizing, Jesus plainly told them that before they were to baptize a person, they were to teach them to observe all that He had commanded them. A baby cannot understand the commandments and teachings of Jesus; therefore, baptism of babies has no purpose.

It does not have any meaning to be baptized before we are old enough to understand what it means to be a Christian. For this reason, it is important to know what it means to give our lives to Jesus and choose to follow Him.

When one reaches the age of ten or twelve, however, you are generally old enough to understand the Bible for yourself. At that point, you are able study for yourself and make your own decision to choose to follow Jesus in all that He taught. At that time, a decision to be baptized will mean something.

Even if you are not old enough yet to be baptized, you can be learning and getting ready for the time you can. Day by day you can be learning what it means to follow Jesus and to let Him live His life in you. You do not have to be baptized before you can give your heart to Jesus and be fully His child.

You can also tell others about Him, and show by how you act and what you talk about that you are part of the family of Jesus, getting ready to meet Him when He returns.
