



DISCOVER GOD'S PLAN

BE A PART OF IT!

Discover God's Plan—Be a Part of It!

is adapted from the original Bible study:

God's World Changers,

by Steve Richardson

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Sapna Cynthia whose illustrations appear throughout this workbook.

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INTRODUCTION

- One half of this booklet is called *Blessed to Be a Blessing* and is an overview of what God has been doing around the world. Simply read this to learn the great progress of the gospel and be challenged to be involved in the remaining missionary task. The other half called *Discover God's Plan—Be a Part of It!* is a 10 lesson Bible study.
- In these two books you will discover God's heart for missions and His incredible worldwide movement. You will be encouraged to share this vision with others. In this way you can help others get involved. You can play a big part by creating awareness in your church. God will abundantly bless your church as it becomes aware and gets involved in missions. By serving and helping your church grow in it's mission vision you can play as important a role as a missionary! You will be surprised that you will be both learning and making a significant contribution to spreading the gospel to the unreached people groups.
- Your life decisions should be guided by knowing God's will. How do you know God's will? The first step is knowing God's plan. Does the Bible have one central theme—a plan? You will soon take the first step in discovering His plan. This Bible study has been designed to take you on an exciting search through the scriptures so that you can *Discover God's Plan* —and— *Be a Part of It!*
- It is our prayer that you, your family and your church will find your specific roles in the Great Commission and in doing so find tremendous joy and daily fulfillment in knowing that your lives are making an eternal difference to those nations or language/ethnic groups who don't have access to the light of the Gospel as yet.

INSTRUCTIONS

■ HOW TO STUDY

First of all, trust the Holy Spirit to teach you. John 16:13 says, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.” Ask the Holy Spirit to do so, in prayer, before each study. Then come to the Scriptures with an open heart and mind.

The key to learning is obedience. Determine in your heart before you begin each lesson that you will obey whatever God teaches you.

■ YOUR TEXTBOOK

DISCOVER GOD'S PLAN — BE A PART OF IT is **not** a textbook. Your textbook is the Bible, the Word of God. This booklet is simply a workbook to help you explore God's purpose and answer the question: What is God really trying to do? You will discover that to accomplish His purpose, God has implemented a plan in which His people are intended to play a significant role. Understanding this plan may give you a whole new perspective on the Bible. The most important part of the study comes when you look up, read, think about, and respond to the Bible verses on each page.

- This course can be studied either individually or with a group. However, it is far better to study with a group.

■ USING THE MATERIAL FOR GROUP STUDY

Studying this course in a group provides many advantages. If possible gather 3-10 people and have the group make a commitment to complete this course together. Refer to the Leader's Guide on page 37.

■ USING THE MATERIAL FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDY

- Read carefully the background Scriptures, perhaps as part of your personal devotions.
- Work through the lesson, answering the questions from the Bible references listed, and noting your answers in the spaces provided.
- Record your personal thoughts at the end of each lesson.

1

SETTING THE STAGE

- **READING:** GENESIS 1:24-28; GENESIS 2-3:24
- **CAUTION:** You are now beginning a “study adventure” that could well change the course of your life! Many of the issues you will face are the deepest and most thought provoking questions that a believer could ask. You are going to discover a common theme throughout the whole Bible as you study and take a quick tour from the beginning to the end. You will be encouraged to search the Scriptures for yourself—*are you ready?*

To fully understand the Bible we must see God as the main character. Too often we read the Bible with a focus on ourselves. We search the scriptures for blessings, promises, healing and good moral teaching for our lives.

Instead, of asking, "What can I get out of this?", we need to ask, "What is God getting out of this?"

Jesus, in His prayer to the Father said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you." (John 17:1)

God Seeks GLORY!

What brings God glory? Psalm 96 summarizes God's plan to declare His GLORY among the nations so that the families of nations may give GLORY to God.

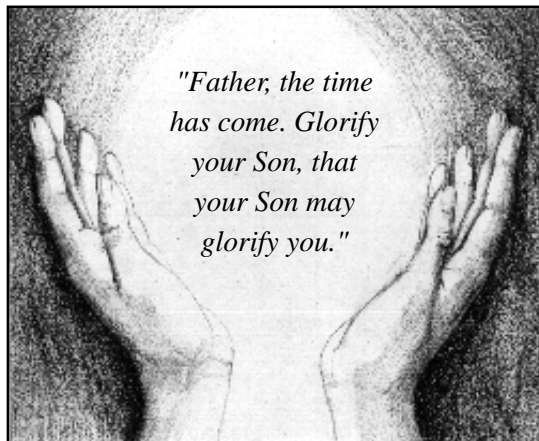
Pastor John Piper says it well, *"The ultimate foundation for our passion to see God glorified is His own passion to be glorified...If it is God's goal it must be our goal."*

Is it your goal to give glory to God? If you say YES—you are saying yes to discovering God's Plan.

If you become a participant in His plan you will experience the cost and the joy of obedience!

Becoming a part of God's Plan of bringing Glory to Himself means:

LOOSING YOUR LIFE FOR HIS SAKE,
AND SEEKING
"HIS KINGDOM" AND
"HIS RIGHTEOUS-
NESS".



- To understand how man fits into God's plan of bringing Glory to Himself we must start in Genesis — the book of “beginnings.”

1. Many today teach that man is simply a highly advanced “life form,” little different than the animals. How does this compare with the biblical view? Psalm 8:3-8 _____

What is it that really makes man different from animals and all other created things? Genesis 1:26-27 _____

Why was man created? Isaiah 43:7 **Man was created for God's Glory.**

How did God plan to expand His Glory? Genesis 1:28 _____

As you read Genesis 2:8-3:9 notice all the ways God shows His love for man. Freedom of choice was a unique quality given to Adam and Eve, because they were created in the image of God.

What was the first "test of choice" God gave Adam and Eve? Genesis 2:16-17

- 2. In your own words, describe the tragedy of Genesis 3:1-11 that changed the course of history.

What effect did the disobedience of Adam & Eve have on their relationship

• With God (Gen 3:8-10) _____

• To each other" (Genesis 3:11-12; 4:8) _____

• To the world" (Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 8:20-22) **The ground and earth and all it produces is cursed and man's life will be difficult .**

• To their descendants" (Romans 5:12,14; I Corinthians 15:22a*) _____

What is the most important result of sin? Genesis 2:17; Isaiah 59:2 _____

When did it begin? Romans 5:12b **Death and separation from God began when Adam sinned.**

Listed below are just few of the consequences of sin. Tick the consequences of sin experienced in your life & use the space given below to write other consequences that you may have experienced.

Spiritual darkness No genuine joy & happiness Lack of purpose & direction No peace of mind

Others: _____

- 3. The Bible teaches us that God provided only one way for man to escape the terrible results of sin. What is that way of escape? (Romans 3:21-25; 5:8-10; 6:23) Tick the correct answer:

By doing good works By meditation & penance Only by faith in Jesus Christ

Will you bear the eternal consequences of your sin? If not, why not? _____

The Bible clearly teaches that everyone who receives Jesus Christ as his Lord, trusting Him alone for salvation, will be brought back into a wonderful relationship with God. Surely no news could be better than this! How has this "good news" changed your life? _____

- 4. What will happen to those who do not hear the good news of salvation through God's Son, Jesus Christ? Romans 1:18-20; 2:12; 10:12-14 (state whether True or False)

T F God will somehow still save them & take them to heaven.

T F They will face the wrath of God & will not be saved from sin.

Does God desire to make His salvation available to everyone? Matthew 9:36-38; 28:19; John 3:16 Yes No

Did you ever wonder how God will accomplish getting his message of salvation to everyone in the world? If you had to make a plan where would you start? _____

*An "a" or "b" after a Bible reference refers particularly to either the first or the second part of that verse.

The good news is that **God does have a plan** for extending His salvation to all the people of the world. If you want to discover His plan it will be revealed to you as you continue this Bible study. Remember, the cause of sin was in Adam and Eve's *DECISION OF CHOICE*. Now it is your turn to make a choice...

- Continue this Bible study** and Discover God's Plan, *or*
- Quit this Bible study** and never know what the Creator God of this world wants to reveal to you!

➔ **Review Lesson One. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson One.

I am created for God's glory, therefore I should do the things that bring glory to God

✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson One.


✍ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ **SUMMARY STATEMENTS**

- Since the beginning, God has been at work to fulfill His purposes.
- God created man unique and in His image, so that He might enjoy perfect fellowship with man.
- This relationship was broken when Adam and Eve made the choice to rebel (sin) against God and His command.
- By that rebellion, the sentence of death came upon all mankind.
- God could have justly destroyed mankind at that time. But God chose to bless man by providing a way for us to know Him once more.

■ **ACTION STEPS**

- Share with your family one new thing you learned from Lesson One.
- Tell a friend that you are making a commitment to complete this study so that you can discover God's plan for your life..
- Pledge this goal to your friend so he/she can follow up on your promise.



**PURSUE
GOD'S
HEART
FOR ALL NATIONS**

If you are a child of God you know where you came from, you know where you are going, but where are you Today? Begin to make the right choices today. Choose the things that will bring Glory to God! Ask yourself, "Will there be lasting fruit from this decision?"

God forbid that we stand in judgement to what Andrew Murray said a hundred years ago: *"As we seek to find out why, with such millions of Christians, the real army of God that is fighting the hosts of darkness is so small, the only answer is—lack of heart. The enthusiasm of the kingdom is missing. And that is because there is so little enthusiasm for the King."*

Loving Lord Jesus, refresh our sense of responsibility to share Your love with the peoples of the earth.

2

PIONEER OF PROMISE

■ READING: GENESIS 11:1-9; GENESIS 12:1-5

In the last session we learned that man's perfect relationship with God was shattered by man's sinful rebellion. However, for nearly four thousand years since, God has been carrying out a magnificent plan for bringing men back to Himself.

Some day soon, when everything is complete, a great multitude—more than anyone can count—will stand before God's throne. There will be those who have been saved from "...every nation, tribe, people, and language." Revelation 7:9

Do you know where all the nations, tribes, peoples and languages came from? To know the answer we must go back to the beginning of the Bible.

■ 1. The first eleven chapters of Genesis tell about the darkness of the human situation, climaxing with the arrogant building of the tower of Babel.

How many languages were there in the world at that time? Genesis 11:1 _____

Why did the people want to build a city and a tower for themselves: Genesis 11:3-4 (*Tick the correct answers*)

- They did not want to scatter over the whole earth.
- They wanted to make a name for themselves.
- They wanted to worship God in heaven and build a holy city.

Instead of bringing glory to God, man chose to glorify the name of man.

God's judgement on the pride of these people resulted in the creation of thousands of language groups or nations as He confused the people's speech. This strategic event was to determine the direction of history — right down to the present time. God had a new strategy! What was His plan? He divided the people up into different language groups so that the power and the glory of His kingdom could expand into each of these darkened peoples one at a time.

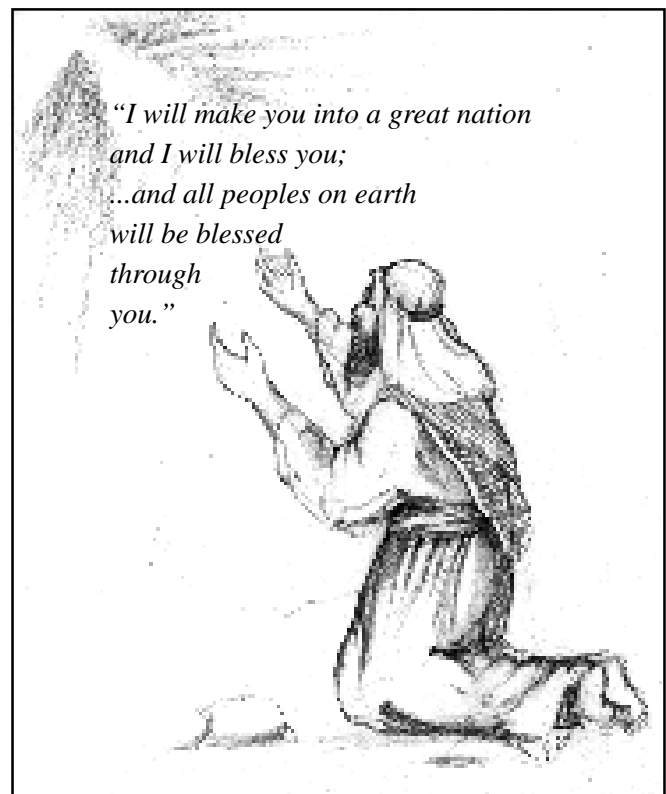
■ When God first began to make His plan known He started very small. In fact, He started with just one person. His name was Abraham.

2. In Genesis 12:1 what did God instruct Abraham to do? _____

What did God promise to do **for** Abraham?

Genesis 12:2, 3a _____

What did God promise to do **through** Abraham for all the "nations" or "peoples" of the earth? (A "people" or "peoples" is a group that shares a



What are peoples, nations, gentiles?

In the English translation of the Old Testament, the terms "peoples" or "nations" is a translation of the Hebrew word *goyim*. *Goyim* usually refers to non-Israelite people or gentiles. Thus "a gentile" refers to a group or nationality, not an individual.

common culture and thinks of itself as different from all other groups of people.)
 Genesis 12:3b **All people groups on earth will be blessed through Abraham.**

The Bible says that those who come to faith in Christ become part of that "missionary nation" chosen to reach out to all the families of the earth. This important idea of God wanting all nations to be "blessed" is not unique to Genesis. Read the following verses and ask yourself if you have inherited this burden to be a blessing to all peoples? Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:8-14

■ 3. With privilege comes responsibility. Do you Agree or Disagree: Yes No

For instance, with the privilege of having a driver's license comes the responsibility of being careful to drive safely and legally. God had committed Himself to bless Abraham. Now, what was Abraham's responsibility?

Genesis 12:1-4; 22:16-17 _____

What effect would his obedience have on others? Genesis 12:2-3; 22:17-18

Abraham pleaded with God to save the righteous of Sodom and Gomorrah

■ 4. Did Abraham fulfill His responsibility to be a blessing when he arrived in Egypt. (Genesis 12:18-20)

Yes No If 'No', then why? _____

Evidently Abraham had more lessons to learn. God continued to prepare him. How was Abraham learning to be a blessing for the cities of Sodom & Gomorrah? Genesis 18:16-33 _____

The importance of the "**covenant**," or promise, made with Abraham in Genesis 12:2-3 cannot be overstated. God repeated this covenant again, twice to Abraham, then again to Isaac and after that to Jacob.

Read Pslam 105:6-10

This "**covenant**" is God's "plan of action" for all history! God's plan to give salvation to His chosen people, in order that they may in turn share that salvation with all the peoples of the earth! Read the following verses in your Bible and underline who God wanted His missionary nation (Israel) to be a blessing to.

example: "Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him." Genesis 18:18

Genesis 18:18 Who did God want to bless? **All nations on earth will be blessed through Abraham and Abraham's people (nation).**

Genesis 22:17-18 Who did God want to bless? _____

Genesis 26:3-4 Who did God want to bless? _____

Geneses 28:13-14 Who did God want to bless? _____

➔ **Review Lesson Two. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Two.

✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Two.

✍ Reword what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.


Oh Father God, help me to be obedient to my inherited calling so that my life will be used to play a part in extending your blessing of salvation among the nations.

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- God's judgement on the people of Babel resulted in the creation of thousands of languages, tribes, peoples and nations—these are the people groups of the world.
- God divided the people *so that* the power and the glory of His kingdom could expand into each of these people groups.
- God began his plan with Abraham by blessing him and making him and his descendants a missionary nation *chosen* to reach all the people groups of the earth.
- With my blessing of salvation comes the responsibility to God, others, and the unreached peoples of the world.
- If I have received the blessing of adoption into God's family I have a responsibility to extend the blessing to the whole earth!

■ ACTION STEPS

- Now that you have read that you are *Blessed to be a Blessing*, find out if your church is involved in the cause of reaching unreached peoples.
- Find a family/person in your church who is participating in the cause of reaching unreached peoples. Ask them to share with you the specific things they are doing.



**PURSUE
GOD'S
HEART
FOR ALL NATIONS**

Dr. Ralph Winter has often said, *"We are all to be part of the cause of completing the Great Commission. No one is out of the action. No one can stand on the sidelines and let others do the job. The question is not whether or not we are called but whether or not we will respond. Nobody in a wartime situation pursues his own career. The cause becomes the career. There is only one cause, and we are all called to be a part of it."*

If you have received the priceless gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, then you have benefited from the obedience of Abraham. You have inherited his blessing — and also his call!

"If you will return O Israel, 'declares the Lord...' then the nations will bless themselves in Him and in Him they will glory." God will eventually have His nations. Revelation 7:9 assures us of this. But the blessing of the nations is depending upon God's people walking with Him and being the people He has called them to be.

Lord, we pray, help us to live in holiness, steadfastness, truth, and justice, for as we do, the door will be opened wider for the nations to find You.

3

A PEOPLE WITH A PURPOSE

■ **READING:** EXODUS 19:1-8; I PETER 2:9-12

It is a common belief among Christians that "missions" first began in the New Testament. Are you beginning to sense that this is not so? In fact, it has always been the very **heart** of God's purpose in history. The reason God selected Abraham was so that he and his descendants would become a "missionary nation" who would bring all the peoples of the world back to God!

Now we will explore how God continued to work out His plan for the nations through Abraham's descendants, the people of Israel.

- 1. Read Genesis 41:41, 56-57. Can you name the great nation (from the list given below) to which Joseph, Abraham's great-grandson, became a blessing? _____ (Israel, Jordan, Egypt)

In what way did Joseph help them? _____

More than four hundred years passed, and the people of Israel became very numerous. God was fulfilling His promise to make of Abraham a "great nation." But what happened to Israel during their latter years in Egypt?

Exodus 1:6-14 _____

When God sent the plagues on Egypt and delivered Israel, He had at least two important purposes for doing so. What were they?

- a. Exodus 6:7 _____

- b. Exodus 7:5; 9:14,16; 10:2 _____

- 2. What was Israel's purpose as a nation? Exodus 19:3-8

A priest is someone who represents men before God. What then does it mean to be a "kingdom of priests?"
To be a mediator or nation who goes between God and other nations. Israel was to be a priestly nation .

Read the personal testimony of a foreigner who learned from what God did for Israel. □ Exodus 18:1, 8-12

Who was Jethro? _____

- 3. Read the account of the following individuals who became a blessing to non-Jews (gentiles), thereby showing their understanding of God's heart for the other peoples. Then, write down how each of these individuals became a blessing.

Solomon (I Kings 8:22-23; 41-43, 59-60) _____

Jonah (Jonah 3; 4:2-3, 10-11) _____

Elijah (I Kings 17; Luke 4:24-26) _____

Elisha (II Kings 5; Luke 4:27) _____

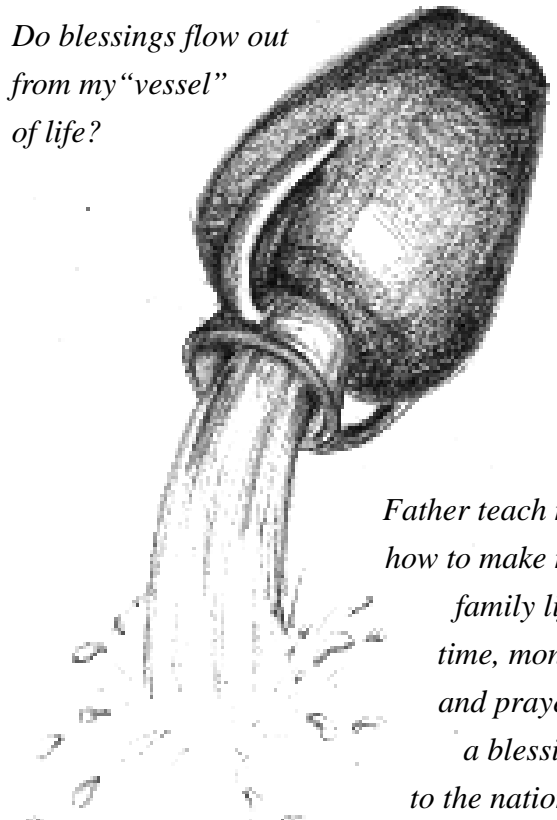
Daniel (Daniel 2:46-47; 3:28-29; 4:27, 34-37; 6:25-27) _____

Unfortunately, Israel often rebelled against God. This kept God from blessing His chosen people as He wished and it prevented Israel from being a good witness and source of blessing among the nations. However, God's plan was still unfolding. He announced through His prophets that He would do something new and even more wonderful! Can you imagine what this might be?

➔ **Review Lesson Three. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Three.

Do blessings flow out from my "vessel" of life?



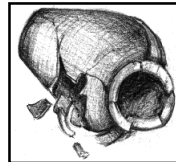
Father teach me how to make my family life, time, money and prayers a blessing to the nations.



**PURSUE
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Israel was called to be a channel of blessing to the nations. God told them, "If you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" Exodus 19:5-6.

In India the priests of other religions are regarded as a special category set apart for religious service that they perform for others. Due to this cultural hangover we do not realise that all believers are God's servants. Help us God not to be like Israel, useless for Your purposes.



Hosea said,
"Israel is swallowed up; already they are among the nations as a useless vessel"
 (Hosea 8:8)

*God loved Israel and chose her to be His own people to fulfill His missionary purpose among the nations of the earth but she failed. She became a useless vessel, 'a worthless thing' (NIV). Our real value does not depend on what the world thinks of us. It does not depend on our position or possessions. It has to do with our relationship to God and to His purpose. When we use something for a purpose for which it is not intended, we are wasting it. That is what Israel did and wasted their God-given resources and blessings and became "a useless vessel."**

*Taken from *Covenant Broken*, by Theodore Williams pp.19,20

☞ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Three.

☞ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- There is a purpose behind every display of God's power.
- God blessed the nation of Israel *so that* they would be a "kingdom of priests" — representing God and becoming a source of blessing to all the other nations/peoples.
- Some of God's people brought God's blessing to the nations.
- Most of the time the nation of Israel wasted their blessing and did not become the blessing they were purposed for.

■ ACTION STEPS

- Get out of your comfort zone! Spend some time getting to know a family from a different ethnic, caste, religious, or language group you don't normally associate with.
- Discover the things that are different and things that are similar between you and this family.
- Think, pray, and seek advice on how you can extend God's blessing of salvation to this family, (without creating suspicion or dislike).

4

SAVIOUR FOR ALL PEOPLES

THE LIFE JESUS LIVED

■ **READING:** MATTHEW 9:35-38; I Peter 2:21

Despite her high calling, Israel failed to be an example and source of blessing to the people groups and nations around her. Finally, God allowed Israel to be invaded by her enemies, and most of God's people were carried away into captivity. The future looked very, very dark. Then, into this darkness shone a bright ray of hope, the birth of the Messiah, Saviour or "**Anointed One**."

■ 1. What did the prophet Isaiah predict, long before the Lord Jesus, concerning the purpose of His coming?

Isaiah 40:5 _____

Read Matthew 1:5 and note the inclusion of Rahab and Ruth among only five women named by Matthew in the ancestral line of Jesus. Where was Rahab from (Joshua 2:1) _____

Where was Ruth from (Ruth 1:3-4) _____ Why are these women special?

When Jesus was dedicated in the temple eight days after His birth, He was blessed by the prophet Simeon. What was Simeon's prophecy concerning Jesus? Luke 2:29-32

Name the two categories of people Jesus was a Saviour for.

(Luke 2:32) _____

Where were the "wise men," from? (Matthew 2:1-2)

Read Matthew 2:9-12. Where did the wise men go after seeing Jesus?

Did God have a purpose in allowing them to celebrate the birth of the Saviour?

God wanted the news of Jesus' birth to spread. From the beginning salvation was intended for all nations. The wise men could take this news to their people in the east

■ 2. It is clear from the circumstances of Jesus' birth and from the prophecies predicting His coming that Jesus would be a Saviour for the whole world, not just the Jews! The example that Jesus set during His ministry makes this fact all the more certain. Let's look at several of Jesus' encounters with Gentiles to see if His attitude toward them differed from that of His fellow countrymen.

What was the common attitude of the Jewish people toward the Gentiles? Acts 10:28; 11:2-3



The same was true of their attitude toward Samaritans, who were partially Gentile. But when Jesus talked with the woman at the well in Samaria, how did his attitude differ from that of the disciples? John 4:9, 27-35

What impact did Jesus' love have on the Samaritan people? John 4:39-42

- 3. Jesus travelled in Gentile lands as well as through the towns of Israel. Who did He meet in the city of Tyre? How did the disciples respond to her? Matthew 15:21-23

By contrast, what did Jesus say to this Gentile woman? Matthew 15:28

How did Jesus hold up the Gentile army officer of Luke 7:2-10 as an example to His fellow Jews?

- 4. When Jesus visited the temple in Jerusalem, He was greatly disturbed to find that the "Court of the Gentiles" had been turned into a shopping market! This area of the temple was intended to be a place of prayer for the nations (Isaiah 56:7). What did Jesus' response show? Mark 11:15-17

Jesus told the story of the "Good Samaritan" when He was questioned about who the neighbor is that the Law tells us to love. Compare the actions of the Priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan in this account. Which of the three should have known better? Luke 10:25-37 Tick the right answer: Levite Priest Samaritan
Why? _____

Which of the three showed neighbor-love to someone from another culture?

Tick the right answer: Levite Priest Samaritan

- 5. Jesus, did **not** fit the mould. His love overcame cultural barriers! Now, read the following Scripture verses and answer the question below. (Matthew 16:13-17; John 1:1-4; Collosians 1:15-17)

Who, after all, is Jesus Christ? _____

Every person will one day bow down and worship the Lord Jesus because He is God. Think for a moment of the importance of following Jesus' example and obeying His commands. Is there anything more important for the believer? Mark 9:7; John 13:15-17; I Corinthians 11:1; Collosians 1:18; I Thessalonians 1:6-8

Examine your own life—how have you reacted like the Jews of Jesus' day?

Is your life limited to showing "neighbor-love" to your own people? Yes No

When was the last time you showed "neighbor-love" to someone other than your "own people" (language or cultural group)? _____ How did you show "neighbor-love"?

What is the greatest way we could be neighbors to those of other cultures (nations, tribes, peoples, and languages)?

➔ **Review Lesson Four. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Four.

✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Four.

I will make an effort to visit my Muslim neighbor and get to know him/her. I will try and learn how to make Jesus' salvation understood in his/her religious and cultural context.


✍ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ **SUMMARY STATEMENTS**

- God displayed His love for all peoples by placing Gentiles in the ancestral line of Jesus.
- Right from the beginning Jesus is proclaimed to be the Saviour for all peoples/nations.
- Jesus extended His salvation to the Gentiles throughout His ministry on earth.

■ **ACTION STEPS**

- Write to the India Mission Association and enclose a small donation for a copy of their prayer booklet for India. Use this tool to begin to pray for unreached peoples in India. For more specific information on people groups write IMA for a people profile. *Address:* IMA • 48 First Main Road • East Shenoy Nagar • Madras 600 030 • INDIA



**PURSUE
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"This day the Lord will deliver you (Goliath) into my hands...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Samuel 17:46) David was young. He had never been a soldier. But he knew God and he knew that God's reputation among the nations was at stake. David understood too, that his victory over Goliath would be a powerful testimony to Yahweh's power and glory. The kind of assignments God gives in the Bible are always God-sized. They are always beyond what people can do, because He wants to demonstrate His nature, His strength, His provision, and His kindness to His people and to a *watching world*. This is the only way the peoples of the world will come to know Him.

Are you willing to let someone outside of your community "*watch you*" as you and your family live out your faith in Jesus Christ. For some of us this may be the biggest '*God-sized*' challenge we will face because we know we have Hindu, Muslim, and Buddhist neighbors who live more devout and godly lives than we Christians do!

Help us Lord to uphold Your reputation among the nations. Lead us in Your triumph as we minister blessings in Your name.

5

SAVIOUR FOR ALL PEOPLES

THE TRUTH JESUS TAUGHT

■ **READING:** JOHN 17:20; MATTHEW 28:16-20

God has been carrying out His plan for the world since the day He promised to make Abraham a "blessing" to all the peoples of the earth. Can you condense the main points of God's eternal plan into a single sentence?

Abraham fulfilled his role in God's plan, but Israel often failed to be a blessing to the nations. Then, in the last lesson, we discovered that the Lord Jesus Christ is the crowning fulfillment of God's plan. Through Him alone salvation has been made available to both Jews and Gentiles!

We have already studied the **example** of Jesus' concern for other peoples of the world. Now we will look together at what Jesus **taught** on the subject of missions.

■ 1. Answer the following question using the Bible references. (Luke 19:10; John 3:16; 6:38; Matthew 20:28)
Why did Jesus come to earth? (Tick the correct answer.)

- To start a new religion To establish a political kingdom
 To seek and save the 'lost' To establish social justice and alleviate poverty

Jesus came as a "sent one" from heaven into the world of men. This is what a missionary is—one sent forth to represent and announce the Kingdom, God's blessing of salvation to other nations. Who was meant to benefit by this salvation? John 3:14-17

Did Jesus consider His mission to be urgent? Mark 1:35-39; John 9:4 Yes No

In John 4:35 Jesus draws attention to the many people who are still waiting to hear the gospel. He likens them to fields of ripe grain, waiting to be harvested. Are you aware that today, nearly two thousand years later, more than half the world's population remains in this category?

Read Matthew 9:35-38 (*Note what Jesus **did**, what He **felt**, and what He **instructed** His followers to do.*)

Today, more than 10,000 cultural groups have no church that is able to reach them with news of salvation. These are the "hidden" or "unreached" peoples of the world. In the light of Jesus' example in Matthew 9:35-38, in what three ways should we respond to this fact?

- a. **Teach and preach the good news and heal the sick.**
b. **Show compassion to those harassed and helpless.**
c. _____

■ 2. Jesus offered salvation to His own people, the Jews, but most of them rejected Him. They refused to recognize Him as their Saviour and Lord. Often Jesus used the example of Gentiles (people groups) to warn the Jews against their unbelief. We have seen several examples of this already in our study (Matthew 15:28; Luke 7:9). Read Matthew 12:38-42 and name the 2 people or people groups whom Jesus used as examples of having believing faith.

- a. _____ b. _____

Jesus also used the lives of Elijah and Elisha to teach that God has a missionary heart? These 2 prophets were a blessing to some foreigners. Read Luke 4:24-27 and see if you can match the prophets and the foreigners to whom they were a blessing. (*see choices on the next page*)

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| a. Elijah | 1. Naman the Syrian |
| b. Elisha | 2. A Jewish widow |
| | 3. A widow of Zarepath |

How did the Jews respond to this teaching? (Luke 4:28-30) Tick the right answer.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> very happy to hear this | <input type="checkbox"/> appreciated Jesus for His bold teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> not happy but not offended either | <input type="checkbox"/> furious and offended by Jesus' teaching |

This message—the believer's responsibility to reach out to other nations (*ethne or ethnic groups*)—was unpopular then and remains unpopular to this day. Can you think of some reasons for this?

Review the strong teaching of Jesus in response to the faith of the Gentile soldier in Matthew 8:5-13. Who will come from the east and the west to the great heavenly banquet?

- 3. Before Jesus went to the cross to atone for men's sins, He prayed for His disciples. He prayed for those who would believe in Him through their message. If you are a believer, He was praying for **you!** He prayed that we who believe in Him would be one so that **who** would believe **what**? John 17:20-22

Who: **The world** What: _____

Why is our relationship with other believers so important? John 17:23

- 4. If you were given only a short time to live, but could speak one final message to your family and friends, what would you say? _____

Why do we place such importance on a person's "last words"?

During His last days on earth Jesus gave the same "final" message several times to His followers.

What was this message?

Matthew 28:18-20;

Mark 16:15-16;

John 20:21;

Luke 24:46-49



What were the seven last words of Christ before he returned to heaven? Acts 1:8

Why was this message so very important?

➡ **Review Lesson Five. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

📖 Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Five.

📖 What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Five.

📖 Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.



J. Oswald Sanders told the story of an Indian missionary who walked barefoot from village to village preaching the gospel. After a long day of many miles and much discouragement he came to a certain village and tried to speak the gospel but was scorned. So he went to the edge of the village dejected and lay down under a tree and slept from exhaustion.

When he awoke the whole village was gathered to hear him. The head man of the village explained that they came to look at him while he was sleeping. When they saw his blistered feet they concluded that he must be a holy man, and that they had been evil to reject him. They were sorry and wanted to hear the message that he was willing to suffer so much to bring to them.

Are you willing to suffer in order to see Jesus' last request fulfilled—that His salvation extend to the ends of the earth? Are you holding onto your life; to your time; to your gold? If you always hold on to what you have, then that is all you will get!

"Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land" (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2). Solomon's exhortation to share our blessings carries with it the reiteration of a major biblical theme: we receive when we give, we are blessed as we bless others, we experience real life as we experience daily death to self and sin. How easy it is to clutch at our possessions and opportunities so that they won't slip through our fingers. Yet God honours the man or woman willing to take Him at His word. Jesus said, *"Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and the Gospel's will ever know what it means to really live"* (Mark 8:35 LB). **Lord Jesus, we cast our bread upon the waters!**

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- Jesus came to seek and save the lost.
- Jesus considered this mission to be urgent.
- Jesus often emphasized the believing faith of the Gentiles in order to challenge the Jews and shame them for their unbelief.
- Jesus often used the stories of the Gentile's faith to show the Jews that God has a "missionary heart".
- Jesus prayed for me to be in unity with believers of all peoples so that the world would know that God sent His Son.

■ ACTION STEPS

- Show a friend or family member how you discovered the "*Great Commission*" in the **Old Testament**.
- Write down the names of three families or individuals you would like to share this Bible Study with.
- Begin to pray for them and ask God to give them willing and available hearts to do this study.

6

SAVIOUR FOR ALL PEOPLES

THE LAMB AND HIS AMBASSADORS

■ **READING:** JOHN 1:26-30; REVELATION 5:6-14; 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21

Many people think that the main characteristic of the life of Jesus Christ was that He was a great teacher, or that He was a wonderful example of how men should live. He was both, of course, but the shocking truth is that the main reason Jesus became a man was to die, to offer His life as a sacrifice for sin in order to bring men back to God, thus bringing glory to God.

■ 1. There were hints of this purpose in the story of the birth of Christ. Joseph was told to name the child Jesus, for "He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21), and one of the gifts brought by the wise men was myrrh, a spice to anoint the dead.

What did John the Baptist mean when he said "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"?

John 1:29,36; Isaiah 53:5-7 _____

As you read Matthew 20:28 and I Timothy 2:6, answer the following questions: What is a "ransom?"

_____ Who paid it? _____

What was the ransom? _____ For whom was it paid? **for all men**

He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. I John 2:2



■ 2. Jesus died on the cross as a substitute. A substitute for whom? I John 2:2

What did Jesus accomplish with His substitutionary death?

a. Matthew 26:26-28

b. Isaiah 53:11

c. Romans 5:10

d. I Peter 2:24

e. I Peter 3:18

If you believe that Christ died for you, what should be your response to the fact that Christ died for your sins? Personalize the verses below using **I**, **me** and **my** instead of we, us and ours.

a. I Corinthians 6:19-20

My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in me, whom I have received from God. I am not my own; I was bought with a price. Therefore I will honor God with my body.

b. II Corinthians 5:15

c. I Peter 2:24

■ 3. Jesus overcame death. The grave could not hold Him. What does the fact of His resurrection mean to you?

I Corinthians 15:17, 20-22

The early witness to Christ put much emphasis on His resurrection? (Acts 1:3; 2:24, 31-32) True False

■ 4. One day the Lamb of God, the Risen Lord Jesus Christ, will preside over truly awesome gatherings in heaven, great services in which those from every tribe and people and tongue and nation will sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." (Revelation 5:6-14; 7:9-17)

Until that time, what job does the Lord have for those who have been redeemed by the Lamb?

II Corinthians 5:17-20

What does "reconcile" mean? II Corinthians 5:18-19

We are ambassadors for _____ to the world. II Corinthians 5:19-20

Read Revelation 7:9. How many people are standing in front of the Lamb? _____

Where are they from? **Every** _____ and _____

Who is an ambassador? II Corinthians 5:20a

What message do we ambassadors have for the world? II Corinthians 5:20b

➔ Review Lesson Six. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Six.

✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Six.


✍ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for not only my sins, but for the sins of the whole world.
- Jesus' servant life confirmed the promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
- Since I have been redeemed by Jesus Christ I am an ambassador for Him to the unreached peoples of the world.

■ ACTION STEPS

- Buy the following book. Read it underline important points and pass it on to another family.
 Book: *The Challenge of Missions*, Theodore Williams
 Order from: Indian Evangelical Mission; 7 Langford Road; Bangalore 560 025
 (or)
 OM Books; Logos Bhavan Medchal Road; Jeedimetla Village; Secunderabad 500 855



**PURSUE
GOD'S
HEART
FOR ALL NATIONS**

*"I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised [Jewish people] to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob], and in order that the nations might glorify God for His mercy." (Romans 15:8-9) John Piper, in his book *Let the Nations Be Glad*, explains this verse: "...Christ was on a mission to magnify God. He came to show that God is truthful. He came to show that God is a promise-keeper. And he came to show that God is glorious. Jesus came into the world for God's sake... Since God sent his Son to do all this, it is plain that the primary motive of the first great mission to unreached peoples was God's zeal for the glory of God. A servant spirit and a heart of mercy motivates world missions. "Christ became a servant...in order that the nations might glorify God for his mercy." He was a servant not only in that he humbled himself to do what the Father wanted him to do at great cost to himself. He was also a servant in that he lived his life for the sake of extending mercy to the nations."*

As you think over what Romans 15:8-9 means; is your heart saying, **"Lord, let me be your servant too. Let me be your ambassador."**

Lord, how thankful we are that some of Your children brought the gospel to our fathers. Help us to be faithful serving ambassadors to take the Gospel to those peoples who still have little or no opportunity to respond to Your offer of forgiveness and hope.

7

OUTWARD BOUND!

■ READING: LUKE 24:45-49; ACTS 1:1-9

Like water collecting behind a dam, we have seen God's unchanging purpose emphasised again and again throughout the Bible. Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, and the prophets all had recognised that God's promise of blessing was not limited to Israel. God so loved the world that He sent His Son; Christ died for all men and commanded His disciples to carry the good news to the "ends of the earth."

In the book of Acts we will see the dam burst and the gospel flowing through obedient and Spirit filled men and women.

■ 1. Who is a witness? (Think of a court trial.) Luke 24:45-49

To what three facts were the disciples witnesses? Luke 24:46-48

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

And to whom were they to carry this message? Was this a new idea? Luke 24:47

What did the disciples need if they were to be good witnesses for Christ? How did the Lord Jesus promise to provide for this need? Acts 1:8a

What did the disciples do as they awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit? Acts 1:14 _____

What was the result? Acts 2:1-4, 40-41

■ 2. In Acts 1:8 we find a "plan of action" which Jesus instructed the believers to follow. Rewrite this plan in your own words.

Did you notice that the plan of action to the geographical locations is simultaneous—Jerusalem, *and* in all Judea *and* Samaria, *and* to the ends of the earth. This plan is often misread and many Christians say, "Oh, I know what this verse means. If we're to start in Jerusalem, we're supposed to start sharing our faith in our home town." That's a great idea, and we should do this, but did you ever notice that the disciples were not from Jerusalem!

Where did the people say the disciples were from? Acts 2:7 _____

Why did Jesus tell them to go to a place which was not their home? Acts 2:5

Did you ever wonder why God had the disciples speak in Gentile languages? It was a missionary move strategically planned by God so that all nations would have a chance to hear the Gospel. God planted the disciples not in their home towns but in the most **strategic place**. He knew that in Jerusalem there were God-fearing Jews from every nation on the face of the earth. Our God is a missionary God in active pursuit of praise among the nations!

■ 3. The church grew in **numbers** of people. In order to see how great this growth was, look up the following

passages and jot down the numbers (or words describing numbers) you find. Acts 1:2,15; 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7; 9:31; 11:21; 12:24; 15:5; 19:20. Make an estimate of the growth in Jerusalem alone.

- 4. The church grew by spreading into many towns, cities, and distant **places**. Travel with the gospel, and in these passages, discover the names of the places it reached? Acts 5:28; 8:1,4; 13:4-6; 17:5-6; 19:10.

The church grew as it began to include more and more cultures, or **people groups**. The first believers were Jews, but with time they began to realize that God intended for the good news to go to the Gentiles as well!

Describe how this happened in Acts 8:26-27; 10:17-23, 27-28, 34-45; 11:2,3,19-21; 18:6. Was this an easy lesson for the first believers to learn?

- 5. What will be the grand finale of God's program, as described in Revelation 5:9?

- 6. Do you recall the Bible passages where "missions" really begins? The Apostle Peter knew what it was! (*Hint: see Acts 3:25*)

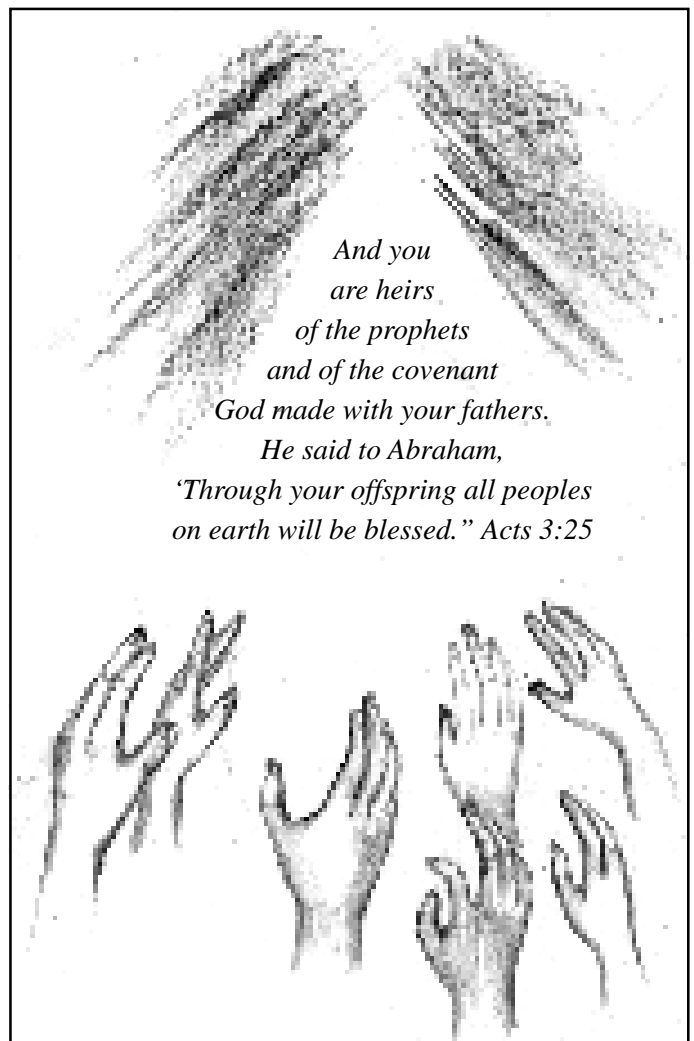
Are you saying, “ Yes, Lord, I want to participate in your covenant of bringing all peoples of the earth into your family”?

Yes No

Do you know that there are over 10,000 such "people groups" who still need a church established for them? Is there any relationship between your obedience to the Great Commission and the return of the King?

Matthew 24:14 Yes No

In 1887 Dr. A.B. Simpson launched a missionary movement that changed the world. Read Simpson's challenge on the following page.



Dr. Walter Turnbull told this story at Dr. Simpson's funeral: "He is the only great teacher we know who linked the evangelization of the world as a necessary preparation of Christ's return with the study of Bible prophesy.

On one occasion a New York Journal reporter approached Dr. Simpson with the question, "Do you know when the Lord is coming?"

"Yes," he replied, "and I will tell you if you promise to print just what I say, references and all."

The reporter's poised notebook gave the ready promise.

"Then put this down: *This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto the nations and then shall the end*

come.' Matthew 24:14. Have you written the reference?"

"Yes, what more?"

"Nothing more."

The reporter lowered his pencil and said, "Do you mean to say that you believe that when the Gospel is preached to all nations Jesus will return?"

"Just that."

"I think I begin to see daylight," answered the reporter. "I see the motivation and the motive power in this movement."

"Then," said Simpson, "You see more than some of the doctors of divinity."

➡ **Review Lesson Seven.**

Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Seven.

-
-
- What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Seven.

-
-
- Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- God is a *strategic missionary God* in pursuit of praise among the nations.
- The Holy Spirit was given *so that* we would have His power to be witnesses for Him in all the earth.
- Only through the help of the Holy Spirit can we finish the task of planting a reproducing fellowship of believers among *every* tribe, tongue, people and nation.
- We know that men for God from *every* tribe, language, people and nation will be in heaven.

■ ACTION STEPS

- "*I now realise how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear Him and do what is right*" (Acts 10:34-35). What a confession from Peter! It took three visions, but at last Peter understood Deuteronomy 10:17 —he even quoted it! Read your Bible with God's love for all peoples in mind. You will find, like Peter, that many familiar verses are actually mission verses that you never saw before!
- Underline the verses in your Bible that speak of God's desire to use His children to bless the nations.
- Ask God to give you the grace to obey what you read!



"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands" (Revelation 7:9).

It is finished! In this scene John describes his vision of the final victory, when some from every people group will praise the Lord Jesus. This scene fulfills God's promise in Genesis 12:3 that through Abraham and his descendants all other families of the earth would receive the spiritual blessing that came through Jesus Christ. There are many causes and interests to which we can commit our lives. But the vision of Christ's global cause is one which is sure to succeed.

William Carey, the father of modern mission, who set sail for India in 1793 expressed his assurance that God's cause will succeed: "*When I left England, my hope of India's conversion was very strong; but amongst so many obstacles, it would die, unless upheld by God. Well, I have God, and His Word is true. Though the superstitions of the heathen were a thousand times stronger than they are, and the example of the Europeans a thousand times worse; though I were deserted by all and persecuted by all, yet my faith, fixed on the sure Word, would rise above all obstructions and overcome every trial. God's cause will triumph.*"

8

A MAN WITH A MISSION

■ **READING:** ACTS 26:1-23

Did you know that the Apostle Paul, the man who wrote more books of the Bible than anyone else, was a missionary! In fact, much of the growth of the early church which we studied in the last lesson was a result of what God did through this man's life and work. But Paul was not always a missionary. Surprisingly, he started out as the church's greatest human enemy!

- 1. For many years, the Apostle Paul carried the gospel message to peoples who had never heard it before. He suffered very much for doing this, but he would not stop. Finally, he was imprisoned. From prison he spoke the words which you read in Acts 26. This is Paul's own account of what God did through his life.

How does Paul describe the life he lived before Christ saved him? Acts 26:9-11

The turning point for Paul came when he met the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. What work did Christ entrust to Paul? (see Acts 26:17,18) Tick the right answers.

- To preach salvation to the Jews
- To heal the sick
- To minister to the Gentiles

What was Paul's response to this "call" from God? (see Acts 26:19) Tick the right answer.

- Did not obey
- Instantly obeyed
- Sought time to think and decide

Has your life been changed by the power of Christ like Paul's was? Yes No

If yes, do you believe that God has a special purpose for your life? Yes No

What do you think this special purpose is?

It is important that every believer be obedient and available, like Paul, to the call of the Lord. What an encouragement to know that God has an important work for each person to do! And if God could use Paul, a man who had persecuted Christians, then He can use any one of us who yields to His will. Our study in the Old and New Testaments has shown that God desires to use every believer in *one way or another*, to take the gospel to all the people groups of the world!

- 2. List the terrible hardships Paul endured in the course of his missionary travels. II Corinthians 11:21-33

What kept Paul going? It seems that no sacrifice was too great for the apostle to make, if it meant that people would be saved. There were many reasons why Paul was willing to pay such a high price. List some of his reasons, or motives, as you read the following passages:

a. Acts 26:16-19; Romans 1:1 _____

c. Philippians 2:5-8 _____

d. I Timothy 2:3-7 _____

e. II Corinthians 4:17 _____

Do you share these motives? _____ Read Matthew 6:1; II Corinthians 2:17; Philippians 1:15-17 and list some of the wrong motives for serving God.

- 3. In chapter two we noted the importance of the **covenant**, or promise, which God made with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). How did Paul link that promise to his own missionary work? Read Galatians 3:8-9 & Ephesians 3:2-8
- _____
- _____

- 4. What was Paul's **goal** as a missionary? Romans 1:5 and Romans 15:20-22
- _____
- _____

*A great multitude...
in front
of the throne
in heaven
is the result
of being often
on the knees
before the throne
on earth.*



Today we would call Paul a "cross-cultural" or "frontier" missionary to the unreached people groups. Paul knew that if the Jewish Christian Church continued to grow it would not naturally expand and include all the Gentiles (people groups). So Paul formed the first group of cross-cultural missionaries to accomplish the specific task of planting churches in unreached people groups.

What was Paul's attitude toward his missionary responsibility? (Colosians 1:29) Tick the right answer.

- He was lazy
- He was not serious about his work
- He had other prime priorities
- He considered it his prime vocation

What was Paul able to say as he neared the end of his life? Acts 26:19-20 and II Timothy 4:6-8 _____

Today, you can choose to join a host of Christians around the world who earnestly pray for the harvest field and the harvest force. Begin today to hasten the Lord's return by praying for all nations to believe and obey Him!

➔ **Review Lesson Eight. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Eight.

✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Eight.

✍ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ **SUMMARY STATEMENTS**

- Paul was a cross-cultural missionary who established churches among peoples who had never heard the Gospel.
- I can have bad motives even when doing God's work.
- Paul had a single minded goal—"*...to see that all nations might believe and obey God.*" Romans 16:26
- Paul stayed focused on this goal until his death.

■ **ACTION STEPS**

- "*Not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only*" (Philippians 4:15). The Philippian church had established an account for Paul in which they both invested funds and made withdrawals. Can you imagine their joy both in providing resources for Paul's ministry and in receiving the reports of what had been accomplished through their investment? What accounts have you opened for "giving and receiving"?
- As a family or individual make a personal financial commitment to support a missionary (*or even more than one!*)
- Paul said, "*I thank my God... because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now*" (Philip. 1:3-5). It is always exciting to get a personal letter from a missionary friend, especially if you have had an important part in his other ministry. Write to your missionary and ask him to write to you.
- Find out if your church is supporting a missionary. If so, think of creative ways you can encourage the missionary and at the same time encourage your church to pray for the people group the missionary is working among.



"For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth'" (Acts 13:47). Quoting Isaiah 49:6, Paul showed that he clearly understood God's intention for the Jewish nation to be a light to the Gentiles. Instead of quoting his own commission to the Gentiles given to him on the road to Damascus, he chose to quote God's commission of all Jews as found in the Old Testament. In rejecting that commission, the Jewish leaders who listened to Paul not only rejected the Gentiles and Paul; they rejected God Himself. As a result, Paul turned to the Gentiles, who immediately "began rejoicing and glorifying the work of the Lord." The result? "The Word of the Lord spread through the whole region." Yes, the nations are responsive to the gospel, if we will only bring it to them!

Can you imagine what would happen if Christians would pursue this one characteristic found in Paul: "*But godliness with contentment is great gain*" (1 Timothy 6:6). Paul here reveals God's counter-cultural value system. Gain is not measured by material wealth, but by a godly contentment with what we have. If every committed Christian were to covenant with God to be content with necessities and to use extra funds to support new missions outreach to unreached peoples a fantastic leap in world evangelization would result! **God, give us Your perspective on things. Teach us to be faithful stewards of Your gifts.**

9

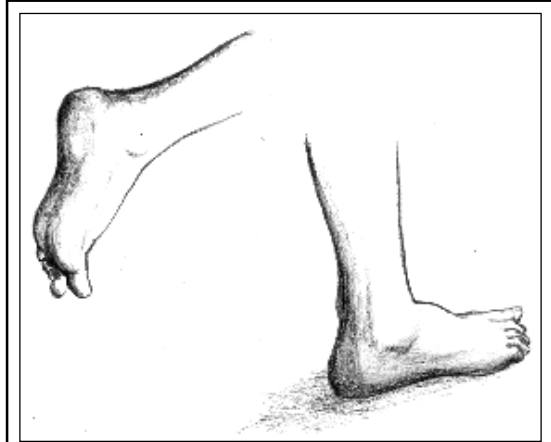
BEAUTIFUL FEET

■ READING: ROMANS 10:13-15; 15:17-22

By now you have discovered that **MISSIONS** is and always has been at the heart of what God is doing in the world. The Bible is a continuing record of the many ways God is bringing glory to himself by adopting the people groups of the world into His family.

"Yes," you might say, "but what does all this mean for me and my family? Do we have a part to play in God's plan?" Good question! Remember how God used Abraham? The nation Israel? The Apostle Paul? He will use you, and your family, if you will let Him. You can make all the difference in the world to a people who are lost.

- 1. Some people feel that being a witness, especially through missionary work, is not necessary because "God loves everyone too much to send anyone to hell." We do know from verses like John 3:16 that God loves the whole world. This is why Jesus came to earth and died on the cross. But what do the following verses tell us will happen to those who do not believe (also read John 3:18,36)



"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news."

Feet symbolize movement. Join the worldwide missions movement by giving to missions. Your sacrificial gifts, prayers and encouragement will support the one who goes!

We would much rather think about heaven than about hell, but Jesus taught that both are real. What did He teach would happen to all who die without being saved? Luke 16:19-31; Matthew 25:41-46

How does the book of Revelation describe hell? Revelation 20:11-15

How does II Thessalonians 1:8-9 describe hell? Everlasting separation from...

You see, the **good** news of the Bible is this: Anyone can be saved into the family of God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But there is also the **bad** news: As sin causes spiritual death (separation from the presence of God), never ending torment awaits those who are not brought into the family of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

- 2. Others believe that while evangelism and missions are good, God's justice would ensure that all who have never had an opportunity to hear the gospel and to be saved would be excused from paying the penalty of sin. What does Paul say concerning this in Romans 1:18-20; 3:9-18.
-

What does Romans 1:21-23 say that man does with the knowledge God has given him? Can you give a modern day illustration of this?

It is true that God judges people by what they know, but Romans 2:12-16 tells us that everyone fails this test. We

can trust God to do what is right because "The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and loving toward all He has made." Psalm 145:17 (see also Genesis 18:25)

Does the Bible teach that a person can be saved without hearing and believing the gospel message? (I Timothy 2:3-6; John 14:6) (Tick the correct answer) Yes No

- 3. Some time ago in England a man named William Carey studied the Bible just like you are doing. As he prayed over the truths of Scripture, he concluded that God wanted him to be a missionary. When Carey shared this conviction with a group of preachers, he was told, "Young man, sit down. When God wants to convert the heathen, He will do it without your help or mine!" Do you think this was sound advice? Explain.

(Read Romans 10:13-15) _____

William Carey came to India, and God did great things through him here. He had been a shoemaker with little formal education, but his life is evidence that God uses ordinary people who love and obey Him. Read the following references and see how God used other ordinary people:

Philip (Acts 8:26-40) _____

Ananias (Acts 9:10-19)


Peter (Acts 10:19-22)

➡ **Review Lesson Nine. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.**

📖 Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Nine.

📖 What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Nine.

📖 Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.



**PURSUE
 GOD'S
 HEART
 FOR ALL NATIONS**

Do you have beautiful feet? Paul quoted Isaiah saying, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news." So does that mean only the missionaries have "beautiful feet"? NO! There are no spectators in missions! Just think of all the people who are working hard behind the scenes to help the good news go out.

Paul said, "Endure hardship *with us* like a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:3). Why does a soldier endure hardship? To win! He sees the commander's cause as the overriding priority of his life, and does whatever is required to win the battle. Missions is a war where Christians are invading Satan's territory in order to push the darkness out of people's lives. During a war everyone is supporting the cause. Nobody pursues his own career—the cause becomes the career!

Both Hudson Taylor and David Livingston, after lives of extraordinary hardship and loss said, "I never made a sacrifice." How much hardship are we ready to endure to see Jesus Christ seal His victory over Satan, so that people from every tribe, tongue and nation may recognize Him as Lord?

There is only one cause, and we are all called to be a part of it. **Lord Jesus, make us good soldiers!**

10

**CALLING GOD'S
WORLD CHANGERS!**

■ **READING:** LUKE 9:57-62; 14:25-35

Before you begin this final lesson, take several minutes to go over in your mind God's great plan for the nations, from its beginning to the present. If you are in a group, choose one person to summarise the important events of history we have studied, then have someone explain how they all relate to God's "mission" in the world. What do you see God doing?

■ 1. Our God, the God revealed in the Bible, is the only true God. Explain from Isaiah 44:6-8: 24-26 why this is so.

The peoples of the world have rejected the true living God and worship "gods" of their own making. How are these gods different from the true God? Isaiah 40:12-26; 44:17-19

You see, this is what the world does, it serves gods of stone, money, fun, sometimes even Satan himself! But the Creator-God has rescued us, and we must be different. How are we who love our Lord to be different from others? II Corinthians 5:14-17; I Peter 2:9-12. Why can we be different?

■ 2. Have you ever wondered what God wants you to do with your life? When we understand what God is doing, then each of us can participate in His plan for reaching the world! Will this Bible study affect your daily life?

Yes No How? _____

What is the single goal toward which we must all work? Matthew 24:14

Individuals may play different roles, but we must all contribute to God's four thousand-year-old global purpose. In what ways can God show each person the particular role he is to play? (Proverbs 3:5-6; Ezra 8:21-23; Acts 13:1-3; Romans 12:6-8; Galatians 2:8-9)

*“For waging war you need guidance,
and for victory many advisors.” Proverbs 24:6*

God never intended us to fight the battle alone or without instruction. Our pilgrimage in missions should consist of a lifetime of learning, listening and seeking advice from many advisors.

We must not sit idle, waiting for a voice from heaven or a strong feeling to tell us what to do with our lives. Rather, we must pursue God's plan with the information and the abilities He has given us. Remember, with blessing comes responsibility! Luke 12:48b says, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

- 3. You will want to pray much and ask many questions as you decide how you can serve God best with your life. Never forget that more than half of the world's people have never heard that Jesus Christ loves them and gave His life to save them. In the light of this, your first consideration should be to multiply the information you have learned in this study by sharing it with other believers.

Name several people we have studied from the Bible who were used by God to change the world.

Why did God use them? (Tick the correct answer.)

- They were men of great personality They were always bold courageous
 They had super human qualities They were willing and obedient

What was accomplished in Paul's time as he and others allowed God to work through them? Acts 17:6b; Col. 1:6

4. What kind of things are likely to keep you from following the Lord in this task? Matthew 6:19-21; 16:24-26; Luke 12:29-34; II Timothy 4:10a

From your reading in Luke 14:25-35, how much will it cost you if you choose to be one of God's "world changers?" Fill in the blank with the correct answer: (nothing, something, my everything)

It will cost me _____ .

Are you willing to pay this price? (Tick to indicate your desire.) Yes No

- The emphasis of these studies has been what we can and should do for the Lord, in being a part of His great plan for the world. There is, however, a **terrific surprise** in store for those who are obedient in how they use their lives

Jesus **promises** that we will gain rewards and find satisfaction and joy. This is what most people in the world are frantically and unsuccessfully trying to find. (Read about these rewards in: Matthew 6:33; 16:24-27; Mark 10:28-31; John 12:24-26; 14:24-27; 15:8-11; I Peter 4:13; Revelation 21:6-7; 22:12)

Finally, Matthew 28:19-20 declares that Jesus Christ will be with us **always**. What a promise! To whom, specifically, is this promise given?

As someone has said, if there is "**no GO**, then there is **no LO**."

If you don't **GO** into God's purposes of missions to the nations,
then the "**LO**, I will be with you" doesn't follow!

What's needed now is a love for Jesus that will obey His purpose and follow Him to finish the task!

➔ Review Lesson Ten. Pray and ask God to identify one or more statements or scriptures that He wants you to understand, learn, or do.

✍ Write down the most meaningful statement or scripture you read in Lesson Ten.

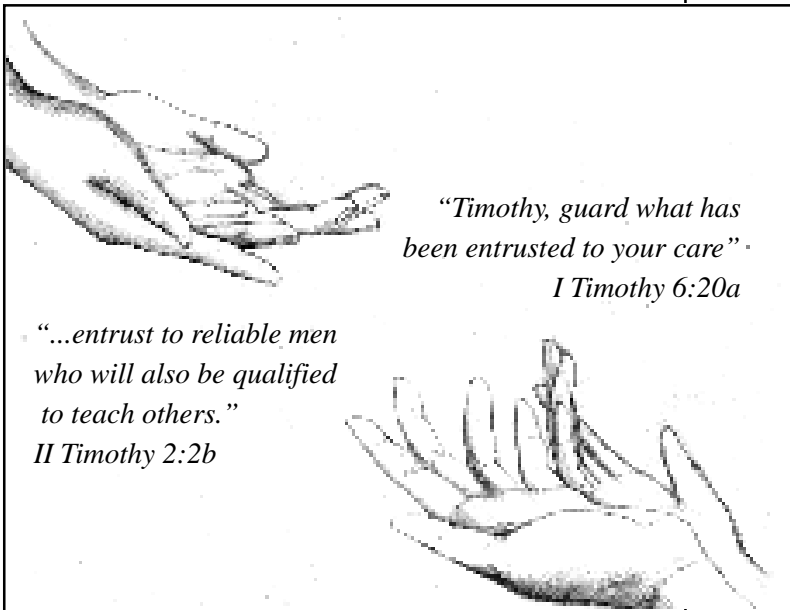
✍ What does God want you to do in response to what you learned in Lesson Ten.



Now that you know God's plan for your life are you willing to pray the prayer of Oswald J. Smith (missionary statesman of Canada)—*"I want Thy plan, O God, for my life. May I be happy and contented whether in the homeland or on the foreign field; whether married or alone, in happiness or sorrow, health or sickness, prosperity or adversity—I want Thy plan, O God, for my life. I want it; oh, I want it!"*

Jesus said, *"If you love me, you will obey what I command."* (John 14:15)

Paul said, *"Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care"* (1 Timothy 6:20). Each of us has received a "command" and a "trust" from God, that is, a deposit of knowledge, resources, and gifts. God expects us to exercise responsible stewardship of this "trust," both to maintain it and to invest it to accomplish His purposes. This is the essence of stewardship: using resources to fulfill responsibilities. Paul instructed Timothy to entrust what he had learned to reliable men who would be qualified to teach others (II Timothy 2:2). God entrusted to Abraham a "blessing" which he was to use to *"bless the other families of the earth."* Each of us has received a similar "deposit" from the Lord. What kind of stewardship are you exercising?



Lord, help me to be a faithful steward of all that You have given me and taught me, using it to extend Your kingdom to all nations of this world.

✍ Re-word what you have learned and what you will do into a short prayer of response to God.

■ SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- I belong to a Creator God who is the ruler of the universe.
- God gives me the power to be a witness for Him.
- The Gospel must be preached and presented as a witness or testimony to *all* nations—and then the end will come!
- God does not call me to be witnesses alone. He desires me to work towards His end with the body of Christ.
- I must never think that I have attained the goal.
- I should always be a learner, server, and worker who stands guard to the temptations of the flesh that can draw me back into the world.
- If I am serious about becoming a "*world changer*" then it will cost me my everything.

■ ACTION STEPS

- Lead a group of 3 other friends and their family members through this Bible study.
- Write to the following address to find out about other mission resources, courses and short term opportunities:
In India: India Mission Association • 48, First Main Road • East Shenoy Nagar • Madras 600 030, India
In USA: USCWM • 1605 Elizabeth St. • Pasadena CA 91104, USA

BE AWARE

of the Biblical Mandate to reach all people groups.

BE PREPARED

to be used of God (time, talents, treasure) to reach other cultures/peoples.

BE INVOLVED

in the task of evangelization worldwide!

Be a Part of It!

Leader's Guide

For Guiding Weekly Meetings

These meetings provide:

- Accountability that will motivate you to complete each lesson and action steps
- Discussion to help you learn from others and get the most out of this study
- Fellowship to give you advice and encouragement
- A group that will continue with a common experience and understanding. This group is more likely to continue advancing God's Kingdom as a group over the years than one person who has taken the course alone.

Wherever you meet—in homes, in church, school hostles—there are some helpful hints in making the most of the sessions. Below, you will find a suggested one hour format. Feel free to modify this format. Do whatever is most appropriate for your group. Some groups may only want to meet for 20 minutes each week for accountability and discussion, other groups may want to meet each week for prayer, still others may want to do one lesson each week, and some may want to do as many as five lessons per week. Whatever the length, format, or reason for your group, focus on finding the vision of God's purpose through the Bible study and the relationships you have with the participants.

Suggestions for Leaders

As a leader you should act as a facilitator not an expert. Your job is to coordinate activities, keep the program on track, encourage all to participate, making sure the meeting starts and stops on time. The meeting should not be dominated by a few who talk the whole time. The leader should cut this off and ask someone else what they think. Everyone should be encouraged to be good listeners.

The leader should set the time and place to meet that is convenient for the most number of people. The leader should encourage the group to make a commitment not to miss any lessons if possible.

The leader should be prepared so that the main points of the lesson are learned by the group. Remember the leader is not the expert with all the answers! Your job is to keep the group focused on discussing the content of each lesson.

If you have not provided this workbook for the students, you'll need to purchase more copies from:

MF; Post Box 8424; Bangalore, 560084 India

or

www.uscwm.org (or) e-mail: EdNet@xc.org

Large-group / Small-groups

If your group is large (over 12) it may be difficult to encourage good discussion time. Therefore it is wise to break up the large group at times during the meeting into several small groups (of 4-5) for discussion and prayer.

The First Session

This should be used for orientation.

- Let each person in the group introduce themselves and share why they want to take this Bible study.
- This is a time when they can buy *Discover God's Plan – Be a Part of It!* Details about the meetings can be taken care of during this first meeting.
- Selections from the Introduction of the course should be read out loud. This will help the participants anticipate what they are about to discover.
- The students should be encouraged to invite other students to the next meeting. (*Discover God's Plan – Be a Part of It!* should be made available for any new invitees.)
- The students should be told that they need to read lesson one and answer the questions before the next meeting.
- Considerable time should be spent in prayer for the course and all the people involved.

Sample Meeting Format

The Opening (5 minutes)

Singing and Welcome—Gather with one or two songs, appropriate to the group.

As you welcome newcomers, always take time to reiterate the purpose of the course: to learn what God is doing and to become valued participants with our Lord in fulfilling the very purpose He lived and died for (II Corinthians 5:15)!

The Lesson (10 minutes)

Spend this time summarizing the Lesson. It is a good idea to take 5 minutes and have someone highlight the main points in the lesson. Contact a student before the lesson and ask him or her to give their summary of the lesson. As the leader, you should be prepared to conclude the summary with any main points that a student has missed.

Discussion and Application (25 minutes)

This is a time of personal discussion and application where each participant should have a turn in responding to the Lesson — as a whole-group or in small-groups.

The leader may choose to use some of the questions within the lesson or he/she may choose to use some of

the suggested discussion topics found at the end of the Leader's Guide.

• **Responding in Prayer (10 minutes)**

In small groups, you'll spend time in prayer. The following is suggested prayer focus:

- a) the Unreached People Groups
- b) one another and what God is teaching you
- c) anyone who is laboring on behalf of the unreached people groups in offices or on the field.
- d) growth in mission awareness & involvement of your church.

Organization (5 minutes)

To conserve time and thus interest, most of your course details should be handled outside the session time. In-session organizational activities might involve:

- Encouraging the group to arrive on time
- Encouraging the group to do their work
- Announcements about any seminars or speakers coming soon
- Announcements of any good books, videos or mission magazines
- Announcements about any change in schedules

Sharing (5 minutes)

This final time for accountability is a critical element for the success of this course. Set up a "Pal" system and have the participants contact each other between meetings to encourage accountability in praying, completing each lesson, doing the action steps, and giving to frontier missions. Direct them to share and pray for each other's roles in fulfilling God's program of making disciples of all the peoples of the earth. This time should be used for these small groups or partners to ask each other how they are doing with this course.

If you want to get the most from the time you're investing in this course, make sure you do the lessons, action steps and attend each group meeting. If you do, you'll be like those who take the time and energy to dig for treasure, as opposed to those who hope one day to stumble upon it.

You can study this course without meeting with a group but you will miss much. If you are unable to be a part of a group, first seek out one other friend or family member who will partner with you in completing this Bible study.

The time together as a group can be very enriching. The people you meet with may become a group that will continue over the years and have a tremendous impact in India and the world. May God bless you as you fellowship together. God will be pleased to see your group meeting and experiencing how to serve Him better.

LESSON ACTIVITIES

The following options are given as suggestions for discussion and prayer points for each lesson. The leader may choose to use these suggestions, or he/she may come up with more appropriate questions and prayer items for the group. There will not be enough time for you to use all of the points written for each lesson. As a leader you will need to pray and decide the course of discussion for each lesson.

Lesson One

Discussion Points:

- When you became a believer, surely you experienced changes in your life. Give an example of how your relationship with Jesus has recently caused a change in your life.
- We have studied the importance of making choices. What are some of the choices that you struggle with? (Choices between choosing the way of the world for personal results or choosing the way of Jesus for eternal results.)
- Where do you go for advice when you have to make a decision? Who and what do you consider in making decisions?

Prayer Points:

- Break up into pairs and read your partners re-worded prayer at the end of the lesson, then pray each others prayer for one another.
- Pray about the decision you have made to take this Bible study.
- Pray for God to open each student's heart and mind to receive and obey God's revelation as we search the scriptures.

Lesson 2

Discussion Points:

- Discuss the concept of "with privilege (blessing) comes responsibility". Review what this meant for Abraham. What it means for you today.
- Discuss who Abraham was to be a blessing to. (Be sure that the students understand the meaning of nations, gentiles, and peoples.) To clarify this point have the students read the section called, "**What is a people group?**" and "**What is an unreached people group?**" (Found on page 2 and page 6 of *Blessed to Be a Blessing*).
- Where in Genesis do we see God creating distinct people groups?
- Review Acts 3:25-26 and ask the students if they are

heirs of the covenant God made with their forefathers? What does it mean to be an heir of the covenant? Continue this discussion by reading Ralph Winter's quote, "The question is not whether or not we are called but whether or not we will respond." Ask the students to share how they have succeeded or failed in their responsibility to be a blessing to the nations.

- What is the most important or meaningful thing you learned in this lesson.

Prayer Points:

- Ask the students to name some unreached people groups. (If the students have read *Blessed to Be a Blessing* this will help them list some people groups.
- Pair up and have each group pray for a church to be established among one of the people groups listed. (Pray for mission leaders, missionaries, churches, Bible, literature, radio and other media translations and social work to be focused on these groups.)

Lesson 3

Discussion Points:

- Have the students review what it meant for Israel to be a kingdom of priests. Have the students give biblical examples of how Israel failed and succeeded in their calling.
- Give some examples from your own life where you have been blessed or blessed someone else?
- Why is it important to have blessings to go in both directions as individual Christians and as a church.
- In what ways have you failed to be a blessing to others?
- Is your church out of balance in extending blessing to others?

Prayer Points:

- Reflect upon the biblical examples of how people took risks and became a blessing to those peoples who were outside of God's family. Pair up and pray for one another to be a "vessel" of extending blessings to the unreached peoples of the world.
- Pray for your church to become involved in actively supporting missionaries and praying for unreached peoples

Lesson 4

Discussion Points:

- Review Matthew 15. What caused the disciples to respond to the Canaanite woman the way they did? What would make you respond in a similar way towards people of other cultures/castes?

- Review and discuss the verses found under question number 5. Ask the students to share how any of these familiar verses may have touched them in a deeper way.

- What is the greatest way we could be neighbors to those of other cultures?

- Discuss how Hindus, Muslims or people who follow other religions can live even more "religious" or devout lives than Christians can.

Prayer Points:

- Call for a time of prayer and confession. Read Philippians 2:3-11 slowly and out loud. Have the group break up into pairs and ask each person to pray and seek the Lord's forgiveness while confessing the times he/she has considered others (because they were different) to be inferior.
- Have the group focus on Christ's attributes and then pray that these attributes become a part of each student so Christ's ministry can freely flow out to others.

Lesson 5

Discussion Points:

- The church's and the believer's responsibility to reach out to other nations (*ethnic/cultural groups*) was unpopular in Jesus' day and remains unpopular even today. Can you think of some reasons for this?
- How often do you take into consideration Jesus' final words? How does your life show that you believe the importance of His last words?
- How have you made yourself willing to do whatever God may ask of you?
- How would you decide to spend your money as it relates to Jesus' final words?

Prayer Points:

- Discuss the strong faith of the Gentile soldier in Matthew 8. Spend time praying for greater faith in your own life.
- Pray for the family members or friends you hope to lead through this Bible study.
- Pray that God would help you let go of your life, time, and money so that you can be available and continuously participating in His great commission.

Lesson 6

Discussion Points:

- Have three students read out loud their personalized version of the verses at the end of question number 2. How do these verses help us in our role as ambassadors?

- How did the gospel and a church get established among your community of people. Have someone who knows their Christian heritage share his/her story.
- Why is it important for a Christian to cross cultures to bring the gospel? Before asking this question have the students read “**What is missions?**” and “**Is evangelism the same as Missions**” found on page 11 of *Blessed to Be a Blessing* also review the illustrations found on pages 12-13.

Prayer Points:

- Spend time in thanksgiving and praise prayer. Thank God for how He brought missionaries and evangelists to you and your community.
- Pray for mission agencies and missionaries by name who are serving among unreached peoples. If you know the name of the people, language, caste or religious group, then pray specifically for receptivity to the Gospel.

Lesson 7

Discussion Points:

- In your own words define a people group? (If the students are not grasping the meaning then review pages 2, 6, and read carefully pages 12-13 of *Blessed to Be a Blessing*.)
- What is God's intent for each of the people groups of the world? Review scriptures: Genesis 12:3, Revelation 7:9-11, Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 16:25-26 and the list goes on.)
- Why is it important to be strategic in our outreach with the Gospel? Review Acts 1-2 and concepts taken from pages 12-13 in *Blessed to Be a Blessing*.

Prayer Points:

- Have the group select an unreached people group in their city or near their town. Have them explain why this group/community is considered unreached.
- Spend time praying by name for this people group. Focus on the people, things, and work needed in order to see this group reached and a church established among them.

Lesson 8

Discussion Points:

- Do you believe God has a special purpose in your life? What do you think this purpose is? (The students do not have to give specifics, but general answers that relate to their overall purpose and significance in God's plan.)
- Think of your present personal and financial resources? What are some ways you can contribute to expanding God's kingdom today?

- Think of your future potential personal and financial resources? (Have students imagine their lives 15 years from now.) What are some ways you can see your family contributing to the great commission?

Prayer Points

- Break up into pairs. Share with your partner the commitments you desire to make. Pray for God's guidance in **making** commitments and **keeping** them.
- Pray for contentment. That you would be faithful in abiding in Christ so that your flesh, the world, and Satan do not distract you from the greater purposes God has called you to.

Lesson 9

Discussion Points:

- How would you respond to someone who said, “God's justice would ensure that all who have never had an opportunity to hear the Gospel and to be saved will be excused from paying the penalty of sin?”
- The church in India has the resources to take the gospel to all the people groups in India. In fact the great commission can be accomplished even in your generation! What does this say about who is responsible for those who do not hear of Christ? (Review *Pursue God's Heart for All Nations* .) Discuss the fact that there are no spectators in missions.
- As a group work through the Action Step of Lesson 9. Creatively think of all that individuals, families, the church, and mission agencies can do to increase mission vision so that the great commission can be completed in your generation!

Prayer Points:

- Pray through the list you have come up with. Continue to pray this list into action!

Lesson 10

Discussion Points:

- Have a students write a short play that gives God's mission plan from Genesis to Revelation. (It would be good if you could give this as an assignment after Lesson 9.)
- What kinds of things are likely to keep you from participating in the great commission?
- What are the costs? Be specific in your discussion.
- How can you share what you have learned with others?

Ideas: Through a short skit your small study group could perform short missions motivating skits to other youth and adult groups. Have the students write a short play

that would communicate the distractions that keep Christians from participating in the great commission. After the play give a challenge and invite others to do a Bible study called, *Discover God's Plan – Be a Part of it!*

Prayer Points:

- At this time the leader should challenge the group to continue to meet once a month for prayer and accountability in the following areas...

1. Relationship: That my life will bring glory to God, as I seek to know Him more and as I seek to bless others, especially those nations (people groups) who are currently without a church and beyond the reach of the gospel.

2. Decisions: As I make decisions for my life I will seek God and what things He wants me to do in order to specifically participate in the great commission.

3. Life-style: That I will be faithful in considering and obeying Jesus' commands as I live:

Before others, so they can see Jesus in me.

For others, making choices in my daily life-style that will help the gospel reach the unreached peoples of the world.

- Spend time praying for one another.
- Spend time praying about your plans to share this Bible study and vision with your friends, family and church.

Calling All Leaders!

We would like some leads from you!

What did you think of the format?



Were the lessons too long or too short?

Was the bible study too easy or too hard?

What was the average age of the students who participated?

How could *Discover God's Plan* be changed to make it more effective?

What was most insightful about *Discover God's Plan* ?

What are some of the changes God has brought about in your life and in the lives of the students?

Are you and the students continuing to meet as a fellowship/accountability group?

Have any of the students gone on to lead another group through *Discover God's Plan*?



Please mail your response to:

MF • PO Box 8424 • Bangalore, 560084, India
(or) e-mail EdNet@xc.org