

**ADULT LESSON GUIDE  
FALL 2022**

**THE GOD OF  
DELIVERANCE**

Moses and the  
Journey to Canaan

**JESUS IS LORD**  
The Ministry of Jesus

**CHOOSING WISDOM**  
What Exactly Is Wisdom?

**GOD'S  
WORD**  
FOR LIFE





# **GOD'S WORD**



**FOR LIFE**

ADULT LESSON GUIDE  
**FALL 2022**

# GOD'S WORD



FOR LIFE

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\*AN indicates All Nations Sunday.

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#### LESSON GUIDE

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## GETTING STARTED

The first page of each lesson gives pertinent information that will be foundational for teaching the lesson. Here you will find the Lesson Title, the Truth about God, the Truth for My Life, and both the Focus Verses and Lesson Text. In addition, a callout box will either give an overview of the series (the first lesson of each series contains this information) or will connect students with their daily devotional activity from the previous week.

SEPTEMBER 4, 2022
SERIES 1: THE GOD OF DELIVERANCE

# 1.1

## SLAVES CAN BE DELIVERED

**FOCUS VERSE**  
Hebrews 3:14  
For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

**LESSON TEXT**  
Exodus 23:10-10; Hebrews 3:1-19

**TRUTH ABOUT GOD**  
God documents efforts that seek to keep us enslaved.

**TRUTH FOR MY LIFE**  
I will rest on God's provision of deliverance.



**Series Overview:**  
This series, "This God of Deliverance," will follow the Israelites on their journey out of slavery in Egypt to the building of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. We will watch as Moses grows up in the palace of Pharaoh and have a close-up view of the plagues that ultimately led to the Israelites' freedom. We will follow them through the Red Sea to the mountain where they received the commandments, and we will end up watching the glory of the Lord fill the Tabernacle. This series will show us a God who delivers and allow each of us to experience the deliverance in our own lives.

LESSON 1.1

### SG TEACHING OUTLINE

**Icebreaker:** Have you ever repeated a story you just knew was true only to discover it was not? Describe what happened.

**Lesson Connection:** Share the Lesson Connection.

- I. THE HEBREWS WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT
  - What was the "spiritual thermometer" in your life that help indicate the spiritual atmosphere you are in?
- A. Governments May Forget Their History
  - What indicators signal that the past has been forgotten? These might be changes in someone's personal life or in the world in general?
- B. Pharaoh's Daughter Rescued Moses from Death
- C. Discovering God's Unstoppable Plan for My Deliverance
  - What are some testimonies of God's deliverance in your life and others' lives?
- II. ANOTHER DELIVERER LIKE MOSES
  - A. Moses Was a Type of the Messiah, Jesus Christ
  - B. I Will Choose Grace and Truth
    - How would you tell a friend or coworker about God's grace and truth?
- III. OLD COVENANT VERSUS NEW COVENANT
  - A. The New Covenant Accomplished What the Old Covenant Only Symbolized
    - What did you see and understand better after you received the Holy Spirit that you could not understand before?
  - B. I Will Believe in Jesus and Experience Deliverance from Sin

**Internalizing the Message**

**Prayer Focus**  
Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- Pray for God to help you to know what spiritual atmosphere you are in and if He wants you to continue therein.
- Ask God to help you be and do what He wants you to as you grow stronger in your faith.

## SG TEACHING OUTLINE

The SG (Small Group) Teaching Outline is the lesson content in outline form. Each lesson main point is listed along with suggested discussion questions. Although the outline can be used to teach the lesson in a large group setting, the "SG" indicates the content is also designed to be used in a Small Group. Because of this, an icebreaker question has been provided to help jump-start interaction in the Small Group meeting.

FALL, LESSON 1.1

### LESSON CONNECTION

**O**n March 22, 2018, an ordinary family said goodbye to an extraordinary man. He wasn't just extraordinary because he had reached the age of 107. He wasn't even extraordinary simply because he had served in government for over twenty-five years or because he'd won a chess tournament at age ninety-nine. Johan van Hulst was remarkable because he saved over six hundred Jewish children from Nazi genocide.

In 1940 van Hulst had been appointed deputy principal of the Reformed Teacher Training College, a seminary in Amsterdam, as World War II swept across Europe. Van Hulst's first contributions included helping convert the college into a shelter for Dutch teachers in danger for refusing to sign the oath of loyalty to Germany. By 1942 van Hulst began an even more radical means of rescuing Jews in the Netherlands.

Nazis used a theater across the street from the college as a deportation center for Jewish families. As part of the process, children were separated from their parents and sent to a crèche (a nursery) next door. The nursery shared a back garden with the college, and van Hulst seized the opportunity to step in and save the children.

By secretly coordinating operations with nursery workers, van Hulst and his colleagues helped smuggle children out of the city. These courageous individuals camouflaged potential adoptive families who could take the children and their belongings without detection. Then partnering nursery workers covertly removed the names of the children from the Nazi's registry.

Van Hulst and the network of secret deliverers then arranged for the children to be hidden in containers such as laundry baskets and sacks. Deliverers would time their clandestine mission for when a train passed, blocking the view of Nazi guards so another resistance worker could ride away with the hidden child. The rescued toddlers would live on the rest of the war in hiding.

The covert deliverance efforts lasted until 1943 when the nursery was closed and its Jewish director was sent to the death camp at Auschwitz. Van Hulst continued to help other Jews in danger until he was forced to go into hiding just three weeks before the liberation. On March 6, 1972, Yad Vashem (the World Holocaust Remembrance Center) recognized Johan van Hulst as Righteous Among the Nations (an honor to describe non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews from genocide).

In an age when most North Americans enjoy relative safety, it may be difficult to understand the depths of van Hulst's sacrifice. Yet we can acknowledge with appreciation the high cost of deliverance and the glorious freedom his efforts purchased for at least six hundred children.

# BIBLE LESSON

The Bible Lesson is a manuscript of the entire lesson. The lessons are written by various Apostolic authors who not only skillfully explain the truths of Scripture but also share ways we can apply these truths to our lives. The lesson contains discussion questions to stimulate thought and media callouts (videos and images available in the Adult Resource Kit) to connect with students of all learning styles.

## BIBLE LESSON

### I. THE HEBREWS WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT

The children of Israel were in a position they never saw coming. It happened slowly over time as evil forces exerted more and more power in their lives. Through time and circumstance, the enemy slowly took away their rights. By the time the Israelites realized what had happened to them, they were entrenched in bondage. Hope seemed a million miles away.

These events are a perfect example of how Satan draws many people into spiritual slavery, and especially how believers can backslide. The devil tries to chip away at our conscience and eliminate small disciplines in our lives. We begin to think, *Maybe this aspect of godly living isn't important or this small sin surely won't hurt me that badly after all. It's not as bad as those other sins.* Eventually, through gradual regression, the devil can put us back into the same slavery from which God delivered us.

#### A. Governments May Forget Their History

The Egyptians had not always oppressed the Hebrews. In fact, Joseph once held a position of authority in their government; he was second only to Pharaoh himself. However, governments may forget their history (Exodus 18). The Egyptians did not remember God's miraculous provision through Joseph's supernatural ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. They did not remember how the God of the Hebrews had provided for them for seven years through Joseph's exceptional God-given ability to manage and administrate. And then, because they forgot previous blessings, they committed egregious sins.

As Christians we must not forget the blessings God has poured out on us in the past. When seasoned Christians fall into sin, it is mainly because they have forgotten or discounted the many miracles and blessings God has given them in the past. How can someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized in Jesus' name backslide? The answer is simple: by slowly and gradually forgetting over time.

#### B. Pharaoh's Daughter Rescued Moses from Death

Fortunately, God saw the Israelites in their distress and had a plan to deliver them (Exodus 2:1-10). Even while Pharaoh was trying to kill all the Hebrew baby boys, God protected many of their children. One of these children was named Moses, whose infancy was exceptional. After his birth, his mother hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer, she formed a floating basket and sent him down the river. Undoubtedly the basket left her hands with a prayer as she sent her child downstream.

God heard her prayer and demonstrated His saving power. Provisionally, the person to save the baby Moses was Pharaoh's

What are the "spiritual thermometers" in your life that help indicate the spiritual atmosphere you are in?

What indicators signal that the past has been forgotten? These might be changes in someone's personal life or in the world in general.

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## INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

If you have ever seen an elephant perform in a circus or at a zoo, you might be amazed at the handler's ability to control the massive creature that might be one hundred times heavier than the trainer. The elephant will perform tricks and stunts with complete submission, even though the elephant could easily crush the trainer with one movement. However, the most impressive stunt is probably when the performance is over and the handler walks away. Sometimes the handler ties a small rope around the elephant's ankle and attaches the rope to a small stake in the ground, leaving the elephant for a long period of time. The elephant could easily break the rope or pull up the stake, but often it remains perfectly docile, not aware that freedom is just one choice away.

The reason for this is similar to the fable of the frog. When the elephant was an infant, the trainers attached large, heavy chains to the baby elephant's ankle so it could not break free. Eventually, the baby elephant stopped resisting. When the elephant gives up, the trainers no longer need the heavy chains but can lead it around with a small rope, no matter how large the elephant grows.

The brutal attacks of the enemy are designed to wear us down over time. They are designed to cause us to lose hope and give in to the lie that we are not strong enough to resist. The devil would like us to believe that the only option is bondage. In truth, we are not strong enough to break free based on our own strength alone. However, when we have Christ living inside of us, we become like the massive elephant, and the heavy chains that bound us become like weak ropes. We can now live a life free from sin and bondage. However, if we allow the tricks of the devil to deceive us into thinking we are still weak and powerless, we might still allow ourselves to remain in spiritual slavery.

Do not be like the frog who is comfortable in the boiling water, and do not be like the massive elephant being led around by a small rope. Receive Jesus Christ and claim your liberty in Him today.

#### Prayer Focus

- Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:
- Pray for God to help you to know what spiritual atmosphere you are in and if He wants you to continue therein.
  - Ask God to help you be and do what He wants you to as you grow stronger in your faith.

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# INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

The end of each lesson will offer a final call to action to apply the lesson's content. The goal of each lesson is not just to share biblical information, but to show what must be done with the information, challenging students to apply God's Word to their lives. You are encouraged to use the Prayer Focus to end the lesson with a time of consecration.

## LEGEND

The following icons and boxes are used to aid leaders in navigating the content.

Contains a suggested discussion question

Gives direction regarding a media callout that is available



Signals the information can be used in a Small Group setting.



Shows a video component is available to help illustrate the lesson information.



Indicates an image is available to help illustrate the lesson information.

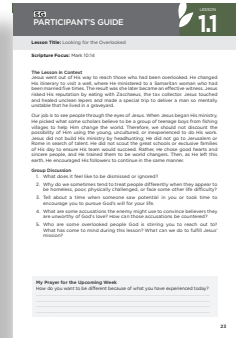
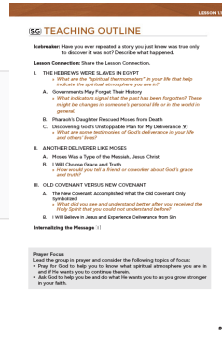
## DIGITAL RESOURCE KIT

The Adult Resource Kit offers a wide array of materials to help expand the impact of each lesson. From videos that inspire discussion to social media tools to help encourage adults to join your group or class, this kit provides tools to help leaders grow their group and make teaching time more effective. Some resources include:



A Video to Accompany Each Lesson to Prompt Discussion or Further Thought

Small Group Teaching Outlines and Participant Guides



A Powerpoint to Accompany Each Lesson



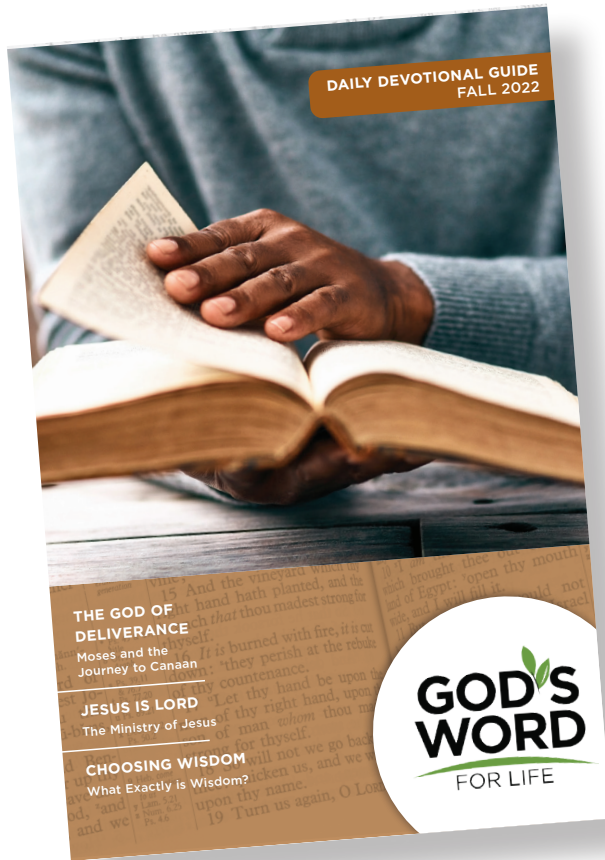
Lesson Leaves and a Printable Version of the Scripture Text



Social Media Graphics, Tips, and Sample Posting Calendar



## DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE



Becoming lifelong Apostolic disciples takes more investment than just an hour on Sunday or Wednesday. Now you can dig into God's Word every day. This guide gives an overview of the biblical text presented in the Lesson Guide each week and is then divided into smaller portions for daily study. Each day offers brief insight about the Bible passage, a devotion that challenges readers to apply Scripture, and then space to reflect and pray over the principles presented.

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# 1.1

## SLAVES CAN BE DELIVERED

### FOCUS VERSE

#### Hebrews 3:14

For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.

### LESSON TEXT

#### Exodus 2:1-10; Hebrews 3:1-19

### TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God circumvents efforts that seek to keep us enslaved.

### TRUTH FOR MY LIFE

I will act on God's provision of deliverance.



### Series Overview:

This series, "The God of Deliverance," will follow the Israelites on their journey out of slavery in Egypt to the building of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. We will watch as Moses grows up in the palace of Pharaoh and have a closeup view of the plagues that ultimately led to the Israelites' freedom. We will follow them through the Red Sea to the mountain where they received the commandments, and we will end up watching the glory of the Lord fill the Tabernacle. This series will show us a God who delivers and allow each of us to experience that deliverance in our own lives.

## **SG** TEACHING OUTLINE

**Icebreaker:** Have you ever repeated a story you just knew was true only to discover it was not? Describe what happened.

**Lesson Connection:** Share the Lesson Connection.

### I. THE HEBREWS WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT

» *What are the “spiritual thermometers” in your life that help indicate the spiritual atmosphere you are in?*

#### A. Governments May Forget Their History

» *What indicators signal that the past has been forgotten? These might be changes in someone’s personal life or in the world in general.*

#### B. Pharaoh’s Daughter Rescued Moses from Death

#### C. Discovering God’s Unstoppable Plan for My Deliverance **V**

» *What are some testimonies of God’s deliverance in your life and others’ lives?*

### II. ANOTHER DELIVERER LIKE MOSES

#### A. Moses Was a Type of the Messiah, Jesus Christ

#### B. I Will Choose Grace and Truth

» *How would you tell a friend or coworker about God’s grace and truth?*

### III. OLD COVENANT VERSUS NEW COVENANT

#### A. The New Covenant Accomplished What the Old Covenant Only Symbolized

» *What did you see and understand better after you received the Holy Spirit that you could not understand before?*

#### B. I Will Believe in Jesus and Experience Deliverance from Sin

### **Internalizing the Message** **I**

#### **Prayer Focus**

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

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## LESSON CONNECTION

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Nazis used a theater across the street from the college as a deportation center for Jewish families. As part of the process, children were separated from their parents and sent to a crèche (a nursery) next door. The nursery shared a back garden with the college, and van Hulst seized the opportunity to step in and save the children.

By secretly coordinating operations with nursery workers, van Hulst and his colleagues helped smuggle children out of the city. These courageous individuals canvassed potential adoptive families who could take the endangered children into their homes without detection. Then partnering nursery workers covertly removed the names of the children from the Nazi's registry.

Van Hulst and the network of secret deliverers then arranged for the children to be hidden in containers such as laundry baskets and sacks. Deliverers would time their clandestine mission for when a tram passed, blocking the view of Nazi guards so another resistance worker could ride away with the hidden child. The rescued toddlers would live out the rest of the war in hiding.

The covert deliverance efforts lasted until 1943 when the nursery was closed and its Jewish director was sent to the death camp at Auschwitz. Van Hulst continued to help other Jews in danger until he was forced to go into hiding just three weeks before the liberation. On March 8, 1972, Yad Vashem (the World Holocaust Remembrance Center) recognized Johan van Hulst as Righteous Among the Nations (an honor to describe non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews from genocide).

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# BIBLE LESSON

## I. THE HEBREWS WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT

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These events are a perfect example of how Satan draws many people into spiritual slavery, and especially how believers can backslide. The devil tries to chip away at our conscience and eliminate small disciplines in our lives. We begin to think, *Maybe this aspect of godly living isn't important or this small sin surely won't hurt me that badly; after all, it's not as bad as those other sins.* Eventually, through gradual regression, the devil can put us back into the same slavery from which God delivered us.

*What are the "spiritual thermometers" in your life that help indicate the spiritual atmosphere you are in?*

### A. Governments May Forget Their History

The Egyptians had not always oppressed the Hebrews. In fact, Joseph once held a position of authority in their government; he was second only to Pharaoh himself. However, governments may forget their history (Exodus 1:8). The Egyptians did not remember God's miraculous provision through Joseph's supernatural ability to interpret Pharaoh's dreams. They did not remember how the God of the Hebrews had provided for them for seven years through Joseph's exceptional God-given ability to manage and administrate. And then, because they forgot previous blessings, they committed egregious sins.

As Christians we must not forget the blessings God has poured out on us in the past. When seasoned Christians fall into sin, it is mainly because they have forgotten or discounted the many miracles and blessings God has given them in the past. How can someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized in Jesus' name backslide? The answer is simple: by slowly and gradually forgetting over time.

*What indicators signal that the past has been forgotten? These might be changes in someone's personal life or in the world in general.*

### B. Pharaoh's Daughter Rescued Moses from Death

Fortunately, God saw the Israelites in their distress and had a plan to deliver them (Exodus 2:1-10). Even while Pharaoh was trying to kill all the Hebrew baby boys, God protected many of their children. One of these children was named Moses, whose infancy was exceptional. After his birth, his mother hid him for three months. When she could hide him no longer, she formed a floating basket and sent him down the river. Undoubtedly the basket left her hands with a prayer as she sent her child downstream.


God heard her prayer and demonstrated His saving power. Providentially, the person to save the baby Moses was Pharaoh's

daughter. When she came down to the river to bathe, she saw the child and immediately had compassion on him. As she swaddled the baby, Moses' sister ran from the bushes and offered to find a Hebrew woman to nurse and raise the child. Of course, Moses' sister went right back to their mother. Even though Pharaoh tried to have all the Hebrew babies killed, Moses was raised by his own mother with the protection of the Egyptian government.

### C. Discovering God's Unstoppable Plan for My Deliverance

Few, if any, of us have experienced literal slavery, but many of us have experienced spiritual, emotional, or psychological slavery. Many have experienced trauma, either by circumstances of life or by the wickedness of humanity, that has left them tortured by doubt and fear. Others have committed such great sin that has left them overwhelmed by guilt and self-condemnation. However, no matter the size or cause of the spiritual bondage, our God can deliver us. There are probably many testimonies in this very room of God's miraculous deliverance from a wide variety of situations. The same God who delivered the Israelites and who delivered our elders and leaders can deliver us as well.

#### Teacher Option:

A supplemental video is available in the Resource Kit. 

What are some testimonies of God's deliverance in your life and others' lives?

## II. ANOTHER DELIVERER LIKE MOSES

After Moses' providential protection in the river as a baby (Exodus 2), he grew up and fled from the household of Pharaoh after killing an Egyptian. Moses then lived in Midian where he received his formal calling to deliver the Hebrews from their slavery in Egypt (Exodus 3). He returned to Egypt where the miraculous work of God delivered the Hebrews from their bondage through ten supernatural plagues (Exodus 11-12).

After the Hebrews were delivered, God gave them the Law—a series of commandments for them to follow. This was not just because God wanted to have control over them. Rather, the Law was given to keep the Israelites in healthy relationship with God and prevent them from falling back into slavery ever again. While giving them these commandments, the Lord also gave them a prophecy of another deliverer like Moses. (See Deuteronomy 18:15-19.)

### A. Moses Was a Type of the Messiah, Jesus Christ

Even though Moses was used by God to deliver the Hebrews, God knew in His divine foreknowledge that this was not the last time the Israelites would need to be delivered. Since God exists outside of space and time, He understood that Israel would continue to sin, turn to false gods, and fall into slavery. Moses was a precursor and type of the ultimate deliverer who would deliver all people for all time. Of course, this deliverer would be Jesus Christ.

In Acts 3:22-26, Peter preached a sermon confirming that Jesus Christ was indeed the Prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15-19. However, the deliverance Jesus offered through His death on the cross was greater than anything Moses ever did. This is why we no



longer look to the law of Moses for salvation. Jesus offered a more complete salvation; therefore, we are no longer bound by the Law.

The writer of John's gospel phrased it like this: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). The Law was not sufficient to keep us out of slavery like the "grace and truth" of Jesus Christ. The grace Jesus offers is unmerited favor. Although we deserve slavery, God has given us an opportunity to receive freedom. Truth refers to reality and fact. We can only experience ultimate truth in Jesus Christ. Biblically, truth is not an abstract concept, but the person of Jesus (John 14:6).

## **B. I Will Choose Grace and Truth**

Both the truth and grace that Jesus Christ offers are freely available to us. The problem is not availability but our willingness to accept what Jesus is freely offering. In the familiar fable of a frog who sits passively while water gradually heats to a boil, the frog always has an opportunity to jump out. However, a frog that is comfortable where it is might not choose that freedom. Instead, it may slowly perish. The frog is only one choice away from life, freedom, and salvation.

Similarly, we are only one choice away from salvation. We can choose today to receive the grace and truth that Christ is offering. We can repent of our sins, submit to baptism in the name of Jesus, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost with the sign of speaking in other tongues. By choosing salvation, we are choosing to receive the unmerited favor and blessings of the Lord (grace) and to live an overcoming life in the higher reality that God desires for us (truth).

*How would you tell a friend or coworker about God's grace and truth?*

## **III. OLD COVENANT VERSUS NEW COVENANT**

Sometimes when Christians speak of the experiences in the Old Testament versus the New Testament, we speak in terms of the Old Covenant versus the New Covenant. Both were established by God and were appropriate for the time when they were given.

However, the Old Covenant was never intended to be permanent. Paul wrote that the Law was a "schoolmaster" to keep us until Christ came (Galatians 3:24). When Christ died and rose again, He established the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, many sacrifices had to be made for all kinds of different problems. Under the New Covenant, Christ sacrificed Himself "once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). His singular sacrifice was efficacious enough to cover all sins for all time. We are still living under that New Covenant and the effects of Jesus' eternally atoning sacrifice.

### **A. The New Covenant Accomplished What the Old Covenant Only Symbolized**

The Old Covenant was never the end goal. The writer of Hebrews made it clear: the Law was a "shadow of good things to come,

and not the very image of the things” (Hebrews 10:1). The Law could never make people perfect. Instead, when the children of God regularly came forward to make sacrifices, their sins were rolled forward year after year, waiting for the ultimate sacrifice that could only come through the Messiah.

Ironically, when people still try to live by the Mosaic law, they submit themselves once again to slavery. Paul said when people only live by the Old Testament, it is as if they are living with a veil draped over their hearts (II Corinthians 3:14-15).

Thankfully, the veil over one’s heart does not have to be permanent. When sincere people turn their hearts over to the Lord, “the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Corinthians 3:16-17). When we receive the Holy Spirit that was poured out on the Day of Pentecost, we can experience the full liberty Christ desires for us.

### **B. I Will Believe in Jesus and Experience Deliverance from Sin**

The Pharisee Nicodemus was well versed in the law of Moses. When he came to Jesus secretly by night, he recognized immediately that Jesus was “a teacher come from God” (John 3:2). However, Jesus was more than just a special teacher; He was the Messiah. Jesus answered a question Nicodemus never asked and told him, “Except a man be born again . . . of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:3, 5). For all his knowledge and training, Nicodemus could not understand what Jesus was saying. Could there really be freedom from the constraints of the Law, which they had followed rigorously for thousands of years? Could there really be hope for the Messiah at this point in history?

Nicodemus seemed genuinely curious, so Jesus revealed to Nicodemus a part of His nature in the now-famous John 3:16-17. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” Jesus had not come to bring death. Jesus had not come to condemn. Jesus had not come to keep people in slavery. Jesus had come to bring freedom and life.

Each one of us has an opportunity today to choose Jesus and the life and freedom He offers. No longer must we be slaves to our situations. We can respond today and start the journey to receive all God desires for us. However, the impetus is on us to respond. God is a gentleman and will not force His grace and truth on anyone. He will wait patiently for us to choose Him. Let us not delay; let us choose Him now while we have the chance.

*What did you see and understand better after you received the Holy Spirit that you could not understand before?*

## INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

*A supplemental image is available in the Resource Kit. *

If you have ever seen an elephant perform in a circus or at a zoo, you might be amazed at the handler's ability to control the massive creature that might be one hundred times heavier than the trainer. The elephant will perform tricks and stunts with complete submission, even though the elephant could easily crush the trainer with one movement. However, the most impressive stunt is probably when the performance is over and the handler walks away. Sometimes the handler ties a small rope around the elephant's ankle and attaches the rope to a small stake in the ground, leaving the elephant for a long period of time. The elephant could easily break the rope or pull up the stake, but often it remains perfectly docile, not aware that freedom is just one choice away.

The reason for this is similar to the fable of the frog. When the elephant was an infant, the trainers attached large, heavy chains to the baby elephant's ankle so it could not break free. Eventually, the baby elephant stopped resisting. When the elephant gives up, the trainers no longer need the heavy chains but can lead it around with a small rope, no matter how large the elephant grows.

The brutal attacks of the enemy are designed to wear us down over time. They are designed to cause us to lose hope and give in to the lie that we are not strong enough to resist. The devil would like us to believe that the only option is bondage. In truth, we are not strong enough to break free based on our own strength alone. However, when we have Christ living inside of us, we become like the massive elephant, and the heavy chains that bound us become like weak ropes. We can now live a life free from sin and bondage. However, if we allow the tricks of the devil to deceive us into thinking we are still weak and powerless, we might still allow ourselves to remain in spiritual slavery.

Do not be like the frog who is comfortable in the boiling water, and do not be like the massive elephant being led around by a small rope. Receive Jesus Christ and claim your liberty in Him today.

### **Prayer Focus**

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- Pray for God to help you to know what spiritual atmosphere you are in and if He wants you to continue therein.
- Ask God to help you be and do what He wants you to as you grow stronger in your faith.