

Adult Christian LIFE



- Unit I– The Word: The Agent of Creation
- Unit II– The Great Hope of the Saints
- Unit III– God Calls Abraham’s Family

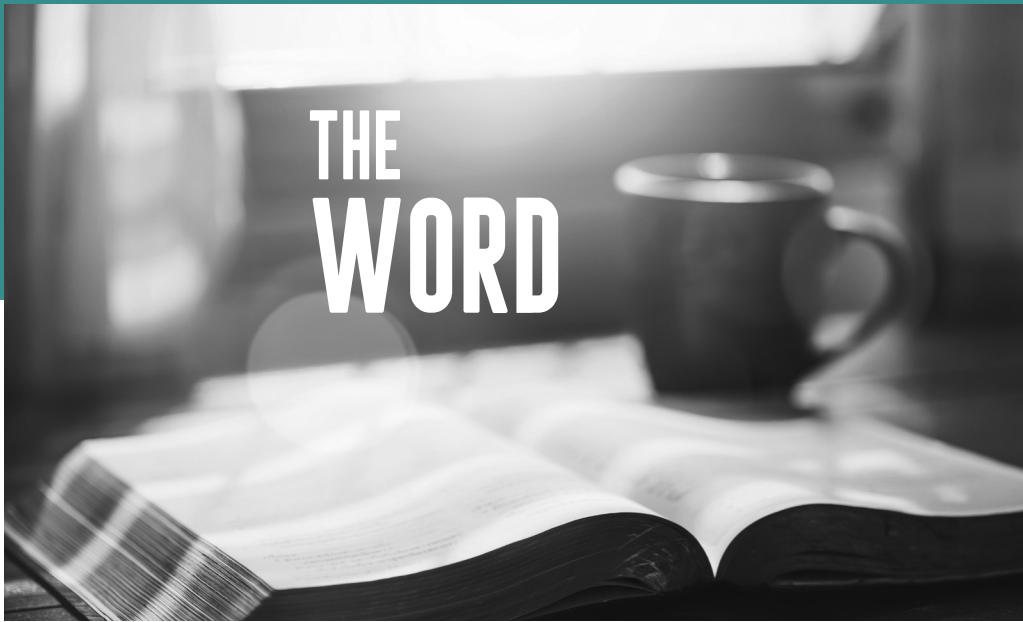
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Adult Christian LIFE

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Adult Christian Life contains Sunday school material for adult believers. The exposition of the Scripture, with life-centered insights, is preceded by an introduction to the lesson designed to help learners gain a greater understanding of the text under discussion relative to context, content, and meaning of life.

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INSIDE

ADULT CHRISTIAN LIFE

The *Adult Christian Life* quarterly has many features that appeal to adult students.

Printed Scripture Passage: The *King James Version* and the *New Revised Standard Version* are listed side by side so learners can compare traditional and contemporary translations of God's Word. The main thought verse is highlighted in bold text.

Suggested Opening Exercises: This feature, standard to all R.H. Boyd Publishing Corporation Sunday school quarterlies, remains popular among learners and leaders alike.

Quarterly Overview: This gives a general description of the lessons to be studied during the quarter.

Know It: Contextualizes the lesson and expands on its truths to stimulate additional questions, interest, or action on the part of the learners.

Remember It: Summary section that emphasizes the most relevant points of the lesson and highlights how the lesson applies to learners.

Hear It: An opportunity to listen to the relevant message of the lesson through music.

Live It: Suggestions for learners to take specific action to make the lesson a personal opportunity for spiritual enlightenment.

Share It: Suggestions for learners to spread the Bible truth learned through various mediums, such as social media or one-on-one talks.

Daily Devotional Readings: Daily Bible readings to prepare learners for the Sunday lesson experience.

Online Extras: Activities, quizzes, and additional resources for outside study via www.rhboyd.com.

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Suggested Opening Exercises

1. Usual Signal for Beginning
2. Prayer (Closing with the Lord's Prayer)
3. Singing (Song to be selected)
4. Scripture Reading:

1 Chronicles 16:8–15 (KJV)

Director: Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.

School: Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk ye of all his wondrous works.

Director: Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

School: Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.

Director: Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

School: O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

Director: He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

All: Be ye mindful always of his covenant; the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.

Recitation in Concert:

Philippians 1:2–8 (KJV)

2 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6 Being confident of this very

thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

CLOSING WORK

1. Singing

2. Sentences:

Proverbs 3:3–10 (KJV)

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

3. Dismissal with Prayer

THE REASON FOR IT ALL

BACKGROUND PASSAGE: JOHN 1:1–14

PRINT PASSAGE: JOHN 1:1–14

RESOURCES: *The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition,*
Boyd's Commentary for the Sunday School

KEY VERSE: All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. John 1:3, KJV

Intro

One of the tragic realities of being Black in America is having to accept that we are a stolen people. The roots of our true ancestry are scattered throughout the world. Beyond the context of industrialized slavery, there is no clear beginning for African Americans. Instead, ours is an origin born from the womb of oppression, subjugation, and unimaginable struggle. Because of this, the Black church became a surrogate for African American culture. As the oldest point of reference for what defines our sense of identity, the Black church served as an incubator for culture.

Like the ambiguity surrounding the nature of our heritage and original birthplace, the origin and nature of Jesus Christ was uncertain among many 1st century believers. For us, the question of Jesus' nature is a settled argument. He and God are one. Our confidence in Jesus' identity is affirmed by viewing His history through a 2,000 plus year old lens. However, during the time when this Gospel was written, the question of Jesus' nature was still in debate.

John wastes no time in addressing the question: "Who is Jesus Christ?" As a prologue of this introductory chapter, John presents Jesus as the Son of God whose beginning was with God. Everything that was ever made was made through Him; and without Him, nothing has ever been created. Jesus was the source of power in the original physical creation and in the spiritual creation by which people are brought to new life in Christ.

Think About It

For Black people, exploring the beginnings of Christ should inspire questions regarding our own beginnings. Like Jesus, the origin of Black people in America is complex and perhaps has distorted our sense of collective identity and heritage.

1. The True Nature of Jesus Christ (John 1:1–5)

King James Version

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

New Revised Standard Version

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being

4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Know It

Different than the other three Gospels, (written about twenty years earlier than the Gospel of John), this author opens with a dramatic and direct portrait of Jesus' origin and nature. Not content with being like the Gospel of Mark that opens with the testimony about Jesus from John the Baptist (Mark 1:1–8), or like Luke and Matthew that open with the genealogy of Jesus; this Gospel starts with in the beginning.

He features Jesus as being present with God in the beginning of all beginnings. It is not by coincidence that the opening phrase: “in the beginning”... in John 1:1, sounds like Genesis 1:1. Both serve as the backdrop of eternity, out of which God chooses to disclose His glory. With the words “let there be,” in Genesis 1:3, God reveals His glory to humanity in creation. But in John 1:1, His glory is revealed in humanity through incarnation. John introduces Jesus as the “Word” who was with God and equal to God. With this opening statement, John prompts his readers to imagine Jesus as more than the Messiah and instead as Christ. He is then the ultimate revelation of God in flesh. Jesus and God are one. John makes that point clearly and immediately.

The usage of “Word” (logos) has its basis in Greek philosophy. Much of Greek philosophy (which was quite popular at

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the time) centered on reason and rationality regarding the mysteries of existence and the universe. For them, the term “Word” was a designation that referred to ultimate wisdom.

Verses 2–3 reinforce the eternal nature of the Word/Jesus theme established in verse one. With the use of the personal pronoun “He,” the concept of the “Word” evolves from being the embodiment of divine revelation to the personification of it. Not only was He, the Word/Jesus, the ultimate revelation of God, “in the beginning with God...so was...all things...made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” Unlike the Gospel writers before him, John declares Jesus as co-creator with God. Many aspects of theology rests upon one’s understanding of God as the origin of all life and of the role Jesus Christ plays in creation.

John shifts focus, in verse 4, from Jesus being the Word to describing Him as the essence of life and light. As the Word, He is co-creator with God, and therefore the giver of physical life. As the Redeemer of humanity, He is the giver of spiritual life, and as Savior, Jesus guarantees eternal life. Life and light are two sides of the same coin, according to John. If the believer accepts Him as the Word, the mystery of Christ’s life will be made known through the light of His glory that shines in the spirit of the individual. Like the Word, the light of Christ is another expression of divine revelation. A revelation of God that contrasts the darkness of the world. Verse 5 confirms this when John writes that this...light shines in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it.

2. The Witness of John the Baptist (John 1:6–9)

King James Version

THERE was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

New Revised Standard Version

THERE was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.

8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

Verses 6–8 may seem like a departure from the theme espoused earlier in verses 1–5; it is not. It is in fact a necessary detail that reinforces the true nature of Jesus. In order for the Gospel writer to present Jesus’ nature in proper historical context, the “character” witness of John the Baptist must be included. Verse 7 makes clear his role and function. As the Word came to bring the heavenly Light to humanity, so John was sent from God to humanity to awaken their need for this heavenly Light.

The Gospel writer makes it clear in the following verse that though he was sent by God to bear witness of the Light, John the Baptist was not the Light. From the tone of the verse, it is likely that the followers of John the Baptist were still around claiming he was the Light, perhaps even up until the time this Gospel was penned. If so, this verse is aimed at rejecting any such possible consideration. From the author’s perspective, John the Baptist must never be categorized as the true Light. The contrast between Master and messenger must be clear for his readers, Jesus is the Word; John is the witness. Jesus is the Light and John is the bearer of that Light. As great as John was, he was only a forerunner.

3. The Word Becomes Flesh (John 1:10–14)

King James Version

HE was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

New Revised Standard Version

HE was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him.

11 He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

12 But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God,

13 who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

NOTES:

The focus of the Gospel returns to the nature of Jesus as the true Light in verse 9. This is a different expression of the divine than that in verses 4–5. According to the author, Jesus as the true Light establishes Him as the source of all other light (or enlightenment). The theme shifts again in verses 10–13, unveiling the ultimate dilemma of and remedy for humanity. Jesus was in the world. A world that He created, but did not know Him. He came to His own people and even they rejected Him. But for those who received Him by believing in His name, Jesus gave the right to become children of God. Verse 13 establishes how God’s children are connected to God. The author shares, they are reborn not of blood nor of merit or by one’s own accord but of God. This introduces the theological concept of being born into the family of God. This notion is expanded in the 3rd chapter as Nicodemus comes to visit Jesus at night. To be born again or from above is that which gains one entrance into the family of God. John previews this in the prologue but more fully explains to Nicodemus as Jesus says, “Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’” (3:7) To be born again is to be born of and through the Spirit who gives believers the right to become and behave as children of God.

John, the Gospel writer, reaches his thematic climax in verse 14 when he announces that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The incarnation of God in the flesh is the greatest manifestation of His glory, even beyond creation. Being fully God and Man, Jesus is also the only begotten son of the Father, making Him the ultimate example for believers as to how the child of God is to live their life in God’s will, through grace and truth. This passage points to one of the theological concepts that stumped believers and non-believers since the inception of Christianity. How is it that Jesus is both God and human. Theologically speaking, we can refer to this as the enfleshment of God, wherein God wrapped Himself in human flesh but remained God, perfect and sinless. As much as we want clarity on this issue, it is a mystery. Jesus is both God and human and that requires faith more than proof. Even as a truth, it is something that cannot be proved rather we believe that God took the form of a human being to deliver humanity from the darkness of the world. We hold to faith that Jesus is the Light, the incarnation of God.

Remember It

To appreciate the fullness of Jesus’ true identity and nature, one would only have to consider verses 1–14 of John 1. Reading these verses together, makes clear who Jesus was, is and has always been, for the believer. His story did not begin in the manger of Bethlehem, but in eternity where the glory of His majesty is too lofty for our finite minds to comprehend. Yet, God, in all His grace and love, fills this gulf of separation by putting His presence in reach. He incarnated one who has made Himself as one of us in order to save all of us.



Share It • Live It • Hear It

To emphasize the hymn theme that Christ is the reason for all things, listen to the hymn “Come Thou Almighty King.” Pay attention to the lyrics in the 2nd second stanza of the hymn.



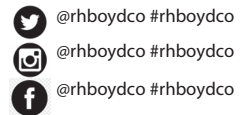
When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us as one of us, the mysteries of God were made known in the hearts of believers. This is because the life Christ lived on earth was the purest example of God’s will. As we strive to be like Christ, we should aspire to personify His word in us.



Accepting Christ as our Savior means living in the light of His glory. In addition to being the Word that was with God and is God, Jesus is also the Light that brings light to the heart of the believer. To live our lives in that light, one must allow that light to illuminate our path and order our steps as we walk in a world shrouded in darkness.

Get Social

Christ became flesh but it was through Him that all things came to be. How does that help to give you the assurance that God is able to do all things for you and in your life? Share your views and tag us @rhboydco and use #rhboydco.



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Devotional Readings for July 4–10, 2022

DDR

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Jesus Reveals His Glory	O Lord, Heal Me!	Jesus Heals a Centurion’s Servant	Jesus Heals a Paralyzed Man	Jesus Heals a Blind Man	God Heals Their Infirmities	Jesus Heals a Royal Official’s Son
John 2:1–11	Psalms 6	Matthew 8:5–13	John 5:1–9	John 9:1–7	Psalms 41	John 4:46–54

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ROSA PARKS BEYOND THE BUS: Life, Lessons, and Leadership

H. H. LEONARDS

Rosa Parks Beyond the Bus: Life, Lessons, and Leadership is a collection of inspiring and instructive memories compiled from the decade that author H. H. Leonards opened her Washington, DC residence to Mrs. Parks as her home away from home.

During those years, H. H. Leonards was able to know the heart, mind, and spirit of the woman who refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama city bus on December 1, 1955.

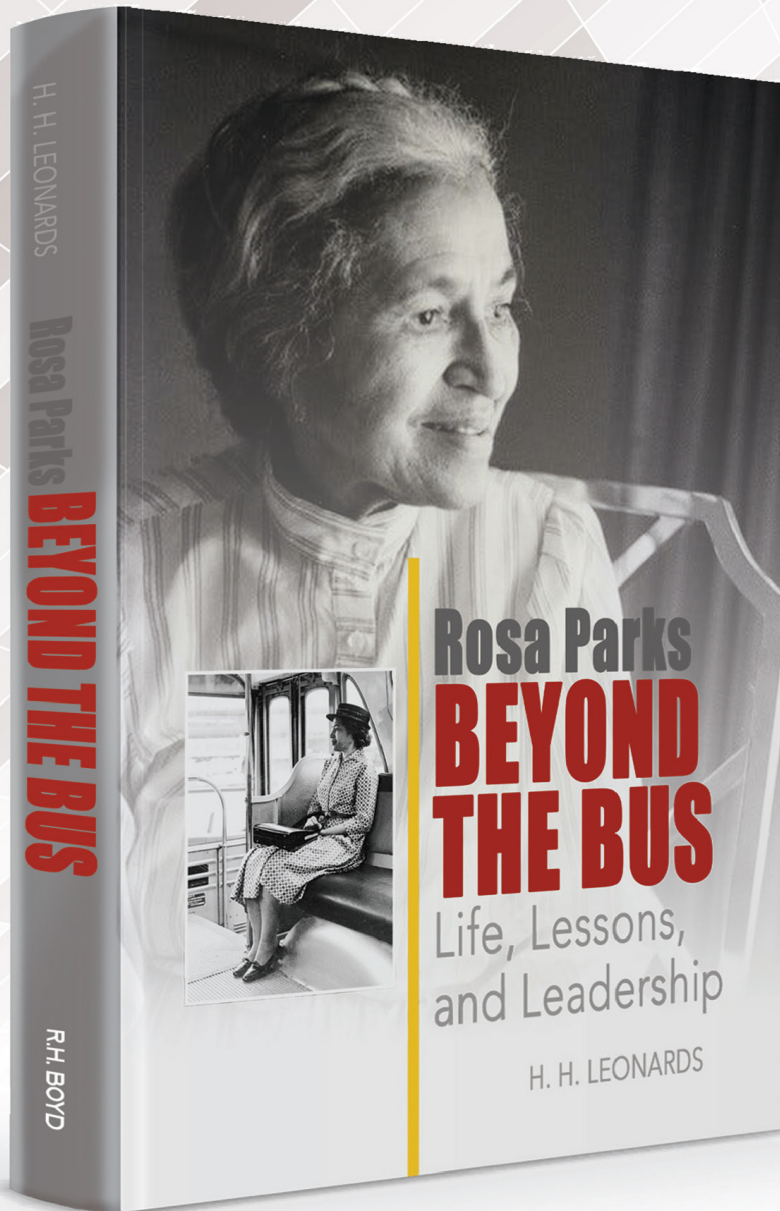
The author uses the book as a forum to share her remembrances, both delightful and somber, in a way that offers readers an intimate and personal glimpse into the personhood of Mrs. Parks.

Rosa Parks Beyond the Bus is a personal look into Mrs. Parks' life, her thoughts, her beliefs, and her immense wisdom that moved people—from world leaders Nelson Mandela, Deepak Chopra, and Pope John Paul II—to the smallest of children to seek and revere her presence.

"I want this book to touch people's souls because that's what Mrs. Parks did for me. She touched my soul."

H. H. Leonards

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Author **H. H. Leonards** is founder and chair of the Mansion on O Street and the O Street Museum Foundation, headquartered in Washington, DC. She is a wife, mother of three, and friend to celebrities and everyday people alike. The Purdue University alumna established The Mansion in 1980 to provide a unique and eclectic forum where clients learn from one another and foster the development of diversity, the creative process, and the human spirit.

