

Understanding Biblical Doctrine

A Workbook in Theology

*As a result, we are no longer to be children,
tossed here and there by waves and carried
about by every wind of doctrine...*

Ephesians 4:14



LEADER'S GUIDE



Understanding Biblical Doctrine

A Workbook in Theology
Leader's Supplement



Crown & Covenant
PUBLICATIONS

7408 Penn Ave. Pittsburgh Pa. 15208

© 1978, 2000, 2005, 2010

Available from

Crown & Covenant Publications

7408 Penn Avenue

Pittsburgh PA 15208-2531

412-241-0436, Fax: 412-731-8861

info@crowncovenant.com

crowncovenant.com

General Guidelines

General Guidelines

Stimulating interest

A leader's own love for an understanding of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith will determine the enthusiasm and interest of the group. You are strongly urged to examine the collateral readings and to build up a personal library of significant Reformed theological works. At the very least, have copies of the Westminster standards, Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*, and Williamson's *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. (Crown & Covenant Publications publishes *The Westminster Confession*, its modern language revision, and the *Reformed Presbyterian Testimony* in parallel columns.) The foreword on pages 3-4 in the handbook should be read by the leader.

Pitfalls to avoid

- a. *Assuming too much*. Don't assume that the learner who has a considerable number of biblical facts at his command is automatically able to put them into a consistent theological system.
- b. *Antagonizing the learner*. Encourage self-expression and questions. And, in response, speak the truth in love.
- c. *Improper pacing*. Be sensitive to the needs and learning levels of each group. Some lessons may take several sessions to complete.
- d. *Going off on tangents*. Avoid expression of insignificant "pet peeves" and aim to give a balanced awareness of major doctrines.
- e. *Answering too much too soon*. Keep discussion to the specific matter at hand, and encourage eager students to hold off on issues that will be discussed at a later time.

Suggested class procedure

The normal presentation should include a balance between the teacher's broadening and structuring the subject matter in the workbook, and the student's own expression of what he has learned from answering the questions dealing with specific passages. There is value in going over all of the specific questions asked in the manual and making running comment upon them. Certain areas will require considerable elaboration beyond the workbook, whereas others can be dealt with more directly.

Normally it would be wise to present a block of material as a leader drawing upon student answers to specific questions in the workbook, and then to engage in further discussion when it appears that the basic doctrinal concepts are clear to the whole group. In every case it is imperative to encourage students to prepare beforehand by answering the specific workbook questions.

Sections in the workbook entitled “Do You Think That” are given at the beginning of certain lessons merely to stimulate interest. These are *not* to be viewed as true or false propositions. Rather, the leader is to use them only in so far as students may refer to them in terms of some specific matter they raise in their minds.

Sections entitled “For Discussion” should be used at your discretion. You must determine the level of understanding of which your group is capable. At the same time, be prepared to give efficient answers to any such questions as they may arise from the group.

Each lesson calls for reading that exposes the student to a credal statement of the doctrines under the section. Students should be encouraged to read these brief but precise doctrinal formulations. You may adapt them to come into line with your own denominational doctrinal standards.

Likewise, the section at the beginning of each lesson entitled “Memorize” seeks to single out key Scripture references and certain questions from the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* that would be profitable for the student to commit to memory. Don’t overlook this matter, but determine what is the best course for the group you are instructing. Adults as well as children can and do profit from direct memory exercises.

Applying doctrine to life

Keeping in mind the basic position set down in the “Before We Start” section, be alert to specific ways that individual doctrines as they are studied apply to the student’s personal spiritual development. For example, to teach the lesson on the plan of salvation without encouraging expressions from the group of how much the grace of God means to them makes these precious truths null and void. Likewise, a lesson on the nature of God that does not lead the group to rejoice in the glory of His person can only be labeled a miserable failure.

Prayer and appropriate praise are eminently suitable complements to the faithful teaching of the doctrines of Scripture. The leader who simply “wins an argument” or “proves a point” has not faithfully instructed others in the Word of God. We recommend J. R. Miller, *The Devotional Life of the Sunday School Teacher* (Solid Ground Christian Books), 110 pp.

Revelation & Inspiration

Lesson Approach

In the “What Do You Think About the Bible?” section (p. 5), the student is encouraged to look at some of the current ideas concerning Scripture, and to see how he reacts. Without passing any judgment at the time, it may help you at the beginning of the lesson to find out on each question how many have answered one way and how many the other. Avoid, however, trying to answer at this time questions that are raised by the group, even those questions that may supposedly deal with so simple a matter as the meaning of the wording in the questions. Instead, after getting some idea of what the group says it believes, proceed to a clear presentation of the biblical doctrine of revelation and inspiration, and employ student answers to the specific passages raised in the manual. After the presentation, it would then be wise to go over the section “Choose the Best Answer” (p. 6) and to show why there is only one genuinely accurate answer to each of the five questions. (Answers: 1-b, 2-b, 3-a, 4-c, 5-b)

Revelation (pp. 6-7)

God reveals Himself in His creation.

1. a. glory of God
b. knowledge
c. everywhere in the world
2. a. hold the truth in unrighteousness
b. by His creation, the things which He made
c. His eternal power and Godhead
d. we have no excuse for denying God

God has revealed Himself:

1. e
2. b
3. g
4. f
5. a
6. h
7. d
8. c

The Authority of Scripture

(pp. 8-9)

The Bible is inspired by God.

1. a. to make a person wise unto salvation through Christ
b. by inspiration (in-breathing)
c. for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness
2. a. the will of man
b. holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit

The Bible has full authority as God's Word.

1. truth
2. holy
3. not to be destroyed or broken
4. that it was truly the Word of God

The Bible is sufficient as the only rule of faith and life.

1. a. adding to God's words
b. reproof, called a liar
2. a. adding to Scripture
b. subtracting from Scripture

The Bible is self-authenticating.

1. perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, righteous
2. converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes

The Bible is life-changing.

increases desire for the Word of God, warns about danger, brings great reward

Specific notes

p. 7 Matching Exercise—No. 1

If questions arise on God's being a body, delay discussion on His nature as pure spirit until the next lesson.

p. 10 For Discussion

There is no attempt at this point to introduce the subject of how the Scriptures came to us and how we are able to determine what is and is not a truly canonical book of the Bible.

Lesson 1 notes:

The Nature of God

Lesson Approach

As in Lesson 1, the “What Do You Think About...” section (p.11) is given to stimulate interest. It should be handled as suggested in the notes on Lesson Approach for Lesson 1. There is need to personalize this lesson in such a way that the student avoids merely receiving a dictionary definition of the nature of God. It would be helpful to dwell on the Trinity, but it is equally important to have students rejoice in the fullness of God’s person. Particular areas such as those dealing with the Angel of the Lord and physical descriptions of God found in Scripture may require additional study on your part. The “For Discussion” section (p. 15) should be helpful at this point. By the end of the lesson the student should have been challenged to see that his view of God colors all his thoughts and behaviors.

The Nature (essence) of God (pp. 12-14)

God is a pure spirit.

1. He is a spirit
2. does not dwell in temples made with hands

God is a personal being.

1. good and upright
2. love

God is a triune being.

1. a. as a Spirit—as “us”
 - b. 1) has seen God face to face
 - 2) redeemed him from all evil
- c. 1) a) Lord, his anointed
- b) Father-Son
- c) put one’s trust in Him
- d) the Son; no
- 2) a) Lord, my Lord (Christ)
- b) He is a priest after Melchizedek

2. a. Spirit of God like a dove, Father speaks from heaven, Christ is baptized
- b. in the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit
- c. Lord Jesus Christ, God, Holy Spirit

The Attributes (characteristics) of God (p. 14)

Incommunicable

1. Isa. 40:18
2. Jas. 1:17
3. Ps. 139:7-10
4. Deut. 6:4

Communicable

1. 1 Sam. 2:3
2. 1 Cor. 2:7
3. Rom. 11:22
4. John 3:16
5. Isa. 6:5
6. Ps. 7:9
7. Ps. 31:5
8. Dan. 4:35
9. Matt. 19:26

Lesson 2 notes:

Man's Origin & Nature

Lesson Approach

A "Who Do You Think You Are?" section is provided (p. 16). Care should be exercised to see that this lesson does not break down into needless argumentation over creation and/or evolution. Steer a clear, positive, biblical presentation. Particular attention should be given to going over the definitions given in the workbook itself. Be thoroughly familiar with this material. The significance of the relationship between the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:28 and the Great Commission should be carefully understood. The lesson should end on a triumphant note akin to that expressed by the psalmist in Psalm 8, and at the same time, tempered by his confession of sin as seen in Psalm 51.

Note: There is a very real possibility that this lesson should be divided into two or more sections.

The Creation of the World

(pp. 17-19)

The universe was originally formed by God's direct act, out of nothing.

1. God's word and breath
2. things which do appear

While those who accept the authority of the Bible commonly agree that God sovereignly made the world out of nothing, there are many different views concerning the exact meaning of the "days of creation" in Genesis 1.

2. b. as long as it took God to create the world
 - c. period of time or era
 - d. one day is as a thousand years
3. b. 1) "And the evening and the morning were"
 - 2) 1—day/night

2—heavens/waters

3—earth/seas

4—sun, moon, stars

5—birds/fish

6—man/beast

lights to rule the day and night
living things for the water and sky

Man as Created by God (pp. 19-21)

God directly formed man as a living being.

1. dust of the ground
2. no

Man as originally created by God bore His image in knowledge, righteousness and holiness.

1. in His image
2. it was very good

3. renewed in knowledge after the image of the Creator
4. created in righteousness and true holiness
5. after the similitude (image) of God; yes

Man was given dominion over the rest of creation.

1. multiply, subdue the earth
2. he has dominion over it
3. Christ is head over all creation

The Fall of Man (p. 21)

The events in the Garden of Eden

1. not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
2. you shall not surely die

3. you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil
4. hid themselves from the presence of God
5.
 - a. cursed above every beast, crawl on belly, eat dust
 - b. pain in childbirth, under husband's rule
 - c. ground cursed, must eat of it in sorrow

The Relationship of Adam to Humanity (p. 22)

1. Adam
2. sin and death
3. death
4. sinned
are conceived in sin
dead in trespasses and sin

Lesson 3 notes:

The Person & Work of Jesus Christ

Lesson Approach

In preparation for this lesson, acquaint yourself with a discussion of the nature and work of Christ such as that found in Berkhof's *Systematic Theology*. Read carefully the definitions in the student's workbook in order to understand and defend them. The eighth chapter of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is a sublime and thoroughly accurate summary of the doctrines to be studied in this lesson. Double-check to see that you are able to answer the six discussion questions, since it is likely that they may be asked by the group.

The Person of Jesus Christ

(pp. 24-27)

Jesus Christ is truly God.

1. His name is the mighty God, the everlasting Father
2. The Lord Our Righteousness
3. all that are God's are Christ's
4. in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily

Jesus Christ is also truly man, but without sin as the Second Adam.

1. weariness
2. in the flesh
3. without sin (as Adam was originally)
4.
 - a. Jesus Christ
 - b. of the earth
 - c. the Lord from heaven

Jesus Christ is revealed in Scripture as existing in different conditions or states.

1.
 - a. His Son
 - b. was God, was in the beginning and all things were made by Him

2.
 - a.
 - 1) was made flesh
 - 2) made of a woman, made under the law
 - 3) conceived by the Holy Spirit and virgin born
 - b.
 - 1) obedience
 - 2) for us
 - c.
 - 1) to make intercession for the transgressors
 - 2) He is made a curse for us
 - d.
 - 1) with the rich
 - 2) buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man
3.
 - a.
 - 1) His soul is not left in hell, He will not see corruption
 - 2) confess Christ with mouth, believe in His resurrection
 - b.
 - 1) taken up in a cloud
 - 2) ascend unto the Father
 - c.
 - 1) in heaven at the right hand of God
 - 2) believers
 - d.
 - 1) Christ will return as He went into heaven
 - 2) for judgment

Christ's Threefold Work

(pp. 28-29)

Christ is our *Prophet*, who reveals God and His truth to us.

1. God will raise up a prophet like Moses from the people (*Note*: the reference should be Deut. 18:15)
2. speaks what has been taught by the Father

Christ is our *Priest*, who as our Mediator both offers the sacrifice of Himself for us and makes intercession for us.

1. priest after the order of Melchizedek
2. one mediator between God and man
3. bear our sins in His own body
4. makes intercession for us

Christ as our *King* rules as Head of His Church now and eternally over all present and future creation.

1. establish the kingdom forever
2. not of this world
3. head over all things

Lesson 4 notes:

The Holy Spirit

Lesson Approach

Much of the discussion in this area will depend upon what extent students have been exposed to the modern charismatic movement. Again, present a straightforward biblical picture of who the Spirit is and what He does. Careful attention should be given to the workbook exercises that stress the extensiveness of His activity. Do not let valuable time be wasted upon needless debate over minor matters. The question of the “unpardonable sin” raised in the “For Discussion” section (p. 33) should also be studied beforehand, but not necessarily introduced to the group. Whether or not this lesson may be covered in one session again centers on what exposure the group has had to the current charismatic movement. Where helpful, provide information and biblical evaluation of charismatic groups known to the students.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

(pp. 30-34)

He is revealed to us in Scripture as possessing the attributes of personality.

1. grief
2. teach believers

The Spirit is revealed to us as the third Person of the Trinity. . .

1. Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ
2. Father, Son (Christ), Holy Ghost

The Work of the Holy Spirit

(pp. 31-32)

The Spirit works in behalf of all creation.

1. Gen. 1:2
2. Job 33:4
3. Job 32:8

4. Ex. 31:2-3, 5
5. Rom. 2:14-15
6. Ps. 145:9

The Spirit also works specifically in behalf of God’s elect.

1. 2 Pet. 1:21
2. a. John 16:8
b. John 3:5, 8
c. John 16:13
d. John 14:16
e. 2 Thess. 2:13
f. 1 John 3:24
g. Rom. 8:26
h. Rom 8:11
3. 1 Cor. 12:1-7

The Spirit in the Life of the Believer (pp. 32-33)

All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at all times.

1. Spirit of Christ

2. those who are led by the Spirit
3. He dwells in them

The Holy Spirit enters the believer's life at the time of his rebirth.

1. born again, born of the Spirit
2. John's was with water, Jesus' with the Spirit
3. had not yet trusted Christ as the Messiah
4. when they first believed by faith

The believer is always to seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit for powerful service and growth in grace, but this fullness can be diminished by the believer's neglect and sins.

1. receive sight, be filled with the Holy Spirit
2. be filled with the Spirit
3. quenching the Spirit

Lesson 5 notes:

Plan of Salvation (Part I)

Lesson Approach

The spirit in which you present Calvinism is all-important. You must first have a deep personal appreciation of the doctrines of grace as they apply to your own salvation. It is not at all unfitting for you to share with the group how you have come to rejoice not only in the fact of salvation, but also in the way in which God has sovereignly chosen to save those whom He has called to Himself. Seek to convey this appreciation of grace to your students. It is likely that some who are unacquainted with Calvinism will want to be argumentative. There may be strong emotional reactions to the doctrines presented. Be careful to guide the group *step-by-step*. Do not display judgmental attitudes toward students not yet in sympathy with what you are saying. It is highly recommended that you stick closely to the student workbook and delay answering questions on some aspects of Calvinism that remain to be presented as part of the whole doctrine of sovereign grace in salvation. The purchase of Steele and Thomas' book mentioned in the pupil's "Digging Deeper" (p. 38) is highly recommended. Loraine Boettner's *Reformed Doctrine of Predestination* is also widely used and available.

Total Depravity (pp. 34-35)

Sin defiles man's total personality.

1. please God
2. from the heart
3. love sin

Sin enslaves man.

1. servants of sin
2. Satan

Sin reigns over all men.

1. lies in wickedness
2. one who is just, does good, and sins not
3. does not understand, does not seek after God, does no good

Sinners have neither the desire nor the ability to be saved.

1. unable to do good of oneself
2. Father must draw him
3. ability to come to Christ must be given him of the Father

Unconditional Election (pp. 35-37)

God selects some and rejects others.

1. called according to His purpose
2. elect of God
3. few are chosen

God's electing act took place in eternity.

1. from before foundation of world
2. before the world was created

God's choice of His people does not rest upon foreseen merit in those whom He elects.

1. a. before birth
b. purpose of God according to election might stand
2. a. willing and running (desire and activity)
b. God's mercy

Good works are the result and proof of election, not the grounds for it.

1. unto good works
2. has ordained that we should do them

Even faith is a result of God's electing grace, not the cause of it.

1. not of ourselves (our own doing) but a gift of God
2. believe through grace

God alone determines those to whom He will give the gift of salvation.

1. "will show mercy on whom I will show mercy"
2. those to whom He wills to show it
3. good pleasure of His will

Exercise:

1. Stress that man's wisdom is not God's, and that our understanding of God's purposes is limited. Stress also that Scripture clearly states the fact of God's election is true and that we are to humble ourselves before this fact.
2. Stress that whereas salvation is all of grace, the man who is saved *must* respond to salvation, because the very nature of salvation is to produce a changed life, making one a new creature in Christ Jesus. We cannot do anything to earn salvation, but we are called upon to do all things to the glory of God as the *proof* that we possess God's marvelous gift of salvation.
3. Stress the fact that fatalism has nothing in common with the personal power and love of our great God. Be sure that students understand that His "good pleasure" is the infinite and all-wise activity of a gracious God, not some fickle whim of irrational Fate.

Specific notes

p. 38—For Discussion

These discussion questions are geared to introducing the concepts of common grace and double predestination. Care should be taken to see that the questions of the group are answered, but at the same time be careful not to "overfeed the sheep."

Lesson 6 notes:

Plan of Salvation (Part 2)

Lesson Approach

Review the remarks made in this supplement regarding Lesson 6. Be adequately prepared to broaden the students' understanding of the specific passages quoted in the workbook, and to lead them in a deeper spiritual appreciation of these specific portions of the Word of God. Work step by step. Although discussion of the believer's personal assurance of salvation does not technically come under the five points of Calvinism, it is presented here in the section "For Further Study" (p. 43-44), and you should be prepared to answer such questions as might arise.

Limited Atonement (pp. 39-40)

Christ's death was a substitutionary act.

1. bore our sins in His body
2. ransom for many
3. iniquities of God's people

Christ's death guarantees complete salvation for all He planned to save.

1. to redeem us from iniquity
2. reconciled to God
3. eternal redemption

Christ's atoning death applies specifically to the elect.

1. His people
2. His sheep
3. many
4. church of God
5. those who are called

Irresistible Grace (pp. 40-41)

The free offer of the gospel is to be extended to all men: We cannot determine who are the elect.

1. all nations
2. them that dwell on the earth (as nations)

There will be those who do not respond in faith to the gospel offer.

1. not seeing or hearing
2. stumbling block (offends them) or foolishness (insults intellect)

In order for a man who is dead in sin to respond to the gospel, the Holy Spirit must first work in his heart, through the Word.

1. regeneration and renewal
2. to know the things freely given us by God
3. new creatures (creations) in Christ
4. opened her heart
5. Word of God

The special inward call of the Holy Spirit always results in the conversion of those to whom it is made.

1. justifies, sanctifies, glorifies
2. out of darkness, into light

Perseverance of the Saints

(pp. 41-43)

The new life given to believers is eternal, not temporary or subject to loss.

1. a. everlasting
b. departing from Him
2. a. everlasting life
b. condemnation (damnation)

Our security (perseverance) rests on God's work, not our own merits.

1. a. cast him out
b. none the Father gives Christ are lost
c. shall be raised up at the last day
2. a. never perish
b. pluck them from the Father's hand
3. love of Christ

Although our eternal security does not rest upon our good works, our works are one proof that we are eternally saved.

1. by their fruits (works)
2. those who keep His commandments

There will be certain individuals who think they are Christians who are not actually saved.

1. one who does the will of the Father
"depart from me, I never knew you"
2. those who do not abide in Christ

For Further Study (pp. 43-44)

The "all" passages.

2. all non-believers in a general sense
3. Jews in general
4. yes
5. yes
6. no; gospel offer is to all men

The "world" passages.

1. only nation of Israel
2. no; many nations were not Roman subjects
3. no, Pharisees did not go "after" him
4. power of sin is restrained by Christians being a salt and light in the world
5. no

God's "will" to save us.

1. revealed—expressed law for finite men; secret—sovereign purpose carried out in all His creation
2. no
3. general revealed plan

What are the three elements necessary for assurance of salvation?

1. knowledge of gospel
2. love for one another as expressed in commandment keeping
3. inner testimony of Holy Spirit

Lesson 7 notes:

The Christian Life (Part I)

Lesson Approach

The focus of this lesson is to be upon the relation of the Christian to the Law of God. The matter of the nature of sin in the life of the Christian is reserved for the following lesson. While it may seem repetitive to go over the nature of the commandments in some groups who have had considerable study of what is involved in the Moral Law, it would be wise to see that all Ten Commandments are merely summary statements or examples that open up discussion of all the moral implications of certain types of action. (The *Catechism* sections on the Ten Commandments are particularly useful here.) Even more important, however, is the absolute necessity of knowing that each student understands the relation of the Law of God to his personal salvation. A full discussion should be held on what is legalism and how it shows up in Christians and the church today.

Avoid needless, nit-picking discussion of minor applications of specific commandments. You may well ask to talk to individuals raising such questions at a time outside of class. Then, see that you do this and are prepared to give thorough and biblical answers. Care should be taken to see that there is a balanced presentation of the whole Law of God, not overemphasis on one or two aspects. It is particularly important to have the group understand that violations of the first four commandments are every bit as serious as violations of the last six. Encourage the group to avoid judgmentalism in weighing the moral violations of others.

The “For Discussion” section (p. 49) should be used in terms of the group’s ability and knowledge to deal with the difficult matters it raises. In some instances you may simply prefer to include answers to these matters by way of lecture. In others you may want to open them up to the group. In any event these issues *should be discussed* and biblical answers provided. Charles Hodge, the Princeton theologian, once remarked that the “milk of the word” is never to be a deliberate hiding of truth from a learner. Instead he insists that “the milk” is simply “the meat” put in a simple and direct form that will make it equally nourishing to those of yet limited understanding. So are we to teach the doctrines of the Word, telling the whole truth but in a form that is suited to the audience.

The Christian and the Moral Law (pp. 46-49)

The Law was given to display God's holiness, and to bring man under conviction of sin as he views himself in the light of God's righteous demands.

1. holy, just, good
2. knowledge of sin
3. brings us to Christ

A man is unable to earn his salvation by keeping the Law perfectly because of his sinful nature.

1. guilty of breaking the whole law if you break one part
2. justification in God's sight
3. the grace of God which brings redemption in Christ
4. not under the law; under grace

The Moral Law, however, is to be obeyed by believers as the evidence and fruit of salvation, not the means of it.

1. we establish it
2. created unto good works in Christ Jesus
3. if we keep His commandments

The Moral Law, which is summarized in the Ten Commandments, is the standard for believers' conduct in every age.

1. see *Shorter Catechism*
2. love the Lord your God; love your neighbor as yourself—all of what the law and prophets (i.e. Old Testament) say can be summarized in these two commandments

The Christian is morally responsible for the effect of his actions upon fellow believers.

1.
 - a. putting a stumbling block before a fellow Christian
 - b. "occasion to fall" into sin
 - c. offended so as to be led into sin oneself—they do not walk in love and destroy their brother
 - d. forego one's personal liberty in order to aid (please) the weaker brother for his good and edification
2.
 - a. sinned against Christ
 - b. do nothing that offends my brother (leads into sin)

Lesson 8 notes:

The Christian Life (Part 2)

Lesson Approach

While the workbook exercises are relatively short in this lesson, there is a great deal involved in understanding the matter of indwelling sin in the life of the Christian. Stick closely to the step-by-step presentation and give special attention to the explanatory notes in the workbook. Read the comments of John Murray on Romans 6 and 7 in *The Epistle to the Romans* (Eerdmans, 1997).

In this lesson it would be good to go over each of the discussion questions (p. 53) in some detail as they bear directly upon the lives of the group. For example, the last question opens up discussion of the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Be prepared to go into the depth of answer necessary to meet the needs of the group. At all times it is necessary to be on top of the discussion to see that it does not veer off into pointless bickering. The triumphant note of victory over sin through the imputed righteousness of Christ should ring out clearly the whole lesson time. Christians in the group should again be encouraged to share their personal experiences of victory over sin.

The Christian and Indwelling Sin (pp. 50-52)

When a person is regenerated by the Holy Spirit he receives a new nature.

1. we are new creatures, the old has passed away
2. give us a new heart and a new spirit

The old nature is destroyed when a person is regenerated.

1. has been crucified with Christ
2. the old man has been put off and the new man put on

Because sin is no longer the nature of the Christian, he now is able to have victory over sin.

1. to reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God; not to let sin reign in our bodies
2. seek things above; mortify earthly desires; do not lie to each other
3. because he is born of God and he who sins is of the devil

In this life, however, the believer is not removed from all possibility of falling into sin.

1. we deceive ourselves if we say we have no sin; the truth is not in us; present
2. a. he wants to do good, but finds himself doing evil

- b. sin in him does what he doesn't want to do
- c. evil is present with him
- d. believer
- e. law of sin in his members (body)

The Christian has victory over sin by claiming Christ's righteousness through faith.

1. we have an advocate—Jesus Christ
2. blood of Jesus Christ
3. by confessing our sins
4. we are not tempted any differently than other men. God will not let us be tempted beyond our ability to cope, but will provide a way of escape.
5. Christ lives in him

Lesson 9 notes:

The Church

Lesson Approach

From the outset seek to present a high view of the Church as the Body of Christ, which He paid for with His own shed blood. If copies of the titles in the “Digging Deeper” (p. 59) in the workbook are not available, the leader should do other outside reading. In any event, approach the class with a full, positive, biblical understanding of the nature of the Church. The workbook’s brief presentation of what are traditionally known as the attributes and marks of the Church should prove helpful. These should not be passed over in order to get to the matter of the biblical warrant for Presbyterianism.

Acquaint yourself with the historical material on pages 60-61 of the workbook. Study the chart of Presbyterian denominations and be prepared to answer factual questions from the group. Class time should also be provided for sharing the practical values of Presbyterianism over other forms of church government.

The Church Described (pp. 54-56)

Various titles ascribed to her by Scripture

1. flock, church of God
2. His body
3. Zion
4. spiritual house, holy priesthood
5. holy city, new Jerusalem

The Attributes of the Church (internal character)

1.
 - a. He will bring them into the one fold with one shepherd
 - b. that all believers may be one
 - c. body, Spirit, hope of calling, Lord, faith, baptism, God and Father
2.
 - a. kingdom of priests, holy nation
 - b. chosen generation, *royal* priesthood, holy nation, peculiar people

3.
 - a. the heathen for His inheritance
 - b. great multitude from all nations

The Marks of the Church (external characteristics)

1.
 - a. preach sound doctrine
 - b. divide the word of truth
2.
 - a. in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
 - b. examine himself so as not to eat unworthily
 - c. not to eat with them
3.
 - a. put him away—excommunicate
 - b. tell him personally in private; take one or two others as witnesses; tell it to the church (officially)

The Government of the Church (pp. 56-58)

Christ is the Sovereign Ruler of the Church.

1. He is the head over all things concerning it
2. He is the vine; the Church is the branches

Christ rules today through the ordained officers of His Church.

1.
 - a. elder; bishop
 - b. elders of the Church—elders were ordained in every church
 - c. both kinds rule; in addition one kind labors especially in the Word and doctrine
 - d. willingly and of a ready mind
blameless (P)
husband of one wife (S)
vigilant (P)
sober (P)
of good behavior (P)
given to hospitality (S)
apt to teach (O)
not given to wine (P)
no striker (S)
not greedy of filthy lucre (P)
patient (P)
not a brawler (S)
not covetous (P)
rules well his house (S)
not a novice (O)
good report of others (S)
(Whether or not some of these are personal, social, or official is debatable. Do not overemphasize.)
2.
 - a. to serve the tables; see to the widows

- b. receive commission by laying on of hands (ordination)
- c. grave (P)
not double-tongued (P)
not given to wine (P)
not greedy of filthy lucre (P)
holds faith in pure conscience (P)
be proven (O)
blameless (P)
husband of one wife (S)
rules well own house and family (S)
(These are also debatable.)

The biblical pattern of church government is the system of higher (broader) and lower (local) courts known as presbyterianism.

1. whether circumcision was necessary for salvation
2. sect of Christians who were also Pharisees/ Paul and Barnabas (v. 5)
3. by coming together of apostles and elders to consider the matter (v. 6)
4. apostles, elders, assembly of believers present at Jerusalem (v. 22)
5. by letter
6. authority does not reside in one individual; Presbyterianism is a representative system; church court may decide, in the Lord, matters that pertain to the whole body of believers.

Lesson 10 notes:



The Sacraments (Part I)

Lesson Approach

It is not unlikely that there will be some discussion on the matter of infant baptism. Unnecessary debate may possibly be circumvented by slowly explaining the argument for infant baptism as it is outlined in the workbook. The practical issues raised by the “How Do You Understand Baptism?” section (pp. 62-63) should be dealt with in the course of the presentation.

Baptism (pp. 63-66)

Jesus initiated it for His Church in all ages.

1. baptizing those who believe
2. repentance, baptism

Baptism is a sign and seal of the inward work of the Holy Spirit.

3.
 - a. remission of sins
 - b. putting on Christ (union)

The mode (immersion, pouring, sprinkling) in which the baptismal water is administered is of little significance to the validity of the baptism.

1. washing away of sins
2. diverse washings; 3 (v. 10)
3. both would have been totally immersed since they both “went down into the water”

The normal pattern in Scripture is for adult believers (not previously baptized) to be baptized at the same time that they make public professions of faith.

1. thief was not baptized
2. the gospel is being preached to adults

God’s covenant of grace is extended to the children of believers.

1. everyone after the seed of Abraham; no, everlasting; yes
2. promise is to their children
3. circumcision
4. baptism
5. are holy (i.e. not necessarily saved. This word “holy” is also used for the special “holy vessels” used in the temple, and refers to being set apart for a particular purpose.)
6.
 - a. Lydia and her household
 - b. Philippian jailer and his family

Lesson 11 notes:

The Sacraments (Part 2)

Lesson Approach

The lesson on the Lord's supper again requires that you be thoroughly acquainted with the way the subject is developed in the workbook. Insist in a positive way that discussion of this sacrament and who is to receive it must center on what Scripture says rather than what individuals may feel should be the church's practice. It would be appropriate to elicit personal responses from the group as to what they have experienced or expect to experience in receiving the Lord's supper.

The Lord's Supper (pp. 67-70)

Jesus established the Lord's supper as a perpetual memorial of His saving work.

1. it is His body; it is His blood
2. Christ commanded this memorial to keep before us the benefits of our salvation; commemorate Christ's death till He returns.

The Lord's supper is to be received only by those who are able to discern its true meaning.

1. examine himself; eating and drinking unworthily; recognize its meaning, apply the benefits of Christ's death to ourselves.
2. the Passover; 12; memorial to deliverance from Egypt (Old Testament type for the world of sin); in its portrayal of our deliverance from sin

The Lord's supper is to be carefully guarded by the Church as a whole.

1. damnation (judgment) to himself; sickness and death
2. a. reject a heretic after the first and second admonition
b. receive them not into your house
3. a. fornicators, covetous, idolaters, railers, drunkards, extortioners
b. withdraw from him

The means observed by some Reformed bodies, including the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, to guard the Lord's table is the practice of session-guarded communion.

1. teach them to observe all things that He has commanded; yes
2. devoting themselves to the Apostles' teaching

Lesson 12 notes:

Eschatology

Lesson Approach

You will want to pace this lesson in terms of your group's attitude. Several sessions will be needed in cases where the students have been exposed to the "isms" of our day that distort the biblical view of final things. There is some merit to presenting sections "What Happens When We Die" (p. 72) and "The Final State" (p. 78) as a unit. You could then in the next section deal with "The Millennium" (p. 75) and "The Second Coming of Christ" (p. 74) as they concern the Second Coming. Be extremely cautious about engaging in speculation. Presumptive, idle over-inquisitiveness is not a sign of faith, but rather of superstition. The joy of Christ's coming should be reflected in all discussion.

The section charting millennial views will need careful study to assure your ability to answer questions from the group. Chapter 32 of Williamson's study on the *Confession of Faith* will provide clear answers to most of the questions that are likely to be asked. Be careful when evaluating millennial views other than your own not to display a judgmental attitude that will confuse the students. Patience, tolerance, and understanding should be displayed at all times. An arrogant defense of a single millennial viewpoint will not be genuinely helpful. Have a clear position of your own, and be prepared to present that position, but not in such a way as to polarize issues. When our Lord does return, then and only then will we have some of the answers that we presumptively think we need to have today.

What Happens When We Die (the Intermediate State)

(pp. 72-73)

The bodies of all men undergo corruption at death.

1. his body would return to dust
2. David saw corruption, but Christ did not

The souls of all men maintain consciousness after death.

1.
 - a. worms would destroy his body, but he would still see God in the flesh
 - b. "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."
 - c. he will be absent from the body and present with the Lord
 - d. to depart (die) and be with Christ
2.
 - a. was in torment and cried for mercy, if one went from the dead others would repent
 - b. they are reserved until that day

The Second Coming of Christ (pp. 74-75)

The visible, historical return of Christ is prophesied in Scripture.

1. Jesus would come again in like manner as He went into heaven
2. the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ
3. He shall descend from heaven with a shout, the dead in Christ shall rise first

Several types of events must be fulfilled before Christ's return.

1. a. They will come to Christ by faith
b. that a complete number will come to know God
2. a. Israel as a race is not finally cast away
b. God will not go back on His promise of saving Israel
3. a. A final gathering of the nations in opposition to the Church; to take place when the thousand years are complete
b. no
4. a. there will be a "falling away"; the son of perdition who sets himself up as God
b. the Wicked One will be revealed and consumed
5. a. the ascended Christ will bring all His enemies beneath His feet
b. Psalm 110:1-2 must be fulfilled

The Final State (the condition of man after the Second Coming) (pp. 78-80)

There will be one final judgment of both saved and lost, dead and living.

1. dead in Christ rise first; will be caught up in the clouds to join Christ in the air
2. appear before the judgment seat of Christ
3. a courtroom where Christ is the final Judge who rewards the faithful and condemns the unjust

The bodies of all the dead (saved and lost) will be raised up at Christ's return.

1. some will awake to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt
2. resurrection of life and the resurrection of damnation; no
3. both the just and the unjust

The righteous dead will receive resurrection bodies and live with Christ eternally in His Kingdom.

1. our spiritual bodies will be incorruptible, glorious and powerful
2. change them to be like His glorious body

The unrighteous who are "resurrected unto judgment" (John 5:29) will be eternally separated from Christ and eternally punished.

1. furnace of fire
2. cast into outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Note:* The concepts of final punishment as fire and darkness are not contradictory. These two terms are best seen as two known descriptions of the most dreadful punishment possible, to be burned alive or to live in total darkness and separation. Hell is far worse than what both these descriptions convey.
3. everlasting

Both the righteous and the lost will receive degrees of reward and punishment respectively.

1. receive reward according to gifts
2. beaten with few or many stripes according to the nature of their sin

Lesson 13 notes: