

# Dependency on the Cross

## FOCUS STATEMENT:

**Living in repentance and faith before the cross daily brings victory to Christians battling sin.**

## KEY VERSE:

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.—1 TIMOTHY 1:15

## MAIN IDEAS:

- > Though partakers of the divine nature, Christians still battle with sin.
- > The way to fight sin is to rely on God's grace through Jesus—to live before the cross daily.
- > Christians need to "preach the gospel" to themselves daily.
- > There is no condemnation for Christians; non-Christians are condemned to the wrath of God and eternal punishment.

## SCRIPTURE:

1) Romans 7:18, 21-25

2) 1 Timothy 1:15-16

3) Romans 8:1

## VISUALS:

- > Bible
- > Three items to juggle
- > Candy bar
- > A piece of fruit
- > Living Before the Cross 1-6 (Curriculum Resources)
- > Tape/tacks
- > Whiteboard and markers

## PREPARATION:

Study the Scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the students in your class.

If you will be using a media projector for the visuals, set up the equipment.

Copy and cut out the *Preaching the Gospel to Yourself* and *Living Before the Cross Daily* Cards (one per student).

Write the following quote on the board:

"PREACH THE GOSPEL TO YOURSELF"

"...continually face up to your own sinfulness and then flee to Jesus through faith in His shed blood and righteous life."<sup>1</sup>

Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*

## ADDITIONAL SMALL GROUP LEADER PREPARATION:

Read Chapter 9 of *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands* by Paul David Tripp.

<sup>1</sup>Jerry Bridges. *The Discipline of Grace*, (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1994), 58. Used throughout.

## Introduction

### Illustration

(Ask a student who does not know how to juggle to volunteer for a lesson in juggling, or ask a student who knows how to juggle to instruct another student.)

3 ITEMS TO  
JUGGLE

Explain to the student how to juggle—Toss the first item in the air; when it reaches the top of the arc, toss the other item; catch the first item, and toss it in the air when the second item reaches the arc. (If the student is able to do this, add a third item to the mix.)

Establish that though the student understands what to do, and even wants to do it, he sometimes just doesn't seem able to do it. His brain understands and he has a desire to juggle, but his hands don't always cooperate.

## Large Group Lesson

*Paul felt this way as well. Though he understood what he should do, and even wanted to do what was right, he just couldn't always do it.*

(Ask a student to read the following verses.)

*Romans 7:18—For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.*

*Romans 7:21-25—So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup>For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, <sup>23</sup>but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup>Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.*

***What phrases in the above verses show that Paul knew what it was like to understand what he should do and to want to do what is right, but not always be able to do it?***

[verse 18—I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out; verse 22—I delight in the law...I see my members waging war against the law...making me captive to the law of sin]

- We all understand what Paul is talking about—wanting to do the right thing and battling with ourselves to do it.
- Even true Christians who are partakers of the divine nature, still battle sinful desires. But the Christian  **fights**  them—he is not content with the sin in his life but is always striving to be more like Christ.
- There are two ways to fight sin. One way is through self-effort—relying on ourselves. The "I'll just try harder" attitude. This works—but just for a little while.

**Illustration**

CANDY BAR  
FRUIT

*Suppose you had a choice between a candy bar and a piece of fruit for dessert. (Show candy bar and fruit.) You really like candy bars and fruit is okay—but it sure isn't a candy bar! But you know that the fruit is better for you, and that you have had more than enough sugar recently. You know in your mind that, you should exercise self-discipline. And you choose the fruit.*

*Do you think that the next five times you are confronted with the same choice you would likely make the same decision? Why? [perhaps not, because your desires haven't changed]*

*Will power only goes so far—sooner or later our fleshly desires overcome our minds. What we need is a change of heart—new desires. If the desire for healthy living becomes greater than the desire for sweets, there is a greater inclination to make healthier choices.*

- The battle against sin is really a battle of the heart. And for that, we need grace—every day.
- The way to fight sin is not by relying on ourselves, but by depending on God's grace through Jesus.
- Every day we need to "preach the gospel to [ourselves]." We are sinners inclined toward sin, daily in need of grace. Every day we need to ask for grace, repent of sinful attitudes and actions, and confess faith in God and in His Word. We need to live before the cross daily—to be *cross-centered*.

(Give the following practical example of how we daily live in the shadow of the cross.):

The situation: someone has deeply offended you. You have spoken angry words in response.



**Preaching the gospel to yourself and living before the cross:** (Show Living Before the Cross 1-6 as you go through each step:)

- **Recognition of Sin:** (Admit your sin specifically.) "I am a sinner. My words toward (John) were unkind coming from an angry heart. This is a great offense to my Savior."
- **Confession:** (Confess your sin to God.) "Jesus, I have sinned against You. I have broken Your law. I have not returned good for evil. I nursed anger in my heart and unleashed that anger on (John)."
- **Repentance:** (Turn from sin.) "I don't want an angry heart. I hate my sin. As much as I'm able, I turn from it. I will strive not to repeat it, trusting in God's help."
- **Faith:** (Believe God's Word.) "You are a merciful God. Slow to anger. Abounding in steadfast love. Full of forgiveness. Thank You for the cross where You placed my sin upon Your Son and gave me His righteousness."

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- Plea for **Grace**: (Ask God to forgive you and give you grace to change.) "Please forgive me for my anger and lack of forgiveness. Change me. Give me a heart of forgiveness. Help me to turn away from anger and toward love."
- **Obedience**: (Act on the grace that God supplies.) "(John) will You forgive me for my unkind words and the anger that I had toward You?..."
- Every day we need to speak truth to our souls to fight against sin.

**What truths would have helped to speak to your soul in the above situation?** [if we don't forgive others, neither will our Father forgive us (Matthew 6:15); vengeance belongs to God, not to us (Romans 12:19); let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger (James 1:9); do to others what you wish they would do to you (Matthew 7:12); every sin against us will either be paid for on the cross (for the Christian) or in hell (for the unbeliever)]

**Small Group Discussion**

(Walk through how to preach the gospel (sin, confession, repentance, faith, grace, obedience) to yourself and live before the cross using the following situations. They may want to refer to the "A Christian relies on the gospel by:" exercise in the journal.)

**SITUATION 1:** Fighting the temptation to watch a movie rather than have your devotions:

SIN: [It is sin to have a greater desire for television than for God.]

CONFESSION: [My heart is inclined toward things of the world rather than things above; I love pleasure and don't crave fellowship with You like I should...]

REPENTANCE: [I don't want to love this world more than You, God...I turn to You.]

FAITH: [I trust in what You have said: Your Word is better than gold. You have promised blessing to the person who meditates on Your Word day and night...Thank You that Jesus has paid for my sin...]

GRACE: [Forgive me for my affections for this world and give me a heart for You. Give me a desire for You that is like a deer panting for water. Give me the grace to trust Your promises and to have my Bible time...]

OBEDIENCE: [Open the Bible and pray for blessing.]

(Make sure that the students understand that living before the cross can also be as simple as: "Lord, I don't want to have my Bible time. Help me." But walking through these steps will help to keep the gospel in mind and identify the real sin problem we are struggling with.)

**SITUATION 2:** Reaching out to someone you don't know well or don't like much:

SIN: [Self-centeredness is a sin.]

CONFESSION: [I think more about myself than about others. I don't really want to reach out to (Mary) because I (envy her; am selfish...)]

REPENTANCE: [I don't want to be self-centered; I want to be a light to the world and a blessing to the body of believers...I turn to You.]

FAITH: [I trust what You have said: It is more blessed to give than to receive...Thank You that I can stand on the assurance that, as a child of God, the blood of Jesus cleanses me from this unrighteousness...]

GRACE: [Forgive me for loving myself and my comfort (my envy, selfishness...) Give me the grace to reach out to (Mary). Help me to think of a way to bless her and give me the strength to do it...]

OBEDIENCE: [Act in blessing (Mary)]

(Read the following verses and answer the question.)

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*1 Timothy 1:15-16—The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. <sup>16</sup>But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.*

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1. *What attitudes do you see in Paul that can help us live before the cross daily?* [humility—a recognition that his sin is immense and that because he is a sinner, he is prone to sin; gratitude—understanding that undeserved mercy has been extended toward him and that God is patient with him]

## Large Group Lesson

- We don't just need the cross at salvation and at the judgment. We need the cross every day. Every day we need to repent, and every day we need grace.
- To live before the cross daily, you must "preach the gospel to yourself." (Show the students the quote on the board and ask one of them to read it to the class.)

### "PREACH THE GOSPEL TO YOURSELF"

**"...continually face up to your own sinfulness and then flee to Jesus through faith in His shed blood and righteous life."**

Jerry Bridges, *The Discipline of Grace*

***What does Jerry Bridges mean when he says "face up"?*** [admit; see your sin and repent]

***What does the word "flee" portray?*** [you are desperate; you immediately turn from you sin and seek Jesus]

- If you are a Christian and feeling condemned for your sin, you are either not confessing and repenting of your sin (not bringing your sin to the cross, trusting in the redemptive work of Jesus to cover it), or you do not understand grace.
- Romans 8:1 says, *"There is therefore now NO condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."* God does not condemn His repentant children—He sees them through the sacrifice and perfect righteousness of Jesus.
- For a Christian to feel condemned is to believe the lies of the enemy and deny the cross. It is believing that sin is greater than grace.
- For a non-Christian to feel condemnation is legitimate because his sins are not covered by the blood of Jesus. He is condemned to the wrath of God and eternal punishment.
- Grace is always undeserved, wonderful, and liberating—and is simply relying on Jesus rather than on ourselves. The Israelites were free from the snake bite consequences

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of their sin of grumbling against God and Moses through God's provision of grace by looking at the bronze serpent on the pole (Numbers 21:5-9). In the same way, we are pardoned from condemnation by looking upon the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

*It is a glorious thing to be cross-centered—to live before the cross daily. To remind ourselves of it constantly. To rejoice in forgiveness to all who look upon Jesus!*

(End with prayer.)

### Small Group Application

Spend some time just thanking God for grace and for the sacrifice of His Son on the cross.

(It may be that you may want to share with your small group your testimony of God's grace in bringing you to Himself, or ask someone else to share a testimony.)

(Give each student a *Preaching the Gospel to Yourself and Living Before the Cross Daily* Card to bring home. Encourage the students to use these cards in the following weeks and establish a pattern of living before the cross.)

### Fellowship Time

(Encourage students to pick up some refreshments as they split into their pairs/triplets.)

# recognition of sin

# confession



# repentance

# faith

# plea for grace

obedience—  
acting in the  
grace that  
God supplies

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**FOCUS STATEMENT:**

**Living in repentance and faith before the cross daily brings victory to Christians battling sin.**

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**KEY VERSE:**

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

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**MAIN IDEAS:**

- > Though partakers of the divine nature, Christians still battle with sin.
- > The way to fight sin is to rely on God's grace through Jesus—to live before the cross daily.
- > Christians need to “preach the gospel” to themselves daily.<sup>1</sup>
- > There is no condemnation for Christians; non-Christians are condemned to the wrath of God and eternal punishment.

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**SCRIPTURE:**

1) Romans 7:18, 21-25

2) 1 Timothy 1:15-16

3) Romans 8:1

<sup>1</sup> The phrase “Preach the Gospel to yourself” is from: Bridges, Jerry. *The Discipline of Grace*. (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 1994), 58.

**In Class**

Words and phrases that show Paul’s struggle:

Romans 7:18:

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Romans 7:21-25:

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There are two ways people can try to fight sin:

1. 

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2. 

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The battle against sin is really a battle of the h\_\_\_\_\_. That is why we need  
g\_\_\_\_\_ every d\_\_\_\_\_.

A Christian relies on the gospel by:

Admitting \_\_\_\_\_ specifically

C \_\_\_\_\_ sin to God

R \_\_\_\_\_ or turning from sin

F \_\_\_\_\_ is believing God’s Word about forgiveness

Asking for forgiveness and g \_\_\_\_\_

O \_\_\_\_\_ : Acting on the grace God supplies

We don’t just need the cross for salvation and freedom from judgment!

We need to “P \_\_\_\_\_ the G \_\_\_\_\_ to O \_\_\_\_\_” daily.

To “face up” to sin means: \_\_\_\_\_.

To “flee” sin means:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Fellowship Time**

### **Share**

Here are some questions you may want to use to help you get started. This is just a starting point, so don't limit yourself to these questions.

- > What joys have you experienced this week?
- > How has God answered your prayer requests from last week?
- > What concerns would you like to pray about this week?
- > Do you have any struggles you would like to confess or to have some accountability with?

### **Encourage**

Use the Word to encourage one another. For help in finding appropriate verses, see the Scripture Index in Appendix IV. (Remember the overarching truths of the gospel and the sovereignty, grace, and glory of God.)

### **Pray**

In class and at home during the week.

### **Prayer Requests**


## At Home

Do you know how wonderful the cross is?! Meditate on this. Rejoice in it! What are some of the incredible gifts God has given us through Christ's death on the cross?

Practice living in repentance and faith before the cross daily:

- > SIN
- > CONFESSION
- > REPENTANCE
- > FAITH
- > GRACE
- > OBEDIENCE

Remember to pray for and encourage your partner(s) this week.

*Preach the gospel to Yourself  
“...continually face up to your own  
sinfulness and then flee to Jesus  
through faith in his shed blood  
and righteous life.”*

*JERRY BRIDGES*



## A Note to Parents

What does it mean to “abide” in Jesus—to be redeemed from being ashamed in the presence of God, to have peace with God through Jesus, to live in daily fellowship with Jesus, and to trust Him in all circumstances, committing all things to Him?

This year, through the curriculum *Abiding in Jesus*, your son or daughter will be exploring what it means to live in daily dependence on Jesus. He/she will be encouraged to commit all things to Christ and to trust Him in all circumstances.

We recognize that some students in the class may not be Christians. The step they need to make is to respond to the call of God to be in relationship with Him, and to trust Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins.

If your son or daughter has not yet become a child of God, our hope is that we can partner with you to encourage him/her to turn to Jesus in salvation. If your son or daughter is a Christian, our desire is to work with you in encouraging him/her to turn to Jesus in all situations. As the parent, you will have multiple opportunities each week to point your son or daughter to Jesus and His sufficiency—when facing an exam, when disappointments come, when battling temptation, and when worries threaten. How easy it is to jump in and solve these situations for them rather than encourage them to turn everything over to Jesus and ask for His strength, guidance, and grace. May the Lord help you to help them focus on Christ.

The class will consist of large group teaching, small group discussion, and sharing and prayer in groups of two or three. It is our hope that not only will the students grow in trusting Jesus, but they will also learn how to encourage others to put their confidence in Jesus and to turn to Him in all situations.

The students will receive an *Abiding in Jesus Student Journal* to use in class and at home. Please encourage your student to complete the home “assignment” each week as a means toward helping them grow spiritually. You will find a table of contents listing all the lessons in the curriculum at the front of the journal.

If there is any way in which we can pray for your son/daughter or your family, or encourage your son or daughter, please let us know.

Blessings on you.

Small Group Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

# Trusting Jesus for the Future

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## FOCUS STATEMENT:

**Remembering God's faithfulness in the past is a means of increasing our faith in God's future grace.**

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## KEY VERSE:

For all the promises of God find their yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.—2 CORINTHIANS 1:20

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## MAIN IDEAS:

- > God has promised His future grace to His children.
- > Remembering God's faithfulness in the past is the solid foundation that informs our future hope.
- > The promises of God are purchased for the believer by the blood of Jesus.

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## SCRIPTURE:

- |                       |                      |                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) 2 Corinthians 1:20 | 4) John 14:1-3       | 7) 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 |
| 2) Hebrews 13:5-6     | 5) Philippians 1:6-7 |                           |
| 3) Psalm 27:13        | 6) Isaiah 46:9       |                           |

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## VISUALS:

- |                                              |                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| > Bible                                      | > Yes (Curriculum Resources)                        |
| > Whiteboard and markers                     | > I Will Never Leave You (Curriculum Resources)     |
| > Tape/tacks                                 | > Goodness of the Lord (Curriculum Resources)       |
| > Pitons <sup>1</sup> (Curriculum Resources) | > I Will Come Again (Curriculum Resources)          |
| > Rock Climber (Curriculum Resources)        | > God Will Complete His Work (Curriculum Resources) |
| > Future Grace (Curriculum Resources)        | > Summary (Curriculum Resources)                    |

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## PREPARATION:

Study the Scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the students in your class.

If you will be using a media projector for the visuals, set up the equipment.

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<sup>1</sup>If you have a real piton, you may want to substitute it for the picture.

## Introduction

### Illustration



(Show the Pitons.) Ask if anyone knows what it is. Share the following information:

A piton (pronounced pee-ton) is a metal spike use in rock climbing. It is also called a pin or a peg. Using a hammer, a rock climber can drive a piton into a crack in the rock face and use the piton as an anchor. Before the use of wires, nuts, and dams, pitons were more popular.



(Show the Rock Climber.) *If you were in this position, you would be very grateful for the use of a piton or some other piece of rock climbing equipment. Though the danger is still present, there is a place of security to hang onto—something to keep you from plunging into the vast unknown.*

## Large Group Lesson

- There are lots of "unknowns" in life too—at least unknown to us. What will tomorrow look like? Will some one in my family die or get cancer? What will high school be like? Are we going to have another financial crash? What will future trials be like? What will I have to go through?
- The unknown future can make us feel anxious.
- But God has given us sure, solid pitons to hang on to.

### Future Grace

*Today, we are going to talk about these pitons of rock solid security in the face of the future unknowns for the children of God. If there is one banner, or one label we could hang over these pitons, it would be Future Grace.<sup>2</sup> (Show Future Grace.)*

- Future grace is the grace that God has promised His children will be there for them in the future. It is based on the promises of God and the past proven faithfulness of God.
- It is expressed in the last two lines of the third stanza of the hymn *Amazing Grace*.

*Through many dangers, toils and snares,  
I have already come;*

(Ask the students to quote the last two lines.)

*'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.*

This piton of security states the solid truth of **past** experience: 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far... and the sure hope of **future** experience: And grace will lead me home. Remembering God's faithfulness in the past, especially the death and resurrection of Jesus, is the solid foundation that informs our future hope.

- Pastor John Piper said his mother taught him to live his life "between the two lines of

<sup>2</sup>For a fuller explanation of future grace, see: John Piper. *Future Grace*, (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 1995).

*Amazing Grace.* The first line: "Tis grace has brought me safe thus far." The second line: "And grace will lead me home."<sup>3</sup>

- The goal of this lesson is to teach you to live your life between these two lines; between the solid truth of the past and the sure hope of the future—to strengthen your faith in God.



- Under the banner of Future Grace are five pitons we are going to look at today. (Show Pitons.)

(Ask a student to read the following verse.)

*2 Corinthians 1:20—For all the promises of God find their yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.*

**Explain the meaning of this verse and the implications of this verse to the class.** [all the promise God has made in the Bible are confirmed in the death and resurrection of Jesus; all of God's promises are for His children and the evidence of His trustworthiness is found in the promised Savior who came and died for us]



(Show "Yes.") *All of God's promises are true for the believer. God says "yes" to them all. You can trust the sure foundation of the death and resurrection of Jesus as evidence that God is a promise-keeping God.*

(Ask a student to read the following verses.)

*Hebrews 13:5-6—Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." <sup>6</sup>So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*

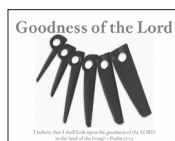
**What false confidence is replaced with real confidence in this verse?** [the false confidence of money is replaced by the real assurance of God's presence with His people and the promise of His help]



(Show "I Will Never Leave You.") *No matter what situation looms for us in the future, God is already there! His presence goes with His people through all the storms and calms of life—and He has promised to help us in them all!*

(Ask a student to read the following verse.)

*Psalms 27:13—I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!*



**What piton does this verse give us?** [God is good]

(Show "Goodness of the Lord.") *Are you concerned about what tomorrow may bring... or next year...or five years from now? If you are a child of God, He has promised good*

<sup>3</sup>John Piper. *Future Grace*, (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 1995), 6.

*for you in the future—not just your future in heaven but your future here on earth. His plans are for "good and not for harm." Good does not mean trouble-free, but even the trouble will be for our good. No matter what happens, you can grab on the piton of the goodness of God and have confidence that all things will work for your good. And God's grace will be there in the future to get you through any difficulty you may have.*

(Ask a student to read the following verse.)

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*John 14:1-3—Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*

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**What piton does this verse give us?** [Jesus will return to bring His children home with Him]



(Show "I Will Come Again.") *Jesus is preparing a place for His children in heaven and He **will** come back to rescue His children from this world of sin. Hang on to that piton "though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea."*

In your small group you will discuss the fifth piton.

## Small Group Discussion

(Read the following verses and answer the questions.)

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*Philippians 1:6-7—And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.*

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1. *Who initiates the work of salvation? Where do you see this in the passage?* [God—"He who began a good work"—any response to the gospel starts with God's call and heart transforming work]
2. *What words of Paul's show you the confidence he has in the truth of what he is saying?* [I am sure; it is right]
3. *What is the truth of what Paul is saying in verse 6?* [God began the good work of their salvation, and is continuing their sanctification until Jesus returns when He will complete their glorification; salvation for the true believer is sure—God will not desert them but will finish the work of grace He began in the believer's life]
4. *What does verse 6 say about the nature of God?* [He is faithful—He will not desert or abandon His people—His past grace assures His future grace]
5. *What is Paul's identification with the Philippian believers? Explain this.* [they are all "partakers of grace"—God's grace saved them; God's grace enabled Paul to withstand prison and for them to minister to him in prison through their encouragement, and in spreading the gospel; God's grace enabled them to defend the gospel]
6. *How do these verses show the past, present, and future grace of God?* [they show God's past grace of salvation, the present grace of sanctification and ministry, and the future grace]

## Large Group Lesson



(Show "God Will Complete His Work.")

- There are many more pitons of future grace. The whole Bible is full of them. The way we know they are true is to look at past grace.

(Ask a student to read the following verse.)

*Isaiah 46:9—remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.*

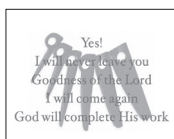
**Why does God tell us to remember the "former things"?** [because looking at past grace gives us the faith for future grace]

- God is God and there is no other god. The same God who gave grace in the past will give grace in the future. We don't need to worry about the future, because God will be there for His people.
- This is why the psalmist can say in Psalm 112:7 about the righteous, *He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.*
- God's grace is past, present, and future.

*What do we do while we await the future, not with anxiety, but trusting in Jesus, and holding on to the faith of future grace? We live each moment satisfied in Jesus, and furthering His kingdom here on earth. Listen to these glorious words of the future for the Christian and these confident words of challenge to us today.*

(Ask a student to read the following verses with excitement and conviction.)

*1 Corinthians 15:50-58—I tell you this, brothers: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup>Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, <sup>52</sup>in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. <sup>53</sup>For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup>When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." <sup>55</sup>"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. <sup>56</sup>The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. <sup>57</sup>But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>58</sup>Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*



(Share or have someone else share a testimony of hanging on to one of these pitons, or another promise or past work of God to trust God for the future. Show Summary visual.)

(End the lesson with prayer.)

## Small Group Application

*What things cause you anxiety? How can faith in future grace help you?*

*Is there a situation in your life right now that is causing you anxiety? What are your worst fears about the situation? What promises can you hold on to?*

*What are some past mercies of God in your life?*

*How are you investing yourself in kingdom work while you await the return of Jesus?*

*What assurances are there for those who are not in Christ?* (Students should understand that the only assurance for those who are not in Christ is the promise of condemnation. The good promises of God are not extended to unbelievers. The grace that an unbeliever receives is common grace alone. For example, rain, as in Matthew 5:45.)

**Small group leader:** Tell the group about something that happened a long time ago and explain how it worked out for your good.

## Fellowship Time

(Encourage students to pick up some refreshments as they split into their pairs/triplets.)

**Note to Small Group Leaders:** You may want to send your small group a note this week with the following quote from Hudson Taylor:

*All God's giants have been weak men, who did great things for God because they reckoned on His being with them... Want of trust is at the root of almost all our sins and all our weaknesses, and how shall we escape it but by looking to Him and observing His faithfulness. The man who holds God's faithfulness will not be foolhardy or reckless, but he will be ready for every emergency.*

—Hudson Taylor



## SAMPLE LESSONS





## SAMPLE LESSONS



# Future Grace



# Yes!



For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. — 2 Corinthians 1:20



# I will never leave you



...he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”  
So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear;  
what can man do to me?” — Hebrews 13:5b-6



# Goodness of the Lord



I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living! — Psalm 27:13



# I will come again



And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. —John 14:3



# God will complete His work



And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. — Philippians 1:6

Yes!

I will never leave you  
Goodness of the Lord

I will come again

God will complete His work



# Trusting Jesus for the Future

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## FOCUS STATEMENT:

**Remembering God's faithfulness in the past is a means of increasing our faith in God's future grace.**

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## KEY VERSE:

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20

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## MAIN IDEAS:

- > God has promised His future grace to His children.
- > Remembering God's faithfulness in the past is the solid foundation that informs our future hope.
- > The promises of God are purchased for the believer by the blood of Jesus.

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## SCRIPTURE:

- |                       |                      |                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) 2 Corinthians 1:20 | 4) John 14:1-3       | 7) 1 Corinthians 15:50-58 |
| 2) Hebrews 13:5-6     | 5) Philippians 1:6-7 |                           |
| 3) Psalm 27:13        | 6) Isaiah 46:9       |                           |

**In Class**

The unknown future can make us feel a \_\_\_\_\_.

Future g\_\_\_\_\_ is the g\_\_\_\_\_ that God has promised His children will be there for them in the f\_\_\_\_\_.

Remembering God’s f\_\_\_\_\_ in the past gives us hope for the f\_\_\_\_\_.

2 Corinthians 1:20 means:

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All of God’s p\_\_\_\_\_ are true for the b\_\_\_\_\_.

What assurance or promise do the following verses give us:

> 2 Corinthians 1:20 \_\_\_\_\_

> Hebrews 13:5-6 \_\_\_\_\_

> Psalm 27:13 \_\_\_\_\_

> John 14:1-3 \_\_\_\_\_

> Philippians 1:6-7 \_\_\_\_\_

God tells us to remember the “former things” in Isaiah 46:9 because

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*He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.* PSALM 112:7

# Fellowship Time

## Share

Here are some questions you may want to use to help you get started. This is just a starting point, so don't limit yourself to these questions.

- > What joys have you experienced this week?
- > How has God answered your prayer requests from last week?
- > What concerns would you like to pray about this week?
- > Do you have any struggles you would like to confess or to have some accountability with?

## Special Sharing Focus

Share with your partner what you hope for in your future—either a month from now or even years from now. Then ask him/her to pray that you will be able to give that desire to the Lord and trust His wisdom and plan for you.

## Encourage

Use the Word to encourage one another. For help in finding appropriate verses, see the Scripture Index in Appendix IV. (Remember the overarching truths of the gospel and the sovereignty, grace, and glory of God.)

## Pray

In class and at home during the week.

## Prayer Requests


## At Home

As you read your Bible this week, look for future grace. What are some words of future grace that you found?

You may want to make a poster for your room of the pitons from this lesson or your own pitons.

*...all the promises of God find their Yes in [Jesus].* 2 CORINTHIANS 1:20A

*I will never leave you or forsake you.* HEBREWS 13:5B

*I will come again and take you to myself.* JOHN 14:3B

*...I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!* PSALM 27:B

*...He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion.* PHILIPPIANS 1:6B

My pitons:

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Remember to pray for and encourage your partner(s) this week.

