

UNIT 1: Elements of the Gospel

for

Young Adults

by

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for

CEDU 3033 Methods of Teaching the Bible

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I. Grace

- A. Heaven is a free gift
- B. It is not earned or deserved.

II. Man

- A. Is a sinner.
- B. Cannot save himself.

III. God

- A. Is merciful and therefore does not want to punish us.
- B. Is just and therefore must punish our sin.

IV. Christ

- A. Who He is: The infinite God-man.
- B. What He did: He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and rose from the dead and is alive to show that He has purchased a place in heaven for us which He offers as a gift.

V. Faith

- A. Is not intellectual assent or temporal faith.
- B. Is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation.
- C. Clarification of Commitment.

* Note: Outline was adapted from *Evangelism Explosion III* by D. James Kennedy.

I. Grace

Theme: Eternal life is received by grace, not by works.

Objective: To understand the significance of grace in the plan of salvation as opposed to trusting in works for eternal life, and to continue to trust in grace.

Bible Text: 1 John 5:13, 1 Peter 3:15, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:15, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, Romans 11:6

Key Verses: Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (NASB)
Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. (NASB)

Outline

- A. Heaven is a free gift.
 - 1. Romans 6:23
 - 2. Romans 5:15
- B. It is not earned or deserved.
 - 1. Ephesians 2:8-9
 - 2. Titus 3:5
 - 3. Romans 11:6
 - 4. FRIEND'S GIFT (illustration)

Teaching Methods: Lecture, discussion, question and answer

Teaching Materials: Board and markers, paper, pens

Time Required: 1 hour

Introduction

Ask: What is the greatest thing that has ever happened to you? (*Solicit a response from everyone who wants to answer, repeating their answer enthusiastically. Answers should be related to their coming to know Jesus as their personal Savior.*)

Ask: Therefore, what is the greatest thing that you can do for other people? (*The answer should be: "to tell others about Jesus." Obtain this kind of a response from at least 2 people.*)

A person who has truly received the Gospel and has been changed by it would not want to keep it a secret to themselves while others perish. However, often people are not able to articulate the internal conviction that they have on the inside. This study on Grace and the subsequent four studies will help confirm for you the reality of your salvation (or lead you to receive salvation) and give you knowledge of the essential elements of the Gospel that all must acknowledge as a prerequisite for having saving faith. (*Explain the theme and objective of the lesson on Grace.*)

Ask: Have you come to the place in your spiritual life where you can say for certain that if you were to die tonight you would go to heaven? (*Obtain a response from everyone.*)

1 John 5:13 - These things I have written ... in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

Ask: Suppose you were to die tonight and stand before God and He were to say to you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?" What would you say? (*Obtain responses*)

1 Pet. 3:15 - Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.

Ask: What do you think non-Christians who hope to go to heaven would say in response to this question? (*Write responses on the board*) Many non-Christians would respond that they have been a "pretty good person" and support this by listing the many "good things" that they have done in their life (i.e. Go to church, not kill anyone, keep the 10 commandments). (*Discuss why these things will not get a person to heaven.*) **Ask: What is "Grace"?** (*Obtain responses, then write an answer on the board, such as "God's unmerited favor or assistance."*)

Ask: What "good news" can we share with a non-Christian? (*Answer: Heaven is a free gift*)

Content Outline

- A. Heaven is a free gift. (*Discuss how the following Scriptures show "grace."*)
1. Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death, but the **free gift** of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 2. Romans 5:15 - But the **free gift** is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the **grace** of God and the gift by the **grace** of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to many.

B. It is not earned or deserved. (*Discuss how the verses below show heaven is not earned*)

Man's way is to earn or to try to deserve, but God's way is grace - to receive freely what we don't deserve. Eternal life rests on grace through faith.

1. Ephesians 2:8-9 - For **by grace** you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the **gift of God; not as a result of works**, that no one should boast.
2. Titus 3:5 - He saved us, **not on the basis of deeds** which we have done in righteousness, but according to His **mercy**, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.
3. Romans 11:6 - But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

The *Liberty Bible Commentary New Testament* comments on this verse:

Grace cannot include works. They are mutually exclusive. If works are to be added to grace, as the Jews thought, then grace is completely cancelled out. Salvation is a free gift and no payment at all can be made else it would cease to be free. (p. 388)

Many professing Christians are partially trusting in Christ and partially trusting in self. For salvation, a person must trust in Christ alone.

4. FRIEND'S GIFT (illustration)

"No amount of personal effort, good works or religious deeds can earn a place in heaven for you because eternal life, like any genuine gift, is free. Suppose your best friend (wife, husband, mother, etc.) were to surprise you with an expensive gift and let's suppose your response would be that of immediately digging into your purse or wallet for a couple of bills to help pay for the gift. What an insult that would be! You must accept gifts freely. If you pay even a penny, it is no longer a gift. It is the same with eternal life."

** Note: All illustrations explained come from the *Evangelism Explosion III* note cards.

Summary and Response

No amount of money, power, influence, or good works will ever obtain for us the gift of eternal life. Heaven is unearned, undeserved, and unmerited. God's grace extends the gift of salvation everyone, and those who receive it by faith in Jesus Christ obtain eternal life.

*Have the students pull out a pen and a piece of paper and take 2 minutes to write their answer to the following question. Ask: How would you describe grace in the plan of salvation as **opposed to trusting in works for eternal life?** (Have the students share their answers)*

Ask: Have you ever trusted in your good works to get you to heaven?

Take 1 minute to reflect on the greatest event of your life--when you trusted in Christ alone for your salvation and not your own good works. Have different students share at most a 3 minute testimony of how they came to a place of receiving eternal life by grace through faith instead of by works.

Make a new commitment to trust only in God's grace (unmerited favor) through faith in Christ to have eternal life. Lead everyone in a prayer to trust in God's grace and provision for salvation. If anyone realizes that they have been trusting in their own good works instead of grace, then they can repent and transfer their trust at this time.

II. Man

Theme: Man is a sinner and cannot save himself.

Objective: To understand the significance of man being sinful and thus unable to save himself by his own "good works," and to continue to not trust in works.

Bible Text: Romans 3:23, Romans 3:10, Isaiah 53:6, Isaiah 64:6, 1 John 1:8, Psalms 5:15, Matthew 5:48, James 2:10, Titus 3:5, Ephesians 2:3-9, Proverbs 14:12

Key Verse: Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
(NASB)

Outline

- A. Is a sinner.
 - 1. Romans 3:23
 - 2. Romans 3:10
 - 3. Isaiah 53:6
 - 4. Isaiah 64:6
 - 5. 1 John 1:8
 - 6. Psalms 51:5
 - 7. SIN DEFINED (illustration)
 - 8. THREE SINS A DAY (illustration)
 - 9. Matthew 5:48
- B. Cannot save himself.
 - 1. James 2:10
 - 2. Titus 3:5
 - 3. Ephesians 2:8-9
 - 4. OMELET WITH BAD EGG (illustration)
 - 5. Proverbs 14:12

Teaching Methods: Lecture, discussion, question and answer

Teaching Materials: Board and markers, paper, pens

Time Required: 1 hour

Introduction

Ask: How would you respond to a person who says that they don't sin? (*obtain responses*)

Ask: How would you respond to a person who says "everyone sins, and I am not the worst sinner, and God knows that I try to be a good person, and some people will be going to heaven--so why not me?" (*obtain responses, then recap the theme and objective of the lesson*)

Content Outline

A. Is a sinner. (*Discuss how these 6 verses show that Man is a sinner*)

1. Romans 3:23 - For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
2. Romans 3:10 - As it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one."
3. Isaiah 53:6 - All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way.
4. Isaiah 64:6 - All our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment.
5. 1 John 1:8 - If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
6. Psalms 51:5 - Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.
7. SIN DEFINED (illustration)

Ask: How would you define sin? (*Write all responses on the board*)

"When we think of sin, many times we think only of robbery, murder, adultery, etc. But the Bible tells us that sin is anything that doesn't please God or is a transgression of His law. Anything we do that we shouldn't, like losing our temper or stealing--these are sins of commission. Anything we should do but don't, like failing to pray or read the Bible, or to truly love our neighbor--these are sins of omission. There are not only sins in deed but also sins in word and thought like lying, cursing, lust, pride, and hatred. The Bible says these are all sins." ** Note: All illustrations explained come from the *Evangelism Explosion III* note cards.

8. THREE SINS A DAY (illustration)

"Suppose a person sinned only ten times a day or even five or even just three. Why, he would practically be a walking angel! Imagine if no more often than three times a day did he think unkind thoughts, or lose his temper, or fail to do what he ought towards God and man--he would be a pretty fine person, would he not? Even if he were this good, he would still have over 1,000 transgressions a year! If he lived to be the average age of 70, he would have 70,000 violations of the Law of God on his records. Think what would happen to a habitual offender in criminal court with 70,000 transgressions on his record!"

9. Matthew 5:48 - Therefore, you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.
None of us are good enough to get into heaven because God's standard is perfection (complete obedience to Him at all times), but we have all fallen short.

B. Cannot save himself. (*Discuss how these 3 verses show that Man cannot save himself*)

1. James 2:10 - For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.
2. Titus 3:5 - He saved us, **not on the basis of deeds** which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy.

3. Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the **gift of God; not as a result of works**, that no one should boast.
4. OMELET WITH BAD EGG (illustration)
 "If you were to prepare an omelet with five good eggs and one rotten egg, you couldn't serve it to company and expect it to be acceptable. Even less can we serve up our lives to God, which many have many things in them that men would call good, and yet are filled with deeds and thoughts that are rotten, and expect them to be acceptable to God. Scripture says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). If we want to get to heaven by our good works, then all we have to do is be perfect. God's standard is complete obedience to Him for all time. We all fall short of this."
5. Proverbs 14:12 - There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.
 Man's way is to earn or to try to deserve, but God's way is grace--to receive freely what we don't deserve. Eternal life rests on grace through faith.

Summary and Response

*Take 2 minutes and write on a piece of paper all the things that you believe are good things that you have done for God and mankind. Reflect for a moment on your deeds and ask yourself: **Have I trusted in any of these "good things" to "earn" my way into heaven.** A proper feeling towards these good works is wanting to do them out of gratefulness for the gift that God has already given you. Make a new commitment to trust only in God's grace (unmerited favor) through faith in Christ to have eternal life.*

Take 2 more minutes and write all the things that you believe are bad things that you have done against God and mankind (these items will not be seen by anyone except yourself). Reflect for a moment on how far short you have fallen from God's standard of perfection. According to James 2:10, if we sin in just one area we are guilty of sinning in all areas; and yet we have fallen in so many ways.

Ask: Do you see Biblically why it is impossible for anyone who is born with a sin-loving nature to get into heaven by being a reasonably good person and doing good things?

If we have even one sin, we do not deserve heaven. None of us can earn heaven. Therefore, God provided a way for us to get to heaven that is based on God's grace--His divine assistance--through Christ.

*Wouldn't you like to accept this free gift from God? Make a new commitment to trust only in God's grace (unmerited favor) through faith in Christ to have eternal life. Have everyone hold the paper that has the list of their good works (that cannot get them to heaven), and the list of their bad works (that will disqualify them from earning their way to heaven). Lead everyone in a prayer to trust in God's grace and provision for salvation and not in their good works. If anyone realizes that they have been trusting in their own good works instead of grace, then they can repent and transfer their trust at this time. **Have everyone tear the paper in pieces, symbolizing that they are not going to trust in their good works and that God has forgiven them of their sins and has given them eternal life.***

III. God

Theme: God is both merciful and just.

Objective: To understand the significance of a loving God justly punishing sin, and to continue to view God as loving even though He must punish sin.

Bible Text: Habakkuk 1:13, 1 John 4:8, Jeremiah 31:3, John 3:16,17, 2 Peter 3:9, 1 Timothy 2:4, Exodus 34:7, Romans 6:23, Romans 1:18, Ezekiel 18:4, Revelations 21:27, Psalms 89:32

Key Verses: 1 John 4:8 - God is love. (NASB)
Exodus 34:7- Yet, He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished. (NASB)

Outline

- A. Is merciful and therefore does not want to punish us.
 - 1. 1 John 4:8
 - 2. Jeremiah 31:3
 - 3. John 3:16,17
 - 4. 2 Peter 3:9
 - 5. 1 Timothy 2:4
- B. Is just and therefore must punish our sin.
 - 1. Exodus 34:7
 - 2. Romans 6:23
 - 3. Romans 1:18
 - 4. Ezekiel 18:4
 - 5. Revelations 21:27
 - 6. Psalms 89:32
 - 7. BANK ROBBER (illustration)

Teaching Methods: Lecture, discussion, question and answer.

Teaching Materials: Board and markers, paper, pens

Time Required: 1 hour

Introduction

One of the attributes of God is *omnipotence*, which signifies that "God is all powerful." In simple language, this often is translated into "God can do anything." **Ask: Can God create a stone so large that He could not lift it?** (*Obtain responses*) If God **can** create a stone that large, then there is something that He **can't** do--lift it. If God can lift anything then He **can't** create a stone so large. In either situation, it seems that God is not omnipotent. **Ask: Where is the fallacy in this logic?** (*Obtain responses*) The problem lies within our definition of the attribute of God--*omnipotence*. This deficient definition renders the question itself fallacious and self-contradictory. In essence, the question asks if God "can do" something that He "can't do"-- an impossibility. In logic, something cannot be both true and false at the same time. Henry C. Thiessen gives a proper definition of *omnipotence* in his book *Lectures in Systematic Theology*:

"God is all powerful and able to do whatever he wills. Since his will is limited by his nature, God can do everything that is in harmony with his perfections." (p. 82)

God can do all things that are in harmony with His nature and Person. For example, according to Scripture, "God cannot lie" (Titus 1:2, Hebrews 6:18). This example shows us the fallacies that can result when we do not have a proper understanding of God and His attributes.

Augustus H. Strong in *Systematic Theology* (p.244), defines the attributes of God as "those distinguishing characteristics of the divine nature which are inseparable from the idea of God and which constitute the basis and ground for his various manifestations to his creatures."

Ask: What are some of the attributes of God? (*Write all the responses on the board.*)

Some of His attributes include:

Non-moral: unique, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, triune, spirit, personal, and interactive with His creation

Moral: holiness, righteousness, justice, goodness, mercy, love, truth.

Ask: What kind of a wrong perception of God would a person have if they only emphasized God's attribute of love? (*Obtain responses such as "everyone would be saved". Recap the theme and objective of the lesson.*) God is not only loving and kind and merciful, but He is also holy and cannot even look upon sin (Habakkuk 1:13, Matthew 27:46).

Out of love, God created mankind with a free will to choose to have fellowship with Himself. Because mankind had sinned, death came into the human race. Scripture is clear that because God is just and righteous, He must punish disobedience. If man continues in rebellion to his creator, God is obligated to deal with sin and punish him in hell. However, God's love and mercy motivated Him to sacrifice His beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to endure the wrath of God as a substitute for all people. God's mercy reaches out to people to save them from their just punishment of eternal death. However, those who do not receive his gift are refusing salvation, and thus they will receive their deserved punishment; but, God is merciful and loves people so much that He patiently waits for them to repent and to turn to Him and His Son.

Content Outline

- A. Is merciful and therefore does not want to punish us. (*Read and discuss these verses*)
1. 1 John 4:8 - God is love.
 2. Jeremiah 31:3 - I have loved you with an everlasting love.
 3. John 3:16,17 - For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son... For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.
 4. 2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
 5. 1 Timothy 2:4 - God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- B. Is just and therefore must punish our sin. (*Read and discuss these verses*)
1. Exodus 34:7 - Yet, He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.
 2. Romans 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death.
 3. Romans 1:18 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.
 4. Ezekiel 18:4 - The soul who sins will die.
 5. Rev. 21:27 - And nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.
 6. Psalms 89:32 - Then I will visit their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes.
 7. BANK ROBBER (illustration)

"Suppose I were to rob a bank of \$5,000. A hidden camera takes movies of me in the act; the teller and other eye witnesses identify me as the robber. When I am brought before the judge, the evidence is undeniable, so I respond, 'I am guilty, Your Honor.'

Suppose I were then to say to him, 'Judge, I am very sorry that I robbed the bank. You have the money back and no one was hurt. I promise you I will never rob another bank if you will just let me go.'

Would the judge be just if he let me go? He has a standard of justice that must be satisfied. If he would let me go, there would be no bank safe in the land. If a human judge, because of justice, must punish law-breakers, how much more a just and holy God must punish sin! That's why the Bible says He can by no means leave the guilty unpunished."

Summary and Response

Although God is holy and just and must punish sin, He loves us so much that he doesn't want to punish us. To solve this problem, He sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross for our sins.

*(Have the students write on a piece a paper the answer to a skeptic's question: **How can a loving God send a person to hell?**) Have students share answers. Have each student pray aloud (less than 1 minute each) thanking God for his mercy and love in saving them from His just wrath.*

IV. Christ

Theme: Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, died to save us.

Objective: To understand the significance of the dual nature of Jesus (God and man) and of his death as full payment for our sins, and to ensure that Jesus is our personal Lord and Savior.

Bible Text: Isaiah 9:6, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 2:9, John 1:1,14, Luke 1:26-27, 30-31, 2:7, John 2:28, Hebrews 2:14-18, Romans 5:8, 1 Peter 2:21,24, 3:18, Hebrews 9:12, 1 John 1:7, John 19:30, Romans 3:25-26, John 14:2, John 3:16

Key Verses: Isaiah 9:6 - For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. (NASB)

1 Peter 3:18- For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit. (NASB)

Outline

- A. Who He is: The infinite God-man.
 - 1. Definition of terms
 - 2. Jesus Was Human
 - 3. Jesus Was God
 - 4. Why would God become man?
- B. What He did: He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and rose from the dead and is alive to show that He has purchased a place in heaven for us which He offers as a gift.
 - 1. Christ died on the cross
 - 2. Christ "purchased" a place in heaven for us

Teaching Methods: Lecture, discussion, question and answer, friendly Bible Search Contest

Teaching Materials: Board and markers, paper, pens

Time Required: 1 hour

Introduction

As December 31st comes and goes, the calendar reflects a change in its year. But what does the year 1996 really mean? When did we start counting these years? Having been a coin collector in my high school days, I was intrigued upon seeing a brilliant looking coin in a coin store with the date 46 B.C. engraved on it!?? Many people walked by and saw this "rare" coin and offered the salesman much money to add it to their collection. (**Ask: can anyone tell me why this coin could not have been genuine?** *Wait for responses*) If this coin was genuine, how would the people who made it know that the current year was 46 B.C.? (*Pause for reflection*) The symbols B.C. are used to represent the time "Before Christ," (A.D. does not represent the time "After the Death" of Jesus Christ, but the symbols come from the Latin words "Anno Domini," which means "in the year of the Lord"), and it is highly unlikely that someone KNEW that Jesus Christ would be born exactly 46 years later. Did we start counting calendar years the moment after Christ was born? Although there were many who believed that the baby Jesus would be a significant person in the course of mankind, the Christ child had not yet gained the notoriety of the whole world to the extent which would warrant basing a calendar on his birth. A standard system of dating events was prepared by Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk, upon the request of Pope John I in A.D. 525.

Our calendar was based from one of the most significant events of history, the Incarnation. Isaiah the prophet wrote a messianic prophecy approximately 700 years before the birth of Christ. (*Have the students to turn to Isaiah 9:6 and have one of them read it*)

Isaiah 9:6 - "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

From this verse that is often used at Christmas time, we see the dual nature of Jesus: humanity (he will be born to us), and Divinity (a Son will be given to us - God's Son is given to the world). We also see a clear declaration that He will be the Mighty God. (*Restate the theme and objective of the Bible Study*)

Content Outline

A. Who He is: The infinite God-man.

1. Definition of terms

(Ask the class to define the four terms below. Write one term on the board at a time and gather responses for each term, then re-emphasize the correct answer(s).)

a. God - "that than which there is no greater", the Creator

1. General attributes: unique, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, triune, spirit, personal, and interactive with His creation
2. Moral attributes: holiness, righteousness, love, truth.

b. Trinity - One God, three persons

1. Defined - In the nature of the one true God, there are three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, each fully God, coequal and coeternal.
2. Scriptures - (One God) Deut. 6:4; (plural persons) Gen. 1:26; (Father) Gal. 1:1; (Son) John 1:1, 14; (Holy Spirit) Acts 5:3-4; (3 persons in 1 name) Matt. 28:19.

c. Jesus Christ - The name "Jesus Christ" is also a title.

1. Jesus - derived from the Greek form of the Hebrew word *Jeshua* or *Joshua*, meaning "Jehovah-Savior" or "the Lord saves."
2. Christ - title derived from the Greek word (*Christos*) for Messiah (*Mashiach* in Hebrew - Daniel 9:26), and means "anointed one." The title implies the two offices of king and priest. Jesus was the promised priest and king of O.T.
3. Jesus Christ possesses two natures: human and Divine. (Phil. 2:5-11)

d. Incarnation - God became man

1. "The gracious voluntary act of the Son of God in assuming a human body and human nature." (*Have a student read: Phil. 2:5-11, Col. 2:9*)
2. The Lord Jesus Christ is one person with two natures indissolubly united, the one nature being that of the eternal Son of God, the other that of man, in all respects human "yet without sin."
3. Jesus, the Word (John 1:1), became man (John 1:14, Rom. 1:3), uniting in the single person of the Son two distinct and complete natures, deity and humanity.

2. Jesus Was Human

(Ask: What occasions in Scripture show the Humanity of Jesus? Write each response on the board. After all responses are in, divide the following verses among each student and have them quickly read the verses in order and highlight the human quality in each.)

a. He was born.

1. Born of a woman. (Is. 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:26-27, 30-31, 2:7; Gal. 4:4)
2. Born in the flesh. (John 1:14, Rom. 1:3)

b. He grew intellectually and physically. (Luke 2:52)

c. He desired food. (Matt. 4:2)

d. He became tired. (John 4:6)

e. He needed sleep. (Matt. 8:24)

f. He cried. (John 11:35)

g. He died. (John 19:33)

h. He was tempted in all things. (Heb. 4:15)

3. Jesus Was God

(Ask: What are some of the views that non-Christians have about the nature of Jesus? After responses are in, have each student turn to the following 3 verses:)

a. Disciples recognized it, and it was foretold.

John 1:1,14 - In the beginning was the Word (Jesus Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 20:28 - Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and **My God!**"

Isaiah 9:6 - For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, **Mighty God**, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

(Have the class prepare for a friendly Bible Search Contest by having each student pull out a pen and paper. Directions: find as many Biblical incidents as possible in 5 minutes that show the Deity of Christ (i.e. When Jesus made Divine claims, exercised Divine works, possessed Divine attributes, received worship, used God's reserved name for Himself). For

most groups, just ask students to share their answers with the group and affirm correct answers. For a competitive group having about the same level of Bible knowledge, score 1-point for a correct incident, 3-points for correct incident with the Biblical reference. At the end of 5 minutes, write the name of each student on the board and have them share their answers to the class. Place their references, points, and total score on the board. Honor the two highest scorers, and encourage the others. If the answer does not clearly imply the divinity of Christ, the answer may be accepted if at least 1/3 of the class thinks that it does. *The Deity of Christ is one of the most important doctrines to understand and to be able to defend Scripturally. Emphasize the examples that show Christ's Deity.*)

b. Jesus Made Divine claims

1. He who has seen Me has seen the Father (John 14:9)
2. He called God His own Father (John 5:18)
3. I and the Father are one (John 10:30-33)
4. Our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus (Titus 2:13)

c. Exercised Divine Works

1. Christ created all things (John 1:3, Col. 1:6, Heb. 1:10)
2. Christ upholds all things (Col. 1:17, Heb. 1:3)
3. Christ directs and guides the course of history (1 Cor. 10:1-11)
4. Christ forgives sin (Mark 2:5-12, Col. 3:13)
5. Christ bestows eternal life (John 10:28, 1 John 5:10)
6. Christ will raise the dead at the resurrection (John 11:25, John 5:21,28,29)
7. Christ will be the judge of all men (John 5:22, 27; Matt. 25:31-46, 2 Cor. 5:10)

d. Possessed Divine attributes

1. Self-existence (John 1:4, John 14:6)
2. Eternal (1 John 5:11, 20; John 8:35, 1 John 1:2)
3. All-knowing (John 16:30, 6:64)
4. All-powerful (Matt. 28:18) Compare John 5:19 with Mark 10:27--God can do anything not forbidden by His divine nature (i.e. sin; He is holy and righteous).
5. Present everywhere (Matt. 28:20, John 14:23)
6. Immutable - He does not change; He is forever the same. (Heb. 13:8)

e. Received worship (Matt. 28:9,17; John 9:38 compared with Deut. 6:13, Matt. 4:10)

f. Jesus used God's reserved name for Himself - Yahweh "I AM" (greek: Ego Eimi)

(Compare Ex. 3:13,14 with John 8:24,58; John 13:19; John 18:5)

4. Ask: Why would God become Man?

(Solicit responses. Read Heb. 2:14-18 and re-emphasize some of the following answers.)

- a. So that humans could have some understanding of the infinite God.
- b. To bridge the gulf between God and humankind.
- c. To experience the sufferings, trials, and temptations (yet, without sin) in order to sympathize with us and help us when we are tempted (Heb. 2:18).
- d. To become a merciful and faithful high priest (Heb. 2:17).
- f. To qualify to redeem the human race from Satan's power (Heb. 2:14).
- e. To atone for sins of people (Heb. 2:17). His obedience and death qualified him to be the perfect representative of fallen humanity and to bear the penalty of sin on their behalf.

- B. What He did: He died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins and rose from the dead and is alive to show that He has purchased a place in heaven for us which He offers as a gift. *(Have the students read and discuss the following verses.)*

1. Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins

a. Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

b. Isaiah 53:6 - All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him [Jesus].

c. RECORD BOOK (illustration)

Let's imagine this book in my right hand is a minutely detailed account of my life. Each page details the sin of a particular day, every word I have spoken, every thought that ever crossed my mind, every deed I've ever done.

Here then (*hold up the book*) is the problem--my sin. (*Place book in palm of left hand*). God loves me (*point to your left hand*) but He hates my sin (*point at the book on top of your hand*) and must punish it.

To solve this problem, He sent His beloved Son into the world (*lift up right hand parallel to the left hand*). The Scripture says, "All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him [Jesus]" (Is. 53:6). (*As you say the words, "fall on Him," transfer the book in one distinct motion from your left hand to the palm of your right and leave it in the right hand*). All of my sin which God hates has been placed on His beloved Son. Christ bore our sin in His own body on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). When He died He was buried in a grave for 3 days (*put the book on your lap*); but He rose from the dead and went to heaven to prepare a place for you and me. Now He offers heaven--eternal life--to you and me as a gift. That's what the word GRACE means.

d. 1 Peter 2:21,24- Christ suffered for you... He [Christ] Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

e. 1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit.

f. Hebrews 9:12 - And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

g. 1 John 1:7 - The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

h. John 19:30 - It is finished (meaning that the debt for sin has been paid in full, *TETELESTAI* in Greek).

"The blood of animals was only a temporary provision or atonement for the sins of the people; ultimately, a human was needed to serve as a substitute for humanity. Thus Christ came to earth and was born a human so that he might offer himself in our place (Heb. 2:9,14). Furthermore, only a human who was free from sin could take our punishment for sin (Heb. 2:14-18; 4:15) and thus adequately and perfectly satisfy the demands of God's holiness (Rom. 3:25-26)." (*The Full Life Study Bible NIV*, p. 1929).

2. Christ "purchased" a place in heaven for us

a. G-R-A-C-E (illustration) God's Riches At Christ's Expense

"God's riches (forgiveness, heaven, eternal life, peace, joy, and a sense of the love of God) at Christ expense (a crown of thorns, the mocking, being

beaten, nailed to a cross, the piercing of His side, the wrath of God and hell itself. Jesus paid it all. He offers us eternal life as a gift by grace."

b. John 14:2 - In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you: for I go to prepare a place for you.

Summary and Response

"Christ, being the Son of God, was able to offer a sacrifice of infinite and eternal value. Having assumed human nature, He was able to identify Himself with mankind and so suffer their penalty. He died in our stead; He took the penalty that was ours, in order that we might escape it" (*Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 207-8). Jesus offers the gift of eternal life to those who will receive it by faith. Christmas is the celebration of the greatest gift of history.

John 3:16 God so loved the world that **He gave** his only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Have the students take 3 minutes to write the answers to these questions in their own words:

(1) Who is Jesus to you

(2) What did Jesus do for you (theologically and experientially)

(3) When did you receive in your heart the Christmas gift that God gave.

Have each person share his written answer and finish by confessing to the class that Jesus is their Lord and Savior now, but be sensitive to those who may not be at a place to do so.

V. Faith

Theme: Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone.

Objective: To understand the difference between saving faith and pseudo intellectual and temporal faith, and to ensure that we are trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation and to be able to share our commitment with others.

Bible Text: Ephesians 2:8, James 2:19, Matthew 8:29, 7:21, 6:19-21,26, Acts 16:31, John 10:9, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, 5:24, 6:47, 1 Cor. 5:14, Rev. 3:20, John 1:12, John 3:1-13, 2 Cor. 5:17, Romans 10:9, Phil. 2:11, 1 Cor. 2:3, Luke 6:46, John 3:36, James 2:14,17, Mark 1:15, Acts 2:38, 3:19, 1 John 1:9

Key Verses: James 2:19 - You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and shudder. (NASB)
Acts 16:31 - And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household." (NASB)

Outline

- A. What it is not - mere intellectual assent or temporal faith.
 - 1. Intellectual assent: James 2:19, Matthew 8:29, Matthew 7:21
 - 2. Temporal faith: Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 16:26
- B. What it is - trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation.
 - Acts 16:31, John 10:9, Acts 4:12, John 14:6, John 5:24, John 6:47
 - K.A.T.: Knowledge, Assent, Trust
 - CHAIR (illustration)
 - MOTIVE FOR GODLY LIVING (illustration)
 - BEGGAR'S HAND (illustration)
- C. Clarification of Commitment
 - 1. Transferring your trust
 - 2. Receiving the resurrected, living Christ personally into your life
 - 3. Receiving Jesus Christ both as **Lord** and Savior
 - 4. Repenting of your sins

Teaching Methods: Lecture, question and answer, role play

Teaching Materials: Board and markers, a key-ring with keys, a handy object (i.e. a pen)

Time Required: 1 hour

Introduction

Ask: What are some of the sincere beliefs of non-Christians of how they hope to get to heaven?

(Obtain responses)

The Bible says "for by grace you have been saved through **faith**" (Ephesians 2:8)

KEY TO HEAVEN (illustration) *(Have everyone pull out their key rings)*

"Faith is the key that opens the door to heaven. You could have a key ring with many keys on it like this. They may even look somewhat alike. But, you go to the front door of my house and try all of these keys except the right one and they would not open that door. It does not matter how sincere you are in exercising belief that a different key will open the door. The fact is that only the right key will open the door.

The right key to heaven is called faith, saving faith. That is what will open the door to heaven. There is nothing else in the world that will open that door no matter how sincere you are in exercising the practice or belief of something other than saving faith to open the door to heaven. What is saving faith?"

Content Outline

A. What it is not - mere intellectual assent or temporal faith.

1. Intellectual assent

Some people believe in Jesus Christ the same way that they believe in some other historical figure, like George Washington. They believe that He lived, but they are not trusting Him to do anything for them now. *(Discuss how these three verses show a pseudo intellectual faith and apply to many people today)*

a. James 2:19 - You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and shudder.

b. Matthew 8:29 - And behold, they cried out saying, "What do we have to do with You, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

(Even the demons believe in the deity of Christ, but they obviously were not saved)

c. Matthew 7:21 - Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

2. Temporal faith

When a person trusts the Lord for finances, that is called financial-faith. If you pray and trust the Lord for good health, that is called healing-faith. If you pray and trust the Lord for a safe trip, that is called traveling-faith. All these are temporary in nature. Once your financial needs are met, you no longer need to trust the Lord; once you have safely reached your destination, you don't need to trust the Lord for traveling-faith. All the things of this world shall pass away. They are temporary. All these things are good to trust Christ for, but they are not saving faith. Saving faith is trusting Christ to save you--eternally.

(As the students read these verses, ponder about the futility of this temporal life)

- a. Matthew 6:19-21- Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
- b. Matthew 16:26 - For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul?

B. What it is - trusting in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation. (*Disperse verses then read*)

1. Acts 16:31 - And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household."
2. John 10:9 - I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved ...
3. Acts 4:12 - And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.
4. John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."
5. John 5:24 - Truly, truly, I say to you he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.
6. John 6:47 - Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes [on me] has eternal life.
7. K.A.T: Knowledge, Assent, Trust (*write these words on the board for emphasis*)

According to theologians, saving faith consists of Knowledge, Assent, and Trust.

Knowledge: We can know something without giving assent to it. I know about different cult teachings but I do not assent to it.

Assent: I can know of and assent to George Washington being the first president of the United States, but I am not trusting in George Washington for anything.

Trust: We need to know about Jesus and what He has done, and to assent to these truths, but then we must place our trust in Christ and what He has done.

8. CHAIR (illustration)

Ask: Do you believe this chair exists? (*obtain YES, and point to an empty chair*)

Ask: Do you believe this chair would support me if I were to sit on it? (*YES*)

But it is not supporting me now for a very simple reason. I am not sitting on it. For the sake of making my point, let the chair where I am sitting represent me [and my good works], and this empty chair represent Jesus Christ. Many people believe He exists and could help them, but do not have eternal life because they are trusting their own good works to support them into heaven. To receive eternal life, I must transfer my trust from myself to Jesus Christ alone for eternal life (*sit in the empty chair*).

9. MOTIVE FOR GODLY LIVING (illustration)

A president of Princeton once said: "As a young man I accepted Christ and the gift of eternal life. All the rest of my life has been simply a P.S. to that day, saying "Thank you, Lord, for what you gave to me then." The motive for Christian living is gratitude for the gift of eternal life.

1 Corinthians 5:14 - For the love of Christ controls us.

10. BEGGAR'S HAND (illustration)

"Faith is the hand of a beggar reaching out to accept the gift of a King. 16 years ago

this beggar reached out an unworthy hand and received the gift of eternal life. I didn't deserve it then, I don't deserve it now--but I have it." (*Use a handy object as 'the gift' and hold it with your right hand when you say 'Faith is the hand of a beggar reaching out ...' reach with the left hand and take the 'gift' in it as you complete the illustration.*)

C. Clarification of Commitment

To avoid a premature commitment to Christ, a person needs a thorough understanding of what is involved in accepting Christ as Savior and Lord. The following four essential points are an elaboration of the meaning of faith. Emphasis needs to be made on certain points depending upon the attitude of the person having "faith" in Christ. If the person is already "moved" to repent, then this point does not need to be emphasized too much. However, if a person thinks that accepting Jesus will not change his life, then aspects of repentance and the lordship of Christ should be emphasized. Faith consist of...

1. Transferring your trust

Faith is transferring your trust (your hope of eternal life) from what you have been doing to what Jesus Christ has already done for you by dying on the cross.

2. Receiving the resurrected, living Christ personally into your life

You receive eternal life by receiving the person of Jesus Christ into your life (your heart) by faith. You then have an intimate personal relationship with God, with Christ, who comes to dwell inside of you through the Holy Spirit.

a. Revelations 3:20 - Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.

b. John 1:12 - But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.

c. Romans 8:9 - However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

At the moment when a person has true saving faith, the Spirit of God produces a change in him whereby he is "born again" and becomes a new creature in Christ (John 3:1-13, 2 Corinthians 5:17). When this *regeneration* occurs, the person has the grace, ability, and motivation to repent and follow the Lord Jesus. It is inevitable that he will produce good works.

3. Receiving Jesus Christ as both **Lord** and Savior:

Ask: Can a person be saved by embracing Jesus as Savior but not as Lord?

Ask: What does it mean to confess with your mouth 'Jesus as Lord'?

Ask: What does it mean to confess 'Jesus is MY Lord'? (*Obtain responses to these questions. Have the students read these verses*) To make Jesus your Lord and Master means that you are committing your entire life to Jesus to be His slave for life; you are committing your own will and desires to him to do His bidding.

a. Romans 10:9 - That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

b. Philippians 2:11- and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- c. 1 Cor. 12:3 - Therefore I make known to you, no one speaking by the Spirit of God says "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.
- d. Luke 6:46 - And why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?
- e. John 3:36 - He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

"The decision to turn from sin and to salvation in Christ involves accepting Christ not only as Savior from the penalty of sin, but also as Lord of one's life. Thus, repentance involves a change of lords--from the lordship of Satan (Eph. 2:2) to the lordship of Christ and his Word (Acts 26:18)." (*Full Life Study Bible NIV*, p. 1407)

In his book *Faith Alone*, R. C. Sproul writes, "saving faith involves embracing Christ as both Savior and Lord and that true faith inevitably, necessarily, and immediately begins to display the fruit of obedience... But the justified person is manifestly a *changed* person who is regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. He acknowledges, embraces, and to some degree submits to Christ as Lord." (p.168)

Ask: Does saving faith necessarily produce the works of obedience?

Ask: Is it possible for a person to have true faith and not have works?

(*obtain responses, then read the statements and these verses*)

R. C. Sproul states, "the Reformers insisted that true faith necessarily, inevitably, and immediately yields the fruit of works. They argued that though justification is by faith alone, it is not by a faith that is alone" (*Faith Alone*, P. 26).

- f. James 2:14 - What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

- g. James 2:17- Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

R. C. Sproul comments that "James makes it clear that a mere *profession* of faith does not result in salvation. There is no profit in a profession of faith that yields no works.... A faith devoid of works is not a saving faith... It is not necessary for God to observe outward action to know if true faith is present in the heart. Our works 'justify' our claim to faith in the eyes of human beholders" (*Faith Alone*, p. 164-65).

"Works are not the ground of our justification or our salvation, but there will be no salvation without them. As one cannot have true faith without it yielding works, so one cannot have true faith without simultaneously having repentance. In that sense repentance is necessary for salvation. If there is no repentance, there is not only no fellowship with God but also no salvation, precisely because the lack of repentance proves that there is no genuine faith." (*Faith Alone*, p. 171)

4. Repenting of your sins

- a. Mark 1:15- [Jesus said] "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent** and believe in the gospel."
- b. Acts 2:38- And Peter said to them, "**Repent** and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- c. Acts 3:19 - **Repent** therefore and return, that your sins may be wiped away.
- d. 1 John 1:9- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P. C. Nelson says well in *Bible Doctrines*, "the faith that saves presupposes genuine repentance, and is followed by obedience" (p. 38) (Mark 1:15, Rom. 1:5, Rom. 16:26, Acts 2:38).

Ask: What does the word repentance mean? (*Write answers on the board*)

In essence, it is a true sorrow for sins, with a sincere effort to forsake it.

The Greek word for *repentance* is *metanoia*, and means a "change" of mind [about Christ and sin]. *Meta* means change; *noai* means mind. *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* accurately states "Although faith alone is the condition for salvation (Eph. 2:8-10; Acts 16:31), repentance is bound up with faith and inseparable from it ... there can be no saving faith without true repentance. Repentance contains as essential elements:

- (1) a genuine sorrow toward God on account of sin (2 Cor. 7:9-10; Matt. 5:3-4; Ps. 51);
- (2) an inward repugnance to sin necessarily followed by the actual forsaking of it (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20; Heb. 6:1); and
- (3) humble self surrender to the will and service of God (see Acts 9:6, as well as Scriptures above referred to)" (p. 1073).

"Repentance is a free decision on the part of sinners, made possible by the enabling grace given to them as they hear and believe the gospel. The definition of saving faith as 'mere trust' in Christ as Savior is wholly inadequate in the light of Christ's demand for repentance. To define saving faith in a way that does not necessarily involve a radical break with sin is to dangerously distort the Biblical view of redemption. Faith that includes repentance is always a condition for salvation (Mark 1:15, Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 11:21). The preaching of repentance must always accompany the gospel message (Luke 24:47)." (*Full Life Study Bible NIV*, p. 1407)

"Turning from sin and turning to God are the conditions and preparations for salvation. Strictly speaking, there is no merit to repentance or faith;... By repentance the penitent removes the obstacle to the receiving of the gift; by faith he accepts the gift." (*Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible*, p. 222)

Summary and Response

"Faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition God requires for salvation. Faith means firmly believing and trusting in the crucified and risen Christ as our personal Lord and Savior. Faith involves repentance, i.e., in true sorrow turning from sin (Acts 17:30, 2 Cor. 7:10) and turning to God through Christ. Saving faith is always a repentant faith (Acts 2:37-38). Faith includes obedience to Jesus Christ and his Word as a way of life inspired by our faith, by our gratitude to God and by the regenerating work of the Spirit (John 3:3-6, Rom. 14:15,21-24. Heb.5:8-9)." (*Full Life Study Bible NIV*, p. 1720)

ACTIVITY: *Have the students' pair up with a partner and ROLE PLAY being an evangelist and a sinner. Within 5 minutes, the evangelist will briefly share the essential elements of the gospel (Grace, Man, God, Christ, and Faith), and conclude by sharing the four clarifying points on what true faith entails. Afterwards, have the partners reverse roles for another 5 minutes.*

Close in prayer for the class and include a sinner's prayer for salvation such as:

Lord Jesus, I want You to come into my life right now. I am a sinner. I have been trusting in myself and my own good works. But now I put my trust in You. I accept You as my own personal Savior. I believe You died for me. I receive You as Lord and Master over my life. Help me to turn from my sins and to follow You. I accept Your gift of eternal life. I am not worthy of it but I thank You for it. Amen.