

Week Three: Teachers Guide

"The Foundational Theme of Salvation"

[You'll notice the prompts to show slide. These are optional. However, you will notice that they will enhance the experience by placing images to words as you share certain aspects of the Bible Study]

Overview:

1. Brief Week Two Recap
2. Life After Sin
3. Two Offerings
4. The Foundational Theme of Salvation
5. Noah and the Ark
6. Can't Have One Without the Other
7. Closing

Last time we got together we looked at how:

[Show WEEK TWO Title Slide from last week]...

- God spoke the world into existence,
- Creation itself points to a magnificent plan from an all-powerful Creator,
- Sin entered the world when Adam and Eve questioned whether God's Word was really true, and whether or not there would actually be consequences if they disobeyed it,
- Yet in spite of sin, we find that since the beginning of time, God has always desired a relationship with humankind,

Before we start, we always want to ask God to bless the lesson and help us to draw closer to Him... **PRAY!**

[Show Title Slide for THIS week... "The Foundational Theme of Salvation"]

2. Life After Sin

- After Adam and Eve sinned, they were expelled from the garden of Eden and from the presence of God the way they knew it when they were created.
- After that point, Eve gave birth to the first newborns in the history of the world.
- With that birth, the Bible leads us into the story of their children named Cain and Abel.

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 4:1–5 (KJV)

1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

- In this story, we see an introduction to a Biblical principle that will forever shape our world.
- This three-step principle is found back here in Genesis, all throughout the Bible, and it is still applicable to us in modern day.

[Show picture of Cain and Abel]...

- Cain and Abel grew and it was time to bring an offering to the Lord.
- Cain is basically like a farmer and Abel is a shepherd.
- Cain brings fruit of the ground and Abel brings a "firstling of his flock." Most likely this was a sheep or another innocent animal from his flock.
- In one circumstance, blood was shed (just like what God called for in the case of Adam and Eve), and in the other case, fruit of the ground was given.
- God accepted the blood shed but was not pleased with the offering of the fruit of the ground.
- **Why is that?**

3. Two Offerings

FIRST:

- God's way always required a shedding of blood.
- Not only was that the case with Adam and Eve, but we also find millions of gallons of blood shed all throughout the Old Testament.
- Even in the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews states this fact...

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Hebrews 9:22 (KJV)

22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

- This is why God takes on flesh and gives Himself on the Cross of Calvary and we no longer have to sacrifice and offer the blood of innocent animals.

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Acts 20:28 (KJV)

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, **to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**

- Cain did not follow this model and he chose to do things his own way. Abel followed God's model and his offering was accepted.

SECOND:

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 4:1–5 (KJV)

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that **Cain brought** of the fruit of the ground **an offering** unto the Lord.

4 And **Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock** and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

This means he brought the firstborn offspring. This was the first part and his very best. **Cain appeared to just bring “an offering.”** God **does not** demand perfection, but He does demand our very best and what is first.

In these two brothers, we see two totally different kinds of people:

One brother trusted and obeyed God. One did not.
One obeyed God’s plan, and one did things his own way.
One way is accepted by God. One is rejected.

We cannot just do things our own way. We must always follow the plan that God lays out for us.

Notice something, they both **believed** in God. After all, they had open communication and dialogue here in this account.

They **knew who God was** and **believed in Him**.

Yet **“belief”** is not the only thing that saves us.

Sometimes people will say, **“Just believe and you are saved.”**

In the Bible, **“belief”** always went hand in hand **with action**.

4. The Foundational Theme of Salvation

[Show Slide with Three Crucial Concepts]...

In this story, we see the foundational theme of the entire Bible. One that I pray you will never forget.

Grace. Faith. Obedience.

Read on to what happens next...

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 4:6–7 (KJV)

6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

There were no surprises here! God basically says to Cain:

- **“Why are you mad? If you just do what I told you to do, the offering will be accepted. But by ignoring my command, sin is going to get in your heart and destroy you!”**
- This is what happened to Adam and Eve, and it’s exactly what happens to us too! If we will just align with God’s plan and commands, all will be well.
- **But if we choose to do our own thing**, sin will destroy us.

God's grace was reaching out to Cain multiple times in this story. Unfortunately, Cain rejects God's **grace**, and even though he **believed** in God, he did not **obey** God.

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 4:8–16 (KJV)

8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Again, it appears that we see the **grace of God reaching** to Cain here and giving him an opportunity to repent. But Cain, once again, **rejects God's grace**.

11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

- I don't know about you, but for being the very first murderer in the Bible (and the history of the world), I feel like Cain gets off easy here!
- He has to work for a living and he is going to be a fugitive. Seems to me that he got off easy!

But that was not the real punishment. Look at the next verse...

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and **from thy face shall I be hid**; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

And verse 16...

16 And Cain **went out from the presence of the Lord**, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

- His continuous act of **rejecting God's grace** and **not responding in obedience**, caused him to be removed from the presence of the Lord forever.
- And if we reject God's grace and refuse to respond in obedience, the Bible also tells of a time when humanity will no longer have a chance to be in God's presence. That is why it is so important that **we respond to God's grace with faith followed by obedience.**

5. Noah and the Ark

- This foundational three-step theme of the Bible also appears heavily in another man's life just two chapters later.
- Because of sin, things had gotten so corrupt in the earth that God decides to destroy humanity and start over.
- But before God ever passes judgment, we always see GRACE first!

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Genesis 6:5–8 (KJV)

5 And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

6 And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

[\[Show pic of Noah's Ark\]...](#)

- Because of this grace, God tells Noah exactly what He is going to do, but then He gives Noah a **“plan for his salvation.”**
- When I say, “a plan for his salvation,” I am referring to **the specific plan that God offers in grace because He wants to save the people He loves**
- The fact that He is giving the plan itself is proof enough that He loves that person.
- God also has a specific plan for **our** salvation even yet today, and we will talk about that later in this Bible study.
- Here for Noah, God gives Noah all the details of the way He is going to save him and his family.

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 6:13–16 (NLT – For ease of understanding the dimensions)

13 So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!

14 “Build a large boat from cypress wood and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior.

15 Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.

16 Leave an 18-inch opening below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper.

God calls Noah to not only build a boat, but also to build a really big boat!

[Show same slide of Noah's Ark again]...

To put things in perspective, look at the dimensions of this Ark that God is telling Noah to build (without modern tools and scaffolds):
450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high.

[Show Slide of Titanic]...

Now look at the dimensions of the Titanic (built in 1909-1911):
882 feet long, 92 feet wide, and 60 feet high (from waterline to boat deck)

That is pretty amazing that Noah did this at least 4,000 years earlier! And Noah's boat did not sink!

6. The Role of Faith, Grace and Obedience

Even the New Testament boasts of Noah's great faith to follow God's plan and build this boat...

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Hebrews 11:7 (KJV)

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

This truly took an immense level of faith because, as far as we can tell, it had never even rained before this time!

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Genesis 2:5–6 (KJV)

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

Could you imagine that conversation with Noah and his wife lying in bed one night?

Noah: Honey, I think I am going to build a boat!
Noah's Wife: What is a "boat?"
Noah: It's something that will float on the water.

Noah's Wife: Why do we need that?
Noah: Because it's going to rain!

Noah's Wife: What is "rain?"
Noah: Water that falls from the sky!
Noah's Wife: Our water mists from the ground, Noah!

Noah:
Yeah, but God is getting ready to send so much rain from the sky that it's even going to cover all the mountains! So I gotta get started on a 450 foot long boat!

Noah's Wife: Noah, are you feeling okay?

You see... even men back then talked to their wives about getting a boat!

Again, some today will make statements like, "**All you have to do is 'just believe and you're saved'**," but that's not what we find in Biblical stories.

Anyone who truly believed always obeyed.

What if God's grace reached out to Noah, told him about the upcoming destruction and His plan for Noah's salvation, and then **Noah simply said, "I believe you, Lord"?**

Noah and his family would have DIED!

God **loved** Noah, Noah **believed** in God, and Noah **knew God's plan**.

But if Noah **does not OBEY**... then Noah dies!

That is not to belittle grace, or to put the burden of salvation solely on our own shoulders. Because without God's grace, there is no salvation!

Noah would have never thought to build a boat! **He needed to have God reach out and offer him a plan... a way to be saved.**

Without grace, Noah is just as dead as if he did not obey.

That is why Noah (and us) need all three:

[Show Same Slide again with Three Crucial Concepts]...

Grace. Faith. Obedience.

Illustration

[Show Slide of Man walking across Niagara Falls]...

There was once a man who gained a following walking on a tightrope across Niagara Falls. Spectators would gather around to see this guy do shows for the tourists. He would grab a megaphone and get the crowd hyped up by asking who thought he could walk across the Falls on a tightrope. Of course, the tourists would roar with applause encouraging him to do it.

Then he would pull out a wheelbarrow and ask who thought he could walk the tightrope while pushing the wheelbarrow. Once again, the tourists would scream and cheer. But then he stopped and looked at a man standing in the front and simply said, **"Okay! Get in the wheelbarrow!"**

The man who was cheering loudly moments earlier, all of a sudden, was pretty hesitant. Sometimes we can live our lives just like that: **We can scream and cheer for God, saying we believe in him.**

But when it comes time to **"get in the wheelbarrow,"** then we tend to hesitate.

7. Can't Have One Without the Other

Biblically, faith and action always go together! More than just "belief" is required to be saved!

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

Hebrews 5:9 (KJV)

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that **obey** him;

Look at this account in James because he addressed this way of thinking...

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

James 2:14–17 (KJV)

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Faith doesn't have life if it is not combined with actually doing something with it!

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

James 2:18–19 (KJV)

18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

If all we need is to “just believe and be saved,” then the devil himself is going to be in Heaven because he is a “believer” in God!

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

James 2:24 (KJV)

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

[\[Show Scripture\]...](#)

James 2:26 (KJV)

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

- **Cain was punished because he believed but did not obey.**
- **Noah was saved because he believed and obeyed by following God’s detailed plan.**
- **The title of this lesson is, “The Foundational Theme of Salvation” because without these three steps of “Grace, Faith, and Obedience,” we do not see salvation occur in Scripture.**

[Show Slide of Cross]...

Some might argue that **the Cross** is the foundational theme of salvation, and that is definitely the foundational element that falls under grace and opens the door to the whole process of salvation.

But we will see later that **the Cross has the power to save everyone, but Scripture says many will still be lost.**

Why is that?

Because like Cain, **grace was extended**, maybe there was even **an element of faith**, but there was **a lack of obedience to God's plan** that would have brought life instead of death.

6. Closing

[Show Slide of Noah's Ark in rain]...

People must have laughed and made fun of Noah, until the rain started. Just like many people still laugh and ignore the warnings and plan of God today. God destroys all life on the earth. This is a very sad truth.

[Show Scripture]...

Genesis 7:21–23 (KJV)

21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man:

22 All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died.

23 And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark.

After the flood, God calls Noah and his family out of the Ark and He commands them to “multiply and replenish the earth” (Genesis 9:1). And that is exactly what begins to happen.

It's a story that get repeated in Scripture of three key components:

Grace. Faith. Obedience.

INVITE BACK FOR LESSON #4 NEXT WEEK.

 **THEN CLOSE IN PRAYER.**