

LESSON 6

Why Were You Born?



LESSON 6

Why Were You Born?

**WHEN WE MAKE
SOMETHING,
WE HAVE
A PURPOSE
FOR IT. IT
STANDS TO
REASON THAT
OUR LIFE ALSO
WAS DESIGNED
WITH A
PURPOSE AND
A MEANING.**

It may be the philosophical question of the ages, but it is also intensely personal. The great thinkers have pondered the purpose of human existence, but so have the rest of us at certain tipping points in our lives.

In moments of expectation or sorrow, in times of decision or trouble, we wonder:

- Why was I born?
- What am I here to do?
- What difference will my life make?
- What is my destiny?

We all find some answers, though they may not be fully satisfying. Most of us do not look to the philosophers for help, for we find their answers too often esoteric or just plain depressing. Like this cheerless exercise from a book claiming to answer *What Does It All Mean? A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy*:

“The problem is that although there are justifications and explanations for most of the things, big and small, that we do within life, none of these explanations explain the point of your life as a whole—the whole of which all these activities, successes and failures, strivings and disappointments are parts. If you think about the whole thing, *there seems to be no point to it at all*. Looking at it from the outside, it wouldn’t matter if you had never existed. And after you have gone out of existence, it won’t matter that you did exist” (Thomas Nagel, 1987, p. 96, emphasis added).

Is that true? Is there really *no point to life*? Is life really just a temporary existence and that’s it?

But we feel in our heart of hearts that there is something more. We know that when we make something, whether dinner or a skyscraper, we have a purpose for it. It stands to reason that our life and universe also was designed with a purpose and a meaning.

In previous lessons we have considered God and His instruction manual, the Holy Bible. In this lesson we will delve deeper into the Creator’s book to discover His purpose for us.

It is there!

Unfortunately, that purpose has been ignored, overlooked and misunderstood throughout human history. Let’s embark on one of the most intriguing, exciting and satisfying explorations possible—the search for the meaning of your life.

PART 1

What Is a Human Being?

**GOD SAID
HUMANITY
WAS MADE
“ACCORDING TO
OUR LIKENESS”
AND “IN
OUR IMAGE.”
HUMANS ARE
MADE AFTER
THE GOD KIND!**

Are humans just basically animals with more highly developed brains—or were human beings created inherently different from animals?

Genesis 1:25-26: “And God made the beast of the earth according to its _____, cattle according to its _____, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its _____. And God saw that it was good.

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our _____, according to Our _____; let them have _____ over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”

Deeper insight

God gave humans responsibility over all the other creatures on earth (a responsibility we have too often misused). This responsibility in itself is a high and noble calling. But does this just make us the highest of the animals?

Compare what God said when He created the animals with what He said about the first humans. Throughout the creation account in Genesis 1, God said plants and animals were each made according to their *own kind* (verses 11, 21, 24).

We see this law very clearly in nature: Life can only reproduce life according to its kind. Cats cannot reproduce dogs. Lions cannot reproduce elephants.

Commenting on the phrase “after its kind,” Albert Barnes notes: “This phrase intimates that like produces like, and therefore that the ‘kinds’ or species are fixed, and do not run into one another. In this little phrase the theory of one species being developed from another is denied” (*Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*).

But what “kind” were humans? God said humanity was made “according to Our likeness” and “in Our image.” Humans are made after the God kind!

In what ways are we created after God’s image and likeness?

There are several ways that we are designed in God’s image:

1. Our physical bodies.

We covered what the Scriptures reveal about God’s form in Lesson 3. We saw that God reveals Himself as having a face, arms, hands and back (Exodus 33:11; Job 40:9; Psalm 110:1; Exodus 33:23).



TERMINOLOGY

The spirit in man

An element in humans that enables what we call the human mind, including self-awareness, intellect, creativity and the ability to appreciate beauty, along with a unique personality and temperament. It gives us the abilities that make us human, created in the image of God.

2. Our mental abilities.

When we compare our mental aptitudes with animals, we see that our brains are imbued with vastly superior abilities. Those abilities come from our Creator. He is a creator and builder, and He has given humans a limited capability to design, create and build. He has unlimited intelligence and understanding, and He has given us the capability to learn and understand our world around us. He is an organized being who works in a methodical manner, and He has enabled us to be organized and methodical.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:11.

This verse reveals an element God has placed in human beings that allows us to do and understand “the things of a man.” This element is called “the _____ in man.”

3. Our emotions.

Human beings have the ability to feel and experience a wide range of emotions—far deeper than what is expressed by any animal. As we learned in Lesson 3, God is not a stoic, emotionless being. He feels and experiences a wide range of emotions. Look up the following scriptures and write what they reveal about the emotions God feels.

| Scripture | What It Reveals About God |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Jeremiah 31:3 | |
| Psalms 103:13 | |
| Jeremiah 32:41 | |
| Psalms 7:11 | |
| Psalms 78:40 | |

Note: Though the scriptures are clear that God feels emotions, it's important to understand that His emotions are always in perfect balance and are never misused. Human beings frequently misuse the emotional capabilities we have been given, but God never misuses or loses control of His emotions.

To recap the above three points, when God designed human beings, He used Himself as the model. He took His appearance, abilities and emotions and put them into us—though on a finite and limited scale.

**EVEN
THOUGH WE
ARE CREATED
IN GOD'S
IMAGE, THERE
ARE STILL
MAJOR GAPS
BETWEEN US
AND HIM.**

What are the primary differences between God and human beings?

Even though we are created in God's image, there are still major gaps between us and Him. Look up the following scriptures and describe what they teach about God and human beings.

God

| | Scripture | Description |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Composition | John 4:24 | |
| Character | Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:30 | |
| Life Span | Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 6:16 | |

Human Beings

| | Scripture | Description |
|-------------|---|-------------|
| Composition | Genesis 3:19; Job 34:15 | |
| Character | Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19; Romans 3:23 | |
| Life Span | Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 3:20 | |

By comparing the answers in each of the above tables, we see there are three major gaps separating us from God. As we will see, in some ways man is now only a clay model of God, but God has plans to transform us into something more!

**GOD WANTS
US TO GROW
TO THINK LIKE
HE DOES—
TO DEVELOP
HIS PERFECT
CHARACTER
IN OUR LIVES
TODAY.**

In addition to God making man in His “image,” does He also want us to develop a mind and character like His?

Philippians 2:5: “Let this _____ be in you which was also in _____.”

Hebrews 10:16: “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My _____ into their _____, and in their _____ I will write them.”

Matthew 5:48: “Therefore you shall be _____, just as your Father in heaven is _____.”

Deeper insight

God wants us to grow to think like He does. He gave us His laws to help us grasp how He thinks on a practical level. His laws are all based on love, and they show us how to love Him and love others (Matthew 22:37-40; Romans 13:8-10).

(To review how each of the 10 Commandments teaches us how to apply God’s spiritual character in our life, go back and study the chart titled “The Spiritual Intent of God’s 10 Commandments” in section 5 of Lesson 3.)

By obeying God’s laws, we develop His character and become like Him. God is perfect, and He wants us to always choose the good, beneficial and loving choice. If we did, we would be perfect, like our “Father in heaven.”

The late religious educator Herbert W. Armstrong defined *character* like this:

“What *is* perfect character? It is the ability, in a separate entity with free moral agency, to come to the KNOWLEDGE of the right from the wrong—the true from the false—and to CHOOSE the right, and possess the WILL to enforce self-discipline to DO the right and resist the wrong” (*The Incredible Human Potential*, 1978, p. 138).

In order for us to develop God’s character, what key choice does He give us?

Genesis 2:8-9: “The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of _____ was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of _____ and _____.”

Genesis 3:1-5: “Now the _____ was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, “You shall not eat of _____ of the garden?”’”

**THE TREE
OF LIFE
REPRESENTS
THE WAY OF
OBEYING GOD
AND THINKING
AS HE DOES.**

“And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, “You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.”’”

“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely _____. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing _____ and _____.’”

Deuteronomy 30:19: “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you _____ and _____, blessing and cursing; therefore choose _____, that both you and your descendants may _____.”

Proverbs 11:19: “As righteousness leads to _____, so he who pursues evil pursues it to his own _____.”

Deeper insight

The Bible outlines two ways of living. The tree of life represents the way of obeying God and thinking as He does. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents deciding for ourselves (often under the influence of Satan) what is right and wrong. This way eventually leads to death.

Answer the following questions to learn more about these two choices and their consequences:

Genesis 3:16-24; Isaiah 59:2; and Romans 6:23: What are the consequences of the wrong choice?

Romans 3:23: How many people have made this wrong choice?

Revelation 12:9; 1 John 5:19; and Romans 8:7: Why have so many made the wrong choice?



PERSONAL STUDY

Can a Person Really Think Like God?

Read the Personal Study
scriptures and answer the
correlating questions.

Isaiah 55:8-9: How do God's thoughts compare to our natural thoughts?

1 Corinthians 2:16: What does it say we can have?

1 Corinthians 2:10: What allows us to think like God?

1 Peter 4:1-2: What elements of Christ's mind does Peter say we need to have?

Philippians 4:8: Give a few examples of godly thoughts listed by Paul in this verse.

Is there a way back from the way of death?

Mark 2:17: "When Jesus heard it, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to _____.'"

Romans 5:8-10: "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still _____, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from _____ through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the _____ of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be _____ by His life."

Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to _____?"

Deeper insight

We have each earned the death penalty, and that penalty can only be paid by death (Romans 6:23; Hebrews 9:22). Incredibly, the perfect and sinless Son of God (John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 4:15) was willing to die to pay the penalty for our sins! Jesus Christ's death made it possible for us to repent, ask for God's forgiveness and start

a life of transformation. Without this loving gift, we could never achieve our God-ordained potential.

God created us out of physical matter and gave us temporary, physical lives. In a way, this life is a training ground for something much more. It seems that if He had created us of spirit and we sinned, we would not have been able to change.

For instance, once some of the angels sinned and became demons, their character became set. They will always be evil. But physical matter is both temporary and changeable, so we can either accept God's call to repent and change, or choose the way that leads to death—ceasing to exist.

God the Father and Jesus Christ love us and paid the ultimate price—the death of the Son, Jesus Christ! This sacrifice makes it possible for us to break free from Satan's deception and slavery from sin. It makes it possible for us to aspire to the awesome potential God has for each of us! So let's explore further what this potential—which means so much to God—is.



PERSONAL STUDY

Why Christians Don't Go to Heaven After Death

Read the Personal Study scriptures and answer the correlating questions.

Ecclesiastes 9:5: What does it tell us about the state of the dead?

John 3:13: What did Jesus say about the dead going to heaven?

Romans 8:17: Does it say that God's people will be glorified at the moment of death or all together at the same time?

These three verses, when read with 1 Thessalonians 4 and 1 Corinthians 15, give a clear picture of what happens after death. After death we are unconscious (other scriptures liken death to sleep). We don't live on in another state in heaven. At Christ's return, He will resurrect His people to eternal life, and we will receive glory together.

PART 2

What Is the Ultimate Purpose of Our Lives?

**WE WERE
BORN FOR A
PURPOSE SO
FANTASTIC,
WE COULDN'T
GRASP IT
UNLESS HE
REVEALED IT
TO US!**

Just knowing that God gave humanity the responsibility to care for the earth is wonderful. Knowing that we are created in His image and likeness is amazing. Understanding that He was even willing to die to give us a fresh start after making disastrous wrong choices is awesome! Knowing that we can think and live as He does is life-changing!

But the Bible tells us there is even more to the story of God's plans for us. We were born for a purpose so fantastic, we couldn't grasp it unless He revealed it to us!

Is this life all there is?

1 Corinthians 15:19: "If in this _____ only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most _____."

Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the _____ of God is _____ in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:18: "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the _____ which shall be _____ in us."

Deeper insight

God knows that the trials and challenges of living a Christian life in an antagonistic world can be painful. But He promises us a priceless gift that humanity has long sought: the gift of eternal life! And He tells us that when we experience that glorious future, we will look back and consider that the things we suffered now are not even worth comparing.

The Last Trumpet

The book of Revelation describes a time immediately preceding Christ's return called the Day of the Lord. This is the time when God will take a direct hand in punishing humanity for their sins. The Day of the Lord is broken into seven trumpets, each representing an action God takes to deal with rebellious humanity. The seventh, and last, of those trumpets announces Christ's return to earth.

When will faithful Christians receive eternal life?

2 Timothy 4:8: "Finally, there is laid up for me the _____ of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that _____, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."

1 Thessalonians 4:16: "For the Lord Himself will _____ from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the _____ of God. And the dead in Christ will _____ first."

1 Corinthians 15:52: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last _____. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be _____ incorruptible, and we shall be _____."

HUMAN BEINGS CAN BE TRANSFORMED FROM PHYSICAL FLESH TO NONMATERIAL SPIRIT AND BE ELEVATED TO GOD'S LEVEL OF EXISTENCE.

The four levels of existence

The Bible reveals there are four basic levels of existence. In terms of power, these four levels form a hierarchy:

1. The God level.
2. The angelic level.
3. The human level.
4. The animal level.

Though we humans are currently below the angels—because they are spirit and we are physical—our potential is to be elevated above the angelic level and join the family of God, which will place us at the God level of existence.

Deeper insight

The Bible teaches that God's faithful people will be resurrected to eternal life at the return of Jesus Christ, which will be heralded by the sound of a trumpet.

We will study this in greater depth in Lesson 9 about the meaning of God's fall festivals.

What will our bodies be like after we are resurrected to eternal life?

John 3:6: "That which is born of the flesh is _____, and that which is born of the Spirit is _____."

1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 48-49: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in _____. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in _____. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a _____ body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body . . .

"As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man [Jesus Christ], so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the _____ of the heavenly Man."

Philippians 3:21: "[Jesus Christ] who will _____ our lowly body that it may be _____ to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."

1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now we are _____ of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be _____ Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Deeper insight

The above scriptures unfold a key truth about your destiny that most people read right over.

They reveal that human beings have the potential not only to live forever, but to live at a level of existence that far exceeds that of humans and angels. Human beings can be transformed from physical flesh to nonmaterial spirit and be elevated to God's level of existence.

Let's look closer at some of the descriptors given in these scriptures about life after the resurrection from the dead:

- **"Born of the Spirit is spirit."** At the resurrection, faithful Christians will be born into the family of God. Just as physical children are born into a family and are the same kind of beings as their physical (human) parents, those who are "born of the Spirit" enter God's family and become the same kind of beings as our Father and Elder Brother—divine beings composed of spirit.

**AS SPIRIT
BEINGS, WE
WILL NEVER
DIE OR WEAR
OUT, JUST AS
GOD NEVER
TIRES OR
WEARS OUT.**

- **“Raised in incorruption.”** As spirit beings, we will never die or wear out, just as God never tires or wears out.
- **“We shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.”** Earlier in this lesson we discussed the truth revealed in Genesis that we were created in God’s image—His *general* form and likeness. But we also highlighted three major ways we are not fully like God now: composition, character and life span. When we are resurrected, those three major gaps will be bridged, and we will fully bear the image of our Creator. We will be spirit, we will possess His perfect character, and we will have no life span, but will be given immortal life.
- **“Conformed to His glorious body.”** The word *conformed* is translated from the Greek word *symmorphos* (*sym*, alike; *morphos*, form). So we will be changed in *form* to have a body *like* Jesus Christ currently has as God the Son.
- **“We shall see Him as He is.”** The Bible shows that no physical human being can look at God in His full glory and live. The power and brightness that radiates from a divine being would be too much for a human being (Exodus 33:20). But when we are made “like Him,” we will be able to look upon Him and live because we will be spirit ourselves.

These scriptures, and many others, unlock the core answer of *why* God created human beings. He created us to build a family of children who *think* and *live* on the same level of existence as He does. That’s why He created us in His image and likeness, but on a limited scale. He wants us to learn today to think as He does so we can share a relationship with Him at His level of existence for all eternity.

Let’s now explore that relationship a little deeper.

What relationship does God want to have with us for eternity?

2 Corinthians 6:18: “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My _____ and _____, says the LORD Almighty.”

Hebrews 2:10: “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many _____ to _____, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

1 John 3:1-3: “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called _____ of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are _____ of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be _____ Him, for we shall _____ Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

Revelation 21:7: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My _____.”

**GOD WANTS US
TO IMITATE HIM,
TO OVERCOME
SIN AND TO
BECOME PURE
SO WE CAN BE
HIS SONS AND
DAUGHTERS!**

The resurrection of the dead

Contrary to what most believe, the Bible doesn't teach that people go immediately to heaven or hell after death. It actually teaches a future resurrection. God's faithful people will be resurrected to eternal life at the return of Christ to earth.

Deeper insight

Throughout the Bible, God time and time again states His desire to be our Father—to make us His eternal children. From the moment of creation, humanity was made in the image and likeness of God for a purpose—to actually become His children. He is reproducing Himself—producing offspring after His kind, the God kind! This biblical truth is so incredible that few have dared to believe the clear revelation of our Creator.

God's loving plan and ultimate purpose for our lives should not make us proud or boastful, since it is all a result of His loving-kindness, not of anything we earned or deserve. But that does not diminish the mind-boggling fact that God wants us to imitate Him, to overcome sin and to become pure so we can be His sons and daughters!

Does God give us hints about our future responsibilities?

Revelation 1:6: "And has made us _____ and _____ to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Revelation 20:4, 6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and _____ was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and _____ with Christ for a thousand years . . .

"Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be _____ of God and of Christ, and shall _____ with Him a thousand years."

Deeper insight

God is not building a family of sons and daughters for them to just enjoy the pleasures of living forever as spirit beings. When we look at the scriptures about our future, they reveal that God and Christ are preparing us for a future of service, work and productivity! In the last lesson, we explored what the Bible teaches about the Kingdom of God. We learned that it is a literal government that will rule this world. That government will be administered by God's faithful family—ruling under Jesus Christ.

The above scriptures reveal some key details about this future:

- We are called to be "kings and priests." After Christ returns, our first responsibility will be to begin governing and educating the nations of this world in the life-changing truths of the Bible.
- We will *reign* under Christ. Christ is called the "King of Kings" (Revelation 19:16). He will be the supreme King ruling over the earth and assisted by other kings who will rule over assigned peoples and geographical regions (Luke 19:17-19).

**GOD IS
TRAINING
LEADERS FOR
HIS KINGDOM
WHO ARE
PREPARING TO
LEAD BY FIRST
LEARNING TO
DEVELOP HOLY,
RIGHTEOUS
SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER.**

One of the main reasons that God's Word heavily emphasizes character development is because this life is, in one sense, a training ground to prepare for our responsibilities in administering God's government throughout the world in the future. One of the primary reasons mankind has experienced so much war and suffering throughout history is *unrighteous and corrupt leadership*. God is training leaders for His Kingdom who are preparing to lead by first learning to develop holy, righteous spiritual character.

How should we be training now for this future life?

Matthew 24:45-47: "Who then is a faithful and wise _____, whom his master made _____ over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so _____. Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him _____ over all his goods."

Matthew 25:14-21: "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five _____, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have _____ five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were _____ over a few things, I will make you _____ over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

Deeper insight

The above sections of Scripture are from two of Jesus' parables. Both of these parables highlight the truth that God is calling us to develop character in our lives now so that we can be entrusted with leadership in His Kingdom.

In the first, the parable of the faithful servant and evil servant, the master rewards the servant who is actively *working* when he returns. The "master" is Jesus Christ, and the servants are His people. He will reward those who are actively building His character and serving others. As Jesus said, "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10). Those who are faithful in the small things today will be entrusted with rulership on a much larger scale in His Kingdom.

In the second parable, often called the parable of the talents, Christ emphasizes the need for a Christian to *grow*. In the parable, the man traveling to a far country represents Jesus Christ (who ascended to heaven), and the servants represent

**GOD WILL
REWARD US
WITH GREATER
RESPONSIBILITY
IN HIS KINGDOM
BASED ON
HOW MUCH WE
USED HIS HOLY
SPIRIT TO GROW
IN SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER.**

the men and women who are called by God. He gave each of the servants an amount of money—the “talent” in the parable was a large sum of money (possibly the equivalent of many years of labor for a common worker)—and then, when he returned, rewarded them based on how successfully they were able to increase it. Those who wisely invested and increased it were given higher positions of authority than those who didn’t. In this analogy, the money represents character growth through God’s Holy Spirit.

God will reward us with greater responsibility in His Kingdom based on how much we used His Holy Spirit to *grow* in spiritual character. God doesn’t want us to be stagnant or regress into sin—He expects us to grow. In fact, one of the main purposes of the Bible is to help us *grow*: “Desire the pure milk of the word [the Bible], that you may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2).

We will discuss the importance of spiritual growth in greater depth in Lesson 11.

Will God reward individual Christians based on how they lived their lives?

Matthew 16:27: “For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will _____ each according to his _____.”

2 John 1:8: “Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full _____.”

Revelation 22:12: “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My _____ is with Me, to give to every one according to his _____.”

Deeper insight

The above scriptures show that God has a *reward* planned for each of His people. According to the **MacMillan Dictionary**, a reward is “something good that happens or that you receive because of something that you have done.” The reward these scriptures discuss is not eternal life in God’s family. Other scriptures are clear that eternal life is a *gift* of God, not a reward based on works we do (Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9). God’s forgiveness and eternal life are so valuable that no amount of good deeds we could ever do could *earn* them. Salvation is a gift given by God’s grace and kindness.

So what *is* the reward the above scriptures talk about?

As we have already covered, those born into the family of God will be given various responsibilities and duties. In the parable of the minas, very similar to the parable of the talents we covered earlier, the nobleman rewards each of his servants for how much they increased the money (or mina) he left with them:

“Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities’” (Luke 19:16-19).

**GOD WILL
USE OUR
EXPERIENCES
AND THE
CHARACTER
WE DEVELOP
IN THIS LIFE
TO BEST SERVE
OTHERS.**

This parable teaches us about the reward Christ will bring for His servants when He returns. The reward is responsibility. All of God's people will be given "power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26) in the Kingdom. We will be given responsibilities and assignments in God's government based on our growth and experiences in this life.

As we covered in Lesson 5, some of God's servants have already been assigned specific responsibilities. King David will rule over the reunited nation of Israel, and the 12 apostles will govern the 12 tribes of Israel.

We can't know what God has planned for us, but we know God will use the experiences and the character we develop in this life so we can better serve others in the future.

Is Jesus Christ preparing specific responsibilities for each of us in His Kingdom?

John 14:2-3: "In My Father's house are many _____; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a _____ for you. And if I go and prepare a _____ for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

Deeper insight

Jesus spoke these words in the context of preparing His disciples for the time when He would no longer be with them. He assured them, and us, that He would return and that we will be with Him in the future. But He also encouraged them about another thing—that one of His tasks in heaven would be to prepare a specific place in His Kingdom for every member of His family.

"My Father's house" ultimately refers to His family—elsewhere referred to as "the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). As we have seen, God's family will rule the earth. He also refers to what He is preparing as "a place." Every child of God will have a *place* in God's family.

As we have seen, King David's and the 12 apostles' *places* are already determined, but Christ is also preparing specific responsibilities and roles for the rest of us.

When He returns, the world will be in a state of disarray and will need loving leaders to work with people. Leaders will be needed for towns, cities and nations. Individuals and groups of people will need to be taught and guided in the right way of living.

Our assignments in God's family government will not be randomly divvied up. Christ won't spin a globe and assign you to lead wherever His finger lands. No, He is carefully and thoughtfully preparing a specific place where each individual son and daughter in His family can serve most effectively. He will determine that *place* based on the unique experiences, skills and character we built during this life.

**THE FAMILY OF
GOD WILL BE
INVOLVED IN
TRANSFORMING
THE ENTIRE
PHYSICAL
CREATION
FROM A STATE
OF DECAY TO
A STATE OF
USEFULNESS
AND VITALITY.**

Will our life in God's family be confined to this earth?

Revelation 21:7: "He who overcomes shall inherit _____, and I will be his God and he shall be My son."

Hebrews 2:6-8: "What is _____ that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under his feet.' For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see _____ things put _____ him."

2 Peter 3:13: "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for _____ and a _____ in which righteousness dwells."

Deeper insight

The scriptures are clear that God's government will be established on earth. That's why Christians pray, "Your kingdom come." Those in God's family will "inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5) and "reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). We are also told that "the righteous will never be removed" from the earth (Proverbs 10:30).

But though God's Kingdom will be established and based on earth, that does not mean the glorified children in God's family will be confined *only* to the earth! The above scriptures make it clear that God's children will inherit *all things*. Yes, that means exactly what it says—*all things*. The entire created order!

In fact, the apostle Paul wrote that the creation "eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God" because right now it is "subjected to futility" (Romans 8:19-20). Futility means uselessness or emptiness. Right now, it appears outer space is not inhabitable and is in a state of disorderly decay. The only part of the created order that we know can sustain life is the earth. But there is a future for outer space—and it is the family of God.

Notice Romans 8:20-21:

"For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

What this tells us is that the family of God will be involved in transforming the entire physical creation from a state of decay to a state of usefulness and vitality.

It's exciting to contemplate having the ability to visit the expanses of space that we can only see today by peering through a telescope. God's glorified children will not be confined by the gravitational force that keeps us tethered to this earth, but will be able to travel anywhere on earth or in space to do the exciting work God will give us to do.

**GOD WON'T GIVE
US HIS POWER
UNTIL WE FIRST
LEARN HOW TO
THINK AS HE
THINKS.**

**Life, Hope & Truth
Bible Study Course**

Authors

Mike Bennett and Erik Jones

Doctrinal Reviewers

John Foster, Bruce Gore,
Peter Hawkins, Jack Hendren,
Don Henson, Doug Johnson,
Larry Neff, Harold Rhodes,
Paul Suckling

Media Operation Manager

Clyde Kilough

Editorial Reviewers

Mike Bennett, David Treybig

Copy Editor

Becky Bennett

Design

Teri Mez

© 2021 Church of God,
a Worldwide Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 3490
McKinney, TX 75070-8189

info@cogwa.org

Is what God has in store for us beyond our wildest dreams?

1 Corinthians 2:9: “But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has _____ for those who love Him.’”

Psalm 16:11: “You will show me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are _____ forevermore.”

Deeper insight

We can't comprehend eternity. We can't grasp the fullness of God's love and His joy. We can't fully understand what it means to share God's nature and power. We can try to imagine God's endless preparations for our future, but our finite minds will come up short. But it is exciting just knowing that what God has lovingly prepared will be far better than our wildest imaginations.

Lesson Wrap-Up

As this lesson has covered, you were born with great potential and purpose. God wants you to be born into His family—to share His level of existence and help rule in His Kingdom. Though the Bible tells us these things, what it all means is so incredible that it's beyond our full comprehension. This purpose and future should motivate us to *change our lives* now. God won't give us His power until we first learn how to *think* as He thinks.

After discussing this incredible future in 1 John 3:1-2, John wrote this in verse 3: “And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” In other words, we have to become like God in our minds and conduct *before* we can be elevated to His level of existence. We hope this lesson will motivate you to seek God and His way of life more zealously and desire to be a part of His eternal family!

What's next? In this lesson, we discussed God's creation of the first man on the sixth day of creation. On the next day, the seventh day, God rested. But He didn't just rest; He also “blessed . . . and sanctified it” (Genesis 2:3).

But what is the Sabbath day all about? Is it relevant for Christians today? We will explore those questions and more in Lesson 7.

Supplemental Reading

Life, Hope & Truth offers additional resources that can help you better understand God's inspired Word, the Holy Bible.

- [God's Purpose for You: Discovering Why You Were Born](#) >
- [The Mystery of the Kingdom](#) >
- [The Last Enemy: What Really Happens After Death?](#) >
- [Why Were You Born?](#) >
- [What Does It Mean to Be Made in “the Image of God”? >](#)
- [What Is the Spirit in Man?](#) >
- [Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden](#) >
- [What Is Repentance?](#) >
- [How to Become a Child of God](#) >
- [The Fruit of the Spirit](#) >

LESSON 6

Quiz

True or false

Write or type in T if the statement is true and F if the statement is false.

1. _____ Humans were made in the likeness of angels.
 2. _____ Human beings were created inferior to animals.
 3. _____ The Kingdom of God will be established on earth.
 4. _____ Repentance is a one-time event when someone accepts Jesus.
 5. _____ God wants us to be His sons and daughters.
-

Multiple choice

Select the correct answer to each question.

6. What word best describes the kind of relationship God wants with us?

a. family b. master c. acquaintance d. pet

7. Each animal was made according to its own kind, but humans were

a. made as a unique creation unlike anything else. c. made in the likeness of apes.
b. made in God's likeness. d. made perfect in character like God.

8. In order to be given God's power later, what does He require us to do now?

a. just do the best we can c. strive to become perfect as He is
b. develop the actual character of God d. b and c

9. The way of life that comes naturally to human beings and is in opposition to God is called

a. carnal. b. neutral. c. violently evil. d. righteous.

10. God's laws are based on the principle of

- a. authority.
- b. the Code of Hammurabi.
- c. tolerance.
- d. love.

11. What does sin ultimately lead to?

- a. torture in hell
- b. death
- c. outer darkness
- d. mental torment for eternity

12. When will faithful Christians be given eternal life?

- a. immediately after they die
- b. after the Millennium
- c. when Jesus returns to earth
- d. at the moment of conversion

13. Eternal life is a _____; while our role in God's family is a _____.

- a. reward; gift
- b. gift; reward
- c. privilege; duty
- d. blessing; burden

14. The parable of the talents teaches what basic lesson?

- a. God's people need to grow in character.
- b. God's people need to develop talents like singing and athletics.
- c. The Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed.
- d. There's no business like show business.

15. What role will King David have in the Kingdom of God?

- a. He will rule over one of the 12 tribes of Israel.
- b. He will be in charge of religious education over the entire earth.
- c. He will rule over the restored Kingdom of Israel.
- d. He will be a priest in Egypt.

16. Which statement does *not* reflect something God has planned for our future?

- a. staring into the face of God for eternity
- b. delivering the created order from corruption
- c. teaching God's law to the nations
- d. ruling over cities

17. Which statement about our future in God's family is *not* found in the Bible?

- a. We will see God in His glory.
- b. We will be spirit.
- c. We will be equal to God the Father in authority.
- d. We will no longer be able to die.

18. What does the Bible say God's people will inherit?

- a. heaven
- b. the earth
- c. all things
- d. b and c

19. What will announce the return of Jesus Christ to earth?

- a. a press release
- b. the sound of a trumpet
- c. the destruction of planet earth
- d. the disappearance of God's people around the world

20. What assignment does Christ have for you personally in His Kingdom?

- a. He will give you authority over five cities.
- b. He will give you authority over 10 cities.
- c. He is preparing a place for you, but you won't know what it is until Jesus returns.
- d. He will put you in charge of an island in the South Pacific.

CHECK YOURSELF

Lesson 6 Quiz

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. F | 6. a | 11.b | 16.a |
| 2. F | 7. b | 12.c | 17.c |
| 3. T | 8. d | 13.b | 18.d |
| 4. F | 9. a | 14.a | 19.b |
| 5. T | 10.d | 15.c | 20.c |