



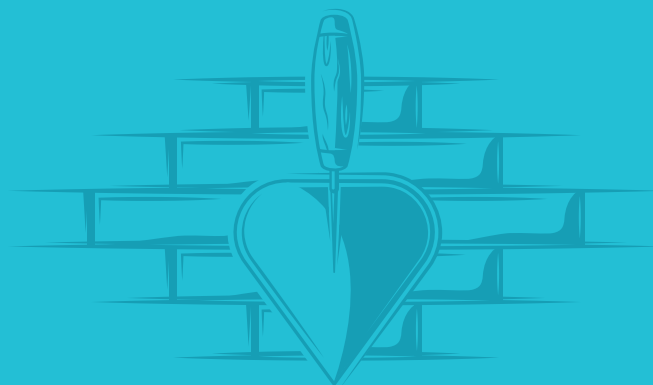
JUL/AUG 2026



EveryDay Foundations

Teaching Guide AND Essentials

- **FOR ADULTS** -



GROUP MEMBERS USE *THE BRINK*, *FUSION FAMILY*, OR *FUSION NEXT*
DEVOTIONAL STUDY GUIDES

1 PETER

1, 2, 3 JOHN

REVELATION



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Adult Teaching Guide



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WELCOME TO THE D6 EVERYDAY FOUNDATIONS ADULT TEACHING GUIDE. This is the one-size-fits-all guide for teaching adult small groups. It correlates with *The Brink*, *Fusion Family*, and *Fusion Next* devotional study guides.

D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum is built on:

- A high view of Scripture
- Church and Home emphasis
- Family alignment and resources for every age
- Practical biblical application
- Intentional focus on developing biblical literacy and a biblical worldview
- Biblical truth and perspective on important cultural issues
- Spotlights on Bible characters

D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum helps you build confidence in the unchanging, enduring, and authoritative Word of God. The three-year scope and sequence includes an overview of the story of the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing major characters and themes, as well as the application of God's Word to current cultural issues.

Even if the student never misses a single Sunday in the three-year cycle, the task is too much for curriculum alone. We must also depend on the work of the Holy Spirit and the partnership of families so the truth goes beyond head knowledge to heart knowledge and anchors in a permanent place. Combining both at-church and at-home tools, *D6 EveryDay Foundations* curriculum helps churches equip parents with the mortar to hold together the building blocks of faith.

Elementary and Teen students (and preschoolers when possible) study the same family themes as their parents and grandparents. This family-aligned curriculum philosophy opens the door to everyday opportunities for faith conversations.

D6 EveryDay Foundations curriculum offers a choice of three devotional study guides for adults.

- ***The Brink***—for young adults without children
- ***Fusion Family***—for parents with kids at home
- ***Fusion Next***—for empty nesters

Singles in your group can choose the magazine that best fits their life stage.

In addition to daily devotions to help reinforce biblical principles, readers enjoy relevant articles, columns, and more. Even if your group is made up of various ages, members can choose the guide that fits best.

Every lesson in this teaching guide is built around the CLEAR® Learning System. This time-tested method gives a simple but effective approach to successfully teaching God's Word.

Connect—These suggested activities help capture the group members’ attention and answer the question, *Where is this lesson going?*

Learn—*What does the Bible say?* This section answers this question by digging into the biblical text and explaining it in ways both teachers and group members can understand.

Explore—These notes provide more information for the teacher. They address issues like cultural background, historical context, theological importance, apologetics, and other complementary biblical teachings.

Apply—*What difference does all this make in my life?* Apply statements help group members see how the biblical truths they have just heard fit into everyday life. These Apply statements, along with thought-provoking discussion questions, are included in with the **Learn** section as they most naturally fit.

Respond—The final section in each lesson answers the question, *What now?* Respond encourages group members to take practical steps to apply the biblical principles they have learned. The lessons are further reinforced in the devotional study guides.

Every lesson also includes:

- Lesson objective—identify the lesson’s main goal
- Building Blocks—encourage biblical literacy for the whole family
- Family Verse of the Month—focus on memorizing key Scripture together
- Teaching Tips—give helps and strategies for effective teaching
- Thought-provoking discussion questions—encourage deeper application of biblical truth
- Teaching essentials—downloadable extras (handouts, posters, outlines, PowerPoint, and more)
- The Teaching Guide is also available for download to help you customize the lesson for your group.

Bonus resources:

- Parent Page—weekly tool that provides the key truths of the lesson, application ideas, talking points to extend family discussion, and family activity ideas, as well as a summary of the pre-school lesson
- D6 Family App—this app delivers free resources designed to equip you for generational discipleship
- Family Faith Moment—biweekly email providing simple ideas to turn everyday routines into discipleship moments
- D6 Teacher group on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/D6Family>)—a Facebook forum for D6 curriculum users to share ideas and ask questions



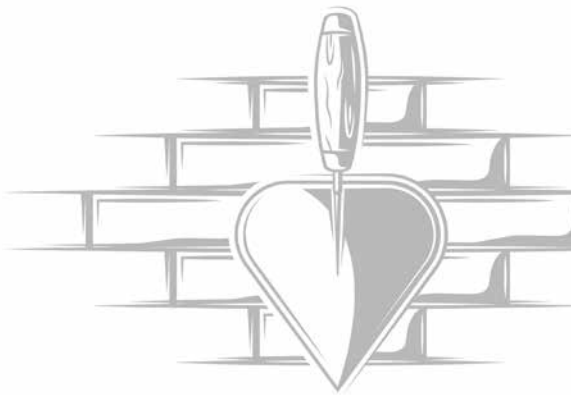
Digital Downloads—To enhance your teaching, digital downloads are available. There you will find PowerPoint slides for each lesson, teaching essentials, and editable teaching outlines. We’re also excited to offer a digital version of this Teaching Guide that includes live hyperlinks so you can click directly on a website or Scripture passage and have it pop up on your device. To access these resources, scan this QR code or visit the following: **d6.family/6920**.

FAMILY THEME

Lessons From the Life of Peter

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners put life lessons from Peter into action.

STUDY TEXT: Matthew 16:13–20 and other Scripture



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 1-1 or AH 1-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 1* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 1-2), the *Getting Beyond Fear* handout (AH 1-3), and *Parent Page* (PP-1) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-1) to parents.



In This Character Study:

- An Introduction to Peter
- Key Events in Peter's Life
- Life Lessons to Apply From Peter
- Ways to Respond

Verse of the
Month

HEBREWS 11:6

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this video that asks why Jesus asked Peter a question three times: tinyurl.com/WhyDeny3. Discuss the video with your group. After discussion, say: *Peter made mistakes while he followed Jesus. But as we'll see today, his life was characterized by boldness and faithfulness.*

OPTION 2: Begin by asking group members to name someone they would consider a hero in sports, history, or even in their own lives. Point out that most heroes have highlight reels—the moments of victory and success that everyone remembers—but they also have failures we don't talk about as much. Babe Ruth is considered one of the greatest home run hitters in baseball history. He hit 714 home runs. Yet he also struck out 1,300+ times. Ask: *Why do we tend to remember the home runs but overlook the strikeouts?* After discussion, say: *Most heroes are imperfect. That is true in the Bible as well. Peter was bold, passionate, and used powerfully by God. But he also failed, sometimes publicly and painfully. Today we will look at Peter's life and discover how God works through imperfect people.*

OPTION 3: Begin by asking how fear sometimes hindered Bible characters. How does it sometimes hinder our service for God? After discussion, say: *Peter was one of Jesus' closest disciples, but he sometimes struggled with fear. Today we will study lessons we can learn from his life.*

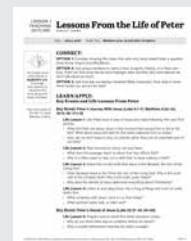
LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 1-2).

Meet Peter

Within the stories of Jesus' life told in the four Gospels, Simon Peter is by far the most prominent figure among Jesus' followers. His given name was Simon, but Jesus renamed him *Cephas* (Aramaic) or *Petros* (Greek), meaning “rock.” In some instances, Peter spoke as a representative of all the disciples. At other times Jesus spoke to Peter individually. When surveying all the stories, people see Peter as bold and passionate, though sometimes impulsive. There is much to learn from Peter because, in many ways, we can identify with his imperfections. The New Testament tells us far more about Peter than could be covered in a single lesson. While we will not be able to cover Peter's

The Family Verse of the Month is **Hebrews 11:6**. Encourage your learners to memorize this verse along with family members.



AH 1-1



AH 1-2

TEACHING TIP

When appropriate, ask questions that cause curiosity. Curiosity leads to learning.

You will not have time to read all the Scripture listed for this lesson. Summarize the commentary and read the Scripture passages you feel are most important.

Discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 1-1), and on *PowerPoint 1*, which is customizable. Files 1A and 1B are provided for customization.

writing in 1 and 2 Peter, we will try to glean highlights from the Gospels and then consider a few important episodes from Acts. As you study Peter, try to find yourself in his mistakes and in his passionate pursuit of Jesus.

Key Events and Life Lessons from Peter's Life

 **KEY EVENT: Peter's Journey With Jesus (Luke 5:1-11; Matthew 14:22-33; 16:13-20; 17:1-8)**

Meeting Jesus (Luke 5:1-11)

Peter's journey as a committed disciple began with his dramatic first steps with the Master. One morning Jesus was teaching a crowd by the lake of Gennesaret (Sea of Galilee) when He chose to use a boat to create distance from the crowd for better communication. He taught from the boat while the owners were washing their nets after a long night of unproductive fishing (**Luke 5:1-3**). After Jesus finished teaching, He instructed Peter to maneuver the boat back out and try another round of fishing. Though respectful to Jesus, Peter was initially resistant to the idea, but when Jesus did not relent, the tired fisherman did as instructed. No sooner had he dropped the nets into the water than the ropes drew taut with the weight of an inexplicable haul of fish (**verses 4-6**).

Their new catch was so large that it threatened the safety of their boat. They called for help from some partners, James and John. They divided the catch, and both boats struggled for the shore (**verse 7**). Peter's focus shifted from fishing matters to spiritual matters. He fell at Jesus' feet confessing his own sinfulness and asking Jesus to leave. In His mercy Jesus did not leave but issued an invitation for Peter and the others to leave their livelihood and follow Him. They would continue fishing, but from now on they would be fishing for people. After securing the boats, Peter and the others left everything to follow Jesus (**verses 8-11**).

LIFE LESSON 1: Like Peter, bow in awe of Jesus and make following Him your first priority.

DISCUSS:

- *What did Peter see about Jesus in that moment that caused him to fall at His feet? What about Jesus still calls for that same response from us today?*
- *How can we tell if Jesus is truly our priority rather than just an important part of our lives?*

Walking on Water (Matthew 14:22–33)

After Jesus ministered to and healed the sick in a large crowd of five thousand men (probably many more when we include women and children) He fed the entire crowd from five loaves of bread and two small fish (Matthew 14:19–21). Afterward, Jesus dismissed the crowd and sent the disciples in a boat to the other side of the lake while He stayed back for a time of private prayer (**verses 22–23**).

During the evening, the disciples' boat stalled in the waves and winds even though some of the disciples were fishermen with significant boating skills. As they struggled against the storm, Jesus approached the boat, walking on the water. Seeing a man walking toward them, the disciples thought they were seeing a ghost. Jesus assured them it was Him, but they were still afraid (**verses 24–27**). Peter challenged that if it were Jesus, He should call Peter to walk on the water as well. Jesus called for Peter to step out of the boat and walk to Him. Once Peter stepped out of the boat, fear from the storm seized him and he began to sink, and he immediately cried out for Jesus' help. Jesus reached down, pulled the soaked disciple from the water, placed him in the boat, and entered the boat Himself (**verses 28–33**).

LIFE LESSON 2: Stay focused on Jesus, not your fears.

DISCUSS:

- *What does this passage teach us about how fear affects faith?*
- *Why is it often easier to step out in faith than to keep walking in faith?*

Confession (Matthew 16:13–18)

While talking with His disciples, Jesus posed a question regarding the theories among the crowds as to His identity. Several answers emerged quickly. Some had said that Jesus was John the Baptist, others speculated that He was Elijah, and still others conjectured that He was Jeremiah or one of the other prophets (**Matthew 16:13–14**).

Jesus then redirected the conversation by rephrasing the question. He asked His followers to give their understanding regarding His identity. Peter answered that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Jesus commended Peter for his answer, explaining that it came to him from the Father in Heaven. He then declared He (Jesus) would build His church, and nothing could stop it (**verses 15–18**).

LIFE LESSON 3: Stand firm on the truth that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

DISCUSS:

- *Peter declared Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Why is this truth vital to the Christian faith? Why is this truth under attack?*
- *Why does the identity of Jesus determine everything about Christianity?*

APOLOGETICS:

The claim that Jesus is the Son of God is not based on legend but on historical events. Jesus publicly claimed divine authority: He forgave sins ([Mark 2:5–12](#)), spoke of God as His unique Father ([John 5:18](#)), and predicted His own death and resurrection ([Mark 8:31](#)). His crucifixion under Pontius Pilate is affirmed by both biblical and non-biblical sources. Most significantly, the Resurrection was proclaimed in Jerusalem shortly after His death, and eyewitnesses testified that they had seen Him alive ([1 Corinthians 15:3–8](#)). The earliest disciples were willing to suffer and die for this conviction. If Jesus truly rose from the dead, His claim to be the Son of God is vindicated. That makes Peter’s confession more than a statement of belief—it is a response to historical reality.

EXPLORE:

When Jesus responded to Peter’s confession of His deity, He told Peter that God the Father had revealed this truth to him. Additionally, He referenced Peter’s name and said that He would build His church “upon this rock” ([Matthew 16:13–20](#)). Believers often disagree about the identity of the “rock” in this statement. Commentators typically offer one of three answers. First, some will say that the “rock” in this case is Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of the Living God. Second, some will offer that the “rock” is Jesus Himself. After all, He is the stone the builders rejected ([Matthew 21:42](#)), which later becomes the cornerstone. Third, others will say the “rock” is Peter. The Roman Catholic Church offers this as evidence of Peter’s papal authority. Many Protestant scholars, while rejecting the papacy, also hold Peter as the “rock” in the sense that he was a representative of the apostles. Each interpretation has been carefully argued by faithful scholars, and they all reflect broader truths. It is fundamental to life in Christ that a person understands that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Christ is the sure foundation upon which life itself must be built. Peter and the apostles form the foundation upon which the church is built with Jesus Himself being the chief cornerstone ([Ephesians 2:20](#)).

Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1–8)

Six days after Peter's confession of Christ's identity, Peter, along with James and John, accompanied Jesus up a mountain. While there Jesus was transfigured in front of them. It was as though the incarnate Son allowed His divine glory to shine through the veil of His humanity. As Jesus revealed His glory, Moses and Elijah appeared as well (**Matthew 17:1–3**). We received the Law through Moses. Elijah represented the prophets who worked as God's mouthpiece for many generations warning of God's judgment and reminding the people of God's promises.

In his excitement, Peter suggested they show these three great men respect by erecting three tents, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. While he was speaking a terrifying voice erupted from Heaven declaring that Jesus is God's Son. The men were so frightened that they collapsed in horror (**verses 4–6**). Jesus touched them, told them to get up, and not be afraid. When they opened their eyes, they only saw Jesus (**verses 7–8**). Jesus was the One they were commanded to listen to. He was the Son of God. He would accomplish redemption while fulfilling all the Law and the promises of God given through the prophets. Though God used Moses and Elijah in great ways, they were just men who needed the Savior as much as anyone else.

LIFE LESSON 4: Listen to and obey Jesus. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, God's Son.

DISCUSS:

- *What competes with Jesus' voice in our lives today?*
- *What spiritual habits help us listen well?*

KEY EVENT: Peter's Denial of Jesus (**Luke 22:31–34, 54–62**)

On the night of the Passover celebration, Jesus sat with His disciples and, for the first time, they took the Lord's Supper together (**Luke 22:14–23**). As the conversation continued, they got into a heated argument over which one of them was the greatest in God's kingdom. Jesus put an end to this discussion, teaching them that humility and service marked true greatness in His kingdom (**verses 24–30**). Then Jesus abruptly changed the discussion by addressing Peter, only this time as Simon. Jesus told him that Satan had requested to test the disciples, but that He had prayed specifically for Peter. Peter confidently declared he was willing to go to prison or death for his Lord. Jesus responded with a sobering prophecy, informing Peter that he would deny knowing Jesus three times before the rooster crowed the next morning (**verses 31–34**).

That night, Judas led a mob to the place where Jesus was praying. They arrested Jesus while the confused and frightened disciples scattered. Gathering what remained of his courage, Peter followed the mob into the courtyard outside the high priest's house. While trying to gather information, Peter encountered three people who accused him of knowing Jesus. Each time he denied knowing the Savior. After the third denial, a rooster crowed. Only Luke tells us that at that moment Jesus looked at Peter. Catching Jesus' eyes, Peter suddenly remembered Jesus' words from earlier. He ran out of the courtyard and wept bitterly (**verses 54–62**).

LIFE LESSON 5: Prepare now to stand firm when pressure comes.

DISCUSS:

- *Why do you think Peter was so confident before the denial?*
- *Why is private faithfulness essential for public courage?*

 KEY EVENT: Peter's Return to Jesus (John 21:1–19)

After the Crucifixion Peter was dejected. He and the other disciples felt like their world had come to an end. Three days after the Crucifixion their world changed again upon hearing a report that Jesus had risen from the dead. Peter and John ran together to the tomb to see what was happening. John got to the tomb first but froze at the entrance. In typical fashion, the brash Peter barged in to survey the scene (John 20:1–10). Finally, Jesus appeared to the disciples and confirmed to them that He had indeed conquered death (John 20:19–23). As John closed chapter 20, it read like the end of the book. John, however, gave his readers a final story.

As if unsure of his status as a follower of Jesus because of the three denials, Peter decided to go fishing. When he announced this, several disciples joined him. After fishing all night, they had caught nothing (**John 21:1–3**). At daybreak they heard a man calling from shore and urging them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. With nothing to lose, they obliged and switched sides. Immediately, they experienced a nearly unmanageable haul of fish. John realized that the man on the shore was Jesus. Desperate but uncertain, Peter dove into the water and swam to the shore. Eventually, the rest of the crew made it to the shore, and they all had fish for breakfast (**verses 4–14**).

After breakfast, Jesus pulled Simon Peter to the side. He asked three times if Simon loved Him. Peter answered affirmatively each time. Jesus instructed Peter to feed His sheep. While there are slight variations in the vocabulary which will provide nuances to consider within the conversation, the primary lesson is that Jesus went out

of His way to restore Peter. It was as though the three affirmations graciously addressed the three denials and placed Peter once again into a healthy frame of mind. Ultimately, it demonstrated to him that he was forgiven and that Jesus was restoring him for the purpose of ministry to the people of God (**verses 15–19**).

LIFE LESSON 6: When you fall into sin, confess your failures and seek God’s restoration.

DISCUSS:

- *What keeps some people from returning to Jesus after failure?*
How does God restore us after times of failure?

 KEY EVENT: Peter’s Service for Jesus
(Acts 1:15–26; 2:14–26; 10:1–48)

After restoring Peter, Jesus assembled His disciples on the Mount of Olives where He gave them some final instructions, and then ascended to Heaven in front of them (**Acts 1:6–11**). From that point forward, the reader notices that Peter took a leadership role among the disciples. Three episodes from Acts display Peter’s leadership in the early church and among the disciples.

First, Peter led the disciples in choosing a replacement for Judas. (**Acts 1:15–26**).

Second, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended on the believers, empowering them as never before. As they preached, they spoke in different languages so that people from those places could understand the message. This confused some who responded with the accusation that these people were intoxicated. It was Peter who responded to this accusation with an explanation of God’s prediction of these events in **Joel 2**. Peter connected the entire event with the death and resurrection of Jesus. In response to this powerful testimony from Peter and the others, 3,000 people repented of their sins and turned to Christ (**Acts 2:14–41**).

Third, Peter led in taking the gospel to the Gentiles. This was ironic since Peter was a devout Jewish person. God’s Spirit orchestrated the event by causing a Roman Centurion named Cornelius and Peter to have separate visions at approximately the same time. Through his vision Cornelius learned to send for Peter as God’s messenger. Peter learned that God was declaring all foods clean and showing that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well (**Acts 10:1–48**).

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 1-3



PP-1

The *Parent Page* (PP-1) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

LIFE LESSON 7: Use the gifts and abilities God gives you to serve Him.

DISCUSS:

- *What gifts or experiences has God uniquely given you? Where might God be calling you to step into greater service?*
- *What gives you hope in Peter's story—especially knowing how he failed?*

WAYS TO RESPOND

Encourage your learners to put what they have learned into action this week.

OPTION 1: Ask your learners to briefly reflect on Peter's entire journey—from bold faith to painful failure to powerful service. Then ask them to consider:

Where do you most see yourself in Peter's story right now?

- *Stepping out in faith?*
- *Struggling with fear?*
- *Recovering from failure?*
- *Being called into greater service?*

Encourage them to thank God for His patience and grace, and to ask Him to continue shaping them for faithful service. Remind them that the same Jesus who called, restored, and used Peter is still at work in their lives today.

OPTION 2: Ask your learners to list fears that keep believers from fully serving or obeying God. If they are struggling with a particular fear, encourage them to commit that fear to the Lord and to focus on serving and obeying Him in that area. The AH 1-3 *Getting Beyond Fear* handout can help.

OPTION 3: Ask your learners to silently consider if there is any unforgiven sin that they need God to restore them from. Encourage them to pray Psalm 51 when they need to be forgiven and restored from sin this week.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

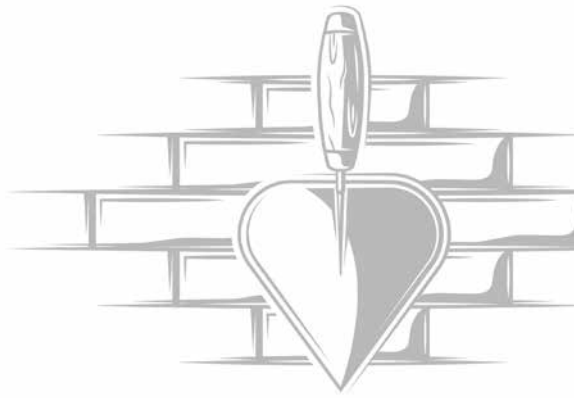
God wants everyone to be saved (2 Peter 3:9).

FAMILY THEME

Living Hope

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners set their hope on blessings to come and live a holy and loving life.

STUDY TEXT: 1 Peter 1:3–25



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 2-1 or AH 2-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 2* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 2-2), the *Looking Ahead* handout (AH 2-3), and *Parent Page* (PP-2) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-2) to parents.



Key Truths

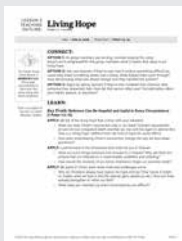
- Believers Can Be Hopeful and Joyful in Every Circumstance (1 Peter 1:3–12)
- Believers Should Display Hope, Holiness, Reverence, and Love While Awaiting Christ's Return (1 Peter 1:13–25)

Verse of the
Month

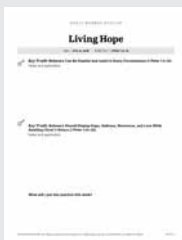
HEBREWS 11:6

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**Hebrews 11:6**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 2-1



AH 2-2

TEACHING TIP

Encourage learners to ask questions about the Scripture passages being studied.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: As group members are arriving, consider playing this song: tinyurl.com/LivingHopePW. You can also find it on streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music. Ask group members what it means that Jesus is our living hope. After discussion, say: *As we'll see today, because of what Jesus has done, we can set our hope on blessings that are yet to come.*

OPTION 2: Open by asking your learners if they've ever had to endure something difficult because they knew something better was coming. Maybe they were training for a marathon, handling a long work project, recovering from surgery, or going through a season of financial stress. What helped them push through? How did knowing what was ahead change how they handled the present? What excited them? After discussion, say: *Peter wrote to believers who were facing hardship. He reminded them that because of Jesus, they had a living hope—an inheritance that could never perish or fade. That future hope was meant to shape how they lived right now.*

OPTION 3: Begin by asking learners if they've ever modeled their behavior after someone they respected. Perhaps they wanted to be like their favorite basketball player or chef. Ask: *What changed about you because of that person? Did admiration affect your habits, speech, or decisions?* After discussion, say: *Peter told believers that because we have been born again through Christ, we are to reflect the character of the One who called us. Our hope in Him should shape how we live. As children resemble their parents, believers are called to resemble their holy God.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 2-2).

The letter of 1 Peter is part of a section of the New Testament known as "The General Epistles." This grouping includes the book of James, the two epistles of Peter, the three epistles of John, and Jude. First Peter was written by the apostle Peter. This authorship, while debated by some, can be accepted because of the testimony of the letter itself and the acceptance of Peter as the author by the early church. It was written primarily to Gentile believers in northern Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey) who were undergoing, or had undergone, suf-

fering because of their faith in Christ. Peter's desire was to encourage them toward faithfulness regardless of their painful and devastating experiences. Some of these early Christians would even face death because of their faith, making Peter's desire to prepare them all the more necessary. The letter began in the customary way. Peter identified himself as the writer and an apostle of Christ. He then indicated to whom he was writing and greeted them with a blessing (**verses 1–2**). Some of the key topics addressed in this book are suffering, hope, and obedience, all of which are dealt with in some way in this first chapter.

 KEY TRUTH: God's Promises Help Believers Be Hopeful and Joyful in Every Circumstance (1 Peter 1:3–12)

In the original language, **verses 3–12** are one long sentence with no punctuation, which is common in Greek. This section begins with *blessed* or *praise be*, which conveys the attitude and heart of praise or commendation. It then gives specific reasons for these early followers of Christ, and believers today, to praise God (**verse 3**). Peter's reasons for praise began with the beauty of salvation as portrayed in **verses 3–5**. Because of God's great mercy or unmerited favor, He has granted people the opportunity and privilege to be *born again*. This new birth cannot be purchased or achieved by human means but is a gift from God initiated by Him.

The effects of this new birth are amazing. Peter understood that this being born again resulted in a living hope. This hope is based on the resurrection of Jesus, and contrary to what the world and false religion offer, is sure, certain, and real, just as the resurrection of Jesus was sure, certain, and real.

DISCUSS:

- *What role does Christ's resurrection play in our hope? (Christ's resurrection proves He has conquered death and that we, too, will rise again to eternal life.) How is a "living hope" different from the kind of hope the world offers?*
- *How does remembering Christ's resurrection change the way we face disappointment?*

Another effect of this new birth is given in **verse 4** when the apostle began describing the believer's inheritance or possession reserved in Heaven. Peter wanted these believers to understand that this inheritance was permanent and could never be destroyed by human forces such as persecution. In typical "preacher" fashion, Peter used three words to solidify this idea, each of which, in the original Greek, began with the same letter and ended with the same syllable. This inheri-

APPLY:

Be full of the living hope that comes with your salvation.



PowerPoint 2

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 2-1) and on *PowerPoint 2*, which is customizable. Files 2A and 2B are provided for customization.

APPLY:

Look forward to the inheritance that awaits you in Heaven.

tance was imperishable or incorruptible, undefiled, and would never fade away. All this was kept in Heaven or put aside for safe keeping for the believer to enjoy throughout eternity.

DISCUSS:

- *What are some things believers look forward to in Heaven? Why did Peter emphasize that our inheritance is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading?*
- *How should the certainty of our future inheritance shape our priorities today?*

The term *kept* or *guarded* in **verse 5** is a military term referring to a garrison within a city. It is because of all the rich blessings we have received in Christ that we can and must endure as good soldiers of the Cross, regardless of what happens to us here on earth (**verse 6**). The various trials Peter spoke of here were in the context of persecution, but the normal challenges of life also test and grow our faith. All these trials will reveal the genuineness of faith while at the same time, bring honor, glory, and praise to Jesus (**verse 7**).

DISCUSS:

- *Why do Christians always have reason for hope and joy? (Our future is bright no matter what we face in this life; eternal glory awaits us; etc.) How can trials actually strengthen or refine our faith?*
- *What helps you maintain joy when circumstances are difficult?*

All these blessed assurances (truths) sustain us as we live as strangers, pilgrims, and exiles on this earth. Our faith in Christ leads to great joy (**verses 8–9**), regardless of the difficulties experienced. This rejoicing focuses on the fact that believers are receiving the promise, namely salvation, that was promised to those who love and believe in Jesus Christ. This salvation was so amazing that, according to Peter, the prophets searched and inquired diligently seeking to understand it. Regardless of how hard they tried they could not determine how and when this salvation would happen (**verses 10–11**). They especially would have struggled to grasp the suffering of the Messiah with the glory that He deserved. This thought must have encouraged the readers as they went through their present sufferings and likely wondered how all this fit into the plan and purposes of God.

In **verse 12**, Peter further encouraged these tested believers by stating that these prophets understood they were not writing for themselves but for those who would live later and would come to know

APPLY:

Be joyful in Christ, even when trials and challenges come.

the full experience of God's salvation. Not only were the prophets intrigued by such experiences but so were the angels.

 KEY TRUTH: Believers Should Display Hope, Holiness, Reverence, and Love While Awaiting Christ's Return
(1 Peter 1:13–25)

There are four primary commands given in these verses. Everything else simply modifies or supports them. The four commands are (1) set your hope fully on the grace to come (**verse 13**); (2) be holy (**verse 15**); (3) conduct yourselves with reverence for God (**verse 17**); and (4) love one another (**verse 22**). It is worth noting that these commands follow Peter's encouragement to weary believers living as foreigners in this world. These commands are shaped by divine truth. God's truth—not our circumstances—should shape how we think and respond. It is because of His truth and what He has done that believers can live hopeful, holy, reverent, and loving lives before God. The way we live holy lives before God is explained through the commands of *set your hope fully* and *conduct yourselves in reverence*. These two—hope and holy fear—are the foundation for living a holy life before God.

DISCUSS:

- *What specific truths in this passage help believers face difficulty?*
- *Why is it easy to let our circumstances rob us of our joy? How can joy be present even when life is difficult?*

Beyond these verbs, however, are participles that further clarify the role of believers experiencing persecution and difficulty. In **verse 13**, the apostle instructed these Christians to be *preparing their minds for action*. It must be understood that obedience is a conscious act of the will. Every believer must exercise spiritual resolve if they are to be obedient when difficulties arise. It was also important, according to Peter, that they be *sober-minded* or *self-controlled*. Rather than letting external situations dictate their response, believers must exhibit self-control if they wish to remain resolute and not be overcome by the external pressures they are experiencing.

In **verses 15 and 16**, Peter connected the holiness of God to the actions of the Christ-follower. This theme of being holy just as God is holy is seen in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The conduct of the church was vitally important to Peter as we see again in **verse 17**. Rather than fear those who would persecute them, these believers were to fear God. If one truly thinks this way, it will affect his or her conduct. Our task is to live in such a way as to reflect and represent the God we serve. He is holy and our lives should mirror this fact. After all, it was the Father who ransomed or paid for our

APPLY:

Let God's truth shape how you feel, not your circumstances.

redemption. He did this not with silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ (**verses 18–19**).

DISCUSS:

- *How does setting our hope on future grace lead to holy living in the present?* (We conduct ourselves as Christ would; we do what is good and right according to God’s Word; we avoid sin; etc.)
- *We often talk about wanting the world to see God through us. What does that look like? What must happen for our lives to reflect the Father?*

According to **verse 20**, this payment for sin was planned before the foundation of the world. The Christians Peter addressed had the amazing opportunity to watch as it was manifested before them, as do we. In **verse 21**, Peter returned to the theme of salvation through the Resurrection that he mentioned in verse 3.

Now that Peter had addressed their personal lives, he urged these exiles to have an earnest, sincere love for one another (**verse 22**). He began this discussion by reminding them that they had purified their souls through obedience to the truth. The gospel calls believers to demonstrate a sincere, sacrificial, and selfless love for others because Christ Himself commanded and demonstrated such a love. The reality of their new birth proved this. Because they had been born again, they were to demonstrate their new birth through new attitudes and actions (new life).

DISCUSS:

- *How does the gospel shape the way we love other believers?* (We choose to do what is best for others; we consider others’ wishes; we put others’ needs and interests above our own; etc.)
- *Why is sincere love especially important during hardship?*

Verse 22 serves as the final command of chapter 1. Obedience to the gospel produces a love for fellow believers. The term *unfeigned* or *sincere* could be translated *without hypocrisy*. Just as their lives were to be pure, so their love for one another, as a fruit of the gospel, should be pure. Beyond their love being pure, it is also to be done *fervently* or *deeply*. This term speaks of supreme effort, literally “with every muscle strained.” This term was used to describe Jesus as He prayed in the Garden in Luke 22:44. All believers are to make a supreme effort to love one another in this way. We need this kind of love when we are walking through challenging times, and we need to show this kind of love to those who need it the most.

APPLY:

Live in a way that reflects and represents the holy God that we serve.

APPLY:

Like Jesus, demonstrate a deep, sincere love for others.

Again, Peter linked their obedience in these specific areas, such as loving one another, to the fact that they had been born again. Here, however, he took the opportunity to remind them that this change came through the *living and abiding Word of God* (**verse 23**). This is not a perishable seed that withers but instead would continue forever. This truth of *forever* would again contrast with the temporary suffering of the scattered believers.

Peter supported this claim by quoting from *Isaiah 40:6–8*. Though every person, like a flower, withers away and dies, what God has said remains, abides, or endures forever. It stands for all eternity and should shape how we live in every circumstance.

In **verse 25**, Peter, equating the Word of the Lord with the gospel message, reminded the readers of the fact that this was the good news that had been preached to them. This good news offered them hope when there was none and provided them the foundation of their faith upon which they could stand.

APOLOGETICS:

Peter reminded believers that they have been born again through the living and enduring Word of God (**1 Peter 1:23**). To reinforce this truth, he pointed back to *Isaiah 40:6–8*, written more than seven centuries earlier, where the prophet contrasted the fading nature of human life with the permanent nature of God's Word (**1 Peter 1:24–25**). People wither and pass away, but what God has spoken stands forever. The remarkable preservation of Scripture, its fulfilled prophecy, and its unified message across centuries point to its divine origin. Peter then identified this enduring Word with the gospel that had been preached to them (**1 Peter 1:25**). The good news of Christ is not built on shifting ideas or temporary philosophies but on revelation that will never fade. Because God's Word endures, believers can confidently anchor their lives to it.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Ask your learners to quietly reflect on whether there is an area of their lives that does not reflect the holiness of God. Is there a habit, attitude, relationship, or pattern of thinking that needs to be surrendered? Remind them that they have been redeemed not with perishable things but with the precious blood of Christ. Encourage

D6 PRINCIPLE:

The enduring Word of God must be intentionally passed from one generation to the next. Just as these believers received the gospel through the proclaimed Word, we are responsible for ensuring that our families and church continue proclaiming that same unchanging truth.

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 2-3



PP-2

The *Parent Page* (PP-2) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

them to set their hope fully on God's grace and commit to living in a way that reflects the One who called them. Invite them to pray silently, asking God to help them walk in holiness and reverence this week.

OPTION 2: Discuss with your group why we can have joy and hope even when going through trials and difficulties. Talk about what believers have to look forward to in the future. Encourage your learners to remind themselves what lies ahead for them whenever they are going through a difficult time. The AH 2-3 *Looking Ahead* handout can help.

OPTION 3: Ask your learners to consider ways they could show self-sacrificing love to someone in their family, their community, their workplace, or their church family. Encourage them to follow through and demonstrate love to at least two people this week.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Some translations of the Bible aim for a word-for-word translation; others aim for an idea-for-idea translation. Some Bible versions are paraphrases rather than translations.

Pray!

Notes:

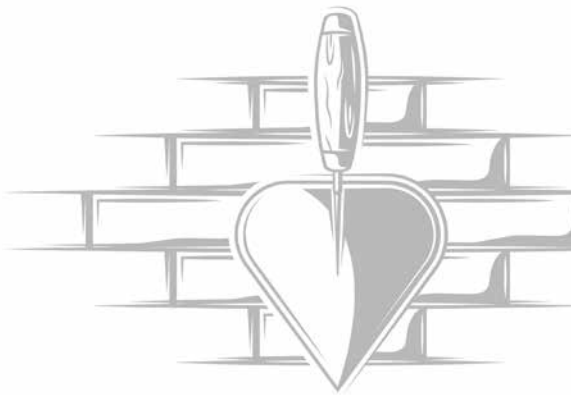


FAMILY THEME

Joyful Trust

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners set aside sin and seek to do God's will.

STUDY TEXT: 1 Peter 4:1–19



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 3-1 or AH 3-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 3* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 3-2), the *Showing Love and Hospitality* handout (AH 3-3), and *Parent Page* (PP-3) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-3) to parents.



Key Truths

- Believers Joyfully Trust God as They Suffer Because of Doing God's Will (1 Peter 4:1–6)
- Believers Love and Serve Each Other Knowing Christ Will Return (1 Peter 4:7–11)
- Believers Should Not Be Surprised to Experience Trials and Persecution (1 Peter 4:12–19)

Verse of the
Month

HEBREWS 11:6

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this short video of a trust fall that didn't go the way it was supposed to: tinyurl.com/TrustFallTG. Ask group members what it means to trust God. Why is our trust in God far from being blind trust? After discussion, say: *Today we will discuss why we can joyfully trust God, even when facing life's toughest battles.*

OPTION 2: Pick a volunteer. Give them simple but slightly odd instructions verbally. Ideas might include:

- “Take three steps forward.”
- “Turn around.”
- “Close your eyes.”
- “Stand still.”

After a few harmless instructions, ask: *How did it feel to follow instructions without knowing why?* Then ask the group: *Why is it harder to trust when we don't see the full picture?* After discussion, say: *Peter told believers to arm themselves with Christ's mindset and trust God even when suffering doesn't make sense. Although we might struggle to trust other people, we can trust God!*

OPTION 3: We often talk about expectation versus reality. Ask your learners to think about something they once looked forward to that turned out to be more difficult than expected. Offer a few examples:

- Becoming an adult
- Getting a full-time job
- Owning a car or a home
- Getting married
- Having children

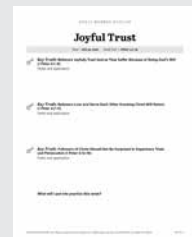
Ask: *Did your expectation meet reality? Why or why not? What was harder than you thought it would be?* After discussion, say: *Many things in life look exciting from a distance but prove to be more challenging in reality. Sometimes following Christ can feel the same way. We might expect comfort or ease, but Scripture teaches that obedience can lead to opposition and suffering. Today we will see why believers should not be surprised by trials, and how we can joyfully trust God even when doing His will is difficult.*

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**Hebrews 11:6**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 3-1



AH 3-2

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

TEACHING TIP

Assign daily Scripture that learners can read through the week that reinforces what was studied on Sunday. D6 Devotional Study Guides provide these devotional passages.

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 3-2).

First Peter 4 stands at the center of Peter's encouragement to believers facing trials and persecution. Knowing the pressures they were under, he pointed them to the example of Christ to help them find the resolve to remain faithful rather than give in to the temptation to give up.

KEY TRUTH: Believers Joyfully Trust God as They Suffer Because of Doing God's Will (1 Peter 4:1-6)

Peter urged his readers to have the same attitude toward suffering as that of Christ. No one knew this attitude any better than Peter, considering that he was with Jesus through much of His suffering. Christ died unjustly and willingly chose to do God's will. Knowing the mind of Christ, Peter admonished his readers to equip themselves with the same mindset (**verse 1**).

Believers who are willing to suffer for God will demonstrate that their purpose is to glorify God rather than continue in sin. They have identified with Christ by faith, have died with Him, and as a result are done with sin (in the sense that they have forsaken the pursuit of sin). This was Peter's way of asserting that believers are delivered from sin's dominion over their lives. The result is that they should not live their temporary lives for the things that once dominated them (**verse 2**). Rather, they should live for the will of God, trusting Him as they do so. Peter also reminded his readers that a day of reckoning is coming.

EXPLORE:

In **verse 1**, Peter spoke of the fact that the believer has *ceased from sin*. What did he mean by this statement? Was he asserting that once a person comes to Christ he never sins again? Of course not. The application of what Peter said at the end of **verse 1** is provided in **verse 2**. In essence, when a person places saving faith in Jesus Christ, sin is no longer the ruling principle of his or her life. In 1 Peter 2:24, Peter spoke of the fact that believers die to sin. The tense of the verb here is such that it looks to a past break and a present freedom that follows from that break. The Christian is no longer ruled by sin. For this reason, **verse 2** indicates the result of this death and ceasing from sin—that such a person no longer lives for human desires but for the will of God. Further, the believer's identification is no longer with sin, but he is instead identified with Christ. Paul's teaching in Romans 6:6–7 also sheds light on this issue when he stated that we are no longer slaves to sin and

that we have been set free from sin. While the struggle is real, we are no longer a slave to sin, but we are instead slaves to Christ. He is the ruling principle, and we serve Him as opposed to serving our former ruler, sin.

DISCUSS:

- *What is the difference between struggling with sin and being enslaved to sin?*
- *Peter reminded us that believers are no longer slaves to sin. In what practical ways should “freedom from sin” show up in our thoughts, words, and habits this week?*

The term *Gentiles* in **verse 3** is used to refer to unbelievers (the pagan world) and the various types of immoral behavior typically associated with them. To be clear, Peter provided a list of vices that included drunkenness, sexual sin, carousing, and idolatry.

When a believer lives a life of holiness, distinct from sinful humanity, the world is surprised or astonished by their conduct. As a result, the Christ-follower is maligned or slandered (**verse 4**). No matter what happens in this life, Peter reminded his audience that all people will give account of themselves to God (**verse 5**). No one, whether living or dead, will escape the final judgment of the words and actions of his or her earthly life.

DISCUSS:

- *Why does godly living sometimes provoke hostility or suspicion from unbelievers? How can believers respond in a Christlike way when this happens?*
- *When you are misunderstood or mocked for your faith, what would a Christlike response look like in the moment? What tempts you most in those moments—anger, silence, compromise, or shame?*

In **verse 6**, Peter referred to believers who had died after hearing and responding to the gospel. Though they may have been judged or condemned by human standards during their earthly lives, they now live eternally in the presence of God.

APPLY:

With the Lord’s help, set aside all sin and live a holy lifestyle. Believers are no longer slaves to sin.



PowerPoint 3

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 3-1) and on *PowerPoint 3*, which is customizable. Files 3A and 3B are provided for customization.

APPLY:

Joyfully trust God when your holy lifestyle causes the lost to revile and speak evil of you.

EXPLORE:

There is no question from Scripture that the life of the believer should look much different from the unbeliever. The only way that can feasibly happen, however, is for each of us to disregard sin and pursue God's will. Sometimes, this will lead to persecution and suffering. Regardless, we lay it all on the line with a willingness to experience whatever God deems necessary or permits for our lives.

KEY TRUTH: Believers Love and Serve Each Other Knowing Christ Will Return (1 Peter 4:7-11)

In **verse 7**, Peter reminded his readers that the end of all things is near. The return of Christ is not only the climax of history but also the goal toward which God has been working. Peter did not state this merely for information; the word *therefore* shows that it demands a response. Since Christ could return at any time, believers are called to be self-controlled and clear-minded so they can devote themselves to prayer.

APPLY:

Be a self-controlled and serious-minded person of prayer.

DISCUSS:

- *What usually moves prayer to the bottom of our priorities? How can we guard against that?*

For believers, a deep love for one another is essential (**verse 8**). The term *fervent* or *earnestly* speaks of a love that does not waver. After all, Peter said loving in this way will cover a multitude of sins (see also Proverbs 10:12). In other words, the practice of such love will result in reaching out with forgiveness and restoration to those who sin against us, treating one another as God has treated us regardless of the weight of our sins.

For the early church, this type of love would also reveal itself in their hospitality toward one another (**verse 9**). This was especially true in light of the unfriendly and hostile treatment they were receiving from unbelievers. They were to do this without grumbling. After all, it is a privilege for believers to serve one another.

APPLY:

Show one another love and hospitality.

DISCUSS:

- *Where in your life right now would “earnest love” require you to stretch beyond comfort?*

In addition, the readers were reminded of the fact that each had received some gift of God's grace endowing them for service for God's glory (**verse 10**). The Greek term for *gift* emphasizes that their gifts

were not based on talent, skill, or worth, but instead were given solely as a result of God and His grace. While Peter was not as extensive in his list of gifts as was Paul, he did mention two specific areas: speaking and serving (**verse 11**). The specific calling of the believer is to be a good steward or manager of the gifts allotted him or her by God, and to use those gifts to bring glory to God. Peter closed this section with a doxology of praise to Jesus Christ.

DISCUSS:

- *It's not always convenient to serve others. How can we make sure lack of convenience isn't keeping us from doing what God wants us to do?*
- *We live in an era where people tout their accomplishments and video themselves doing good deeds so they can post it online. How can we serve in a way that draws attention to Christ rather than to ourselves?*

Peter, as an apostle and a leader in the early church, understood the importance of loving one another. In a world that despised believers, it was even more necessary that their relationships with one another were characterized by love, generosity, and hospitality. This love would challenge them to serve one another with the gifts graciously given to them by God. We must also love one another and serve one another as God has gifted us.

KEY TRUTH: Followers of Christ Should Not Be Surprised to Experience Trials and Persecution (1 Peter 4:12-19)

Peter returned once more to the subject of Christian suffering. He appealed again to the believers not to be surprised by the trials they were experiencing, but to see trials and persecution as a test of their faith. God uses testing to refine faith (**verse 12**). Peter's admonition for them not to be surprised was a simple way of telling them to expect suffering, a teaching that echoed the words of Jesus to His disciples. There are other terms in this verse that require attention. The expression, *fiery trial*, spoke of a painful experience or a fierce ordeal. The word *test* referred to examining something to reveal its true character. Believers needed to understand that one of the purposes of trials was to reveal the character or nature of one's faith. The believers also needed to know that these tests were not strange or unique to them. Even the prophets, as Jesus said, experienced many of these same tests. See [Matthew 5:11-12](#) and [Matthew 10:24-25](#).

Instead of the believer cowering in the face of persecution or becoming bitter for it, Peter encouraged them to rejoice. This is not typically the first response of those facing difficulties and challenges. However,

APPLY:

Bring glory to God by using your God-given gifts to serve.

believers can rejoice when suffering, because as they go through the trial they can further identify with Christ and His sufferings. As he often did, Peter appealed to Christ's future return as motivation for present rejoicing. After all, the New Testament is clear that those who take part in suffering for Christ will one day take part in His glory (see [1 Peter 5:1](#)).

APOLOGETICS:

One of the hardest questions people ask is why a good and all-powerful God allows suffering, especially when children suffer from disease or injustice. Scripture affirms that God is sovereign and able to act ([Psalm 115:3](#)), yet it also teaches that we live in a fallen world where sin has corrupted creation ([Romans 8:20–22](#)). Not all suffering is directly caused by God; much of it flows from humanity's rebellion and the brokenness that followed. God does not delight in suffering ([Ezekiel 18:23](#)), nor is He distant from it. In Christ, God entered into human pain and experienced injustice and death firsthand ([Isaiah 53:3–5](#)). The Cross reminds us that God can bring redemption out of what He does not author. While we may not have every answer, we trust a God who is powerful, present, and ultimately working to restore all things ([Revelation 21:4](#)).

In **verse 14**, the teachings of Jesus are again brought into the discussion. As part of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke of the blessing of being reviled and persecuted for His name's sake ([Matthew 5:11](#)). The *insult* of verse 14 speaks of reproach or being slandered. Note, however, that these insults are for a very specific reason: *for the name of Christ*. This expression speaks of association with Christ. Because of their association with Christ, many of these believers were experiencing ostracism, discrimination, and ridicule for Christ's sake. Regardless of these experiences, the believer is blessed with the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence.

APPLY:

Rejoice and do good when trials come, considering them a test of faith and committing yourself to God's care.

DISCUSS:

- *What is usually our first instinct when trials come—trust, fear, discouragement, anger, withdrawal?*
- *How can we tell whether a hardship is refining us or embittering us?*
- *So many people today turn to unhealthy vices to deal with hard times. What does continuing to do good in suffering communicate to a watching world?*
- *How does remembering that God is our Creator strengthen our trust during hardship?*

Part of the believer's responsibility is given in **verse 15**. At no point should an individual suffer because of unrighteous deeds such as a murderer, a thief, an evil-doer, or even as a meddler. It is only when suffering as a Christian, as stated in **verse 16**, that an individual can glorify God through his sufferings.

While Peter had previously spoken of a future judgment that was coming, this was the first time that he specifically tied it to the household of God (**verse 17**). He saw persecution as a form of purifying discipline for believers, in contrast to the final judgment that awaits unbelievers. In **verse 18**, Peter quoted Proverbs 11:31, and gave a further warning to the wicked. If those who are saved have such purifying judgment to bear, the wicked cannot stand before God at all.

In light of this, those who are suffering in God's will need only to entrust their safekeeping to God and devote themselves to doing good. After all, He is their Creator and is faithful to His own (**verse 19**). Again, this is the pattern that was established by Jesus who committed His soul to the Father while on the cross. Every believer must continue doing good, regardless of suffering, knowing that their faithful Creator has them in His hands.

The terms *rejoice* and *suffering* seem to be contradictory terms. Is it really possible to rejoice while suffering? Peter said yes, and he said so because of his observation of Jesus and from his personal experience with suffering. If for no other reason, we can, and must, do this knowing that God our Creator is faithful and works all things according to His good purposes.

D6 PRINCIPLE: —

Children and students learn how to handle suffering long before they ever face it personally. They watch how parents and spiritual leaders respond when prayers seem unanswered, when plans fall apart, or when faithfulness brings difficulty instead of comfort. First Peter 4 reminds believers to rejoice in trials, continue doing good, and entrust themselves to a faithful Creator. When adults model calm trust instead of panic, obedience instead of compromise, and joy instead of bitterness, they are discipling the next generation in real time. A home marked by joyful trust teaches children that following Christ is worth it, even when it costs something.

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 3-3



PP-3

The *Parent Page* (PP-3) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Ask your learners to quietly identify a current trial, hardship, or pressure they are facing. Invite them to consider whether they have been responding with trust or frustration. Read 1 Peter 4:19 aloud and encourage them to memorize this verse this week and to consciously entrust that situation to their faithful Creator. Close by praying together, committing those specific burdens to God and asking for strength to continue doing good.

OPTION 2: Discuss with your group how we can respond in a Christ-like way when those who don't know Jesus mock us and speak evil of us for not joining in their sinful ways. Encourage group members to respond like Christ would next time the lost make fun of them.

OPTION 3: Discuss various ways we can show love or hospitality to others. Encourage learners to plan how they will show love or hospitality to someone this week, and to follow through and put their plan into action. The *Showing Love and Hospitality* handout (AH 3-3) can help.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Hope is a confident expectation in the promises of God.

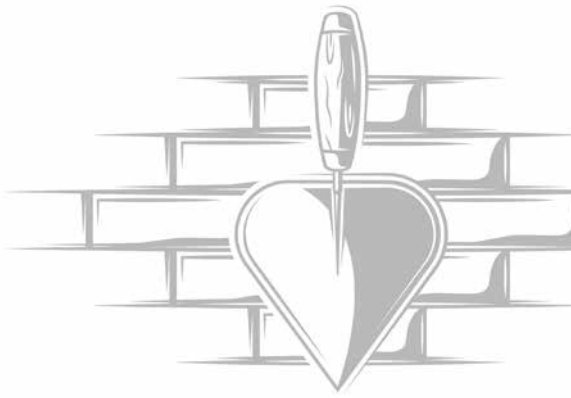
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Lessons From the Life of John

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners put life lessons from John into action.

STUDY TEXT: Luke 5:1-11 and others



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 4-1 or AH 4-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 4* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 4-2), the *Love on Display* handout (AH 4-3), and *Parent Page* (PP-4) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-4) to parents.

In This Character Study:

- An Introduction to John
- Key Events in John's Life
- Life Lessons to Apply From John
- Ways to Respond

Verse of the
Month

HEBREWS 11:6

The Family Verse of the Month is **Hebrews 11:6**. Encourage your learners to memorize this verse along with family members.



AH 4-1



AH 4-2

TEACHING TIP

Don't get stuck in a rut. Use a variety of methods to avoid monotony in your teaching.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this video that gives more background into the life of John: tinyurl.com/JohnD6. Discuss the video with your group. After discussion, say: *Today we will examine the life of John and learn key principles from his life.*

OPTION 2: Ask group members if they had a nickname when they were growing up. If so, how did they get it? If someone gave them a nickname now based on their personality, what would it be? Explain that Jesus once nicknamed John and his brother James “Sons of Thunder” ([Mark 3:17](#)). Yet John later became known as the apostle of love. Say: *Today we'll look at how God transformed a fiery personality into a faithful witness of love.*

OPTION 3: Begin by asking this question: *If you could have front-row access to one moment in history, what would you choose?* Discuss this with your group. After discussion, say: *John had front-row access to some of the most important moments in history. Today we'll study the life of this disciple who saw the Cross and the empty tomb.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 4-2).

Some people have life experiences that make others eager to sit and listen. Jesus' disciple John was such a person. He seemed to have a close relationship with Jesus and referred to himself in his Gospel as the beloved disciple. As a member of Jesus' inner circle, John witnessed events that shaped the history of our salvation. While James was the first of the disciples to be martyred ([Acts 12:1–2](#)), church tradition identifies John as the only disciple not to experience a martyr's death. He did, however, experience and witness much that can convict and encourage believers through the centuries. As we study John's relationship with Christ, we will consider how the events he witnessed shaped him into a faithful servant and citizen of God's kingdom.

Key Events and Life Lessons from John's Life

KEY EVENT: John Became a Committed Follower of Jesus (Luke 5:1-11)

While church tradition suggests John might have been one who first met Jesus on an earlier occasion as a disciple of John the Baptist ([John 1:35-51](#)), he became a fully committed follower of Jesus when Jesus was teaching by the lake of Gennesaret, also called the Sea of Galilee (**Luke 5:1**). The gathering crowd swelled until the Great Teacher needed to create distance between Himself and the crowd. Stepping into a nearby boat owned by Peter, Jesus continued His teaching (**verses 2-3**). After teaching, Jesus instructed Peter to engage in another round of fishing (**verses 4-5**). Overwhelmed by the massive catch straining their nets and nearly sinking their boat, Peter and his brother Andrew called for their partners, James and John, to help.

Once the boats struggled to the shore, Jesus invited the men, including John, to follow Him and start fishing for people. John and the others left everything behind and followed Him (**verses 6-11**).

LIFE LESSON 1: Make following Jesus your highest priority, and don't let anything stand in the way of walking with Him.

DISCUSS:

- *What did “leaving everything” look like for John? What might it look like for us today?*
- *What kinds of things can compete with Jesus for first place in our lives today?*

KEY EVENT: John Was Part of Jesus' Inner Circle (Luke 8:40-56)

Since John functioned as one of Jesus' closest disciples, he witnessed some of the most personal and private interactions with Him. Pay attention to three special encounters that give us a clearer picture of Jesus' character.

First, John saw Jesus' compassion when he, and a few others, witnessed Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead. With a crowd pressing in around Him, Jesus listened to Jairus' request that He come help his only daughter. She was 12 years old and was very sick, prompting the concerned father to seek Jesus' intervention (**Luke 8:40-42**). As they began winding their way through the crowd, Jesus stopped, aware that power had gone out from Him. Soon He met the sick woman who had touched Him and had been healed. Blessing her, Jesus continued to Jairus' house (**verses 43-48**).

You will not have time to read all the Scripture listed for this lesson. Summarize the commentary and read the Scripture passages you feel are most important.



PowerPoint 4

Discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 4-1), and on *PowerPoint 4*, which is customizable. Files 4A and 4B are provided for customization.

At that point messengers arrived with news that the child had died. Unbothered, Jesus continued on His way. The group heard weeping as they arrived at the house. Jesus reassured Jairus and instructed that everyone be sent away except her parents and John, Peter, and James (**verses 49–51**). The crowd quickly shifted from weeping to taunting as they mocked Jesus for saying that she was not dead. They knew she was dead. Finally alone, Jesus took her by the hand and told her to get up. John saw her get up at once. She was alive again! Jesus told the parents to feed her and not tell anyone about the events of that day (**verses 52–56**).

LIFE LESSON 2: Trust Jesus. He has the compassion and power to meet our deepest needs.

DISCUSS:

- *What situations in your life right now require you to trust Jesus' compassion and power?*

Second, John experienced a deeper lesson regarding Jesus' identity on the top of a mountain. He, along with Peter and James, saw Jesus transfigured before them. Jesus' clothes appeared dazzlingly white (Mark 9:2–3). Elijah and Moses appeared to the group. An overwhelmed Peter suggested that they should build shelters for Jesus, Elijah, and Moses. Peter might have thought he was honoring Jesus by classifying Him along with the two Old Testament legends (verses 4–6). However, a voice boomed from Heaven, reminding Peter that Jesus is God's Son while Elijah and Moses were servants (verses 7–8). They were to listen to Jesus.

LIFE LESSON 3: Listen to and obey Jesus. He is the Son of God.

DISCUSS:

- *If Jesus truly is the Son of God, what difference should that make in how we respond to His Word?*
- *Why do we sometimes listen to other voices more than we listen to Jesus?*

Third, John watched Jesus on the most excruciating night of His life. After celebrating the Passover with His disciples and guiding them through the first Lord's Supper, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him for a time of prayer. In deep anguish over the suffering He was about to endure, Jesus left the group to pray alone, where He affirmed submission to God's will. Returning, He found the trio sleeping (Matthew 26:36–43). Overcome with sleep and confusion, the disciples did not understand why Jesus seemed disappointed. As that

scenario repeated itself Jesus finally announced that the time of His betrayal had arrived (verses 44–46).

LIFE LESSON 4: Like Jesus, submit to God's will for your life.

DISCUSS:

- *How does Jesus' example help us submit to God's will even when our plans are disrupted?*
- *How can prayer help us move from resistance to surrender?*

John, James, and Peter still staggered mentally to catch Jesus' meaning. Betrayal? What was going on? Then Judas arrived with a mob. He greeted Jesus with a customary kiss and Jesus then whispered something back to Judas. Then the mob moved in to seize Jesus. Peter drew a sword and injured a man severely only to watch as Jesus stopped him and then healed the man's damaged ear. Unsure how to proceed, John and the other disciples fled (verses 47–56), although Peter and John followed at a distance (John 18:15–16).

 KEY EVENT: John Was a Witness of Jesus' Resurrection (John 20:1–8, 19–20)

Throughout the New Testament narratives, John often appeared alongside Peter. This means that some of the material that informs us about Peter also speaks about John. Two of those occasions center on the Resurrection.

First, we read about John and Peter on the morning of Jesus' resurrection. Mary Magdalene and other women with her were the first witnesses to the empty tomb. Once the report of an empty tomb reached the disciples, they immediately assumed that something terrible had happened. Perhaps an enemy had stolen Jesus' body. John ran to the tomb with Peter, though John, as always, referred to himself in vague terms (**John 20:1–2**). Some readers have noticed a subtle contrast between Peter and John in these accounts. John mentioned in his account of the Resurrection that he outran Peter to the tomb (**verses 3–4**). He was honest, however, by telling the reader that he hesitated to enter the tomb. Peter, however, rushed in to investigate the scene (**verses 5–7**). As John surveyed the burial area, he saw the linen clothes lying there and the face cloth folded separately. Something ignited inside John and he realized that Jesus had risen from the dead (**verse 8**). Later that evening Jesus would appear to John and the other disciples to show them that He indeed had risen (**verses 19–20**).

APOLOGETICS:

Christianity is not built on vague spiritual ideas but on historical events witnessed by real people. John did not present himself as a philosopher inventing religious concepts; he wrote as a man who had seen Jesus, walked with Him, and witnessed both His death and resurrection (John 20:8, 19–20). In his later writings, John emphasized that he proclaimed what he had heard, seen, and touched. The Resurrection was not a private vision or symbolic story. It was publicly proclaimed in the very city where Jesus was crucified. These eyewitnesses endured persecution rather than deny what they had seen. John's testimony reminds us that our faith rests on credible, historical claims. We trust Christ not because of blind faith, but because trustworthy witnesses recorded what God actually did in history.

LIFE LESSON 5: Joyfully look forward to Heaven. Because Jesus lives, believers will live also.

DISCUSS:

- *Why does the Resurrection change the way we view death?*
- *How can confidently looking forward to Heaven motivate us to share the gospel and live faithfully for Jesus now?*

Another time John witnessed the resurrected Christ occurred after Jesus' appearances to the disciples behind locked doors. This time it was on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias, also called the Sea of Galilee. John and some other disciples agreed to go night fishing with Peter (**John 21:1–3**). Unsuccessful throughout the night, at daybreak they heard a voice from the shore telling them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. When they followed this instruction, they experienced a tremendous haul of fish. As they struggled to secure the nets John realized that the person on the shore was Jesus. At this, Peter immediately swam to shore leaving the others to maneuver the boat to safety (**verses 4–8**).

When they came ashore, Jesus invited them to join Him for a breakfast of fish and bread that He had prepared for them. This was the third time Jesus appeared to John and the other disciples after His resurrection (**verses 9–14**). After breakfast Jesus restored Peter's downcast heart with a series of questions and instructions. Peter asked Jesus what John's future would be. Jesus told Peter to not worry about John. Peter was just to follow Jesus. From this, a misunderstanding arose that John would not die, but John clarified that Jesus simply posed this as a hypothetical not as a prophecy (**verses 21–23**).

KEY EVENT: John Was a Witness to the Early Believers (1 John 1:1–2:2)

In his Gospel, John wrote in a narrative style telling stories about Jesus' life and recorded some of Jesus' teaching. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, John and other apostles functioned as leaders among the churches. It was in this context of pastoral leadership that John wrote three letters included in the New Testament canon as 1, 2, and 3 John. These letters capture the heart of John's message to the church and, by extension, to the world.

John's message to the church emphasized core matters of Christian belief and doctrine. He spoke of the physical reality of Jesus' human body, which is essential in order for Him to function as our Redeemer (**1 John 1:1**). John taught the absolute holiness of God who, in turn, expects His people to live in holiness (**1 John 1:5–7**). Our problem is that we all sin, but God, in His grace provides forgiveness for repentant sinners (**1 John 1:8–9**). He identified Jesus as our advocate with the Father, functioning like a defense attorney on our behalf (**1 John 2:1–2**).

LIFE LESSON 6: Be holy because God is holy.

DISCUSS:

- *How would you explain holiness to an unbeliever?*
- *Why does holiness go beyond just trying harder or being “more moral”?*

John warned believers against loving the world because the values of the world stand opposed to God (**1 John 2:15–17**). John's most essential message related to love. God's love for the world captivated John's imagination (**1 John 3:1–3**). Because God loves us, we are able to love Him and to love other people (**1 John 3:21–23; 4:10, 16–21**). After encouraging the believers with some final words, he charged them to stay away from idols (**1 John 5:21**).

LIFE LESSON 7: Love God and others because God loves us.

DISCUSS:

- *Where is it hardest for you to show Christlike love right now?*
- *What practical step could you take this week to reflect God's love?*

Several key figures in the early church (Irenaeus, Eusebius, and Jerome) mentioned that while John experienced persecution, he did not die as a martyr like the other disciples. He died a natural death. In him we find an imperfect man who felt passionately about Jesus.

We also see a man who demonstrated deep spiritual discernment and spoke wisely to the early church.

D6 PRINCIPLE:

Faith is not meant to stop with us. Like John, we are called to walk closely with Christ and intentionally pass on what we have seen and learned to others, especially within our homes and church families (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).

EXPLORE:

John was not only a witness of Christ's earthly ministry and resurrection but also of His future glory. While on the island of Patmos, John saw the risen and reigning Christ and wrote the book of Revelation to encourage believers to endure faithfully. Whatever one's understanding of the book's prophetic details, its central message is clear: Jesus wins, His kingdom is secure, and His people must remain faithful because He will return and gather them to be with Him.

RESPOND

Encourage your learners to put what they have learned into action this week.

OPTION 1: Ask learners to reflect on this question: *If someone observed your life closely for a week, what would they conclude about your relationship with Jesus?* Remind them that John's credibility came from the fact that he had seen, heard, and walked with Christ. Encourage learners to consider one intentional step they can take this week to live as a faithful witness of Jesus in their words, attitudes, and actions.

OPTION 2: Ask learners to list several ways they could show love to others with God's help. After discussion, ask them to choose five persons and show them love in the next two weeks. The AH 4-3 *Love on Display* handout can help.

OPTION 3: Ask your learners to silently identify ways in which they are too close to the world. After a few moments, encourage them to pray for God's forgiveness and to ask for God's power to live holy in that area and draw closer to Him.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 devotional study guides* this week.



AH 4-3

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

John wrote five New Testament books: the gospel of John, three letters (epistles), and Revelation.

Pray!

Notes



PP-4

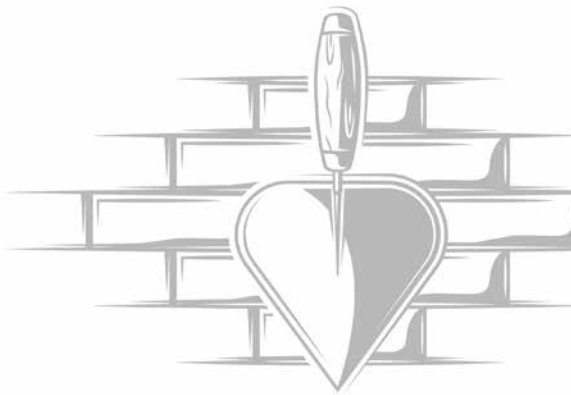
The *Parent Page (PP-4)* is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

FAMILY THEME

Walking in the Light

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners follow John's instructions in how to walk in the light, avoid false teaching, and partner with others to strengthen the Church.

STUDY TEXT: 1 John 1:1-7



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the Adult Teaching Outline (Adult Handout 5-1 or AH 5-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review PowerPoint 5 and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 5-2), *The Message of John's Letters* handout (AH 5-3), the *Choose to Love Others* handout (AH 5-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-5) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-5) to parents.



Key Truths

- True Fellowship and Confident Assurance Flow From Abiding in Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-7; 4:7-12)
- Truth and Discernment Guard the Church From Deception (2 John 4-11)
- Faithful Witness and Gospel Partnership Strengthen the Church (3 John 5-12)

Verse of the
Month

JOHN 11:25

CONNECT

Choose one of the Connect options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Today we hear about many people “deconstructing” their faith. This video explains why there’s a better alternative: tinyurl.com/DoNotDecon. Discuss the video with your group. Why do people deconstruct? After discussion, say: *The concept of deconstruction is nothing new. John knew some would walk away from the teachings of Christ and embrace false beliefs. Today we’ll examine why holding to truth is a much better option.*

OPTION 2: Bring a small flashlight. Turn off part of the room lights (if possible) and shine the flashlight at the floor; a corner; inside a bag; under a chair. Ask: *What happens when light hits something? Does light create what’s there or reveal what’s already there?* After discussion say: *John wrote that God is light. Light exposes truth. Today we’ll see what it means to walk in the light instead of hiding in darkness.*

OPTION 3: Begin by asking the following question: *How do you decide whether something you read online is trustworthy?* Discuss the question with group members. Then ask: *Why is discernment even more important spiritually?* After discussion, say: *John wrote to believers facing false teaching. Today we’ll see how truth protects fellowship and strengthens the church.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 5-2) and *The Message of John’s Letters* handout (AH 5-3).

EXPLORE:

John wrote 1, 2, and 3 John near the end of his life. By this time, he was likely the last living apostle. Early church tradition places him in Ephesus serving as a spiritual father to a network of house churches across Asia Minor. These congregations faced false teaching, fractured fellowship, and growing cultural hostility toward the gospel.

John’s purpose was pastoral. He addressed believers as “little children” (1 John 2:1), connecting sound doctrine with spiritual health. Right belief about Jesus was not merely theological—it was essential for fellowship with God and one another.

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (John 11:25) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 5-1



AH 5-2

TEACHING TIP

Hold interest by showing learners that the day’s topic is meaningful, useful, enjoyable, and informative.

Teacher Note:

The background EXPLORE material at the beginning of this lesson will give you a good overview of 1 John, 2 John, and 3 John. You might want to share a synopsis of this material with your learners while leaving plenty of time for sharing the Key Truth material of the lesson.

One major threat facing these churches was an early form of what later became known as Gnosticism. Although full Gnosticism developed in the second century, early Gnostic ideas were already circulating. These teachings claimed that salvation came through secret spiritual knowledge (Greek: *gnōsis*) available only to the enlightened. Many Gnostic teachers viewed physical matter as evil, leading some to deny that Jesus truly became human. Some claimed He only appeared to have a body (a belief called Docetism). Others separated the divine “Christ” from the human Jesus.

These ideas struck at the heart of the gospel. If Jesus did not truly come in the flesh, then His death and resurrection lose their saving meaning. If salvation comes through secret knowledge, then grace is replaced by elitism. And if the physical body is irrelevant, moral obedience becomes optional.

John responded by emphasizing what had been proclaimed “from the beginning”—the real, historical, incarnate Jesus Christ. He grounded believers in truth, called them to obedience, and reassured them of their salvation.

Why three letters?

1 John strengthens assurance, clarifies truth, and calls believers to walk in light and love.

2 John warns against supporting false teachers.

3 John encourages faithful gospel partnership and confronts prideful leadership.

Together, these letters form a unified pastoral message: true believers walk in truth, practice love, and remain rooted in the apostolic gospel.

KEY TRUTH: True Fellowship and Confident Assurance Flow From Abiding in Jesus Christ (1 John 1:1-7; 4:7-12)

John began the letter we know as 1 John with a strong declaration of eyewitness testimony. He wrote as someone who *heard*, *saw*, and *touched* the incarnate Word of Life (**1 John 1:1**). In doing so, he confronted false teachers who denied Jesus’ full humanity. John insisted that eternal life is not found in an idea or a vague spiritual force, but a Person—Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man.

The Greek verbs in **verse 1** are tactile and experiential. To *have seen* and *have touched* emphasize firsthand experience. This was John’s foundation of Christian assurance. He saw with his own eyes and ex-

perienced in his own life Jesus Christ as a physically real person who performed works that revealed His divine identity (**verse 2**).

DISCUSS:

- How does John's emphasis on eyewitness testimony strengthen your confidence in the gospel?
- Why is it important that Christianity is rooted in real events, not just spiritual ideas?

John's goal was *fellowship* (*koinōnia*), not mere social connection but spiritual participation in the life of God and His people. Believers can have fellowship with the Father, with His Son, and with each other. This fellowship brings joy (**verses 3–4**). True fellowship exists only when anchored to the true Christ.

John continued by grounding fellowship in God's nature: *God is light* (**verse 5**). Light signifies purity, truth, revelation, and moral clarity. Walking in the light means living transparently before God, confessing sin, rejecting falsehood, and pursuing righteousness.

To *walk in darkness* (**verse 6**) is to live in contradiction to God's character. John was pastoral but firm: no one can claim fellowship with God while embracing patterns of sin or deception.

Yet the comfort in this passage is profound: we are cleansed from sin by Jesus' blood (**verse 7**). The present tense *katharizei* (*cleanses*) communicates ongoing cleansing. Believers continually find forgiveness, restoration, and renewal through Christ's atoning work.

At times this passage has caused some believers to struggle, questioning their salvation because of ongoing struggles with sin. The passage is meant to accomplish the opposite! There is a difference between willfully embracing sinful practices without remorse or efforts to repent and struggling with the weakness of our flesh. The good news is that the *blood of Jesus* is active in the life of a believer who continues to trust in Him. It is our belief and trust in the person of Jesus Christ that is the key to our right standing with God, not our ability to stop sinning. We cannot produce the righteousness required by God's holy nature. That is why the sacrifice of Jesus is absolutely essential. John clarified that this sacrifice is also sufficient.

Yet we are also to walk in the light. Repentance is an ongoing process. We rest in the grace and mercy of Christ while also striving for holiness through regular steps of confession and active repentance whenever we sin.

APPLY:

Hold to the truth that Jesus is fully human and fully God. He died and rose again so our sins can be forgiven.



PowerPoint 5

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 5-1) and on *PowerPoint 5*, which is customizable. Files 5A and 5B are provided for customization.

APPLY:

Walk in the light and repent whenever you sin.

DISCUSS:

- *Why is confessing sin essential for enjoying true fellowship with God and with other believers?*

John returned to the theme of love in **1 John 4:7–12**, famously declaring, *God is love* (**verse 8**). This does not mean love defines God, but that God defines love. Love flows from His very nature and to know God is to reflect His love. The Greek word used throughout is *agapē*: self-giving love characterized by sacrificial action, not sentiment. The supreme revelation of this love is Christ coming into the world and dying on the cross to satisfy God's wrath against sin and pay its full penalty. Because of this we can have life everlasting (**verses 9–10**). God did not define love for us in the abstract, but in the tangible, real life of Jesus.

John then applied that understanding toward our relationships with others. Loving one another shows that God lives in us (**verses 11–12**). This means God becomes visible through the love His people show one another. Our love becomes a living apologetic—evidence of God's presence in the church. Jesus' life of love made God visible to us. Our lives, living out Christlike love, are to make the truth of God's love and its power visible to all.

APPLY:

Show that God lives in you by loving others.

DISCUSS:

- *How is godly love different from worldly love? How does Christ's cross redefine what love truly is?*

John also tied love and assurance closely. A lack of love signals spiritual deception; active love confirms new birth. The Spirit assures us that God's love has been *perfected* (*teteleiōmenē*, matured or brought to completion) in us. Walking in light and practicing love provide believers with confident assurance that they truly belong to God. First John teaches that truth, obedience, fellowship, and love are inseparably connected and reveal genuine faith.

KEY TRUTH: Truth and Discernment Guard the Church From Deception (2 John 4–11)

The second letter of John is brief, perhaps because the message was urgent. John wrote to the elect lady and her children (likely a metaphor for a local congregation) to emphasize the importance of walking in truth and guarding against deception.

John rejoiced that some among them were *walking in truth* (**verse 4**). It was common for John to write about truth not just in terms of accuracy, but faithfulness to Christ Himself, who is the truth (**John 14:6**).

Truth is lived, not merely believed. In that vein, John immediately paired truth with love (**verses 5–6**), indicating that love and truth cannot be separated. Love without truth becomes permissive sentimentality; truth without love becomes harsh legalism.

DISCUSS:

- *What happens in a believer's life when there is a gap between what they claim to believe and how they actually live?*

Then John warned that deceivers will be in the world. These deceivers deny that Jesus came in the flesh, a present participle (*erchomenon*) emphasizing Jesus' ongoing active identity as truly incarnate (**verse 7**). The denial of Christ's humanity undermines the gospel and corrupts Christian fellowship. John labeled such people as *the deceiver* and *the antichrist*. The term *antichristos* here refers to false teachers opposed to the true Christ.

John urged believers to *watch* themselves (**verse 8**). Spiritual vigilance protects believers from losing their *full reward*, not the loss of salvation, but the loss of reward connected to faithful service. Anyone who leaves the teaching about Christ and goes forward with new and different teaching does not really know God (**verse 9**). This is a warning against teachings claiming to be “beyond” Scripture. To abide in Christ's teaching is to remain faithful to His Word.

DISCUSS:

- *Where do you see cultural pressure to soften or reshape the identity of Christ?*
- *Why is the identity of Jesus the primary target of false teaching?*
- *What practical steps can you take to test books, podcasts, or influencers before embracing their teaching?*

John's final instruction is striking: do not welcome false teachers into your home or church (**verses 10–11**). In the ancient world, traveling teachers relied heavily on church hospitality. To host them would be to support their teaching and influence. This is not a prohibition against showing kindness to unbelievers, but a pastoral directive not to participate in the work of those who undermine the gospel. We must be careful who we support and allow to influence us. Second John teaches that the church must embrace truth and love while drawing firm boundaries against teachings that distort the identity of Jesus Christ.

APPLY:

Jesus is the truth, and Scripture reveals Him faithfully.

APPLY:

Don't be deceived by false teaching. Compare what is taught with Scripture.

APOLOGETICS:

In our day, many popular influencers blend biblical language with self-help philosophy, offering messages that sound uplifting but subtly distort the gospel. When believers raise concerns, they are often told, “Judge not,” or get accused of being unloving and intolerant. Yet Matthew 7 does not forbid discernment; it forbids hypocritical judgment. In the very same chapter, Jesus commanded His followers to beware of false prophets and to evaluate them by their fruit (Matthew 7:15–20). Likewise, John repeatedly warned the church to test teaching and refuse those who deny the true identity of Christ (1 John 4:1; **2 John 9–11**). Biblical love is not silent about error. Love protects people from deception and points them back to truth. Guarding doctrine is not hatred; it is shepherding. The most loving thing we can do is hold firmly to the real Jesus revealed in Scripture.

D6 PRINCIPLE:

Faith does not drift toward truth by accident. In every generation, parents and spiritual leaders must intentionally teach sound doctrine so children and new believers can recognize error. John wrote to protect the church from false teaching, urging believers to remain in what they had heard “from the beginning.” In the same way, families must regularly talk about who Jesus is and what Scripture teaches. Clear, consistent teaching at home and church helps the next generation walk in the light and stand firm against deception.

KEY TRUTH: Faithful Witness and Gospel Partnership Strengthen the Church (3 John 5–12)

While 2 John warns believers about whom not to support, 3 John provides guidance on whom they *should* support. This letter offers vivid real-life case studies of faithfulness and unfaithfulness in the early church.

Gaius: A Model of Faithful Hospitality

John praised Gaius for his faithfulness in caring for traveling gospel workers (**verses 5–8**). His hospitality reflected the truth he walked in (verse 3) and became a tangible expression of love. John emphasized that these missionaries traveled and ministered for the sake of the Lord (**verse 7**). Christian hospitality partners believers with gospel laborers, helping them work together for the truth (**verse 8**).

DISCUSS:

- *Why is the desire “to be first” so spiritually dangerous in ministry settings?*
- *What does it look like to “work together for the truth” in a local church today?*
- *How can someone who never leaves their hometown still have a global impact for the gospel?*
- *What does it mean to have a “good testimony” both inside and outside the church?*

Diotrephes: A Warning Against Prideful Leadership

John then contrasted Gaius with Diotrephes, who wanted to be first and foremost. This ambition was a direct contradiction to Christlike leadership ([Philippians 2:5–8](#)). Diotrephes rejected apostolic authority, spread nonsense, refused hospitality to missionaries, and punished those who offered it (**verses 9–10**). His behavior threatened the unity and witness of the church.

Demetrius: A Testimony Worth Following

John offered a third example: Demetrius, whom everyone spoke well of (**verse 12**). His life aligned with the truth, and he stood as a model of faithful character.

These three portraits—Gaius, Diotrephes, and Demetrius—demonstrate the relational dynamics of the early church. Faithful believers support the work of Christ; prideful leaders oppose it; a consistent testimony strengthens others. Third John teaches that faithful witness and gospel partnership advance the mission of Christ and protect the church from spiritual harm.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these Respond options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Ask learners to take a personal inventory this week of what influences are shaping their beliefs. Encourage them to identify one source (book, podcast, teacher, social media voice, etc.) they regularly listen to and evaluate it carefully in light of Scripture. Does it align clearly with the biblical identity of Jesus and the gospel? Challenge them to remove or limit any influence that distorts truth and to replace it with intentional time in God’s Word. Invite them to commit to reading 1 John in full this week as a reset toward walking in the light.

APPLY:

Be a faithful witness and partner with those who work to spread the gospel.

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 5-3



AH 5-4



PP-5

The *Parent Page* (PP-5) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

OPTION 2: Ask learners to demonstrate the difference Christ is making in their lives by showing godly, self-sacrificing love to at least two people during the upcoming week. Whom will they choose to love and how will they demonstrate that love? Ask them to include people they have a hard time loving. The *Choose to Love Others* handout (AH 5-4) will help.

OPTION 3: Have learners write down the names of missionaries, pastors, or other gospel workers they know. Challenge them to pray daily for these individuals and find one practical way to support them—financially, in prayer, with encouragement, through acts of hospitality, etc.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Reconciliation means returning to a right relationship with God.

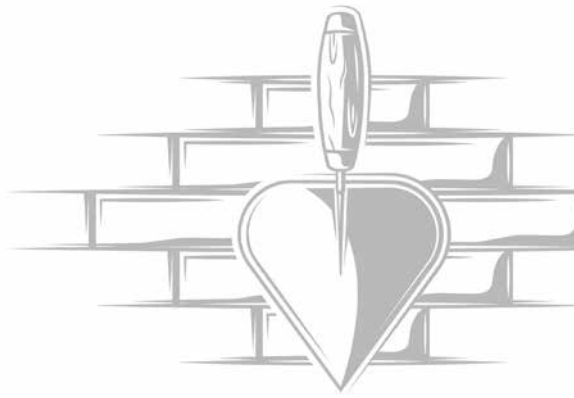
Pray!

FAMILY THEME

Steadfast Faith

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners gain the steadfast faith to overcome persecution, false teaching, and temptation.

STUDY TEXT: Revelation 2:1–3:22



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 6-1 or AH 6-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 6* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 6-2), the *Practical Steps to Overcoming Temptation* handout (AH 6-3), and *Parent Page (PP-6)* if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page (PP-6)* to parents.



Key Truths

- **Steadfast Faith Overcomes Persecution**
(Revelation 2:8–10, 12–13; 3:10–12)
- **Steadfast Faith Overcomes False Teaching**
(Revelation 2:2, 14–16, 20–24)
- **Steadfast Faith Overcomes Temptation**
(Revelation 2:4; 3:1–2, 15–18)

Verse of the
Month

JOHN 11:25

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**John 11:25**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 6-1



AH 6-2

TEACHING TIP

Show how what is being studied fits in the bigger story of the Bible.

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Consider showing this video that gives background into the seven churches in Revelation: tinyurl.com/7ChurchesD6. How might today's Church be described? After discussion, say: *Today's Church faces difficulties of many kinds. Through it all, we're called to have a steadfast faith.*

OPTION 2: Ask your learners if they have ever received a performance review. Was it harder for them to hear the praise or the critique? Did they learn anything valuable from that review? Did they change anything after that review? After discussion, say: *Revelation 2–3 reads like Christ's performance review of His churches. He sees clearly, speaks honestly, and calls them to overcome.*

OPTION 3: Ask your learners what non-essential snacks or treats they are tempted by at the grocery store. Does it take more self-control to avoid the sugary or savory treats? After discussion, say: *Most of us have certain items that we don't need to buy, but they tempt us when we walk by them at the grocery store. Today we will talk about different kinds of temptation we face that are much more serious.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 6-2).

The seven churches of Asia in Revelation were literal, historical churches. Christ's words to each church were addressed to individual pastors who stood as representatives of the churches. There is a consistent formula for each message: identification of specific strengths (except for the church of Laodicea); weaknesses (except for Smyrna and Philadelphia); instruction; warning; and a promise for overcomers. While the church as a whole may have had a particular reputation, each church was made up of individuals. It is the behavior of individuals that is being addressed, as several of the letters make clear. Churches and individual Christians today can benefit from identifying similar characteristics, heeding the warnings, and embracing the promises given.

 KEY TRUTH: Steadfast Faith Overcomes Persecution
(Revelation 2:8–10, 12–13; 3:10–12)

Persecution was a common threat for most of the seven churches **(Revelation 2:8–10, 12–13; 3:10–12)**. Each of these cities had prominent local deities that were worshiped. Added to that would be the “imperial cult” that demanded the worship of the Roman emperor. Christians would refuse to worship either of these false gods, and this refusal would not go unnoticed. Membership in the trade guilds would have required some sort of sacrifice or recognition of the local deity (Acts 19:23–27). The unbelieving Jews were also eager to report Christians to the local officials for any “offense” (Acts 17:5–8).

It is important to recognize that there has not been a time in the history of the Church that believers have not faced persecution (John 15:18–20; 16:33). Even today, in some parts of the world, violent persecution against Christians is an ongoing threat. For others it might be more accurate to say Christians face opposition in the form of ridicule or discrimination. It is encouraging to understand the same promises given to first-century churches are true today: those who are faithful, even to the point of death, will receive an eternal reward in God’s presence.

APOLOGETICS:

One striking feature of Christianity is that Jesus never promised cultural acceptance or earthly comfort. Instead, He warned His followers to expect hatred, rejection, and persecution (John 15:18–20). If Christianity were a man-made religion designed to gain power or popularity, it is unlikely its Founder would predict suffering for His followers. Yet history confirms exactly what Jesus foretold. From the first century until today, believers have faced opposition in various forms. Rather than weakening the credibility of Christianity, persecution actually strengthens it. Christ accurately described the cost of discipleship long before it unfolded, demonstrating both His authority and the reliability of His Word.

Of the two churches that had no negative statement from Christ—Smyrna and Philadelphia—one would suffer a period of tribulation **(Revelation 2:10)** while the other would be protected from whatever trial the rest of the world would face **(Revelation 3:10)**. Some interpret Revelation 3:10 as referring to escape from a future tribulation, but the broader context shows that faithful churches have historically endured tribulation.

APPLY:

Expect persecution and remain faithful to Christ when it comes.

**PowerPoint 6**

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 6-1) and on *PowerPoint 6*, which is customizable. Files 6A and 6B are provided for customization.

APPLY:

Look to God for grace and strength to endure persecution.

DISCUSS:

- *What small pressures today test our faithfulness?*
- *How can we stand firm in minor opposition so we are prepared for greater trials?*

What did these warnings mean to the first-century churches? Were the *ten days of persecution* (**2:10**) a reference to the ten periods of Roman persecution? Polycarp was the pastor of the church in Smyrna. He was a disciple of the apostle John and became a historic martyr by Roman persecution. You can read more about Polycarp at bit.ly/who-was-Polycarp and bit.ly/Polycarp-story.

However one interprets the end times, we have the example of countless believers throughout history that God provides grace and strength to endure persecution. We also have the assurance of God's Word of a crown of life for those who are faithful.

DISCUSS:

- *What would remaining faithful look like if obedience cost you reputation, comfort, or safety?*
- *How should knowing that Christians around the world suffer far more intensely shape our prayers and perspective?*

EXPLORE:

The most common *crown* referred to in Revelation was a mark of honor (Greek *stephanos*: **2:10; 3:11**; 4:4, 4:10; 6:2; 9:7; 12:1; 14:14), not a sign of royalty. This crown was like the Olympic-type wreath made of plants or flowers awarded to athletes or victorious generals. Those crowns were temporary and would wither just as the strength of the victor would fade over time. The crown of life, however, is awarded to the faithful and has an eternal quality that doesn't fade away (**Revelation 2:10**; 1 Peter 5:4). The *diadem* (Greek *diademata*: only used three times in the NT: **Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 19:12**) was a crown of royalty. Two imposters claimed royalty, the Dragon and the Beast, but both are cast down. There is only one King of Kings and Lord of Lords who is worthy to reign, and His kingdom will have no end.

 KEY TRUTH: Steadfast Faith Overcomes False Teaching (Revelation 2:2, 14-16, 20-24**)**

One of the biggest ongoing challenges faced by churches is false teaching. Scripture provides frequent warnings to be on guard against anything that conflicts with sound doctrine (**1 Timothy 1:3-4**;

2 Peter 2:1–3; Jude 1:3–4). The church at Ephesus had been diligent about testing false prophets and opposing false teachings (**Revelation 2:2**). But Pergamum and Thyatira struggled to maintain a pure faith. Both churches tolerated elements within their congregation that practiced some form of idolatry mixed with immoral behavior (**Revelation 2:14–16, 20–24**). Even seemingly minor compromises can pollute the church (1 Corinthians 5:6–13).

The *teaching of Balaam* (**Revelation 2:14**) is no doubt a reference to the Old Testament prophet who instigated the men of Israel to participate in idolatry and committing sexual immorality with the women of Moab (Numbers 25:1–3; 31:16). We don't know anything definite about the Nicolaitans (**Revelation 2:6, 15**) except that they promoted some form of false teaching that was prevalent at the time since Ephesus and Pergamum both had to deal with them. Jezebel (**Revelation 2:20**) could have been the actual name of the false prophetess in Thyatira or the name could be a symbolic reference to the wicked queen of Israel (1 Kings 18 and 19). Regardless, this false teacher was promoting sexual immorality and idolatry in the church of Thyatira.

EXPLORE:

Who are the Nicolaitans? Some suggest they were followers of someone named Nicolas, perhaps even the early deacon in Jerusalem (Acts 6:5), although this is merely speculation based on the similarity of the name. They might have become a class of authoritarians or have been influenced by elements of Gnosticism, which incorporated Greek thought that the flesh was evil and the spirit was good so one could indulge the flesh without affecting the spirit. But Scripture refutes such dualistic separation, affirming that both body and spirit are to be holy and pure (2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 Corinthians 6:13, 18). According to the *Randall House Bible Commentary*, “There is no information about the Nicolaitans except for what we find in this chapter. It is possible that John used the term symbolically, describing those in general who practice or tolerate idolatrous and immoral behavior in the church.” “Toleration of these errors endangers the church’s holiness, mission, and future existence.” (*The Randall House Bible Commentary: 1, 2, 3, John and Revelation*.)

There is a mysterious connection between idolatry and sexual immorality. Scripture identifies idolatry as spiritual adultery (Ezekiel 23:37; Jeremiah 3:6–9; Hosea 4:12–13). The worship of false gods frequently involved sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 10:6–8; 1 Kings 14:23–24). God desires for His people to be pure in their relationship with Him and each other. It is not loving for churches to excuse sin. It is a false teaching to say that immoral sexual behavior is acceptable to God.

God designed marriage as a *one flesh* relationship between one man and one woman for life (Genesis 2:24). Any other type of sexual relationship is sin and is to be repented of and forsaken (1 Corinthians 6:9–11). Scripture affirms the necessity for unwavering holiness in doctrine and lifestyle. Anything less is contamination. Jesus warns that He will war against those who tolerate false teaching or embrace sinful behavior in His church (**Revelation 2:16**).

APPLY:

Be on guard against false teaching and reject sinful behavior.

DISCUSS:

- *Where are churches today most tempted to “tolerate” what Scripture clearly calls sin? What small doctrinal compromises eventually lead to moral compromise?*
- *What is the best defense against false teaching? (Knowing God’s Word; comparing teaching to what the Bible says; etc.)*

 KEY TRUTH: Steadfast Faith Overcomes Temptation
(**Revelation 2:4; 3:1–2, 15–18**)

Common temptations were immorality and idolatry. But in the letters to the churches, we also see that some, like Ephesus, had succumbed to the temptation to substitute sound doctrine in place of a heart relationship with Christ. Others, like Sardis, were tempted to live in the past. Most concerning of all, Laodicea had fallen into the trap of self-sufficiency.

EXPLORE:

Research consistently shows that people who avoid temptation most effectively are not necessarily more disciplined. They intentionally structure their environment to reduce exposure to temptation. Instead of relying on constant willpower, they remove triggers, avoid compromising situations, and build patterns that support wise choices. Scripture echoes this wisdom by urging believers to flee temptation (1 Corinthians 6:18).

DISCUSS:

- *What small compromises today could weaken our ability to stand firm against future temptation?*
- *What are some practical steps we can take to overcome temptation? (Live in the power and control of the Holy Spirit; avoid tempting situations; turn away immediately when tempted; pray for strength; quote Scripture; be accountable to someone for weak areas; etc.)*

APPLY:

Recognize temptations you struggle with and take practical steps to overcome them.

Although the believers at Ephesus received commendation for their doctrinal integrity, their love for Christ and perhaps their love for others suffered (**Revelation 2:4**). Correct doctrine is important, but Jesus wants more. He taught that the identifying trait of His followers would be their love (John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:7–8; 5:2–3). It is easier to follow a checklist of beliefs and behaviors than to sacrifice oneself to love as Christ loved and gave Himself for others. Yet that is what Jesus calls us to continue doing.

DISCUSS:

- *Our world talks a lot about self-love. What is the difference between self-love and sacrificial love?*

Past successes cannot sustain present spiritual health. The church at Sardis had a good reputation, but Jesus warned that the church was dying. The remedy was to recognize their dire situation, remember their mission, and repent (**Revelation 3:1–2**). The church is not a social club or fraternal organization. It is the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27), commissioned to spread the good news of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

The only church in Revelation that was not commended in any way is the church at Laodicea. They thought of themselves as rich and in need of nothing, yet their self-sufficient attitude distressed Christ. Their material strengths were weaknesses (**Revelation 3:15–18**). Jesus warned of the *deceitfulness of riches* (Matthew 13:22) and the difficulty of one with riches to enter the kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 19:22–24). It's not that riches are evil and poverty is a virtue—both conditions have their temptations. The temptation and deceitfulness of riches are the false belief that the wealthy can depend on their own resources and don't need God. Regardless of material possessions, a church or an individual believer cannot accomplish the work of God without God's help.

The picture of Jesus standing at the door and knocking is often visualized as an invitation to the lost to receive salvation. However, the context of this appeal to hear the voice of Jesus and open the door is addressed to the church (**Revelation 3:20**). It is a sad situation when Jesus has to request fellowship with His church. Yet He promises to dine with those who are willing to sit at the table with Him. This fellowship meal illustrates the close companionship Jesus desires to have with His church. Whatever our temptations, we are to take whatever steps necessary to overcome them and continue in that close relationship with Christ.

APPLY:

Love as Christ loved and gave Himself for others.

APPLY:

Most important of all, walk in a close relationship with Christ.

DISCUSS:

- *How does knowing that Christ pursues fellowship with His church—even when we fail—encourage you to draw near to Him?*

EXPLORE:

To Them Who Overcome. Each church was given a promise to those who overcome. These promises might be related to the particular instruction or warnings of the individual churches, or they could be general promises for all faithful believers. Some of the promises are a bit cryptic, but they all give assurance of eternal reward with Christ in Heaven.

- Eat of the Tree of Life (**Revelation 2:7**) – The Tree of Life is reserved for those in God’s presence.
- Not be hurt by the second death (**2:11**) – The second death is spiritual death, marked by eternal judgment and separation from God.
- Hidden manna, white stone, new name (**2:17**) – A pot of manna was placed in the ark of the covenant as a reminder of God’s continual provision for His people. A white stone was used for admission or in court as a vote for acquittal, perhaps here symbolizing either access to God’s presence or innocence before God. A new name often signified a new relationship (Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel).
- Authority over the nations and the morning star (**2:26–28**) – The good and faithful servant was given authority over cities in the master’s kingdom. The morning star could be a symbol of authority, or it could refer to Christ.
- Clothed in white, name in the book of life (**3:5**) – White clothing signified both holiness and victory, both of which applied to those who are in Christ. The Book of Life is the record of the names of the righteous in Christ. Jesus said those who acknowledged Him would be acknowledged before His Father.
- A pillar in the temple of God, name of God (**3:12**) – A prominent place in the presence of God for all eternity. In Revelation 14:1, those who had the name of God written on them were the redeemed ones who belonged to God.
- Sit with Jesus on His throne (**3:21**) – The place of honor prepared by the Father.

D6 PRINCIPLE:

Steadfast faith is cultivated in daily obedience at home and in the church, preparing believers to stand firm in truth, resist temptation, and remain faithful to Christ under pressure.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Invite learners to spend a few quiet moments reflecting on [Revelation 3:20](#). Ask them to consider whether there are areas of their lives where they have grown self-sufficient, distracted, or spiritually cold. Encourage them to respond in prayer, thanking Christ for pursuing them and asking Him to renew their fellowship with Him. Emphasize that steadfast faith begins not with striving harder, but with drawing near to the One who is already knocking.

OPTION 2: Distribute copies of the AH 6-3 *Practical Steps to Overcome Temptation* handout. Take time to read and discuss the handout. Encourage your learners to put these steps into practice to help them overcome temptation.

OPTION 3: Ask your learners if they, or someone they know, has faced persecution, ridicule, or opposition because of their stand for Christ. What persecution have they faced? Pray that God will give each of you the grace, strength, and help you need to overcome persecution. You might also want to share how believers in other parts of the world are being persecuted and pray for them as well. Go to [persecution.com](#) for examples.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Revelation is the New Testament book of prophecy.

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 6-3



PP-6

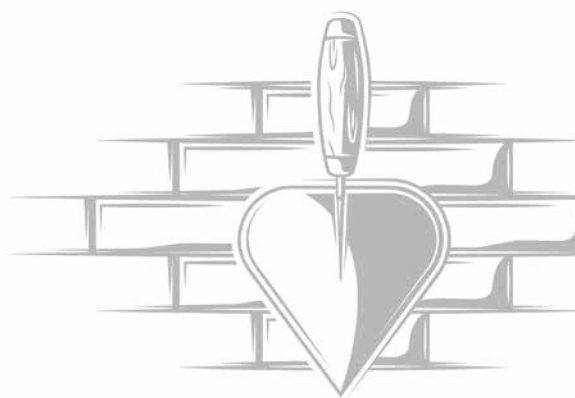
The *Parent Page* (PP-6) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at [D6home.com](#). (No password required.)

FAMILY THEME

Worship the Lamb

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners take time to worship God the Father and Christ the Son this week.

STUDY TEXT: Revelation 4:1—5:14



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 7-1 or AH 7-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 7* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 7-2), the *Worthy of Worship* poster (AH 7-3), the *He Is Worthy* handout (AH 7-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-7) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-7) to parents.



Key Truths

- God the Father, Our Holy Creator, Is Worthy of Worship
(Revelation 4:1–11)
- Christ the Son, Our Crucified Redeemer, Is Worthy of Worship
(Revelation 5:1–14)

Verse of the
Month

JOHN 11:25

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: As your group arrives, consider playing “Revelation Song.” Versions have been done by Kari Jobe; Guy Penrod; Phillips, Craig & Dean; and many others. You can find the song on YouTube or on streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music. Transition to the lesson by saying: *Today we will continue our study of Revelation and see why the Lamb is worthy of our worship.*

OPTION 2: Display several common objects (or pictures of them):

- A dollar bill
- A trophy
- A wedding band
- A child’s drawing

Ask group members: *Which of these is worth the most?* Let the group discuss. Then ask: *Who determines the worth of something?* After discussion, say, *In Revelation 4 and 5, Heaven declares that God is worthy of worship. Today we’ll see why His worth is rooted in who He is and what He has done.*

OPTION 3: Begin by asking group members if they’ve ever been in a setting where everyone stood up at the same time. What caused it? Answers might include a bride entering, a national anthem, the “Hallelujah Chorus” being played. Ask: *What makes a room full of people rise to their feet?* After discussion, say: *In Revelation 4 and 5, Heaven doesn’t just stand; it erupts in worship. Today we’ll examine why every creature in Heaven responds that way to the One on the throne and to the Lamb.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 7-2).

While some consider the angel’s invitation to *Come up here (4:1)* as a symbolic reference to the rapture of the church, there is nothing in the text to indicate that this directive refers to the gathering of the saints. While there is much symbolism in the book of Revelation, at this point the text is describing John’s experience as he was ushered into the throne room of Heaven.

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**John 11:25**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 7-1

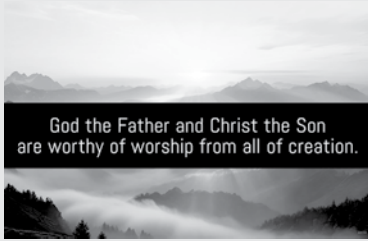


AH 7-2

TEACHING TIP

Use brief reminders to help learners memorize important information.

Display the AH 7-3
Worthy of Worship poster.



AH 7-3

APPLY:

When times are tough,
consider what life will be like
with God in Heaven.



PowerPoint 7

The discussion questions
can also be found on the
Adult Teaching Outline
(AH 7-1) and on *PowerPoint 7*,
which is customizable. Files
7A and 7B are provided for
customization.

KEY TRUTH: God the Father, Our Holy Creator, Is Worthy of Worship (Revelation 4:1-11)

The first thing John saw was the One seated on the throne (**verse 2**). Naturally, John's eyes would be drawn to the center of everyone's attention. This One's appearance was beyond description, which is typically the case when the writers of Scripture attempt to explain what they witnessed in the presence of God. It is difficult to fully grasp what John saw. Even his efforts to describe what he saw suggest he was overwhelmed with the sights and sounds all around him—an emerald rainbow, flashes of lightning, peals of thunder, flames of fire, and a sea of crystal glass (**verses 3 and 5**).

DISCUSS:

- *How does this passage help shape our understanding of who God is?*
- *What fears tend to shrink when we remember that God is not absent but reigning?*

EXPLORE:

Along with numerous references to the throne of God, there are several expanded descriptions of the throne room of Heaven: Isaiah 6:1-7; Ezekiel 1:4-28; Ezekiel 10:1-22; and Daniel 7:9-10. All the accounts include imagery of fire, whether burning coals or flames; most use precious stone to describe the throne or the One on the throne. Lightning, stormy conditions, and rainbows are also common. Angelic beings are always present. The descriptions of these angelic beings have some similarities but also some differences. They are identified in various passages as *living creatures*, *cherubim*, and *seraphim*. The number of wings of these beings varies from four to six. Of those that include descriptions of these beings, four faces are often identified, but with some variation: the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of a flying eagle, and the face of an ox. Whether these faces are symbolic or literal is a matter of interpretation, as Scripture does not specify. There are sufficient differences in the details to suggest that these are similar beings, though not necessarily identical. One thing is certain: while they seem to function in different capacities, they all serve the One on the throne.

Surrounding the throne (**verse 4**) were 24 elders who wore white garments and golden crowns (Greek *stephanos*, which mark achievement rather than royalty). Scripture does not identify these elders, but many interpreters believe they represent believers. The idea is

appealing that these could represent the 12 tribes of Israel and the 12 apostles, which would symbolize an assembly of Old Testament saints and New Testament saints. But that is simply a matter of interpretation that is not clarified in the text. What is clear is their function—they were there to worship God.

EXPLORE:

In Scripture, the number seven frequently is symbolic of perfection or completeness. This pattern is first seen in the seven days of Creation. Seven is also used to represent the perfection of God. Since elsewhere in Scripture the Holy Spirit is identified as one person of the Trinity, it is clear there is one Holy Spirit, not seven. However, as a spirit, the Holy Spirit is not limited to a physical body and as God, is omnipresent (also pictured in the seven eyes of the Lamb in **Revelation 5:6**). Therefore, *the seven spirits of God* are often understood to be the perfection or complete fullness of God's Spirit. God the Spirit is often described as a fire. So, the seven flames of fire around the throne do not have to be viewed as needing a lamp or torch to hold the fire. This imagery may indicate flames sustained by God's power. This idea fits with the *tongues of fire* that were evident on those in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost (**Acts 2:3**). Flames of fire symbolically depict the Spirit, in that, there is a definite presence, but it has no particular shape or body.

Also around the throne were four living creatures: one like a lion, one like an ox, one with the face of a man, and one like an eagle. Whether these creatures are literal or symbolic is also a matter of interpretation, but as with the 24 elders, their function is also clear. They continually proclaimed, *Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!* (**verses 5–8**).

DISCUSS:

- *In Revelation 4, worship is constant and God-centered. What tends to compete for your attention and affection?*
- *The elders cast their crowns before the throne. What “crowns” (achievements, status, control) are hardest for us to lay down?*

When the winged creatures proclaimed the glory of God, the 24 elders bowed down in worship to Him. As they cast their crowns before His throne, the elders declared God is worthy to receive glory and honor and power because He is the Creator of all things (**verses 9–11**).

APPLY:

Worship our holy God now, knowing that one day you will join the heavenly hosts before His throne.

APPLY:
Worship our powerful
God for the variety and
beauty of His creation.

Scripture affirms God is worthy to be praised for His work of Creation:

- The angels were the first to express joyful praise when they witnessed God's creative work in shaping the earth (Job 38:4, 7).
- The heavens were made by the word of the Lord. He spoke and everything came into existence (Psalms 33:6-9).
- Psalms 104 is one long hymn of praise to God for His creative acts and provision.
- God's ongoing work of forming new life is praised in Psalms 139:13-16.

The New Testament reveals that Jesus was active in Creation:

- All things were made through Him (John 1:3).
- Everything was created by Him and for Him (Colossians 1:15-17).

DISCUSS:

- *How does the truth that God created "all things" shape our understanding of His power and authority? How should this shape our view of human value and dignity?*
- *How should recognizing God as Creator shape the way we approach Him in worship?*

It is appropriate that all of creation praises Him. Not only is He the source of all, but He sustains and holds all things together. We do not need to fear that the sun will go dark or the earth will stop spinning. He upholds the universe according to Hebrews 1:3.

We can also praise Him for the variety and beauty of creation. We don't live in a world of gray. The universe was created in vivid color and our bodies were created with the ability to recognize and appreciate its beauty. In every season we can find variety and beauty. Even in the extremes of height, depth, cold, heat, light, or dark there are reasons to praise Him.

KEY TRUTH: Christ the Son, Our Crucified Redeemer, Is Worthy of Worship (Revelation 5:1-14)

There is no break in the story as we proceed into chapter 5 (chapter and verse divisions were added by Bible scholars in the Middle Ages as an aid for locating passages). As John took in the overwhelming sight of the throne room, he noticed more detail. He saw a scroll in the hand of the One seated on the throne (**verse 1**). This scroll had seven seals. We might think of them as wax seals with an impressed image indicating the authority of the one who sealed the document and indicating that only one with the proper authority may open it.

This is clearly an important document to be sealed in such a manner. It signals an urgent and weighty purpose. But sadly, despite a search throughout Heaven and earth, no one was found worthy to open the scroll and reveal its message (**verses 2–3**). As John wept, one of the elders announced that there is One who is worthy—the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David (**verses 4–5**).

These two expressions are filled with prophetic messianic significance. In Jacob's blessing of his 12 sons he referred to Judah as a lion's cub and revealed that royal rule would come through Judah (Genesis 49:8–10). Isaiah spoke of a descendant of Jesse (King David's father) on whom the Spirit of the Lord would rest (Isaiah 11:1–2). This *Branch* would establish righteousness and peace (Isaiah 11:3–9), draw the Gentiles to His kingdom (Isaiah 11:10; 49:22), recover the remnant of God's people, and conquer their enemies (Isaiah 11:11–16).

Jeremiah also prophesied of the reign of this *righteous Branch* who would execute justice and righteousness (Jeremiah 23:5–6; 33:14–16). Zechariah foretold that *the Branch* would come and the iniquity of the land would be removed in a single day (Zechariah 3:8–9). The *Branch* would build the Temple of the Lord and rule on the throne (Zechariah 6:12–13).

DISCUSS:

- *How do the titles “Lion of Judah” and “Lamb who was slain” reveal both Jesus’ kingly authority and His redeeming sacrifice?*
- *What would be missing from our understanding of Jesus if we emphasized only the Lion and ignored the Lamb—or vice versa?*
- *How should Jesus’ kingly authority and sacrificial love shape the tone and focus of our worship?*

The apostle Paul identified this *root of Jesse* as Jesus Christ (Romans 15:8–12). Jesus fulfilled the messianic promises in His first coming and will fulfill the remaining promises at His return. Here in the book of Revelation, John is informed there is One who is uniquely worthy with the right qualifications and authority to open this sealed scroll.

APPLY:

Worship Jesus, the Promised Messiah foretold by the prophets.

EXPLORE:

The Triune Nature of God: It is impossible for us, as mere mortals, to fully comprehend the triune nature of God. No created analogy fully captures the relationship of God in three persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit). All efforts to illustrate this relationship fall short and, in some cases, fall into heresy. But in Revelation 4 and 5 we are confronted with the enigma of seeing one God in three persons. This was also witnessed at Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:16–17). In Revelation 4, God the Spirit was before the throne represented by seven torches or lamps of fire (**4:5**) as God the Father was seated on the throne (**4:2; 5:1**). In chapter 5, the Lamb took the scroll from the One seated on the throne (**5:7**). The Lamb also possesses the fullness of the Spirit, represented by seven eyes (**5:6**). Although we cannot comprehend the triune nature of God, Scripture repeatedly affirms there is one God and He is Father, Son, and Spirit—each fully God and yet one God, not three. Because Scripture is true, we accept by faith that God is a Trinity.

John saw a new detail in the throne room—a lamb. This lamb was standing, yet as though it had been slain (**verse 6**). This lamb is a picture of the Passover lamb. Jesus' death during Passover identifies Him as the *one without blemish* whose blood delivers from bondage and death. Yet Jesus' death also fulfills the meaning of the Day of Atonement. God's justice was fully satisfied, so our sins could be forgiven and removed.

It might seem odd that Jesus is identified as both the Lion and the Lamb. This dual role resolves the tension in messianic prophecy of the Eternal King (Isaiah 9:6–7) and the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53:1–12).

Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection demonstrated He alone was worthy to open this scroll (**verses 7–8**). By His blood, people from every nation, ethnicity, and language can be redeemed from the penalty and bondage of sin and brought into God's kingdom (**verses 9–10**). We have the privilege of joining the chorus of praise from the throne room of Heaven in proclaiming *Worthy is the Lamb* (**verses 11–14**).

DISCUSS:

- *How do the Old Testament sacrifices prepare us to understand the meaning of Jesus' death?* (The blood of a substitute was shed so people's sins could be forgiven; Jesus paid the penalty for all our sins by shedding His blood on the cross once for all; etc.)
- *Singing can be a form of worship, but why does worship go far beyond singing? What does worship look like in our day-to-day lives?*

APPLY:

Worship Jesus, the Lamb who was slain to save us.

• How should the truth that Jesus was slain for sinners shape the way we praise Him?

APOLOGETICS:

Some argue that Jesus never claimed to be God and that later Christians elevated Him beyond what He intended. Yet Revelation 4–5 presents a clear picture of His divine identity. In chapter 4, worship belongs to the One seated on the throne—the holy Creator. In chapter 5, the Lamb approaches that throne and receives the same worship. The elders fall before Him and proclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb.” In Jewish belief, worship belongs to God alone ([Isaiah 42:8](#)). If Jesus were merely a teacher or created being, Heaven’s worship of Him would be idolatry. Instead, He shares divine honor, authority, and glory, while remaining distinct from the Father. This vision aligns with Jesus’ own claims to divine authority in the Gospels. Scripture consistently reveals one God—Father, Son, and Spirit—with Christ fully God and fully worthy of worship.

D6 PRINCIPLE:

The world is actively discipling our children to worship success, self, and security. It will not teach them to treasure Christ. Parents must intentionally lead their families to exalt Jesus as the worthy King and sacrificial Lamb. By centering conversations, decisions, and daily rhythms on Him, we train the next generation to give their highest devotion to the One Heaven declares worthy.

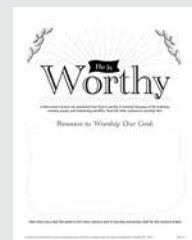
RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: End by playing “Is He Worthy?” by Andrew Peterson (tinyurl.com/WorthyAP). You can also find the song on music streaming services. Send a link of the song to group members this week as a reminder that we worship the Lamb who is worthy!

OPTION 2: Ask your learners to list reasons why we should worship God. Write the list on the board. Encourage learners to keep adding to the list this week and to worship God each day. The AH 7-4 *He Is Worthy* handout will give learners a place to keep adding reasons to worship God.

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.



AH 7-4

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



PP-7

The *Parent Page (PP-7)* is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

OPTION 3: Discuss why Jesus' redeeming sacrifice makes Him worthy of our worship and praise. Then give learners a few moments to express their worship, praise, and thanks for what Jesus did to redeem us. Encourage them to worship Christ all week for His sacrifice.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Only God is worthy of our worship.

Pray!

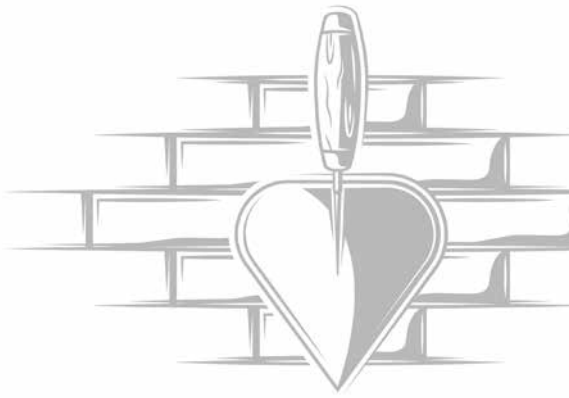
Notes:

FAMILY THEME

Prophecies of the End Times

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners worship Christ, the victorious King who will return to gather His saints.

STUDY TEXT: Revelation 20:1–15



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 8-1 or AH 8-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 8* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 8-2), the *Important Details About Revelation* handout (AH 8-3), the *Different Views of Revelation* handout (AH 8-4), and *Parent Page (PP-8)* if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page (PP-8)* to parents.



Key Truths

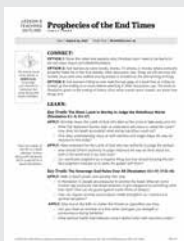
- The Risen Lamb Is Worthy to Judge the Rebellious World (Revelation 5:1–5; 6:1–17)
- The Sovereign God Rules Over All (Revelation 13:1–17; 17:12–14)
- The Eternal King Reigns Forever (Revelation 19:11–21; 20:1–15)

Verse of the
Month

JOHN 11:25

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**John 11:25**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



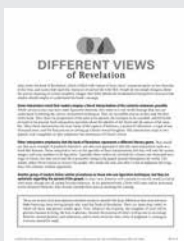
AH 8-1



AH 8-2



AH 8-3



AH 8-4

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: Discussing the book of Revelation can sometimes make people anxious because there's so much we don't know and so much that seems unfamiliar to us. Consider showing this video that explains why Christians don't need to be fearful of the last days: tinyurl.com/WaterRevelation. After discussion, say: *Today we will study prophecies of the end times. Although some of what we read might seem confusing, we need not fear because we know the end of the story!*

OPTION 2: Ask group members to name books, stories, TV shows, or movies where someone powerful hides his or her true identity. Examples might include *The Prince and the Pauper*, *Undercover Boss*, superheroes, King Arthur legends, etc. Ask group members why stories like that capture our attention. After discussion, say: *In today's lesson we will see how the humble Jesus who once walked among people is revealed as the eternal King of Kings.*

OPTION 3: Ask group members if they've ever read the last page of a book first, or if they've looked up the ending to a movie before watching it. If so, why? Ask: *Does knowing the ending change how you experience the story?* After discussion, say: *The book of Revelation gives us the ending of history. Even when events seem chaotic, we know how things end.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 8-2).

This lesson does not seek to resolve all interpretive debates about Revelation, but to highlight the book's central, unifying message: Jesus Christ reigns as the victorious King. It is not possible for one lesson to fully cover 17 chapters of Revelation along with parallel Old Testament prophecies. This lesson highlights three key truths from Revelation 4–20. Supporting passages from Ezekiel and Daniel highlight the continuity of the message of Scripture, showing that God has been working throughout history to accomplish His purpose.

For more information about the book of Revelation, see Handouts 8-3 and 8-4. Give learners a copy of these handouts to read at home. You decide whether you have time to present some of this information in class.

KEY TRUTH: The Risen Lamb Is Worthy to Judge the Rebellious World (Revelation 5:1-5; 6:1-17)

Supporting Prophecies: Ezekiel 34:23-24; Daniel 2:44-45; 9:25-26; Matthew 24:21-31

The book of Revelation depicts the culmination of the entire story of redemption. The imagery of Revelation draws from symbols and prophecies throughout Scripture. In **Revelation 5:1-5**, the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah* relates to the prophecy Israel (Jacob) made on his deathbed regarding his fourth son, Judah, from whom kings would descend (Genesis 49:8-10). The *Root of David* points to numerous prophecies that illustrate the Messiah's wisdom, righteousness, power, and authority (Isaiah 11), and most significantly as the *Son of David*—the *Prince of Peace*—who would build a house for God and reign as King forever (1 Chronicles 22:9-10; Ezekiel 37:24-25).

The incarnation of Christ identified Him with humanity, thus qualifying Him to be the representative of the human race to take on the sin of the world. His perfect righteousness qualified Him to be the Lamb without blemish whose death is sufficient to provide atonement for all and effective for those who believe (John 1:29; Hebrews 10:1-14). It is only right that Jesus' name is exalted above all names, and that every knee will bow and every tongue confess He is Lord (Philippians 2:8-11). He alone meets all the qualifications.

DISCUSS:

- *What Old Testament themes help us understand why Jesus is called the Lamb? How does His death accomplish what animal sacrifices could not?*
- *How does understanding Jesus as both sacrifice and Judge shape the way we respond to Him today?*

Revelation 4-11 records one long vision that shows how Christ, and Christ alone, has provided redemption through His death and resurrection, which makes Him uniquely worthy to reign as King over all creation with the supreme authority to judge all unrighteousness.

As the Lamb breaks each seal of the scroll in **Revelation 6:1-14**, judgment after judgment falls upon the earth and its inhabitants. It appears that believers are present on the earth at this time since the fifth seal explains that more martyrs would be killed (**6:9**). The righteous may suffer alongside the wicked for a time, yet even then we are assured that God will supply what we need and we have no reason to fear condemnation under His wrath. Whether the images described at the opening of each seal are literal or not, the effects are real—war,

APPLY:

Worship Jesus, the Lamb of God, who died on the Cross to take away your sin.



PowerPoint 8

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 8-1) and on *PowerPoint 8*, which is customizable. Files 8A and 8B are provided for customization.

unrest, famine, death, and disaster characterize the judgment of God. The effects produce fear and dread in the hearts of people small and great to the extent that they go to extreme measures to hide themselves from facing the righteous wrath of God (**Revelation 6:15–17**).

APPLY:

Have reverence for the Lamb of God who has authority to judge the wicked.

DISCUSS:

- *How should Christ's authority to judge influence the way we think about sin, both in the world and in our own lives?*
- *Our world sees judgment as a negative thing, but how should knowing the lost face judgment motivate us to share the gospel with them?*

EXPLORE:

**Seals (Revelation 6:1–14; 8:1–5) and
Trumpets (Revelation 8:6—9:15; 11:15–19)**

Seal 1: Conquering rider on a white horse with a bow and crown

Seal 2: Rider on a red horse with a sword to take peace from earth

Seal 3: Rider on a black horse with scales announcing famine

Seal 4: Death riding on a pale horse with Hades following to kill one-fourth of the earth with the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts

Seal 5: Souls of the martyrs crying out to God to be avenged; given a white robe and told to rest a little longer until martyrdom was complete

Seal 6: Earthquake and cosmic signs signaling the wrath of the Lamb

Seal 7: Angel with golden censer and sounding of seven trumpets

Trumpet 1: Hail and fire burn one-third of the earth

Trumpet 2: Burning mountain falls into the sea killing one-third of marine life and destroying one-third of ships

Trumpet 3: Burning star called Wormwood poisons one-third of freshwater

Trumpet 4: One-third of the sun, moon, and stars are darkened

Trumpet 5: Bottomless pit opens and smoke darkens the sun and scorpion-like locusts led by the angel of the bottomless pit torment unbelievers

Trumpet 6: Four angels leading 200 million mounted troops kill one-third of mankind

Trumpet 7: Kingdom of God announced, Temple in Heaven is opened

 KEY TRUTH: The Sovereign God Rules Over All
(Revelation 13:1-17; 17:12-14)

Supporting Prophecies: Ezekiel 38:18-23; Daniel 7:7-8, 23-27; 8:23-25

Daniel explained that Nebuchadnezzar's dream revealed four world empires: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (Daniel 2:36-45; 8:20-21). Daniel described the characteristics of these empires with such precision (Daniel 7:1-8; 8:1-14; 11) that liberal theologians assumed the writings were made after the fact, instead of being God-inspired prophecy.

APOLOGETICS:

One of the strongest pieces of evidence for the Bible's divine inspiration is the accuracy of fulfilled prophecy. Daniel did not speak in vague generalities. Rather, he described a sequence of empires with identifiable features. In Daniel 2, the statue's parts represent successive kingdoms, moving from Babylon to a stronger empire, then a divided kingdom, and finally a crushing "iron" rule—details that closely match the historical rise of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Daniel 7 uses beasts to portray the same progression. Daniel 8 is even more specific, naming Medo-Persia and Greece and describing a swift conqueror whose kingdom would be broken and divided into four—an uncanny fit with Alexander the Great and the division of his empire among multiple rulers. Because these prophecies align so closely with recorded history, some critics argue they must have been written after the fact. Yet Scripture presents them as prophecy, and their precision strengthens confidence that God truly rules over history and has revealed His plan with reliability.

The fourth kingdom Daniel described clearly characterized the Roman Empire, which exerted dominance with brutal force. During the apostle John's last days, Emperor Domitian demanded to be worshiped and cruelly persecuted the people of God. Eight more periods of intense Roman persecution would follow.

It's easy to understand how the Roman Empire could be viewed as the beast of the Apocalypse. Although the Roman Empire fits the description of Daniel's fourth kingdom, which parallels the beast in John's prophecy, there still seems to be the possibility of a future kingdom that will exert authority over the entire world, not just the known world of John's day. This interpretation fits with the frequent dual fulfillment of other prophecies where a short-term event fulfills the prophecy in a narrow sense, and a more distant event fulfills the prophecy universally.

We recognize the power deceptive leaders have over people. We see the tendency to worship celebrities, sports teams, and other idols, but when demonic influence and spiritual deception are added, only those sustained by the power of God will be able to resist worshipping false gods (**Revelation 13:1–4**).

DISCUSS:

- *In Revelation 13, people are pressured to worship the Beast. What are some modern-day pressures that tempt believers to give allegiance to something other than God? How can we guard against subtle forms of idolatry?*
- *How can regular worship and Scripture intake strengthen our resistance to spiritual deception?*

Those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (**13:8–10**) are contrasted with those who have the “mark” of the beast (**13:16–17**). Those who do not worship the beast are to be killed (**13:15**), while those who worship the beast receive a mark that permits them to buy and sell as needed. Whether this mark is literal or symbolic of some means of identification, it appears to be an intentional act of worship that shows solidarity with the beast (Revelation 14:9).

Throughout history God's people have faced persecution, but they do not experience God's condemning wrath. He separates His people from the worst of His judgment (Noah – Genesis 6:5–8; Goshen separated from the plagues – Exodus 8:22–23).

Christians of all eras are called to be faithful. Whether you are challenged to deny the faith by your family, friends, or the entire world and all the powers of darkness, God honors those who persevere to the end. That's the message to the seven churches (Revelation 2–3). Scripture also assures us of the Lamb's ultimate victory over the beasts, the dragon, Satan, the world, and all other powers (**Revelation 17:12–14**).

DISCUSS:

- *Can you share an example of a time when God gave you strength or perseverance during hardship?*
- *What spiritual habits help believers remain faithful when faith becomes costly?*

The breaking of the seven seals listed in chapter 6 affects a portion of the earth, but the plagues of the seven bowls listed in chapter 16 are universal. This appears to be the consequence of being cast into the winepress of the wrath of God (Revelation 14:19). However severe con-

APPLY:

Walk in God's power and always worship Him only.

APPLY:

Stay true to the faith no matter the threats or opposition you face.

ditions were earlier, the full wrath of God compounds the suffering for those who have rebelled against Him and persecuted His people.

EXPLORE:

Plagues and Bowls of the Wrath of God (Revelation 16)

Bowl 1: Sores on people who bear the mark of the beast

Bowl 2: Sea turned to blood and everything in it dies

Bowl 3: Freshwater turned to blood

Bowl 4: Sun scorches people with fire

Bowl 5: Darkness covers the beast's kingdom and sores on people

Bowl 6: Euphrates River is dried up in preparation for invasion

Bowl 7: Earthquake, lightning, thunder, and hail; islands and mountains gone

KEY TRUTH: The Eternal King Reigns Forever (Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-15)

Supporting Prophecies: Ezekiel 43:1-7; Daniel 2:44-45; 7:13-14, 27; 12:1-4

Isaiah seemed to foretell the coming of two Messiahs: the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52:13—53:12) and the Victorious King (Isaiah 2:2-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-10). We understand today that Isaiah spoke of one Messiah appearing in two roles. He came first as the humble babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, announced to only a few. At His second coming, He will arrive as the glorious King coming in the clouds, announced with trumpet fanfare for the entire world to see (Matthew 24:30-31; Revelation 1:7).

In *Mere Eschatology*, Robert Picirilli reminds us: “At the heart of biblical eschatology is this momentous promise: Jesus is going to come back to this earth.” The return of Christ is a foundational teaching of Christianity. Old Testament prophets, New Testament apostles, angelic messengers, and Christ Himself affirmed His return.

DISCUSS:

- *How does the certainty of Christ's return motivate believers to live holy and faithful lives now? What are some practical ways we can demonstrate readiness for His return in our daily routines?*
- *How does the reality of Christ's return shape the way we think about success, possessions, and ambition?*

APPLY:

Live for Christ faithfully while awaiting His certain return.

Our glorious Christ, riding a white horse, will return with the armies of Heaven (**Revelation 19:11–14**), although their role seems ceremonial since He will strike down His enemies with the very words He speaks—symbolized as a sharp sword coming from His mouth (**19:15, 21**). From the mouth of the beast comes blasphemy, demonic frog-like spirits, and deception (Revelation 13:5; 16:13). But the Lamb brings judgment to His enemies (**19:17–21**) and comfort to His people.

Revelation 20 speaks of a thousand-year reign of Christ, during which time Satan is bound (**20:1–6**). Whether this thousand years is literal or not, it demonstrates Christ’s power over Satan. Even after Satan is released from his prison and leads the nations in battle against the saints, the enemies of God’s people are defeated. Even though some details of the end times are debated, the final result is certain. All who oppose Christ are defeated and banished from His presence (**20:7–10**). Those who reject the salvation He made available will be judged according to their works, which sadly will show them to be unrighteous (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10–12). Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life escape the righteous judgment of God and are invited into His eternal kingdom (**Revelation 20:11–15; 21:27**).

APPLY:

Worship the Mighty God
who reigns over Satan.

*D6 Devotional Study Guides
provide resources to help
parents disciple their
children.*

DISCUSS:

- *Revelation 20:10 shows Satan’s final defeat. How should the certainty of this outcome affect how we respond to temptation and spiritual battles today?*
- *Why is it important to remember the end of the story when spiritual battles feel intense? How can worship carry us through times of struggle?*

D6 PRINCIPLE:

Headlines and cultural shifts can stir fear in parents, especially when the world seems unstable or hostile to faith. Scripture reminds us that history is not spiraling out of control; God is bringing it to completion. Because we know the end of the story, we do not parent from panic but from confidence. Rather than withdrawing in fear, let current events motivate you to disciple your children intentionally, ground them in truth, and teach them to trust the sovereign King who reigns forever.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Invite group members to write down one current concern or fear about the future. Then read Revelation 19:6 aloud together. Encourage them to surrender that concern to the sovereign King and trust His ultimate plan.

OPTION 2: Ask your learners to think of someone in their sphere of influence who needs to hear the gospel and what is coming with Christ's return. Ask them to think through what they would like to share with that person and to set a time to share with him or her. It might help for them to write out what they want to share.

OPTION 3: Today we studied how God alone is worthy of our worship. Ask your learners to consider whether there is anyone or anything other than God that is competing for their worship and allegiance. Encourage them to worship God alone.

Building Blocks:

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Hell is a place of separation from God where those who practice sin and reject Jesus will suffer eternal punishment.

Pray!

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



PP-8

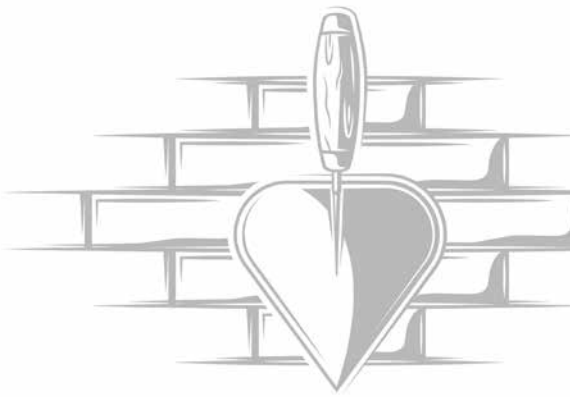
The Parent Page (PP-8) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

FAMILY THEME

A Glimpse of Heaven

LESSON OBJECTIVE: Learners let the sure hope of Heaven encourage them to walk closely with God here on earth.

STUDY TEXT: Revelation 21:1–22:5



CHECKLIST

- ☐ Study the biblical text and Adult Teacher's Guide.
- ☐ Review the *Adult Teaching Outline* (Adult Handout 9-1 or AH 9-1). You can take notes on this editable document as you study. You can also use it as a guide to teach from.
- ☐ Review *PowerPoint 9* and insert your own questions if needed.
- ☐ Print and make copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 9-2), the *When Do Christians Go to Heaven?* handout (AH 9-3), the *Until You Are Home* handout (AH 9-4), and *Parent Page* (PP-9) if you have parents in your group. For free access to these handouts, scan the QR code on page 3 of this teaching guide or go to d6.family/6920.
- ☐ Distribute *Parent Page* (PP-9) to parents.

Key Truths

- God Will Make All Things New (Revelation 21:1–8)
- God Will Dwell With His People in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9–27)
- Believers Will Worship and Reign Forever in Heaven (Revelation 22:1–5)

Verse of the
Month

JOHN 11:25

CONNECT

Choose one of the **Connect** options to capture attention and get this session started.

OPTION 1: “Is Heaven boring?” It’s a question many people have asked. Consider showing this video that addresses that question: tinyurl.com/HeavenAle. Discuss the video with your group. Why might some think Heaven will be boring? After discussion, say: *John got a glimpse of Heaven. Today we will learn more about what he saw and his response to it.*

OPTION 2: Begin by asking this question: *If money and time were no object, where would you most want to travel?* After several group members have shared, ask, *What makes those places so appealing?* After discussion, say: *The Bible describes a place that has perfect beauty, perfect peace, and perfect joy, and it lasts forever. Today we’ll look at John’s glimpse of Heaven.*

OPTION 3: Begin by saying, *If we surveyed 100 people and asked them to name the most breathtaking places in the world, what would they say?* Allow group members to call out answers *Family Feud*-style. Answers might include the Seven Wonders of the World, the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, etc. After discussion, say: *Even the most stunning places on earth pale in comparison to what John saw. Today we’ll get a glimpse of a city and a world that far surpasses every earthly wonder.*

LEARN + EXPLORE + APPLY

Distribute copies of the *Adult Member Outline* (AH 9-2).

While there are accounts about Heaven from visions and near-death experiences, these reports are not reliable sources about Heaven. Unbelievers have told of similar experiences, which are inconsistent with what Scripture teaches (**Luke 16:22–24**). Scripture alone gives trustworthy revelation. We rely on the testimony of the One who has been there—Jesus—who tells us Heaven is real and shows us the way to eternal life.

KEY TRUTH: God Will Make All Things New (**Revelation 21:1–8**)

The previous chapters record the demise of the old world that had been marred by sin and rebellion, which had even affected the heavenly realm. With the defeat and final judgment of all God’s enemies,

Encourage learners to memorize the Family Verse of the Month (**John 11:25**) along with family members.

Cue up videos and have them ready to play. D6 Family Ministry does not control ads shown before or after videos.



AH 9-1



AH 9-2

TEACHING TIP

Teachers maintain attention by changing speech rhythms, pitches, and volume, asking a question, or moving to a board to write a word or draw a simple diagram.

God will make all things new. There will no longer be any sign of corruption or sin in God's new Heaven and new earth (**verses 1–2**).

As we look at the wonders of the world today, we can see the beauty of the mountains, valleys, and canyons. But as we read through Scripture, we are reminded that the current topography of the earth has been shaped by the Flood and the subsequent global conditions following the Flood. The present earth bears the marks of sin. Though God can redeem what is broken, creation still reflects the effects of the Fall.

In the new Heaven and new earth, those scars will be erased. Heaven is described not only by what is present but by what is absent—sorrow, pain, regret, and death (**verse 4**). All are forms of loss, and their removal fulfills our deepest longings for restoration.

The circumstance that makes this situation possible is the presence of God (**verse 3**). He makes His dwelling place with us. Ever since humans sinned and were expelled from the Garden of Eden, we have suffered loss, the biggest loss being the intimate connection with God. He no longer dwelt with us as He had done before because sin had created a barrier.

On the Cross, Jesus uttered, *It is finished* (*tetelestai* – [John 19:30](#)) in reference to the completed sacrifice and payment for redemption to bridge that barrier. In the new Heaven Jesus will announce, *It is done* (*gegonan* – **verse 6**). This might refer to creation being made new, or to Jesus as the Alpha and Omega—the beginning and the end—whose purposes will be fully accomplished. In any event, the will of God will be accomplished. Eternal life will be freely given to those who belong to Him, and God's children will be with Him (**verse 7**). This is in stark contrast to what awaits those who do not trust in Christ for forgiveness and salvation (**verse 8**).

APPLY:

Let the sure hope of eternity in Heaven with the Lord encourage your walk with Him here on earth.

DISCUSS:

- *In what ways do the frustrations of this world increase your longing for the new Heaven and new earth?*
- *What do you look forward to in Heaven? What are you looking forward to leaving behind on earth?*
- *Our world often talks about the power of hope. Why is hope so powerful? How is a Christian's hope different from the hope offered by the world?*
- *Look at verses 7–8 again. How does the contrast between those verses affect the urgency with which we share the gospel?*

EXPLORE:

When do Christians go to Heaven? From 2 Corinthians 5:1–8, we understand that being absent from the body at death brings the believer into the presence of the Lord. Jesus explained to the disciples that when the Son of Man returns He will send His angels to gather the elect (Matthew 24:29–31). First Corinthians 15:51–55 informs us there will be a decisive point in time when all living believers are caught up and transformed *in the twinkling of an eye* to an immortal body. At what point during the end times will this gathering occur? That is a matter of interpretation. Many hold that the return of Christ could happen at any time, with varying details about other aspects of the end times. A popular view is that the Church will be raptured before the Tribulation. Others suggest it might happen halfway through the Tribulation, while some expect it to happen at the end of the Tribulation. Revelation 14:14–20 speaks of two “harvests,” which some compare to the parable of the wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24–30). The first harvest is gathered, but the text does not identify where it is taken. Those in the second harvest face the wrath of God (which appears to be reserved for the unrighteous: John 3:36; Romans 1:18; Ephesians 5:5–6). While the details vary, one truth is certain on which all believers agree—Jesus will return and His followers will be with Him forever.

APOLOGETICS:

Some dismiss Heaven as wishful thinking or emotional comfort. Yet the Bible presents Heaven not as an escape from reality, but as the restoration of reality. Revelation describes a renewed creation, justice fully realized, evil removed, and God dwelling with His people. Our deep longing for permanence, beauty, justice, and unbroken fellowship reflects that we were made for something beyond this fallen world. Christianity does not offer fantasy; it offers hope grounded in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise that what was broken by sin will be fully restored by God.

KEY TRUTH: God Will Dwell With His People in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:9–27)

The next scene John was invited to observe was the arrival of the New Jerusalem. This new city descends from above, arriving with the radiance of a bride prepared for her groom (**verses 9–14**). The magnificence of the city is beyond compare. The most valuable and precious



PowerPoint 9

The discussion questions can also be found on the *Adult Teaching Outline* (AH 9-1) and on *PowerPoint 9*, which is customizable. Files 9A and 9B are provided for customization.



AH 9-3

Distribute copies of the AH 9-3 *When Do Christians Go to Heaven?* handout for learners to read at home.

elements on earth are used for building materials in the New Jerusalem: all manner of precious stones for the city wall, gates of pearl, and a street of gold (**verses 18–21**).

Whether the dimensions are symbolic or literal (12,000 stadia is approximately 1500 miles cubed!), the message is clear: there is abundant room in God's eternal city. As Jesus promised, His Father's house has many dwelling places (**verses 15–17; John 14:2**). In examining the description of this heavenly home, it's easy to see how some translations use the word *mansion*. But based on the account in Revelation 21, these dwelling places are not the typical single-family dwellings. The housing accommodations are not what make Heaven *Heaven*—it's who lives there. First and foremost, Heaven is the dwelling place of God (**verses 22–23**).

APPLY:

Look forward to the magnificent city and your dwelling place there, but remember that the presence of the Lord will completely overwhelm the surroundings.

DISCUSS:

- *The city shines with the glory of God and needs no sun or moon (Revelation 21:23). What does this teach us about how overwhelming and sufficient the Lord's presence will be?*
- *If the greatest joy of Heaven is not the surroundings but the presence of the Lord, how can we begin cultivating a deeper love for His presence now?*

The invitation to enter is extended to all, but only those who believe and trust in Christ (whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life) are allowed to enter (**verse 27**). Getting one's name in the book is not a matter of wealth, it's a matter of birth. It's not through physical birth but spiritual birth—those who have been born again through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:3).

EXPLORE:

Paul mentioned the Book of Life in Philippians 4:3, affirming that believers' names are written in it. Revelation clarifies that those who worship the beast are not in the Book of Life and that it will be opened at the final judgment. Interpretations differ regarding when names were written, but Scripture is clear: only those whose names are in the Book of Life enter the New Jerusalem.

Verses 22–27 highlight a few more things that are conspicuously absent. There is no Temple. The old Tabernacle and Temple were symbolic representations of God's dwelling on earth. But God inhabits the New Jerusalem. This is His literal dwelling place, and as omnipresent God, He is not limited to any physical space. The residents of Heaven dwell with God in the most complete way, always in His presence.

There is no need for the sun or moon. These celestial bodies served as markers for time, for day and night, for seasons and years (Genesis 1:14). None of these are relevant in Heaven since there is no more night. They are not needed for light since the glory of the Lord and the Lamb provide all the light that is needed.

That the gates of the city will never be closed indicates there is no threat to the city. In fact, nothing unclean, impure, defiled, shameful, or dishonest will enter the city. All those negative traits will be no more. Only those clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ remain (**verse 27**).

DISCUSS:

- *Why is it good news that nothing sinful will ever enter the New Jerusalem? How is that in stark contrast to what we deal with on earth?*
- *How should knowing that nothing impure enters Heaven affect how we pursue holiness now?*

D6 PRINCIPLE:

Every person will spend eternity in one of two places—Heaven or Hell. There is no middle ground, and no one drifts into Heaven by accident. This reality gives weight to discipleship, especially in the home. Our children are not merely preparing for careers or adulthood; they are preparing for eternity. Parents must intentionally teach the gospel, model faith, and call their children to follow Christ. Eternal destinies are at stake, and discipleship cannot be delayed or delegated.

KEY TRUTH: Believers Will Worship and Reign Forever in Heaven (Revelation 22:1-5)

In making all things new, God will restore His original creation. There will be no more curse and no more death (**verse 3a**). The River of Life flows and the Tree of Life grows. In this new garden, everything proceeds from the throne since God is the source of all things, including life. He provides everything that is needed (**verses 1-2**). The function and purpose of the Tree of Life is not explained, yet it continually produces fruit and has healing properties in its leaves (**verse 2b**). The true focus of Heaven will be God and the Lamb. God will be seen in His fullness and worshiped by those who belong to Him, and they will be in His presence for eternity (**verses 3b-4**). Worship is the joyful response of those in Heaven. Believers will reign with the Lord for all eternity (**verse 5**).

APPLY:

Rejoice that nothing sinful, unclean, impure, shameful, or dishonest will ever be in the New Jerusalem and we will never be tempted to sin again.

APPLY:

Worship the Lord daily while waiting to worship and reign with Him in Heaven.

DISCUSS:

- *If worship will be central in Heaven, how might that shape the way we approach worship in our lives and homes now?*
- *What opportunities do we have to cultivate worship in our day-to-day activities?*

In God's original creation, humans were designed to dwell with God and enjoy perpetual life as they experienced all the wonders of the world. The prophet Isaiah spoke of a time when there would be a new Heaven and earth and all of nature would dwell together peacefully ([Isaiah 65:17–25](#)). This prophecy is understood by some to indicate there will be animals in the new Heaven and earth. This interpretation seems consistent with all things being made new. There is good reason to conclude that in Heaven we will be able to experience and enjoy all of God's marvelous creation as He intended.

DISCUSS:

- *How does regularly looking forward to eternity help us endure trials and stay focused on Christ?*
- *What burdens feel lighter when you remember Christ will reign and you will be with Him?*

APPLY:

Look forward to experiencing God and His new creation for all eternity.

EXPLORE:

When will the lion lay down with the lamb? Technically, it's the wolf with the lamb and the lion with the calf; but they are all living together. The prophet Isaiah spoke of a future era of peace when all of nature dwells together without violence or destruction ([Isaiah 11:1–16; 65:17–25](#)). Some interpreters recognize this promised peace as a restoration of the nation of Israel and a millennial reign of Christ on earth. Isaiah's first reference (11:1–16) has distinct elements that refer to the first coming of Christ along with other prophetic statements that are more veiled. The second prophecy of Isaiah (65:17–25) makes specific reference to a *new Heaven and earth*. Both prophecies include statements that can be identified in different activities of Christ. The branch of Jesse on whom the Spirit of the Lord rested is a clear prophecy about the first coming of Jesus. It is always difficult to discern between literal and figurative elements in prophecy. Some prophecies appear to have both immediate and future fulfillment. While details are debated, believers can rest in the certainty that Christ will reign and His kingdom will bring peace.

RESPOND

Use one or more of these **Respond** options to help your group members put into action the principles they learned in this lesson.

OPTION 1: Challenge group members to make intentional time this week for focused worship—whether through prayer, Scripture reading, or song—remembering that they are practicing for eternity. Consider ending with this song, or send it to group members during the week: tinyurl.com/PWHeaven.

OPTION 2: Ask your group members to think of ways they can worship and serve God this week as they wait for Heaven. Encourage them to put some of these ways into action and to share the good news with someone whose name is not written in the Book of Life. The AH 9-4 *Until You Are Home* handout can help.

OPTION 3: Encourage your learners to dwell this week on how wonderful it will be to not have to deal with any temptation and sin in Heaven. With this in mind, ask them to confess and turn away from any sin they struggle with and walk closely with the Lord while they wait for Heaven.

Building Blocks

Share these Bible basics with your learners.

Heaven is a place of joy and perfect bliss where God and His people will live throughout eternity.

Pray!

D6 Devotional Study Guides provide resources to help parents disciple their children.

Encourage your group members to complete the daily devotions in the *D6 Devotional Study Guides* this week.



AH 9-4



PP-9

The *Parent Page* (PP-9) is a resource to help parents discuss the truths of this lesson with their children at home. Give copies of this page to those who will benefit from it and encourage them to use it at home this week. *Parent Page* is also available for FREE download at D6home.com. (No password required.)

Notes



START WITH **THE END** IN MIND

When you open a map, you don't just look at where you are; you look at where you want to be, then chart the course.

NEW
RELEASE

BACKWARD
DISCIPLESHIP

RON HUNTER JR.

Discipleship works the same way.
We identify the destination
then chart a course to get there.

Backward Discipleship, by Ron Hunter Jr., helps leaders start with the end in mind, planning backward before pressure comes. Drawing on the researched-backed approaches of the faith-forging five, *Backward Discipleship* reconnects what was never meant to be separated: the church and the home, belief and daily practice, and parents and spiritual family.

D6
FAMILY
MINISTRY





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