

DISCIPLESHIP LESSON 13

1	PRAYER
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Pray for God's guidance through his Spirit, for awareness of his presence and for listening to his voice. Dedicate this lesson about disciple making to the Lord.

2	WORSHIP (20 minutes) [CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD] GOD IS THE ONLY GOD AND THE ONLY SAVIOUR
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Definition.

What is "worship"? Worship is:

- *an attitude* of awe, adoration, submission and dedication to God,
- *expressed* in various kinds of prayer and the way we live every day (lifestyle).

In order to worship God, we need to get to know "the God of the Bible".

During every worship time we will learn one characteristic (attribute) of God for which we worship him.

Meditation.

Theme: The God of the Bible is the only God and the only Saviour.

Read the Bible passages and the explanation or explain it in your own words.

- 1. Exodus 20:2-3.** God forbids every human being to have any other God than the LORD. The LORD is the God who revealed himself in the Bible (the prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles). He is the Saviour from the house of sin and slavery.
- 2. Isaiah 9:6-7.** God takes on the human nature in Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Corinthians 1:3 "The God and Father of Jesus Christ" means "the God and Father who revealed himself in a unique way in Jesus Christ". Compare: God revealed Himself visibly in flames of fire and in the Angel of the Lord (Exodus 3:2; Exodus 19:18).
- 3. Isaiah 40:18.** The LORD is incomparable! The gods of other religions cannot be compared to the LORD!
- 4. Isaiah 42:8.** The LORD will not share his glory (his divine attributes, presence and honour) with any of the "gods" of the other religions.
- 5. Isaiah 43:10b-11.** The LORD, the God who revealed himself in the Bible, is the only living God. Apart from the LORD there is no "god" and also no "saviour" in the world.
- 6. Isaiah 44:6-8.** The LORD is from beginning to end the only God that ever existed. Apart from him, no other 'god' ever existed. Although there are many evil spirits (demons) that claim to be "gods", they have never been able to reveal what happened in the past and have never been able to foretell what will happen in the future.
- 7. Isaiah 45:18-21a.** The LORD only is God and Creator. There is no other! The LORD has not spoken in secret. Instead, over a period of 1500 years the LORD has spoken *the same message* to about 40 different prophets and apostles! He did that in different countries and languages! He alone announces the coming future events long before they actually happen. No other "god" has ever done that or can do that.
- 8. Isaiah 45:21b-23.** There is no living God apart from the LORD. The "gods" of all the other religions in the world only exist in the minds of people who devised them and they are not the same as the God of the Bible! There is no righteous and saving God besides the LORD. Thus, not one of the 'gods' of the other religions is righteous or a saviour. Therefore, all the people on earth must turn to the LORD and be saved. Finally, every knee in history will one day bow willingly or unwillingly before the LORD. And every tongue will one day confess with conviction or with regret that the God who revealed himself in Jesus Christ is the only true God (Philippians 2:9-11)!

Worship.

Ask each group member to use his Bible verse to worship God.

Take turns to worship God as the only God and the only Saviour. Worship God for being your God and Saviour.

3	SHARING (20 minutes) [QUIET TIMES] JOHN 15:1 – 18:27
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Take turns and *share* (or *read* from your notes) in short what you have learned from one of your quiet times out of the assigned Bible passages (John 15:1 to 18:27).

Listen to the person sharing, take him serious and accept him. Do not discuss what he shares.

A. THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL

The message of the gospel is the good news about the plan of God. It speaks about the problem of man, the solution of God and the response of man if he wants to be saved. God's solution for the problem of man is Jesus Christ! God's requirement to be saved is faith in Jesus Christ and in what Jesus Christ has done for man. First, learn to understand the gospel and then learn to tell it to another person.

1. The bridge of life illustration.

Teach and train. Help students to understand and memorise the bridge of life illustration.

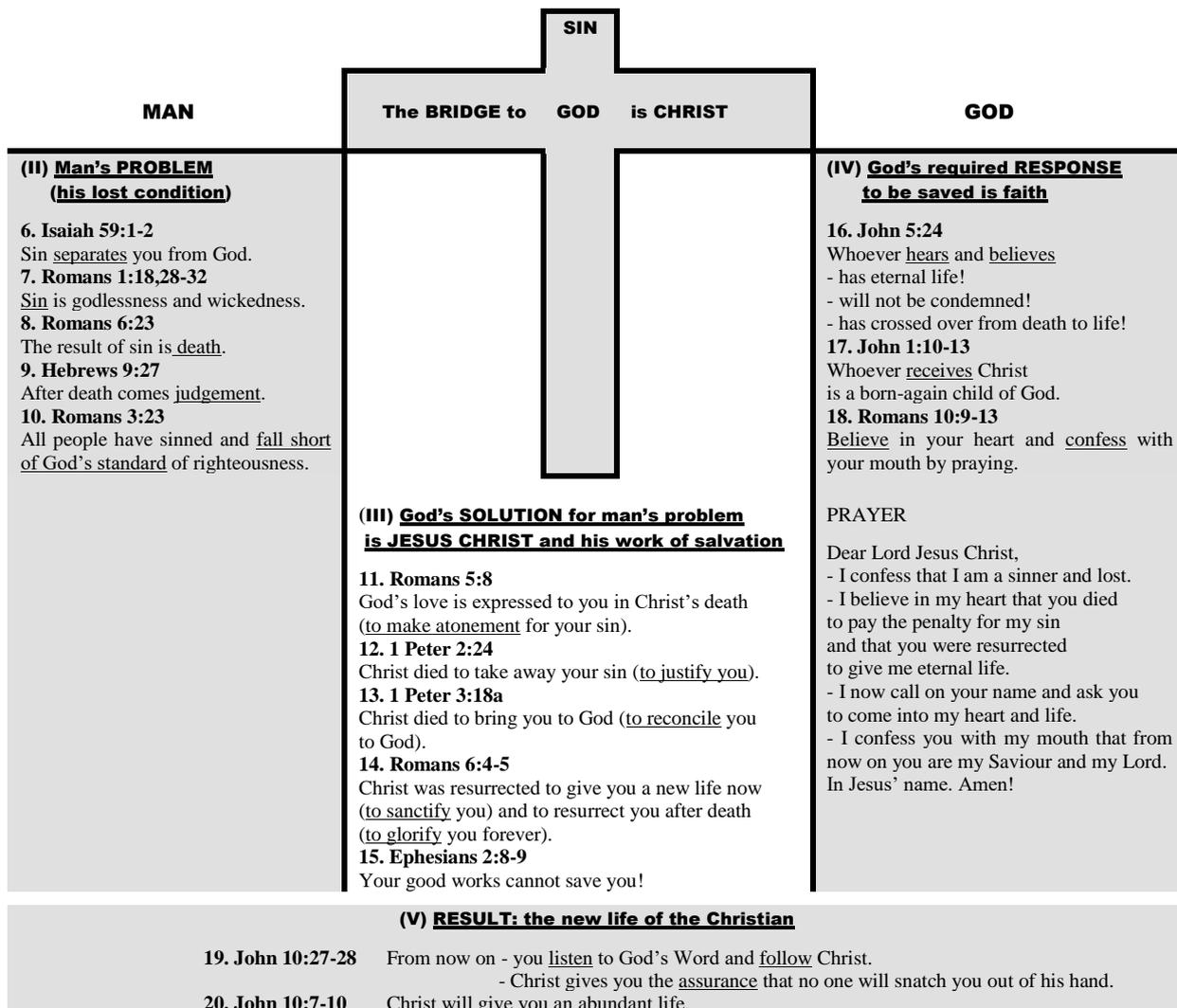
Afterwards, train them to use this illustration when they share the message of the gospel to others.

Read the Bible passages one by one.

Discover and discuss. (I) The truth about GOD. (II) The truth about MAN. (III) The truth about CHRIST. (IV) The truth about SALVATION. And (V) the truth about the NEW LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN.

(I) **God's PLAN**

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| 1. Romans 1:19-20 | God <u>revealed</u> himself. You can know God. |
| 2. 1 John 1:5-6 | God is light. If you want to <u>know</u> God, come into the light. |
| 3. 1 John 4:8 | God is love. If you want to <u>experience</u> God, receive God's love and love other people. |
| 4. Genesis 1:27 | God created you to <u>have the characteristics of God</u> , not of evil. |
| 5. Isaiah 43:7 | God created you to <u>live for God</u> , not for yourself. |

2. The meaning of difficult words.

(1) To make atonement for your sin means to remove God's righteous anger against your sin. Christ's death is an atonement sacrifice, a sacrifice that turns away God's wrath against your sin (Romans 3:25).

(2) To justify you is a legal term and means to declare you righteous in God’s eyes. Christ took your unrighteousness on his body and allowed it to be nailed to the cross and gave you his perfect righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). As a righteous person you are completely forgiven and stand in the right relationship with God. This happens the moment you believe. From that moment onwards, God regards and treats you as completely righteous.

(3) To reconcile you to God means that God changed his enmity against you and your former life-style (Psalm 5:4-5; 11:5). From the moment you believe, God has made peace with you and you may experience peace of mind and heart (Romans 5:1,9-10; Philippians 4:7).

(4) To sanctify you means to transform you more and

(5) To glorify you means to transform you to become like Jesus Christ (1 John 3:2). This includes the transformation of your present body, which will become like Christ’s glorious body (Philippians 3:21). This will happen at Christ’s Second Coming.

3. A shorter version of the message of the gospel.

You could also teach the group members to share the gospel message in 12 Bible verses as in Manual 1, lesson 3.

B. TELL THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL TO ANOTHER PERSON

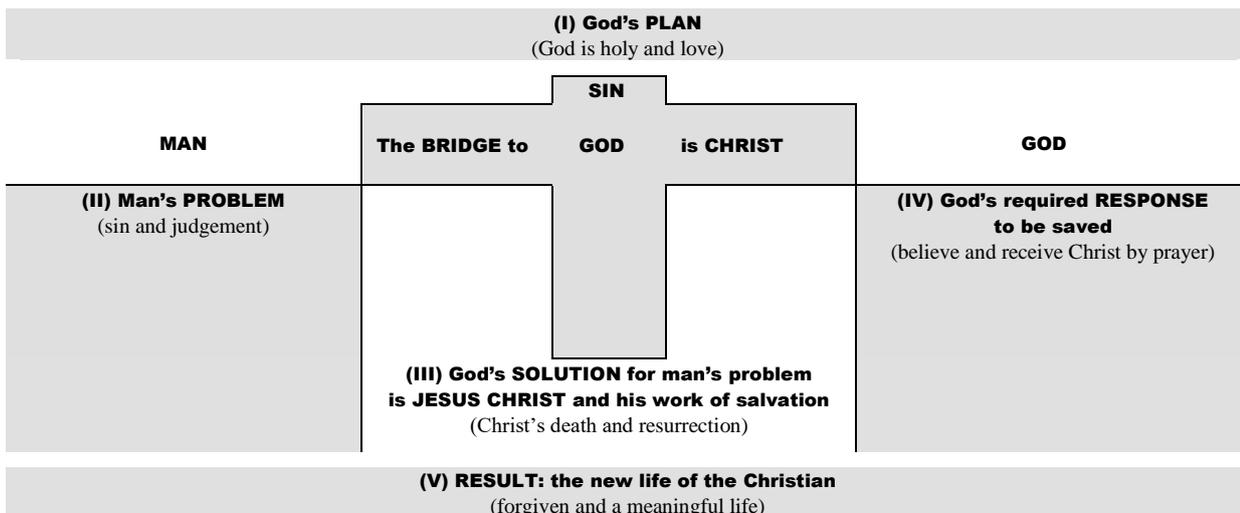
1. Practical suggestions.

(1) The “gospel” is the Good News

- about God’s love, grace and kingship
- about Christ’s death, resurrection and enthronement
- about forgiveness, salvation and victory for anyone who believes.

(2) Share the message of the gospel in five steps.

Whenever you preach, teach, share or explain the message of the gospel, you could use the following 5 steps:



(3) Help a person to discover these truths for himself.

Let the non-Christian read from the Bible the verses that explain the gospel. Encourage him to discover for himself the truths from the Bible by asking questions like:

- “What does this Bible verse say about God?”
- “What are the consequences of sin?”
- “Why did Jesus Christ have to die?”
- “According to Jesus, what must you do to receive salvation?”
- “What are the responsibilities and privileges of a Christian?”

Draw ‘the bridge of life illustration’ as the discovery and discussion progresses.

Write down the Bible references and key words as the illustration progresses.

At the end, give this illustration to him in order to remind him of the gospel.

(4) Invite the person to receive Christ.

After you have completed drawing the bridge of life illustration, invite the person to receive Jesus Christ as his Saviour or to submit his heart and life to Jesus Christ as King. If the person desires this, let him pray.

(5) Be sensitive to God’s Spirit.

Pray in your heart while you share the gospel. Remember that you are only God’s servant. Only God can work a new life in his heart. Therefore, be sensitive to what God is doing in his heart and life.

2. Practise sharing the gospel.

- Let the group members two by two share the shorter version (12 verses) of the gospel message to one another. See manual 1, lesson 3.
- Let the group members two by two share the bridge of life illustration by means of the above 20 Bible verses or by means of either John 10:7-18 or Ephesians 2:1-10.

C. SHARE YOUR SALVATION TESTIMONY

No one is born a “Christian”. Jesus Christ said: “You *must* be born again” (John 3:3-8). But how and when this happens is a different story for every person. Telling how you became a Christian is called “a personal salvation testimony”.

1. The salvation testimony of Paul.

How does Paul share his salvation testimony?

Read Acts 26:1-29

Paul divides his salvation testimony into four parts:

- The introduction (Acts 26:1-3).
- The period before his conversion (Acts 26:4-11).
- The event of his conversion (Acts 26:12-18).
- The period after his conversion (Acts 26:19-23).

(1) The introduction (Acts 26:1-3).

- When Paul is given an opportunity to tell about his faith in Jesus Christ, he shares his salvation testimony.
- He first establishes a friendly relationship with his hearers (verse 2-3).

(2) The period before his conversion (Acts 26:4-11).

- Paul talks about his background in order to help his hearers to identify with him (verse 4-5).
- Paul includes some positive elements about his former life: his good education, his religious zeal and his genuine intentions.
- Paul also includes some negative elements about his former life: his persecution of Christians, and his violence against the Christian Church.
- Paul speaks about things his hearers can identify with. He thus creates resonance. For example, the Pharisees were interested in the resurrection and the king was interested in the customs and controversies of the Jews. He helps his hearers, who might have similar questions, to get interested in how he found answers.

(3) The event of his conversion (Acts 26:12-18).

- Paul does not say, “I think” or “I feel”, but vividly describes the concrete events of his conversion.
- Paul makes it clear that he did not seek God, but God sought him and found him! He also makes it clear that Christ revealed himself to him, not after he had cleaned himself up, but when his life was still in a mess.
- Paul quotes the very words that Jesus spoke to him. He includes various elements of the gospel in his salvation testimony. For example: people must turn from darkness to light, from Satan to God; people must believe in Jesus Christ; believers will receive forgiveness of sins and a place among God’s people (verse 18). The truths of the gospel help his hearers to also believe in Jesus Christ if they want to.

(4) The period after his conversion (Acts 26:19-23).

- Paul describes the major change in his life: the persecutor of the Christian Church has become the preacher of the Church. His “line of thought” speaks about something *before* his conversion that was changed *after* his conversion.
- Paul admits that he still faces difficult situations. But he also says that God helps him in his difficult situations.
- Paul quotes the Bible as his authority (verse 22).
- Paul includes more truths of the gospel in his salvation testimony: Jesus Christ died and was resurrected. The good news is for all people – both Jews and Gentiles. Every person should repent (convert) and turn to God. Thereafter every person should live the obedient Christian life, in which they prove their repentance by their deeds(verse 23,20)

2. The discussion that followed the salvation testimony of Paul.

(1) Paul remains respectful (Acts 26:24-25).

When he gets insulted, he continues to be respectful.

(2) Paul tries to persuade his hearers (Acts 26:26-27).

He does not force or threaten, but tries to persuade his hearers to become followers of Jesus Christ

(3) Paul challenges his hearers (Acts 26:28-29).

He challenges his hearers to become followers of Jesus Christ.

3. The possible salvation testimony of Timothy.

Read 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:10-15.

Teach. Like Timothy, some Christians have become believers when they were still young. They may not remember how they became a believer in Jesus Christ. But they know that they are followers of Jesus Christ. These Timothy's should write their salvation testimony as follows:

(1) Share your background.

Christian grandparents, parents, church or teachers.

(2) Share Jesus Christ.

Share what Jesus Christ has come to mean for you through the years and how he changes your life in the present.

(3) Share the main truths of the gospel, as you understand it now.

Include at least one Bible verse in your testimony (for example: John 3:16 or Matthew 11:28).

4. Write your personal salvation testimony down and practise telling it to others.

(1) Choose a format for your testimony.

<u>The format of Paul's testimony</u>	<u>The format of Timothy's testimony</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your life <i>before</i> you became a believer • Share <i>how</i> you became a believer in Christ • Describe your life <i>after</i> you became a believer (how Jesus Christ changed your life) • Include the truths of <i>the gospel</i> in your testimony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your <i>background</i> as a child of believers • Share the present <i>meaning</i> of your relationship to <i>Christ</i> • Describe how Jesus Christ <i>changed</i> your life • Include the truths of <i>the gospel</i> in your testimony

(2) Write your testimony down and practise to tell it to others.

- Making use of either format, write your own salvation testimony on a sheet of paper (A5 to maximum A4 size)
- Read your testimony to your group leader or to your discipleship group and let them give you some positive suggestions.
- Memorise your salvation testimony.
- Share your salvation testimony in the small group or in the house church.

5	PRAYER (8 minutes) [REACTIONS] PRAYER IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD
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Take turns in the group **to pray short** to God in response to what you have learned today. Or divide the group into two's or three's and pray to God in response to what you have learned today.

6	PREPARATION (2 minutes) [ASSIGNMENT] FOR NEXT LESSON
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(Group leader. Give the group members this preparation for at home in writing or let them copy it down).

1. **Commitment.** Be committed to make disciples. Preach, teach or study the teaching of "Sharing the gospel and your testimony" together with another person or group of people.
2. **Personal time with God.** Have a quiet time from half a chapter of **John 18:28 – 21:25** each day. Make use of the favourite truth method. Make notes.
3. **Bible study.** Prepare the next Bible study at home. (1) **1 Corinthians 13:1-13.** Theme: "The Christian foundation for all relationships." Make use of the five steps method of Bible study. Make notes.
4. **Prayer.** Pray for someone or something specific this week and see what God is doing (Psalm 5:3).
5. **Update your notebook** on making disciples. Include the worship notes and teaching notes and this preparation.