

CHURCH.

LESSON 10

1	PRAYER
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Group leader. Pray for God's guidance through his Spirit, for awareness of his presence and for listening to his voice. Commit your group and this lesson about church building to the Lord.

2	SHARING (20 minutes) [QUIET TIMES] 2 CORINTHIANS 1 - 3
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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 (2 Corinthians 1 - 3).

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

3	MEMORISATION (5 minutes) [KEY VERSES IN JOHN] (4) JOHN 3:16
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Review two by two.

(4) John 3:16. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

4	BIBLE STUDY (85 minutes) [THE GOSPEL OF JOHN] JOHN 3:1-36
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Introduce. John 3:1-21 describes Jesus Christ revealing himself to Nicodemus. John 3:22-36 describes how John the Baptist begins to withdraw.

STEP 1. READ.	GOD'S WORD
<i>Read.</i> LET US READ John 3:1-36 together. Let us take turns to read one verse each until we have completed the reading.	

STEP 2. DISCOVER.	OBSERVATIONS
<i>Consider.</i> WHICH TRUTH IN THIS PASSAGE IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU? Or WHICH TRUTH IN THIS PASSAGE TOUCHES YOUR MIND OR HEART? <i>Record.</i> Discover one or two truths that you understand. Think about them and write your thoughts in your notebook. <i>Share.</i> (After the group members have had about two minutes to think and write, take turns to share). Let us take turns to share with one another what each of us has discovered. (Remember: In every small group, the group members will share different things)	

3:16

Discovery 1. Salvation through faith.

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

(1) God loved from eternity.

The verb in *the aorist tense* points to a *once-only act of God that goes back to eternity and stretches out to eternity*. God's love is the one, great, central fact and one great reality in the Bible en goes back eternity (before "time" was created at the creation of the universe). The love, with which he chose us before the creation of the world, finds its highest possible expression in the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, and is now shown in our salvation when we believe.

(2) God so greatly loved the world.

The word "the world" has several different meanings in the Bible and in the Gospel of John (cf. John 1:10). Here in John 3:16, the word "world" refers to "the world of lost people", without distinction with respect to race or nationality. It refers to people alienated from the life of God, laden with sin, exposed to judgement and in need of salvation, from every tribe, nation and language on earth. The emphasis is on people as a group without implying that it refers to every single individual on earth. The world is here not viewed as the realm of evil, which is openly hostile to God, to Christ and to Christians, as in John 15:18. God does not love evil and therefore God does not love the world of evil people that

hate God, Christ and Christians (cf. Psalm 5:4-6; Romans 1:18). God loves the “world” of lost people, without distinction with respect to race or nationality.

(3) God's love gave his most precious gift.

God gave his only-begotten Son. This is not an expression referring to physical sonship, spiritual sonship or symbolic sonship, but of his metaphysical, ontological, eternal and trinitarian Sonship (see manual 2, supplement 8, the nature of God and the Son of God). It expresses the fact that Christ is God from eternity (John 1:14,18), that is, before the creation the universe (matter with its force of gravity, energy with its light, space that can be measured and time that moves only in one direction). The fact that God *gave* his Son means that God gave the most precious he had as a sacrifice of atonement for sins.

(4) Only believers obtain eternal life.

Jesus is speaking here of all people who receive him with *abiding* trust and confidence. The verb “to believe” is in the *present continuous tense* and thus shows that it does not refer to those, who once made a gesture of faith, but later stopped to believe and slid back. The faith of such people was *only intellectual or emotional faith, a temporary, historic an faith, but not saving faith!* Genuine faith persists in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ every day and will persevere to the end. Although the Gospel is preached to people of every tribe, nation and language in the world, not everyone who hears the gospel believes in Jesus Christ. But whoever believes in Jesus Christ, whether he is a Jew or a Gentile, receives eternal life the moment he believes.

(5) The nature of eternal life.

“Eternal life” consists of knowing Jesus Christ personally and fellowshiping with him (John 17:3) from the moment you believe. It is a new life that includes the following: assurance of salvation (John 10:28), love for God, and peace, joy and love in your heart, and a purpose and fulfilment in life! It is a life that is different in quality from the life that characterises this present age and is never-ending! It is the assurance that you will definitely share in the wonderful life of Jesus Christ on the new heaven and new earth in the future age of glory after the second coming of Christ.

3:17-18

Discovery 2. God's judgement for unbelief.

(1) The Jews believed that only they were exclusively God's chosen nation.

They believed that the Messiah would condemn the physical Gentile nations, because these nations were oppressing Israel. They believed that God would not judge Israel. However, the prophet Amos warned the Jews that the final judgement day would also be for the Jews (Amos 3:2)!

(2) Jesus teaches that God's salvation plan includes all the nations of the world.

He said that God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Jesus Christ (John 3:17). Like John 3:16, “the world” here means the world of lost people in every race, nation and language. God's plan was not only to save people from the *punishment* of sin, but also the *power, guilt and shame* of sin and from *sin* itself and to give them everlasting life.

(3) Jesus teaches that the issue of salvation or condemnation is determined in this life.

While the main purpose of the first coming of Jesus Christ was to bring salvation, it does not mean that the main purpose of his second coming will be to bring condemnation. John 3:18 says, “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe *stands condemned already*, because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son”. Nobody will have to wait for the final judgement day to receive his judgement. The decision whether you will be saved or condemned (doomed) is made *now* in this life! On the final judgement day all people who believe in Jesus Christ will not be condemned (John 5:24). Because they have already been forgiven, no sentence of condemnation will be read against them!

However, on the final judgement day all the people who have done evil will rise to be condemned (John 5:28-29). This does not mean that they will only be judged and condemned on the last day, but rather that their condemnation will be publicly announced! All people, who have rejected Christ by not believing in him, do not need to wait for the final judgement, as if the verdict will be postponed until then. All unbelievers stand condemned already! John 3:36 says, that God's displeasure and settled indignation rests on all people, who disobey Christ by refusing to accept him by a true and abiding faith. After your death, there will be no second chance to believe in Jesus Christ! The issue of salvation and condemnation is determined in this life!

STEP 3. QUESTION.

EXPLANATIONS

Consider. WHICH QUESTION ABOUT ANYTHING IN THIS PASSAGE WOULD YOU LIKE TO ASK TO THIS GROUP?

Let us try to understand all the truths in John 3:1-36 and ask questions about the things we still do not understand.

Record. Formulate your question as clearly as possible. Then write your question in your notebook.

Share. (After the group members have had about two minutes to think and write, let each person first share his question.)

Discuss. (Then, choose a few of these questions and try to answer them by discussing them together in your group.)
(The following are examples of questions the students might ask and some notes about the discussion of the questions.)

3:3,5,7

Question 1. What does it mean, “to be born again”?

Notes.

The real thing Nicodemus wanted to know was: “What good thing must I do in order to enter the kingdom of God?” His unspoken question was: “How do I get eternal life?” Jesus answered him with a riddle. A riddle is a saying with a hidden meaning. Jesus said, “No one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again”.

(1) To be born again means to be born “anew” and “from above”, that is, from the Holy Spirit.

The word born again literally means *to be born from above*, that is, from God who lives in heaven (John 3:31). It also means *to be born anew*, that is, *to be born all over again* spiritually after you have been born physically (cf. Galatians 4:9, all over again). In John 3:6, Jesus says, “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit”. To be born of the flesh means to be born physically with a sinful human nature. To be born of the Spirit means to be born spiritually with a new spiritual nature.

(2) To be baptised with water is only a sign and seal of being baptised with the Holy Spirit.

In John 3:5, Jesus says, “No man can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of *water and the Spirit*”. In Matthew 3:11 we also read about *water and the Spirit*. John the Baptist says, “I baptise you with water ... but Jesus Christ will baptise you with the Holy Spirit”. The meaning is that people are only born again by the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and lives. People are born again when the Holy Spirit uses the preaching or teaching of the Word of God to regenerate people (1 Peter 1:23). People are never born again by merely the baptism with water. The baptism with water is the visible sign (or pictorial presentation) and visible seal (confirmation) of the reality, namely, the invisible baptism with the Spirit. Only when the thing signified accompanies the sign, the sign has value. Only when the baptism with water signifies that you have been born again by the baptism with the Holy Spirit, does the baptism with water have significance. Because we no longer read in John 3:6,8 about “born of water”, but only about “born of Spirit”, it proves that “the baptism with the Spirit” is the essential thing!

(3) To be born again by the Holy Spirit is an absolute necessity and a sovereign work of God.

In John 3:7-8, Jesus says, “You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again’. The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” Like all the Jews, Nicodemus believed that people could be justified (saved) by keeping the law. Now Jesus surprised him by teaching him that salvation is a gracious gift from God and not a work earned by man! Jesus taught that a person is born again only through the Holy Spirit and not through keeping the law.

In the beginning salvation is a sovereign act of God and man is completely passive. Nobody on earth can direct the wind. It acts with complete independence from man. Likewise, nobody on earth can direct or control his own salvation (rebirth). The Holy Spirit acts with complete independence from man. Regeneration is a sovereign work of God in which man has no more control than he has over the wind. Nicodemus should have known from the Old Testament that he is corrupt (cf. Genesis 6:5; Job 14:4; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9) and absolutely unable to save himself (cf. Isaiah 43:10-11). He should not have been so surprised at the teaching of Jesus.

3:3,5

Question 2. What is “the kingdom of God”?

Notes.

(1) The kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God is the realm (heart and life) in which God’s grace prevails and where the rule (lordship) of God through Christ is recognised, confessed and obeyed (Luke 17:20-21). The kingdom (kingship) of God is expressed in the following:

- the salvation of believers (Mark 10:24-27) from beginning (the salvation of their souls) to end (the salvation of their bodies).
- the constitution and growth of believers as a Church on earth (Matthew 16:18-19)
- the good works (influence) of believers in every aspect of human society (Matthew 25:34-40; Romans 14:17) (intellectual, physical, emotional, social and spiritual).
- the new heaven and the new earth (Hebrews 12:22-24; 2 Peter 3:10-13).

(2) Entering the kingdom through rebirth and faith.

“Entering the kingdom of God” is the same as “receiving eternal life” or “being saved”. Thus, a comparison between John 3:3-8 and John 3:16-17 teaches that “the sovereign act of God” (rebirth through the Spirit) precedes “the act of man” (faith in Jesus Christ). (John 6:44,37; John 17:6)

But because man cannot perceive this, *the rebirth through God* in his perception is simultaneous with *the faith of man*. In his perception *being born of God* takes place simultaneous with *his accepting of Christ* or *his believing in Christ*. John 1:12-13 says, “Yet to all who received him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become the children of God – children born not of natural descent (*physical* descent, e.g. from Abraham), nor of the will of the flesh (*biological* carnal desire, the sexual impulse of the man or woman) or the will of man (*volitional*, the free will or decision of man)(Romans 8:7-8), but born of God (*supernatural, divine, from above*).”

3:9-13

Question 3. What does Jesus mean when he speaks about knowing and testifying about the heavenly things?

Notes.

In John 3:11 Jesus says that John the Baptist and he himself knew and testified about the heavenly things. But the Pharisees and Nicodemus did not accept their testimony. Jesus could say this, because with his penetrating eyes he could look right into their heart and see their hesitation to believe what Jesus was teaching (cf. John 2:25).

(1) The earthly things.

In John 3:12, Jesus says, “I have spoken to you of *earthly things* and you do not believe”. He had been speaking about things, which are heavenly in character and in origin, but take place on earth, like the baptism with the Spirit and the baptism with water. Although the baptism with the Spirit or regeneration through the Holy Spirit is clearly taught in the Old Testament in Ezekiel 36:25-27, the majority of Jews rejected it. God said, “I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.” Regeneration takes place in the sphere of human perception and experience on earth. Therefore anybody, who knew the Old Testament and reflected on his own natural inability to please God, would have understood the necessity of being born again!

Other “earthly things” are the first coming of the Messiah (Christ) to his own people (Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1-2), the death and resurrection of the Servant of the LORD and the proclamation of the good news (gospel) to the Gentiles everywhere in the world (Isaiah 49:6). But now that Nicodemus and people like him think that these earthly things are incredible, how would they ever believe when Jesus speaks to them about “the heavenly things”?

(2) The heavenly things.

In John 3:13 Jesus says, “No one has ever gone into heaven except the One who came from heaven – the Son of Man”. “The heavenly things” are the being of God himself (John 1:18) and God’s eternal plan of salvation, which Jesus explains in John 3:13-18. Only the Son of God has always been in the presence of God and knows all the decisions that were made in heaven. Therefore, God’s plan to save people from every nation in the world through the crucifixion of Jesus Christ lies completely outside the range of human knowledge until it is revealed to man. Only Jesus Christ descended from heaven to earth and only Jesus Christ ascended into heaven (Ephesians 4:9-10)¹. Only Jesus Christ knows God’s eternal plan of salvation. Only Jesus Christ reveals God’s plan of salvation to people. And only Jesus Christ carries that plan out on earth (Matthew 11:25-27). Only Jesus Christ opens the book in heaven and executes its contents (Revelation 5:1-5)!

3:14-15

Question 4. What does Jesus mean when he says, “he must be lifted up”?

Notes.

(1) The illustration in the Old Testament and fulfilment in the New Testament.

The heart of God’s plan of salvation:

- was partially disclosed in the illustrations (types) of the Old Testament
- but only fully disclosed in the fulfilment (antitypes) through Jesus Christ in the New Testament!

In the Old Testament in Numbers chapter 21, the illustration (or type) of God’s plan of salvation was the lifting up of the bronze snake on a pole in the desert. The fulfilment (antitype) of God’s plan of salvation would be the lifting up of the Son of God on the cross!

There is resemblance between the illustration in the Old Testament and the fulfilment in the New Testament. In both cases, death threatens as a punishment for sin. In both cases, God himself with sovereign grace provides a remedy. In both cases, something or Somebody must be lifted up in public view of everybody. In both cases, only those, who look up at the snake or at Jesus Christ with a believing heart, are saved from death.

¹ “Apparently death” experiences in which people claim to have been in heaven or hell and then describe heaven or hell, are lies! Jesus Christ can appear to people in a vision or a dream. But only Jesus Christ knows what heaven looks like (Matthew 11:27)!

(2) But as always, the fulfilment (the reality) far transcends the illustration (the shadow).

In the Old Testament, only the Israelites are threatened with death, but in the New Testament all people in the world are threatened with spiritual, physical and eternal death due to their sins! In the Old Testament, the bronze snake was only a symbol that could not heal people. But in the New Testament Jesus Christ is the reality, namely God who has the power to heal and save believers or allow unbelievers to perish!

(3) The lifting up of Jesus Christ on the cross is presented as a divine “must”.

Jesus says that he “must” be lifted up. His lifting up on the cross is not one of many remedies in the world – the cross is the only possible remedy for sin and eternal death in the world (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:22-24)! God’s requirement for salvation of people is a 100% righteous and holy life on the one hand and a 100% punishment of sin on the other hand! No human being besides Jesus Christ could accomplish that! Only through the perfect life of Jesus Christ in the place of people who believe in him on the one hand and through the death of Jesus Christ for the sins of people who believe in him on the other hand could God’s just requirement for salvation be fulfilled. Only on the cross was God’s holiness and righteousness reconciled with his love and mercy! Only on the cross God’s righteous indignation against sin of people came together with God’s indescribable love for lost people!

His “being lifting up” refers first to his being lifting up on the cross, but is never separated from his being lifted up in his resurrection from the dead, from his being lifted up in his ascension and his being lifted up in his enthronement (Acts 2:33). Although Christ is lifted up in the sight of all people, not all people are saved, because not all people believe.

3:19-21

Question 5. Why are certain people condemned (doomed)?

Notes.

Certain people are doomed because they have hardened their heart and refused to receive God’s revelation in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ revealed God: he made God’s attributes visible to man (John 1:3-4). Jesus Christ earned salvation by his complete holy and righteous life and by paying the penalty for man’s unholy and unrighteous life. Jesus Christ proclaimed the kingship of God and exhorted people to repent and believe (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus Christ did everything necessary to save man.

All people who reject Jesus Christ, who continue to live in the darkness, already stand doomed (John 3:18; 1 John 3:6-9). But the Light (Jesus Christ and his truth) drives away all darkness. Whoever refuses to come to the Light will remain in darkness. Whoever stays away from the Christian meetings, neglects to read his Bible or refuses to reconcile himself to his brother, hates the Light. He hides in the darkness, because he does not want the Light to expose the darkness in him. But all people who come to the Light prove that God in Christ is working in them (1 John 1:5-7)! They will prove the reality of their faith by the new life they live.

Thus, all people in this world stand or fall depending on their relationship to Jesus Christ (John 3:18,36; Luke 2:34).

3:22-26

Question 6. What was the connection between the baptism with water (of John the Baptist and Christ’s disciples) and the Jewish purification rites (baptismal rituals)?

Notes.

During the first year of Christ’s public ministry Jesus Christ and John the Baptist had parallel ministries of preaching and baptising people with water (John 4:1-2). John baptised people at Aenon near Salim (in the province of Decapolis across the Jordan from Samaria)(John 3:23). Jesus and his disciples probably baptised people at the shallow places in the Jordan River close to Jericho in the province of Judea. Jesus himself did not baptise people with water, but his disciples did (John 4:2). This shows that Jesus Christ was much greater than John the Baptist, because he baptised people with the Spirit and let them be baptised with water by his disciples (cf. Matthew 28:19)! This happened from about May to December 27 A.D. when John the Baptist was arrested (Matthew 4:12). The Jews were glad that John had been imprisoned, because he always preached that they needed to repent. But their joy did not last, for they heard that Jesus and his disciples were making even more followers than John! The expression “everyone is going to him” (John 3:26) is a figure of speech: a hyperbole (an exaggeration).

The Jewish priests and Levites from Jerusalem regarded the baptism of John the Baptist as a purification ritual (John 1:25; Hebrews 6:2). Also John the Baptist and his disciples regarded the baptism with water as a purification ritual: “a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” (Mark 1:4). Thus there arose a dispute between the disciples of John the Baptist and a Jew about the Jewish purification rites (John 3:25). This ritual was called “the proselyte baptism”. When a non-Jew desired to join Judaism, he took a bath (by pouring water on or over himself), was physically circumcised and promised to keep the Old Testament Law (cf. Hebrews 6:2). The argument of the disciples of John the Baptist was probably that they accorded the baptism of their teacher, John the Baptist, greater purification significance than the proselyte baptism of the Jews and the baptism which the disciples of Jesus performed. That is why they could not understand why more people went to Jesus to be baptised with water. Thus, the baptising with water (Greek:

baptiz6) (John 3:23,26) of John the Baptist and of Jesus is here connected to the Jewish purification ritual (Greek: katarismos) (John 3:25).

The baptism with water of John the Baptist revealed the Messiah, Jesus Christ, to Israel (John 1:31) and thus prepared them to receive Jesus Christ and his work of salvation.

But the Christian baptism with water is connected to the first coming of Christ and his completed work of salvation through his death and resurrection. The Christian baptism with water is the visible sign and seal that the believer in Jesus Christ:

- has a share in Jesus Christ and his salvation (from the guilt of sin in the past, from the power and pollution of sin in the present and from the punishment and presence of sin in the future).
- has been born again and renewed by the invisible baptism of the Spirit (Acts 10:44-48; Titus 3:4-7)
- all his sins have been washed away (off) (Acts 22:16), that is, he is completely forgiven and justified in God's eyes
- has become a member of God's covenant people or Church (Galatians 3:27-29; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

3:34

Question 7. What does it mean that God has given the Spirit to Jesus without limit?

Notes.

This means the same as what Paul says in Colossians 2:9, "In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form."

The Gospel of John often says that God sent Jesus Christ (John 3:17,34; 5:36,38; 6:29,57; 7:29; 8:42; 9:7; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3,8,18,21,23,25; 20:21) and that the testimony of Jesus Christ is the very words of God (Hebrews 1:1-2). John the Baptist was an ordinary prophet (cf. Matthew 11:13) who received the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit in a limited measure. But Jesus Christ is not an ordinary prophet like the other prophets (Acts 3:22-26), because Jesus Christ received the Holy Spirit "without limit", that is in all his fullness (John 1:32; cf. Colossians 2:9). This means that Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible Triune God. Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17-18) and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Romans 8:8-10; 1 Peter 1:9-12).

3:35-36

Question 8. Why does everyone stand or fall with respect to his relationship to Jesus Christ?

Notes.

Jesus holds the whole wide world in his hands. God the Father loves God the Son and has placed everything in his hands (John 3:35; cf. John 13:3). God has revealed himself completely in Jesus Christ (John 14:6; Matthew 11:27; Colossians 1:15,19; Colossians 2:9). God has spoken his last and final word in and through Jesus Christ (John 12:49; Hebrews 1:1; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:18-19). No man who came after Jesus Christ and calls himself "a prophet" is a prophet of the God of the Bible!

- God has given authority over everyone and everything on earth to Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-23).
- God saves people only through Jesus Christ (John 3:16,18,36; 6:37; 14:6; 17:2; Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:11-12).
- God will resurrect the dead through Jesus Christ (John 5:28-29)
- And God will judge the world through Jesus Christ (John 5:22).

Therefore everyone stands or falls with respect to Jesus (John 3:36). The final testimony of John the Baptist is, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever is disobedient to the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." To believe means to believe *continuously and with perseverance*. To be disobedient also means to persist in disobedience. God's holy and just wrath against the unholiness and unrighteousness of unbelievers will continue to rest on unbelievers. *All three verbs are in the present continuous tense*. This ends the testimony of John the Baptist about Jesus Christ.

STEP 4. APPLY.

APPLICATIONS

Consider. WHICH TRUTHS IN THIS PASSAGE ARE POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS FOR CHRISTIANS?

Share and record. Let us brainstorm with one another and record a list of possible applications from John 3:1-36.

Consider. WHICH POSSIBLE APPLICATION DOES GOD WANT YOU TO TURN INTO A PERSONAL APPLICATION?

Record. Write this personal application down in your notebook. Feel free to share your personal application.

(Remember that people in every group will apply different truths or even make different applications of the same truth. The following is a list of possible applications.)

1. Examples of possible applications from John 3:1-36.

- 3:1. Come to Jesus at night when you are afraid to come to Jesus by day.
- 3:3,8. Consider, "Have I been born again?" Examine yourself to see whether you are in the faith (2 Corinthians 13:5).
- 3:16. Memorise John 3:16. It is the gospel message in a nutshell.

- 3:18. Be convinced that your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and countrymen, who have heard the gospel but do not believe, stand condemned already.
- 3:19-21. Never join a secret organisation. Never do things in the dark, but always live your life in the light. Be transparent.
- 3:30. Continually step down from your pedestal and let Jesus Christ become greater.
- 3:36. Be convinced that people, who reject Jesus Christ, will not see eternal life.

2. Examples of personal applications from John 3:1-36.

I want to continue to reflect on the love God has for me. I have memorised John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life”. I never want to forget that God loved me before I loved him. God loved me first. I never want to forget that God’s love cost him the life of his one and only Son. It was self-sacrificial love. I never want to forget that God loves me right now as he has always done before!

I want to grow in humility. I want to conduct my life and ministry in such a way that Jesus Christ becomes greater and I become less. What is important is not so much what I do for Christ, than what Christ did for me! That is why I want to glorify him and occupy myself with things that please him.

STEP 5. PRAY.	RESPONSE
LET US TAKE TURNS TO PRAY ABOUT ONE TRUTH THAT GOD HAS TAUGHT US in John 3:1-36.	
(Respond in your prayer to what you have learned during this Bible study. Practise to pray only in one or two sentences. Remember that people in every group will pray about different issues.)	

5	PRAYER (8 minutes)	[INTERCESSION] PRAY FOR OTHERS
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Continue to pray in groups of two’s or three’s. Pray with one another for one another and for the people in the world (Romans 15:30; Colossians 4:12).

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 and build Christ’s Church.
2. Preach, teach or study the Bible study of John 3 together with another person or group of people.
3. Personal time with God. Have a quiet time from half a chapter of **2 Corinthians 4 – 6** each day. Make use of the favourite truth method. Make notes.
4. Memorisation. Meditate and memorise the new Bible verse (5) **John 4:24**. Daily review the last 5 memorised Bible verses.
5. Prayer. Pray for someone or something specific this week and see what God is doing (Psalm 5:3).
6. Update your notebook on building Christ’s Church. Include your notes on quiet times, your memorisation notes, your Bible study notes and this preparation.