**Coming Home: Using First Steps/First Principles Bible Study Series**

**Salvation and Church Studies**

Remember the challenge: Every member in a study with someone this Fall (restoration, follow-up, Jesus Studies of First Steps)

**Salvation Study**

Purpose: To establish a solid doctrine of how and when one is saved.

Ephesians 2:1-10

v. 1-3 Q: What is the problem? Who has that problem?

v. 4-8 Q: What is the solution?

Note the idea of being raised (v. 6). We will see what that refers to later.

v. 9 Q: What definitely does not save us?

Does this mean that God does not require any works?

Illustration. Give reach out with an object as a gift (but coach your helper ahead of time not to take it). Then, do this again, but this time have him/her take the gift.

Q: Did the person earn the gift? Would he/she have received it without doing something? Did doing that thing earn the gift?

Our works, no matter how awesome, do absolutely zero to earn salvation, but this does not mean that God does not ask us to do something in order to receive it.

So, what response on our part to God’s offer of salvation is required?

1. John 3:16 To believe. Q: What kind of belief is this—intellectual assent that something is true, or faith and trust in God?

2. John 3:3-6 To be born again.

Q: What MUST happen for us to enter the kingdom?

Q: What is involved in being born again? (water and spirit) We will see what this means in the next passage.

3. Acts 2:36-41 Repent and be baptized.

Q: What does “cut to the heart” mean?

Q: What two things did Peter tell them to do?

Q: What does repent mean? (*metanoia* 180o mind change)

Q: What does baptism mean? (*baptizo* immersion in water)

Q: What two things would God do for us if we do those two things?

Q: Who is this for?

Romans 6:1-7

Note: The only thing in the Bible ever connected with into Christ is baptism (Gal 3:26).

Q: What happens when we are baptized into Christ?

(buried with him AND raised with him)

v. 5,7 What if we have not been united with him in a death like his?

Note: This explains the born again language in John 3:3-6

1 Peter 3:21-22

Q: What does the water of Noah’s flood symbolize?

Q: What does baptism do?

Romans 10:8-10

Q: What act on our part is connected with our salvation here?

Q: Do we need to actually say these words, or is the actual taking on of lordship sufficient?

Summary:

In order to receive the offered gift of salvation, the Bible tells us we must:

1. Have biblical belief/faith in Jesus—in his death burial and resurrection.

2. Repent of our sins.

3. Confess Jesus as Lord.

4. Be baptized by immersion into Christ

Q: Does the order matter?

2 Corinthians 7:8-11

Q: What is worldly guilt, and what is the result of this?

Note: There are two categories of repentance—the deep, 180o turnaround repentance that leads to salvation, and daily life-style repentance of those already saved.

Go through each of these qualities that define the repentant person/heart and ask the person what that will look like for them. Assure them that if they do these things, then they are ready to be baptized.

Assignment: Review your letter to God and spend time praying and perhaps even fasting.

The Church Study

Purpose: To establish the importance in church/body in the life of a Christian.

We want to avoid any “surprises” when someone becomes part of the local church.

Colossians 1:15-18

Q: What metaphor is used for the church, and for Christ here?

Q: What are the implications for us individually and as a group?

Ephesians 2:19-21

Q: What metaphor is used for the church here?

The church is a family/household. We call each other brother and sister.

Being part of a family comes with responsibilities and privileges.

Q: What are some of the privileges of being in a famiy (and therefore in the church)?

Q: What are some of the responsibilities of being in a family (and therefore in the church.

Explain the meaning of Jesus as the cornerstone of the church.

Q: What might it mean that the apostles and prophets are the foundation? (most likely this is talking about their teaching—the Bible. The Bible sets the agenda for the church.

Ephesians 4:4-6

Q: What word is repeated here many times? Why might that be?

Unity is important. God’s plan is for there to be one church, not thousands of denominations. These things are what we can be united on (with the Bible as the unifying document)

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Q: When do we become part of the church?

Q: What does this scripture (esp. v. 15-20) say about our relationship with the body?

(Many parts, one body, We are stronger together than apart)

Q: What about v. 21-27? (We need the body. No special treatment. All equal)

Q: What happens to a pinky finger if you cut it off?

Hebrews 3:12-13

Q: What does it mean to “see to it”? (We are our brother/sister’s keeper)

Q: How often do we need encouragement? Why? (daily, so we will not be hardened)

Q: What is at stake? (salvation)

Hebrews 10:23-25

Q: What does it mean to “spur one another on”?

We need to be in the habit of meeting together.

At this point, explain to the person how we, as a body, meet for Church on Sunday, Bible group 1/week and devotional 1/2 week and we expect everyone to be at every meeting.

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 Optional, but I use it to explain about dating and marriage if necessary.

Malachi 3:6-12 Optional. Can be used to explain tithing. Sometimes I simply mention that one commandment is to give sacrificially.

1 Peter 4:10. Optional. Can be used to get them to think about what they can contribute to the church—get them to understand that it is about giving, not receiving.

Homework Read Romans 12 List the gifts that God had given you and how you can see using those gifts to serve Jesus’ Church.

Discussion group:

Any progress on the goal to do at least one study (restoration, follow-up, Jesus studies, or First Steps/First Principles)?

Of those qualities of godly sorrow, which has meaning for you right now? Which one can you work on this week?

How do you feel about your own church life? Are there any areas in this study that challenge you?