

# **We Believe**

## Personal Study Guides

FEBRUARY 20 - MAY 1, 2022

**First Baptist Hendersonville**



# We Believe

FEBRUARY 20 - MAY 1, 2022

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# MAN—HIS CREATION AND FALL

GENESIS 2:7-25; 3:1-24

FEBRUARY 20, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **What is the worst injury you've ever had? Did you need help with the healing process? Why?**
- 2 **Is it easy or difficult for you to admit when you're injured or ill? Do you tend to try to carry on as usual or do you allow people to help you heal? Why?**
- 3 **Why is it sometimes hard for us to accept help when we are injured or ill?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Genesis 2:7-25.*

- **God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (2:15). What was Eden like? How does the Bible describe it?**
- **God gave Adam two distinct mandates in these verses. What were they?**
- **God also gave Adam a commandment to obey. What was it? Why is it important to realize that God gave commands before the fall?**
- **What kinds of relationships did man have in the garden? How did these relationships bring God glory?**

> *Read Genesis 3:1-7.*

- **What does the fact that God gave Adam and Eve a rule to abide by in the garden tell us about Him?**
- **Compare Genesis 2:16-17 with this passage. What did God really say? What did Eve change when she repeated the command? What contradictions and lies did the serpent make?**
- **How does all sin start by questioning whether God truly knows best?**
- **When have you been forced to answer the question, "Did God really say?" How did you respond to the temptation to distrust God?**
- **What did the serpent say about God's command in verses 4 and 5? What did he imply about God's character?**

> *Read Genesis 3:8-24.*

- **Verses 14-17 represent a radical reordering of creation. What does that tell us about the power of sin?**
  - **What did the fall of man do to Adam and Eve's relationship with each other, God, and the rest of creation?**
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- **Where do you see God's mercy and love in this passage?**
  
- **Was God trying to deny Adam and Eve something that was good for them in the tree? Why do you think God prevented Adam and Eve from eating of the Tree of Life?**
  
- **Why did God banish them from the garden? How was this an act of love?**
  
- **To whom does Genesis 3:15 refer? In what way is He the answer to our problem with sin?**
  
- **What is the significance about God making skins for Adam and Eve and clothing them (Genesis 3:21)? What would have had to happen for the Lord to give them clothing made of skins?**
  
- **What does it tell us about God that the gospel plans started this far back?**

## APPLICATION

- 1 **In what ways are you tempted to question God?  
What is the difference between questioning God and asking God questions?**
  
- 2 **Though the fall has corrupted all of our relationships, how can we, as those redeemed in Christ, seek to honor God in our relationships with Him, others, and all of creation?**
  
- 3 **How might we encourage one another in this world that has been corrupted by sin?**

## PRAY

Thank God for creating us in His image to walk in perfect relationship with Him forever. Ask God to help us long for the day when He will return in glory and restore the world sin has corrupted to perfection. Thank God for the gift of Jesus, through whom all people may become restored children of God.

# SATAN THE ADVERSARY

1 PETER 5:8-10

FEBRUARY 27, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **What is the most affecting battle sequence you remember from a movie? What made it so memorable?**
  
- 2 **If you were a soldier, what do you think your strengths in battle would be? Your weaknesses?**
  
- 3 **What makes someone a strong soldier spiritually?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Revelation 20:1-10.*

- **What four names are used to describe Satan in verse 2? What do these titles tell us about him?**
  
- **What do verses 1-3 tell us about God's power over evil? What impact can that truth have on your personal struggle against Satan?**
  
- **What are some possible reasons from this text why these "souls"—or martyrs—had been killed?**
  
- **In spite of their martyrdom, what is the ultimate reward that awaited them? What do we learn about the Christian life from their example?**

- **What can we conclude about Satan from verses 7-10?**
  
- **What is the final fate of the beast, false prophet, and Satan? What impact does this have on the spiritual battle you fight every day?**

> *Read 1 Peter 5:8-10.*

- **How is Satan described in verse 8? What does that description tell us about his identity, power, and desire for us?**
  
- **How does this description of Satan compare to the way many people think about Satan?**
  
- **Why is passivity not an option in our spiritual lives? Where are you most tempted to be passive?**
  
- **Why does a failure to recognize who Satan really is leave us vulnerable to his schemes against us?**
  
- **If you've ever watched a lion hunt, you'll notice that they always pick off the animal that is alone and lagging behind the herd. Why do we often think it's not that big of a deal when a Christian is isolated from the community of faith?**

> *Read Ephesians 6:10-13.*

- **Why is spiritual warfare an inevitable part of the Christian life?**
- **How would you face each day differently if you recognized you were always under attack?**
- **What must a believer do to be strengthened by the Lord?**
- **According to Ephesians 6:10-12, are believers expected to hunt down and destroy evil? Why or why not?**
- **Why is it a struggle to keep our spiritual armor on at all times? How does knowing that the battle has already been won affect the way you fight?**

**APPLICATION**

- 1 **Are you engaged in the spiritual battle today or choosing to live like the battle doesn't exist? If you are engaged, share how.**
  
- 2 **How does being with God's people encourage you? How does it prepare you to go back out and fight the battle?**
  
- 3 **How can we encourage one another this week in our battle with sin and in remembering our true identity?**

**PRAY**

Thank Jesus for having victory over Satan's power in this world and in your life. Ask the Spirit to make you more aware of the spiritual battle you face each day and to strengthen you to face that battle from a posture of hope, confidence, and victory.

# SALVATION

EPHESIANS 2:1-7

MARCH 6, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 Describe a time when you recognized you were in a dangerous situation but were spared from harm.
- 2 How did you feel once you were spared from the danger you faced?
- 3 How does the recognition of danger add to the relief of being rescued?

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Ephesians 2:1-3.*

- What one word did Paul use to describe the condition of all people as the result of our trespasses and sins (v. 1)?
- Why do many well-meaning churchgoers tend to minimize the seriousness of sin in the lives of their neighbors, coworkers, friends, family, and even themselves?
- What is the danger in doing that?
- Based on these verses, how should we view sin? Why?

- **To what kind of death was Paul referring? What causes this death?**
- **What are its symptoms, according to these verses? Left untreated, what is the inevitable outcome?**
- **Who or what controls unbelievers? What is the result?**
- **Can we blame all our failures and faults on the devil, the ruler mentioned in verse 2? Why or why not?**
- **What does verse 3 say about the nature of those who are in this state?**
- **Why is it important that we understand the sinful condition of man before we attempt to appreciate the mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus?**

> *Read Ephesians 2:4-7.*

- **Why is "but God" such a statement of hope (v. 4)?**
  - **What is your "but God" moment—the moment everything changed spiritually for you?**
  - **How is your life different now than it was before Christ?**
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- **How has God had mercy on you? What is the greatest evidence of God's love for you?**
  
- **What are the benefits and the goal of our salvation, according to Paul in verses 5-7?**
  
- **How does this help you better understand God's desire for your life?**
  
- **If we are made "alive with Christ" then why do so many people who profess faith in Him live like they're still dead in their sins?**
  
- **How does it make you feel to know your salvation had to be earned but Christ earned it on your behalf because you are unable to do so?**

**APPLICATION**

- 1 **Based on Ephesians 2:1-7, how would you summarize God's gift of salvation?**
  
- 2 **What is one way you can cultivate your gratitude for God's amazing gift of salvation this week?**
  
- 3 **Who do you know who needs to receive God's gift of salvation? How is God calling you to respond in light of today's reminder of His lavish grace in your life?**

**PRAY**

Thank God that, in His mercy, He made you alive with Christ when you were dead in sin. Pray that you would have a greater appreciation of what Jesus has done and a greater compassion for others as you look deeply into the truth of the gospel.

# ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

1 JOHN 5:11-13

MARCH 13, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **Name something you wish were true but doubt that it is.**
  
- 2 **Name something you know for sure is true, without a doubt.**
  
- 3 **Name something you think is true but have some doubts.**
  
- 4 **Have you ever doubted your salvation? Explain.**
  
- 5 **What do you do when you have doubts about your relationship with the Lord?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read 1 John 2:1-6.*

- **How is Jesus Christ an advocate for sinners? Why do we need an advocate?**
  
- **How can sin cause you to doubt or question your salvation?**
  
- **What did John say gives certainty that we know Christ?**

- **Why do those who know Christ keep His commands?**
  
- **Rate the difficulty of the command to walk as Jesus walked on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being very easy and 10 being very difficult. Why did you choose that rating? Why do you think John called us to walk as Jesus walked?**

> *Read 1 John 3:10-24.*

- **Why do you think John used Cain as an example? Why did John want his readers to consider the importance of loving fellow Christians?**
  
- **Contrast loving in word and speech with loving in action and truth. What does each say about a person's faith in God?**
  
- **How does keeping commands demonstrate that we have been saved? Reread 1 John 2:3-6. Why might John have repeated this calling?**
  
- **Why is being faithful to commands a source of certainty in our salvation?**
  
- **What is the role of the Spirit in our certainty (v. 24)?**

> *Read 1 John 5:6-13.*

- **According to verse 6, what is one of the roles of the Holy Spirit?**
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- **If the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirits, then why do we sometimes doubt?**
  
- **Can you recall a specific occasion when the Holy Spirit revealed biblical truth to you?**
  
- **Practically speaking, how can we rely on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us into all truth?**
  
- **What is God's testimony about what it takes to be saved?**
  
- **According to verse 12, is there life apart from the Son of God? How does 1 John 5:12 answer the question, "How can I know for sure I am saved?"**
  
- **What reason did John reveal for writing these things (v. 13)?**
  
- **Why do you think non-believers are sometimes put off by the fact that there is only one way to salvation?**
  
- **How do these verses affect the way we share with others about how to become a follower of Jesus?**

## APPLICATION

- 1 **How might it affect your relationship with God if you are unsure of your salvation? How might it affect your relationship with other believers? With unbelievers?**
  
- 2 **When thinking about going and sharing the gospel, why is it important to know for sure we are saved?**
  
- 3 **Based on the discussion today, how would you respond to someone who is having doubts about their own salvation?**
  
- 4 **What actions can you take to demonstrate the certainty of your salvation?**

## PRAY

Thank God for the assurance He gives us so we can be confident in who we are in Christ. Acknowledge that your confidence in approaching the Lord comes from the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Thank Him for sending His Son so that you may have eternal life.

# ADOPTION

ROMANS 8:15-17

MARCH 20, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **What do people mean when they refer to one of their children's friends who is over all the time as someone they've "adopted"?**
  
- 2 **Have you ever "adopted" one of your kid's friends in that sense, so that your home is, in essence, their home too? Has someone else ever "adopted" one of your kids in that way?**
  
- 3 **What are some limits you put on that type of relationship (has to go home at a certain time, you don't spend the same amount of money on that person as you do on your actual children, certain shelves in the pantry are off-limits, you're not paying for college, etc.)?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Romans 8:15.*

- **What contrast did Paul make in verse 15 for believers in Christ?**
  
- **What is meant by a "spirit of slavery"? What is the natural result of a "spirit of slavery"? Why?**
  
- **What is the "Spirit of adoption"? What is the result of "the Spirit of adoption"? Why?**

- **Why should we regularly make time to approach God with joy and heartfelt delight in worship and admiration?**
- **Think about your relationship with God the Father. Are you crying "Abba! Father!" or are you lost and fearful? What makes the difference?**
- **What does it mean to you that you can call God "Abba, Father," just as Jesus did? How should this truth affect our prayers?**

> *Read Romans 8:16.*

- **Why does the Spirit need to testify that we are God's children?**
  - **Why must the Spirit continually make us aware that we are children of God?**
  - **Based on verses 15-16, who were we before salvation? How did Paul describe our relationship with God after salvation?**
  - **When are you tempted to doubt your status as an adopted child of God and become a slave to fear?**
  - **How can you rely on the Spirit in those moments to fight this lie?**
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- **What part does biblical community play in helping us remember this?**
- **In what ways has the Spirit shown you recently that you are God's child?**

> *Read Romans 8:17.*

- **What do we inherit with Christ as a result of our adoption as sons and daughters? What part of your inheritance excites you the most? Why?**
- **When you find yourself in difficult situations, is it easy or difficult for you to consider that suffering as a connecting point to Jesus? Why?**
- **What happens when we try to embrace or teach the first part of Romans 8:17 and leave off the second part?**

## APPLICATION

- 1 **What do our thoughts, words, and actions look like when we are not living in our true identity as adopted children? When we are?**
  
- 2 **How should the concept of our adoption as sons and daughters affect the way we interact with people at First Baptist Hendersonville? How should it inform the way we share the gospel with others?**
  
- 3 **How should the knowledge that we are sons and daughters of God cause us to approach prayer differently?**

## PRAY

Thank God for the specific ways the Spirit changes us from the inside out and makes us aware of our status as adopted sons and daughters. Ask Him to let that assurance impact your life this week in the way you pray, in the way you think about yourself, and in the way you relate to other people.

# BAPTISM

ROMANS 6:1-11

MARCH 27, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **What is the last big celebration you attended?**
  
- 2 **Why is it important to celebrate specific milestones (weddings, anniversaries, baptisms, graduations)?**
  
- 3 **What is your understanding of the significance of baptism? Why should someone get baptized?**
  
- 4 **What is your experience with baptism? If you grew up in a Christian environment, how was baptism practiced?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Acts 2:36-41.*

- **Why were the people initially perplexed when they heard Peter's teaching (vv. 14-35)? What question did they ask Peter and why?**
  
  - **How did Peter respond to the question?**
  
  - **Is Peter's response surprising to you? Explain.**
  
  - **What are some other ways people answer that same question in response to Jesus's death on the cross?**
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- **Why is Peter's response to their question as relevant for us as it was for them?**

> *Read Romans 6:1-11.*

- **How would you define God's grace?**
  
  - **What kinds of changes would you expect to see in someone's life once they experience God's grace through salvation?**
  
  - **What did Paul say we are baptized into? At First Baptist Hendersonville, we practice baptism by immersion. How does baptism by immersion symbolize the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ?**
  
  - **Why is baptism a good picture of being dead to sin and being made alive in Christ?**
  
  - **Baptism is an act of obedience, identity, and renewal. Why should baptism come after we have received salvation?**
  
  - **How is baptism an act of discipleship?**
  
  - **How would you help someone understand that baptism comes after salvation?**
-

> *Read Matthew 3:13-17.*

- **Why was Jesus baptized, even though He didn't need to repent of His sins?**
- **Why is baptism an important symbol of your commitment to God?**
- **How did Jesus's baptism "fulfill all righteousness"?**
- **The text tells us God the Father was pleased with Jesus's act of obedience. How does God come to be "well-pleased" with us?**

**APPLICATION**

- 1 **What are some of the reasons you have given, or have heard others use, for not getting baptized? How does this week's lesson help answer those reasons?**
  
- 2 **How could you use the picture of baptism to explain the gospel to someone who is wary of church and of faith?**
  
- 3 **How would you counsel someone who was baptized at a young age and is unsure if it meant anything?**

**PRAY**

Thank God for the ordinance of baptism as a means by which His followers can identify with Him in His death and resurrection. Pray for greater motivation to go and tell others the good news of the gospel, so they might be baptized and discipled as well.

# FAITH

EPHESIANS 2:8-9

APRIL 3, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **Are you a risk-taker or do you prefer to play it safe? Explain.**
  
- 2 **What is the biggest risk you have ever taken? What influenced you to do it? What was the outcome?**
  
- 3 **Does your opinion about risk say anything about the way you view faith? Why or why not?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Ephesians 2:8-9.*

- **How are people saved? What is the relationship between grace and faith? What are we saved from?**
  
- **Why is grace difficult for people to comprehend?**
  
- **How would you describe the concept of grace to a non-believer? How would you describe faith?**
  
- **How has God demonstrated grace to you?**
  
- **Read Galatians 5:2-6. What problem was Paul addressing here?**

- **How can our works undermine our faith?**
- **Other than in Jesus Christ, what do people place their faith in to save them?**
- **What is the distinguishing mark of genuine faith in Jesus Christ?**

> *Read Hebrews 11:1-3.*

- **How would you describe faith to someone who has never experienced it? How did the writer of Hebrews describe faith?**
- **What are some different ways people complete the following sentence: "Faith is ...."? What does a person's answer reveal about the nature of his or her faith?**
- **Since we have confidence that God has the power to create something good out of nothing, what concerns in your life do you need to turn over to Him, and in the process, exercise the faith that pleases Him?**

> *Read John 20:24-29.*

- **Has there ever been a time when you could identify with Thomas—when faith was hard? Explain.**

- **What does Jesus's response to Thomas teach us about Him?**
  
- **How did Thomas respond to Jesus?**
  
- **Notice that a week had passed and the disciples were in another locked room. Why did Jesus appear again to the disciples?**
  
- **Do you ever feel as though you are at a disadvantage from the early disciples because you cannot physically see Jesus? What does this reveal about your own faith?**

**APPLICATION**

- 1 **How might it make someone uncomfortable to believe faith in Christ alone is necessary for salvation?**
  
- 2 **Why do many Christians come to Christ by faith and then begin to rely on their works instead? Where do you struggle with that?**
  
- 3 **Do you know anyone who is skeptical like Thomas was? What keeps them from believing and how might you help them deal with that skepticism?**

**PRAY**

Thank Jesus for His saving grace in your life. Ask God to help your unbelief and to give you opportunities to share with other people how Jesus helps them overcome theirs.

# REPENTANCE

1 JOHN 1:9-10

APRIL 10, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 How would you define repentance?
  
- 2 How do you know if repentance is real? What is the result of genuine repentance?
  
- 3 Has your perspective on repentance changed as you've grown older? How?

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read 1 John 1:8-10.*

- **Based on these verses, what could be said about a person who never confesses sin?**
  
- **These verses speak of confession of sin as a test of a person's faith. Why is it true that though we have had our sin forgiven through faith in Christ and walk in the light, we still sin?**
  
- **Why does repentance necessitate confession of sin?**
  
- **What is the result of living in denial of our sin and therefore not living a life of repentance?**

- **According to verse 9, why does God forgive us of our sin? What does this assure us in regard to repentance?**

> *Read Psalm 51:1-5.*

- **What do you know about the context in which this psalm was written? How did David try to cover up his sin against Bathsheba, Uriah, and ultimately, against God (see 2 Samuel 11:1-27)?**
- **Did David succeed in hiding his sin? What does this tell us about the nature of sin and the necessity of true repentance?**
- **What is the main thing David asked for in verses 1-5? How would you describe his attitude?**
- **How did God feel about what David had done? How did David feel about what he had done? Why is our sin always ultimately against God?**

> *Read Psalm 51:6-12.*

- **What was David's general prayer in these verses?**
  - **What changes when we acknowledge our sins and ask for forgiveness?**
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- **Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. What is the difference between godly grief and worldly grief? What did David do that demonstrates godly grief?**
- **In verses 10-12, David prayed for spiritual renewal and revival. Why is renewal important after forgiveness?**
- **What is our role in renewal and revival? What is God's role?**

> *Read Psalm 51:13-19.*

- **What promises did David make to God in these verses? What does this inform us about true repentance?**
- **What kinds of sacrifices does the Lord desire according to verses 16-17? In verse 19? What would these sacrifices look like in your life?**
- **Why is it important that First Baptist Hendersonville adopt a posture of repentance if we hope to see God bring revival to our church and spiritual renewal to our city?**

**APPLICATION**

- 1 **Do you cherish conviction and repentance, or do you resist getting close to the light of confession? How can you learn to love conviction and repentance?**
  
- 2 **Repentance opens up the opportunity for God to use you. How have you experienced this? How might an unrepentant heart hinder us from being used by God?**
  
- 3 **How can we help each other express repentance here at First Baptist Hendersonville? How can our group help one another live in the freedom that repentance brings?**

**PRAY**

Thank God that He can have no part in sin. Thank Him that because He loves and wants to be with you, He made a way for your sins to be fully paid by Jesus on the cross. Invite the Lord to show you areas of your life where you have resisted coming into the light and for the courage to stay within His presence. Come to Him with a heart of repentance.

# JUSTIFICATION

**GALATIANS 2:15-16**

**APRIL 24, 2022**

**PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE**

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **Name some terms you might hear at church but their meanings might be unclear or unknown to many outside of the church.**
  
- 2 **Today we're going to talk about one of those words—justification. What are some ways people use the word "justify" in culture today?**
  
- 3 **Today's culture is fixated on justice. What does our longing for justice tell us about ourselves? About the world we live in?**
  
- 4 **What is your understanding of the biblical use of that word?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Galatians 2:15-16.*

- **What is the common need of both groups named in these verses?**
  
- **Why is it important to see ourselves on equal ground with all others in need of salvation?**
  
- **What did Paul say about the role of faith and works (or the law)?**

- **Is it then wrong to follow the law? When does it become wrong? Why did God give us the law to begin with?**
- **What kind of behavior would be considered consistent with an understanding of gospel justification?**
- **Why does it rob God of glory when we add to faith other requirements for justification? How do people attempt to justify themselves today?**
- **Why is it so significant that we view justification as a once-for-all declaration and not a process?**
- **What's the potential danger in the following statement: "Jesus has done so much for me, so now I must work for Him"?**

> *Read Romans 3:21-24.*

- **What do you think it means to fall short of God's glory?**
- **From God's perspective, what did the cross do?**

- **If you are a Christian, then how has being declared not guilty (justified in Christ) changed your identity? Because of your relationship with Jesus, how does that challenge you to live differently?**

> *Read Romans 4:1-5.*

- **According to these verses, what problem would be presented if Abraham had been justified by his work?**
  
- **Instead of his work, how was Abraham justified?**
  
- **How does the illustration in verses 4-5 help understand how justification occurs?**
  
- **Read Romans 5:1-2. What is the result for everyone who stands justified before God?**
  
- **Abraham couldn't boast in his own works. What could he—and those who are in Christ today—boast about?**

## APPLICATION

- 1 **How would you explain “justification by faith” to someone who has never been to church before?**
  
- 2 **How have you wrestled with the doctrine of justification applying to your life? How might you believe this theologically but struggle to experience it practically?**
  
- 3 **Why is it more difficult for most of us to trust God in faith than to try to reach Him by works? What can we do to increase our trust?**

## PRAY

Thank God for His grace that provides a way for sinful people to be justified in His presence. Thank Jesus for His work on the cross on your behalf that alone stands as your justification in the presence of a holy God. Ask the Lord to help you humbly and courageously live in the peace that justification offers.

# SANCTIFICATION

GALATIANS 2:20

MAY 1, 2022

PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 **If you had to narrow it down to three things, what would you say are the keys to growing in Christ?**
  
- 2 **We learned last week that we are justified before God by faith in Jesus Christ. How do you wrestle with the fact that we've been made right before a holy God, but our lives don't always look holy?**

## UNDERSTANDING

> *Read Galatians 2:20.*

- **What does it mean to be "crucified with Christ"? What part of you was crucified with Christ? What did Jesus take from you when you surrendered to Him? What did He give you in return?**
  
- **What does it mean to "live by faith in the Son of God"? How does faith in Christ change your identity?**
  
- **What does this verse mean practically for believers in Christ? How do people who have been given new life live?**
  
- **How can you know someone loves you? How can you know Christ loves you?**

- **What happens to our spiritual lives if we don't remember what God has done for us? How does a failure to remember result in a failure to live by faith?**

> *Read Colossians 3:1-10.*

- **How did Paul's words in Colossians 3 echo Galatians 2:20?**
  - **What reasons did Paul give in verses 3-4 to focus on what is above? How should a greater awareness of what Christ has accomplished for us through His death and resurrection change our relationship with the world?**
  - **Read John 17:15-19. Keeping Jesus's words in John 17 in mind, what do you think it means to "set your minds on things above"?**
  - **What do the sins listed in verse 5 and in verses 8-9 have in common? What does the presence of these sins in our lives reveal about our hearts?**
  - **What does Paul's command (v. 5) to "put to death what belongs to your earthly nature," tell us about the attitude we should have toward the sinful attitudes and actions still present in us?**
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- **Do you always feel capable of putting to death your sinful attitudes and actions? Why or why not? How should remembering our position in Christ and what He has accomplished for us through His death and resurrection give us confidence in our fight against sin?**

> *Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-10.*

- **How does this passage help you better understand what Paul meant when he wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith..." (Galatians 2:20)?**
- **Since Jesus died for our sins, why does it matter to God that we be sanctified, too (v. 3)?**
- **If the Thessalonians were doing well in their walk, why did Paul's language reflect such urgency that they continue (v. 1-2)?**
- **What is the role of growth in the life of a believer?**
- **When the Lord calls us, what type of life does He call us to?**

## APPLICATION

- 1 **How do you know if you are being sanctified? When have you experienced spiritual growth as you live by faith in Christ?**
  
- 2 **What does it look like practically to “put to death” earthly things? What role does the church play in this process? How can we support each other in our individual fights against sin?**
  
- 3 **Where in your life do you seek to live in a way that is increasingly pleasing to God? Where in your life are you content to maintain the status quo? How is God speaking to you about that today?**

## PRAY

Thank God for promising to make you more and more like what He has already declared you to be—righteous in Christ. Pray that God would help our group to grow in transparency with one another so that we might encourage and point one another and those around us to Christ.