

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
2080 West Grand Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48208
Nathan Johnson, D.D., Senior Pastor

Lesson 14: “Seek the Salvation...”
Scriptures: John 20

Goal: To embrace and fulfill our covenant relationship with God and one another.

Objective:

- To develop a commitment to actively support others in seeking salvation.
- To read, study and use God’s word to effectively help others come to know Jesus Christ.
- To help others come to a biblical understanding of what it means to accept salvation through Jesus.

Church Covenant Segment: *To seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance;*

Introduction

As we grow in our faith and personal relationship with Christ, we may be challenged to find effective ways to fulfill God’s commandment to bring others to Christ (*Matt. 28:18-20*). Often, in our struggle to share the “good news” with friends and acquaintances, we don’t realize that one of the most effective testimonies may be our own story of conversion. Ephesians 2:3-5 captures the transformation that can occur in the lives of believers and may be one of the most powerful starting points in sharing with others.

“All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature and we were under God’s anger just like everyone else. But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s special favor that you have been saved!)” —Ephesians 2:3-5 NLT.

Through our personal testimonies we can explain the reason for the change in our lives. Family members and friends need to know that we are sinners saved by grace. They need to know how God’s amazing grace strengthens our personal commitment to *walk in this new life*. Kindred and acquaintances need to know what it means to say “*you were once lost, but now found was blind but now you see.*” Are you willing to be honest and open about your salvation? People who need Jesus are often self-conscious and anticipate being judged by the church community. God is glorified as we share our testimony about what He has done in our lives.

If we are honest with ourselves and others, they will understand that it is the power of God that allows us to experience victorious lives. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 4:1-7, Jesus Christ is the source and center of all ministries. We are simply partakers in the ministry of reconciliation. Just as God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, we are also ambassadors and witnesses of Christ, reconciling and drawing others to Christ through our lives. When our friends and acquaintances look at us, they ought to see Jesus! It’s essential that we understand that the source of power in evangelizing lies in one single truth—Jesus lives in us. The apostle Paul puts it this way, “*But we have*

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this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves” (2 Cor. 4:7).

Knowing that God provides the means by which others can be saved helps us to put into perspective our role. One need not be discouraged if they don't bring someone to Christ after the first or second encounter. Our job is to allow God to use our lives, our testimonies, our sharing about what He has done for us to plant a seed. Keep planting the seeds of faith, someone else will water and God will give the increase (*I Cor. 3:6*). Jesus never promised that it would be easy, but He promised to be with you. In John 15, Jesus taught, *“I am the vine. You are the branches. My Father is the gardener. Without me you can do nothing.”*

Dialogue Web

Did you know that God is a Great Bridge Builder? He began bridge building to restore humanity's broken relationship with Him. This bridge would serve as a walk over to seek and save humanity lost in the darkness of sin. The name of that bridge is Jesus Christ. *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)* God is not only a giving God; he is also a seeking God. People are ashamed of sin and they try to hide from their sins. Genesis 3: 8 –10 reveal that Adam and Eve were ashamed of their nakedness and hid themselves among the trees, but God sought them out to make them aware of their sinful nature. God wants His church to actively seek salvation for others. We must help our kindred and acquaintances understand that knowing God through His Son, Jesus, is an imperative for salvation. According to Jill Briscoe¹, God has given us knowledge of who He is in five ways.

- 1) Nature: nature itself reveals a Creator (*Ps. 19:2 - 4*).
- 2) Conscience: in our hearts there is understanding of right and wrong (*Rom 2: 1*).
- 3) The Ten Commandments: describe God's requirement for acceptable behavior (*Exo. 20*)
- 4) The Bible: includes all we need to know to be saved and live for God (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*).
- 5) Christ: All revelation points to Christ (*Col 1: 15-2*). (Daily Study Bible for Women, New Living Translation)

<i>Guiding principles for seeking salvation for others</i>	<i>What the Scripture Says</i>	<i>Class Discovery Points</i>
1. It is natural for people to reject salvation.	1. John 1:9-12	
2. Jesus knew that people were more receptive to receive Him during their crisis.	2. Matthew 11:28 - 30	
3. Conviction is initiated with a	3. Romans 10-11	

¹ Jill Briscoe is a British American Bible study teacher: tellingthetruth.org; www.briscoeministriesinc.com. She has written and co-authored over forty books.

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statement of belief.	John 9:23-32	
4. The Word of God initiates faith in God.	4. Romans 10:17 John 1:14 John 17:13-19	
5. Jesus is the only way to salvation	5. John 14:6	
6. Jesus prayed for you and your kindred and acquaintances.	6. John 17:20-23	

Class Summary Statement

Seeking the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance is essential because...

Lesson Summary

Salvation is the most precious gift we can offer anyone, because salvation is the most precious gift God offers to everyone. His priceless gift, given out of His love, is our assurance of eternal life. The rich cannot buy it and the poor do not have to beg for it. The price was paid for all by the blood of His Son and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Jesus showed the extent of God’s love through His sacrificial death on the cross. What a great price that was paid so that we might come into relationship with God. Jesus’ example ought to compel us to obey His command to *“Go and make disciples!”* (Mat. 28: 18-20). Once a believer experiences the love of God and all that salvation in Jesus offers, it inspires and fuels your desire to bring others to Christ. Jesus quoted Moses’ commandment to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 6:5) when the apostles asked, which was the first or greatest commandment?

“And Jesus answered him, Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is: Love, your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these (Mark12: 30-3).

As we seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances we are extending to them an opportunity to know and embrace God’s love. Our family and friends are the ones we feel closest to and love the most. We want the best for them. The ‘best’ is life in Jesus Christ which is eternal life. We see this in John 13: 34-35, where Jesus speaks on evangelism: “

I give you a new commandment: that you should love one another. Just as I have loved you, so you too should love one another. By this shall all know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

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As a covenant community of faith, we demonstrate our love for God and each other by always being conscious of and seizing the opportunity to share the “good news” of Jesus Christ so that all people will come to know Him! Do you know the plan of salvation? Can you share it with someone? The Holman Christian Standard Bible provides a simple acronym to help you. It is a matter of **FAITH**²:

- **F is for FORGIVENESS.**
 - *We cannot have eternal life and heaven without God’s forgiveness. (Eph. 1: 7)*
- **A is for AVAILABLE.**
 - *Forgiveness is available. It is available for all (John 3: 16) but it is not automatic (Matt. 7: 21).*
- **I is for IMPOSSIBLE.**
 - *It is impossible for God to allow sin into heaven. Because of who He is: God is loving and just. God is Holy. His judgment is against sin. (James 2: 13a). Because of who we are: Every person is a sinner. (Rom. 3: 23). We cannot enter heaven since we are sinners unless we:*
- **T is for TURN**
 - *Turn means repent. We turn from something—sin and self (Luke 13: 3). We turn to someone—Trust Christ only (Rom 10:9).*
- **H is for HEAVEN**
 - *Heaven is eternal life. Here (John 10:10) and Hereafter (John 14:3).*

How can a person have God’s forgiveness, heaven and eternal life, and Jesus as personal Savior and Lord? By trusting in Christ and asking him for forgiveness. Take the step of faith described by another meaning of FAITH: **F**orsaking **A**ll **I** Trust **H**im.

Prayer:

Lord, Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and have displeased You in many ways. I believe You died for my sin and only through faith in Your death and resurrection can I be forgiven.

I want to turn from my sin and ask You to come into my life as my Savior and Lord. From this day on, I will follow You by living a life that pleases You. Thank you, Lord Jesus for saving me. Amen.

Going Deeper (Journal Writing)

As preparation for sharing the good news, write your personal testimony about: 1) How you came to know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and 2) How salvation in Jesus Christ has changed your life. Your testimony can be a powerful starting point for sharing the ‘good news’.

Closing Prayer:

² Holman Christian Standard Bible. (1999). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers. Pg. iv.

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Where we are in the Church Covenant... *

HAVING BEEN LED, AS WE BELIEVE, BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers, and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate our children; ***to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance***; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

Each month we will include a copy of the Church Covenant and highlight the current lesson. It is our hope that this will give the larger context for the passage being studied.