

3.1

DEAD OR ALIVE

LESSON BIG IDEA

I will trust that the sacrifice Jesus made for me is sufficient for my sins.

FOCUS VERSES

Romans 5:17-19

¹⁷ For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)

¹⁸ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

¹⁹ For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

LESSON TEXT

Genesis 3:1-7;
Romans 5:12-19;
Ephesians 2:1-10;
Colossians 2:13-15

TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God has provided a way for people to be freed from the penalty of sin and restored to spiritual life.



Series Overview:

This series, "You Must Be Born Again," will look closely at the New Testament plan of salvation. These four lessons will highlight the sacrifice Jesus Christ made for our sins, along with the necessity of repentance, water baptism in Jesus' name, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. This series will present foundational truths with fresh fervor, believing God will stir those who have not yet responded to the gospel.

LESSON CONNECTION I

On May Day, 1915, Bill Drost was born at a farm on the rolling hills of New Brunswick, Canada. His life would be characterized by astounding miracles as he fulfilled God’s prophetic call as a missionary in South America.

When Bill was ten years old, his older sisters attended a revival meeting where Mattie Crawford preached. Many responded to her preaching by repenting of their sins. Bill’s parents were troubled by it. His mother did not want her children to “be led away with the error of the devil.”

Five years later, another spiritual stirring came into the area. A group holding “Bible meetings” spoke of the Holy Ghost. An older friend of Bill’s, named Bless, joined these people. Bless was a champion boxer, tall and powerful. He had “gone to the altar” and had become a changed man. Bill’s mother was furious to learn her son had anything to do with Bless and warned him never again to speak to the man.

But Bill could not resist visiting a Bible meeting he discovered while riding his bicycle one night. He marveled at the testimonies he heard, the songs they sang, and the spontaneous worship. When he told his mother he had been to the meeting, she was stunned and said, “If you ever go back there, it will be over my dead body! I now forbid you to go, and I never want to hear you mention those Holy Rollers again! You know they are of the devil—they have deceived you.”

Perplexed, Bill knelt by his bed that night and with tears prayed, “O God, show me what to do. If these people are of the devil, they should be told. Lord, whatever Scripture you give me, it will help me.” He dropped his finger on his open Bible. It fell on a verse he had never heard before: “O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph” (Psalm 47:1). Stunned, Bill said, “O God, that’s just what those people were doing—they clapped their hands!”

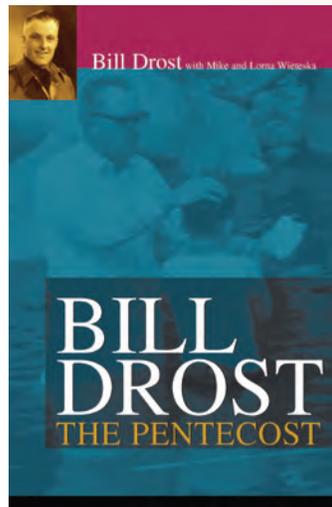
As he slept, Bill had a vivid dream. He saw Jesus coming from glory in a sky ablaze with beautiful light. He saw the faces of people he recognized; they were the people he had seen at the Bible meeting. They were rising to meet Jesus in the air, their faces filled with great joy.

“O God, take me!” Bill cried out, awaking and jumping from his bed. He was on his way to discovering what God had done to make it possible for him to experience eternal life.

(This account is summarized from *Bill Drost the Pentecost*, Word Aflame Press, 2000, available at www.pentecostalpublishing.com.)

Teacher Option:

Show image to help illustrate the Lesson Connection.



SG TEACHING OUTLINE

Icebreaker: Who was the first person in your family history—that you know of—to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost? Explain.

Lesson Connection: Share the Lesson Connection on page 311. **I**

I. SIN INTRODUCED DEATH TO HUMANITY

A. Adam and Eve Sinned

» *Do you agree with the idea that the power of choice is the greatest power people possess? Why or why not?*

B. Spiritual Death

» *If death refers to separation, what do you think it means then to be dead to sin? **V***

C. Physical Death

» *If God did not want Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, why do you think He placed it in the Garden of Eden?*

D. The Wages of Sin Is Death

II. DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS

A. All Have Sinned

B. We All Need a Savior

» *What does it mean to you to think of Jesus as your Savior?*

III. JESUS CAME TO OFFER HIMSELF AS A SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS

A. The First Man Adam and the Last Adam

» *What similarities and differences do you see between Adam and Jesus?*

B. The Free Gift from God

C. I Will Trust That the Sacrifice Jesus Made for Me Is Sufficient for My Sins



Internalizing the Message

Prayer Focus

Lead the group in prayer and consider the following topics of focus:

- For forgiveness of sins
- To live in victory through the power of the Holy Ghost

LESSON COMMENTARY

I. SIN INTRODUCED DEATH TO HUMANITY

A. Adam and Eve Sinned

Human beings were created as living souls. The Creation accounts in the first two chapters of Genesis focus on the creation of people from different perspectives. The first, found in Genesis 1:26-29, reveals both male and female are created in the image of God. Both share equal blessings and responsibilities. The second account, located in Genesis 2:7, 18, 21-22, emphasizes the material and immaterial aspects of human existence. Physically, humans are made from the earth. Their immaterial component springs from the breath of life, breathed into human nostrils by the Lord God.

These two accounts offer no hint of sinfulness. Instead, humans are portrayed in hopeful and positive ways. Though made of the earth—itsself created by God—humans are more intimately related to their Creator than any other created thing. God has personally breathed into human nostrils. The result is the image of God, supremely blessed and capable. But to be made in God's image includes the fact that people possess the power of choice. Since God has the freedom to choose, so do humans. Since this is so, God warned Adam to avoid the thing that would destroy him.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. (Genesis 2:16-17)

Both Adam and Eve exercised their freedom of choice to disregard this warning, and both suffered the consequence—death. Since neither experienced physical death at the time, some think God mercifully changed His mind. Adam, after all, lived 930 years (Genesis 5:5). However, this was not the case. God's warning was not about physical death, but spiritual.

Do you agree with the idea that the power of choice is the greatest power people possess? Why or why not?

B. Spiritual Death

Biblical references to death are always about a kind of separation. The death of a human is not about cessation of existence. Every person born will exist forever. When a person dies, that person's material and immaterial components are separated.

James illustrated this point when he wrote, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26). Adam did not become a living soul until God breathed life into him. The human body is lifeless without the spirit.

Upon their sin in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve experienced spiritual death. They were separated from fellowship with God.

Thus, they were expelled from Eden. Paul wrote of this idea in a variety of places:

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned . . . death reigned from Adam to Moses . . . by the one man's offense many died . . . by the one man's offense death reigned through the one . . . sin reigned in death. (Romans 5:12, 14–15, 17, 21, NKJV)

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; . . . we were dead in sins. (Ephesians 2:1, 5)

If death refers to separation, what do you think it means then to be dead to sin? ▼

The death to which these texts refer is not physical death; it is separation from fellowship with God—spiritual death.

C. Physical Death

The Garden of Eden contained many trees, but only two had special significance. The Tree of Life was there to provide an opportunity for Adam and Eve to live forever. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil gave them an opportunity to exercise their freedom of choice. This option was necessary to make their relationship with God meaningful. God loved them, and He wanted them to love Him in return. But love is meaningful only when it is a choice.

Teacher Option:

Show Video to either take the place of the question or to help illustrate it.

After their sin, Adam and Eve were exiled from Eden to prevent them from eating from the Tree of Life and living forever (Genesis 3:22–24). The Tree of Life was not there to impart eternal life (i.e., salvation). It was there to preserve Adam and Eve from physical death. It would not do for them to continue to inhabit the Garden in a state of rebellion against God. From the earliest days of human history, relationship with God was made possible by faith, not by eating from a tree. (See Hebrews 11:4.)

D. The Wages of Sin Is Death

The connection between sin and death is seen in Romans 6:23: “For the wages of sin is death.” This is not a reference to physical death, which everyone will experience. The death in view in Romans 6:23 is a separation from fellowship with God, as experienced by Adam and Eve.

In Romans 5:12–21 Paul explained in a carefully worded argument the negative universal impact of Adam’s sin:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. (Romans 5:12)

The consequence of sin upon humanity was universal death. This is not a reference to physical death, but to separation from fellowship with God. Adam was apparently created as a mortal being. Only by eating of the Tree of Life could he have lived

If God did not want Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, why do you think He placed it in the Garden of Eden?

forever in the physical body. (See Genesis 3:22–24.) Scripturally, death is not extinction, but separation.

II. DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS

A. All Have Sinned

Beginning at Romans 1:18, Paul showed that all people, whether recipients of general or special revelation, fail to live up to the revelation they have received. Thus, all are sinners in need of a Savior. As he began to conclude his message of universal sinfulness, Paul wrote, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). All *have sinned* (past tense) and *fall short* (present tense) of the glory of God. It is important grammatically to note that not only has every person sinned in the past, but all *continually* fall short of God’s glorious revelation. This is why the blood of Jesus continually cleanses us from sin as we walk in the light with our faith in Jesus Christ (I John 1:7).

B. We All Need a Savior

Since sin is universal, all people need a Savior. Paul did not discuss this truth only in Romans. In his letter to the Galatians, he made the same point: “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe” (Galatians 3:22).

Even before Jesus’ birth, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel informed him of the name to be given to Mary’s Son and the reason for that name: “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Literally, the name Jesus means “Yahweh-Savior” (or Jehovah-Savior), “He is Savior,” or “He shall save.” There is abundant testimony in the New Testament to the fact that Jesus is the Savior of all those who come to Him in faith. (See Luke 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Ephesians 5:23; II Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; Philemon 3:20; II Peter 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:18; I John 4:14.)

What does it mean to you to think of Jesus as your Savior?

III. JESUS CAME TO OFFER HIMSELF AS A SACRIFICE FOR OUR SINS

A. The First Man Adam and the Last Adam

First Corinthians 15:45 reads, “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”

To grasp the significance of this verse as it relates to salvation, we must read it in its immediate context. In its larger context, it is part of Paul’s defense of the reality of resurrection, which was denied by some in Corinth (I Corinthians 15:12).

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. . . . Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:42-44, 46-47)

What similarities and differences do you see between Adam and Jesus?

A key phrase in verse 45 is this: “the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” Whereas Jesus, like Adam, was a living soul, Jesus was more than that: He was a *quicken*ing (i.e., life-giving) spirit. (See Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19.)

B. The Free Gift from God

Notice the contrast between wages and gift in Romans 6:23. We earn wages by the work we do. We do not earn gifts.

Notice also the contrast between death and eternal life. The consequence of sinful behavior is separation from fellowship with God. Eternal life, which can also be described as life forever in God’s presence, is a free gift from God. As Peter said on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost is a gift (Acts 2:38).

C. I Will Trust That the Sacrifice Jesus Made for Me Is Sufficient for My Sins

According to Paul, this is the gospel in its most succinct form: “Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; . . . he was buried, and . . . he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). To receive the benefit of this good news, it is essential to believe in Jesus (John 3:16).

Genuine belief results in obedience. This obedience is not a work; it is a response of faith. To those who asked on the Day of Pentecost, “What shall we do?” Peter answered, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:37-38).

INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

After his dream of the people he had seen at the Bible meeting rising to meet Jesus, Bill Drost ran downstairs to tell his mother. “Mum, I want to talk to you! Do you believe Jesus Christ is going to come in the clouds from Heaven?”

“My dear son,” she replied, “the coming of the Lord is only when death comes and takes us—that is what His coming is.” When he told her about the dream, Bill’s mother said with tears, “Poor Willie, you’ve been deceived. This is just the devil. Try to forget about it.” She warned him again not to talk to the “Holy Roller” people.

But the next Sunday, Bill rode his bicycle seventeen miles to the meeting. When the preacher concluded his message, Bill knew he needed to come to Jesus. He went to the altar and prayed, “Lord, Lord, if You save me, I don’t care what happens. I want to be ready for Your coming, and whatever You want me to do, I will do it, Lord.”

A lady placed her hand on Bill’s head, praying, “Lord, help this boy to believe what You have done for him on Calvary.” At that moment, something gripped him—an inner realization of the things the woman had said. His faith reached out and took the words, pulling them into his experience, clinging to them, savoring the reality of them. He felt a lightening, a freedom, a liberation from the heaviness, confusion, and conviction that had been pressing on him.

On New Year’s Eve as Bill prayed, he heard a voice saying, “Go to the meeting tonight.” When he shared his intention with his mother, she responded, “Over my dead body!” Nevertheless, Bill walked through the snow to the service. The preacher’s text was Luke 24:49, “Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” The preacher asked, “Who wants the promise of the Father?” Bill went forward. He began to speak words he had never known.

It was 4:00 AM before Bill realized how much time had passed as he was caught away in the Spirit. When he returned home, his mother asked, “Where have you been till this hour of the morning?”

Beginning to sense the Spirit welling up within him, he answered, “Mum, I was at the meeting.”

“And what went on there that would bring a boy of your age home at an hour like this?” his mother asked.

Bill responded, “Mum, it was wonderful!”

“What was wonderful?” she asked.

As Bill lifted his hands to Heaven, he began to speak with tongues again. His mother, with wide eyes and opened mouth, stared at him, bewildered.

Later, however, she chided and insulted him, rehearsing the faults of Pentecostal people. Never again, though, did she try to stand in his way, even when he was baptized in the river at Newcastle Bridge.

(This account is summarized from *Bill Drost the Pentecost*, Word Aflame Press, 2000, available at www.pentecostalpublishing.com.)