

Middle School & High School Sunday School Lesson

September 13, 2020

Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith

Lesson 2 – Who Are You, LORD?

Bible Point:

The Bible clearly teaches there is only one God, and we should worship Him with everything we are.

Scripture

Acts 9:1-12, 17-18; 10

Discussion



1. How would you define God?
2. What are some ways you have heard God defined by people who do not know Him like you do?
3. How do you think people form opinions about God?
4. Do you think you can change someone's mind about God? Why or why not?

Full Speed in the Wrong Direction



Read Revelation 3:15–16.

God wants us to choose to serve Him and seek Him. Consider the attitude God had toward the Old Testament brothers Esau and Jacob.

The Bible records that God rejected Esau. We can see from the exchange between Jacob and Esau that Esau refused to see the importance of his birthright.

Although Jacob was a swindler and a deceiver, he cared about the blessings of God. Eventually, though, he suffered due to the way he went about obtaining them.

Full Speed in the Wrong Direction_(cont.)



Read Acts 7:58; 8:1

When we first read about Saul (also called Paul), we could make numerous negative comments about him, but no one would accuse him of lacking passion. No one would say he was indifferent about religious matters.

When Saul is first mentioned, he is watching the coats of those who stoned Stephen, an innocent and righteous man who stood up for his faith. Ironically, Saul would eventually be martyred for that same faith, many years later.

The problem Saul had was not a lack of conviction, but a lack of truth. He was willing to go anywhere and do anything to serve the God he thought he knew, especially if that meant persecuting those who believed that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-awaited Messiah.

Full Speed in the Wrong Direction_(cont.)

Read Acts 9:1–2

This story is one of many that prove the truth we read in Isaiah 55:9.

Upon reading of Saul's persecution of Christians, many of us would think the best thing for God to do would be to strike Saul down, dead in his tracks.

If Ananias and Sapphira were executed by God for lying about an offering, then how much more quickly should God eliminate Saul who was persecuting those who served God? However, as we continue reading, we will see God had different plans



He Saw the Light



Read Acts 9:3–12, 17–18.

- There are so many important features to this story that we could spend several weeks discussing how they apply to our lives.
 - Notice that God specifically called Saul. The others who were with him heard the voice but saw no man. God spoke directly to Saul and struck him blind so he would eventually see the light of truth.
 - **When Saul was humbled, he was willing to seek after the Lord.** Part of that process was a three-day fast.
 - When the Lord spoke to Saul, He did not reveal all truth to Saul at once; rather, He sent another saint named Ananias to pray for Saul to receive his sight and to explain to him the plan of salvation.

He Saw the Light (cont.)

Our focus will be on the specifics of the conversation Saul had with the Lord, especially the central question Saul asked.

- The Lord began the conversation by asking Saul why he was persecuting Him.
- Imagine the whirlwind this set off in Saul's mind—zealous for Jehovah, Saul was on his way to Damascus on a mission to punish all those who blasphemed by worshiping Jesus, and now God was accusing him of wrongdoing?
- Saul's only response was to cry out in desperation: "Who art thou, Lord?"
- Saul did not say, "Who are you, Voice?" or "What is this being that I hear?" Saul spoke directly to God by asking the identity of the Lord. Saul sought understanding. The answer is the central focus of our Bible study.
 - The Lord did not say, "I am Jehovah."
 - The Lord did not say, "I am God."
 - The Lord did not say, "I am your Jehovah-Jireh or Jehovah-Nissi."
 - The Lord said, "I am Jesus."
- If we ask the same question today, we will receive the same answer.
 - Yes, Jesus is the Lord our God.
 - Yes, He is our provider and our banner, and His name is Jesus.



The Lord Proves Saul

- The conversion of Saul is quite an amazing story. How fascinating that after years of persecuting Christians, it only took the Lord a few minutes to get Saul's attention and correct his view about who God is.
- The next question Saul asked proved how willing he was to accept this new revelation. Saul simply asked, "Now what do You want me to do?"
- Saul realized the truth about the identity of God would do more than just satisfy the itching ears of his friends the next time theology came up at the lunch table. Saul understood he had to do more than accept the identity of the Lord in his heart. Instantly he knew that believing the truth would require action on his part.
- **Saul understood that faith without works is dead.** Before asking for his sight, Saul simply asked Jesus what He wanted Saul to do.
- How much more effective would the Apostolic church be if we understood that simple concept—ask Jesus what He wants us to do, and everything we need to accomplish that task will be the by-product of our obedience.

The Rest Is (New Testament) History

- The instructions from Jesus were simple and reminiscent of His last instructions to the original disciples: go into the city and wait.
- What was different this time is Jesus told Saul he would be told what to do next. We read this pattern often in the New Testament: a visitation from God followed by instructions to wait for further instructions.
- Ananias was the man sent by God to Saul. Ananias prayed for Saul and witnessed his blindness being healed. Ananias then instructed Saul to receive the Holy Ghost and be baptized, calling upon the name of the Lord.

Have You Ever Been to Damascus?

- If we were to investigate the definition of repentance, we would discover it can be described as a process where a change in life direction occurs, including changing our focus from living for ourselves to living for God.
- Obviously, Saul experienced that change of life. He still went into the city of Damascus and found followers of Jesus Christ, but instead of hauling them off to prison, he received the completion of his own new-birth experience.
- His willingness to be transformed from one who persecuted Jesus and His church into one who joined His cause can be found in Saul's willingness to ask the two specific questions we discussed earlier.
 - Who are You, Lord?
 - What do You want me to do?



Have You Ever Been to Damascus? (cont.)

- If we live a life that pleases the Lord, we must be willing to act upon these questions.
- The answers to these questions will always be the same.
 - Who are You, Lord?—"I am Jesus."
 - What do You want me to do?—"Repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - Hopefully with what we have discussed, you have received enough facts from the Bible to accept these answers given to Saul, but what about the questions Saul did not ask? Perhaps you have additional questions. Allow time for students' questions.



How Many Gods Are There?

1

Saul was raised as a Jew.

- That means he would have been taught at a very young age that there is only one God, because of the commandment that is foundational to all of Judaism. This passage is referred to as the Shema, named after the first word of verse four in Hebrew.
- ***Read Deuteronomy 6:4–7.*** Later as Saul went on to found churches, teach, and write what we now know as books of the New Testament, he would do so from that foundation of understanding God is one.

All Christians of that day would have likewise believed in the oneness of God because the historical deviation into Trinitarianism had not yet been introduced.

The Bible contains numerous verses that clearly identify the existence of only one God. Here are a few to consider: *Isaiah 42:8, Isaiah 43:10–11, Isaiah 44:6, Isaiah 44:8, Isaiah 44:24, Isaiah 45:5–6, Isaiah 45:21–22, Isaiah 46:9*

How Many Gods Are There? (cont.)

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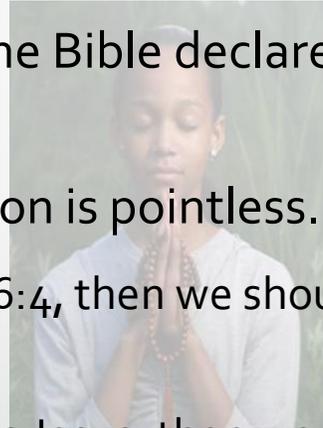
- In the Book of Isaiah, as many as thirty times, God referred to the “Holy One” of Israel, never the holy three.
- A marked difference between us and Saul is that he did not have the privilege of reading the New Testament, which completely agrees with the truth about God that was established in the Old Testament.
- **A few scriptures to read:** *1 Corinthians 8:4, Galatians 3:20, II Corinthians 5:19, Colossians 2:8–10*
- The main reason Saul could not study those verses is that he would eventually write them.

One God and One Name

- Now that we have firmly established that the Bible teaches there is only one God, it makes perfect sense that He only has one name.
- Many times Scripture records that God was asked a question about His name, but He only gave an answer a few times.
- When God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, He told Moses that His name was “I AM.”
- **When God appeared to Saul, He told Saul that His name was Jesus.**
 - These answers may seem different, but they are not.
 - The phrase “I AM” is where we get the name Jehovah, and the name Jesus means “Jehovah has become my salvation.”
 - Just like God did not cease to become Jehovah when He began to be called Jehovah-Jireh or Jehovah-Nissi, He did not cease being Jehovah when He revealed His name as Jesus. The fact is His name has always been the same, but He revealed Himself fully after becoming the salvation for our sins.

Knowledge Must Spur Us into Actions

- We should commit these verses to memory, so we can explain the doctrine we call the oneness of God.
- In addition, we must remember the Bible declares faith without works is dead. (See *James 2:17*.)
- Likewise, knowledge without action is pointless.
 - If we understand Deuteronomy 6:4, then we should actively live out Deuteronomy 6:5–7. ***Read these verses.***
 - If we understand that His name is Jesus, then we should be baptized in the name of Jesus.
 - If we understand that God sends people to tell us the method of salvation, then we should be willing to embrace and act upon the plan of salvation as presented to us in the Book of Acts.



Expand

The first part of the Hebrew *Shema* is “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” (*Deuteronomy 6:4*). Jesus declared this to be part of the greatest commandment. It is vitally important we understand who God really is.

Many say, “We all worship the same God; we just worship Him in different ways and call Him by different names.” This, of course, is not true.

There is one God, and He is established exactly how we are to worship Him. He is the only source of truth, and in Him we find life.

