

SERVANT OF GOD



A COURSE FOR CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

Dear Student,

It is a joy to offer you this course of the Word of God. Your textbook is the Gospel according to Saint John. It relates the life of our Lord Jesus Christ. We hope the course will please you and be a help to your life.

The course has a section of exams in the middle of this book. In page 2 of the exams you will find detailed instructions for study of this course.

Lesson One

DOING THE WILL OF GOD

1. Read chapter 1 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number one.

Mark tells us the history of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, Servant of God. Jesus pleased God the Father in everything.

In verses 1-11 we see John at the river Jordan, baptizing those who came to him.

One day Christ, who had never sinned, came for baptism. When Christ was baptized, God spoke from Heaven, saying He was very pleased with His Son. Afterward, Satan tried to make Christ sin (verses 12,13), but we see here, and in other parts of the Bible, that He never sinned.

Then Jesus found four men and called them to follow Him and be servants of God (verses 14-20). They left all and followed Him. They wanted to learn the truth and serve Christ.

In the city of Capernaum, Jesus went into the synagogue and healed a man who had an unclean spirit. Afterward, He entered into a house and found a sick woman, the mother-in-law of Simon Peter. He took her by the hand, lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her (verses 21-31). Later, the people came looking for help. He healed many of them. God loves people, and Jesus, His Servant, loves them also.

A man sick with leprosy came to Christ. Leprosy is a horrible sickness. A leper cannot heal himself. The person who has disobeyed the laws of God is like a leper. He is a sinner and needs to be saved from the results of his sin.

This leper came to Christ. He said, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean". So we see that Christ loves and has power to heal. God also loves us, sinners that we are, and Christ can pardon us and save us from the results of our sin.

SOME HATE THE SERVANT

1. Read chapter two and three of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number two.

In chapter two, the great Servant of God heals another sick person. However, we see that what the man needed most was forgiveness. That is why we read in verse 5: “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” The Jews knew that only God can forgive sin, but they ignored the fact that Jesus, as Son of God, has power to forgive sin. For this reason they did not think well of Christ (verse 7).

The Lord responded to His critics by healing the sick man and sending him home, carrying his bed. Some were amazed and some were even more disgusted. They criticized Christ for eating with sinners (verse 16) and for not obligating his disciples to fast (verse 18).

On a Sabbath, the day of rest, Jesus and his disciples went through a corn field. They were hungry and the disciples began to pick ears of corn to eat. The Pharisees, the Jewish religious leaders, believed that it was sin to work on Saturday, but the Lord said that He was Lord of the Sabbath (verse 28). It is good to rest one day a week, but sins are not forgiven by keeping the law. God loves us and will pardon us, but only if we believe that Christ died for our sins.

In chapter three there is another sick man, he could not use his hand. The Jews watched Jesus closely to see if He could heal on the day of rest. He asked, “Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day?” They would not answer. Christ looked on them with anger and grief, because they would not believe. Nevertheless, many people followed Christ to hear Him, and many believed on Him.

Today there are many who speak against Christ, but He is the Perfect Servant of God who always does the will of His Father. Those who love God must come to Him through Christ. There is no other way. There never has been any other way; there never will be any other way.

In verses 31 to 35 we see the mother and brothers of Christ coming to call Him. Christ said that all who do the will of God are His brothers and His mother. We need Christ to bring us into the family of God.

TEACHING THE PEOPLE

1. Read chapter 4 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number three.

We have seen that Christ, the Servant of God, healed the sick. But men need more than a healthy body; they need to know God and also know what God wants from men. For this reason, in this chapter, the Lord teaches us much.

Many people were around the lake when Jesus taught the story of the sower (verses 1-9). Later, He explained it to His disciples.

Some of the seed fell in the path, and the birds ate it up. This happens when people hear the Gospel without understanding it. Satan snatches away the Word. Satan hates God and people. He does not want the Word of God to get into the human heart.

Some of the seed fell on very rocky ground where there was not much soil. It grew quickly, but when the sun came up it was scorched. There are people who hear the Gospel with gladness, but when a trial comes they return to their old life.

Some of the seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew and choked out the good seed so that it could not bear fruit. This happens when people hear the Gospel, but the cares of this life and worldly things push it out of the heart. The love of other things will not let the Gospel grow.

Some of the seed fell on good ground and produced much fruit. When you hear the Word of God, ask God to fill your heart and let you understand it. In this way it will produce results.

Jesus and the disciples entered a ship to go to the other side of the lake (verses 35-40). A strong wind came up and the waves began to fill the ship. Christ was not afraid. He had peace because He knew God was in control, but the disciples were fearful and awoke Him. He, as the Son of God, rebuked the wind and there was a great calm.

In the problems of life, Christ is the only one who can give us life. Why not turn to Christ now? He loves you and will forgive your sins and give you peace.

Lesson Four

A MAN, A WOMAN, AND A DAUGHTER

1. Read chapter 5 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number four.

In chapter five we see how Christ helped a man, a woman and a girl. The man had an unclean spirit (verses 1-20) and lived in the cemetery. He was so strong that he could not be bound, even with chains. He cried and shouted day and night and cut himself with stones. He was completely controlled by Satan, the wicked one. Satan desires to keep us separated from God. Satan is stronger than men. No person can free us from the slavery of sin or of Satan. Only Jesus Christ, the Son of God, can save us.

The Lord ordered the unclean spirit out of the man. Immediately the man, dressed and in his right mind, fellowshipped with Jesus (verse 15). Only Christ can give true peace and salvation. The Lord sent him to his friends saying, "Tell them how great things the Lord has done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (verse 19).

Later, as the Lord went on His way, many people followed Him (verse 24). There was a woman in the crowd who had suffered twelve years with an incurable disease. She touched the clothes of Jesus, and He knew that power had gone out of Him. He called the woman and said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace" (verse 34). The Lord can solve your problems and give you peace also.

One of the rulers of the synagogue had a sick daughter. He pleaded with Christ to heal her (verse 23). While they were on the way to his house, the news was given to him that his daughter was dead (verse 35). The Lord told him, "Be not afraid, only believe" (verse 36). When Jesus arrived He raised her from the dead. The people were astonished. He commanded them to give her something to eat and not to tell anyone.

He that is dead needs life. Right now, you may have life that is necessary to be on earth, but the life that is necessary to be in Heaven is received only at the moment of faith in Christ. It cannot be bought or earned. God gives it freely to those who receive Christ as Saviour.

In this chapter Jesus freed a man from the power of Satan, healed a woman, and raised a girl. He is a marvelous Savior! He can give you peace if you will repent and believe this very day.

THE LOVE OF GOD

1. Read chapter 6 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number five.

In chapter two we saw how Jewish leaders hated the Perfect Servant of God. In this chapter, Christ returns to his own countryside and His own people do not believe in Him (verses 1-6). It is difficult to serve God among those who know us, but this is what God wants us to do.

When those of Nazareth would not believe in Christ, the Lord sent His disciples to nearby villages to preach (verses 7-13). God loves people even though they do not want to believe in Christ; for this reason He sends His servants to preach the Gospel.

King Herod ordered the head of John the Baptist to be cut off. John had preached that Herod was living in sin with the wife of his brother, Philip. This woman had Herod to kill John, the cousin and friend of Jesus. The Lord was saddened by the death of John. Today, many still suffer in order to be faithful to Christ and the Truth. God will reward them when Christ comes again.

The Lord and the disciples tried to get away from the people to pray and rest, but many followed them. Christ spoke to them of the love of God. When it was late in the day, the people still had not eaten and were hungry. They were in the desert, and there was no place to buy food.

The disciples said, "Send them away," but Christ had more to teach them. They had five loaves of bread and two fish. The Lord took this small portion, prayed and gave it to the disciples to give to the people. The creating power of God was manifested, and there was enough for every person. There were even twelve baskets left over!

God, in His love, gives us sun, rain, and food for our bodies. He also gives us something more important - His word. It is food for our souls. The Gospel of Mark is one of 66 books in the Bible. Are you grateful for what He has given us?

As the disciples were crossing the lake on their way back to Bethsaida, the Lord came to them, walking on the water. The disciples were frightened, but the Lord said, "Be not afraid."

Christ does not want us to be afraid either. He died for our sins and now lives to hear our prayers. Why not ask Him for salvation?

THAT WHICH OUR FATHERS BELIEVED

1. Read chapter 7 and chapter 8 up through verse 26 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and do exam number six.

The Lord fed 5,000 people, healed the sick, and taught the Word of God. Why did the Jewish leaders hate Him? They said that they were servants of God, but would not accept His teachings. They preferred the teaching of their ancestors. The Lord teaches us to honor our fathers (verse 10), but it is more important to obey God.

In chapter seven the Jews criticize Christ because His disciples do not wash their hands. It is good to be clean, but the Pharisees went to extremes and justified it by the Law of God. God does not save us by keeping the Law. We can be saved only because Christ died for our sins on the cross. The Lord also said food does not contaminate a person - it is that which comes from the heart - words and bad actions (verses 14-23).

The Lord then made a long journey to heal the daughter of a foreigner (verses 24-30). She was not a Jew and compared herself to the dogs that eat the crumbs that fall from the children's table. Christ gave her what she asked for - again showing His love for all people. Afterward He healed a man who could not hear or speak (verses 31-37). The people were right to exclaim, "He hath done all things well."

In chapter eight again Christ feeds 4,000 people with a little food. This time seven baskets were left over (verses 1-9). Even though He did these good works, the Pharisees again looked for ways to tempt or try Him. They asked for a sign, but many had already been given! No sign or miracle can convince a person when he does not want to believe. The Lord counseled His disciples not to be like the Pharisees. The Pharisees kept the traditions of men instead of looking for ways to please God. Only in the Bible can we find the will of God.

God sent many prophets. Some wrote their messages and these messages are in the Bible. Some books are written by men to give the truth while others contradict the Bible. We can be sure that the Bible teaches truth. The Bible contains the history of Christ and tells us that if we repent and believe in Christ we have eternal life.

THE SON OF GOD

1. Read from verse 27 of chapter 8 to the end of chapter 9 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number seven.

Jesus was the Perfect Servant of God, but we have seen that some did not believe in Him. Some thought that He was an evil man while others considered Him a great prophet.

Peter and the disciples believed in Him. They knew that He was the Christ and the Savior of the world (verse 29), but they did not understand that He had to die to save us (read 8:31-38 and 9:31). God had declared that all men are sinners and that sinners have to pay the price of death. Jesus was not a sinner and He died for us. We can be saved by believing in Him. The Lord also said that he would rise again or be resurrected (8:31 and 9:31). Today He is alive and can save all who believe on Him.

In chapter 9:1-13 the Lord went up a mountain with Peter, James, and John. There His appearance changed before them and His clothes became shining and white. The disciples saw Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. They heard the voice of God say, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him." Before the foundation of the world, Christ the Son of God, was with the Father in Heaven.

God created Heaven, the earth and all people. He can do all things. He was able to come to earth as a man. He loved mankind and for this reason came to the world and was made like them. This is what happened when the virgin Mary gave birth to Jesus. His name was Jesus and He was the Son of God. When it is said that Jesus is the Son of God, we should remember that He was with the Father before the creation of the world. He and the Father are one.

Being man it was possible for Jesus to give His life and suffer death. Being perfect and without sin, He would die in our place. Being the Son of God, His life had infinite value, and being both God and man, He could take our place and satisfy a Holy God. So that is the way He gave His life on the cross for all of us (10:45).

In the last part of chapter nine we see the Son of God healing the sick and teaching many things. In reading these verses, and remembering these things, why not ask yourself - Is the Son of God really your personal Savior?

Lesson Eight

A MAN WHO WAS RICH AND ANOTHER WHO WAS POOR

1. Read chapter 10 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number eight.

In the world we can find both rich and poor people. Some teachers become rich teaching lies. When the Son of God was in Heaven, He had everything. But He left all this to come to earth to be our Savior. He worked as a carpenter. He was always poor, but taught the truth.

In chapter ten we discover His teaching about marriage (verses 1-12) and about children (verses 13-16). Read those verses carefully.

A rich man came asking what he had to do to inherit eternal life. The Lord said that he had to keep the commandments (verse 19). This man believed that he had always obeyed God, but really his money kept him from believing in God. Jesus loved him and told him the truth, but he went away sad. Jesus commented to His disciples that it was difficult for a rich person to enter into salvation. Truly it is impossible for a rich person to save himself. But with God nothing is impossible. Christ can save!

Christ left all to be able to save us and wants us to be ready to leave all to follow Him. In verse 28 Peter said the disciples had left all but James and John wanted a place of privilege or position when Christ came in glory (verses 35-37). The Lord did not promise them such a thing or place.

Near Jericho a blind beggar was begging by the road. The people would not let him get close to Jesus (verse 48), but Jesus stopped and gave him his sight.

Today many people try to keep others from coming to Christ. However, Christ still calls to repentance and calls us to follow Him. If you will go to Him, He will help you. Christ did not give money to the beggar, but He gave something worth much more. To you He will give forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

To give us life, He gave His life. He died for our sins. As a sinner, you cannot pay God what you owe, but Christ paid the debt for us. With the debt paid, we are free. Christ has done all - everything - and only asks you to repent, believe, accept - be grateful for what He offers you.

JESUS PRESENTS HIMSELF AS KING

1. Read chapters 11 and 12 through verse 17 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number nine.

Before Jesus came into the world, the prophets of God announced that a great king would come. They said the king would come peacefully, riding on a donkey or young colt.

The Lord was not only the Servant of God who fulfilled all the will of God, but God chose Him to be King over all the earth. In this chapter He comes to Jerusalem and presents, or offers, Himself as King to the Jews. The poor received Him gladly (verses 9 and 10), but He knew there had not been a change in their hearts toward sin. He had many discussions with the Jews, especially their leaders. The fig tree mentioned in verses 12 to 14 illustrated the condition of the Jewish people. They had no fruit for God and He put them aside for a time.

In Jerusalem the Lord went into the temple and threw out those who were doing business there (verses 20-25). The religious leaders confronted Christ as to where He received the authority to do such things, but He did not feel it was necessary to answer their question.

A story about a man who planted an orchard of grapes is told in chapter twelve. The orchard was left to the care of workers while this man took a trip. When he returned he sent a servant to receive the harvest, but the workers beat the servant and gave him nothing. Another servant was sent and was wounded by the workers. Others were sent by the owner and they too were beaten and some killed. In the end he sent his son who was also killed.

This illustrates what God did for Israel. He made a covenant with them but they did not honor it. He sent prophets and some of them were killed. Finally He sent His Son, and they killed Him. God punishes those who rebel against Him in this manner.

The Pharisees tried to trap the Lord, but He surprised them with His wisdom and embarrassed them (verses 13-27).

Actually, many recognize Him as a great Teacher but there is no change in their lives. They continue in sin. God judges all who reject His Son, but will save all who believe in Him. One day Christ will return to the earth as King. We do not know when this will happen. When He comes, He will punish all who have not believed in Him. Trust Christ today and you will not have to fear the future.

SOON COMING EVENTS

1. Read chapter 12 from verse 18 through chapter 13 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number ten.

Jesus went to Jerusalem and offered Himself to the people as King. The leaders rejected Him and looked for a way to kill Him. In this lesson we see what the Lord taught His disciples concerning what would happen in the final days of human history.

Some of the leaders did not believe in the resurrection. They asked Him a question about seven brothers who died. It was not a sincere question, and the Lord answered that they did not know Scriptures or the power of God (verse 24). The Bible says that God raised His son from the dead and that one day all people will be resurrected.

Again the leaders came to Him with questions and He answered them all. However, they could not answer His questions because they did not believe that He was the Son of God (verses 35-37). Jesus accused them of insincerity and then praised a poor widow who put into the offering box all that she had.

In chapter thirteen verse four, the disciples asked about the future. Only God knows the future. However, Jesus is also God and thus could respond to the question. He said that false Christs would come (verses 6,21-23), that there would be wars and famines (verse 8). He also said that His disciples would be hated (verse 8) and some would have to flee to the mountains to escape death (verse 14-20). All these terrible things would happen in the future.

There would be signs or occurrences in the heavens; the sun would be darkened, the moon would not shine, and stars would fall. The Lord Jesus will return in great glory, and the angels will come with Him. The angels will gather the believers from all over the earth and Christ will reign on earth for 1000 years.

We do not know when the Lord shall return. Those who do not know Him will be sent to Hell - this is eternal separation from God and no second chance to receive Christ. Now is the time to turn to Him and receive pardon for sin.

THE LORD JESUS BEFORE HUMAN JUDGES

1. Read chapter 14 and 15 through verse 14 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number eleven.

Jesus, the Perfect Servant, always pleased the Father. God loves people and His Son always helped the needy. However, Jewish leaders hated Him and looked for ways to kill Him (verses 1 and 2).

There were some who loved Jesus. One woman poured over Him a very costly perfume (verses 3-9). Nevertheless, Judas, one of the disciples, wanted money, and promised to deliver Christ into the hands of His enemies (verse 10 and 11).

The Lord knew that He was going to die (verse 27). He went with His disciples to a place to pray (verse 32). Judas came there with an armed group and took Christ away. Christ could have escaped, but He went with them without resisting.

He was first taken to the High Priest (verse 53). Christ answered that He was the Son of God and the High Priest reacted violently, accusing Christ of blasphemy. The people began to spit on Him and to strike Him (verse 65).

Peter followed, but at a distance for fear. When he was accused of being a follower of Christ, Peter denied it. Later he repented and wept.

The priests took Jesus to Pilate. Christ consented to the fact that He was the King of the Jews (15:2). Pilate realized that Jesus had done no wrong and wanted to free Him. There was in prison a man by the name of Barabbas. He had killed many people. As it was a custom during the feast of the Passover to release a prisoner, Pilate said, "Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?" The priests influenced the people to ask for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus. Pilate was concerned with pleasing the people - so he allowed Christ to be crucified. Pilate knew it was wrong to condemn Christ - He believed Jesus was an innocent man. You have to settle the same problem that Pilate had. What will you do with Jesus? You know that He is the Son of God. He died on the cross to pay for your sins. If you reject Him, you will die in your sins. Receive Him today and God will pardon you and receive you as His son or daughter.

CHRIST GIVES HIS LIFE FOR US

1. Read from verse 16 of chapter 15 through chapter 16 of the Gospel of Mark.
2. Read this lesson and then do exam number twelve.

It is really sad to see how Pilate, the Jewish leaders, and all the people wanted the death of Christ. In verse 15-19 the soldiers mocked Christ. They put a crown of thorns on His head, hit Him with a reed, and then took Him out to be crucified. An African, a man by the name of Simon, helped Christ by carrying His cross part of the way.

Christ was crucified between two thieves. The soldiers cast lots or gambled for His clothes. The people came close and ridiculed and insulted Him. The religious leaders said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save."

When the sixth hour came (middle of the day), it became very dark. This darkness lasted for three hours. During this time Christ cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Shortly afterward, He cried out and gave up His spirit to the Father. A roman soldier, a centurion who was an officer, said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (verse 39). After His death, Joseph, a well-to-do man, went up to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. The body was wrapped in fine linen and put in a tomb hollowed out of rock.

Some of the women went to the tomb early on Sunday. There was an angel there who said, "Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: He is risen; He is not here: behold the place where they laid Him." They were afraid, but understood that Jesus had been raised. Death could not keep the Son of God.

The Lord appeared several times to His disciples. He commanded them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (verse 15). Then He ascended, or went up, to Heaven and was seated on the right hand of God the Father.

We have seen that the Son of God came from Heaven to do all the will, or plan of God. He died on the cross for our sins. God raised Him from the dead and He returned to Heaven. Men rejected Him, but God gave Him life and eternal honor and glory.

AND NOW...

WHAT FOLLOWS?

We congratulate you for having finished this course on the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Upon receiving your exams, we will correct them and send you the next course in this series. There are many more courses that we offer that will be of spiritual benefit to you.