

GOD'S PLAN OF RESTORATION

God's holy Bible begins and ends with a perfect world. A study of the first two chapters of Genesis leads us to ask, "What ever happened to it? Why would anyone ever want it different?" A study of the last two chapters of Revelation forces us to admit that we surely are not there yet. The daily news--in the paper, on the radio or television--is surely not like the conditions described in God's perfect world to come.

What happened back in the beginning? How can the conditions we live in today be changed? How can I personally be qualified to be a citizen in the land that Revelation 21 and 22 talk about? Can I do anything about it now? Let's try to put real "flesh" on the bony structure of lesson one.

1. When we read Genesis 1 and 2, it is plain that man was in harmony with God, that there was no barrier between them. Imagine being in your garden and having God come there and talk with you! What was the one condition for things remaining that way there in that garden of Eden? Genesis 2:15-17. Summarize it in your own words.
 - (a) Why was there such a tree? _____
 - (b) What point did God make very clear? _____

2. But Adam and Eve disobeyed. Scripture calls it "sin." Read the story of the first sin: Gen. 3:1-6. What does this passage tell us about why they did this, especially when their wonderful God was perfect love?

3. The tempter promised Eve that she would gain something by disobeying God. Read Genesis 3:8-24 and as you read, list some of the things that she and Adam lost. What is the one "key" thing that they lost?

4. Could what we have just read and written be the source of the saying, "Sin doesn't pay?" Read Gen. 4:1-8 and 6:5,6 and see how quickly and how far the human race went down hill after being separated from God. In what ways was mankind affected by this course of "deterioration?"

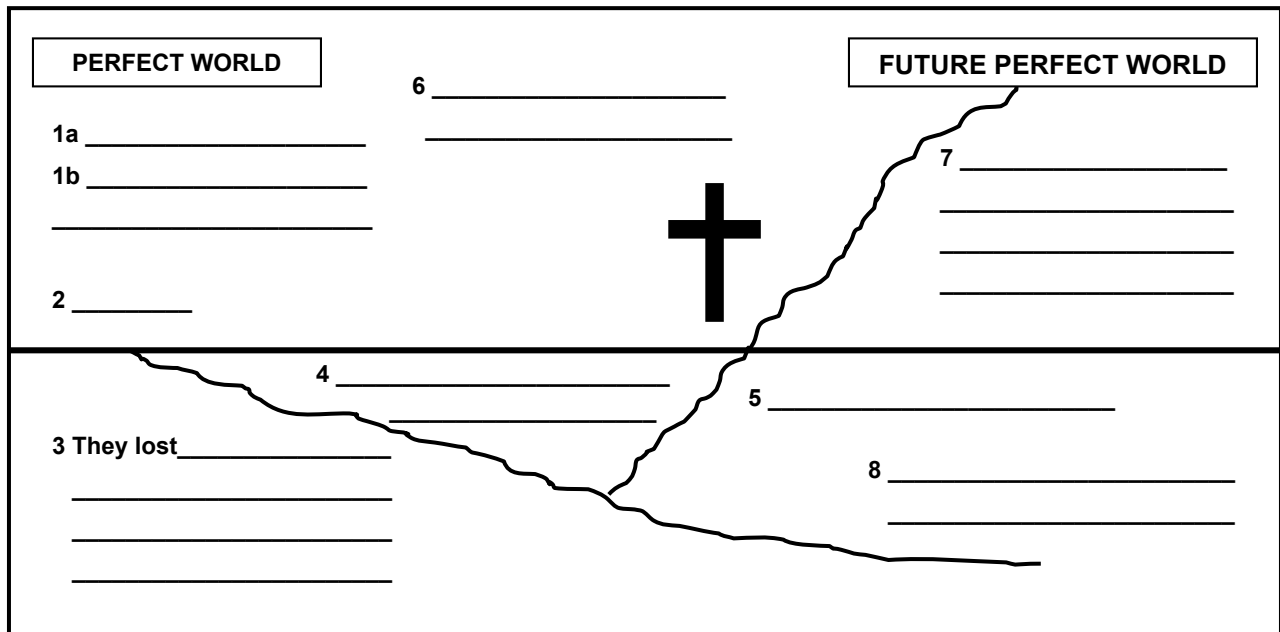
5. Aren't we all glad that our story does not end here? If it did, we would all face only a very dark future, for we all have sinned (Romans 3:23). But where does the Bible point every one of us?

- (a) Review Psalm 119:11, 105 _____
- (b) Psalm 16:11 _____
- (c) John 1:4 _____

6. In John 8:12, Jesus calls Himself "the light of the world." In John 1:9 John called Jesus the "true light." How does Luke summarize His work?
- (a) Luke 5:30-32 _____
 - (b) Luke 19:10 _____

Christ alone can "heal" the disease of sin, the inability to love, and set us back on the track that He originally planned for mankind. Read ever so carefully John 13:35; 1 Cor. 13:4-8a; 1 John 4:8-11.

7. In addition to helping us love again, our blessed Lord plans to "restore" everything to us that was lost when Adam and Eve sinned back in the beginning. God plans an end to all deterioration and a wonderful restoration to the image of God. (Review Genesis 1:26,27.) Make a list of some of the many things that He promises to restore to us, if we accept His Son and follow His will.
- (a) Revelation 21:1,2 _____
 - (b) Revelation 21:3,23 _____
 - (c) Revelation 21:4 _____
 - (d) Revelation 22:1,2 _____
 - (e) Revelation 3:5 _____
8. Memorize the Bible's greatest promise to all of us: John 3:16.



1. Gen 2:15-17

¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Answer (a): Adam and Eve had a free will – they could choose who they would trust. The tree would test their loyalty, who would they trust – would they trust what God told them or would they trust what the "serpent" told them – they could choose whose word they would trust.

Answer (b): Eating the fruit of the tree (disobeying what God had told them) would cause them to die.

2. Gen 3:1-6

¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Answer: Adam and Eve listened to what they serpent told them and trust what he said instead of trusting what God had told them. They believed the serpent when he told them that God had lied to them.

3. Gen 3:8-24

⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

⁹ Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?"

¹⁰ So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

¹¹ And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

¹² Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

¹³ And the Lord God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the Lord God said to the serpent:

"Because you have done this,
You *are* cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.

¹⁵ And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,

And you shall bruise His heel.”

¹⁶To the woman He said:

“I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;
In pain you shall bring forth children;
Your desire *shall be* for your husband,
And he shall rule over you.”

¹⁷Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’:

“Cursed *is* the ground for your sake;
In toil you shall eat *of* it
All the days of your life.

¹⁸Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
And you shall eat the herb of the field.

¹⁹In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
Till you return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken;
For dust you *are*,
And to dust you shall return.”

²⁰And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

²¹Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.

²²Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” — ²³therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Answer: The “cost” of sin was very expensive! Adam and Eve lost the following:

1. Their purity.
2. Eden home.
3. Equality between Adam and Eve.
4. Ability to trust and love.
5. Face-to-face communion with God.

4. Gen 4:1-8

¹Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the Lord.” ²Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the Lord. ⁴Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering, ⁵but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

⁶So the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it.”

⁸Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Answer: How quickly? Cain (Adam and Eve's first born son) murdered his younger brother Abel.

4a. Gen 6: 5,6

⁵Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. ⁶And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

Answer: How far? Man became wicked (physically, mentally, spiritually) continually.

5. Roman 3:23

²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, . . .

5a. Psalm 119:11, 105

¹¹Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.

¹⁰⁵Your word *is* a lamp to my feet
And a light to my path.

Answer (a): God's Word in our heart (mind) empowers us to not sin.

5b. Psalm 16:11

¹¹You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Answer (b): God will reveal (show us) the "path of life" – how to avoid the "path of death".

5c. John 1:4

⁴In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Answer (c): God will give man "life" even though he deserves death because of his rebellion (sin).

6. John 8:12

¹²Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

6. (Additional Text) John 1:9

⁹That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

6a. Luke 5:30-32

³And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³²I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

Answer (a): Jesus came to call sinners to repentance and thus to receive the benefits of the Plan of Salvation made possible by God through our faith (trust) in His plan.

6b. Luke 19:10

¹⁰for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Answer (b): Jesus came to seek and save sinners (those who are lost and will die without God's intervention (The Plan of Salvation)).

6. (Additional texts) John 13:34, 35

³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

6. (Additional Texts) 1 Cor. 13:4-8a

⁴Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

⁸Love never fails.

6. (Additional Texts) 1 John 4:8-11

⁴You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

7. (Review) Gen 1:26,27

²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

7a. Rev. 21:1, 2

¹Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ²Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Answer (a): New heaven, New earth, New Jerusalem

7b. Rev. 21:3, 23

³And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

²³The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb *is* its light.

Answer (b): God will once again live (face-to-face) with His people and be their God (they trust Him).

7c. Rev. 21:4

⁴And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Answer (c): No more death, sorrow, crying, tears, or pain.

7d. Rev. 22:1, 2

¹And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. ²In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, *was* the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each *tree* yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

Answer (d): Tree of Life, which will provide "healing of the nations".

7e. Rev. 3:5

⁵He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Answer (e): Those to "overcome" the devil and his attacks do so because they are "clothed in white garments" (the robe of Christ's righteousness) and thus are listed in the Book of Life and confessed or acknowledged or affirmed before God and the angels.

8. John 3:16

¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

GOD'S PLAN OF RESTORATION

Notes for the Instructor

Purpose of Lesson 3: This lesson puts meat on the skeleton that was briefly discovered in lesson 1. Its great importance is in the fact that the concept of "God's plan of restoration" is the central, backbone theme and illustration device for this entire series of thirty-three studies. It provides the framework for reducing the Bible study series from a long list of topics to one, God-given "way of life" – in Christ. It continually forces the teacher to discover and present doctrine as a way of life, rather than as a subject. It also forces the teacher to discover and present each doctrine in terms of how it leads the student to a more mature relationship with Christ, rather than simply more facts to know, more "things" to believe, more obedience to perform. It guides the teacher and student to see all doctrines as the means to an end, not the end itself. Most important of all, it helps us to see the centrality of the cross, and the great truth that we must lead people first to accept Christ, then unfold for them the way of life in which the converted Christian will choose to walk. In short, we present the Lord of the Sabbath, before introducing someone to the Sabbath of the Lord.

During the study itself: Strive in this study to focus the attention of your students on the illustration. Help them come to the place where they can almost dream about it at night. Help them, as time passes, to see it as the simple foundation upon which you build every study. It can serve as a tremendous intrinsic appeal in every study. Everything is built around the cross. The emphasis is always relationship with a person, not just acceptance of another subject.

Appeal: Use question 7 to build desire, and question 8 to focus on how to achieve the desire. Question 7 helps people to want to go to the restored land. Question 8 shows that we must have faith in, and accept, the Restorer if we are ever to be taken to the restored land.

Illustration: Keep it simple and clear. When finished, even have your students close their eyes with you, and lead them through the points on the completed visual aid.

