

Lesson 2

The Holy Spirit Shows us Our Sin

Bible Lesson: Acts 9:1-18

Memory Verse: Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin. *Romans 3:20*

Enrichment Memory Verse: For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. *Romans 10:4*

Catechism Memory Work: I believe in the Holy Spirit;...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;...

TEACHER PREPARATION

Prepare to Teach:

- ✠ Students will understand that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Law and shows us that we are sinners who need God's forgiveness, and the Gospel shows us God's forgiveness through Jesus.
- ✠ Students will listen and read God's word and yield to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Prepare Materials:

Along with the regular materials needed for class, you will need the following items for this lesson:

- ◆ Bibles for students who don't have them
- ◆ model or picture of the tables of the law
- ◆ list of classroom rules

Prayer Preparation

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will teach you as you study and prepare to teach. Pray that you may gain a clearer understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in your own heart.
2. Pray that God will enable you to teach clearly and that He will hinder distractions and the work of the devil and the flesh.
3. Pray that students will be open to the work of Spirit through the law to bring conviction and sorrow for sin so that they might see their great need of Jesus.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

A. Bible Study

John's Gospel records for us the wonderful conversation that Jesus had with Nicodemus. There Jesus teaches Nicodemus saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 'The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit'" (John 3:5-8).

We are told by our Savior that as we are not in control of the wind so also we are not in control of the Holy Spirit. We hear from Jesus that there is a sense of mystery for us in the activity of the Holy Spirit but we need not think that all His ways are hidden from us. He is about the work of making us holy. The conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus made it clear that the work of bringing someone to new life is wholly in the realm of God's work.

With joy in Christ's promises about the Holy Spirit we should humbly come and learn from the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures. We can have confidence that the means that God has provided will be used of the Holy Spirit that we might obtain the forgiveness of sins, and have our consciences comforted as long as we live (See the Large Catechism).

The Spirit's work is to remind us that it is not by "our strength or reason" but the love and mercy of God that we come to salvation and eternal life. So here we see again how the Creed is so different than the Commandments. The commandments declare what we are to do but in the Creed we are told what God has done and continues to do for us. Certainly in the Third Article we see that the work of God has not stopped. By His grace He continues His work of making us holy.

Part of that activity is God showing us something we don't want to see; namely, our sin. As children of wrath and enemies of God we have rebelled against God and stand dead spiritually. So through the Law the Holy Spirit shows us the sin which has so destroyed our relationship to God.

The Holy Spirit is not a force that we order around but one person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is not governed by us. So take notice that the teaching of His word will sometimes first bring feelings (which are shaky ground) which we might first attribute to the Devil.

We might feel confused, sad, or even angry as the Holy Spirit instructs us with the Word of God. However, the Holy Spirit is not at work to just emotionally manipulate us. Simply having certain emotions does not mean it is the Holy Spirit at work. The inspired Scriptures are where we place our confidence.

B. Creed Study

Titus 3 deals with how God calls us through the law. The Holy Spirit uses and works through the law to convict us of our sins. People can resist that work of the Holy Spirit - but if they do resist they become harder in spirit to the Lord's call to salvation.

Read Titus 3:3-7. Notice in verse 3 the description that Paul gives of himself before he became a child of God. Notice also that he uses the plural noun "we" - all of us have the old nature which is partially described in this verse. What we have in this verse is a list of the desires of the old self which are always selfish.

The sons of Sceva (Acts 19:11-16) manifested these selfish desires. They wanted God's power, but only for their own selfish desires. The old self always seeks its own gratification. Notice the difference between verse 3 and 4. In verse 4 we have two words that introduce a definite contrast from verse 3. "But when the *kindness* and the *love* of God...appeared." Both kindness and love represent a *giving* attitude, as opposed to a selfish attitude. The ultimate expression of Jesus' love is His giving of Himself to die on the cross for us.

Notice the emphasis upon God's grace in verse 5. Our salvation is purely a result of God's work and not our own effort. Notice also the reference to the "washing of regeneration." We make a connection here to baptism. Lesson 4 of this quarter will focus on this topic. In verses 6-7 Paul refers to the outpouring of God's grace through Christ. In Romans 5:1-11 we see a further development of this emphasis. Through Christ we are justified (declared righteous) in the sight of God.

BEGINNING YOUR CLASS HOUR

Welcome

Visit with students as they arrive; listen and seek to learn what they are thinking about and learn of their personal needs.

Open with Prayer

Ask students to report events of the week to thank God for and topics to pray about. Encourage brief prayers of thanks and praise, as well as prayers for God's help. Thank God for the Holy Spirit's real presence and work in our class and in God's Word. Pray that the Spirit will work today and that each one, teacher and students, will listen carefully and really hear God speaking.

Recite Memory Work

Listen to students recite their memory work:

From the Bible: John 14:16

And

From the Catechism: I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church, The Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

Review

Conduct a quick oral review of last week's lesson, asking these or other questions. Name the third Person of the Trinity (*the Holy Spirit*). What is another name for the Holy Spirit? (*Helper, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Spirit of Jesus*). When

the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Word, who else is speaking? (*The Father, Jesus*) What does the Holy Spirit give us? (*Faith to believe in Jesus*) Why is the Holy Spirit called our Sanctifier (*He makes us holy and Christ-like*) Why is it so important to listen when the Holy Spirit speaks? (*We can believe in Jesus only when He convicts us of sin and gives us faith to receive Jesus as our Savior.*)

Introduce Wall Words

distinguished—
 fanatical—
 zealously—
 persecuting—

Introduce the Lesson

ASK When your teacher wants to get your attention to tell you something, what does he/she do? (Allow students to respond.) Yes, he might call your name. Or he might ring a bell, or write a note on the board. Some teachers turn out the light. However she does it, your teacher wants to tell you something. If you have done something wrong, your teacher might show a list of class rules. **SHOW** list. **ASK** What do those rules tell you? (*What you should or should not do*) Would the list make you a better student? (*No, the list would only tell you that you had done something wrong.*) **SAY** God has a list of rules for us that tell us how we should think, act and speak. He tells us what is right and wrong. What is that list called? (*The Ten Commandments*) **SHOW** model or picture of tablets of stone. **SAY** The Ten Commandments are part of God's law. Show the first 5 books of the Old Testament. God's law is

explained in this part of the Bible especially, but also in many other places in the Bible, even in the New Testament. The Law is very good because it tells us God's will, and God's will is perfectly holy. **SHOW** your copy of Luther's Small Catechism. **SAY** In the catechism we find the Ten Commandments and many other Bible verses and words that explain what the Bible teaches about God's law. **SAY** Open your books to Lesson 2 and read the lesson title. **ASK** a student to read the title. **SAY** This title says something about the Holy Spirit and the Law. When the Holy Spirit speaks to us through God's Law, what is He doing? (*Showing us*) The Holy Spirit wants to tell us something; He wants to show us something.

Teach the Lesson

SAY This lesson is going to be about how the Holy Spirit showed a man his sin and great need of the Savior. **ASK** Saul was called by another name, what was it? (*Paul, the Apostle Paul*) **SAY** We learned about a man named Saul who hated Jesus and all Christians. But when Jesus called him and showed him his sin he was very sorry for his sins and repented of them, and Jesus changed his heart. Then Saul was completely changed. Now he wanted to live for Jesus and spend the rest of his life as a missionary bringing the good news of the Gospel to the Gentiles. **SAY** The last paragraph tells us why we should listen and pay attention when we hear God's Word. Read this paragraph and find out. **ALLOW** students time to read these the paragraph. Or have a student read it aloud.

More to be added later...

APPLYING THE BIBLE LESSON

Memory Work

BIBLE VERSE— Romans 3:20

Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

CATECHISM—READ

I believe in the Holy Spirit...

What does this mean?

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him;...

Activity Pages

Activity 1—Law or Gospel?

ANSWERS

1. L, 2. G, 3. L, 4. L, 5. G, 6. G, 7. L, 8. G, 9. L, 10. G, 11. G

Activity 2—Saul and Paul

ANSWERS

1. underline
 2. underline
 3. circle
 4. underline
 5. circle
 6. circle
 7. underline
 8. circle

9. circle

10. underline

CLOSING THE LESSON**Closing Prayer**

Thank you, heavenly Father, for Your Word that shows us our sins and shows us how much we need You, our Savior. Help us to have open hearts. Help us to listen when your Holy Spirit speaks to us. We pray that everyone in this class may listen. Help us trust in Jesus as our Savior. Amen.

Assignment

1. Remind students to complete lessons at home.
2. Challenge students to read their Bibles every day and to listen when the Holy Spirit speaks.
3. Remind students to bring their Bibles to class.