

GOALS FOR THE GROUP LEADER

Help the group members:

1. to accept that the promise of salvation is also for them
2. to understand the gospel. All human beings descended from Adam (the first human being) have lost righteousness in God's eyes. But every human being who believes in Jesus Christ is justified (saved) in God's eyes.

I. WORSHIP (14 min.)

1. Prayer

Pray that God will guide us through his Spirit; that we will be aware of his presence and that we will listen to what he says.

2. Meditation

Worship is to submit and dedicate yourself to the only possible Saviour.

Theme: The God of the Bible is the only Saviour

Read the Bible verses mentioned below and the explanation. Or explain the verses in your own words.

In this lesson we are going to use the words in the Bible concerning God himself to worship him. Let each group member take a turn to read one of these Bible verses and the group leader explains the verse. After reading and explaining all the Bible verses let each group member pray a short prayer worshipping God with the words said about God (There are 8 Bible verses for 8 group members)

Job 19:25-27

- 25 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth (my grave).
 26 And after my skin (my body) has been destroyed, yet in my flesh (my resurrected body) I will see God;
 27 I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Psalms 40:2-3

- 2 He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.
 3 He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.

Isaiah 1:18

- 18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

Isaiah 43:10-11

- 10 "You are my witnesses," declares the LORD, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.
 11 I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no saviour."

Isaiah 43:25

- 25 "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

Isaiah 53:5-6

- 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 55:1-2

- 1 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.
 2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare."

Micah 7:18-19

- 18 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.
 19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

3. Worship

Let everyone in the small group take a turn to worship God (in one or two sentences) as the only Saviour.

II. INTRODUCTION THEME (1 min.)

The theme for this meeting is:
Salvation (through the second Adam)

Read or explain in your own words.

The fall of Adam and Eve in sin dragged all people after them into sin and caused them to need salvation. Although it is true, Romans 5:12 does not say that ‘all men sinned during their own lives’. The Greek original says, “Therefore, it is just like sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because *all have once for all sinned.*”

Adam was the representative of all created human beings. And through the fall into sin of this one man (Adam) the whole human race fell into sin (Romans 5:17a,18a,19a)! Since the fall of Adam into sin until today all his descendants are born in the image of sinful Adam, that is, with a sinful nature (Genesis 5:1-3).

Because human beings have a sinful nature they are not capable of doing anything else than sinful deeds (Genesis 6:5). By nature man is hostile towards God and he *does not submit* himself to God’s law (commandments). By nature man *is not able to submit* to God’s law. By nature man *cannot please* God (Romans 8:5-8)!

Job says, “Who can bring what is pure from the impure? No one!” (Job 14:4; 15:14). And David says, “Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5). The Bible says, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Note, however, the following contrasts in the Bible: “For as in Adam all die so in Christ all will be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). “For if by the trespass of the one man (the first Adam), death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man (the second Adam), Jesus Christ. Consequently, just as the result of one trespass (of Adam) was condemnation for all men (connected to Adam), so also the result of one act of righteousness (of Christ) was justification that brings life for all men (connected to Christ). For just as through the disobedience of the one man (Adam), the many (connected to Adam) were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man (Christ) the many (connected to Christ) will be made righteous” (Romans 5:17-19).” The Bible does not think exclusively in individual terms (every individual has sinned in his or her personal life on earth). In the above passages the Bible views people from the point of view of their solidarity with their representative! The representative of all natural people is Adam. And the Representative of all believers in Jesus Christ is Jesus Christ.

III. SHARING OF QUIET TIMES (30 min.)

Let everyone in the small group take a turn to share (or read) what he has learned from one of the assigned quiet times.

Theme: Salvation

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| Day 1 | Philippians 2:5-11
First step: Jesus became a man |
| Day 2 | John 13:3-15
Second step: Jesus became a servant |
| Day 3 | John 10:11-18
Third step: Jesus gave his life |
| Day 4 | Romans 6:3-14
Fourth step: Jesus was raised from the dead |
| Day 5 | Ephesians 1:17-23
Fifth step: Jesus is the Lord over everything |
| Day 6 ^{BS} | John 3:14-21
Salvation through Jesus Christ |
| Day 7 | Ephesians 2:4-10
Salvation is a gift |
| Day 8 | Isaiah 9:2-7
Prophecy about the coming Saviour |
| Day 9 | Isaiah 53:4-6
He brings forgiveness of sins |
| Day 10 | Isaiah 42:1-7
He brings freedom from captivity |

IV. ADDITIONAL SHARING (15 min.)

Part IV is optional.

If after sharing quiet times there is still time left over, the following may serve as subjects for conversation.

1. Discussing the study

Discuss the study with reference to the questions mentioned below:

Theme: Christ’s work of salvation

- Why was it necessary that God took on the human nature in Jesus Christ?
- Why was it necessary that Jesus Christ died?
- Why is Jesus Christ the only possible Saviour?
- How can the sins that you still experience be forgiven?
- What are the results of Christ’s resurrection for believers?
- What is now the authority and task of Christ in heaven?
- How can someone receive salvation? How can he or she become a follower of Jesus Christ?

2. Commitment

- *Read* the following first.

2 Corinthians 13:5

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in

you—unless, of course, you fail the test?

John 1:12

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

Let the group members consider the following question and record their answer:

“Do you genuinely believe in Jesus Christ?” – That is: “Have you received him (his Spirit) in your heart and life?”

➤ *Write out your personal salvation testimony.*

In it tell how you came to believe in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. At some time discuss your testimony with your group leader.

➤ *Share the gospel (a practical exercise).*

Tell a member of your family or friend the good news by making use of the illustration from John 3:16 in the study.

3. Personal sharing

Discuss personal growth and commitment. Who would like to share a difficulty or blessing in his/her personal life? What are your thoughts or feelings?

V. MEMORISATION (5 min.)

1. Review previous Bible verses

Let pairs of group members review each other’s first four memorised Bible verses.

2. Memorisation of the new Bible verse

Explain the meaning of the new Bible verse.

SALVATION John 3:16

For God so loved the world
that he gave his one and only Son,
that whoever believes in him
shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 (NIV)

3. Memorisation of the Bible books

The 5 poetical books:

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.

VI. BIBLE STUDY (45 min.)

Theme: Salvation through Jesus Christ.

1. Bible Study.

Make use of the 5 step Bible Study method and study:

John 3:14-21.

¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son (literally: his only begotten Son), that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son. ¹⁹This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”

2. Emphasis

John 3:16 contains a promise with a condition. How does it sound when you put your own name instead of the words: ‘the world’ and ‘whoever’?

“For God so loved _____ that he gave his one and only Son, that (if) _____ believes in him (he/she) shall not perish but have eternal life.”

3. Explanation for the group leader

3:14. The cross

God’s holiness requires that all sin *must* be punished. Christ *must* therefore be lifted up on the cross in order to carry the punishment (Luke 24:26,44; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18a).

3:16. God’s righteousness and God’s love

God’s righteousness demands that whoever rejects God’s holiness, righteousness and love must remain lost. Whoever does not believe in Jesus Christ stands condemned already, because he does not believe in the name of God’s one and only Son (verse 18 and 36).

God’s love gave the most precious he had. God gave Jesus Christ as an undeserved gift to whoever believes! The past tense: “loved the world” does not mean that God has stopped loving the world. The past tense emphasises that that God’s love reaches back to God’s eternal decision “before the beginning of time” to save people (2 Timothy 1:9). This grace and salvation became a reality “when the

time had fully come” (Galatians 4:4), during the first coming of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 1:10). While we were not yet born and while we were still sinners, God proved his love for us in that Christ died for us (Romans 5:8; cf. Matthew 1:21)!

The world

The word ‘the world’ has different meanings in the Gospel of John: ‘The world’ is:

- the created universe (John 17:5)
- the realm of mankind, the human race (John 16:21)
- the general public (John 7:4)
- the people in the world: separated from God, loaded with sins, subject to God’s judgement and in need of salvation (John 3:19)
- the people in the world: the same as in John 3:19 with the additional thought that no differentiation is made with respect to race, nationality, social status, or culture; thus, people from every tribe and language and people and nation (John 1:29; John 3:16)
- the world of evil: the same as in John 3:19 with the additional thought that they are openly hostile against God, against Christ and against Christians (John 7:7)
- the world of the elect: all those from every nation elected unto salvation (John 4:42; 1 John 4:14).

In John 3:16 ‘the world’ does not mean ‘every human being that has ever lived’ (cf. Psalm 5:4-6; James 4:4).

3:17. To condemn or to save the world

The first coming of Jesus Christ was above all to save all the people who believe in him. So between his first and second coming he will save everyone who believes in him (John 3:17).

However, all people who do not believe in him already stand condemned (John 3:18) and will remain under God’s wrath (John 3:36) unless they get reconciled to God (Romans 5:10)!

3:18. Faith, justification and sanctification

The relationship between faith and justification
(Romans 4:2-8; Philippians 1:29).

‘Faith’ begins when you hear the truth (Romans 10:17). Faith becomes personal when you trust that this truth is also intended for you personally. You begin to experience it when you accept that truth.

‘Justification is a judicial concept and means that God reckons (ascribes, imputes) the righteousness of Jesus Christ to you and henceforth regards and treats you as completely justified (forgiven, saved) in his eyes (Romans 4:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

➤ *The relationship between justification and sanctification*
‘Justification’ describes your new position (state) of being completely and perfectly (100%) righteous in Jesus Christ. When God looks at you, he sees you ‘in Christ’, that is, he sees only the righteousness which Jesus Christ earned for you on the cross and which he imputed (ascribed) to you because you believed in Jesus Christ.

‘Holiness’ describes your new position (state) of being completely and perfectly (100%) holy in Jesus Christ, that is, set apart to be completely dedicated to Jesus Christ (Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

‘Holiness or sanctification’ also describes your process of transformation of character and life-style (Romans 6:19; 1 Peter 1:15). The process of sanctification flows from the state of justification and holiness and signifies that God is making you more and more Christ like. In time he is making you more and more what you already are in Jesus Christ!

3:19-21. Light and darkness

‘Light’ is the visible revelation of God’s character, attributes, words and deeds. ‘Darkness’ is the opposite of light. Christians are called to live in the light, that is, to live in accordance to God’s character, believing God’s words and obeying God’s commands.

VII. PRAYER (8 min.)

Pray with one another in response to what God said to you during this gathering. Let every group member take a turn to pray one or two sentences about what God taught him during this meeting.

Pray with one another for one another (Romans 15:30) and for other people (Colossians 4:12).

VIII. THE NEXT MEETING (2 min.)

Hand out the preparation for the next gathering.