

Bible Study Questions

True or False.

For all people (past, present, and future) who do not believe or accept what Jesus said and demonstrated about his Father, Jesus died to provide atonement for their unbelief (their sin) in order for them to be saved and be reconciled to an offended God. **T or F.**

Complete the Sentence.

A. For all people (past, present, and future) who believe and accept as truth what Jesus said and demonstrated about his Father, Jesus' death on the Cross _____
_____.

B. Jesus didn't come to tell us how bad we are; he came to tell us _____
_____.

Questions.

1. If Jesus hadn't died on the Cross, can anyone be saved or receive eternal life?
2. If Jesus hadn't died on the Cross, can anyone receive forgiveness of sins?
3. If people can be saved, and receive eternal life and the forgiveness of sins without Jesus' death on the Cross, why did Jesus have to die?
4. If you had been there 2,000 years ago, would you have been part of the mob, the religious community shouting for Jesus' death: "Crucify him! Crucify him!"
5. Today, as you look back on that event, do you approve of Jesus' death?
6. If you had been there 2,000 years ago, would you have applauded Jesus' death on Friday, and then personally thanked him Sunday morning for dying that death?
7. Today, as you look back on that event, what did Jesus accomplish for believers? What did he accomplish for unbelievers?
8. Jesus says in John 6:54 "*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.*" How are these acts completed?
9. Is Jesus more interested in forgiving people or healing people? What kind of healing does Jesus want people to receive?
10. What does it mean to "believe in Jesus?" What does it mean to be "healed?"
11. If salvation (eternal life) is a free gift that Jesus willingly gives to all who ask for it, does it make sense then that Jesus has to pay a penalty for giving that gift?

12. Did Jesus die on the Cross to satisfy the Father's offended wrath against us so we may be reconciled to the Father? Had God forgiven anyone before the Cross?

13. Was God the Father in any way connected with Jesus' death? Did he have a part in orchestrating Jesus' death? Was God in any way instrumental with the events of the Cross? Did God kill Jesus? If he did, is God then a killer? If God didn't kill his Son, who did?

14. Are Satan, the devil, and his angels in any way responsible for Jesus' death? If they are, how are they involved? How do they fit into the equation?

15. Did the Father inspire Satan and his evil followers to put Jesus to death so Jesus' blood could be shed and forgiveness of sins might then take place? Was the death of Jesus part of "the Plan" that God and Jesus planned in advance and knew would have to take place ever since the creation of planet Earth?

16. What is the sin that separates us from the Father? What procedure or act on our part has to be completed in order to eliminate this separation? What procedure or act on God's part, if any, has to be completed in order to eliminate this separation?

17. Given the fact that Jesus is the exact representative of his Father, and that he and the Father are identical in nature and character, if the Father would have come instead of the Son, would any of this world's events have been any different? Would the Father have lived among his people as Jesus did; would he have fed them and told them about his relationship with his Son; would he have been rejected as Jesus was; would he have died on the Cross; would he have forgiven everyone as Jesus did?

18. Much scripture is written about Christ's return, his second coming. What is he waiting for? Is he waiting for evil to become so bad that he must come before the entire Earth is enveloped in catastrophic disaster and suicide? Is he waiting for the gospel to be preached to all the world, and then the end will come? What foreseeable future events need to take place before an end can be put to the calamity now being experienced by the inhabitants of this planet? Is Jesus waiting for a time table to expire before he can come? Can anything be done to expedite or speed up his return?

19. Is there anything more important to know before our own death than all of our sins have been forgiven? What assurance from God should people strive to attain so they will have confidence that they are accepted and will spend eternity with God?

20. What is the central theme of the Gospel message, the Good News? What/Who is it all about? Did Jesus present the Gospel during his ministry? If so, cite scriptural reference and describe it as briefly as possible. If not, what did he present for all to hear? Should our message to others be the same as the one he presented? Why or why not?

21. If God did not promise to give eternal life to all who ask for it, would you still like him and admire him, and want to be his friend?

22. Did Jesus atone for everyone's sin when he died on the Cross? If you answer yes, then will everyone be saved? If you answer no, then who will be saved?

23. If you accept Jesus' death on the Cross as your personal atonement for sin, does that mean you will be saved? Did atonement exist before the Cross?

24. What is it that saves a person?

- a. Nothing but the blood of Christ.
- b. The goodness (the kindness) of God.
- c. Our acknowledgment, repentance and confession of sin.
- d. All of the above.
- e. None of the above.
- f. Other_____.

25. God's judgment of whether a person is saved or not is based on what? Does God treat everyone the same whether that person lived before or after the Cross? For those who have never heard of Jesus or the gospel message in their lifetime on planet Earth, what is God's basis for judgment?

26. Jesus says in John 6:54 "*Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.*" If God treats everyone the same before the Cross as well as after the Cross, how could people living before Jesus' birth and before the Cross "eat the flesh and drink the blood" of Jesus in order to have eternal life? What exactly is eternal life?

27. What is the will of God? Did Jesus testify about God's will? Did Jesus complete God's will? Is God's will the same for everyone who has ever lived on this planet? Is his will for us the same as it is for angels created in his image?

28. How will God deal with those who are lost? Will unbelieving, rebellious human beings suffer the same consequences as Satan and his angels who likewise chose to rebel? Will God be satisfied that justice has been served when he casts all of the lost into the bottomless pit of fire and torment, and for that torment to last as long as God shall live? For the lost, can there be anything worse to endure than this act which God will one day pronounce upon them?

29. Jesus said that the devil "*was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*" (John 8:44). Among other lies, what is the first and original lie that the devil told? Primarily, what is insinuated by that lie? Is it important that we understand this completely?

30. Hatred tends to evoke strong feelings. Jesus said to his brothers: "*The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify that what it does is evil.*" (John 7:7). What is the evil that the world does? How has Jesus testified to this evil? Why can't the world hate his brothers, and presumably others?

31. Jesus told the disciples about hatred by saying: *“He who hates me hates my Father as well. If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: ‘They hated me without reason’.”* (John 15:23-25). To hate without reason implies that people are _____. Why does the world hate the Father as much as it hates Jesus? What did Jesus do that no one else did that makes them guilty of sin? Is the hatred found in these verses similar or comparable to the devil’s attitude found in the previous question number 30?

32. How do any of the following statements made by Jesus relate to those people who make claims on their own behalf, such as “I’ve been saved! I’ve been born again!”

- “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid.”* (John 5:31).
- “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing.”* (John 8:54).
- “He who speaks on his own does so to gain honor for himself.”* (John 7:18).

33. The man of lawlessness. Paul writes: *“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day (the coming of Jesus) will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness (the man of sin) is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”* (2 Thess. 2:3, 4). What is the rebellion that will occur? What and where is God’s temple? How does the man of lawlessness magnify himself so that he is greater than God? Does the man of lawlessness possess the same characteristics as the anti-Christ? When we as individuals make claims about ourselves, as in question 32, are we usurping God’s prerogative? Is it right to claim we know ourselves better than God and can read our own hearts?

34. Scripture (1 John 4:10) says that God *“sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”* What constitutes “our sins?” Are they the wrong things we do (our actions)? Do “our sins” involve believing Satan’s lies about God which causes us to be separated from God? What sacrificial atonement needs to take place? If Jesus would have come to this planet and just died without saying a word to anyone, would that act by itself have satisfied God’s need for atonement? Why or why not? When atonement is mentioned, does that mean God is thought of as being offended and that sincere apologies need to be extended to him before friendship can be reinstated? Does God expect and, perhaps, even demand that everyone beg forgiveness on bended knee? Will he continually hold people at arms length until his forgiveness is expressed? Will a greater number of “sins” committed mean a greater length of time before God will say ‘I forgive you?’

35. Scripture reads that *“God presented him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood”* (Romans 3:25), and *“that he (Jesus) might make atonement for the sins of the people.”* (Hebrews 2:17). Atonement implies the reconciliation of God and man through the death and shed blood of Jesus. Again, what are “the sins of the people?” Did atonement ever exist before Jesus died on the Cross? Could reconciliation between God and man take place before the Cross? Did forgiveness exist before Jesus died on the Cross? Has God been holding a grudge against everyone since day one?

36. Describe God's justice. Is it the same for believers as well as unbelievers? Complete the sentence: For people who want nothing to do with God, in the end God's justice requires him to _____.
For people who have aligned themselves to be on God's side, in the end God's justice requires him to _____.

37. Describe God's wrath. Is it the same for believers as well as unbelievers? Complete the sentence: For people who want nothing to do with God, in the end God's wrath will _____.
For people who have aligned themselves to be on God's side, in the end God's wrath will _____.

38. 1 John 4:16 states "*God is love.*" How does that characteristic of God merge with the descriptions of God's justice and God's wrath in the preceding two questions?

39. 1 John 4:18 states "*...perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.*" Revelation 14:7 states "*Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come.*" How can these seemingly opposing verses dealing with fear be reconciled?

40. On different occasions, Jesus told the disciples and others "*Do not be afraid!*" What is it that makes people afraid of God and afraid of others? Did Jesus offer any means to eliminate being afraid?

41. Complete the sentence.
Jesus' life reveals _____.
Jesus' death reveals _____.

42. Many times while talking with others Jesus would begin an important thought by saying "*I tell you the truth...*" Why did he do this? Was it because that particular audience needed to pay special attention to what he was about to say? Was it because Jesus was negating an untruth or a lie while saying those words? In all actuality, could Jesus have begun every thought and sentence he said with those five words?

43. John 18:37 records the following words as Jesus stood before Pilate: "*You are a king, then!*" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "*You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.*" What "truth" did Jesus testify about? How do people on the side of that truth "listen" to Jesus? What conclusion can be reached from this conversation between Jesus and Pilate as to what is Jesus' mission? What conclusion can be reached from this conversation between Jesus and Pilate as to what is not included in Jesus' mission? If everyone "listens" to what Jesus is saying in this passage, will everyone then know and understand what Jesus' mission is all about? What do people do who are not on "the side of truth?" Why has John's record of the gospel included this conversation, whereas it is omitted in Matthew, Mark and Luke? Why has John devoted nearly half of his book to the last week of Jesus' life and ministry?

44. Throughout his ministry, Jesus repeatedly foretold the disciples about his impending death, but they all seemed to misunderstand what he was telling them. An example of this is found in Mark 10:32-34. *“They were on their way up to Jerusalem, with Jesus leading the way, and the disciples were astonished, while those who followed were afraid. Again he took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to him. ‘We are going up to Jerusalem,’ he said, ‘and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise’.*” What confusion existed in the minds of the disciples, and why were they so slow to grasp what Jesus was revealing to them? What prevented the disciples from comprehending the events which were about to take place? Could their inability to adequately “listen” to Jesus be reason for their shock when Jesus actually died on the Cross? John, the gospel writer, was the last gospel record to be written. Part of Jesus’ prayer to his Father states *“I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world.”* John 17:5. Was Jesus’ prayer found in chapter 17 of John’s gospel written to expose what the other three gospels failed to include, and at the same time present information to the reader who is willing to “listen” to the words of Jesus, words that define and elaborate his mission of revealing God?

45. What is the foundation of God’s government, his kingdom? What is the kingdom of God all about? What characteristic above all others defines the attribute of God and his relationship with all of his created beings, angels as well as men? In your opinion, what one word describes what God has always intended for everyone? Will God ever change his mind about this?

46. Paul wrote in Galatians about freedom. *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.”* Gal. 5:1. From what has Jesus set us free? How did Jesus do it? Did he do it by dying on the Cross, or did he accomplish it some other way? How important is freedom in God’s government, his kingdom? To what extent will Jesus and God go to protect everyone’s freedom of choice? When did this freedom begin? Will this freedom ever end?

47. Paul wrote in Galatians about the fruit of the Spirit. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”* Gal.5:18. The fruit of love is mentioned first; the fruit of self-control mentioned last. Could there be a specific reason why the Apostle Paul did this? Could possessing the fruit of self-control be possible only when the preceding “fruits” have been attained? Define what *“self-control”* means to you. Could possessing the fruit of self-control mean that God fully trusts you one hundred percent, even to the extent of asking you to sit on his throne for a short period of time while he was absent? Could your self-control and, at the same time, could total trust by God be the ultimate expression of freedom that God desires for all of his creation? From the Biblical account, list all of those people who, in your opinion, possessed *“self-control.”*

48. In the fifteenth chapter of John, Jesus talks at length about the Vine and the Branches, and bearing fruit. *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”* John 15:1-5. Is the “fruit” expressed by Jesus in this passage necessarily the same “fruit of the Spirit” that Paul mentions in Galatians? What does Jesus mean by “bearing fruit” in this chapter? When Jesus “bears fruit,” does that have anything to do with his mission of revealing God and representing his Father? If Jesus’ mission was to reveal his Father, then is the giving of that vital information to those willing to listen part of Jesus “bearing fruit?” Does “bearing fruit” mean that a person is willing to extend the correct picture of God as Jesus did, and to speak the truth about God, no matter what the consequences might be? Read and reread these important verses several times to get the full picture of what Jesus is getting across to the disciples, because it is after these verses about the Vine and the Branches that the disciples are told about hatred. Hatred exists, and people hate because of something said or done by someone else that is not agreeable with them, and they also hate because they were not chosen (verse 16).

49. Continuing in John 15, Jesus said *“You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other.”* John 15:14-17. Ah, to be called friends! Is this important to Jesus? It appears to be ‘the goal’ that Jesus desires with the disciples and with us. The mode of being a servant places restrictions and the wrong emphasis on people that they do things without question and without understanding why, whereas in comparison, a friend of Jesus has willingly received the information about God that Jesus has “made known” to him (verse 15). Friends understand what God is all about. Friends then take this information that has been “made known” to them and they “bear fruit” by taking that same information and ‘making it known’ to others willing to receive it. Information about God is the “fruit that will last.” (verse 16). That fruit will last because it is eternal in nature and will never be exhausted or totally consumed. God is the only One who can accurately read the hearts of individuals. He alone chooses to whom this information is made available, and to those he did not choose, they become his enemies, and within their minds dwells hatred so real and so intense, it is, as Jesus said, *“They hated me without reason.”* (verse 25). That kind of hatred is pure insanity! Revert back to question number 31 to review this hatred discussed earlier. What comments do you have in regard to the above paragraph?

50. The disciples need assistance. Jesus' friends, the chosen ones, need assistance. John 15:26, 27 and John 16:1-4 describe this assistance. *"When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. They will do such things because they have not known the Father of me. I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you."* Sounds a bit scary, doesn't it? Yet, in Jesus' own words he says that his friends who have the correct information about God the Father must *"bear fruit,"* they *"must testify"* about God. But look what will happen to them! They will be put out of the synagogue; in fact, they will be killed. And the insane people who do this act of violence think they are doing something great for God! Little do they realize they do not know the Father, nor do they know Jesus. They've been deceived by their inability and unwillingness to listen to Jesus tell them the truth about his Father, and they will not accept the fact that Jesus can read their hearts and for good reason did not choose them to represent him or his Father. The Spirit of truth, the Counselor, found in verse 26, is further described in chapter 16:13-15. *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you."* Those are words of comfort and assurance, and are a conclusion to *"bearing fruit,"* of *"testifying,"* of receiving information that the Spirit of truth will *"make known!"* Could it be said that these friends of Jesus possess the *"self-control"* that was talked about earlier in question number 47?

51. From *servants*, to *listening*, to *bearing fruit*, to *friends*, to *you must testify*, and then all the way back to *listening*. From the prophet Zechariah these words are found: *And the word of the Lord came again to Zechariah, "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts, do not think evil of each other.' But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped their ears. They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the Lord Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So, the Lord Almighty was very angry. 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the Lord Almighty. 'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate'."* Zech. 7:8-14. We are a difficult bunch of people to work with, aren't we? Why does God even bother? How long is the Lord going to put up with us? It seems like such a waste from his perspective. Refuse to listen, plug up our ears, turn our backs, hearts of solid rock. Not a good scene, and even though he surely is a God of love and compassion, the result of not being willing to listen, etc. leads in the end to an unpleasant scenario. People scattered; the land desolate. Perhaps "Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind" applies to this situation.

52. *Then he (Jesus) called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."* Mark 8:34. Doesn't sound too complicated, does it? Jesus said these words immediately after having just predicted his death, and after having just been rebuked by Peter, the ever-present authority who thought he knew everything there was to know about God. "Sorry, Peter," Jesus said. *"You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."* Mark 8:33. Things of God and things of men stand in opposition to each other. They cannot dwell in the same mind at the same time according to Jesus; it's either one or the other! Things of men might possibly be our attitudes and the things we learn when God is not our teacher. This position can lead us in the direction of Satan's lies. Contrary to this are the things of God that pertain only to him and represent the truth about God that Jesus came to reveal and tell to everyone willing to listen. Most of the time a lot of the information we learn about someone or something is incorrect. Why? Because the information did not originate directly from God. What has this to do with "deny himself?" Is Jesus saying we need to get rid of all incorrect beliefs and information, to deny all of that stuff? *"Take up his cross."* As it was 2,000 years ago, truth was not popular. Few were interested in the truth Jesus came to tell them about. It seemed ridiculous then as Jesus presented that information, and that to accept it would mean a person would have to deny all previous beliefs. No amount of evidence would convince them, but when Jesus continued to press the issue to get them to admit their wrong beliefs, people could only back away and call Jesus a liar. They wanted nothing to do with him, and the notion of death was conceived in the minds of those people. For Jesus, it came to the warning point: 'Teach the message about God correctly, and it's going to kill you.' Nonetheless, Jesus said. *"Follow me."* To follow Jesus means being willing to listen to him reveal information about his Father. To accept that information, of course, would be the desired result.