



OUR GREATEST NEED

Course 1, *Basic Christianity*, Lesson 1

The Problem: We live in an achievement-driven culture, where success often defines our worth. From an early age, our educational system instills this mindset, encouraging students to overcome academic challenges to earn good grades—symbols of personal progress. This drive extends into the professional world, where success is frequently measured by tangible outcomes. The top-performing salesperson is celebrated for closing the most deals and maximizing profits. In factories, the most valued worker is the one who produces more, faster. Even in medicine, success is often seen in terms of patient numbers or groundbreaking accomplishments.

But success, as society defines it, often fails to meet the deeper longings of the heart. Perhaps you know someone who is generous and kind—dedicated to helping others through volunteering and charitable acts. Or perhaps this describes you. Despite noble intentions, even the most selfless individuals may feel unfulfilled or disconnected. On the other hand, many of us wrestle with personal struggles—bad habits, difficult personality traits, or unresolved relational conflicts. Counseling or life changes can offer temporary relief, but the deeper questions often remain unanswered.

For countless individuals, the most pressing needs in life revolve around personal fulfillment, meaningful relationships, and true happiness. Others seek to make a difference in the world or search for answers to profound questions about purpose and existence. These desires, whether spiritual, emotional, or practical, reveal a universal truth: beneath the surface, we all long for meaning, connection, and a belonging that only something greater can provide.

Objectives:

First, we ask what identical problem is shared by every human being.

Second, we study why Jesus Christ was given to the world.

Third, we consider what Jesus Christ can do for us personally.

Fourth, we offer you LifeTrac, a series of Bible studies that will answer your most pressing questions and deepest need.

I. WHAT IDENTICAL PROBLEM IS SHARED BY EVERY HUMAN BEING?

Many of us mistakenly think that we are in right-standing with God simply because of our achievements, or because of the good works we do, or because of progress we make in overcoming challenges through helpful counseling and other resources. However, human achievement and moral goodness alone cannot bridge the gap between humanity and God. Success, good deeds, and emotional maturity, while admirable, do not address our greatest need -- a deeper spiritual need for reconciliation with God through a relationship that transcends earthly accomplishments.

All human beings need a power beyond themselves providing deliverance from personal faults and failings. It is no coincidence that the world's wisest book, the Bible, describes and illustrates our problem in graphic detail.

The Word:

1. To what extent can we give ourselves a right-standing before God?

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one! Job 14.4

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil. Jeremiah 13.23

2. How does the Bible describe our bondage to sin?

Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. John 8:34. See also Proverbs 5:22-23, Romans 6.

3. How did David describe his great need after he had fallen into the sin of adultery?

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Psalm 51: 5-6

Explanation: Sin separates us from God. God is holy and we are not. The above Bible passages teach that the person who does not know God is held captive to sin, which separates from God. Only as we cry out to God for help as David did can we find cleansing and restoration: *"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me"* Psalm 51:7, 10.

Paul expands on this idea in Romans 6, where he contrasts being enslaved to sin with being freed through Christ to serve righteousness. He writes, *"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness... But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life"* Romans 6:20-22. This emphasizes that sin is not just a moral failing but a powerful force that requires divine intervention to overcome.

The Bible also portrays this bondage as a universal human condition. In Romans 3:23 Paul states, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* This reveals that no one is exempt from sin's grip, underscoring the need for redemption through Christ.

Relevance: Accepting the Bible truth that we all have need of a power beyond ourselves is the beginning of the abundant life of forgiveness, peace, growth and fulfilment. Are you willing to admit your need?

II. WHY WAS JESUS CHRIST GIVEN TO THE WORLD?

From the very beginning, God planned that Jesus, His Son, would come to earth as God in human flesh. Jesus came to live the perfect life that we could not, to die in our place on the cross, and be resurrected to save us from our sins and to give us His power to become His lifelong friends and followers.

The Word:

4. Why did God give His Son to our world?

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. I Corinthians 15:3

5. What did Jesus offer the woman He met at Jacob's well?

Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For

His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do you get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." John 4:6-15.

6. When Jesus died on the cross, His perfect sacrifice set us free from sin and gave us the right to become His children. He died for everyone who would receive Him as their Savior and Lord.

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13

7. What kind of fulfillment can Christ give us?

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8

Explanation: Jesus Christ came to our world to save sinners. The Bible emphasizes that anyone can be saved from sin and given eternal life if he believes and trusts in Christ as Savior and Lord. *"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God."* | John 5:13

Jesus knew just how to approach lost men and women. He appealed to the woman of Samaria by the simple act of asking her for a drink of water. This captured her attention because the Jews usually would not have anything to do with the Samaritans. Then when He talked about the water of life she became interested. He offered her "living water" that would so quench her spiritual thirst that she would be eternally satisfied. This she very much desired to have. Then, in a direct but gentle way, he pointed out her sin. Finally He told her that He was the Messiah (verse 26), and the woman believed in Him and was saved.

When we respond in faith, as the woman of Samaria did, the Lord justifies us, counting us as though we had never sinned. He graciously empowers us to follow Him wholeheartedly. No longer enslaved by our impulses, we become willing and loving disciples, joyfully submitting to His lordship.

III. WHAT CAN FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST DO FOR ME?

Christ provides grace, forgiveness, purpose and transformation that go beyond what we can achieve on our own. He offers a pathway to eternal life, a sense of identity rooted in divine love, and guidance, grace and power for living in alignment with God's will. No matter how accomplished or morally upright, the message of Christ emphasizes that every person requires God's grace and salvation—not earned through works, but freely given through faith.

The Word:

8. What did Jesus present to Nicodemus as the solution to his problems? How would Nicodemus come to know Christ?

Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter 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 marvel that I said to you, You must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” John 3:3-8

9. What does it mean to have faith in Christ?

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.” John 15:4

10. What will faith in Christ do for you?

“Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” Mark 9:23

“So Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ The blind man said to Him, Rabboni, that I may receive my sight.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go your way, your faith has made you well.’ And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road.” Mark 10:51-52

“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” Ephesians 6:16

11. To what extent will our faith in Christ transform our lives?

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.” 1 John 5: 1-4

Explanation: Jesus’ message to Nicodemus was that his heart (mind) would be transformed by the Holy Spirit if he believed. Jesus used the analogy of birth to explain what he meant. He told Nicodemus that he must be born again. To be born again is to have the Holy Spirit come into your heart and provide the power to live for Christ. It means that now you can be the kind of person God intends you to be. Now you can achieve your full potential as a follower of the Lord Jesus.

Christ provides grace, forgiveness, and purpose that goes beyond what we can achieve on our own. He offers a pathway to eternal life, a sense of identity rooted in divine love, and guidance, grace and power for living in alignment with God's will. As with Nicodemus, no matter how accomplished or morally upright, the message of Christ emphasizes that every person requires God's grace and salvation and transformation—not earned through works, but freely given through faith.

As Scripture assures us in 2 Corinthians 9:8, *“God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”* Through His grace, we are equipped with the power to live an abundant life in Christ. By His sacrifice—healed by His stripes on the cross—we die to our sins and rise to new life. Christ not only redeems us but also imparts His grace and power to continually transform us more and more into His image. Who would refuse such transformative strength?

What does it mean to have faith in Christ? Faith is surrendering our life to Him, even without scientific proof of His existence. Faith is depending on Him, abiding in Him, so that He becomes our indwelling power. Jesus said, *“I will come to you”* John 14:18. That is a divine mystery that cannot be explained biologically or psychologically; it really cannot be explained at all! It must be experienced to be known. Jesus comes to us by the Holy Spirit when we give our hearts to Him. And when He comes to us, we have His indwelling power to conquer our personal weaknesses. To come to know

Christ you must make the experiment of faith. The only way to be quite sure is to act as if Christ is with you, and then you will know that He is.

This is the only way to knowledge in many areas of life. There are many things you will never know unless you take what looks like a risk to find out. If you act as though some things are true, you may discover they are true. For example, if a man decided that he would never get into the water until he knew how to swim, he would never learn to swim. As the late preacher Will Sangster put it: "The venture is part of the knowing. It is against all 'common sense' that, if you lay a human body on the sea, the sea will hold it up. Yet it does. You can never know until you prove it yourself." Give God a Chance, W. E. Sangster, p.25

The results of believing in Christ are dramatic. You now understand much better what God wants of you, and when you ask for His spiritual power, He willingly gives it: "*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you*" John 15:7. He provides healing of the mind. By faith in Him you can "*quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*" Ephesians 6:16. You now have the power to keep His commandments, because faith is the means of victory over sin: "*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith*" 1 John 5:4. Instead of being a victim of your old habits, you now have the desire and the power to leave them behind and serve God. It is like being released from iron shackles; only Christ can break them for you.

The Bible tells us that no one is good except God. (Luke 18:19) We all sin and come short of God's glory. We might not see our sins as great but God does. God measures us against His standard of holiness, not our own. So we may think of ourselves as good people but we could never come close to the Holiness of God on our own. Regardless of how moral we have been, the debt of our sin is enormous. The damage to God's glory by our sin is determined not by the severity of our sin but by the value of God's glory.

After the King of Israel died, the Prophet Isaiah had an amazing vision of the Lord exalted and enthroned in heaven. Angels were worshipping him and crying out "Holy, holy, holy!" Isaiah immediately recognized his own sinfulness in comparison to God's holiness. It's not that Isaiah was a bad man – he was a prophet and prophets had to be moral and law abiding. But he realized that regardless of how moral he was, God was infinitely greater and he would always be unworthy: "*So I said, 'Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The Lord of hosts'*" Isaiah 6:5.

You might feel like your life is okay without complete surrender to God but the truth is, there's so much you are missing. The Gospel comes with joy and peace like you've never known. There is so much freedom in becoming a child of God. God isn't calling us to be good, He's calling us to be holy. Only God can make us holy. We become holy by believing the Gospel and choosing to follow Jesus.

Relevance: Faith in Christ brings forgiveness, reconciliation with God, eternal life, transformation, peace, purpose, strength, hope, freedom, and joy. It's not just about the afterlife; it reshapes how you live each day. While Christ provides everything needed for a fulfilling, purposeful life, the journey of faith is a process of growth and transformation. His presence is assured every step of the way as He works within you to refine your character and guide you toward His image.

Now is the best time to entrust your life to Christ and begin experiencing the victories He desires for you. Speak to Him. Tell Him you believe in Him. Invite Him to take control of your life and dwell in your heart. Through faith, Christ empowers you with His grace and strength to confront life's challenges and overcome sin. Transformation is ongoing—His love and power enable you to grow closer to Him daily. In this abiding relationship, you discover life in its fullness, marked by enduring joy and peace.

Perhaps God is speaking to your heart, gently reminding you that your own efforts and goodness cannot fully satisfy. The hardest step may be surrendering your life and will to Him, but it is also the most transformative. God desires to give you

His Spirit, inviting you into a deep and authentic relationship with Him—a relationship built not on what you’ve always known, but on faith.

Walking by faith and not by sight means choosing to trust that God is who He reveals Himself to be and that His promises are steadfast and true. It’s not about striving for perfection or clinging to personal achievements; it’s about letting go of self-reliance and embracing the abundant, new life He offers. By His grace, you are equipped to rise above ongoing failures, experience His transformative power, and live with purpose, hope, and joy.

IV. STEP INTO THE ABUNDANT LIFE TODAY!

Discover deeper purpose, joy, and connection through the transformative power of God's Word. Start your journey with the LifeTrac Bible Study Courses and experience the richness of faith like never before.

“But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days,” says the LORD. “I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people” Jeremiah 31:33. Christianity is not merely a religion with a set of rules to follow. God wants to make us more like him. He puts His law in our hearts and actually empowers us to love and follow His way.

True Christianity is not burdensome. Life can be hard sometimes but Christ says, *“Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”* Matthew 11:28-30.

The Apostle Paul was so excited about this experience that he said: *“I live; yet not I but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”* Galatians 2:20.

LifeTrac Course 1 is a series of nine Bible studies designed to introduce you to the basic teachings of Christianity. This is the first lesson and there are eight to follow.

Would you like to know what our world and our universe were like before evil came into existence? This series will tell you.

Would you like a better understanding of how God led believers in ancient times, before the coming of Christ? You can discover that too by going through this fascinating series of studies.

You can learn what kind of Person Jesus of Nazareth was, and what He did for us when He was here on earth.

This course will show you that Jesus and the prophets revealed what is to happen in the future of our world. And you will learn from the Bible how we can know that the end of the world is near, and what God plans to do for us when it comes.

Discover the meaning of true Christianity. Learn what it truly means to follow Christ and experience a life of lasting fulfillment and satisfaction. Through Him, you can find peace, purpose, and joy that remain constant, no matter the circumstances.

Will you commit now to setting aside time in your life to study the remaining lessons in LifeTrac Course 1?

“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6