

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions The Best Gift of All – Jesus Series, Lesson 31

Lesson Title: God Gives Us a Gift—His Son
Take Home Point: Jesus is a gift—God gives us his Son.

Warm-Up:

As a parent, have you ever had your child get a white shirt really dirty, say by wallowing in the mud? (Or maybe it's happened to you in your work or play!) The shirt is really filthy. In fact, it's so dirty you use a stain remover and soak it and wash it separately so it doesn't interfere with getting your other white clothes clean. You carefully check it before putting it in the dryer; it looks unstained. When it comes out of the dryer, it still looks pretty good. That is, until you lay it side by side with a white shirt that has never gotten dirty. Then you can see just how much the shirt is affected – you will never be able to wash those stains out to make it look new again no matter how much you try. You can wear it, if you wish, and it may be that people won't notice, especially if their shirts are dirty, too! But you will know. You need a new shirt.

Read: John 1:29-51; 5:16-26; 20:31

Observation (What happened?):

In John 5:16-26, what names does Jesus call himself?

According to John 5:21, what do both the Father and the Son do?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What does it mean that Jesus "takes away the sin of the world"?

What does it mean that Jesus equates himself with God the Father?

Insight:

What is it about the gift of Jesus Christ to us that makes it so hard to accept? I suppose there are several factors at work, but I think one of them is an inadequate understanding of how unfixable we are by human effort. For example, imagine the feelings of Adam and Eve after their first sin! Guilt, shame, blame, sorrow, fear, failure, anxiety, separation, regret, cover-up, defensiveness – none of these had ever been known to Adam or Eve prior to their disobedience. In an instant their hearts and minds must have been flooded with the crushing reality that everything was different in a dreadful way, and there was nothing they could do to change or fix it. Imagine the turmoil and confusion about these new, unpleasant thoughts and feelings. And because we sin, too, we may face the same thoughts, feelings, and turmoil, but our lives are so warped by sin that it's hard to see it for what it is – certain death. How thankful we can be that we don't have to try to work for any part, however small, of our salvation. How wonderful that we can receive this gift from our gracious God, and that he planned it for us all along!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Take a few minutes to thank the Father for his wonderful gift of eternal life.

Pray for the children in your small group to recognize and accept his gift.

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