

Lesson 6 Commentary

How Can I Know God?

Review/ What did we learn from the last study about what Jesus did for us and the relationship we must have with him to benefit from what he did?

**Jesus died in our place to pay the ransom for our release from sin.
He must be *in us* so that we can be *with God*.**

1. **John 1:12** What must a person do to become a child of God?

In order to become children of God, we must receive Jesus by believing in his name.

Jesus' name represents who he is and what he has done. While it's true that belief in God does usually mean belief that there is a God, believing in Jesus Christ means more than affirming his existence. Even the demons believe that Jesus is God's Son (Matthew 8:29, Luke 4:34), but they refuse to admit their sin and depend on him as their Savior. The question, "Do you believe in this chair?" is not a request to speculate on the philosophical reality of the chair but to decide if you trust it to hold you up if you sit in it. The issue is dependence, not existence. Likewise, belief in Jesus is not merely being convinced that he once lived or even that he is the Son of God, who lived a perfect life, died for sin and rose again. Rather we become children of God when we depend on Jesus alone to take away our sin and give us the righteousness we need to approach God.

2. **John 14:6** What did Jesus say about other ways to God?

Jesus insisted that only through him is it possible to have a relationship with God.

Jesus Christ is the only way to God, not because Christians say so but because Jesus said so. We might prefer to include sincere followers of any religion, but we cannot worship Jesus as God and question the truth of what he says. The reason that only Jesus can give us access to God is that only he is both God and man and only he satisfied God's judgment of man. Jesus had to become a man in order to die in our place. But because he is also the holy and infinite God, he had no sin of his own for which he had to die and his death could count for as many (not just one person) as believe in him. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

3. **Romans 3:20-24** What does the Bible teach about our own efforts to get right with God?

The law of God reveals how righteous we must be to have a relationship with him and how far short we fall from his standard of holiness. The only righteousness that can make us fit for a relationship with God is the righteousness he credits to those who believe in his Son.

"All who rely on observing the law (to get right with God) are under a curse (condemned to death, separation from God), for it is written: 'Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law'" (Galatians 3:10). Since no one is able to obey all the law all the time (Romans 3:10), the only way to have a relationship with God is to accept from God the righteousness he offers "freely by his grace." "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

When we accept this gift of righteousness from God, he “justifies” us. Justification is God’s decision to declare us righteous on the basis of Jesus’ death in our place. Our part in justification is simply the transfer of our trust. We stop relying on what we do for God to make us acceptable to him and start depending entirely on what he has already done for us.

4. **John 3:16** What is the result of believing in Jesus Christ?

Whoever believes in (depends on) Jesus Christ for salvation will have life (a relationship with God) that is eternal (starts now and lasts forever).

5. **John 13:13** What can we expect Jesus to do when he comes into our lives?

When Jesus enters our lives, he comes in as Teacher and Lord to guide and govern.

It is only through Jesus Christ that we can know God and his will. His purpose for our lives will be the most satisfying for us and most glorifying to him. True Christians will want Jesus to teach them his ways and to rule (even overrule) in their lives, so that they can experience his best for them. It is not possible for Jesus to enter our lives without being Lord. He does not become Lord because we make him so. Jesus is Lord over all, and he cannot leave that part of his nature on the doorstep of our lives when he enters as Savior.

It’s not that we must obey Jesus as Lord in order to be saved by him. True believers regularly violate the Lordship of Christ, but they admit their sin and affirm his right to rule their lives. “God cannot be mocked” (Galatians 6:7). We cannot expect his forgiveness when we have no desire to overcome the sins that make it necessary. Jesus only enters the lives of those who want him as Savior and Lord. We must not only receive Jesus Christ as Savior but also repent of (turn away from) our sin and follow him as Lord (Acts 20:21).

6. **Romans 10:9-10** What must we do to be saved from sin and reconciled to God?

To be saved from sin and death (separation from God) a person must submit to Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead.

God raised Jesus from the dead to prove that Jesus is his Son and to show that he accepted the sacrifice Jesus offered on the cross for our sins. Believing that God raised Jesus means depending on his sacrifice for your salvation. Affirming that Jesus is Lord means seeking to live by his principles and for his purposes.

7. **Romans 10:11-13** What will people do who believe that only Jesus Christ can save them from sin?

Those who admit their sinfulness and believe that only Jesus can save them will call on him to be their Savior and Lord.

The true God is a living God who wants a personal relationship with those who believe in his Son. Relationships cannot be established or maintained without communication, and a relationship with God is no exception. Those who truly believe in Jesus call on him in prayer to forgive their sin and to give them the righteousness they need for a relationship with him.