FINDING OUT ABOUT CHRIST · STUDY NOTES

Study 6: What final task did Jesus give His disciples?

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

Turn from sin

"Go into all the world!"

After He rose, Jesus appeared to His disciples many times, and explained to them (again) that He had to die and be raised from the dead (Luke 24:25–27, 44–46). He also told them to announce forgiveness through His death to the whole world, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:46–47). God's Holy Spirit would give them the courage for this great task (Acts 2:1–4). This wonderful offer of salvation came with two conditions: turning from sin, and believing in Christ.

Finally, the New Testament tells us, Jesus was taken up into heaven in a cloud (Acts 1:9–11), and is now enthroned at God's right hand (Acts 5:31).

They must invite everyone to repent

Jesus commanded His disciples to tell people everywhere to turn from their sinful ways. This is called repentance. The first person to preach repentance after Jesus rose was Peter, one of the leading disciples. He offered forgiveness, through faith in Christ, to the very people in Jerusalem who had killed Jesus. But first they had to repent of their sin.

1 **Look up Acts 2:38**

What is the first thing Peter told the people to do?

If the worst can be saved, so can I

Peter offered forgiveness to the people who had crucified Jesus. No one is beyond God's mercy.

What true repentance is like

True repentance begins with a deep sense of our own failure. See how aware of their sin the people were when Peter preached to them.

2 **Look up Acts 2:37**

How did the people feel when they heard Peter, and what did they ask?

But true repentance is more than feeling sorry for our sin. It means confessing it to God (Luke 15:21) and turning away from it. Repentance always leads to a changed life (Luke 3:7–8).

3 **Look up Acts 26:20**

What did Paul say should go with repentance?

Once sin has been confessed and turned from, there is one more condition for salvation: faith in Christ.

PART 2

Trust in Christ

They must invite everyone to believe

Jesus commanded His disciples to tell a world that had never seen Him about Him. Those who had never seen Jesus would have to believe the witness of those who had (John 20:29). They must not only believe things about Jesus; they must also believe in Jesus, trusting His death to put them right with God. Faith in Christ is the second condition for salvation.

John wrote his Gospel so that his readers would believe.

4 **Look up John 20:31**

What are we to believe about Jesus, and what comes by believing?

Paul, a church leader, was once wrongly thrown into prison. When an earthquake shook the prison, the terrified jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul told him to believe in Christ.

5 **Look up Acts 16:31**

What was the jailer told to do?

What saving faith is like

Not just any kind of faith saves. Even the demons believe that God is one (James 2:19). A person with saving faith trusts Christ's death alone to put them right with God. A drowning man must first give up all hope of saving himself; only then will he let someone else save him. People who trust their own goodness to put them right with God are unlikely to trust the cross to save them.

A drowning man cannot save himself
We have to stop relying on ourselves before we can trust Christ completely.

Forgiveness is through faith alone, not good deeds, so that no one can boast. Salvation is a gift; it cannot be earned (Romans 6:23).

6 **Look up Ephesians 2:8–9**

Where does salvation come from, and why can no one boast?

Real faith leads to action

If we really believe a building is on fire, we will get out quickly. And if we really believe that God hates sin, we will do our best to turn from it. Faith without deeds is dead. Real faith shows in the way we live.

7 **Read James 2:17–18**

What does verse 18 say about faith and deeds?

Faith is not just an idea in the mind, or a statement we sign. It is a deep confidence (Hebrews 11:1) that is not ashamed to own Christ in front of others (Romans 10:9–10).

PART 3

Baptism

Baptism is a step of obedience

Before Jesus returned to heaven, He told His disciples to baptise those who came to believe in Him through their preaching. This became the practice of the church. But unlike repentance and faith, baptism is not a condition for salvation.

When Peter preached Christ, he told those who believed to declare their faith in baptism (Acts 2:38, part 1). He did this because Jesus had commanded believers to be baptised. True believers will want to obey their loving Saviour and be baptised.

8 **Look up Matthew 28:19**

What did Jesus command His disciples to do?

Baptism pictures the washing away of sin

The people Peter and Paul baptised had already become Christians. They did not become Christians by being baptised. Baptism was a picture of what Christ had already done for them: their sins had been washed away.

9 **Read 1 Corinthians 6:9–11**

What does verse 11 say had happened to these believers?

No ceremony can wash sin away

Baptism cannot wash away sin. Only Christ's blood can (Revelation 1:5). Baptism is the outward sign of that inward washing (Acts 22:16).

PART 4

The coming Judge

Jesus, the world's Judge

One of the last instructions Jesus gave is often overlooked. The disciples were to tell the world that Jesus would be its future Judge. Yes, the very person who came to save the world will return to judge it! This is an awesome thought, and it should move us to get right with God now, while we have the opportunity.

Much of Jesus' teaching was about His future role as Judge, so it is not surprising that He gave this command.

10 **Look up Acts 10:42**

What did Jesus command the apostles to tell the people about Himself?

Jesus, the fair Judge

Jesus will justly condemn those who have not repented, because He is too righteous to judge unfairly.

11 **Look up Acts 17:31**

How will God judge the world, and what proof has He given?

Taking our opportunity

The New Testament records the amazing lengths God has gone to, to bring sinners back to Himself. But its writers warn us not to neglect what God has done (Hebrews 2:3). Now is the time to act: "now is the time of favor; now is the day of salvation!" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

It is wrong to keep putting off our response. What excuse could we give to Almighty God for keeping Him waiting? If we have not turned from sin and trusted Christ as Saviour, we should do so now. We must not hesitate. Jesus said, "He who is not with Me is against Me" (Matthew 12:30).

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. What is the difference between feeling sorry for sin and truly repenting?

2. Why can't we earn our forgiveness by doing good things?

3. Is there anything holding you back from turning to Christ today?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 6

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

FINDING OUT ABOUT CHRIST · STUDY 6 · MEMORY VERSE

“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

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **Acts 2:38** *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

2 **Acts 2:37** *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and asked Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

3 **Acts 26:20** *First to those in Damascus and Jerusalem, then to everyone in the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I declared that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds worthy of their repentance.*

4 **John 20:31** *But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*

5 **Acts 16:31** *They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household."*

6 **Ephesians 2:8–9** *8For it is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9not by works, so that no one can boast.*

7 **James 2:17–18** *17So too, faith by itself, if it does not result in action, is dead. 18But someone will say, "You have faith and I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.*

8 **Matthew 28:19** *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

9 **1 Corinthians 6:9–11** *9Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to or perform homosexual acts, 10nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

10 **Acts 10:42** *And He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the One appointed by God to judge the living and the dead.*

11 **Acts 17:31** *For He has set a day when He will judge the world with justice by the Man He has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising Him from the dead."*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says 'man', 'he' or 'brothers' where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 6: What final task did Jesus give His disciples?

> **Memory verse:** “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). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Understand the two conditions of salvation: repentance and faith in Christ.
- See that salvation is a gift of grace, received by faith alone, and that real faith shows in a changed life.
- Understand baptism as a step of obedience for believers, a picture of sins washed away, not a means of salvation.
- Feel the urgency of responding to Christ, the coming Judge.

Suggested timing (about 85 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **20 min** Part 1 video (4 min); Acts 2:37–38 and 26:20.
- **25 min** Part 2 video (5 min); John 20:31, Acts 16:31, Ephesians 2:8–9 and James 2:17–18.
- **15 min** Part 3 video (4 min); Matthew 28:19 and 1 Corinthians 6:9–11.
- **15 min** Part 4 video (4 min); Acts 10:42, 17:31 and the discussion questions.
- **5 min** Summary and closing prayer.

Tips

- Some will ask whether Acts 2:38 makes baptism necessary for forgiveness. Point to Ephesians 2:8–9 and Acts 16:31: forgiveness is received by faith; baptism follows as the believer's public step of obedience.
- Ephesians 2 and James 2 can seem to clash. Faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone: it shows in a changed life.
- 1 Corinthians 6:9–10 lists serious sins. Stress verse 11: "that is what some of you were". No one is beyond being washed clean.
- Part 4 is a gentle but clear call to respond. Be available to talk with anyone afterwards.

Answers to watch for

- **Acts 2:38:** repent and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins; receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **Acts 2:37:** they were cut to the heart and asked, "What shall we do?"
- **Acts 26:20:** repent and turn to God, performing deeds worthy of their repentance.
- **John 20:31:** written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name.
- **Acts 16:31:** "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved."
- **Ephesians 2:8–9:** saved by grace through faith, the gift of God, not by works.
- **James 2:18:** "I will show you my faith by my deeds."
- **Matthew 28:19:** make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- **1 Corinthians 6:11:** washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit.
- **Acts 10:42:** Jesus is the one God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.
- **Acts 17:31:** God will judge the world with justice by the man He has appointed.