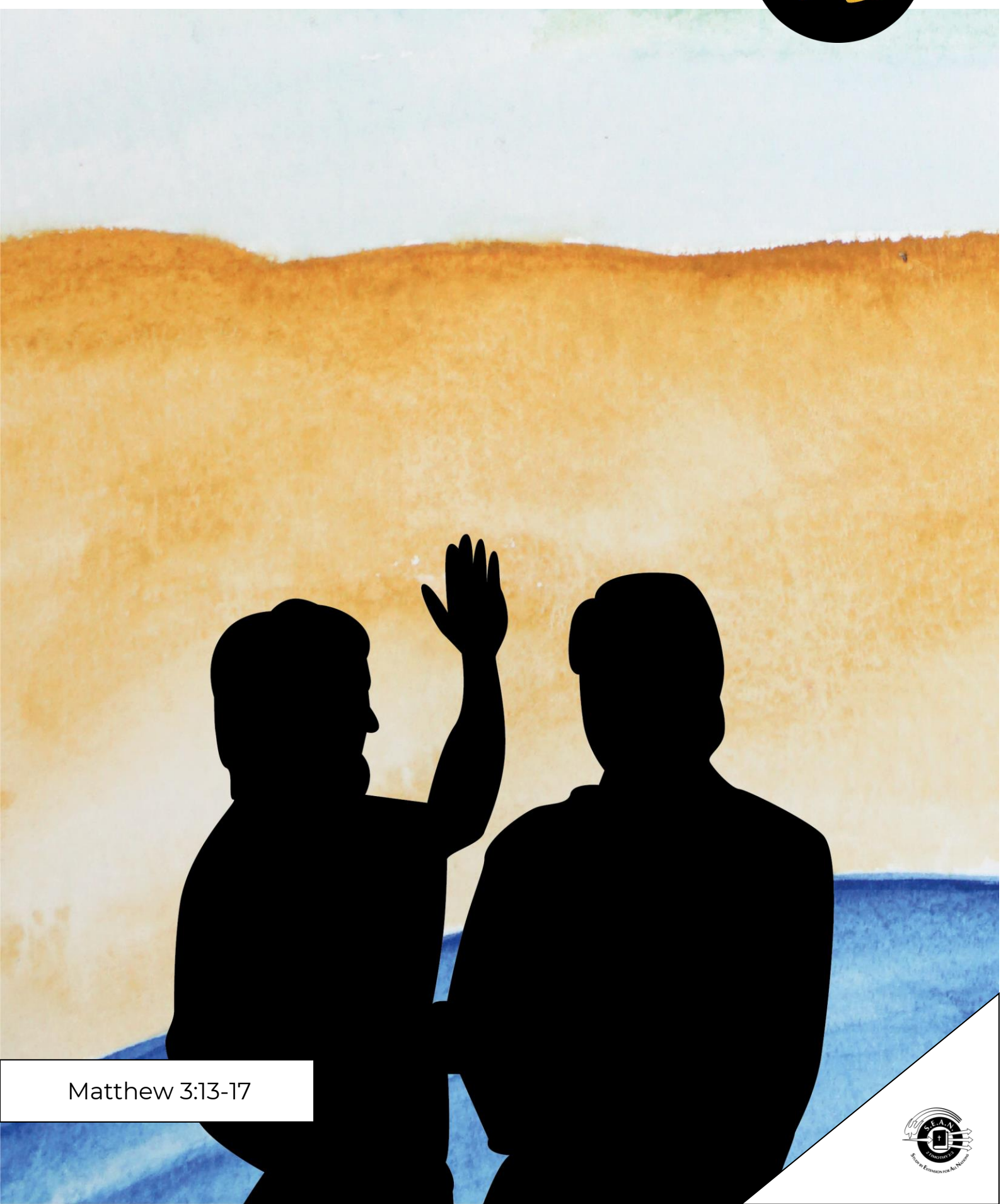


FOLLOWING JESUS: LIFE OF CHRIST (2)

The Year of Preparation

Sample Lesson



Matthew 3:13-17





This sample lesson is from the Level 2 course **Following Jesus: The Life of Christ (2): Year of Preparation.**

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Welcome

This course is the second of a series of six books on the Life of Christ called “Following Jesus”, based on the Gospel according to St. Matthew. It combines lessons for home study with group discussion. The lessons are arranged in blocks; each block being a week’s work. After each block there is a group meeting, which should be led by a Group Leader, who follows the companion Group Leader’s Guide.

Book 2 analyses the first year of the ministry of Jesus (Year of Preparation) including the preaching of John the Baptist. It also introduces the doctrines of the Trinity and the attributes of God and the authority of the Bible. At the same time it introduces skills to help analyse Bible passages in more detail. The whole series is based on the New International Version of the Bible. If you use other versions, adjustments may be necessary.

The Method

The course uses a very simple method. It is specially aimed at ordinary people with a basic school education but is useful for all types of people. All our GOLD Project courses are designed to help you learn by means of:

Home Study
plus
Group Meetings
and
Practical Application

Home Study

Each course is made up of **10 Blocks** of two or three **lessons** each that you need to complete on your own at home. These lessons require you to read and interact with the course material as well as with your Bible.

Each lesson is **programmed** to help you check your progress as you work through. To get the maximum benefit it is important that you use the course in the way it was intended:

1. Read the section numbered 1 (often referred to by the technical term ‘frame’ 1).
2. Make the response required, if there is one.
3. Check that your answer corresponds with the feedback given in the ‘feedback’ section at the end.
4. Proceed to section 2.

Note that the **course** is programmed—**you** are **not** being programmed! The aim of programming is that:

1. you can check frequently that you have understood the material presented;
2. you are stimulated to active and critical thinking;
3. you reinforce what you learn and are better able to remember it.

At the end of each lesson, we encourage you to spend some time in reflection on how what you have learnt applies to you in the situation where God has placed you.

Group Meeting

Regular group meetings take place where you will have the opportunity to discuss points of interest that have arisen and think through with others how your learning may be applied. The group meetings give the opportunity for you to clarify ideas and to share your own thoughts and to listen to the ideas of others. The process of learning from the Bible in a group is an essential part of the programme. It is here that you are able to think through areas of application and to pray and support each other in your studies.

Practical Application

During each group meeting, you will discuss what practical application task you will try and complete before you next meet. You will have an opportunity to review the practical application each time you meet.'

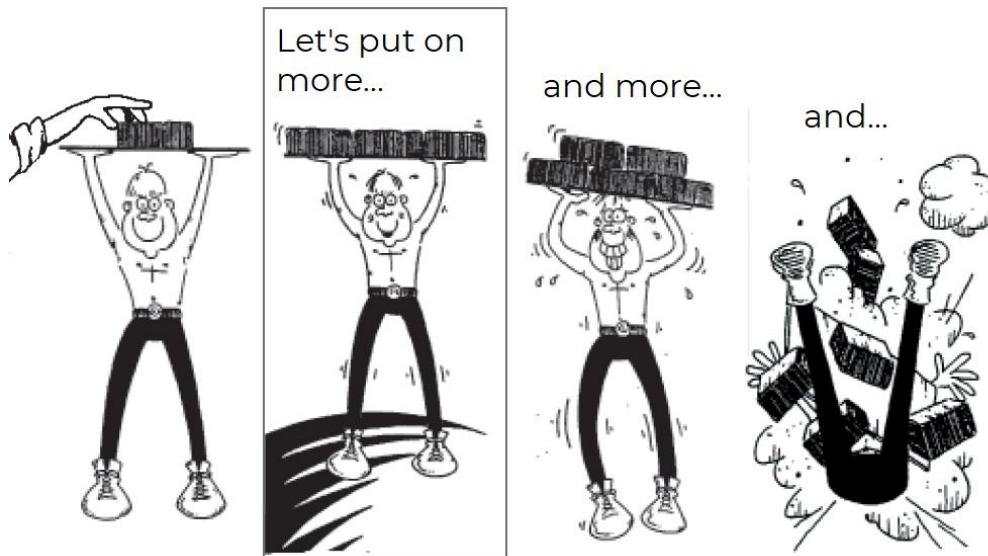
Additional instructions are provided in these boxes. Please pause to read them thoroughly. Now it's time to get started!

Block 2 Lesson 1

Confessing our Sins



John the Baptist called upon the people to confess their sins. In this lesson, we will consider the importance of confession in our Christian life. When we sin frequently, each sin is like a weight put on this tray...



It's the same with sins we don't confess. What does it mean to keep short accounts with God?

Preparing for this lesson:

- Take a moment to pray
- Remember to keep a notebook handy to note down any questions or issues for discussion.

Objectives

- At the end of this lesson you will be able to:
1. Explain the need to confess our sins to God;
 2. Identify two Psalms in which David confessed his sins;
 3. Recognise the need to confess our sins to others and to put things right with them;
 4. State three results of confessing our sins and knowing we are forgiven.

1. Reread **Matthew 3:1-6**.



What did the people do as they were baptised by John the Baptist? (v.6)

They _____ their _____.

2. Some people are not sure to whom they should confess their sins. Should they confess to a priest, a neighbour or to God? Read **Psalm 51:1-4**.



David committed adultery with his neighbour's wife. To cover up this sin, he caused the death of her husband. Afterward he wrote this great Psalm of repentance and anguish.

a) To whom is David speaking in verse 1? _____

b) Against whom had he sinned in verse 4? _____

3. All confession should be made to God, because all sin is against God. In which Psalm did we read about David's confession of sin to God?

Psalm _____

4. We should confess all our sins to God, because all sin is against him and forgiveness comes only from him. However, many times our faults and failings harm other people as well as being sin against God.

According to the drawing, if a Christian lies to their neighbour, they should confess

- a) only to God.
- b) only to their neighbour.
- c) to neither of the two.
- d) to both.

5. Read **Matthew 5:23-24**. In these verses Jesus teaches us that we ought to be reconciled with our brother or sister



- a) before we come to God.
- b) after we come to God.
- c) at some time in the future.

6. In other words, if your sin has had anything to do with another person, you must confess to both _____ and the person you've _____.

7. To sum up:

a) We must always confess to God, because all _____ is against _____.

b) We must sometimes confess to another person also. When?

8. But there is something else we must do if our attitude to sin has really changed. If we have in any way harmed another person, as well as confessing to him or her, we must also make restitution. To make restitution means to return things to how they were before the harm was done.

For example, if I have stolen money from my neighbour, I must return at least the amount that I stole. Which of the following verses speak of making restitution?

a) Genesis 4:8–9

b) Leviticus 6:4–5

c) Luke 19:8

b) 1 Samuel 12:3

9. Confession of sin is the first result of true repentance. Now we see a

second result: if we have harmed someone, we must make

r_____. In other words, we must put things right so that our

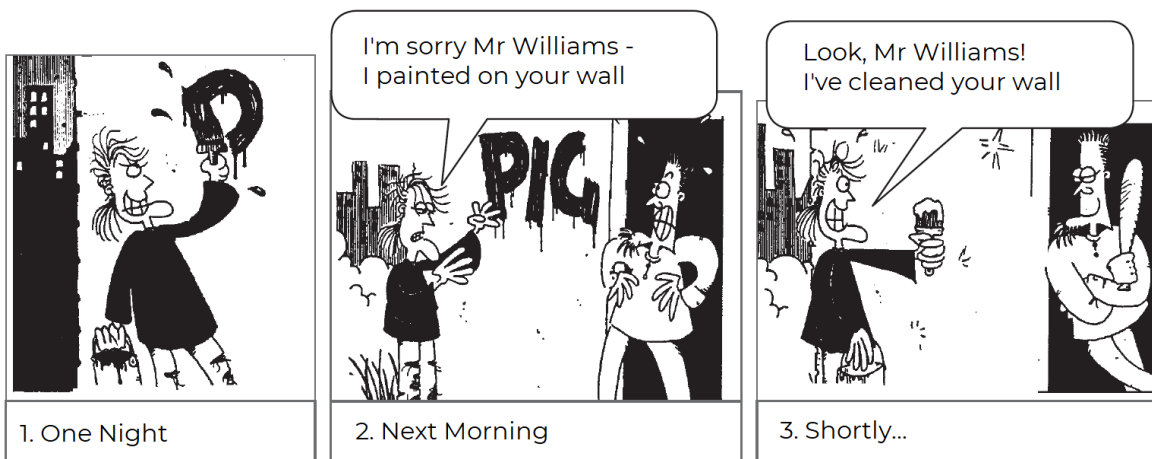
relationship is the same as it was before the harm was done.

10. Read **Luke 19:8–9** again. Who approved of what Zacchaeus did about the



money he had stolen? _____

11.



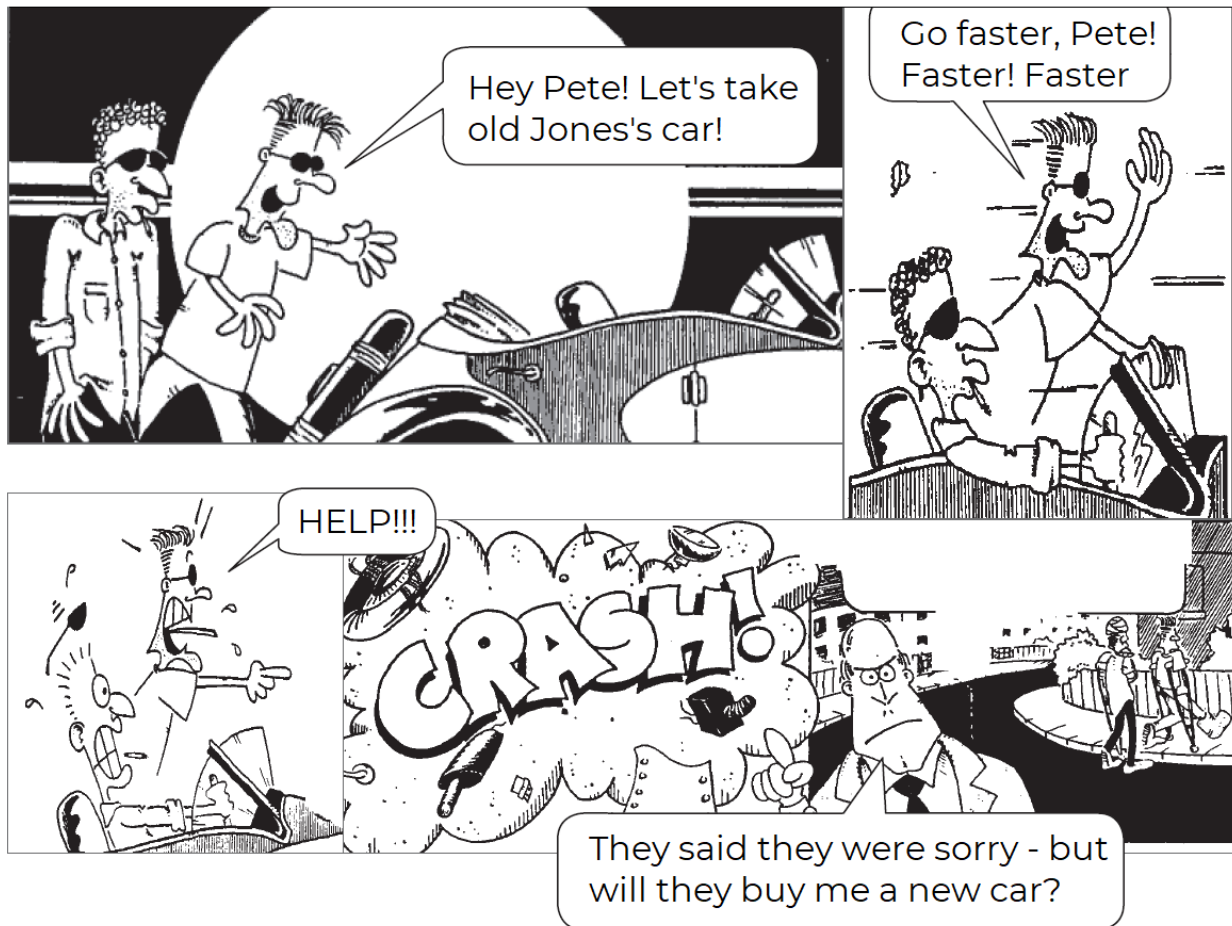
Which of these pictures shows?

- a) _____ sin?
- b) _____ putting things right?
- c) _____ confession?

12. What is restitution?

13. Tick examples of how to put things right after harming someone:

- a) An employer who gives special benefits to workers whom he had exploited in the past.
- b) A secretary who decides to put in extra hours without charge, to make up for time she had wasted on personal calls.
- c) An employee who returns stationery that he had been pilfering at the office.
- d) A father who gives his child a birthday present.
- e) A woman who does everything she can to speak about somebody's good points, to make up for speaking unjustly about her in the past.



14. Was this a genuine confession? What is still lacking?

15. Let's review



a) To whom should we always confess our sins? _____

b) When should we confess our sins to another person?

When we have h_____ them.



Pray for a few moments, asking the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to put things right. Maybe there is someone you have harmed at home, at work, in your neighbourhood or local government. Make a note of how you could make good the damage and ask God for the humility and strength to do it. Then destroy the paper.

16. **1 John 1:9** says:



"If we confess our sins to God, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins."

What does God promise to do if we confess our sins to him?

17. God, who is the source of all forgiveness, forgives us because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Which of the following verses show that we can be forgiven through the sacrifice of Jesus?

a) Matthew 26:28

b) Ephesians 1:7

c) 1 Peter 2:24

18. God never changes. He is always ready to forgive. However, we can only receive the benefit of that forgiveness when we have

a) confessed to God.

b) hidden our sins from God.

c) denied that we are sinners.

19. Knowing that our sins have been forgiven is very important to us. **Read Psalm 32:3–5**, written by David – keep your Bible open at this Psalm. Here we see that there is great danger in not confessing our sins.



a) In which two verses does David say that he feels worn out and weak, day and night? _____ and _____

b) In which verse do we read that David confesses his sin and is forgiven?

20. What did David feel while his sin was unconfessed?

a) Worn out, dry and ill.

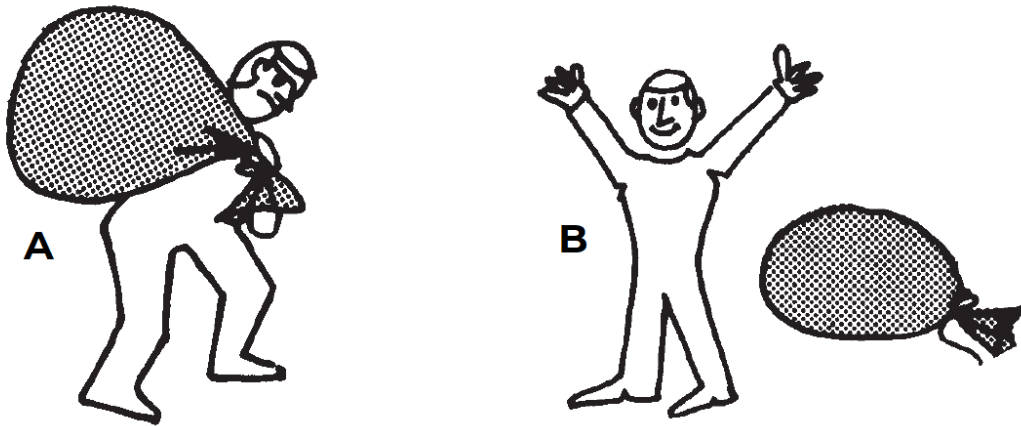
b) Full of life.

c) Strong and healthy.

21. Not admitting his sin brought sickness and spiritual dryness to David, but when he a) _____ to God he received the
b) _____ of his sins and a feeling of well-being.
22. When we confess our sins to God, we are forgiven by him and we feel better in our spirit and even in our body.

In Psalm 32:1–4, which verses tell us of the happiness or blessedness when sins are confessed and forgiven? _____

23.



Which of the sketches could represent a man

- a) who has confessed his sin? _____
- b) who hasn't confessed his sin? _____
24. Name two Psalms in which David confesses his sins to God.
Psalm _____ and Psalm _____

25. There are certain kinds of sickness which are caused by a guilty conscience.

The weight of unconfessed sin bears down upon our minds and bodies until one begins to feel as David did. In these kinds of illnesses relief can only be found by getting rid of the guilt.

A guilty conscience can only be relieved through _____ of
_____.

- 26.** Jealousy, envy, coveting and resentment are only a few of the sins which can harm the mind and affect the physical well-being of a person.

What is the only way to deal with these sins?

- 27.** So that unconfessed sins don't mount up, it is essential to keep short accounts with God.

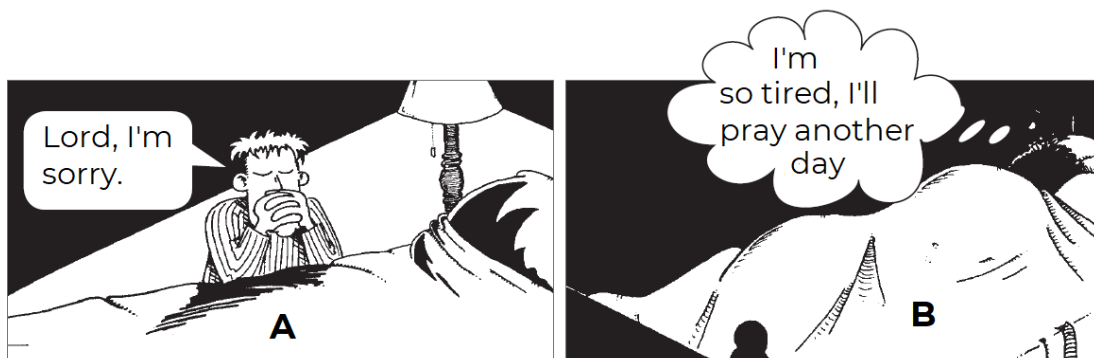
It is better

- a) to pay for the things we buy every time we go to the store.
- b) to run up an account which we find difficult to pay at the end of the month.
- 28.** When we run up long accounts with God, the moment arises when we spoil the fellowship we have with other Christians as well as with God.

What are the results of keeping long accounts with God?

- a) The joy and happiness of sins forgiven.
- b) Avoiding other Christians.
- c) Not enjoying fellowship with God.
- d) The relief of being at peace with God.
- e) A barrier between you and God.
- f) A barrier between you and other Christians.
- 29.** Which of the following verses tells of the benefit of keeping short accounts with God?
- a. Matthew 5:1 b. Matthew 5:25 c. Ephesians 4:26–27

23.



Which sketch shows

a) long accounts? _____ b) short accounts? _____

31. a) Does the man with the tray, on the Title Page of this Lesson 2A, keep long or short accounts with God? _____

b) What does keeping “long accounts” with God mean?

c) What harmful effects can this have on us?

32. On the other hand, what are the results of confession?

a) Spiritual, and sometimes physical, well-being.

b) Spiritual and sometimes physical illness.

c) Restored fellowship with God.

d) Restored fellowship with other Christians.

e) A barrier between you and God.

f) Barriers between Christian people.

33. a) However, not all illnesses are caused by sin. Therefore confession of sin results in physical well-being

always.

sometimes.

never.

b) On the other hand, genuine confession of sin, by faith, leads to spiritual well-being

always.

sometimes.

never.

34. What are these three the results of?

- Spiritual and sometimes physical health.
- Fellowship with God.
- Fellowship with other Christians.

_____ our _____

35. I hope you can now understand why the people had to confess their sins before they were baptised by John the Baptist.



a) To whom should we always confess our sins? _____

b) Why? _____

c) When should we confess our sins to another person?

d) What else should we do? _____

36. What are the three results of confessing our sins and knowing we are forgiven?



Now do **Test 2.1**.



Congratulations on finishing Lesson 1 successfully.

In the next lesson, we will see how to use the Bible as a pattern for confessing our sins.

Don't forget to go to the Group Meeting. It is an essential part of the course.1.



Reflecting on this lesson

Note down in your notebook anything from today's lesson:

- that you want to discuss in your group meeting;
- that is significant for your own personal faith.

Spend some time in prayer asking God to help

Feedback to Lesson 1

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. confessed/ sins | 16. To forgive us our sins | c) A conscience worried by guilt; |
| 2. a) God
b) God | 17. a. b. c. | 31. c) broken fellowship with God and other Christians; |
| 3. Psalm 51 | 18. a. | sometimes even physical sickness as well as spiritual dryness (similar) |
| 4. d. | 19. a) Verses 3 and 4
b) Verse 5 | 32. a. c. d. |
| 5. a. | 20. a. | 33. a) sometimes
b) always |
| 6. God/ harmed | 21. a) confessed
b) forgiveness | 34. Confessing/ sins |
| 7. a) sin/ God
b) When we have harmed them (similar) | 22. Verses 1 and 2 | 35. a) God
b) Because all sin is against God
c) When we have harmed them
d) Put things right (restitution) |
| 8. b. c. d. | 23. a) B
b) A | 36. Spiritual and sometimes physical health/ Fellowship with God/
Fellowship with other Christians (any order) |
| 9. restitution | 24. Psalms 32 and 51 | |
| 10. Jesus | 25. confession/ sin | |
| 11. a) 1 b) 3 c) 2 | 26. Confession | |
| 12. To return things to how they were before the harm was done | 27. a. | |
| 13. a. b. c. e. | 28. b. c. e. f. | |
| 14. Pay for repairs (Restitution) | 29. b. c. | |
| 15. a) God b) harmed | 30. a) B b) A | |
| | 31. a) Long
b) Not confessing sins immediately | |

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