

Christian Life

1. The Bible
2. Health and sickness
3. Riches and poverty
4. Prayer
5. Truth and deceit

Instruction for the teacher

- As a teacher, you need to understand that there is an ongoing spiritual fight between Satan, who wants to deceive people, and God, who wants people to know the truth. When teaching, you must be ready to deal with this spiritual reality (Ephesians 6.10-18).
- Some of the students may be people who have been teaching false teachings. Others may be people who have been deceived. Ask God for wisdom to address them when teaching.
- Be very clear in what you say: don't compromise. Be kind and patient when you teach God's truth: we don't want people to take offence because of the way being taught. Show them the Biblical truths and let them decide what they want to follow.
- Encourage the students to read the Bible to discover what God says. Even our lessons must be examined and are subject to the authority of the Bible.
- The lessons teach us about Christian life. Without Christ as our personal Saviour, we can't live a Christian life and we can't see and understand what God wants us to know. Therefore, emphasize in every lesson the importance and possibility of being reconciled with God through Jesus Christ.

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord,
and in the power of His might. Put on the
whole armour of God, that ye may be able to
stand against the wiles of the devil –
Ephesians 6.10 and 11*

Lesson 1 The Bible

Materials

- Bible
- Blackboard
- Chalk

1. Welcome (10 minutes)

- Welcome everyone
- Explain that in these lessons we will learn about practical Christianity.
- All the lessons will be based upon what the Bible teaches.

Practical information

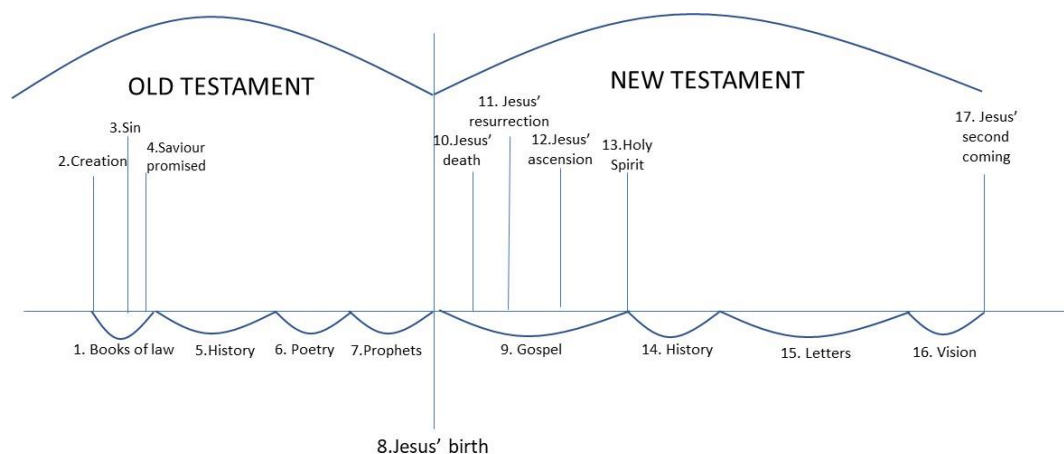
- Every lesson will start at o'clock. Don't be late, otherwise we'll run out of time.
- It's important to attend all lessons.
- The students need to bring a Bible to the lessons. We will need them during the lessons.
- In the last lesson we'll write an exam (the teacher will choose if the exam will be written or not). It won't be difficult to pass the exam if you attend all lessons.

Explain the rules

- Children aren't allowed during the lessons (babies allowed if they don't disturb).
- Don't walk in and out during the lesson.
- Be serious and listen to the teacher. Participate freely.
- Ask God for a blessing on this lesson.

2. Line throughout the Bible, point 1-6 (30 minutes)

- Ask the students why it is important to know what God says to us through the Bible.
Answer: Read 2 Timothy 3.15-17 for them. Explain that through the Bible we can get to know the Saviour Jesus and we learn how to live for God.
- Ask the students to name the Bible books.
- Explain that the Bible consists of two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament. They are both God's Word. However, there is a difference.
- Draw a horizontal line on the blackboard. Introduce the line throughout the Bible by drawing the following picture, step by step.



1. The Bible starts with 5 books that explain the way God wanted His people, the Israelites, to live in relation with Him.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2. God created everything and everyone good (Genesis 1 and 2). When God created everything, people lived in peace with Him, with each other and the rest of creation. God is the Owner of everything. Therefore, we must obey Him.

3. Men decided to disobey God: Adam and Eve sinned. We now live in a broken relationship with God, ourselves, the people around us and creation. We don't see ourselves anymore in the way God intended. Some act and think as if they are God, others don't value themselves anymore. We have broken relationships with others. That's why people fight, hate, abuse, are self-centred, etc. We fail to live in harmony with creation. We can misuse creation for our own benefit. We have to deal with sickness and death.

4. Out of mercy, God promised to send a Saviour to reconcile everything that was broken (Genesis 3.15). In Genesis 3.15 God told the snake that there would be a fight. This does not only mean that people will hate snakes. It also means that there would be a fight between Satan and God: Satan would try to destroy people (as a snake that bites people in their ankles) but God would send a Saviour to conquer Satan (if the snake's head is crushed it means that it dies and has no power anymore). That Saviour is Jesus Christ (if we read Luke 3.23-38 we'll find that Jesus was born into a family that descended from Adam and Eve).

5. A lot happened, but God kept the nation Israel as His people despite their sin and many problems. This is all history.

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

6. The books of poetry are experiential. This means that in those books we read about the spiritual experience of God's people in all different circumstances.

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

3. Discussion

- Tell the students to sit in groups of three to four people. Give them a chance to discuss and answer these questions:
 - What kind of a person is a prophet?
 - What kind of work does a prophet do?
- Discuss together. Ask many questions to find out and understand what the students think about prophets in the Bible and nowadays.

4. Line throughout the Bible, point 7-17 (60 minutes)

7. Prophets taught the people about God, sin and salvation. They called the people to repent and repeatedly mentioned God's promise to send a Saviour to reconcile them with God.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

There are a few things that the prophets have in common:

- **They spoke on behalf of God, Who spoke directly to them** (Jeremiah 1.2, Jeremiah 46.1, Ezekiel 3.16-17, Hosea 1.2 and Joel 1.1).

Nowadays we have the Bible of which we are sure that it is God's Word. God speaks to us through Jesus Christ and we read His words in the Bible (Hebrews 1.1). Every revelation, teaching and idea must be tested and compared to the Bible. If it contradicts with what the Bible teaches, that revelation, teaching or idea must be rejected.

- **They taught how the Israelites had to respond to God's special care for them** (Ezekiel 16.1-43, Jeremiah 7.3-11, Amos 4.6-11 and Isaiah 1).

The prophets emphasized that God loves His people and He cares for them. It was the Israelites' responsibility to love and obey Him, but they failed to do it. They served other gods, disobeyed His law, refused to repent and didn't do what is right. It was a prophet's duty to point these sins out and call the Israelites to repent (Jeremiah 35.15).

- **They warned of a devastating judgment on all sins** (Isaiah 2.12-22, Joel 2.1-11, Zephaniah 1.7-18).

God's judgment is often called *the day of the LORD*. It is often in this context that the prophets prophesied what would happen in the future: they told the Israelites what would happen if they continued to sin and also what would happen if they repented from their sin. The purpose of prophesying was to call people to repent from their sin.

- **They taught about God's merciful promise of renewal and reconciliation through a suffering and dying Saviour** (Isaiah 9.1-7, Isaiah 11.1-16, Isaiah 53, Jeremiah 31.31-40, Ezekiel 36.22-32).

That Saviour would be a Mediator to bring both Israelites and people outside Israel (the gentiles) to God through the Holy Spirit. Through the Saviour there would be cleansing of sin and hope of renewal of heaven and earth. **This promised Saviour is God's Son Jesus!** Everything the prophets prophesied about the Saviour was fulfilled in Jesus' life.

Read for them the following verses:

1. Isaiah 7.14 and Matthew 1.20-23 – Jesus would be born from a virgin
2. Micah 5.2 and Matthew 2.1-6 – Jesus the Ruler would be born in Bethlehem
3. Isaiah 53.7 and Matthew 27.12-14 – Jesus kept quiet despite being accused
4. Zachariah 13.7 and Mark 14.27 and Mark 14.50 – Jesus' disciples would run away when Jesus would be taken captive. He was left alone to suffer.

If the students want more examples, you can read for them: Zachariah 9.9 and Matthew 21.4-7, Isaiah 53.1 and John 12.37-38, and Hosea 1.11 and Matthew 2.13-15.

8. **Jesus was born.** That is what the New Testament starts with. We remember this on Christmas.

9. **The first four books of the New Testament are called books of the Gospel.**

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

They do not only teach about Jesus' birth, but also teach about:

10. Jesus' death (Good Friday) to reconcile sinners with God by forgiving their sins. He was buried.
11. After 3 days, Jesus rose from the dead (Easter)
12. After 40 days, Jesus returned to Heaven (Ascension Day).

13. The book of Acts starts with the story of the **sending of the Holy Spirit** (Pentecost Day, 10 days after Ascension Day). The Holy Spirit was promised before Jesus went to Heaven (John 14.26, John 16.7). He taught people to repent from their sins and believe in the Saviour, Jesus.
14. **The rest of the book Acts tells how the young Christian church grew.**
15. **Letters written by different people teach Christians what to believe and how to live.**
Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1 and 2 and 3 John, Jude
16. **The last book of the Bible tells what will happen before Jesus comes again.**
Revelation
17. **The last pages of the Bible tell us that heaven and earth will be renewed.** God's people, who are forgiven from their sin, will be with Him forever. The others will be in hell forever.

3. Break (10 minutes)

- If the students want, let them play a game during the break. Split the group in three groups. Give them a letter, for example 'a'. Allow every group to come up with as many Biblical names starting with the letter 'a'. Give them a point for every correct name mentioned.

4. Reading the Bible – the difference between the Old and New Testament (30 minutes)

- Explain that the Bible is a special Book that needs our attention when reading/listening. We need to know what kind of a Book the Bible is. Knowing the difference between the Old Testament and New Testament helps us to understand the Bible better.
- Explain the following differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament:
 - a. As New Testament Christians we are no longer told to keep certain Old Testament commandments, for example those concerning offerings.
In the Old Testament, Saviour Jesus was promised. God wanted the Israelites to be reminded of the need of a Saviour continuously. Therefore, He told the Israelites to do certain rituals that pointed to Jesus. For example, the offering of animals to point to forgiveness. In the New Testament, after Jesus came, people are no longer told to keep the Old Testament commandments concerning offerings (for example Hebrews 10.11-18 in which Paul explains that Jesus once died to forgive sins and offerings are therefore not needed anymore).
 - b. In the Old Testament, God's blessing is mostly material and earthly. In the New Testament, it is mostly spiritual and eternal. In the Old Testament, God shows His goodness to the Israelites and the people around them mostly through material blessings (prosperity, help, fertility, health, safety, good harvests). That's why we read about a direct relationship between obedience and prosperity in the Old Testament (for example in Deuteronomy 28 and Leviticus 26). Material blessings were used to attract people to become part of Israel in order to serve and glorify God.
In the New Testament, we read more about spiritual blessings than about material blessings. Material blessings are not granted in the New Testament. According to the New Testament, God blesses His people especially with spiritual and eternal blessings,

like God's presence, salvation, forgiveness, indwelling of the Holy Spirit and eternal life (for example Ephesians 1.3-14).

In the Old Testament, people from outside Israel had to be attracted to become part of Israel to serve God. But now, in the New Testament, the calling for God's people is to go out and teach all nations that God is the God of all nations, not only of the Israelites. (therefore, material blessings are no longer given with the purpose to attract people). God wants His people to teach the Gospel of Jesus so that His power will be seen through blessing people with redemption and reconciliation. That is what we may expect and ask from God; not material blessings in the first place, although God is able to bless us with material blessings if that is what pleases Him.

- Therefore, if we want to know what the Bible teaches on a certain topic, we also need to know what the Bible teaches about the same topic in other parts of the Bible. If we only use one verse when preaching or teaching, we can easily say something that contradicts with other verses in the Bible.

5. Reading the Bible – contextual reading – Bible study (30 minutes)

For this part, we'll read verses about wealth and prosperity. Don't go too deep, but stick to the verse and its brief explanation, as we'll learn more about it in lesson 2.

- If we want to know what God says in a specific verse, it helps a lot to look at the context. Some examples:
 1. Read Matthew 6.33 for the students.
 - Ask them what this verse means.
 - Explain that this verse is often used to teach that born-again Christians (who are in God's Kingdom) will get whatever they like to have.
 - Now read Matthew 6.31-34.
 - Explain the meaning of Matthew 6.33 from the context of verse 31, 32 and 34: God says that His people don't need to be worried about food and clothing, but be focused on Him. He says that He will care for them. 'Having food and clothing' is different from being rich!
Read carefully: the Bible says these things referring to the things mentioned in verse 31. So it means that we won't lack food or clothing. It does not mean that everything else we may desire will be given to us.
 2. Read Galatians 6.7 for the students.
 - Ask them what this verse means.
 - Explain that this verse is often used to teach that if we give, God will reward us with more: 'Sow a seed!'
 - Now read Galatians 6.8.
 - Explain the meaning of Galatians 6.7 from the context of verse 8: God speaks about eternal, spiritual blessings, not about riches. It means that if we live through God's Holy Spirit who guides us, we'll live the way God wants, and do what pleases Him. Our reward will be eternal life with Him in Heaven.
 3. Read 2 Corinthians 8.9 for the students.
 - Ask them what this verse means.
 - Explain that this verse is often used to teach that God's people are supposed to be rich.

- Now read 2 Corinthians 8.7-9.
 - Explain the meaning of 2 Corinthians 8.9 from the context of verse 7 and 8: God speaks about the abundance of faith, utterance, knowledge, diligence, love and grace. This verse cannot be used to prove the point that God's people must be rich.
- Conclude by repeating that if we read the Bible, we must be careful not to take verses out of their context. This requires us to study the Bible, otherwise we're easily misled!

6. Finish (5 minutes)

- Summarize what was taught today: If we want to understand what God tells us through the Bible, we need to read carefully, study the Bible and the Bible verses. We need to understand the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Most of all it is important to pray when reading or listening to the Bible, because it is God Who helps us understand His Word.
- Pray.

Lesson 2 Health and sickness

Materials

- Bible
- Blackboard
- Chalk

1. Welcome (10 minutes)

- Welcome the students.
- Pray.
- Summarize what was taught last time: If we want to understand what God tells us through the Bible, we need to read carefully, and study the Bible and Bible verses. We need to understand the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Most of all, it is important to pray when reading or listening to the Bible, because it is God Who helps us understand His Word.

2. The source of sickness (30 minutes)

- Ask the youth why people get sick: where does sickness come from?
- Explain that God created everything. He made it perfect. No one was sick. But Adam and Eve, the first people on earth, sinned: they disobeyed God by eating a forbidden fruit. As result:
 - The relationship between God and us is broken. We are separated from God because of our sin and sinful nature.
 - How we relate to ourselves is broken. We don't see ourselves anymore the way God wants us to. Some act and think as if they are God, others don't value themselves anymore.
 - The relationship with others is broken. That's why people fight, hate, abuse, are self-centred, etc.
 - The relationship between us and creation is broken. We fail to live in harmony with creation. We can misuse creation for our own benefit. We have to deal with sickness and death.
- The main cause of sickness is the first sin in paradise. Since that time everything is broken and we can get sick due to several different causes (as we'll learn in the Bible study). Sickness is not necessarily a curse from Satan that needs deliverance!

3. Singing (10 minutes)

- Teach them a song, for example 'Muthange mwafuna' or 'Yang'anani kwa Ine'

4. The Bible about sickness – Bible study (90 minutes)

The origin of problems

- Read Job 2.7 and John 9.1-3 together and answer the questions.

1. According to these verses, what can be some of the causes of sickness and problems?

Answer: There can be different causes. It can be a certain personal sin (John 5.14), Satan (Job 2.7), our own behaviour (1 Peter 4.15), and it can be God who uses it for a certain purpose (2 Kings 15.5, John 9.1-3). Note that God is good and does not do anything bad,

but He can use bad things in the way He wants for His own glory. We cannot say that everyone who is sick is being attacked by Satan or a bad spirit!

2. How can we find out the cause of problems in our own lives?

Answer: We must reflect on our lives and ask God if there's something He wants to show us. Don't use forbidden means, like going to the witch doctor (Deuteronomy 18.9-14). Don't try to find the cause in other people's lives, because it is something very personal. Sometimes we simply can't know the cause (like Job). Leave it to God.

3. What would you answer to people who say that God never allows His people to get sick?

Answer: That is not true. Sometimes we can't understand God. He can use sickness and problems for His own glory. Trust Him for His wisdom and power.

Suffering as part of Christianity

- Read Philippians 1.29 and 2 Timothy 3.12 together and answer the following question.

4. How would you answer people who say that born-again Christians will always be successful and healthy?

Answer: God helps and keeps His people (Isaiah 43.2) but that doesn't mean that they don't struggle. Suffering is part of being a Christian (2 Timothy 3.12, Acts 14.22). God can use suffering to teach His people (Hebrews 12.6-10). The Bible tells us about faithful believers who were sick: Trophimus (2 Timothy 4.20), Lazarus (John 11.3), Elisha (2 Kings 13.14), Epaphroditus (Philippians 2.25-27), Tabitha/Dorcas (Acts 9.37). The Bible doesn't blame them for being sick and in trouble.

- Read Isaiah 53.3-5 together and answer the following questions.

5. Who does these verses speak about?

Answer: They speak about the Lord Jesus who suffered and died on the cross.

6. What was the purpose of Jesus dying on the cross?

Answer: To reconcile sinners with God by taking their sins away so that they are righteous in God's eyes (John 1.29, 1 John 4.10, Titus 2.14, 2 Corinthians 5.21).

7. Verse 4 is often used to show that God always wants His people to be healthy. What can we say to those who teach that?

Answer: The purpose of His death on the cross was to reconcile us with God (Romans 5.10, 1 Peter 3.18). This means that everyone who believes in Jesus is immediately set free from the damnation of sin. The Bible doesn't say that Christians will be immediately set free from sickness. We still suffer and get sick until Jesus comes again to completely renew everything, even our bodies. Think of the example of the sun. Before the sun rises we can see its light: that's proof that the sun will soon be seen. It is the same in Christianity: our souls are delivered from all consequences of sin and the full redemption of our bodies will follow later (Romans 8.18-23, Philippians 3.21).

So when Isaiah 53.5 speaks about healing, it means being healed now from sin that is like a disease and being healed from all sickness and suffering in the future.

Responding to suffering

- Read 2 Corinthians 12.8-10, 2 Corinthians 1.3-4 and James 5.13-15 together and answer the following questions.

8. What do these verses teach us about how to respond to suffering?

Answer: Be strong and remain in the faith (John 16.33), rejoice, pray and understand that suffering in a Christian way has good fruits: patience, experience and hope

(Romans 5.3-5). Whatever we learn through suffering, we must share with others so that they can be encouraged (2 Corinthians 1.3-4). In 2 Corinthians 4.16-18 and 2 Corinthians 5.1 God teaches us that we should not be discouraged: in difficult situations, God renews us to His glory.

9. Read James 5.13-15 again. What is it that heals the sick, according to these verses?

Answer: It is prayer, because the power is not in us, but in God. Oil is mentioned as being a permitted medicine. Note that it is not the oil that heals, but God. Don't put your hope in medicines or rituals, but in God (2 Chronicles 16.12). Acknowledge that prayer is not meant to manipulate God (we'll learn more about that in lesson 4).

10. What do you think of people saying that the remedy to suffering lies in a prayer being made by a certain pastor, prophet, bishop or other person?

Answer: In Bible we don't read about prophets saying: come to me so that God can help you. That would be putting themselves in the centre, not God! That is a huge difference! Those who teach this are false prophets. The Bible encourages us to pray for one another. Every Christian has the same access to God (Ephesians 3.12). The Bible doesn't leave any room for any other mediator than Jesus alone. We'll learn more about this in lesson 4.

The end of suffering

- Read Revelation 20.12-15 and Revelation 21.1-4 together and answer the following questions.

11. Read Revelation 20.15 again. The bodies of those who were not written in the book of life will suffer for ever. What does it mean to not be written in the book of life?

Answer: It means to be without spiritual life. Everyone who has not received Jesus, is spiritually dead, no matter how committed that person has been in church, perhaps even having performed miracles (Matthew 7.22). Only those who surrender themselves to Jesus for salvation and reconciliation, who receive spiritual life from God, are written in the book of life.

12. What do these verses teach us about the bodies of God's people?

Answer: God will care for them. He will end their suffering and sickness forever. In Philippians 3.20-21 we read that the bodies of His people will be like Jesus' body, which means to be perfect.

13. What does it mean that the former things have passed away (Revelation 21.4)?

Answer: It means that heaven and earth will be renewed. Everything will be new. On the new earth there will be no suffering and sickness. There will be no sickness for those who have received forgiveness of their sins (Isaiah 33.24).

14. Where will you be in eternity?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves. Urge them to find salvation in Jesus.

4. Break (10 minutes)

- If the students want, let them play a game during the break. Let one of the students come in front and think of something (e.g., a dog). Let the others ask the student questions to find out what the student has in mind but the student is only allowed to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the questions being asked. So the people need to ask questions that can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' to find out what the student has in mind.

5. Case studies (45 minutes)

- Tell the students to sit in small groups and assign each group to discuss one of the following case studies.

1. Misheck and Dainess

Misheck and Dainess have 3 children. One day, one of the children gets very sick. Misheck and Dainess don't agree on what to do. Misheck wants to wait for some days to see if their child gets better. He wants to give God a chance to intervene. Dainess wants them to go to the hospital for help. Dainess' grandmother says that the fastest and easiest is to bring the child to the witch doctor who lives next door.

1. What could the problem be if Misheck and Dainess wait before they do something? What could the problem be if they follow Dainess' advise to bring the child to the hospital? What could the problem be if they listen to Dainess' grandmother who told them to bring the child to the witch doctor?
2. What would you advise Misheck and Dainess to do?

2. Patricia

Patricia is a single mother with two children. She has repented from her sin and believes in Jesus as her Lord and Saviour. One day Patricia gets very sick. People fear that she may die. Patricia didn't expect herself to get that sick. She thinks, 'The Bible says that all things work together for good to them that love God (Romans 8.28). I love God, so why did I get sick?'

1. Do you know people who believe that Christians aren't supposed to get sick?
2. What would you say to Patricia? If you have a Bible, read Romans 8.28 and 29 and try to explain these verses.

3. Oscar

Oscar has not been well since last year. In the hospital they found that he has a problem with his heart. He was given medicine. But nothing changed. He went to a prophet to buy anointed oil. Oscar has been using it for some time but he doesn't notice any difference. Oscar wonders what the problem could be.

1. Do you know people who use anointed oil and were healed?
2. Do you know people who used anointed oil but were not healed?
3. What is it that causes oil to be anointed? Where does anointed oil come from?
4. What could the reasons be that Oscar didn't get healed, although he used anointed oil?
5. What would you advise Oscar?

4. Marita

Marita is an old lady. She has cancer. Every day she is in pain. However, she doesn't complain much. When her children ask her how she feels, Marita says, 'I'm in a lot of pain. Every day when I wake up, I don't know how to get through the day. But I know that my God cares for me. He has saved me from my sin and He gives me strength. It is not easy at all. I've asked Him often to heal me, but He hasn't done it thus far. If this is what is the best, I want to accept it and thank Him. His will be done in my life'.

1. What does it mean to say 'Your will be done'?
2. Think about your own life. How do you respond to sickness and other difficulties?

5. Christoffer

Last year, when Christoffer travelled to Lusaka, he was involved in an accident. The bus he was on collided with another bus. Some passengers died. Many were injured. Christoffer was also injured. He was kept in the hospital for three weeks. People in Christoffer's village start to think over a reason why the accident happened.

1. What different causes of problems have you heard people speaking about?
2. What does the Bible say about the causes of problems?
3. How must we respond when we face problems?

- After 10 minutes, discuss the answers together. The right answers are as follows.

Misheck and Dainess

1. **What could the problem be if Misheck and Dainess waited before they did something? What could the problem be if they follow Dainess' advise to bring the child to the hospital? What could the problem be if they listen to Dainess' grandmother to bring the child to the witch doctor?**

Answer: If they wait, they would ignore the ways God provides to find solutions.

If they bring the child to the hospital, they could forget that they need God's help and blessing on the treatment.

If they bring the problem to the witch doctor, they would disobey God, who doesn't allow us to seek help from a witch doctor (Deuteronomy 18.10-13, Leviticus 19.31, Isaiah 8.19).

2. **What would you advise Misheck and Dainess to do?**

Answer: They should ask God for help and wisdom and go to the hospital while praying God to bless the treatment received.

Patricia

1. **Do you know people who believe that Christians aren't supposed to get sick?**

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. **What would you say to Patricia? If you have a Bible, read Romans 8.28 and 29 and try to explain these verses.**

Answer: Christians can get sick. Based on Romans 8.28 only, we may think that God wants His people to always be healthy and never to be sick, because being healthy is good. But if we read Romans 8.29, we discover that God speaks about the good of becoming like Jesus. God causes His people to become like Jesus, no matter in what circumstances they are.

Oscar

1. **Do you know people who use anointed oil and were healed?**

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. **Do you know people who used anointed oil but they were not healed?**

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

3. Where does anointed oil come from? What causes that oil to be anointed?

Answer: Let them share ideas.

In the Old Testament we read about the ingredients for anointed oil that was used to mark the Tabernacle and its furnishings as set apart for God (Exodus 30.23-24). The Bible doesn't say that there was spiritual power in the anointed oil. God didn't allow anyone to reproduce the anointed oil (Exodus 30.32-33).

In the New Testament we also read about oil (Matthew 6.17, Mark 6.13, James 5.14) but the Bible doesn't say that that oil was anointed. In the New Testament, the Bible talks about ordinary oil. In the New Testament we don't read anything that suggests that we must use anointed oil, nor do we read that God forbids it.

Nowadays, many people believe that there is power in anointed oil that comes from God's special people. We need to be careful:

- What kind of power is it and where does it come from?
- In lesson 4 we'll learn that prophets don't have any special power. All Christians are allowed to come to God boldly and with access.
- Often people trust the oil and not God.

4. What could the reasons be that Oscar didn't get healed, although he used anointed oil?

Answer: Let them share ideas. They need to understand that there is no power in anointed oil, but in Jesus. Whatever we do or use, it can only work if God wants it to work.

5. What would you advise Oscar?

Answer: Don't depend on the oil, but on God. Oscar needs to learn to say: 'Your will be done'.

Marita

1. What does it mean to say 'Your will be done'?

Answer: It means to believe that God's will is good, that He is in control, and to surrender whatever happens to Him. If He heals us, we'll accept His will. If He doesn't heal us, we'll accept that as well. This is a huge lesson. Don't think that it's easy to deny our will wholeheartedly and to accept His will. This can only be done by grace through Jesus.

In 2 Corinthians 4.16-18 and 2 Corinthians 5.1 we see that even when we are sick, we can have hope.

2. Think about your own life. How do you respond to sickness and other difficulties?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

Christoffer

1. What different causes of problems have you heard people speaking about?

Answer: Let them share their ideas.

2. What does the Bible say about of the causes of problems?

Answer: The Bible says that the cause of all problems is the first sin of Adam and Eve in Paradise. That is when all different problems started. When we read the Bible, we can find several specific reasons why people face problems, e.g. a personal sin, Satan, their own behaviour, or God who uses it for a certain purpose (see Bible study question 1).

3. How must we respond when we face problems?

Answer: We must always turn to God. Use ways and means that He allows us to use. Leave it to Him to do what is best.

5. Finish (5 minutes)

- Summarize what was taught today: Suffering and being sick are part of life. There is no exception for Christians. We must surrender ourselves to God and continue being strong in the faith, trusting God for His wisdom to keep, help and teach us through His Holy Spirit. We may use permitted medicines and depend on God to heal us. We ask Him to do what is best for us and to His glory.
- Pray.

Lesson 3 Riches and poverty

Materials

- Bible
- Blackboard
- Chalk

1. Welcome (5 minutes)

- Welcome the students.
- Pray.
- Summarize what was taught last time: Suffering and being sick are part of life. There is no exception for Christians. We must surrender ourselves to God and continue being strong in the faith, trusting God for His wisdom to keep, help and teach us through His Holy Spirit. We may use permitted medicines and depend on God to heal us. We ask Him to do what is best for us and to His glory.

2. Game (10 minutes)

Answers to the statements will be given during the Bible study, so don't spend much time on this part.

- Read the following statements to the students one by one. If they agree, they must raise their hands. If they don't agree, they must not raise their hands. Allow them to explain their answers.
 - a. Poor people are better in helping others than rich people.
 - b. Money can solve every problem.
 - c. Poverty is a curse.
 - d. There is no difference between Christians and non-Christians in the way they use their money.
 - e. If you're poor it is easier to trust God.
 - f. God's people are supposed to be rich.

3. Riches and poverty in the Bible – Bible study (90 minutes)

Everything belongs to God

- Read Jeremiah 27.5 and 1 Samuel 2.7 together and answer the following questions.
 - 1. God is the Creator and Owner of everything. What does it mean that we are His stewards?**
 Answer: It means that we must take care of everything He entrusts to us and give account to God, whether we have little or a lot (Genesis 2.15). We must use whatever we have in the way He wants us to: be just, love mercy and walk humbly with God (Micah 6.8).
 - 2. What would you say to those who say that poverty is a curse from Satan?**
 Answer: God is the Owner of everything and He distributes to people in the way He sees to be best. Rich and poor have are of equal value. Satan can only do something that God allows him to do (see example of Job where Satan had to ask God for permission). Satan and God are not equally powerful: God is the Almighty.

Handling our belongings

- Read Deuteronomy 15.7-8 and Acts 20.35 together and answer the following questions.
 - 3. What do these verses teach about how to respond when God gives us something?**
Answer: Be grateful: don't be proud. Even if we worked hard, it is God who gave us the strength to work. Enjoy what God has given (Ecclesiastes 5.18 and 19). Be generous. Don't exploit the poor and powerless (James 5.1-6).
 - 4. What does Acts 20.35 teach us about the way to find riches?**
Answer: We must work so that we can share from what we have (Ephesians 4.28). God usually blesses people through their work.

Riches as hinderance

- Read Mark 10.24-27 and 1 Timothy 6.5-10 together and answer the following questions.
 - 5. What do these verses teach us about the importance of being rich?**
Answer: It is not important at all. In fact, the Bible warns that riches can hinder us spiritually. The Bible encourages us to be focussed on and prepared for Heaven (Luke 12.33).
 - 6. How can riches hinder us spiritually?**
Answer: The danger is that we are focussed on material, earthly things instead of eternal, heavenly things. Riches can distract us from God and from living the way God wants (Matthew 6.24). Being too worried about riches and daily life shows that our heart is not united with God and we are unfit for Heaven. Example of Moses who knew that it would be better to live with God in poverty than without God in wealth (Hebrews 11.24-26). Ask the students if they are willing to leave riches if it causes them to sin (e.g. stop stealing, stop illegal mining, stop witch craft, stop lying about money).
- Read 2 Corinthians 11.23-27, Hebrews 13.5 and 1 Timothy 6.8 together.
 - 7. What would you answer to those who say that God wants every Christian to be rich?**
Answer: It is not true. We read many examples in the Bible of true believers who were poor (for example, Mark 12.42, 1 Kings 17.12). The Bible doesn't blame them for being poor. The Bible warns against striving for wealth.
 - 8. Does God allow us to always be longing for more?**
Answer: God wants us to be satisfied with what we have. If we lack something, we may surely ask Him, but don't be greedy. The Bible encourages us neither to long for riches nor for poverty (Proverbs 30.8 and 9).
 - 9. What is the only way to be satisfied with what we have?**
Answer: We can be truly satisfied if we know that God is our personal God; if we are reconciled with Him through Jesus. If He is our God, He cares for us, He knows what we need, He does what is best for us and we trust Him that He'll never leave us (Hebrews 13.5). This does not mean that we'll always live in abundance (see the answer to question 7).

True riches

- Read Luke 16.19-26 and Revelation 3.17-18 together and answer the following questions:
 - 10. In which way was the rich man poor?**
Answer: He was poor because he was not ready to meet God. He had focussed on earthly, temporal wealth instead of eternal wealth, which is to be reconciled with God.

11. What does it mean to be truly rich according to these verses?

Answer: It means to be brought back into a good relationship with God through Jesus the Saviour. Through Jesus alone our sins can be forgiven so that we are brought back to God. Because of Jesus alone, people will be allowed to be with God in Heaven forever, where they will never lack anything anymore.

12. Read Revelation 3.17 and 18 again. What does it mean to be spiritually poor?

Answer: It means to be separated from God. To be without hope of eternal life. To be alone, sinful and under God's wrath because of sin. To be without spiritual life. This is the situation of everyone who is not reconciled with God. We may have a lot of money, but if we live without Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we're poor.

A rich God for poor sinners

- Read Isaiah 55.1 and Ephesians 2.4-7 together and answer the following questions.

13. We read that God is *rich* in mercy and grace (Ephesians 2.4). What does that mean?

Answer: It means that God never lacks mercy or grace for anyone who comes to Him for salvation. God is willing and able to save anyone. Out of mercy and grace, He also keeps His people in all circumstances (whether riches or poverty) and He brings them home to Heaven.

14. How can we personally know God's mercy and grace?

Answer: Through Jesus, the Saviour and Mediator. Salvation is a gift (Isaiah 55.1) that God gives out of mercy and grace. That gift is worth more than anything on earth. Being reconciled with the Owner of the universe! The Lord of hosts as our Father, who looks after us! To be allowed to be with Him in eternity! Those who receive this great gift are called to glorify God in every circumstance, whether it is in poverty or riches (1 Corinthians 6.20).

- Conclude by saying that God can surely bless us with earthly things, but it is wrong to be self-centred by being focused on wealth.

4. Break (10 minutes)

- If the students want, let them play a game during the break. Ask one of the students to come in from of the group. Let the others ask him/her questions. The student in front is not allowed to say 'no' when answering. Once the student has used the word 'no' he/she must sit down and someone else must be given a chance.

5. Case studies (45 minutes)

- Tell the students to sit in small groups and assign each group to discuss one of the following case studies.

1. George

George works hard at his farm but he doesn't see the fruits of his work. One evening he decides to call a prophet who preaches on the radio. The prophet tells George that he sees a spirit that hinders prosperity. The prophet tells George to visit him to destroy the power of the spirit. The prophet says that God wants George to always be rich.

1. Have you heard people saying that God always wants His people to be rich?
2. What would you say to George to help him?

2. Davison and Patricia

Davison and Patricia are married. They have 6 children. Davison works hard to provide his family with everything they need. Davison and his wife love to help others who are in need. They don't have much themselves, but they help others as well. They say, 'God is so merciful that He gave us His Son Jesus as the greatest Gift ever to be reconciled with Him. God is merciful and He helps us every day. Therefore, we want to help the less privileged'.

1. Do you know people who love to share with others?
2. In which ways can we help others?

3. Albert and Anna

Albert and Anna have one child who is seven years old. Albert does piece work and manages to find enough money for his family. Anna is not satisfied with the money Albert earns. She finds a job at a restaurant where she prepares food every day of the week. Because of the money Anna earns, they manage to send their child to a private school. However, after some time Albert starts to complain that his wife fails to do the work at home that she's supposed to do.

1. Explain how we see in this story that being focused on riches can cause problems and can hinder us.
2. What would you advise Albert and Anna?

4. Lovemore and Vestina

Lovemore married Vestina last year. They often lack food and clothes at their home. Vestina encourages Lovemore to do something to help them, but Lovemore answers: 'If I start looking for money, that means that we are not satisfied with what we have and that is sin. Besides that, the Bible says 'Blessed are the poor' so in God's eyes it is better to be poor.' Vestina isn't happy at all about it, but Lovemore does not want to change his mind. If they've nothing to eat, Vestina sometimes steals from her neighbour.

1. Do you know people who believe that the poor are better believers than the rich?
2. What would you tell Lovemore and Vestina?

5. Benson and Dalitso

Benson is a member of your church. His friend Dalitso does not go to church. Dalitso often tries to convince Benson to stop going to church. He says, 'There is no God. You're just wasting your time. Instead of going to church on Sundays you should go to work in your field so that you'll have as much maize as I have. You could be rich if you stop going to church and work hard'.

1. Do you know people who don't believe that God exists?
2. What would you advise Benson to answer Dalitso?

6. Kondwerani and Mercy

Kondwerani and Mercy have been married for 3 years and struggle to survive. Mercy says, 'Our pastor is not doing right. All he wants is our money. He is rich because of the offerings. We are poor because we give our money to the pastor.'

1. Do you know people who argue about giving offerings?
2. What would you advise Kondwerani and Mercy?

- After 10 minutes, discuss the answers together. The right answers are as follows.

George

1. Have you heard people saying that God wants His people to always be rich?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What would you say to George to help him?

Answer: It is not a problem to ask wise, Biblical leaders for help and advice. Be careful who you ask for help. George must be aware that both riches and poverty are in God's hand (1 Samuel 2.7). It is not true that every Christian is supposed to be rich (see Bible study in which we learned that many true believers in the Bible were not rich and that God warns us that riches can hinder us).

Davison and Patricia

1. Do you know people who love to share with others?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. In which ways can we help others?

Answer: Let them share ideas. For example: give money to the church so that the church can help where there is a need, share from your harvest, give them some food, speak with them to encourage them and help them find their own ways to support themselves.

Albert and Anna

1. Explain how we see in this story that being focused on riches can cause problems and can hinder us.

- Anna worked every day which means she couldn't attend church programs. How could she be spiritually strong if she only thinks about physical needs and not about spiritual needs?
- Her husband started to complain that she failed to do her duties at home. They had money, but no peace. Let the students discuss what they believe to be the most important.

2. What would you advise Albert and Anna?

Anna must understand that money is not the most important. The most important thing is to know God through Jesus Christ the Saviour and to live according to His will. If riches hinder us from living a godly life, it is better to have less and to be able to obey God. Of course it is important that a family can survive, but in the case of Albert and Anna, they could survive, but it was Anna's longing for abundance that caused the problems.

Lovemore and Vestina

1. Do you know people who believe that the poor are better believers than the rich?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What would you tell Lovemore and Vestina?

Answer: God wants us to work hard to help our families and to help those in need (2 Thessalonians 3.12, Ephesians 4.28). It is not true that the poor automatically are part of God's family. Everyone, whether rich or poor, needs to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ. The Bible doesn't say 'Blessed are the poor' but 'Blessed are the poor *in spirit*' (Matthew 5.3), which means those who understand they don't have anything in themselves that can earn reception by God, but they understand that they lack everything and depend on Jesus alone.

Benson and Dalitso

1. Do you know people who don't believe in God?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What would you advise Benson to answer Dalitso?

Answer: Benson can try to talk to Dalitso. He can explain why he is convinced that there is a God. Everything we have is a gift: we don't own everything. Even if we work hard on our fields, it is God who gave us the strength to do so. Benson needs to pray to God for wisdom and help to speak the right things at the right moment.

Kondwerani and Mercy

1. Do you know people who argue about giving offerings?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What would you advise Kondwerani and Mercy?

Answer: They must find out if their pastor is a sincere Biblical preacher. Some preachers preach just to find money. It may be true that their pastor is a false teacher. In that case, they must look for another church where the true Gospel is being preached. They need to do research (lesson 5). They must understand that God is the owner of everything, so giving offerings is good.

6. Finish (5 minutes)

- Summarize what was taught today: God is the Owner of everything. We must use whatever we have for His glory and live according to His will. The Bible speaks about rich Christians just as it speaks about poor Christians. Riches can hinder us spiritually. The greatest gift is Jesus, the Saviour. Seek to find Him, not wealth in the first place.
- Pray.

Lesson 4 Prayer

Materials

- Bible
- Blackboard
- Chalk

1. Welcome (10 min)

- Welcome the students.
- Pray.
- Summarize what was taught last time: God is the Owner of everything. We must use whatever we have for His glory and live according to His will. The Bible speaks about rich Christians just as it speaks about poor Christians. Riches can hinder us spiritually. The greatest gift is Jesus, the Saviour. Seek to find Him, not wealth in the first place.

2. Answer to prayer (20 minutes)

- Read the following statements to the students one by one. If they agree, they must raise their hands. If they don't agree, they must not raise their hands. Allow them to explain their answers and discuss.

1. God hears every prayer.

Answer: True, God hears all our prayers (Psalm 65.2). Not only the perfect ones or the ones prayed by special people. He hears everything we say (Psalm 94.9).

2. God gives us anything we want as long as we pray.

Answer: Not true. He only gives if we pray according to His will (1 John 5.14).

3. If God answers, He always does it immediately.

Answer: Not true. Sometimes God answers later. Sometimes we don't receive an answer at all. Sometimes God answers in a different way than expected. We must trust God that He knows what is the best and pray what Jesus prayed: Your will be done (Matthew 26.42)

4. If God doesn't answer, it means that God is unfaithful.

Answer: Not true. God can decide not to answer our prayers for several reasons. For example, perhaps what we prayed for is not the best or our prayer was selfish (James 4.3). We must trust Him.

5. Vain repetitions don't make our prayers more likely to be answered.

Answer: True. God tells us not to say the same things again and again (Matthew 6.7, Ecclesiastes 5.2).

6. If God doesn't answer our prayer, it is better to stop praying.

Answer: Not true. God tells us to pray continuously (1 Thessalonians 5.17, Luke 18.1). We must wait for Him and check if we need to transform our prayer to pray according to God's will.

7. If we want God to answer our prayers, we must ask God's special people to pray for us.

Answer: Not true. Other people's prayers don't carry more weight than our own prayers. The Bible encourages us to pray for one another, but there is no such thing as God's special people having more access to God (see below in the Bible study).

3. Praying in Jesus' Name – Bible study (60 minutes)

- Read 1 Timothy 2.1-6 together and answer the following questions:

1. Read verse 5 again. Have you, in your daily life, ever made use of a mediator? If yes, what was the task of that person?

Answer: The duty of a mediator is to reconcile two people/parties that are in conflict.

2. Explain in what way Jesus is the Mediator.

Answer: Jesus is the Mediator between God and men. God is holy and perfect, and He hates sin. Everyone sins. The result is that everyone is in conflict with Him. We'll be separated from God forever in hell, unless our sins are washed away. Out of love and grace, God sent His Son Jesus to be the Mediator between God and men. Jesus mediated between God and men by dying on the cross to forgive sins. Everyone who depends on Jesus alone for forgiveness, is reconciled with God. Without Jesus, there is no hope for any of us to be accepted by God. Jesus is willing and available to be our Mediator.

3. Do you want Jesus to be your only Mediator?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

4. Can Mary, prophets, apostles, pastors and others intervene for us by God?

Answer: No one can intervene for us by God apart from Jesus, God's Son (Ephesians 2.18, Hebrews 7.25). The Bible doesn't leave any room for anyone else to be our Mediator. We don't need a Mediator between us and Jesus, because He is willing to receive anyone who comes to Him (John 6.37).

5. Why must we always pray in Jesus' Name?

Answer: Because Jesus is the only Mediator Who can make us and our prayers acceptable in God's eyes.

- Read Ephesians 3.8-12 together and answer the following questions:

6. Read verse 12 again. What is the reason that Christians may pray boldly and with access?

Answer: Jesus is the reason that Christians may pray boldly. *In whom* refers to Jesus (verse 11). God can hear and answer us because of Jesus alone. If we believe in Jesus, God is no longer far from us, but close, because Jesus has removed our sins that separated us from God (Isaiah 59.2).

7. What does it mean to pray boldly and with access?

Answer: It means that because of Jesus we may approach God without doubt. Not because of who we are or because of our prayers, but because of Jesus, we are confident that God hears us and will answer.

8. Read verse 12 again. What kind of people may come boldly and with access unto the throne of God according to this verse?

Answer: Everyone who has faith in the Lord Jesus. Those people are reconciled with God through Jesus. There is no such thing as some special people who are closer to God than others. All believers have the same access to God because of Jesus (Matthew 7.8: *every one*). We are wrong if we think that God's special people are more likely to be answered. In the Old Testament, before Jesus was born, God had His special people through whom He spoke. But after Jesus' death and resurrection, every believer has direct access to God through Jesus.

- Read John 14.12-14 together and answer the following questions:

9. Read verse 14 again. What does it mean to pray in Jesus' Name?

Answer: It means to be in the same spirit as Jesus. To pray according to His will. To want what He wants. It does not mean to pray whatever we want and just end the prayer by saying 'In Jesus' Name. Amen'. We must reflect on our prayers: are they according to what God wants? When you pray, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you (Romans 8.26).

10. Some people say that we'll always be successful and prosperous as long as we pray in Jesus' Name. What would you answer such people?

Answer: If we read verse 12, we see that God wants His people to do what He did: to serve and glorify God in everything. It is therefore not right to pray 'in Jesus' Name' for a car, a fridge, promotion etc. because that is not God's purpose for us. Our purpose is to glorify God by being Christlike.

- Read Ephesians 2.13-22 together and answer the following questions:

11. Read verse 14 again. Who is the only One who gives true peace?

Answer: Jesus.

12. Read verse 16 again. In which way did Jesus bring peace?

Answer: He brought peace by dying on the cross. By dying on the cross, He reconciled sinners with God. He took away sin (which is enmity).

13. Read verse 18-20 again. What is one of the fruits of Jesus' death according to these verses?

Answer: It is that those who are in Jesus, are close to God.

14. Do we need certain people to do something so that God can come close to us and bless us?

Answer: No, we don't! If we think that we need anyone else to overcome the barrier between God and us, we sin! It is idolatry to think that we need someone else apart from Jesus. We may ask others to pray for us, but don't think that God is so far that we need someone other than Jesus to bring God close to us. The only barrier between God and us is sin, and Jesus alone forgives sin. If we are in Jesus, we are close to God. We are of the household of God because of Jesus (verse 19).

4. Break (10 minutes)

- If the students want, let them play a game during the break. One student starts the game by finishing the sentence: 'I'll be traveling and I carry...' For example: 'I'll be traveling and I carry clothes'. The next person must repeat what was already being said and add something. For example: 'I'll be traveling and I carry clothes and wood'. The next person must repeat the sentence and add another word. When they all fail to remember what was said, you may start the game all over again.

5. Our prayers (20 minutes)

You as a teacher need to understand and remember that people pray differently. God looks at the heart. If students ask you about raising hands or pacing when praying, ask them 'Why do you do that?' Your task is to cause people to think about the question if there's respect in their prayers.

- Ask the students if they've ever been to the chief with a request. Ask them about the importance of showing respect when meeting a chief.
- Explain that when we pray, we enter before God's holy throne. That is an amazing privilege. Not everyone is allowed to visit the Zambian president, but everyone is allowed to come before God through prayer. God deserves all respect when we speak to Him.
- Ask the students in what ways we can show respect when we pray:
 - What do we look at? Why do we do so?
 - What do we do with your hands? Why do we do so?
 - What do we do with our legs/feet? Why do we do so?
 - How do we speak? Why do we do so?
- Conclude by explaining how we can show respect to God. For example, in the following ways.
 - We **close our eyes** to not be distracted by anyone and to be focused on God alone. Don't allow anyone or anything to disturb. Try to find a quiet place. When praying in church, don't allow people to enter and go out during prayer.
 - We **fold our hands** to show that we have no power and wisdom but depend on God.
 - Speak **respectfully**. We can't shout at a chief, nor can we at God. Genesis 18.27.
 - Speak **humbly**. We can't tell a chief what to do, nor can we tell or manipulate God. We praise Him and ask for what we need. It is a good custom to kneel down when praying. Psalm 123.2, Isaiah 57.15.
 - Speak from your **heart**. Don't just copy what others say when they pray. Speak to Him with your own words, from your heart. We may pray the Lord's prayer but it doesn't make sense if we don't understand its meaning and we don't fully agree with it. Psalm 62.8.
 - Be **sincere**. We cannot deceive God. He knows everything. If you say to God that you humbly come before Him, but meanwhile you are proud of yourself or your prayer, you are not sincere. Words only don't please God. Be honest. Hebrews 4.13, Matthew 15.7 and 8.
 - **Believe** that God hears us and will answer in the best way, because He knows what is best. Trust Him and long for His answer. Hebrews 11.6, John 4.24.

6. Case studies (30 minutes)

- Tell the students to sit in small groups and assign each group to discuss one of the following case studies.

Edson

Edson has been washing cars for many years. This year he managed to get his driving license, but he struggles to find work. He's been praying about it but nothing has changed. One evening he calls a prophet who preaches and prays on the radio. Edson explains his problem to the prophet. The prophet answers: 'I have opened a door for you in Jesus Name'.

1. Give two examples of prayers you prayed that were not answered.
2. What do you think of the way the prophet responded?
3. What would you advise Edson?

Dorika

Dorika is a member of the church. Often, she is asked to pray. People like the way she prays. Dorika is not shy when praying and speaks with a loud voice. Sometimes she even manages to shout. She tells God to give them a good harvest in Jesus' Name. After the church service the church members tell her that it was a powerful prayer that will surely be answered. They ask her to teach them to pray the same way so that God can give them what they want.

1. Do you know people who can pray powerfully?
2. What is a powerful prayer according to you?
3. What do you think of claiming whatever we want from God?

Nelson

Nelson is 35 years old. He has been sick for a long time. He often vomits and he is weak. Nelson has tried to find a solution through the witch doctor, but after spending a lot of money, his problem is still not solved. People have prayed for him, but the situation has not changed. One night he turns on the radio. A prophet says that people with problems must visit a certain church in Petauke so that he/she can be given a paper with a prayer request. Then God will help. Nelson thinks about finding means to visit that prophet because it seems that that prophet can heal people.

1. What do you think of people saying that God can only heal through a certain person or church?
2. What would you do if you were Nelson?

- After 10 minutes, discuss the answers together. The right answers are as follows:

Edson

1. Give two examples of prayers you prayed that were not answered.

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What do you think of the way the prophet responded?

Answer: Let them share ideas.

- Mention that the prophet didn't ask God anything, but he declared a door to be opened. We cannot manipulate God. The prophet didn't show any sign of being humble and dependant on God.
- Remind them of the Bible study: we must not misuse Jesus' Name to fulfil our own desires that are earthly focused.

3. What would you advise Edson?

Answer: There is no problem in asking others to pray for you. But don't think that others have more access to God than we have if we are Christians. Humbly ask God and trust Him that He will answer wisely. That means that God can refuse to answer or answer in another way than we expected.

Dorika

1. Do you know people who can pray powerfully?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves.

2. What is a powerful prayer according to you?

Answer: Let them share ideas. Conclude by saying that there is no power in what we pray or how we pray, but in Jesus. He is the one that causes our prayers to be answered.

That's why we pray in Jesus' Name. God surely hears and answers sincere prayers that are prayed silently (1 Samuel 1).

3. What do you think of claiming whatever we want from God?

Answer: Let them share ideas. We may ask God for whatever we need and tell Him whatever troubles us. Remind them of the importance of being humble and sincere. Remind them also that our purpose is not always to be healthy, but to remain in the faith, rejoice in suffering and submit ourselves to God.

Nelson

1. What do you think of people saying that God can only heal through a certain person or church?

Answer: Let them share ideas. Remind them that prophets in the Bible never drew people to themselves, but to God. If we think that God can work only through His special people, we limit Him and that's dishonouring Him.

2. What would you do if you were Nelson?

Answer: Let them share ideas. Nelson needs to understand that the Bible encourages us to pray for one another. He needs to understand that the power is not in that prophet. He needs to find out if that prophet teaches and acts according to the standards in the Bible (lesson 5).

7. Finish (5 minutes)

- Summarize that praying is a duty and privilege of every Christian. We must be aware of how and what we pray. Praying has everything to do with our relationship with God.
- Pray.

Lesson 5 Truth and deceit

Materials

- Bible
- Blackboard
- Chalk

1. Welcome (10 min)

- Welcome the students.
- Pray.
- Summarize what was taught last time: Praying is a duty and privilege of every Christian. We must be aware of how and what we pray. Praying has everything to do with our relationship with God.

2. Story (20 minutes)

- Read the following story for the students.

Jairos is 30 years old. He lives with his family in a small village. When he was a child, he often went with his friends to the bush. They played there for hours. Sometimes they managed to find some wild, healthy fruits in the bush.

One day, Jairos decides to go back to the bush where he used to play as a child. It has been a long time since he was there. He wonders if those wild fruits will still be growing there. Just thinking of those fruits makes Jairos' mouth water. It would be great if he could find some of those delicious, healthy fruits and share them with his family!

There he goes. He walks around for some time. It seems that the fruits he ate in the past, are no longer there. That's a pity. He would have loved to feed his family with the healthy fruits.

Jairos turns around to return home. Then, suddenly, he sees a tree with the delicious, healthy fruits! 'Those are the ones I've been looking for', Jairos thinks. He quickly walks to the tree and starts picking the fruits. He takes as many as he can carry in his pockets and shirt. On his way home, Jairos walks with a smile on his face. What a nice day!

When Jairos reaches home, he shows his family the fruits he has brought. They all praise Jairos for finding the delicious, healthy fruits. They immediately start eating the fruits. It is a happy day for all of them.

But the next day, everything has changed. No one is happy anymore. Everyone who ate the fruits doesn't feel well. Some family members are seriously ill and may need to go to the hospital. It seems that Jairos has made a mistake: he thought that he had found the delicious, healthy fruits but instead he had picked poisonous fruits.

There is a difference between healthy food and poisonous food. There is also a difference between true teaching and false teaching. The Bible says that we must obey healthy teaching (Titus 2.1). If we listen to false teaching, our spiritual lives will be destroyed. Just like Jairos' good health was destroyed by the poisonous fruits.

- Discuss together the following questions:
 - 1. Explain what happened in the story.**
Answer: Allow them to summarize the story.
 - 2. What can we learn from this story?**
Answer: we need to know the difference between true and false teaching, we need to examine what we are being taught (1 Thessalonians 5.21). False teaching can appear to be good, but deceive many.
 - 3. How can we differentiate between true and false teaching?**
Answer: It can be very difficult to know the difference, so we must examine everything. In the Bible study we'll learn to differentiate true and false prophets/pastors and their teachings.

3. Differentiating between false and true – Bible study (60 minutes)

- Explain that it can be very difficult to differentiate between false and true. Therefore, we always need God Himself to guide us. Ask God for His help and wisdom. There are also some questions that can be asked to help us to differentiate between true and false. We'll be looking at them in the Bible study.

Question 1. Is the pastor/prophet and his teaching faithful to what God has revealed in the Bible?

- Read Jeremiah 35.15, 1 Corinthians 14.3 and Mark 1.15 together and answer the following questions:
 - 1. What is the main responsibility of someone who speaks on behalf of God?**
Answer: To build people up, to encourage and console.
 - 2. What kind of words need to be spoken to people?**
Answer: To repent from our sins and believe in Jesus to be reconciled with God.
 - 3. What does it mean to repent?**
Answer: It means to feel sorry about our sins, to leave them and to ask God for forgiveness.
 - 4. What is the Gospel?**
Answer: It is all about Jesus Christ, God's Son Who came to die for sinners and rose from the dead. Everyone who surrenders himself to Jesus alone and depends on Him, receives forgiveness of sins and is reconciled with God. The good news is that we don't need to contribute anything to our salvation, because Jesus did it all! The focus of the Gospel is on Jesus, not on wealth, blessings, health or anything else we may like.
- Read Galatians 1.9 and Acts 17.10-11 together and answer the following questions:
 - 5. What is the consequence if someone's teaching differs from God's Word the Bible?**
Answer: That person is not sent by God and God curses such people. Those who realise they've been teaching false teachings need to repent and ask God for forgiveness. He is willing to forgive!
 - 6. Why were the Bereans being praised (Acts 17.11)?**
Answer: They compared the teaching they heard with the Word of God. We also need to compare the teachings we hear with the Bible. Everything that contradicts with the Bible has to be denied.

Question 2. Does the person who teaches live according to the Bible?

- Read Matthew 7.15-20 and Titus 1.6-9 together and answer the following questions:

7. Read Matthew 7.20 again. What does this verse mean?

Answer: It means that God's people can be recognized by their fruits. God's people produce good fruits (good behaviour and good teaching) and others don't. We must examine them by their fruits.

8. Do you know spiritual leaders who bear the fruits mentioned in Titus 1.6-9?

Answer: Let them answer for themselves. The Bible mentions other fruits in other passages. For example, in 1 Timothy 3.2 and 3.

Question 3. Do their predictions indeed happen?

- Read Deuteronomy 18.22 and Jeremiah 28.9 together and answer the following questions.

9. Should we believe everyone who claims to predict the future in the name of the Lord?

Answer: No, not everyone. We must watch closely if the prediction is fulfilled. If not, it means that that person did not speak in the name of God. That person just said what people liked to hear or what they thought that could happen.

10. False prophets may say that their predictions didn't happen because of certain spiritual powers that hindered them. What do you think about that?

Answer: God's power is greater than that of anyone else. When God says something will happen, it will indeed happen.

Question 4. Does the person teach and live based on facts?

- Read 2 Timothy 4.4 and 2 Peter 1.16 together and answer the following questions.

11. Read 2 Timothy 4.4 again. What does it mean to turn away from the truth?

Answer: It means to not be willing to listen and obey the truth but to look for something else. It means to turn away from the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

12. What does it mean to turn to fables?

Answer: It means to listen and obey something that's not true at all. To prefer stories above the truth.

13. Read 2 Peter 1.16 again. How do we know that we don't follow fables but God's truth?

Answer: Everything that is written in the Bible has truly happened. There are many eyewitnesses. That's how we know that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not just a story, but that it is God's truth.

- Conclude by saying that to examine a person/teaching, we need to answer all four questions. All four questions need to be answered positively before we can recognize a person/teaching as 'healthy'. If we conclude that a person/teaching is false, we need to stop listening to it. Follow what is right!

4. Break (10 minutes)

- Let the students prepare themselves to write the exam.

5. Exam (45 minutes)

- Writing the exam is optional. If you want them to write the exam, photocopy the exam in advance as it is on the last page of this book. Otherwise, read the questions for them or write them on the blackboard.
- Let the students write the exam.
- Mark the exams. The correct answers are as follows:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 A | 2 B | 3 A | 4 B | 5 A | 6 B | 7 C | 8 B | 9 C | 10 B |
| 11 A | 12 B | 13 B | 14 C | 15 A | 16 C | 17 B | 18 A | 19 C | 20 A |

6. Finish

- Thank the students for joining the lessons.
- Encourage them to study the Bible to know God's truth. Ask God for wisdom and help. He is willing.
- Pray.

Exam Christian Life



Name.....

- 1. What is the first book of the Bible that teaches us about the creation of everything?**
 - A. Genesis
 - B. Revelation
 - C. Matthew

- 2. What do the four books of the Gospel in the New Testament teach us about?**
 - A. About doing good works so that we will enter Heaven.
 - B. About Jesus when He lived on earth.
 - C. About evangelising.

- 3. What did the prophets in the Old Testament teach about?**
 - A. About God, sin and salvation through the promised Saviour (Jesus)
 - B. About blessings and prosperity
 - C. In the Old Testament we don't read about prophets

- 4. The book of the prophet Isaiah was written before Jesus was born.**
 - A. Not true
 - B. True

- 5. In the Old Testament we read about the promised Saviour Jesus.**
 - A. True
 - B. Not true

- 6. What kind of blessing does the New Testament speak about mostly?**
 - A. About healing
 - B. About forgiveness of sins
 - C. About prosperity

- 7. In Matthew 6.33 we read, 'But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you'. What does this verse mean?**
 - A. It means that if we believe in God, we'll get whatever we want
 - B. It means that people in God's Kingdom have more possessions than others
 - C. It means that if we believe in God we do not need to worry about our daily needs

- 8. God wants every Christian to be rich.**
 - A. True
 - B. Not true.

- 9. What does it mean to be truly rich according to the Bible?**
 - A. It means to be so rich that we don't need to worry about food and clothes.
 - B. It means that we can buy whatever we want.
 - C. It means to have peace with God through Jesus the Saviour.

- 10. What was the purpose of Jesus dying on the cross?**
 - A. So that His people will live a happy life.
 - B. To reconcile sinners with God by taking their sins away and making them righteous in God's eyes.
 - C. Jesus' death had no purpose.

- 11. What do we need to do when we are sick?**
- A. We must pray, depend on God and look for help without using forbidden means.
 - B. We need to find out what kind of a spirit has caused our sickness.
 - C. We shouldn't do anything because God is our Creator.
- 12. God wants every Christian to be healed.**
- A. True
 - B. Not true
- 13. In which way was the rich man in the Bible poor despite having a lot of possessions?**
- A. He didn't have friends or family.
 - B. He was not ready to meet God when he died.
 - C. His harvest was not good at all.
- 14. Who can intervene for us by God?**
- A. No one can intervene.
 - B. Prophets, pastors, apostles and others who are close to God.
 - C. Only Jesus can intervene for us.
- 15. Why should we always pray in Jesus' Name?**
- A. Because Jesus alone can make our prayers acceptable in God's eyes.
 - B. Because otherwise we don't get what we want.
 - C. Because that is what church leaders do.
- 16. Ephesians 3.12 says, 'In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him'. Who has access to God according to this verse?**
- A. Only God's special people who are closer to Him than others.
 - B. The people in the Old Testament who offered sheep and other animals.
 - C. Everyone who believes in Jesus the Saviour.
- 17. What is most important when we pray?**
- A. To speak loudly and without being shy.
 - B. To be respectful, humble, sincere; to believe and to speak from our hearts.
 - C. To pray in the same way that church leaders pray.
- 18. What did we learn from the story of Jairos?**
- A. We need to listen to healthy teaching so that we can be spiritually strong.
 - B. It is not right to look back at the past. We must look forward.
 - C. We need to look after our families.
- 19. Which question does not help to differentiate between true and false church leaders?**
- A. Are the leaders and their teachings faithful to what God has revealed in the Bible?
 - B. Does the leader live according to the Bible?
 - C. Does the leader have many followers?
- 20. How can we reach Heaven?**
- A. We'll reach Heaven if we have received Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.
 - B. We'll reach Heaven if we do well to others.
 - C. We'll reach Heaven if we do what our church leaders tell us.

THANK YOU!