

Quarter Two: Growing in a Relationship with God

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Lesson 1—Reality Check

Tuesday: Everlasting Love

March 31, 2026

- **Last Quarter:** Philippians & Colossians
 - “Standing in all the Will of God”
 - Col 4:7 – 18
- **This Quarter:** Growing in a Relationship with God
 - Importance of –
 - A proper understanding of the character of God
 - A strong devotional life (prayer & Bible study)
 - A clear picture of practical Christianity: how to live as a Christian
 - Learn to love God more & commit ourselves to Him without reservation
 - Learn to walk with Him and talk with Him & abide with Him
 - Learn to be encouraged in our own journey with Him – don’t let setbacks discourage us
 - **Lesson Author:** Nina Atcheson – curriculum manager & senior editor of “Alive in Jesus” SS Curriculum at the GC.
- **This Week:** “Reality Check”
 - Importance of reality check in our relationship with God:
 - Where are we?
 - Cold
 - Indifferent / Apathetic / Lukewarm
 - Interested / Growing / Vibrant
 - In love with God & eager to share Him with others?
 - Hard to grow in relationship without knowing the state of our current relationship

Memory Text: “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love” (John 15:9, NKJV).

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** Our Condition (John L)
 - Rev 3:14 – 19 – Condition of the Laodicean Church (the end-time / lukewarm church)
- 2. **Monday:** Rebuke, Repent, and Reward (John D)
 - Rev 3:19, 20 – the counsel for the Laodicean Church (God’s invitation & the choice we have)
- 3. **Tuesday:** Everlasting Love (Jill)
 - Rev 3:21 & multiple OT Scriptures – God’s great love for us & desire for us to recognize our condition, repent & enter into relationship with Him
- 4. **Wednesday:** Abide (SQ)

- John 15:1 – 11 – how to abide in Jesus & be connected to Him; the fruit that is developed as a result of that relationship
- 5. **Thursday: The Sap (Ryan)**
 - Multiple NT Scriptures – importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christ

Tuesday: Everlasting Love

Rev 3:21; Gen 2:7; Gen 3:8 – 10; Gen 5:24; Gen 6:13; Gen 12:1 – 4; Ex 34:29; Jer 31:3

- Self-awareness
 - 95% of people believe they're self-aware
 - Only 10 – 15% of people are truly self-aware
- Self-awareness in our own walk with Christ
 - Laodicean Church – not self-aware
 - Not just indifferent or apathetic
 - Believers think they're good (righteous / in good relationship with God) & they're actually the opposite
 - Matt 7:21 – “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven,” (22) Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lor, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ (23) And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”
 - Christian's can lack self-awareness
 - Claim to be Christians, but never entered into relationship with Christ
 - Rev 3:21 – “To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”
 - What do we need to overcome?
 - Lesson: “For some of us, it may be the greatest battle we ever face— simply realizing our weak, self-sufficient condition; accepting Jesus’ rebuke; repenting; and receiving Jesus’ robe of righteousness over us with eyes that truly see.”

7 takeaways of God & humanity in relationship:

God's differing approaches to relationship –

- Gen 2:7 - “And the **LORD God** formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”
 - Lord = Yahweh
 - God = Elohim = plural – indicates the Godhead involved in creation
 - Formed & breathed as verbs are singular – indicates our God is plural (Godhead) yet only one God
 - **Takeaway #1: God invites intimacy in relationship**
 - *Feeling someone's breath = intimate experience
 - God wants to know us intimately

- Gen 3:8 – 10 – “And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (9) Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ (10) So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself.’”
 - God invites intimacy, yet, sin brings disconnection (fear & guilt) & we often don’t feel close to God
 - **Takeaway #2: God initiates the relationship**
 - God **always** takes initiative to look for us first:
 - God called to Adam: “Where are you?”
 - God woos: we respond
 - Christ loved us first
 - 1 John 4:19 – “We love Him because He first loved us.”
 - Christ chose us first
 - John 15:16 – “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain...”
- Gen 5:24 – “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.”
 - **Takeaway #3: God will come as close as we allow**
 - We have as much of God as we desire
 - *Rare experience – both to walk with God & to be called to Heaven
- Gen 6:13 – “And God said to Noah, ‘The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.’”
 - Flood = consequences of persistent rebellion against God
 - **Takeaway #4: God gives warning before judgment**
 - Noah preached the warning for 120 years
 - Calls to repentance precede judgment
 - OT prophets called people to repentance
 - Eze 18:30, 31 – “...Repent and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin. (31) ...for why should you die, O house of Israel?”
 - John the Baptist
 - Matt 3:2 – “...Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand!”
 - Jesus
 - Mark 1:14, 15 – “... Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15) and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’”
 - The apostles

- Acts 2:38 – “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
- Gen 12:1 – 4 – “Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘**Get out** (Heb, can mean “Go”) of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. (2) I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. (3) I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ (4) So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him...”
 - 7 fold blessing
 - Abram walked in obedience
 - **Takeaway #5: God’s relationships are reciprocal**
 - God called: Abram obeyed (Gen 12)
 - God tested, Abraham trusted (Gen 22)
 - God warned, Noah prepared (Gen 6)
 - God prospered, Joseph served (Gen 39)
 - God promised, Caleb believed (Num 14)
 - God restored, Job worshiped (Job 42)
 - God prompted, Samuel listened (1 Sam 3)
 - God announced, Mary believed (Luke 1)
 - God appeared, Paul surrendered (Acts 9)
- Ex 34:29 – “Now it was so, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai ... that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone while he talked with Him.”
 - **Takeaway #6: God’s relationships are transformative**
 - Moses’ face shone **while** he talked with God
 - The relationship is what transformed Moses – made his face shine
- Jer 31:3 – “The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: ‘Yes, I have loved you with an **everlasting love**; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.’”
 - Love = *a-hab-aw* = deep, covenantal, self-giving action; not just an emotion; it showcases divine love & faithfulness that neither Israel’s sin nor exile can annul
 - *A-hab-aw* is often translated *agape* in the Septuagint – showcases God’s self-giving love
 - Everlasting = signifies eternity, perpetuity, & a love without end, unshakeable by human failure or changing conditions
 - **Takeaway #7: God loves us: unconditionally, forever, regardless of us**

7 Takeaways of God & humanity in relationship

- #1: God invites intimacy in relationship
- #2: God initiates the relationship
- #3: God will come as close as we allow
- #4: God gives warning before judgment
- #5: God’s relationships are reciprocal
- #6: God’s relationships are transformative
- #7: God loves us: unconditionally, forever, regardless of us