

## GOD IN ACTION (Lesson 6)



**ONE ARMY: We see a God-raised, Spirit-filled Army for the 21st century - convinced of our calling, moving forward together**

We will...

- deepen our spiritual life
- unite in prayer
- identify and develop leaders
- increase self-support and self-denial

**ONE MISSION: Into the world of the hurting, broken, lonely, dispossessed and lost, reaching them in love by all means**

We will...

- emphasise our integrated ministry
- reach and involve youth and children
- stand for and serve the marginalised
- encourage innovation in mission

**ONE MESSAGE: With the transforming message of Jesus, bringing freedom, hope and life**

We will...

- communicate Christ unashamedly
- reaffirm our belief in transformation
- evangelise and disciple effectively
- provide quality teaching resources

*\*God in Action Bible Study Manuel produced by Captain Michael Ramsay at the Swift Current Corps of The Salvation Army, September 2012.*

**In this Bible Study we will be looking at different ways in which God is active in our world today. We will look at various scriptures and ask ourselves, ‘what are we going to do about it’?**

### **Lesson 6: John 2:23-3:35**

*We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved*

**Background and context:** John, a first century fisherman was probably the author of this letter. John and his brother James (The sons of Zebedee) actually dropped their work mid-day and left their dad to run the family business without them to follow Jesus. John was known in the Gospel of John as ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved’ and had a prominent role in serving Jesus as a disciple and later as an apostle.

### **John 2:23-3:8**

1. What kind of a greeting is this? Why would Nicodemus come by night? (John 3:1)
2. What does it mean to ‘see the Kingdom of God’? (John 3:3)
3. What does it mean to be born of the Spirit? What does it mean to be born of water? (John 3:4)
4. Explain John 3:8: *The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.*

### **John 3:9-15**

1. Put Jesus' comments in Verses 10-11 into your own words; what is Jesus saying to Nicodemus?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Read Daniel 7:3,13-14: who is the 'Son of Man'? (See also Matthew 25:31ff.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Read Numbers 21:1-8 (cf. 2 Kings 18:4). What comparison is Jesus drawing in Verses 14 and 15?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. To whom is both the salvation from the snakes and the Salvation provided through Jesus offered?

Important Note: *this salvation is available for everyone but not everyone necessarily takes advantage of it.*

### **John 3:16-21**

1. 'One and only Son', as it reads in some translations, is better translated as 'only begotten Son'; what is the difference?
  - a. Why might 'one and only son' be a misleading phrase?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who takes advantage of the offer of eternal (everlasting) life?

3. Why did God send His Son into the world?
4. Does God's Son condemn people?
  - a. How is it that some people are condemned?
5. Verses 19-21. What is this saying? How does this relate to Chapter 1:1-18?

**John 2:22-36**

1. Verses 22-26, who is the recorded dispute between and what is it all about?
2. Verses 27-30, what is the Christ (Messiah)?
  - a. Who is the Christ?
  - b. Who is not the Christ?
3. Verses 31-33, what does it mean to come from either heaven or earth? What is said about each?
4. Verses 34-36, what is the relationship between God and His Son, Jesus?
  - a. What is the relationship between God and people who put their faith in Jesus?
  - b. What is the relationship between God and people who do not put their faith in Jesus?

*Scriptures for further exploration: Genesis 12-17, Numbers 21:1-8, Isaiah 53, Leviticus 16-17, Mark 8-14, Romans 2-5, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 5, Hebrews 9, 2 Timothy 2, 1 Peter 1.*

### **Further Reading:**

Augustine, *Doctrinal Treatises* Chapter 14, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf103.iv.i.vi.xv.html>

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Kruse, Colin G. 2003. *John: An Introduction and Commentary* Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 4), S. 24, 31

McGrath, Alister E. ed. 2006 *The Christian Theology Reader 3rd Edition* Oxford Blackwell.

O'Day, Gail. *NIB IX: The Gospel of Luke, The Gospel of John* 'John'.

Ramsay, Captain Michael. 2011 *John 3:16-21: For God so loved the world..* Presented to each the Nipawin, Tisdale (23 November 2008) and Swift Current Corps of The Salvation Army (12 March 2011) <http://sheepspeaks.blogspot.ca/2008/11/john-316-21-for-god-so-loved-world.html>

Ramsay, Captain Michael. 2007. *The Good News of Romans: Paul and the Gospel and Salvation (Romans 1:16-17)*. Presented to William and Catherine Booth College.

Salvation Army, The. 1998. *Salvation Story: Salvationist Handbook of Doctrine* London: The Salvation Army. P. 35-43

Sloyan, Gerard. 1988. 'John' in *Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press.

## **Doctrines of The Salvation Army**

1. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God; and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.
2. We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.
3. We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost - undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.
4. We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.
5. We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness; and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.
6. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has, by His suffering and death, made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.
7. We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.
8. We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.
9. We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.
10. We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
11. We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.