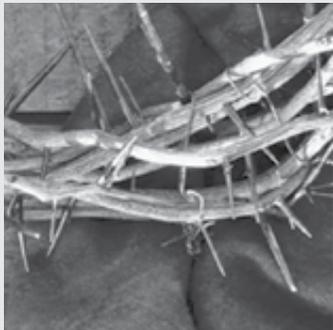


BY HIS WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED



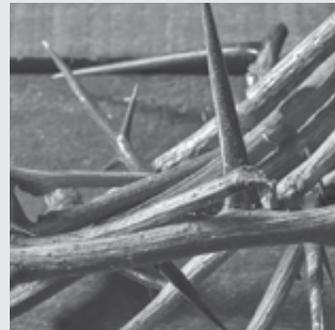
SESSION 1

Blasphemy



SESSION 2

**Violating
the Sabbath**



SESSION 3

**Dishonoring
Authority**



SESSION 4

Murder



SESSION 5

**Associating
with Sinners**



SESSION 6

**False Witness
and Coveting**



A 6-SESSION **BIBLE STUDY**
FOR LENT

leader's guide

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INTRODUCTION

"He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth ... He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:22-24). The innocent Son of God had no sins of his own for which he deserved to die, yet his enemies sought to destroy him and falsely accused him of violating the commandments of God. He was betrayed and delivered over to the authorities, unjustly condemned and nailed to a cross between two criminals. For us, he "was numbered with the transgressors" and "bore the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:12). It was our sins against God's commandments—our disobedience—that Jesus bore in his body on the cross. The Lord laid on him "the iniquity of us all." Jesus suffered the penalty of death in our place, and "by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5-6).



Leader's Guide For Session 1

BEFORE CLASS:

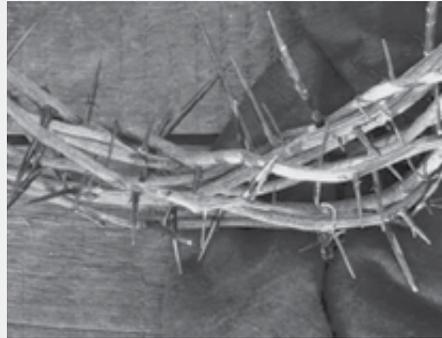
Read through this session yourself. Examine the Bible readings listed and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have a member of the group read the Introduction on page 4 aloud.

READ: Have someone read the Opening Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

DISCUSS: Discuss false gods worshiped in our culture today.

SESSION 1



Blasphemy

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

COLOSSIANS 1:19

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, during this Lenten season we will follow our Lord's path to the cross. Lead us to repent of our sins. Forgive us for Jesus' sake and with the help of your Spirit lead us to walk in the path of your holy commandments. Bless our study of your Word so that we might better know your love and your will for us. Hear our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

DISCUSSION

What false gods are worshiped in our culture today?

DISCUSS: Share examples of eyewitness testimony and the task of an eyewitness.

READ: Read aloud or have someone read aloud the Introduction.

1. **Read Exodus 3:10-15.** God's name is a description of his existence, of his reality. He alone is God. He is the God of Israel's fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Read Genesis 15:12-14 and Genesis 50:24-25. He is the God who promised the fathers that he would one day bring Israel out of slavery and bring judgment on those who enslaved them.

INTRODUCTION

God commands us to worship him and to honor his holy name. "You shall have no other gods before me ... You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain" (Exodus 20:3, 7). Jesus honored and obeyed his heavenly Father, even to the point of death on the cross. Yet the Lord's enemies accused him of violating God's commandment: "It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:33) ... "The Jews answered him, 'We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God'" (John 19:7). Jesus was condemned for our sake, condemned for speaking the truth about himself—that he was, and is, God in the flesh.

1. Israel had been freed from slavery, saved from death by the lambs' blood that marked their doors as the Lord passed over and destroyed the first-born of Egypt. The former slaves were no doubt familiar with the many gods and goddesses of Egypt, and on their way to the Promised Land, they would pass through and conquer nations that worshiped false gods, including the stars and sun. These nations had "exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things" (Romans 1:23). Israel would worship only one God, the God who had called from a burning bush and revealed himself to Moses, summoning the former Egyptian prince—then a fugitive shepherd—to lead the Israelites out of slavery. Moses said that the people would ask about God's name. The Egyptian gods had names: Ra, Isis, Osiris, Anubis and all the rest. What was the name of this God who would set them free? **Read Exodus 3:10-15.** How is the name of Israel's God different from the names of other gods? In what other way does God identify himself? **Read Genesis 15:12-14 and Genesis 50:24-25.** Why was it important that God should be known and remembered as the God of the Israelites' fathers? As the Scriptures were written down and copied, scribes did not want to write the sacred name of God, I AM, and in its place used the term *adonai*, or LORD. Some English translations spell out God's name from the Hebrew as Yahweh; other English versions substitute the word LORD in all capital letters.

2. **Read Exodus 20:1-7 and Deuteronomy 5:1-11.** God begins by reminding Israel that he brought them out of slavery. In Deuteronomy he reminds them that he made a covenant with them on Horeb (Sinai). The people are to worship no other gods.

Read Deuteronomy 32:21 and Isaiah 42:8-9. As a jealous God he will not share his glory with any other god.

Read Deuteronomy 4:15-20. They were not to make graven images so they would not worship them as idols.

Read Isaiah 45:9-17. The craftsman cuts down a tree and uses half the wood to build a fire and cook a meal. The other half he uses to make an idol. Answers will vary.

3. **Read Exodus 32:1-6.** Aaron is the high priest of the true God. The people worship the calf as the god who set them free from slavery. Aaron says the idol worship is a feast for the LORD, Yahweh.

Read Judges 2:16-19 and Jeremiah 3:19-20. Israel's unfaithfulness is compared to chasing after prostitutes. They turned aside from the faithful ways of their fathers. In Jeremiah God refers to Israel as a "treacherous wife" who leaves her husband. God had promised to be their Father. The Lord was moved

2. **Read Exodus 20:1-7 and Deuteronomy 5:1-11.** How does God introduce his commandments? What had he done for Israel? What does God command his people concerning the glory and honor due to him? **Read Deuteronomy 32:21 and Isaiah 42:8-9.** What does God mean when he says, "I the LORD your God am a jealous God"? **Read Deuteronomy 4:15-20.** Why was Israel not to make any graven images? **Read Isaiah 44:9-17.** How does the prophet mock the practice of idolatry? How are people today involved in the same sort of foolish worship of idols?

3. "Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments ... and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Deuteronomy 8:11, 14). The people of Israel did forget. **Read Exodus 32:1-6.** Why is it especially terrible that it is Aaron who builds the golden calf and leads the people to worship the idol? How do the people describe the calf they have created? What is Aaron's idolatrous proclamation concerning the feast? This was not the only time Israel turned away from the worship of the true God. **Read Judges 2:16-19 and Jeremiah 3:19-20.** How is Israel's unfaithfulness described? What is the cycle that repeats itself during the era of the judges? How does God display his faithfulness?

4. We know the commandments, "You shall have no other gods before me ... You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain" (Exodus 20:3, 7) and, like the people of Israel, we transgress those sacred commands. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:6-14.** What does the apostle Paul say about Israel's idolatry? How is sexual immorality a form of idolatry? What words of encouragement does the apostle offer in our battle against temptation? **Read Colossians 3:5-10.** In what way is covetousness, or greed, a form of idolatry? We may not always encounter "graven images" in our culture today, although some religions do use such images in worship. What false gods are pursued in today's society? If you wish, describe false gods that tempt you. How are we tempted to use the Lord's name in vain? We may often hear people exclaim, "Oh, my God!" (or text OMG). Is that a transgression against the commandment? **Read Romans 1:18-23.** How is idolatry described in these verses?

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to pity when Israel was oppressed and he saved them.

4. **Read 1 Corinthians 10:6-14.** Israel's disobedience is a lesson for us, not to do evil as they did. Answers will vary, but immorality is a worship of self and of one's own desires.

Read Colossians 3:5-10. When coveting, we desire some material thing more than we desire God. Answers will vary. We may be willing to break the commandments to get what we want.

Read Romans 1:18-23. People knew God's power in creation but turned from him to worship created things.

5. **Read Matthew 4:1-11.** Jesus quotes Scripture in response to the temptations and refuses to fall down and worship Satan.

6. **Read John 8:48-59.** The Jews say Jesus is a Samaritan and has a demon. When Jesus calls himself “I AM,” the Jews pick up stones to throw at him.

Read John 10:27-33. Jesus says that he and the Father are one. The Jews wanted to stone him for blasphemy, because he is, they say, making himself God.

Read John 14:8-9. Jesus says that whoever has seen him has seen the Father.

Read Mark 14:61-65. Jesus answers that he is the Messiah and that they will see him seated at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds. He is condemned to death for blasphemy.

5. Idolatry takes many forms. We do not always give to God the glory and honor that belong to him alone, yet out of his love for the world, he sent his Son to be our Savior and to reconcile the world to himself. Jesus kept all of the commandments of God perfectly. **Read Matthew 4:1-11.** How does Jesus resist Satan’s temptation to idolatry?

6. Even though Jesus was innocent, his enemies accused him of blasphemy, that is, claiming to be equal to God, of claiming to be the God of Israel. That, of course, is exactly who Jesus is (John 1:1, 14), and during his earthly ministry he told people who he was. **Read John 8:48-59.** What do Jesus’ opponents say about him? What does Jesus say about them? Jesus identifies himself with the name once revealed to Moses, “I AM.” The Jews know what he is saying about himself. How do they respond? **Read John 10:27-33.** What does Jesus say about himself, and what is the response of the Jews who do not believe in him? **Read John 14:8-9.** How does Jesus identify himself as God in these verses? Jesus’ enemies tried to find the right time to arrest Jesus and bring him to trial. Finally, they succeed. **Read Mark 14:61-65.** Jesus is asked, under oath, if he is the promised Messiah, the Son of God. What is Jesus’ answer? What is the penalty for the blasphemy of which he is accused?

7. **Read John 19:6-7.** The penalty for this ultimate idolatry of which Jesus is accused—claiming to be God in the flesh and taking the name of God for himself—is death. Jesus was condemned and crucified. **Read 1 Peter 2:22-25.** Jesus was innocent of the accusations against him; it was our sins he carried in his own body to the cross. There on that cross so many centuries ago, God carried out his just judgment against our sins, including our sins of greed and idolatry. **Read Acts 2:32-36; Romans 1:16; and Colossians 1:18-20.** How and when were Jesus’ claims about his identity validated? What is said about him in each of these passages?

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7. **Read Acts 2:32-36, Romans 1:16 and Colossians 1:18-20.** Jesus’ claims about himself were proclaimed to be true through his resurrection from the dead. He was exalted as Lord and Messiah. He was known to be the Son of God. He was exalted as Lord over all things. He is the firstborn from

the dead, and preeminent in everything. All the fullness of God dwells in him and God reconciled all things to himself through the blood Jesus shed on the cross.

8. **Read Romans 8:1-4.** In Jesus, God condemned sin in the flesh; the requirements of the law were fulfilled in us and through faith in Jesus (Romans 3:21-22).

Read Hebrews 12:28. We have a kingdom that cannot be shaken and so we offer God acceptable worship with reverence and awe. Answers will vary.

READ: Read responsively the words of the Bible verses.

READ: Have someone read the Closing Prayer or read the prayer in unison.

ASSIGN: Assign the suggested activity.

8. **Read Romans 8:1-4.** How has “the righteous requirement of the law” been fulfilled in us? **Read Hebrews 12:28.** What does the writer to the Hebrews say about our worship? Share ways in which we can keep the commandments to worship God alone and to honor his holy name.

RESPONSIVE READING—ISAIAH 53:4-6

Surely he has borne our griefs

And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions;

He was crushed for our iniquities;

Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

And with his wounds we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;

We have turned—every one—to his own way;

And the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

CLOSING PRAYER

Take prayer requests from the class. Ask God for his guidance as you seek to worship him alone and honor his holy name.

DURING THE WEEK

Look for opportunities to worship God with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Honor God’s holy name through the study of his Word.

Leader's Guide For Session 2

BEFORE CLASS:

Read through this session yourself.
Examine the Bible readings listed
and become acquainted with them.

READ: Have someone read the
Opening Prayer or read the prayer
in unison.

DISCUSS: Discuss aspects of
worship that you enjoy.

SESSION 2



Violating the Sabbath

For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath. MATTHEW 12:8

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help us to remember the Sabbath, the day of rest, as a time to honor your holy name, to worship you and to learn from your Word. Lead us by your Spirit to grow in faith and in knowledge of your will so that we might walk in your ways and serve as faithful witnesses for Jesus, our Savior. Hear our prayer in his name. Amen.

DISCUSSION

What do you most enjoy about worship with your brothers and sisters in Christ?

READ: Read aloud or have someone read aloud the Introduction.

1. **Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15.** All of Israel is commanded to keep the Sabbath, including servants, animals and sojourners (people of other nations living with Israel). God established the Sabbath because, after creating the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day. He set the day aside as holy and blessed the day. Israel must remember that God created the heavens and the earth and that he freed them from slavery. Answers will vary.

2. **Read Isaiah 58:13-14.** Israel was to regard the Sabbath as a pleasure and a delight and to honor the day and take delight in the Lord. God would bless them and give them the heritage, the promises, of their ancestors.

Read Ezekiel 20:9-13. God gave Israel the Sabbath as a sign so that they would know he was the Lord who sanctified them, who had made them holy, a people set apart for himself.

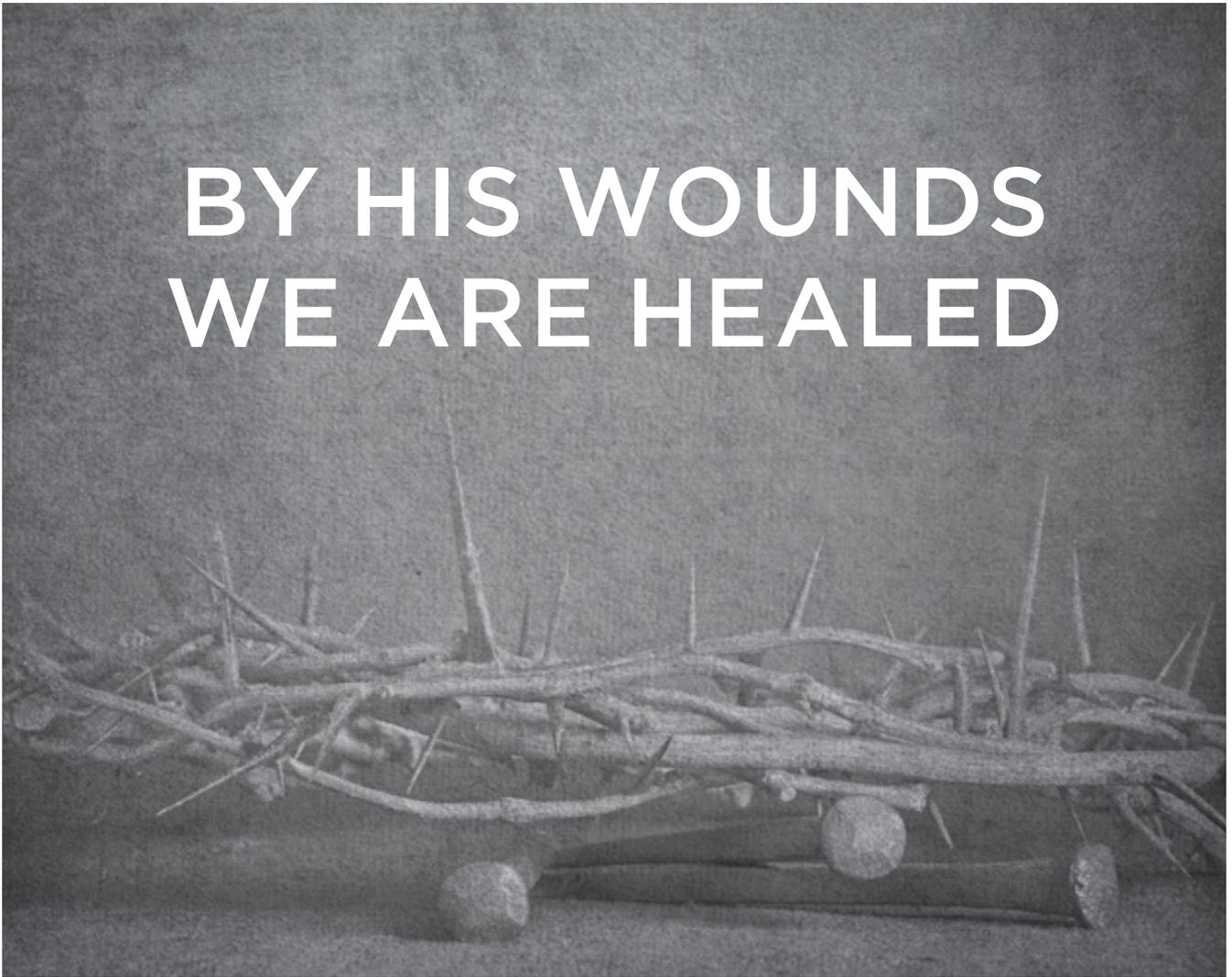
INTRODUCTION

On the sixth day, God finished his work of creation. He saw that what he had made was “very good,” and on the seventh day, he rested. “So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation” (Genesis 2:3). To make something holy was to set it apart for a special purpose. The seventh day was the Sabbath (from the Hebrew word for *rest*), a day set apart to rest and worship and remember the mighty God who created the heavens and the earth in six days. Jesus kept the Sabbath, attending synagogue worship. But his compassion knew no day of rest. If someone needed his help on the Sabbath, Jesus was present with his healing touch. His enemies, always watching, often accused Jesus and his disciples of violating the Sabbath. But as Jesus said after a Sabbath healing, “My Father is working until now, and I am working” (John 5:17).

1. “On the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation” (Genesis 2:2-3). **Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15.** Who is commanded to keep the Sabbath? The seventh day is a holy day, that is, a day set apart for a special purpose. It is a day for rest and for remembering. According to the account in Exodus, why does God establish the Sabbath day? What reasons for keeping the Sabbath are given in the Deuteronomy account? What must the people of Israel remember about their God? For what reasons do we come together to worship today?

2. **Read Isaiah 58:13-14.** What particular instructions and promise does God give concerning the keeping of the Sabbath day? **Read Ezekiel 20:9-13.** According to these verses, for what reason did God give the people his Sabbath?

BY HIS WOUNDS WE ARE HEALED



The innocent Son of God had no sins of his own for which he deserved to die, yet his enemies falsely accused him of violating every commandment of God. In each week of this six-session Bible study, we will see that it was our sin, our disobedience that Jesus bore in his body on the cross. The Lord laid on him “the iniquity of us all.” Jesus suffered the penalty of death in our place, and “by his wounds we are healed.”