

# PRINCIPLE PRACTICED

Discuss the following questions with one other person.

My Answer

My Partner's Answer

1. Do you reserve one day each week to rest from normal work? Why, or why not?
2. Do you observe Sunday as “the Lord’s Day”? Why, or why not?
3. Considering Romans 14:5, 6, which day or days do you hold to be more important than others, if any, in terms of honor and devotion to God? Why?
4. Is there anything we have talked about that should be kept just between the two of us?

# REST WRESTLING

How do Romans 14:5, 6; Colossians 2:16, 17; and other passages inform your response to these statements?

*“I saw my neighbor, who is also a deacon at our church, repairing his car on Sunday! He’s not being a good Christian, since the Bible tells us to rest on the Sabbath.”*

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*“I don’t think the idea of having a day of rest applies to Christians. God said to do that as part of the old covenant, but we are under the new covenant.”*

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# NOTHING LESS THAN PERFECT

As six learners present the following skit, have the rest of the class find verses related to the priest's comments about each animal. Suggested discoveries are listed in the answer key.

**PRIEST:** Everyone with a sacrifice to offer to God can line up right here. I'll take a good look at it to be sure it is acceptable. We want all of our sacrifices to honor our holy God. So, who's first?

*First Person:* I have brought a goat to be used for a burnt offering.

**PRIEST:** Well, bring it over here. Good, I see it's a male and appears to be in good shape. But let me run my hand over it. What's this? There's some kind of bump here. Could that be a tumor?

*First Person:* I don't know; he's had that growth for a while now. I'd forgotten about it.

**PRIEST:** Well, you can forget about offering this goat as a burnt offering. No skin conditions allowed. Next.

*Second Person:* I have brought a lamb to sacrifice.

**PRIEST:** Do I know you? You sound like a foreigner.

*Second Person:* Yes, I have lived among your people for several months. I believe in your God and want to honor him. This lamb is an offering for a vow I have taken.

**PRIEST:** You are welcome to do so, for God accepts all who believe in him and obey him. Your lamb is in perfect condition. Take it right over there by the altar. Next person, please step up.

*Third Person:* Here is my ram to be used as a peace offering. He's strong and healthy.

**PRIEST:** Well, he looks healthy enough. But why does he keep bumping into things?

*Third Person:* Oh, he's just clumsy. And maybe a little blind in one eye, but otherwise . . .

**PRIEST:** So, you're saying he's perfect except for the fact that he's half-blind? Take him away! You should know better than that. Who's next?

*Fourth Person:* I am a poor man, and all I have is this small sheep to offer. But I want to give it as a freewill offering to show the Lord how much I love him.

**PRIEST:** This sheep appears to be somewhat stunted, but since it's a freewill offering, God allows exceptions such as yours. Take your sheep over to be offered. (*Speaking to the next person*) Looks like you're the last one in line. What kind of offering do you want your bull to be?

*Fifth Person:* I'd like it to be a peace offering, so my family and I can share a meal with the priests and show honor to God.

**PRIEST:** Has this been a healthy animal—no injuries, deformities, or skin diseases?

*Fifth Person:* It has none of those things. I wanted to bring my very best bull.

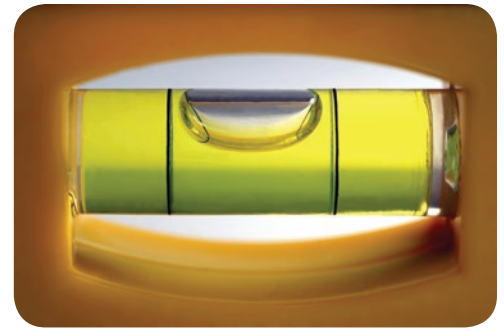
**PRIEST:** Very well, take it over to the altar, and I'll see you later at the meal.



## MAKE IT TRUE

Each of the following statements has a single word that makes it false. Find that word and correct it. Then check your answers against the lesson text.

1. God commanded that the Israelites redeem every secondborn.
2. The dedication of the firstborn was to be used to teach children about the Israelites' deliverance from bondage in Babylon.
3. When Mary's days of purification were completed, she and Joseph brought Jesus to Bethlehem to present him to the Lord.
4. Mary and Joseph offered the required sacrifice of three turtledoves or pigeons.
5. Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Judah.
6. Simeon came to the temple by happenstance at the time Mary and Joseph were there with Jesus.
7. Simeon praised Mary after he took the infant Jesus in his arms.
8. Simeon acknowledged that God's salvation had been prepared in the ears of all.
9. According to Simeon, the child would provide a light for revelation to the Jews.
10. According to Simeon, the child would provide the glory of the Gentiles.



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## HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE

Anna “was advanced in years” when she encountered the infant Jesus (Luke 2:36). We may conclude that Simeon was elderly as well, since he considered his life's work complete after holding the child (2:29). God honored both by allowing them enough time on earth to witness the arrival of the Messiah. In what ways can your church honor its faithful members of many years' standing? Jot ideas to the right. ☞



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# SEVEN WAYS TO BE A HYPOCRITE

Read the following statements made by a hypothetical scribe or Pharisee. Match a verse or verses from today's two texts that set forth its contrast by Jesus.

**Verse(s)**

1. "That's *Rabbi* Benjamin to you!"
2. "That's my seat! You move down there."
3. "You can't really know how to live right until you learn to apply all our interpretations of the law."
4. "Watch out—you're stepping on my robe!"
5. "It's not my fault your husband died before paying off the loan to your house. Either pay up or vacate!"
6. "Be sure to follow my teachings, but be aware that a person in my position has to have certain exemptions."
7. "I just love to hear the large jangle of coins when I make one of my generous contributions to the treasury!"

# FOUR WAYS TO BE GODLY

What are at least four negative, ungodly qualities that Jesus condemned in today's text? What godly qualities should replace them?

**UNGODLY QUALITIES**

\_\_\_\_\_

**GODLY QUALITIES**

\_\_\_\_\_

# ONE THING TO CHANGE

While it's easy to see pride, selfishness, and greed in others, it's not so easy to admit that we have these faults as well. Is there any area of your life in which you are acting like a hypocrite? Write below a prayer resolution for change in this regard for the coming new year.

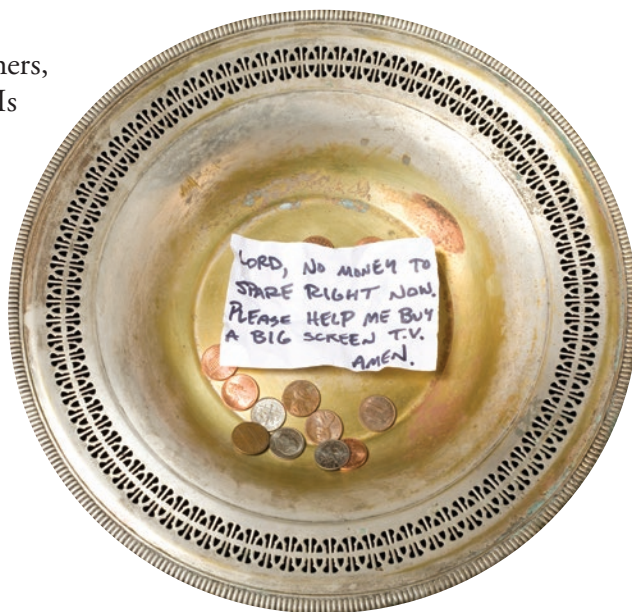
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\_\_\_\_\_



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# THE LAST SEVEN YEARS

What do you consider to be the seven most significant events of the past seven years (2009–2015), not only in terms of world history but also of your life personally? Enter those below.

- I. \_\_\_\_\_
- II. \_\_\_\_\_
- III. \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. \_\_\_\_\_
- V. \_\_\_\_\_
- VI. \_\_\_\_\_
- VII. \_\_\_\_\_



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Seven years is a long time in some ways, but a short time in others. The latter is the case of Jacob’s seven years of service to gain his bride Rachel: “they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her” (Genesis 29:20). What seems to make “time fly” in your life? Why is this question important? Jot ideas below:

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# WAITING FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Few things are considered worth waiting for in a culture that expects immediate gratification! What factors are necessary to make waiting tolerable for most people? Jot ideas below:

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_

Now let’s change the topic from *waiting for what you want* to *waiting for what God wants*. How does (or should) this change your observations above? Jot ideas below:

- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_



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# HUSBANDS AND WIVES

Solomon's lifestyle of having many wives stands in sharp contrast with God's picture of the ideal, godly marriage. What do these texts say about the ideal relationship?

- Genesis 2:18, 24 \_\_\_\_\_
- Exodus 20:14 \_\_\_\_\_
- Deuteronomy 7:1-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- Proverbs 5:18, 19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Corinthians 7:2-5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Corinthians 6:14 \_\_\_\_\_
- Ephesians 5:22-33 \_\_\_\_\_
- Colossians 3:18, 19 \_\_\_\_\_
- Hebrews 13:4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1 Peter 3:1-7 \_\_\_\_\_

## SOLOMON'S WIVES

Solomon was a man of God, but also a man with a sinful weakness that he chose not to overcome. He enjoyed the blessings of righteousness, but he also suffered the consequences of sinfulness. Review Exodus 34:15, 16; Deuteronomy 7:1-4; 1 Kings 11:1-10; and Nehemiah 13:26 to answer these two questions.

1. How could someone so wise do something so foolish?

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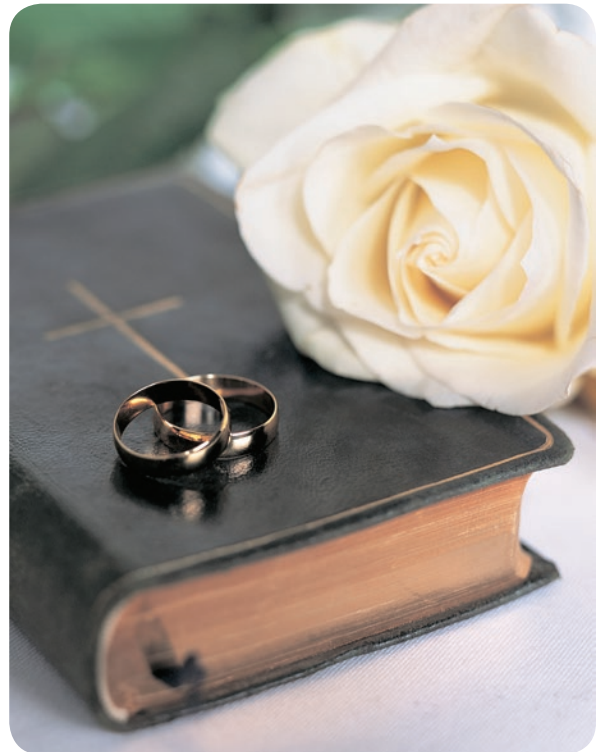
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2. What can I learn from Solomon's failure in the area of marriage relationships?

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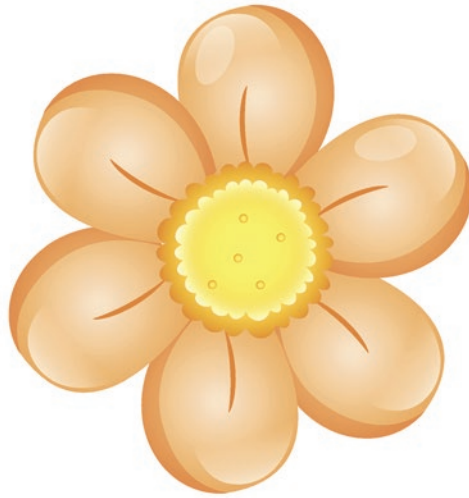
# HE LOVES ME . . . HE LOVES ME NOT

Examine the texts below. For each one that speaks of God’s love for his people, write “He loves me” on a petal of the flower.

Jeremiah 31:3

Hosea 11:1

Hosea 14:4



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Romans 5:8

John 3:16

1 John 4:19

## ILLUSTRATIONS FOR TODAY

To what extent do the following statements about modern marriages serve to illustrate the relationship between Christians and their Lord? Rank-order them from *5 stars* (best illustration of the five) to *1 star* (least likely to illustrate—too many exceptions). Be prepared to explain your rankings.

\_\_\_\_\_ A. “Dirty laundry” created within a marriage can always be “cleaned up”—forgiven and forgotten.



\_\_\_\_\_ B. Any marriage, no matter how troubled, can be saved if both parties are willing.



\_\_\_\_\_ C. Love always redeems, that is, it is always ready to “buy back” what is valued.



\_\_\_\_\_ D. A marriage may have to hit rock bottom before one or both parties see the need for change.



\_\_\_\_\_ E. All relationships have times of brokenness; love is always the resolving factor.



☞ Which Scripture passages influence your rankings?

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# MORE MIRACLES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN



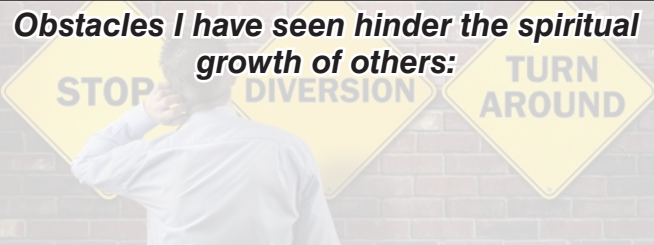
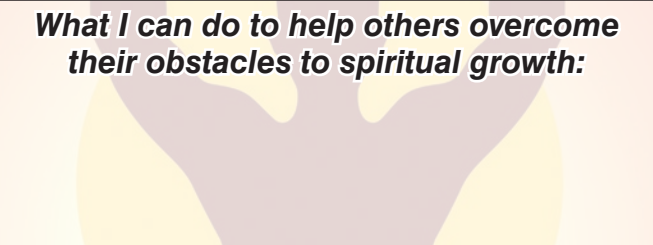
Jesus' first miracle—turning water into wine—resulted in his disciples placing their faith in him. Indeed, John's purpose in recording such miraculous signs is that people might believe (John 20:30, 31). The list below notes other (but not all) miracles recorded in John's Gospel. Read the passages and fill in the blanks.

<u>Passage</u>	<u>Miracle Performed</u>	<u>How People Reacted</u>
John 4:46-54	_____	_____
John 5:1-18	_____	_____
John 6:1-14	_____	_____
John 9	_____	_____

When confronted with the evidence of Jesus' ability to perform miracles, how are the reactions of people today like and unlike the reactions of those who actually saw the results of Jesus' miracles? Jot your observations and experiences in that regard below.

## BEYOND INITIAL BELIEF

Miracles should result in belief in Jesus, and that is John's goal (see John 20:30, 31). But staying at that stage is to remain "infants in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1). How do you get stronger and move beyond spiritual infancy? How can you help others do so as well? Jot ideas below.

<p><b>Obstacles that hinder my spiritual growth:</b></p> 	<p><b>How I plan to overcome these obstacles:</b></p> 
<p><b>Obstacles I have seen hinder the spiritual growth of others:</b></p> 	<p><b>What I can do to help others overcome their obstacles to spiritual growth:</b></p> 

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# BELIEF AND DOUBT

How are you like Martha—confessing belief but still having doubts? Read and reflect on John 11:38-44 (see also Mark 9:24; John 11:1-38; 19:38–20:10). In the first column, write some statements of your beliefs about Christianity in general and Jesus in particular. In the second column, write statements that describe what is difficult for you to believe.

## What I Believe

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## What Is Difficult for Me to Believe

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Does the illustration to the left reflect the tensions between what you have written in the two columns above? Why, or why not? What can you do to resolve the tensions? Jot reflections below.

# HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Write a poem of four lines that expresses your belief in the Christian hope of eternal life. (If poetry is too daunting, write a brief devotional thought instead.) Possible words to include are scattered below.

Consider whom you could share your composition with in the week ahead.



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resurrection

glory of God

life

rise again

Father

believe

love

Christ

Son of God

# PASSOVER SCRAMBLE

Find the words connected with the Passover. Words may run in any direction.

E U G A L P B H N J W D B N O  
 Y C Y X E O C T Y I R S R R D  
 W E O W U B F N H U G O Q O B  
 C M N Q W X J E I M B H H A T  
 P N Q M T L H E Y T Z V T S S  
 E A U E D U E T S Q N D X T K  
 Q U N B A U A R H V X O B E P  
 H T X G E H I U X Y V X I D P  
 H N D D R F L O S T S S P W A  
 Q K S H B N P F X D R M T R S  
 J U D G M E N T S A O P O M S  
 H E R B S A J E E G Y O H C O  
 N R U B M T L L Q G J K L R V  
 H Y H H R A E U E P P B B B E  
 F X Y O Q Z L X F J B Z F R R

פסח  
 פסח  
 פסח

Blood  
 Bread  
 Burn  
 Egypt  
 Firstborn  
 Fourteenth  
 Herbs  
 Israel  
 Judgments  
 Lamb  
 Night  
 Passover  
 Plague  
 Roasted  
 Tenth

# SELF-EXAMINATION

First Corinthians 11:27-29 indicates that Christians are to examine themselves so as not to participate in the Lord's Supper without discernment. Use the space below to write out a prayer of self-examination in that regard. Keep it in your Bible for immediate reference prior to your next observance of the Lord's Supper.



O Lord,

My sin hinders my discernment, but my sin is also the reason Christ instituted the Lord's Supper before he died! As I take the loaf and the cup, I acknowledge the terrible inconsistency of harboring unconfessed sin, sins such as these:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

May I approach the loaf and the cup with gratitude of sins forgiven and resolve to sin no more. In the name of your Son, who makes both possible. Amen.

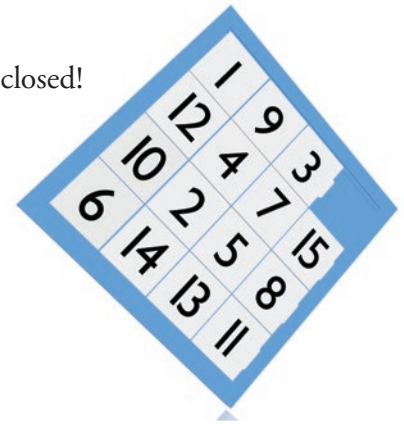
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# NUMBER MATCH

Match the numerical references with the corresponding application. Bibles closed!

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|--|---|
| ___ 1. Burnt offering                  | A. Seven Sabbaths                                 |
| ___ 2. Sin offering                    | B. Fiftieth day                                   |
| ___ 3. From Passover to Feast of Weeks | C. Two loaves                                     |
| ___ 4. Weight of wave offering         | D. Two-tenths of an ephah                         |
| ___ 5. Beginning of Feast of Weeks     | E. Two lambs (one year old)                       |
| ___ 6. Offering of firstfruits         | F. Seven lambs (one year old), one bull, two rams |
| ___ 7. Peace offering                  | G. One male goat                                  |



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# PROVIDE FOR THE POOR

Using Leviticus 23:22 as an impetus, identify specific ways you, your class, and/or your church can provide for the poor.

## How We Can Apply This Today:

### Leviticus 23:22a

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge.”

### Leviticus 23:22b

“nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner.”

hemera

## PROPER ORDER

Only the first and seventh actions in the following list are in the correct order. Without looking at today's text, see if you can put the rest in the correct sequence, numbering them 2 through 6.

1. Aaron kills a bull of the sin offering for himself.
- \_\_\_ Aaron sprinkles the blood of the bull on the mercy seat.
- \_\_\_ Aaron sprinkles the blood of the goat on the mercy seat.
- \_\_\_ Aaron kills a goat as a sin offering for the Israelites.
- \_\_\_ Aaron burns incense to create a cloud of smoke.
- \_\_\_ Aaron takes a censer of burning coals inside the veil (curtain).
7. Aaron sprinkles blood on the altar to cleanse it.



## PRAYER OF PRAISE

Using Hebrews 9:6-15 as a guide, fill in the blanks in the prayer below as a praise to God for the atonement available through the blood of Christ.

*Heavenly Father,*

*I praise you for sin atonement available through Jesus. Instead of the blood of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, you provided the greater and perfect substitute through the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ. No longer does a high priest have to enter the \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Instead, Christ \_\_\_\_\_ himself to cleanse me from my sins.*

*Unlike the sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement—sacrifices that had to be repeated yearly—Jesus' sacrifice happened \_\_\_\_\_ and provides an eternal \_\_\_\_\_.*

*In Jesus' precious name, amen.*

# DAYS TO REMEMBER

Identify which details below correspond with Passover (P), the Feast of Weeks (W), the Day of Atonement (A), and/or the Feast of Booths (B). The “and/or” means that some statements will take more than one answer.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Held during the first month
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Held during the seventh month
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Held seven Sabbaths after a different feast
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Held 50 days after a different feast
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Involved putting blood on doorposts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Coincided with a grain harvest
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Involved living in temporary shelters seven days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Involved sprinklings of blood
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Connected with the Festival of Unleavened Bread
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Also known as Pentecost
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Sacrificed one lamb or goat per household
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Involved a censer of burning coals and incense



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# MILESTONES OF LIFE

What are some personal milestones you have experienced in your walk of faith? How can you commemorate these periodically in order to remind yourself of God’s blessings on your life? Why is it important to do so? Jot your ideas below.

## Personal Milestones of Faith

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## How and Why I Can Commemorate These

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## Lesson 2

*Nothing Less Than Perfect.* First Person, verse 22; Second Person, verse 18; Third Person, verse 22; Fourth Person, verse 23; Fifth Person, verse 21.

## Lesson 3

*Make It True.* 1—firstborn, not secondborn; 2—Egypt, not Babylon; 3—Jerusalem, not Bethlehem; 4—two, not three; 5—Israel, not Judah; 6—the Spirit, not happenstance; 7—God, not Mary; 8—sight, not ears; 9—Gentiles, not Jews; 10—Israel, not Gentiles.

## Lesson 4

*Seven Ways to Be a Hypocrite.* 1—Matthew 23:7; 2—Matthew 23:6; Mark 12:39; 3—Matthew 23:4; 4—Mark 12:38; 5—Mark 12:40; 6—Matthew 23:3; 7—Mark 12:41. (Learners may make a good case for others as well.)

*Four Ways to Be Godly.* pride → humility / greed → generosity / selfishness → kindness / being served → being a servant / exalting self → exalting God / seeking attention of people → seeking God's attention. (More than four pairs are listed here; others may be possible.)

## Lesson 7

*He Loves Me . . . He Loves Me Not.* All petals should say “He loves me.”

*Illustrations for Today.* There are no single, “right” answers. Learners may be able to make a good case for any rank-ordering.

## Lesson 8

*More Miracles in the Gospel of John.* **John 4:46-54:** official's son healed / official and all his household believe. **John 5:1-18:** man who had been an invalid for 38 years healed / the man believes, the Jews do not and seek to kill Jesus. **John 6:1-14:** feeding of 5,000 / people believe that Jesus is the Prophet. **John 9:** man born blind healed / the man believes but the Pharisees do not.

## Lesson 10

*Passover Scramble*

E U G A L P + H N + + + + N +  
+ + + + + + T + I + + R R +  
+ + + + + + N + + G O + O +  
+ + + + + + E + + B H + A +  
+ + + + T + + E + T + + T S +  
+ + + E D + + T S + + + + T +  
+ + N + A + + R + + + + E +  
+ T + + E + I U + + + + I D P  
H + + + R F + O + + + S + + A  
+ + + + B + + F + D R + T + S  
J U D G M E N T S A O P + + S  
H E R B S + + + E + Y O + + O  
N R U B M + + L + G + + L + V  
+ + + + + A + + E + + + + B E  
+ + + + + L + + + + + + R

## Lesson 11

*Number Match.* 1—F (v. 18); 2—G (v. 19); 3—A (v. 15); 4—D (v. 17); 5—B (v. 16); 6—C (v. 17); 7—E (v. 19).

## Lesson 12

*Proper Order.* 1, 4, 6, 5, 3, 2, 7.

*Prayer of Praise.* goats (v. 13), bulls (v. 13), blood (v. 14), first section (v. 6), offered (v. 14), once (v. 12), redemption (v. 12).

## Lesson 13

*Days to Remember.* 1—P; 2—A and B; 3—W; 4—W; 5—P; 6—P and W; 7—B; 8—A; 9—P; 10—W; 11—P; 12—A.