

Confirmation At Home

Theology Lesson 1



For our first at-home lesson we're going to be doing some review and the first half of a two-part lesson on Christian Theology. We'll start by reviewing some of the vocabulary we've been using as we talk about theology.

Consequences: Using the Biblical story we have talked a LOT about consequences. Our definition for consequence has been *value neutral* (meaning consequence is neither a negative nor a positive word, just a descriptive word). A consequence is always after a *because...* example "because you ate all the ice cream yesterday, we have none left for dessert today" or "because you got your homework done early you have more time for minecraft."

In the Bible we have two descriptive words for consequences related to our relationship with God. Good consequences for us are called *Blessings* and bad consequences for us are called *Curses*.

Sin: Again using the Biblical story we have defined sin as "anything against the plan of God". For example it was a sin for Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil (because in God's plan they were asked not to do that). It was a sin for Pharaoh to enslave the Israelites and to murder their children (that was not part of the plan of God). Sin will get further defined as the Bible goes along (because God's intention and plan will be further defined).

Righteousness: The opposite of sin is righteousness, which literally means doing the right thing. The definition of "the right thing" in Christian theology is defined by God. "The right thing" is the thing that God asks us to do.

Commandments: The first really important place where God teaches us how to be "the people of God" is with the giving of the 10 commandments (Exodus 20, which you should have memorized). Those spell out how God intends for us to live (no lying, murdering, respect other people's stuff, respect marriage, etc).

Idols/Idolatry: One commandment in particular played a major role in the story of the Exodus. We talked in depth in the class about how Idolatry worked, and how it can be a dangerous cycle of sacrifice. Trying to please an entity that does not exist, and is therefore unable to respond to you is a religious system that is not only untrue, but also harms those practicing it.

Grace: Grace is a gift that is given *even though it was not earned*. It is usually motivated by love, and is usually a significant gift. In Christian theology we talk about "God's Grace" and by that we mean the gifts that God gives to us, which we did not earn.

Responsibility: In theological terms, this is an obligation that you must complete. A responsibility is something you're in charge of, something you're expected to do. Responsibilities can be *inherent* (you have it because of who you are: ie—you need to eat well, because you're a human being). Responsibilities can also be *assumed*: ie—you joined the volleyball team so *now* you have a responsibility to practice and to play your best.

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Theology Homework



I know it's been a few weeks since we met, and this review might be a challenge, but take a look at your notes and recall our conversations in class. You may also take a look at the passages of scripture we have studied in depth so far:

The Creation Account: Genesis chapters 1-5 in particular, but there's good stuff in 6-9 that we chatted about just a little bit.

The Exodus: Exodus chapters 1-20

Please have your parents send an email to pastor@downsumc.org and copied to youth@downsumc.org with the answers to these questions: Your answers do not need to be overly long, but complete sentences and your best writing is appreciated. You can even handwrite them and take a photo or scan, whichever is easier. You may absolutely get help from Mom and Dad in your *finding* your answers BUT only as a resource, not as a do-it-for-you.

- 1) Find two examples of consequences in either Genesis or Exodus. One that is a curse, and one that is a blessing.
- 2) Choose one of the 10 commandments and discuss *both sides* of the commandment. What is the sin, and why do you think God declared that a bad thing? What is the righteous action, and how does that action lead to a better life?
- 3) Explain why and how the critique of Idol worship is a major theme in the Exodus. This answer does not have to be overly long, choose one of the 10 plagues of Egypt as your example.
- 4) Where has God been graceful in the Genesis story?
- 5) Where has God been graceful in the Exodus story?
- 6) What is an *inherent* (we have to do this because of who we are) responsibility for humanity?
- 7) What is an *assumed* (taken on) responsibility for the people of God *after* the Exodus?