

fresh start

is a 19 week, in-depth look at the Bible and it's reliability as the source of God's truth. It is an examination of Biblical truth about critical topics and a respectful comparison of the many significant differences between historic Christianity and LDS doctrines.

By Judi Abdulla

Growing up in Utah as a member of the local religious culture was a wonderful experience of family and community. However, in my early adulthood, as I began to question some of the basic tenets and beliefs of my religious upbringing, I was unable to embrace them as truth. I turned away from the “faith of my fathers” and began to examine faith in God because someone I knew claimed to have a “personal relationship” with Jesus. Needless to say, I was skeptical but intrigued!

Many questions arose in my mind as I grew in my knowledge of the Biblical teaching about Jesus. I had to sort out my previous understanding about Him from the things I was learning as I studied God’s Word. Through this study it became clear that I needed a *fresh start*. I soon discovered Jesus in those pages and secured my faith in Him.

The *Fresh Start* study started more than 20 years ago when my pastor at Washington Heights Church in Ogden, Utah asked me to share what I had learned. This study is not a time of ridiculing or bashing other beliefs, but it is an examination of Biblical truth about critical topics and a respectful comparison of the many significant differences between historic Christianity and the LDS doctrines. My heart’s desire is to help other people make their journey of understanding a little more easily.

Over the past 20 years, many people have attended *Fresh Start*. God has met them through the study of His Word, hearts have been changed, and a personal relationship with Jesus has been established. They, too, found a *fresh start* through faith and freedom in Him.

~ Judi

Video and MP3 files are available to download at www.washingtonheights.org/media/freshstart

Small group questions have been provided for your use to discuss and take this study even further. Thank you to Sam Albano, who has taken considerable time to ponder over this material and develop these questions.

Small Group Leaders: Questions for small group time are provided only to facilitate discussion. Use them in any way you wish. You do not have to get through all the questions, use them in order, or even as worded. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide your small group discussion time; it is important to end your time with prayer.

Please note the following areas of concern:

Lesson 7: This is often a time when students will realize their need of forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Be prepared to pray with them to receive Him. Ensure there is time to speak to individuals who may have questions.

After Lesson 10 there is an optional review lesson. This allows for two ten-week semesters if desired, or you can do all 19 lessons together. Please note that there are no small group questions for this lesson.

Acknowledgement:

Thank you to Sam Albano, Allison Martin, and Pam Sams for their countless hours of helping edit and keep this project on task. Thank you to Josh Allen for his graphic abilities and to Dale Johnson for all his video edits, graphics, and expertise! Thank you to Washington Heights Church for their support over the years and the opportunity to share God’s truths.

Scripture references provided for study purposes only; not all references provided are discussed in the video. Unless otherwise referenced, NASB Bible references and Mormon Doctrine 2nd Edition are used. "This video and written booklet are protected under the laws of the United States and other countries. Any unauthorized duplication, copying, exhibition, distribution and/or use of this video and booklet or any part thereof without express written approval will result in penalties in accordance with applicable laws. "Fair Use" rights are exercised under US Copyright Law, title 17, circular 92, chapter 1, sections 107 & 110. Copyright Washington Heights Church, 2013. All rights reserved".

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Judi's Testimony and Introduction

1. Introduction

A. Judi's Testimony

B. The Bible as the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:14-17

2 Peter 1:20-21

John 16:13-14

John 17:17

2. What Exactly Is the Bible?

A. God's Special Revelation

1. History

One Central _____

One Central _____

One Central _____

B. Foundational to Christian Belief

1. *sola scriptura*

[Ephesians 2:19-22](#)

2. Issues of Reliability, Validity, and Inerrancy

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is for the participants to get to know each other and to discuss application questions about Lesson 1.

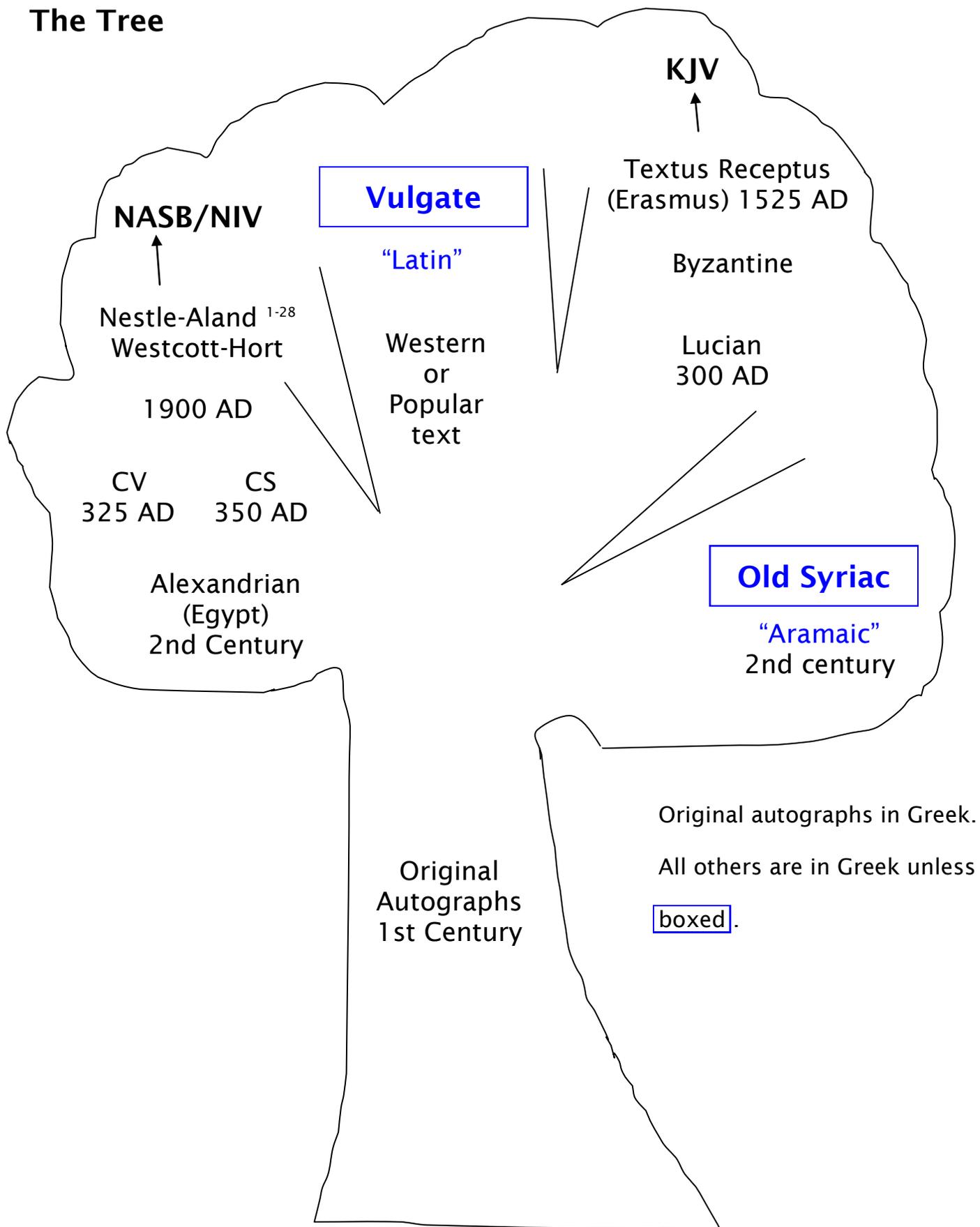
Ask your group members to introduce themselves and answer some questions, perhaps one or two of the following questions, as you go around the table:

1. What are two words that describe your personality?
2. What is the biggest challenge that you have faced?
3. What are two things you love about yourself?
4. Name one thing/person that was instrumental in your coming to this class.
5. What are you most passionate about?

Then discuss the following application questions:

6. After hearing Judi's testimony, share how your past brought you to where you are now in your walk with God. How did this shape your understanding of the Bible and the person of Jesus?
7. Judi said that if you have two conflicting ideas either neither are true or one is true and the other is false. Both cannot be true because they are conflicting. Do you agree? What do you believe about truth – is it relative or is there absolute truth?
8. What experience have you had with the Bible? Can you take it as your ultimate authority? Do you believe it is God's Word? Has the Bible changed you? Share how.
9. Peter says that no prophecy is "a matter of ones own interpretation, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Do you believe that there is only one meaning, the writer's meaning, for a Biblical passage? Or do you believe there are many interpretations based on our culture and the time we live in?
10. Judi said the one central purpose of the Bible is to explain God's provision for our greatest need – to be restored in our relationship with God. Do you agree? What is your greatest need?

The Tree



Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is for the participants to discuss application questions about the historical reliability of the New Testament.

1. Why is it important for us to understand the history of how we got the Bible?
2. Are you bothered that we do not have any of the original papyrus manuscripts of the New Testament? Can you be confident that the copies that have been discovered are credible?
3. How does the 1st Century oral culture, which differs from our written culture, play a role in supporting the reliability of the New Testament?
4. How do the large number of complete manuscripts and pieces of manuscripts in existence help determine the authenticity of the New Testament?
5. How does archeology increase our confidence in the reliability of the New Testament? How is archeology a friend of the Bible?
6. What is the difference between a translation and the transmission of a document? How did the tree diagram help you understand how we got the Bible we have today? Would you be able to use this diagram to explain to a friend how we got the New Testament?
7. How have politics, geography, denominations, and environment played a role in preserving the New Testament?
8. What did you learn about the accuracy and origin of our present day New Testament translations - King James Version, New International Version, New American Standard Version? How could one translation be more accurate than another?
9. Based solely on what you have learned about the bibliographical tests, do you believe that the Bible has a high level of reliability? How likely is it that something was added or deleted that we don't know about?
10. Do you have any remaining questions about the historical reliability of the New Testament?

The Historical Reliability of the New Testament, Part 2

1. Internal Evidence Tests

A. Reliability of Writers

Luke 1:1-3

Luke 3:1

2 Peter 1:16

1 John 1:1-4

John 19:35

1 Corinthians 15:8

Acts 26

B. Relationship to Time and Place of Events

2. External Evidence Tests

A. Archeology

B. Secular Writing

3. Canonicity
A. Purpose

B. Tests
1.

2.

3.

4.

C. Council of Carthage 397 AD

D. Excluded Writings

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is for the participants to discuss application questions about the historical reliability of the New Testament.

1. Which test do you find the most compelling in showing the historical reliability of the New Testament: the internal evidence test — the reliability of the writers and the proximity of the events to their writing; or the external evidence test — archeology or secular testimony. Why?
2. Why do you think that one of the criteria for writers to be included in the New Testament is that they were eyewitnesses or second degree witnesses? Should anyone else be included?
3. What if archeologists found a new manuscript purported to be written by the Apostle Peter; should it be added to the New Testament? Why or why not?
4. Why is the timing of the authors' writing critical in determining reliability? Could other eye witnesses have refuted the writings?
5. Why can the Bible use itself to support itself when other books cannot?
6. What do you do with inconsistencies that appear unreconciled between various gospel accounts? How do these actually enhance the validity of the text?
7. How do the authors' descriptions of their failures, skepticism, and doubt display the truth of their writings?
8. Do you think that the New Testament authors believed the events they wrote about were true? How is that demonstrated? Does this mean they really are true?
9. What did you learn about truth from this lesson? Can something that is not true when it is written be made true later by vote or discussion? Why is this important?
10. Do you believe the New Testament that we have today is reliable? What questions do you still have about the New Testament's historical reliability?

D. The Talmudic school (100-500 AD)

E. The Masoretic text (500-900 AD)

F. The Dead Sea Scrolls (200 BC-100 AD)

2. Historical Reliability of the Book of Mormon and Pearl of Great Price

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is for the participants to discuss application questions about the historical reliability of the Old Testament.

1. Has learning about the origin of the Old Testament made it reasonable to believe it is true? Why? Has this changed your view about the parts of the Old Testament that are difficult to understand?
2. What significant differences are there between the Old Testament and New Testament documents? How does this influence our study of their reliability?
3. Jesus quoted from every section of the Old Testament — the Law, Prophets, and the Writings. How does this increase your confidence that the book we hold today is truly God's Word and that nothing has been lost or added?
4. The discovery of the manuscripts at Qumron allowed scholars to test the accuracy of the 900 AD texts because they are almost identical to those from 200 BC to 100 AD. How does this demonstrate the accuracy of the transcription process that had been used?
5. How do you see God's hand in history, working in His people and preserving His Word? What does this information tell you about who God is?
6. How has the bibliographic information presented increased your confidence in the historical reliability of the Old Testament?
7. What questions do you still have about the reliability of the Old Testament?
8. How should you investigate questions you may have regarding the validity of any book which claims to be the Word of God?

The Triune God in Creation and Our Accountability

1. The Triune God as Creator

A. "In the beginning, God..."

[Genesis 1:1-2, 26-27](#)

[Deuteronomy 6:4](#)

B. "In the beginning was the Word..."

[John 1:1-3, 14](#)

[Hebrews 1:1-3](#)

[Colossians 1:16](#)

C. "And God said..."

[Genesis 1](#)

1. What is *ex nihilo*?

[Hebrews 11:3](#)

[John 1:3](#)

D. Contrasting LDS View

1. Doctrine and Covenants Section 93:33

2. Pearl of Great Price Abraham 4:1

3. "Mormon Doctrine" p 169, quotes King Follett discourse

2. Creation of Man

[Genesis 1 and 2](#)

A. Made in God's image (*tse/m*)

[Genesis 1:26-27](#), [John 4:24](#)

1. What it is NOT

[Deuteronomy 4:15-19](#)

[Numbers 23:19](#)

Contrast

Mormon Doctrine "Father in Heaven" p 278

Doctrine & Covenants Section 130:22

2. What it IS

B. Purpose

1. [Isaiah 43:7](#), [Revelation 4:11](#)

2. Stewards to Rule over Creation

[Genesis 1:28](#)

3. Contrasting LDS view

Book of Mormon 2 Nephi 2:25b

3. Authority and Accountability

A. Giving of command

[Genesis 2:16-17](#)

Authority / _____

Reigns / _____

Creator / _____

B. Penalty

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is to discuss application questions about the Triune God as Creator.

1. In Genesis 1:1-2, God is Elohim, which because of the “im” ending is plural. How does the plurality of God relate to Deuteronomy 6:4 which asserts that the Lord is one? How can you reconcile the two notions?
2. What have you learned about Jesus’ role in creation? Why is that important?
3. Judi pointed out that the word “trinity” is not in the Bible. Is there enough evidence to believe that God is both three in expression and also of one essence? Is believing that God is triune important? Why or why not? What did you take away about God from the two triangle analogies?
4. Why is it important to know God is able to create out of nothing? How does this differ from reorganizing already eternal elements? What questions does this bring up?
5. God didn’t just speak mankind into being, He fashioned us and breathed life into us. What does this tell you about God? About man’s relationship to God?
6. We are the only part of creation to whom God gives moral responsibility. Why do you think that man is to be morally accountable and answerable to God? How are you accountable to God?
7. If God made man in His image, intentionally and purposefully, how does this fly in the face of the theory of evolution? What questions does this raise in your mind about your purpose?
8. If we remove God as creator, we are left as creatures who try to exert authority over each other and this leads to chaos. What happens to authority, accountability, and absolute right and wrong? Do you see any evidence of the result of this in our world today?
9. In Isaiah 43:6-7 God says that He created everyone for His glory. How does this differ from the Book of Mormon view that man’s purpose is to have joy? How can you glorify God with your life?

Due to time constraints, DVD Lesson 6 does not cover the LDS contrasting view. These LDS reference sources are listed at the end of Lesson 6 and should be covered at this time for the sake of continuity. However, if you are using the DVD, explain to your group that the contrasting LDS view will be given at the beginning of Lesson 7.

The Temptation and Fall

1. Review Authority and Accountability

A. Command and penalty

[Genesis 2:16-17](#)

2. Temptation and Fall

A. Satan's origin

[Genesis 3:1](#), [Revelation 12:9](#), [Isaiah 14:12-13](#), [Ezekiel 28:11-14](#)

B. Satan's method

[Genesis 3:1-6](#), [1 John 2:15](#)

1. casts doubt on God's Word
2. denies reality of sin and it's penalty
3. casts doubt on the goodness of God's character
4. promises what he couldn't give

C. Result

[Genesis 3:7-13](#), [1 Timothy 2:14](#)

1. personal shame
2. fear and dread of God
3. enmity and blame
4. unwillingness to accept responsibility for choices

D. God's response
[Genesis 3:11-24](#)

1. exposes sin
2. judges sin
3. provides _____ of redemption
4. provides _____ of redemption

3. Subsequent Results

A. All are born with a "sin nature"

1. Born in Adam's image
[Genesis 5:3](#)

2. Conceived and born in sin
[Psalm 51:5](#)

B. All are separated from God

[Isaiah 53:6](#)
[Romans 3:23](#)
[Romans 5:12-17](#)
[Romans 8:7-8](#)
[Isaiah 59:2](#)

4. Contrasting LDS view

Book of Mormon 2 Nephi 2:22-25
Pearl of Great Price Moses 5:10-11
Mormon Doctrine "The Fall of Adam" p 268

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is to discuss application questions about the temptation and fall of man.

1. When Adam and Eve were in the garden, they had deep intimacy with God and each other. After they sinned, how did their relationship with God change? How did their relationship with each other change?
2. After Adam and Eve sinned, they were ashamed. What causes shame in our lives today? What are some of the things in the world that we use to cover up the effects of sin in our lives? Do they work?
3. Blaming others and an unwillingness to accept responsibility for sin were also results of the fall. Why do we struggle with these issues in our relationships today?
4. How does understanding the origin of Satan help you understand how and why he offered the temptation to Eve? What do you think his motives were? Are these motives relevant today? How do you see him operating in your life?
5. God created man with the knowledge that man would choose to disobey Him. Why do you think God still created man? What does this say about your value to God?
6. If God has authority over Satan and all the rest of creation, how could God allow Adam and Eve to sin? Is God absolutely sovereign? Do we have free will? Can we reconcile these two notions?
7. Temptation in the garden began as Satan cast doubt on God's Word. Do you see God's Word distorted, made irrelevant, ignored, or marginalized today? How does knowing the Word help you to resist temptation?
8. Satan tried to deny the reality of sin and its penalty. Do people really weigh the morality of what they are doing before they do it, or do they just do what is easy, expedient, or popular? What is the big deal about sinning anyway, if no one gets hurt?
9. Satan cast doubt on the goodness of God, insinuating that God was withholding something good from Eve. What do you know about God's character, nature, and attributes? Does God want you to be happy? Is He good all the time?

Due to time constraints, DVD Lesson 6 did not cover the LDS contrasting view. These LDS reference sources were listed at the end of Lesson 6. They are repeated again here and are discussed in detail at the beginning of DVD Lesson 7.

God's Plan of Salvation

I. Review the Fall (bad news)

[Genesis 2:16-17](#)

[Genesis 3:15, 21](#)

Contrasting LDS view:

Book of Mormon 2 Nephi 2:22-25

Pearl of Great Price Moses 5:10-11

Mormon Doctrine "The Fall of Adam" p 268

A. Promise/picture of redemption

[Leviticus 17:11-14](#)

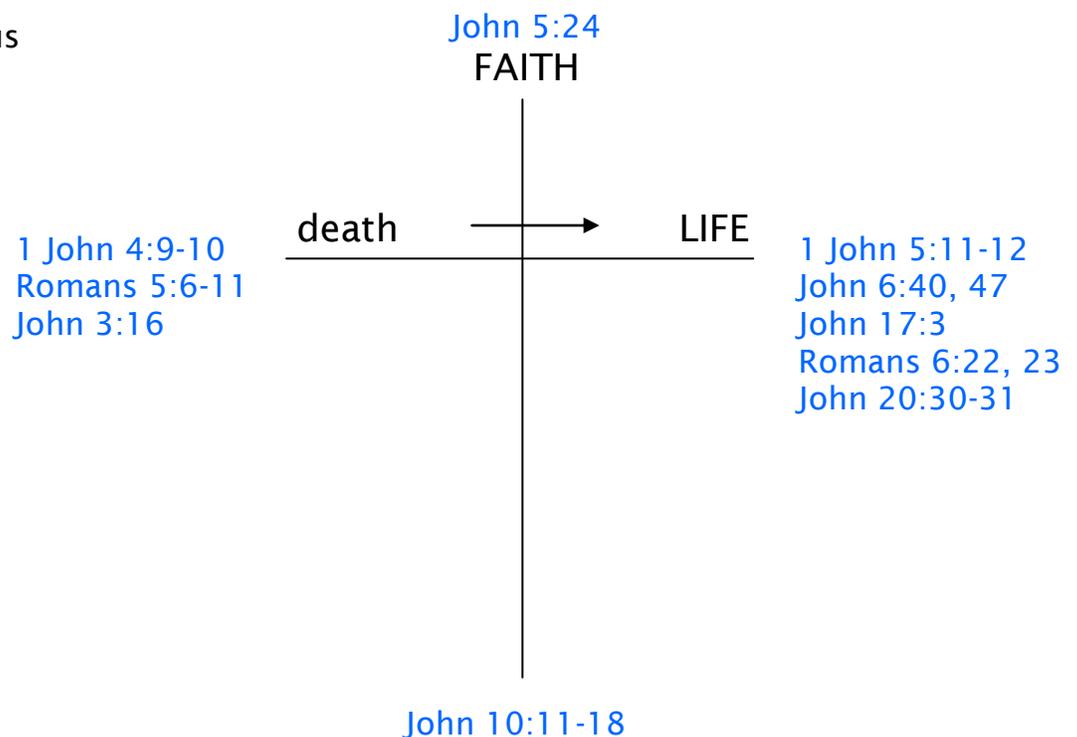
[Hebrews 9:22](#)

2. Good News

A. God knows us intimately

[Psalm 139:1-16](#)

B. God loves us



3. Becoming children of God

A. FAITH

[John 1:12-13](#)
[Galatians 3:26](#)

B. NOT Works

[John 3:3 vs 3:36](#)
[Romans 10:1-4, 9-13](#)
[Ephesians 1:13-14](#)
[Romans 8:9, 14-15](#)

C. Faith vs baptism/church membership/works

[Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8-10](#)

4. Eternal life

[John 17:1-3, John 20:30-31](#)

5. Contrasting LDS view

Mormon Doctrine "Eternal Life" p 237
Doctrine & Covenants Section 29:43-44, 14:7, 132
Mormon Doctrine "Immortality" p 377
Pearl of Great Price Moses 1:39

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is to discuss application questions about God's plan of salvation.

1. Isaiah 53:6 defines sin as going our own way. Sin separates us from God. Have you ever felt far away or somehow lost from God? What did you do? What caused it? Why is submitting to God's will and not going our own way so difficult, yet so important?
2. In Psalm 139:1-6, David reveals God's character and His love for us. What did you learn about God from this passage of scripture? Have you come to understand God's love for you in a specific and personal way? How?
3. Our human loves are all conditional and self-seeking. Describe how you have seen this to be true in your life. How do you deal with the pain of disappointment in human love? Why is it important to you that God's agape love is unconditional and sacrificial?
4. 1 John 4:9-10 defines God's love by saying it is not that we love Him, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. How do death and forgiveness relate to love? How is this relevant to you?
5. The bad news of our sin is replaced with the good news through Christ's sacrifice on the cross; the consequence of sin is paid for and we have eternal life. How does being reconciled to God through Jesus' death on the cross affect your life now? Does what Christ did apply to you? Can it change your life now, or is it just for after you die?
6. According to what Jesus taught there are only two categories of people — those under judgment for sin and those who have forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Christ's sacrifice. Do you believe this? Eternal life, according to LDS Doctrine, is having the same kind, status, type, and quality of life God enjoys; we become gods. What is the difference in the way the phrase "eternal life" is used in the Bible? Why is this distinction important to you?
7. Sin separated man from God and destroyed his personal relationship with Him; but in Christ this relationship is restored. How can you have a personal relationship with Christ? How can you deepen that relationship? Do you believe you can know God?

The Deity of Christ

1. Review & Introduction

The importance of the identity of Jesus: What He was able to do depended on who He is.

2. Christ's Deity—Who is He?

John 1:1-18

Colossians 1:15-20

Philippians 2:5-11

Hebrews 1:1-12, 2:14-15

3. Who did He claim to be?

John 8:23-24, 51-59 (Exodus 3:14-16)

John 10:24-33

John 14:6, 8-11

4. What evidence did He give?
[John 5:31-40](#), [John 10:37-38](#)
Miracles:
[Matthew 8:3, 6-13, 16-17, 23-27](#)
[John 11:39-44](#)

Fulfilled Prophecy:
[Isaiah 42:9](#)

5. What was the conclusion of the disciples?
[Matthew 16:13-16](#)
[John 20:26-29](#)

6. Contrasting LDS view:
Mormon Doctrine "Father in Heaven" p 278
Doctrine and Covenants Section 93:21-23
Doctrine and Covenants Section 130:22
Pearl of Great Price Moses 1-4
Mormon Doctrine "Pre-existence" p 590
Mormon Doctrine "Christ" p 129
Mormon Doctrine "Son of God" p 742
Book of Mormon 1 Nephi 11

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is to discuss application questions about the deity of Jesus.

1. Why do we need to understand who Jesus really is? Isn't it enough to understand what He did? Why is understanding that He is fully divine important?
2. What is the significance for you that Christ is Creator? What is the importance that He Himself is not a created being?
3. Philippians 2:5-11 tells us that Jesus didn't cling to His rightful position as God, but humbled himself, took the form of man so that He could accomplish His purpose — to die on the cross. Lots of men were crucified by the Romans in the first century; why was Jesus' death unique?
4. What have you seen so far about substitutionary sacrifices leading up to Christ's sacrifice?
5. Why did Jesus have to be born of only the seed of a woman, without a human father? Why did He have to be without sin?
6. Explain in your words how LDS doctrine of the pre-existence differs from the Biblical view, especially with respect to the nature of Jesus.
7. Jesus claimed to be God. C.S. Lewis says that if someone claims to be God they are either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. How does what you understand about Jesus from our lesson help you conclude which category Jesus is in?
8. How do Jesus' miracles provide evidence that He is God? Who do you think Jesus is?

The Humanity of Christ

1. Introduction
 - A. Purpose of prophecy
Isaiah 42:9, Isaiah 46:9-10, Luke 24:44

The importance of the identity of Jesus: What He was able to do depended on who He is.

2. The Incarnation
 - A. John 1:14, Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18

- B. Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1

Book of Mormon Alma 7:10
Mormon Doctrine "Son of God" p 742

- 3. How His Humanity Was Seen
 - A. Physical and Emotional
[John 4:6-7, 11:35](#)

- B. In the Temptation
[Matthew 3:16-4:11](#)

- 1. preceding events
 - 2. stones to bread
 - 3. throw self down
 - 4. worship me and have the kingdom



What did Jesus use to defend Himself?

How did Satan use the Word of God?

- 4. Results of the Temptation
 - A. [Hebrews 2:18, 4:15](#)

- B. [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)

- 1. Temptation will be limited
 - 2. There will be a way out (or ability to bear up under it)

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the humanity of Jesus.

1. There are over 300 specific prophecies in the Old Testament that foretold a coming Messiah. These point to His identity, place of birth, location and time in history. What does this tell you about God? What does this tell you about your value to Him?
2. We often have our own expectation of what God is like, and instead of believing what God tells us about Himself, we make up and piece together our own God. Is this true for you? As a result of these lessons, have you had to reevaluate your view of who God is? What have you changed and why?
3. When Jesus left His glory and became a human being, it was to reveal God to us. How has Jesus revealed God to you?
4. The virgin birth is an essential part of the identity of Jesus. If Jesus were conceived, begotten, and born in the literal manner as the LDS doctrine describes, is this the Jesus predicted in Old Testament prophecy?
5. What did you learn from Jesus' responses to the temptations by Satan in the wilderness that will help you resist temptation? Why is it important that Jesus was tempted in every way as we are but He never gave in?
6. Why do we need a High Priest who can sympathize with our failures?
7. What further questions do you have about the humanity and deity of Jesus?

The Work of Jesus — His Life and Ministry

1. Born to Die

What His Purpose Is:

[Matthew 1:18-21](#)

[John 1:29](#)

[John 20:30-31](#), [John 1:1](#)

2. Teaching, Preaching, and Healing

What He did/What He said about His purpose:

[Matthew 4:23](#)

[John 2:13-22](#), [John 4:4-26](#)

[Matthew 16:13-21](#)

[Matthew 17:1-13](#), [John 6:26-29](#)

[John 10:14-18](#), [John 11:21-27](#)

[John 14:6-11](#), [Matthew 26:26-28](#)

[John 17:1-3](#)

Book	Audience	Portrayal of Christ
Matthew	Jewish	Jesus the King of Israel/Messiah
Mark	Roman & Jewish	Servant
Luke	Gentile	Perfect Man
John	Everyone	The Christ The Son of God

3. Contrasting LDS view

Mormon Doctrine, Eternal Life, p 237

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the life and ministry of Jesus.

1. Some people believe that Jesus came to be a good example for us so that we can emulate His life. Others believe that He came to be a great moral teacher. Are these things true about Jesus? What was His real purpose?
2. Jesus came into a Jewish culture where atonement, or covering over the guilt of sin by animal sacrifice, was commonplace. When John the Baptist saw Jesus and said "Behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world" they understood substitutionary sacrifice. What are the things that we need to grapple with in our culture to understand or explain Jesus' sacrifice for sin?
3. C.S. Lewis said Jesus made profound statements about who He is, which if they are not true, makes Jesus either crazy or a great deceiver. Are there any other options? What holds people back from accepting that He is who He said He is? Where are you on the journey to know the real Jesus?
4. Jesus performed many miracles in His life. How do they help you understand His identity?
5. Jesus claims to be the only means through which intimacy and a personal relationship with God can be obtained. Is this view intolerant of other religions or narrow minded? How would you respond to someone who says that all religions lead to the same God?
6. What did Jesus' life teach you about His relationship to the Father? How can this apply to your relationship with the Father?
7. How has your view of what it means to have eternal life been challenged? Jesus says in John 17 that eternal life is knowing the only true God and the one whom He has sent. How well do you know Him? Personally? Intimately? What stands in your way?
8. When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well, He told her that the hour has come to worship God in Spirit and truth. How are you worshiping God?

(Optional)

1. Creator God – Triune, Uncreated, Eternal
[Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-3](#)
2. Man Made In God’s Image (Tselm)
[Genesis 1:26-27, 2:16-17](#)
3. Sin and Separation (Penalty)
[Genesis 3](#)
4. Promise and Picture
[Genesis 3:15, 21](#)
5. OT Promises/Prophecies further explain God’s Plan
6. Passover
[Exodus 12](#)
7. Old Covenant: Law, Sacrifice, Priesthood, Sanctuary, Day of Atonement
[Leviticus 16 and 17 \(17:11, 14\)](#)
8. Promise of New Covenant
[Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)
9. The Incarnation
[Matthew 1:20-23, John 1:29, 34](#)
10. Jesus’ Claims
[John 8:23-24, 51-59 \(Exodus 3:14-16\), Matthew 26:26-28](#)

The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

1. Old Testament Background Review

A. Passover

[Exodus 12](#)

B. Old Covenant

1. Day of Atonement

[Leviticus 16 and 17](#)

2. Other Sacrifices

2. New Testament Predictions of the Sacrifice

[Matthew 1:21](#), [John 1:29](#), [Matthew 26:26-28](#)

The importance of the identity of Jesus: What He was able to do depended on who He is.

3. The Crucifixion

[Matthew 27:45-54 \(Psalm 22\)](#), [Luke 23:46-48](#), [John 19:30](#)

4. Old Testament and New Testament Interpretation: What happened there?

[1 Peter 2:24-25](#), [Isaiah 53:5-6](#)

[Hebrews 8:6, 13, 9:11-15, 22, 24-26](#)

[Hebrews 10:1-4, 10, 14, 17, 18](#)

[Colossians 2:13-15](#)

[Romans 3:20-26](#)

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#)

[1 John 1:7](#)

5. Contrasting LDS View

Mormon Doctrine "Eternal Life" p 237

Mormon Doctrine "Immortality" p 377

Mormon Doctrine "Atonement of Christ" p 62

Mormon Doctrine "Redemption" p 623

Mormon Doctrine "Blood Atonement" p 92-93

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the crucifixion of Jesus.

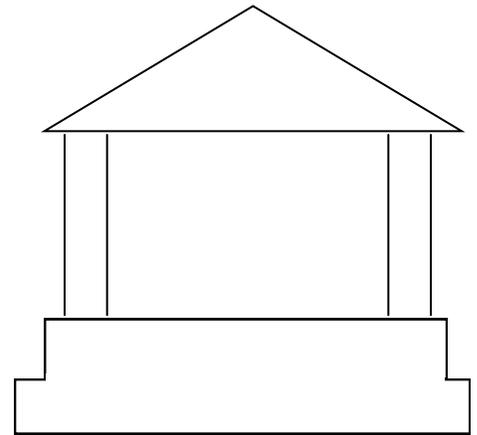
1. In the Old Testament, man dealt with his sin by sacrificing an innocent animal. Why is this sacrificial system no longer necessary? Where did it fall short in dealing with the problem of sin?
2. Is Jesus' death on the cross still necessary and relevant today?
3. Jesus said He would lay down His life, that no man takes His life but that He would lay it down on His own initiative. How do the events that took place during the crucifixion show that He voluntarily laid down His life? Why is this important for us to understand?
4. In the midst of the horror, pain, and cruelty of the crucifixion, Jesus cried out to the Father quoting Psalm 22, "Why have you forsaken Me?" What did He mean? How does this Psalm foreshadow what happened to Jesus on the cross? Why did God the Father turn His back on Jesus? How is this important to your own relationship with Him?
5. What happened to your sins — like selfishness and pride — when Jesus was crucified? What has resulted from His death for you personally? What should your response be? Can you see the mercy of God at work in your life?
6. According to the book of Hebrews, what happened in heaven while Jesus was dying on earth? What did His phrase "It is finished" mean when Jesus died? What was finished or paid in full? Do we need to do anything more?
7. According to the Bible, is there any sin that Jesus' blood can't cleanse? How does this differ from Mormon doctrine?
8. According to the Bible, can we do anything ourselves to cover up or remove our own sin? Could Christ have paid our sin debt in Gethsemane and avoided the cross? Why?
9. Discuss how the LDS belief that Jesus came to be an example, to show us how to live, and attain godhood, differs from the Biblical view. What is the significance of this difference?
10. Because of the crucifixion, what happened to the power of Satan?

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

1. The Significance of the Resurrection

[Romans 1:1-4, 4:25](#)

[1 Corinthians 15:1-8](#)



2. The Proofs of the Resurrection

A. Jesus' Predictions

[Matthew 16:21](#), [Mark 8:31](#), [Luke 9:22](#), [John 2:19-21](#)

B. Resurrection Appearances of the Living Christ

C. The Empty Tomb

D. The Empty Grave Clothes

E. The Stone – Moved Up and Away
[Matthew 27 & 28](#), [Mark 16](#), [Luke 24](#)

F. The Guard

G. Breaking of a Roman Seal

H. Boldness of Apostles
[Acts 2:22-24](#), [Acts 17](#)

I. Jewish Implications of Changing Day of Worship

3. Contrasting LDS View
Mormon Doctrine “Resurrection” p 641

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the resurrection of Jesus.

1. I Corinthians 15:1-8 contains the most concise teaching of the gospel. What does Paul emphasize? Why are these things so important to a Christian? How would you explain the gospel to someone who doesn't know it?
2. Some believe the resurrection is an allegory about renewal; not an actual, literal event. Is there a problem with this view? Why? What does it mean for us if Jesus didn't physically rise from the dead?
3. Imagine you were a first century believer and you heard Jesus say that those who believed in Him would never die. What would you think when you saw your fellow believers die and not rise from the dead after three days like Jesus?
4. What role does faith play today in your understanding and accepting that Jesus rose from the dead?
5. What does the resurrection prove? How does it relate to who Jesus is? How does it relate to what He did for you personally?
6. There are three main theories that are used by critics to disprove the resurrection: the disciples stole the body, mass hallucination of the disciples, and the swoon theory. Where do each of these ideas fall apart? Why do you think that so many people cling to them even though they are easily disproved? What do you think happened to the body of Jesus?
7. Which of the evidences of the resurrection — the empty tomb, the stone rolled away, the sleeping Roman guard, the broken Roman seal or the boldness of the Apostles — was most compelling to you? Why?

The Holy Spirit

1. The Promise of the Holy Spirit

[Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)

[Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)

2. Jesus' Teaching regarding the Holy Spirit

[John 14:15-18, 15:26; 16:5-14](#)

[Luke 24:46-49](#)

Mormon Doctrine "Holy Ghost" p 359

Doctrine & Covenants Section 130:22-23

3. The Coming of the Holy Spirit

A. Christ's Ascension

[Acts 1:3-9](#)

B. Day of Pentecost

[Acts 2:1-39](#)

4. How to Have the Holy Spirit

Acts 10:42-45, 11:15-18

Ephesians 1:13-14

_____ is the key

Mormon Doctrine "Gift of the Holy Ghost" p 313

Mormon Doctrine "Laying on of Hands" p 438

Doctrine and Covenants Sections 20:41, 58, 68 and 36:1-2

A. Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:12-13

B. Sealed with the Holy Spirit

2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 4:30

5. Walking by the Spirit

Romans 8:1-11, 13-16, 26

Galatians 5:16-18

Titus 3:3-7

1 Corinthians 2:12, 3:16, 6:19

2 Corinthians 6:16

A. Purpose of Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

B. Purpose of Gifts of the Spirit

1 Corinthians 12 - 14

Ephesians 4:1-14

1 Peter 4: 10, 11

Small Group Leader: The goal of this lesson time is for the participants to get to know each other and to discuss application questions about the Holy Spirit.

1. How does the indwelling of the Holy Spirit relate to the new heart promised in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36? How is the work of the Holy Spirit different in the Old and New Covenants?
2. Jesus said in John 14 that He would ask the Father to send another Helper for them. What does this show about relationships within the Trinity?
3. Why is it important that the Holy Spirit is another of the same type as Jesus? What does this tell you about the identity of the Holy Spirit?
4. What is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit and why is it the only unforgivable sin? Are there any sins that the blood of Christ can't forgive?
5. How does a person receive the Holy Spirit? Does He dwell in you? How did that happen in your life?
6. What is the role or function of the Holy Spirit? What characteristics does He bring out in you that are evidence that He lives in you? Do you see character transformation in you or someone else because of the Holy Spirit in them?
7. What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? How have your thoughts, attitudes, speech, and actions changed because you are led by the Holy Spirit?
8. How is the LDS view of the Holy Ghost different from the Biblical view of the Spirit of Christ?

The Church of Jesus Christ

1. Jesus gives the Promise of the Church
 - A. Based on the revelation of Jesus Christ
[Matthew 16:16-18](#)

 - B. *Ekklesia*
[1 Peter 2:4-8](#)

2. Pentecost and the Early Church
 - A. Coming of the Holy Spirit, First Sermon, First converts
[Acts 2](#)

 - B. Persecution causes the spread of the Gospel
[Acts 8:1-4](#)

3. The Jerusalem Council
[Acts 15](#)

4. The Mystery of the Church revealed
One new “man”
[Ephesians 2:11-19](#)
[Ephesians 3:4-12](#)

5. The Purpose of the Church
 - A. Making and Growing Disciples
[Matthew 28:19-20](#), [Acts 2:42](#), [Ephesians 4:4-7](#), [11-16](#)

 - B. Preaching and Serving
[Acts 2:42](#), [Ephesians 4:4-7](#), [11-16](#), [1 Corinthians 12 - 14](#), [Colossians 1:25](#)

 - C. Leadership
[Titus 1:5-9](#), [1 Timothy 3:1-13](#)

6. Some Important Questions
 - A. Was there a complete apostasy/falling away?
[Matthew 16:18](#), [Jude 1:3](#)
Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith History 1:18-20
Mormon Doctrine "Apostacy" p 44
Doctrine and Covenants Section 112:23

 - B. Is there One True Church?
[John 14:6](#), [Ephesians 2:20](#), [1 Corinthians 3:11](#), [Colossians 1:18](#)
Doctrine and Covenants Section 1:30

 - C. Do we need a prophet today?
[Hebrews 1:1-2](#), [1 Corinthians 14:3](#)

 - D. What are the Biblical tests of a true prophet?
[Deuteronomy 18:21-22](#), [13:1-5](#), [Galatians 1:6-9](#)

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the Biblical Church.

1. The foundation of the Church is Jesus — the Christ — the Son of God. The called out assembly must be built on the Jesus of the Bible. Is your church founded on this Jesus? Does your church teach who He is and what He did as of primary importance, or are other things added or emphasized? What is the result if a church is founded on anything else?
2. The sign of the New Covenant is the Holy Spirit within each believer. Why then is there such a big problem of unity among believers: divisions, quarrels, and/or factions? What can we do to bring unity and maintain peace in the Body?
3. What is the purpose of the Church? How is your church fulfilling this purpose? Where is it strong? Weak? What can you do to strengthen your church?
4. Where do you fit into the Body of Christ? What area of service or gifting do you bring to grow up the Body? Where are you serving in your church?
5. How does your church help believers mature spiritually? Are you growing? What is helping you grow?
6. What evidence do you see of the Fruit of the Spirit, godly character, being developed in you?
7. Jesus taught that the gates of Hell would not prevail against the Church. Does this teaching line up with the LDS view of an apostasy and the need for restoration? How does the permanence of Jesus' Church affect you?

Priesthood, Temples and Authority, Part 1

LDS contrast is not provided separately on Lesson 15 video; it appears in Lesson 16. LDS references regarding claim of restored priesthood are provided in Lessons 15 and 16 for your convenience.

Pearl of Great Price Joseph Smith History 1:68-72 and Mormon Doctrine, "Restored Priesthood" p 594

Three essential questions:

1. What was the purpose and scope of the Biblical Priesthood?
2. Is there a need for restoration of the priesthood in any form now?
3. What is the source of authority for present-day preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Question 1:

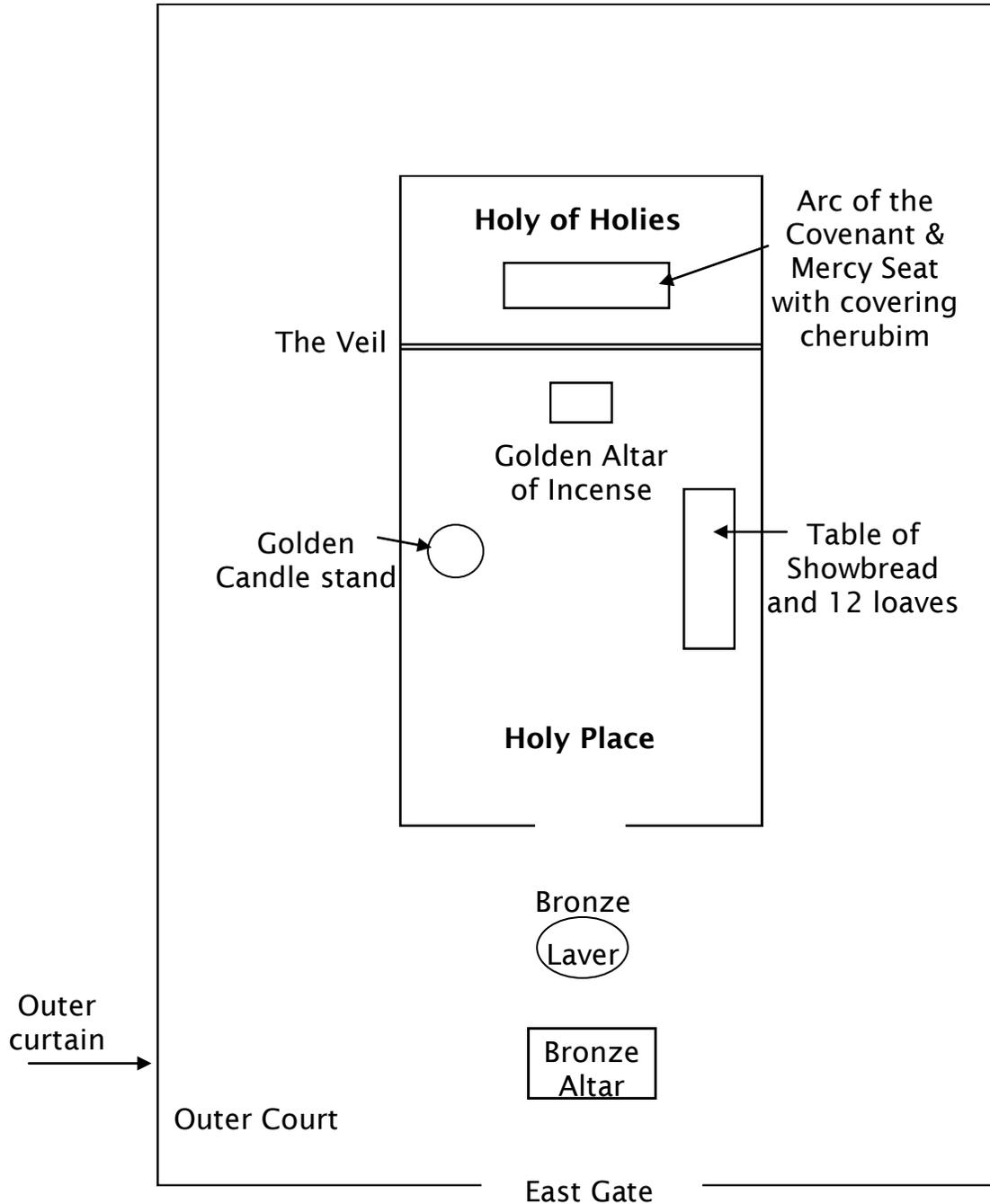
1. The Mosaic Covenant (Old Covenant, the Law)
 - A. Priesthood (Levitical)
[Exodus 28, 29 and 39, Leviticus 8](#)

 - B. Tabernacle/Temple (Sanctuary)
[Exodus 25-27, 30-40](#)

 - C. Sacrifices
[Leviticus 1-7, Hebrews 10:1-4, Leviticus 17:11, 14](#)

 - D. Fulfillment
[Matthew 5:17-18](#)
[Galatians 3:19-25, Romans 3:20-28](#)
[Hebrews 10:10-18](#)

The Sanctuary



Court of Women & Gentiles

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to discuss application questions about the priesthood, temples and authority.

1. In your own words, recount why Joseph Smith felt that there was a need for a restored priesthood. How do LDS teachings about priesthood power invalidate all other churches' claims?
2. What was the purpose of the priesthood in the Old Covenant? Is that purpose still valid today? Why or why not?
3. A covenant is a solemn binding agreement. What does the fact that God made many covenants with men tell you about who He is? How does this change how you respond to Him?
4. One reason God set up the Law was to make His people distinct from other nations who didn't know God. Does He do anything to make New Covenant believers distinct from unbelievers?
5. Another reason God set up the Law was to show Israel that they were all law breakers. Was there a point in your life when you realized that you were a law breaker? What did you do about it? How do you deal with your sin today?
6. God gave the elaborate system of sacrifices, priests, and a sanctuary so that when the Israelites broke the Law they would have a way to stay in relationship with Him. What reason could He possibly have had to do that?
7. God desires an exclusive relationship with His people, like a marriage relationship. What can you do to foster or hinder that relationship? How can you deepen your intimacy with Him?

Priesthood, Temples and Authority, Part 2

LDS contrast is not provided separately on Lesson 15 video; it appears in Lesson 16. LDS references regarding claim of restored priesthood are provided in Lessons 15 and 16 for your convenience.

Pearl of Great Price Joseph Smith History 1:68-72 and Mormon Doctrine, "Restored Priesthood" p 594

1. Review:
What was the purpose and scope of the Biblical Priesthood?

Question 2:

Is there a need for restoration of the priesthood in any form now?

2. The New Covenant (Grace)
[Jeremiah 31:31-34](#), [Ezekiel 36:26-27](#)
[Matthew 5:17-18](#), [26:26-28](#)

- A. Priesthood (Melchizedek)
[Genesis 14:18-20](#)
[Psalm 110:4](#)
[Hebrews 7:11-28](#)

- B. Tabernacle/Temple (Sanctuary)
[Hebrews 8:1-5](#)
[Hebrews 9:11, 24](#)

- C. Sacrifice
[Hebrews 9:12-28](#)
[Hebrews 10:10-23](#)
[John 14:6](#)

- D. On-Going Ministry
[Hebrews 8:13](#)
[Hebrews 9:15](#)
[Hebrews 7:25](#)

Question 3:

What is the source of authority for present-day preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ?

3. Temples

A. Present

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

2 Corinthians 6:16

B. Future

Revelation 21:22

4. Authority

Acts 1:8

Ephesians 1:13-14

A. Priests

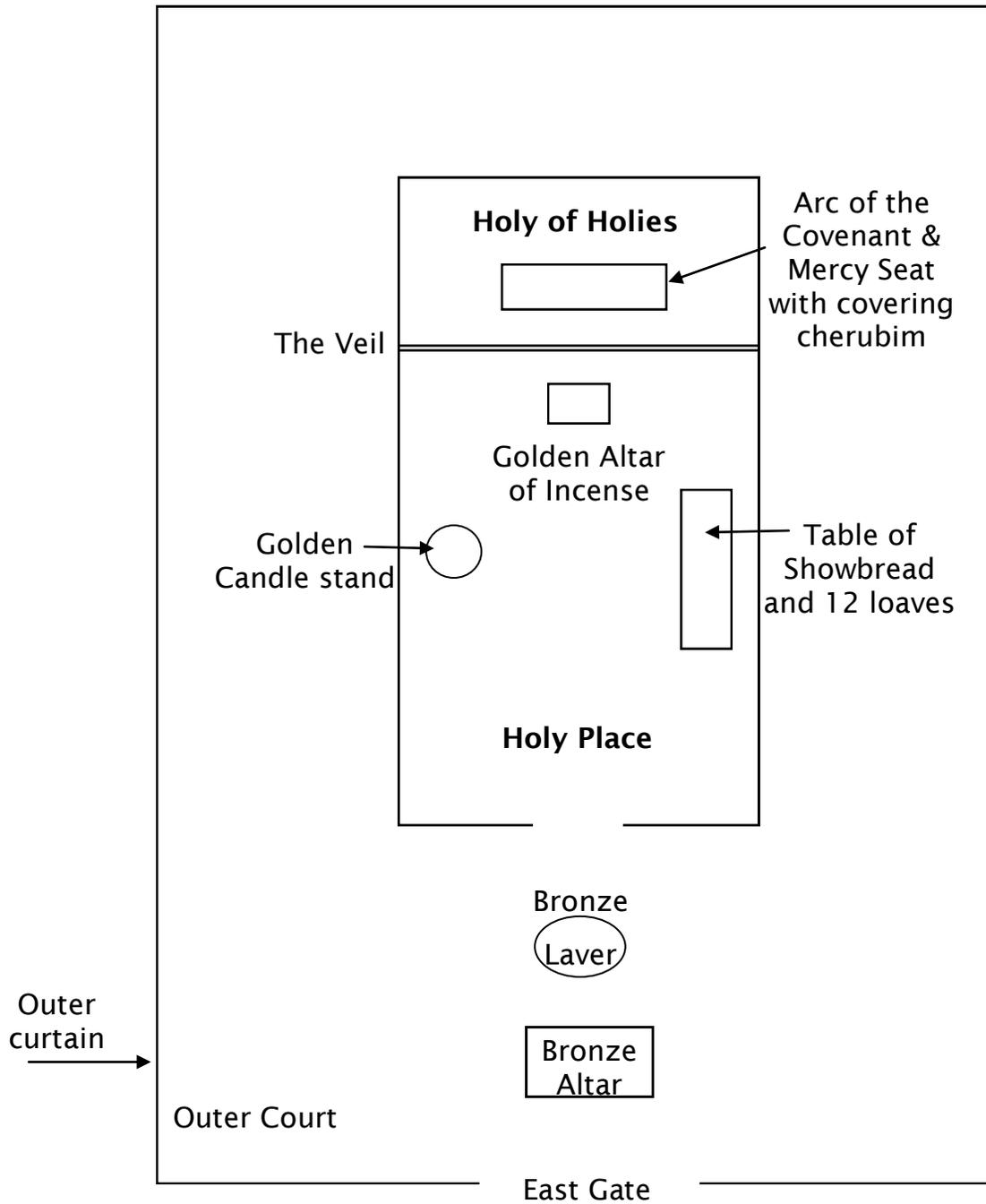
1 Peter 2:4-10

B. Ambassadors

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

2 Corinthians 2:1-5

The Sanctuary



Court of Women & Gentiles

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to continue to discuss application questions about the priesthood, temples and authority.

1. In the Old Covenant the people drew near to God through the sacrificial system, but in the New Covenant we draw near to God through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. How does faith fit in to all of this? In what do you place your faith? How is your faith evident in your life?
2. What did the picture of the sanctuary teach you about Jesus? Do you see any parallels between the furnishings in the tabernacle and Jesus Himself?
3. How is the New Covenant based on better promises? Where is the Law in the New Covenant? What is the purpose of the Law today?
4. How and where did Jesus fulfill the Old Covenant? Why do we need to understand the Old Covenant if we are no longer under it?
5. Do we need a Melchizedek priesthood today? According to Hebrews, who can fill this role?
6. How is Jesus a better sacrifice than the bulls and goats sacrificed under the Old Covenant? How has His sacrifice affected you?
7. How is Jesus a better priest in the New Covenant than the priests of the Old Covenant? What is His on-going ministry in your life?
8. What is your source of authority for preaching the gospel? How are you fulfilling the ministry of reconciling a lost world to Christ?
9. What does the tearing of the veil in the temple mean in terms of Covenant? What does that allow you to do?

Plan of Eternal Progression, Part 1

1. The Pre-existence
 - A. LDS View:
 - Pearl of Great Price Abraham 3:21-28
 - Mormon Doctrine "Pre-existence" p 589-90
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 93:21-23

 - B. Biblical View:
 - [Psalm 139:13-16](#)
 - [1 Corinthians 15:42-49](#)

2. Relation between Lucifer, Human Beings, and God
 - A. LDS View:
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 76:24-38
 - Pearl of Great Price Moses 4:1-4

 - B. Biblical View:
 - [Colossians 1:15-17](#)

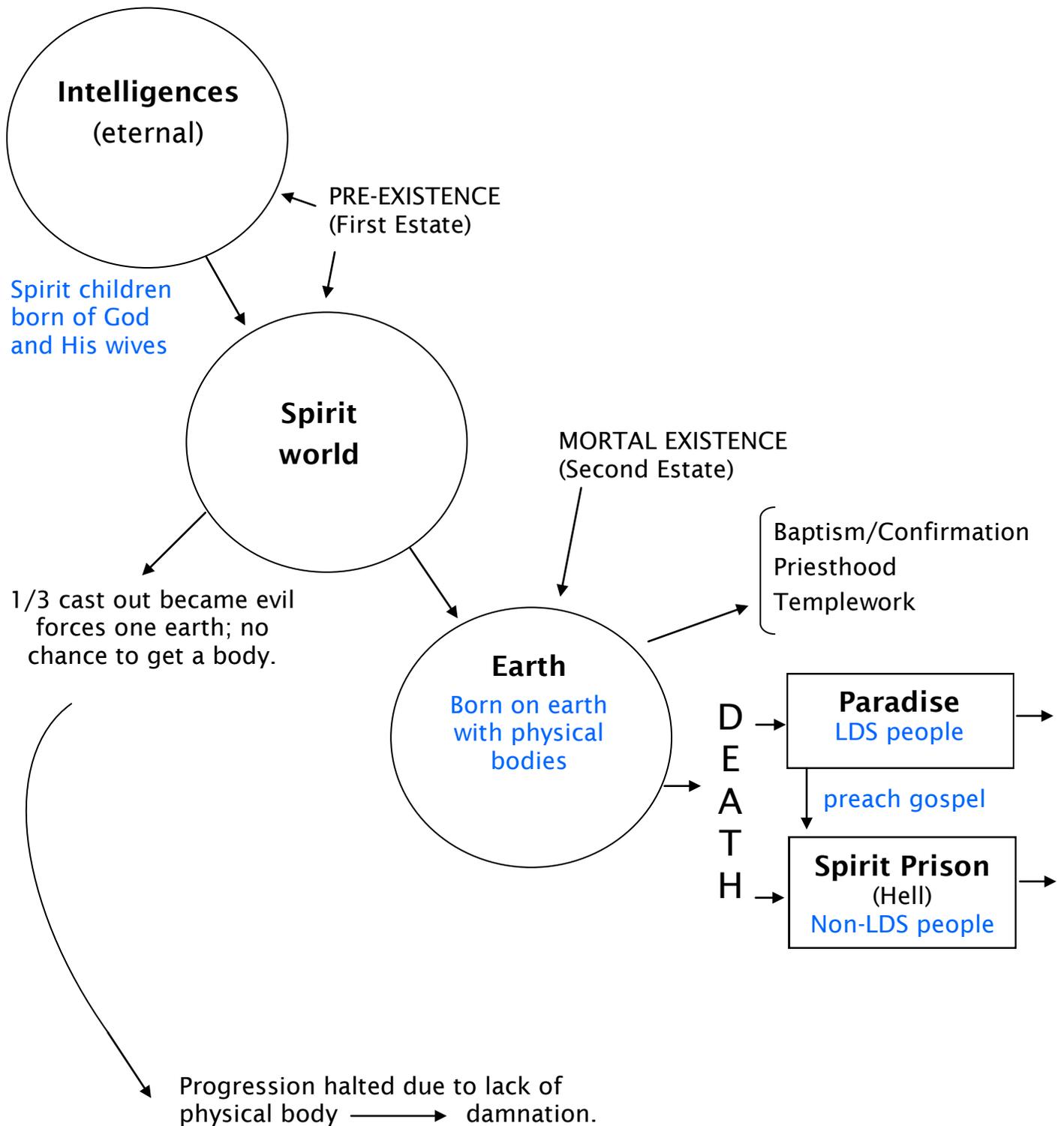
 - C. The Origin of Satan
 - [Luke 10:18](#), [Isaiah 14](#), [Ezekiel 28](#), [Revelation 12:7-9](#)

3. Baptism and Confirmation
 - [Romans 10:9-10, Ephesians 1:13-14](#)
 - Articles of Faith #4
 - Mormon Doctrine "Baptism" p 69-72
 - Mormon Doctrine "Holy Ghost" p 359
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 130:22-23

4. Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthood
 - [1 Peter 2:4-10](#)
 - Mormon Doctrine "Aaronic Priesthood" p 9-11
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 107:1, 6, 10,
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 13

5. Endowments, Ordinances, and Temple Work
 - Mormon Doctrine "Endowments" p 226-228
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 95:8-9
 - Doctrine and Covenants Section 124:25-41
 - Mormon Doctrine "Salvation for the Dead" p 672-673

LDS View, Part 1



Note: complete chart on page 59.

Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is discuss application questions about the plan of exultation.

1. How does the LDS concept of the pre-existence differ from the Biblical view? Why are these differences significant?
2. Why is possession of a human body so important in the LDS faith? How does the Biblical view of the purpose of our time on earth differ from the LDS religion?
3. What do you think of Lorenzo Snow's comment "As man is, God once was. As God is, man may become?" Why is the origin or eternality of God significant? If you believe that Heavenly Father was once a person, verses the self-existent eternal God of the Bible, how does that change your faith, your self concept, your life, and your hope?
4. The LDS view holds that intelligences, priesthood power, and matter are all eternal whereas Biblical Christianity believes only the triune God is eternal. How do each of these views differ with respect to origins, the purpose of man, morality, and destiny?
5. Why would an evangelical Christian believe that the Mormon concept of Lucifer and Jesus as spirit brothers is "blasphemy?"
6. What did you learn about God from Psalm 139:13-16? How can you use this knowledge to change your worship or prayer life?
7. What distinct differences do you see between LDS and evangelical Christian views of baptism, the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit? How do these differences affect your relationship with God?
8. What is the purpose of the temple and work for the dead in LDS culture? Why don't evangelical Christians do work for the dead or emphasize genealogies?

Plan of Eternal Progression, Part 2

1. Review the Pre-existence

2. Death: Is there an opportunity to believe after you die?

A. Paradise vs. Spirit Prison/Hell

B. Work for the dead

Mormon Doctrine "Salvation for the Dead" p 672-673

Mormon Doctrine "Baptism for the Dead" p 72-73

Doctrine and Covenants Sections 124:28-36, 127, 128

C. Biblical View: Paradise & Spirit Prison

1. [2 Corinthians 5:1-10](#)

[Philippians 1:23](#)

[Luke 23:43](#)

[2 Corinthians 12:1-4](#)

2. [Luke 16:19-31](#)

[Ezekiel 14:12-20](#)

3. Spirit Prison [1 Peter 3:18-20](#)

4. [2 Corinthians 1-2](#), [Hebrews 9:27](#)

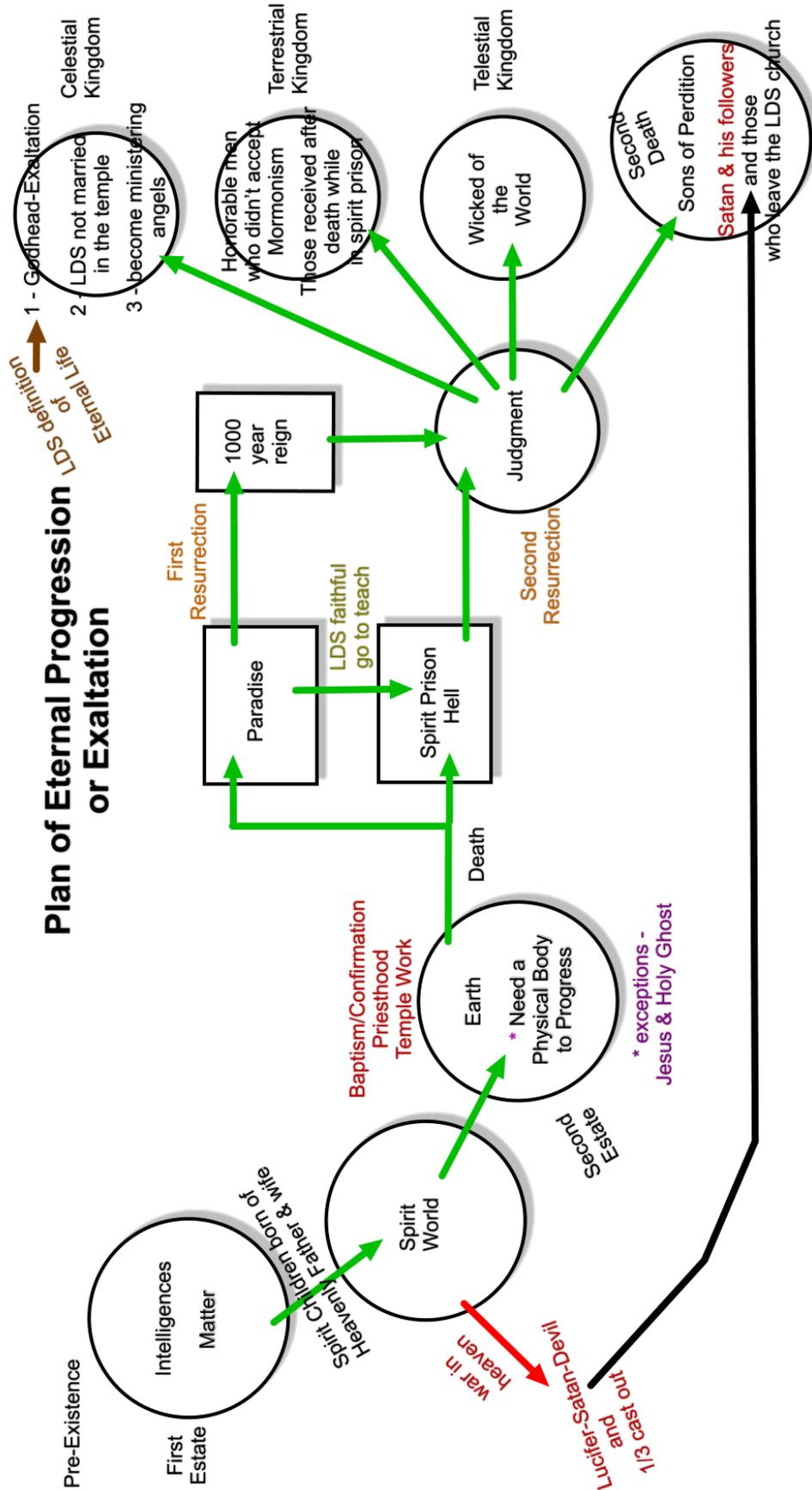
3. LDS View: The First Resurrection / 1000 Year Reign / Judgment
Doctrine and Covenants Section 76
 - A. Celestial Kingdom
 - B. Terrestrial Kingdom
 - C. Telestial Kingdom
 - D. Second Death

4. Biblical View
 - A. Resurrection
[Revelation 19:11-20:6](#)

 - B. Judgment
[Revelation 20:11-15](#)
[Romans 14:10-12](#)
[2 Corinthians 5:10](#)

 - C. Great White Throne / Second Death
[Revelation 22:12, Revelation 20:11-15](#)
[Revelation 22:15](#)
[1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#)

LDS View



Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is discuss more application questions about the plan of exultation.

1. What struck you the most in this and last week's lesson? Why?
2. What is the difference between LDS Paradise and Biblical Paradise? According to each view, who goes to each?
3.
 - LDS church teaches that the purpose for our life is to progress to godhood.
 - Evolution teaches us that life is an accident, the result of random chance and is purposeless.
 - Some religions believe that man's purpose is to work to please a divine being.
 - Christianity believes that the purpose of life is to glorify God.

Compare these four views. What do you believe is the purpose and ultimate goal of your life? Why do you believe this? How does this change how you live your life in comparison to people who embrace an alternate view?

4. How would believing there is a second chance to believe and to progress after death, based on the work of others on your behalf, change how you live your life? How would your life change if you believe that only the decisions you make in this life will determine your eternal outcome after you die?
5. What is eternal life according to the LDS view? According to the Biblical view? What do you believe about eternal life?
6. Can an LDS person know for certain that they have done enough to be worthy of exultation? How does this contrast with the Biblical view of eternal life? Why is certainty of your eternal outcome important?
7. What is the result of believing that a person can accrue righteousness for someone else? What did you learn from Ezekiel 14 about this topic? Why is this important?
8. If you believe that your family is eternal, how would that change how you live? How would it change the way you choose your spouse and your view of having children? How would it affect your attitude towards divorce?
9. What are the implications for an LDS person who leaves the LDS church based on what you learned about the degrees of heaven and the sons of perdition?

Salvation or Judgment/Heaven or Hell

1. Old Testament (Law)
 - A. Creation
[Genesis 1 and 2](#)

 - B. Temptation, Fall, and Death
[Genesis 3, Romans 5:12](#)

 - C. Substitutionary Sacrifice
[2 Corinthians 5:21](#)
[Romans 3:25-26](#)

2. New Covenant (Grace)
 - A. New Heart/Born Again
[John 3:3](#)
[Ephesians 2:1-10](#)
[Ephesians 1:13-14](#)

 - B. Forgiveness of Sin
[Colossians 2:13-14](#)

C. Death of Unbelievers & Believers

[Philippians 1:21-23](#)

[2 Corinthians 5:5-9](#)

D. Bema Seat

[2 Corinthians 5:10](#), [Romans 14:12](#)

[1 Corinthians 3:9-15](#)

3. The End Times

A. Rapture

[1 Corinthians 15:20-28](#), [50-57](#)

[1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)

B. 1,000 Year Reign

[Revelation 19-20:6](#)

C. Great White Throne/Second Death

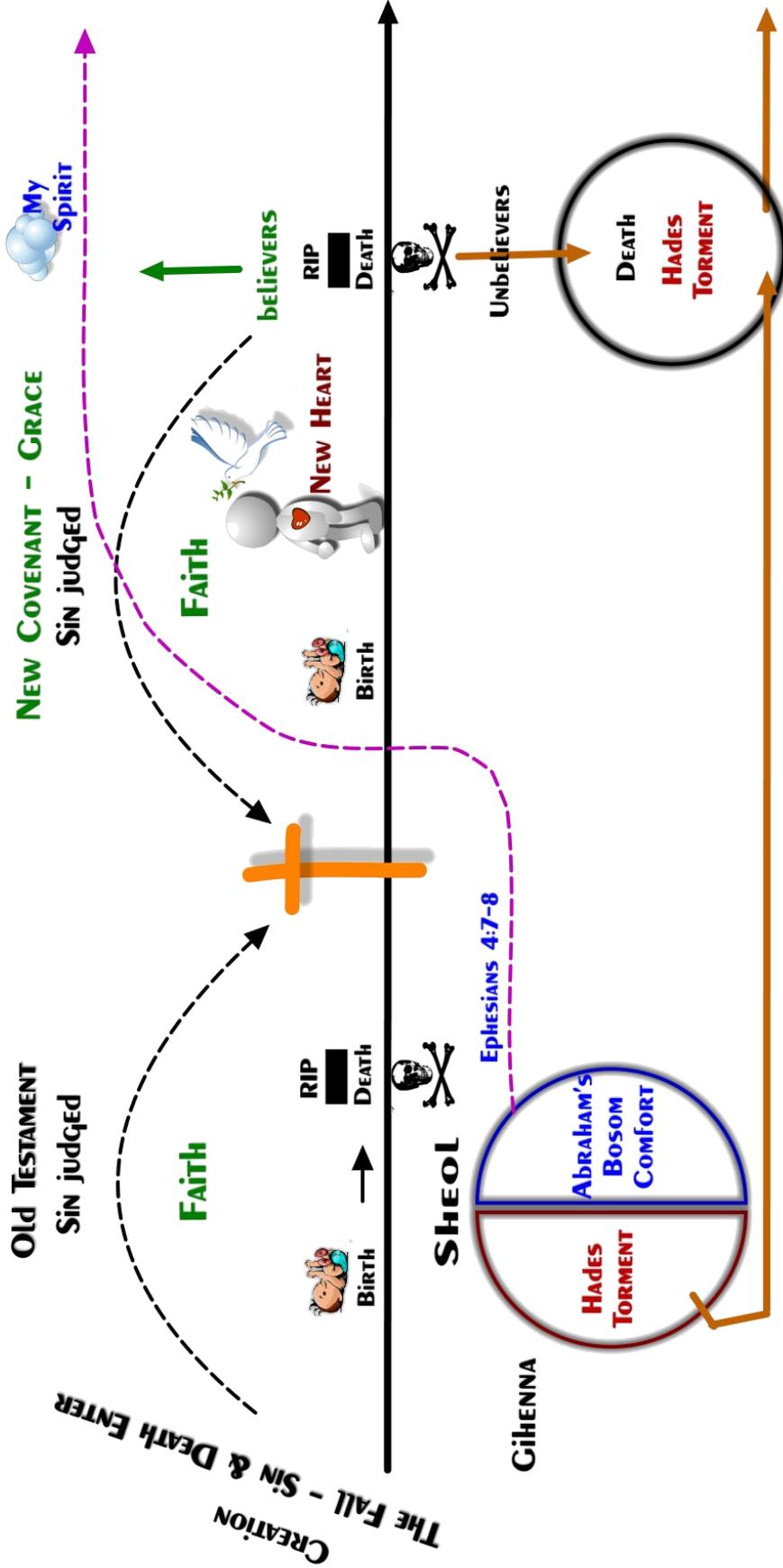
[Revelation 20:7-15](#), [14](#)

[Revelation 21:8](#)

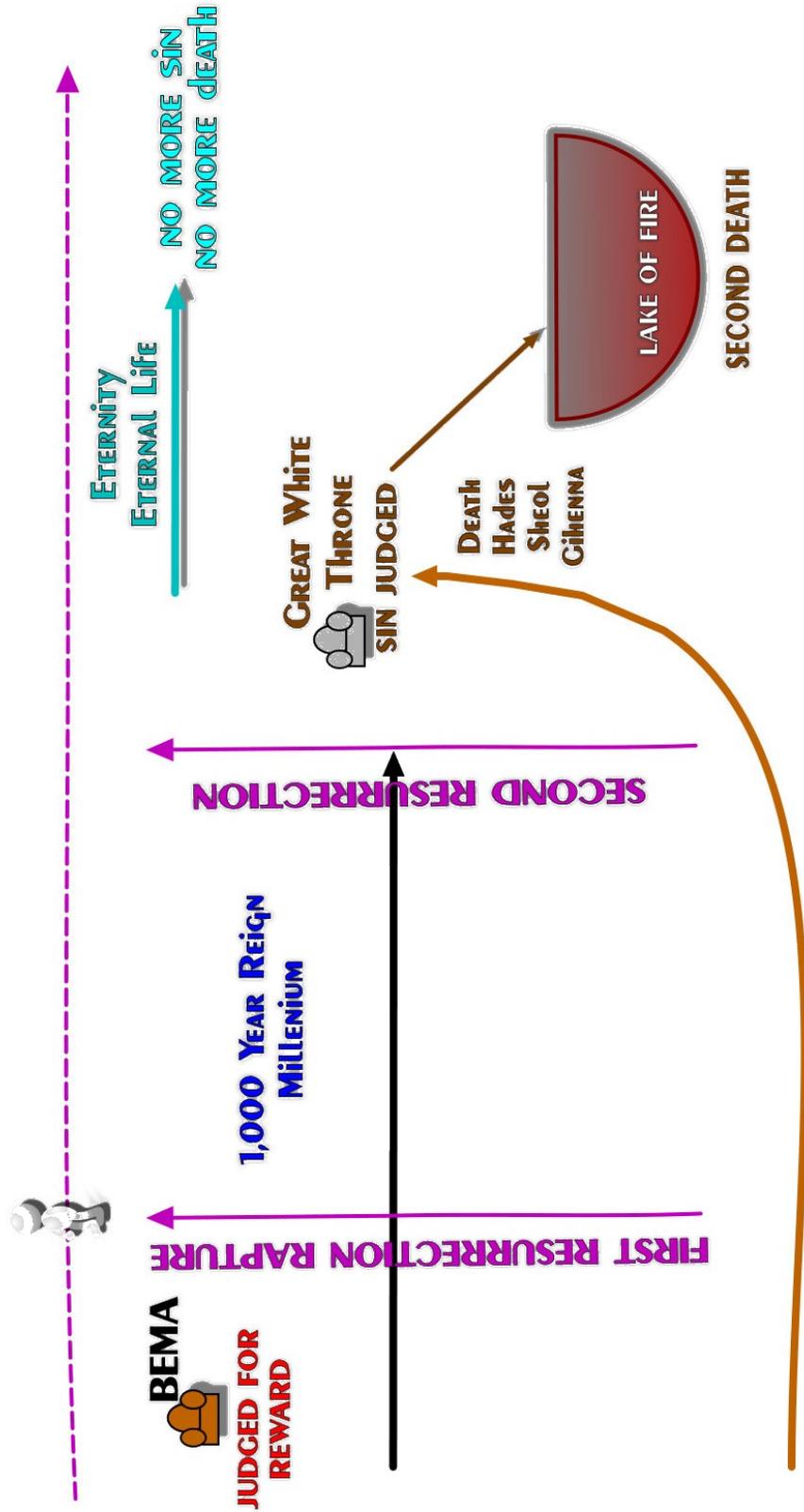
D. Eternal Life

[Revelation 21 and 22](#)

Salvation or Judgment - Heaven or Hell



Salvation or Judgment - Heaven or Hell



Small Group Leader: The goal of this small group time is to continue to discuss application questions about salvation, judgment, heaven and hell.

1. How did sin enter God's perfect creation? What was the result for mankind and the world? How does this view compare with the humanistic view that people are basically good?
2. When was the promise of redemption made? What does that reveal about God?
3. What role did the Law, sacrifices and priesthood play in the Old Testament? What about in the New Testament?
4. How did God fulfill His promise of redemption? Where is sin judged? What about your sin?
5. What did you learn about God's character and plans for us from this lesson?
6. What things are you doing that have eternal significance? What deeds of yours will be burned up as wood, straw, and stubble at the Bema Seat of Christ? How will this change the way you are living?
7. Where will you go when you die? Why?
8. When do you have the opportunity to believe the truth that determines your eternal destiny? How does this change your priorities? Who will you pray about sharing Jesus with in your circle of influence?
9. How does the LDS view of eternal progression differ from the Biblical view of heaven and hell? Why is this difference significant?
10. What role do faith and grace play in your life? How do works fit into the Christian plan of salvation?
11. How has what you learned in this class changed your view of life, man, or God?