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LESSON 7: Hold on to Faith

Doctrine 8:

We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth has the witness in himself.

Doctrine 9:

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

Ready:

Students are encouraged to read this weeks Lesson online, or download the reading onto their devices for study.. There is a link in the lesson: [Read before Lesson 7:HOLD onto Faith!](#) Reading Handouts may also be downloaded and printed for each student.

Have your POWERPOINT PRESENTATION / WEBSITE UP AND READY



OPTIONAL: REVIEW the Doctrines VIDEO– Go to DOCTRINE tab– and look at the Doctrines PowerPoint and Presentation for options.

Set:

Group Conversation (limit this time to 5-7 minutes)

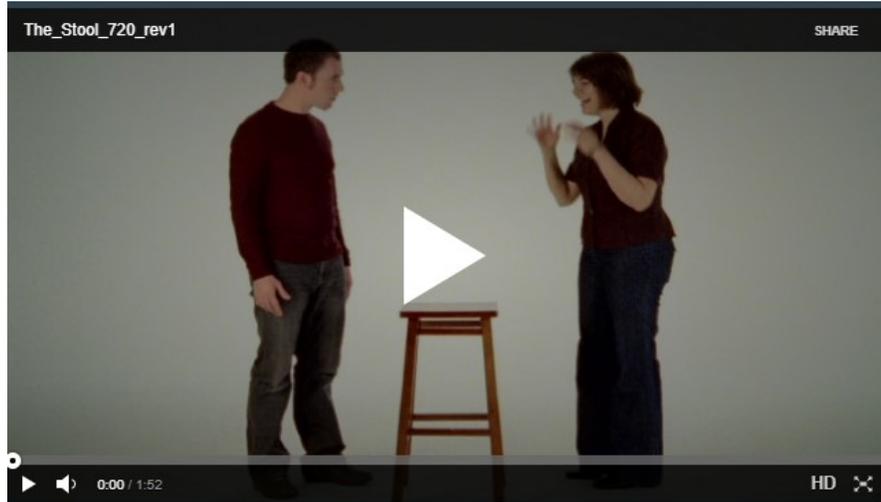
There are stories of those whose lives of faith seemed almost heroic to those of us watching on from a distance...until their sin destroyed their families and ministries, and that thought to be private became excruciatingly public. Others have witnessed firsthand the devastation of sin in their own families and relationships. While acknowledging that God forgives completely when the sinner turns to Him, we must still ask ourselves what place “personal choice” to step away from obedience to God has in the life of the believer.

What do you think? Examples.

Action:

Video: **“The Stool”** is such a great illustration of the struggle to allow Christ to sit on the throne of our lives. It aptly depicts the personal choice we each have while showing Christ’s desire to be Lord. Choice and Trust.

In



For highest quality play inside the armyofcompassion lesson.

Leader’s PowerPoint link is to YouTube which will give a lower quality with watermark.

Embed code:

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<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/Mod-5duhUi4" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>
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Youtube link: <https://youtu.be/Mod-5duhUi4>

Go!

Lesson 7: HOLD on to Faith

Doctrine 8: We believe that we are justified by grace, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he that believeth has the witness in himself.

We choose. We respond. It’s been that way since the beginning. Uniquely created, we place our lives in his hands...or not. The eighth doctrine is where we begin. It is almost a direct quote from I John 5:10: “Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.” We can be absolutely certain that salvation is ours...”Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine” writes Fanny Crosby, and we sing that tune so effortlessly. He is mine. It is the promise that anchors our relationship of faith.

Still, there are those who are worriers, who question whether salvation is alive and well, working in their spirits and lives.

- I hope so. I don’t have much faith. Not really paying attention.
- I live such a defeated life...I cannot dream that this is real for me. I’m too tired to “try”.
- I accepted Christ, but I don’t really follow him. I know I should. Right now I’m following my own path-making my own choices. They don’t really align with His will.

The Bible gives us assurances of our salvation. A few are here for you to read: Romans 8:16: “The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we’re God’s children.” I John 5:11-13 “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the

name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

Your student’s reading assignment this week listed several ideas as to why some people have difficulty believing in the assurance of their salvation.

What are those reasons?

(*Have students review if they don’t remember:

READING LINK HERE [Read before Lesson 7: HOLD onto Faith!](#)). (website link or download)

It is important for us to understand as we will meet these people daily.

Belief must engage ones understanding of God’s grace with the action of placing one foot in front of the other. It is this foundational truth that ties doctrines 8 and 9 to one another.

We begin to understand deeper truths, then we need to begin to "wear our faith" everywhere we go. We might not even see all the ways in which we've changed...but we have! He changes us-our attitudes, our thoughts, the ways in which we react to those around us. What was once darkness is now light. Engaging with grace means living (and choosing) in such a way that the Spirit’s transformation of our “old sinful nature” impacts the world for Christ.

VIDEO: SAVN: “The Painter”

Why does God bother with us? He loves us. We are the work of his hands- His children and He is teaching us for He sees us as what we will one day be...what we were designed to be. And like a good Father- He will always be with us.

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Doctrine 9: We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

What this means for us is that as long as we let him, God will continue to change our hearts and minds until we’re totally free from those old rebellious ways.

Jesus spoke directly to his disciples about what it might look like to live each day with their spiritual eyes wide open. He taught them, speaking in parables to create physical dimension to these spiritual principles which they had a hard time grasping. In the parable of the Ten Virgins, he is challenging the Twelve to watch-to be ready-to lay down complacency. To put this in context we need to remember that the disciples have just asked about a sign or a visual that would signal them to be ready for his return. Jesus must have smiled....Live ready. Don’t wait for the “sign”.

1 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to

meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of the virgins were foolish, and five were wise. 3 When the foolish ones took their lamps, they did not take extra olive oil with them. 4 But the wise ones took flasks of olive oil with their lamps. 5 When the bridegroom was delayed a long time, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look, the bridegroom is here! Come out to meet him.' 7 Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, because our lamps are going out.' 9 'No,' they replied. 'There won't be enough for you and for us. Go instead to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' 10 But while they had gone to buy it, the bridegroom arrived, and those who were ready went inside with him to the wedding banquet. Then the door was shut. 11 Later, the other virgins came too, saying, 'Lord, lord! Let us in!' 12 But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I do not know you!' 13 Therefore stay alert, because you do not know the day or the hour" (Matthew 25:1-13)NEV

How many of you have ever totally run out of gas? How many have ALMOST run out of gas? How many wait to fill the tank until the warning light comes on? With all the technology we have at our disposal, there are still over a half million people that call for help because their gas tanks are empty. This parable doesn't speak to gasoline, but rather running low on the fuel of the first century, olive oil.

Preparation. The Salvation Army is brilliant in its response time to emergencies. Our mobile units roll as soon as the need presents itself. Training has been conducted, volunteers called in, skills learned, hearts in tune with God as personnel ready themselves for ministering to those whose lives have been altered by devastation. We never not know when disasters will come, but we will be ready-come what may.

In the same way we live our lives in the shadow of God's love and grace.... The stories of God's faithfulness from the beginning are woven into the Bible's narratives. Christ's coming; ministry, death and resurrection give us the foundational theology for living out our own faith as we reach back to the Creator, asking for forgiveness. A supernatural transformation occurs and we are forgiven, justified, and rescued thoroughly. The Bible is our playbook, love letter, solace, treasure; where relationship is miraculously called to action. We are no longer spectators, but are called to follow His lead...living out Christlikeness in our world.

And this is where we once again get to "choose." Will there be engagement, or failure to launch? Do we live in light of the promise or in our own strength? While these are degrees of living in anticipation of the truth of Christ's promises; there is yet another response. Teeth clenched and hands firmly on the hips. "Go ahead. Make me follow!" And the truth is that as we were created with the ability to choose, we can choose -to step away from. We can choose to move closer or to disregard our relationship with Him entirely. The key IDEA here is that this is not merely "drifting", but consciously deciding to once again go our own way.

Major James Garrington gave an example of such a choice in this week's reading. He wrote: "My father told me of an alcoholic who had come to Christ through the ministry of The Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation program. This man received forgiveness for his sins and his life was completely turned around. Eventually he became a Salvation Army officer. Then one morning his wife awoke to find him gone. A note on his pillow read, "I liked my old life better."

While unimaginable, it happens.

If we follow Christ daily as a duty, a ritual, a burden (yawn)... our relationship with him and with others will reflect our weary modeling of Christianity. We will find ourselves putting in minimum effort, building walls, and running on empty spiritually. If we long for the sinful days of old and take steps back towards them we must be aware that moving away from Christ. Hebrews 10:26 tells us that: "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God." The key here is deliberate...deliberately choosing against God is sin. Deliberate

actions become pattern, become attitudes, become character.

If we follow Christ daily-...if we deliberately choose FOR God- tasting and seeing that the Lord is faithful in times of great joy and as we walk through the deepest trials; we will understand what it is to be wise. We will understand what it is to have a heart so filled with gratitude for the ways in which He daily comes into our lives, that we will be ready for the Bridegroom.

Note: If you want to understand more concerning the Calvinist theology: "Once Saved, Always Saved" refer to this week's reading.

Questions.

VIDEO: Doctrine 8:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-vMH4dfUvY>

**Boots on the Ground:
An opportunity to put your faith into action**

Stand (if appropriate), join hands forming a circle. Ask each to share something that God is teaching them right now. Pray for one another's specific prayer requests, allowing for praise reports as well. Leader: close the prayer time by praying specifically for areas of growth and opportunities for students to reach out in faith this next week in response to God's call

You may hand out the Reading Handout for the next lesson if you wish, or direct students online to read their material.