

## BEHOLD THE MAN

"IN THE FLESH, NO DOUBT"

JOHN 20:24-31

### This Week's Core Competency

**Salvation by Grace** – I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by his grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. Ephesians 2:8, 9 *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Sometimes theological terms like "grace" even "faith," although familiar words, obscure the meaning of the gospel—not for those who believe it but for those who don't. The meaning of the Salvation by Grace creed may not be as obvious to some as it seems to others. Perhaps an analogy will help.

Higher education is expensive, so expensive that few students can afford to go to university. What I mean is few students can plop down \$50,000 to \$150,000 to pay for an education at a public or private 4-year school (see "The Average Cost of a US College Education," [www.usnews.com](http://www.usnews.com), April 24, 2010). Institutions know this, so many recruit students on the basis of "net cost" or tuition minus financial aid. Nevertheless, lots students still have to borrow to pay the "net cost" of their educations. And once they graduate, many of them spend many years paying off their student loans. Three startling facts bring this truth home. Number one, in 2010, the average college graduate had

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*A grace full Christian is one who looks at the world through 'grace-tinted lenses.'*

- Philip Yancey

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accumulated approximately \$25,000 in student loan debt. Number two, approximately two-thirds of all college students graduate with student loans. Number three, Americans have accumulated around \$900 billion in student loan debt. That figure is higher than the total amount of credit card debt in the United States.

What about financial aid? Financial aid comes in many forms. Here are two common ones: *scholarships* and *bursaries*. A scholarship is a financial award based on *merit*; scholarships are generally speaking *earned*. Students must qualify and compete for scholarships. When I say qualify, I mean they must meet specific academic requirements—like specific major, full-time enrollment, minimum GPA, letters of recommendation, etc.—to be eligible for the scholarship. When I say compete, I mean whenever the number of applicants for scholarships exceeds the number of scholarships to be awarded, the scholarships are awarded to the best qualified students. Sometimes applicants for scholarships must also demonstrate financial need, but need alone will not get you a scholarship!

A bursary, on the other hand, is a financial award based on *need*; bursaries are generally speaking *not earned*. In the words of one seminary's catalog, "ACTS bursaries are based on financial need . . . ACTS scholarships are based on GPA." This institution awards a grant of up to \$1500 to needy students. Students don't have to qualify and compete for bursaries. They don't have to meet specific requirements related to academic performance to be eligible for a bursary. And while

cont. pg. 2

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the number of applicants for bursaries often exceeds the amount of money to be awarded, bursaries, unlike scholarships, are normally granted on a first come, first served basis until the money runs out. One might say that scholarships are obtained by works; bursaries are obtained by grace.

So what about Salvation by Grace? Here's the point of the analogy. No one gets to heaven on a scholarship. No one goes to heaven because he earns it or because she beats someone else out of it. Everyone who goes to heaven gets there on a bursary. It's a gift based on need, not on merit. What's more, the grace behind the gift, unlike the money behind the bursary, never runs out, so there's a bursary available to everyone who applies by faith.

## For Discussion

The gospel doesn't make sense to Jeff. All the words used to express it are familiar to him, but taken together they don't make sense to him. He's heard that he's lost, but he doesn't feel lost. He knows where he is and where he's going. He's heard that he's a sinner, but as far as he can tell he's no worse than most and a lot better than some—many of whom call themselves Christians. He believes in God, and "kinda" figures in the end God will decide who goes to heaven and who doesn't. And he's good with that. After all, if what Christians say is true, "God is love," then everyone, apart, perhaps, from the notoriously wicked, will get there. Why would everyone have to believe in Jesus, and by the way, who doesn't believe in Jesus? The only people who don't believe in him are the ones who've never heard about him, and wouldn't a loving God give them a pass?

## day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

### John 20:24-31

24 Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

26 A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" 27 Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your

hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

28 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

30 Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

(NIV(c)1984)

## EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- \* Underline "one of the twelve," in v. 24.
- \* Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 25.
- \* Circle "told" in v. 25.
- \* Box the word "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 25.
- \* Circle the pronoun "it" in v. 25.
- \* In the margin next to v. 26 write, "See v. 19."
- \* Underline "though the doors were locked" in v. 26.
- \* Bracket what Thomas said in v. 25 and what Jesus said in v. 27.
- \* Underline "stop doubting and believe" in v. 27.
- \* Highlight what Thomas said in v. 28.
- \* Draw a line from "other" in v. 30 to "these" in v. 31.
- \* Circle "miraculous signs" in v. 30.
- \* Box the word "that" (2x) indicating *purpose* in v. 31.

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day **2**

**EXPLORE** – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What does the phrase "one of the twelve" add to the sense of verse 24?
2. Sometimes it's fun to speculate; why do you think Thomas missed the meeting a week earlier?
3. Read verse 25. To what extent does the one word you would use to describe Thomas apply to you?
4. In verse 26 and verse 19 John is careful to mention the doors were locked both times "Jesus came and stood among them." What's his point?
5. What do you infer about Jesus from his invitation to Thomas in verse 27 in light of what Thomas had said in verse 25?
6. Was Thomas not born again before this time?
7. Do you think Thomas accepted the Lord's invitation to touch his hands and side? Explain.
8. What's so remarkable about his confession in verse 28?
9. What does verse 29 mean to you as a later reader of John's Gospel?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about John's purpose for writing his Gospel and his strategy for accomplishing it.

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## day 3

### **EXAMINE** – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

This passage explains the origin of "doubting Thomas" whom we meet in the proverbial statement, "Don't be a doubting Thomas." Thomas was one of the Twelve who for some reason did not meet with the others on the evening of the first Easter Sunday. No doubt he was disillusioned by the crucifixion like the others were but unlike them simply preferred to deal with his disappointment alone. After all, he had a lot to think about. If Jesus were the Messiah like he thought, the crucifixion didn't make any sense. What about the kingdom? When would God restore it to Israel? He needed time to reconsider his assumptions so he might in time get on with his life.

Later when the others repeatedly tried to persuade him that they had seen the resurrected Lord, he would have none of it. Like many today he demanded proof; he wasn't about to be disappointed again. "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it," he insisted.

The following Sunday, they met again only this time Thomas met with them. And again the Lord stood among them even though the doors were locked as before. As soon as Jesus offered him the

proof he had demanded, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side," his heart was touched, and he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." Hearing the words of the Lord was all the proof he needed. Jesus had risen from the grave, and since he had, he was undeniably the Lord God!

Clearly this passage serves as the climax to John's Gospel. The apostle so arranged its contents that skeptical readers might see themselves in Thomas and be persuaded by the resurrection, the concluding miraculous sign recorded in the book. And like Thomas, they might exclaim that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and by believing have life in his name. And should any reader reason, "Thomas believed because he saw the Lord," he must remember what the Lord, himself, said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

### *The Message of the Passage*

*Stop doubting and believe in the resurrection;  
be fully persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,  
so you may have life in his name.*

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day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

**“In the Flesh, No Doubt”**  
(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)



### Family Time

Family time will help you take a break from your busy schedule and spend time connecting with your family.

**Tips for your Family Time: Keep it simple! Be flexible! Do it often! HAVE FUN!!**

Deuteronomy 6:7 encourages us to have these talks often with our kids. Here are a couple of ideas to help you start salvation discussions in your home:

**Seeing is Believing:** In John 20:24-31, Thomas believed Jesus was risen when he saw it with his own eyes. Jesus said blessed are those who believe without seeing. Write a message on a piece of paper with a white crayon (Jesus Saves, Jesus is Alive, John 3:16). Ask your kids if they see anything on the paper. Dip the paper for one minute in a bowl of water with red food coloring to reveal the message. Jesus is alive and wants us to know the truth about who He is!

**Jelly Bean Eggs:** Give each family member a plastic egg filled with the following jelly beans. Black - represents the darkness in our lives before Jesus (Ro. 3:23). Red - represents the blood shed by Jesus (Ro. 5:8). White - represents our sins that are washed away (Ro. 10:9-10). Yellow - represents the streets of gold in heaven that we will someday see (Rev 21:21). Green represents our growing in our faith (2 Co. 5:17)

**Pray together:** That all members of the family would know Jesus as Savior and that your family would be a light that leads other families to Jesus.

#### What Does The Bible Say

**Weekly Verse:** John 20:24-31

Jesus Appears to Thomas

\*What did Thomas say he needed to believe Jesus had risen from the grave?

\*Describe the doors to the house where the disciples were staying.

\*Why was the story of Jesus appearing to Thomas and the other disciples important?

#### What Do You Think

\*How would touching Jesus' wounds help Thomas believe in Jesus resurrection?

\*Why do you think the writer thought it was important to explain the doors were locked?

\*How does this story help you believe in Jesus even more?

#### What R U Going To Do

People can't believe in Jesus unless they hear about the stories about his life, him. The Family Easter Celebration is this Saturday. Make sure you invite a friend! Not only will it be lots of fun, but the story of Jesus resurrection will be shared with everyone who attends.

### MEMORY TIME

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the Memory Verse throughout the house.

#### Core Comp

Salvation by Grace -I believe that I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

#### Memory Verse

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast."

### KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC \_\_\_\_ and Verse \_\_\_\_\_. Family completed **Say** \_\_\_\_\_ **Think** \_\_\_\_\_ **Do** \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_ Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.

Questions: Kids@pantego.org

# 30 CORE COMPETENCIES

## 10 CORE BELIEFS

### **Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### **Salvation By Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

### **Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

### **Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

### **Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

### **Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

### **Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

### **Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

### **Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

### **Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 CORE PRACTICES

### **Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

### **Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

### **Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

### **Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

### **Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

### **Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Money**

*2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians*

*6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

### **Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 CORE VIRTUES

### **Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

### **Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

### **Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

### **Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

### **Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

### **Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

### **Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

### **Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

### **Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

### **Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

## About the Authors

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is [tbulick@pantego.org](mailto:tbulick@pantego.org).