



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

HEAVEN



Dear Friend,

Do you know that you have a special friend who loves you with all His heart, a friend who is strong and gentle and kind, a friend you can talk to at any time, a friend who is always willing to listen to you and help you?

You may wonder, "Who is this special friend?" He is God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ! He loves you with all His heart. He is the best Friend you could ever have! This best Friend lives in a special place.

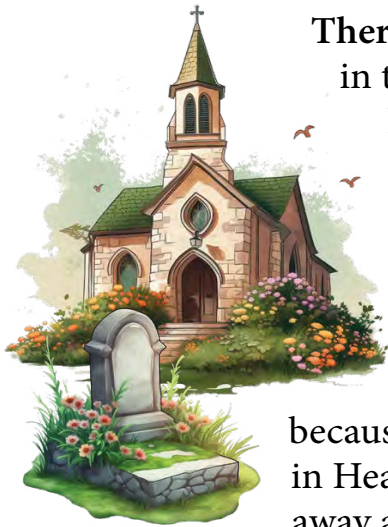
What is this special place where the Lord Jesus lives? It is called Heaven. Heaven is God's home. Jesus called it "My Father's house." You cannot imagine how beautiful it is.

What is Heaven like? The best way to tell you what Heaven is like is to tell you about the things that *will* be in Heaven and the things that *will not* be in Heaven. First, we will think about the things that will **NOT** be in Heaven.



What WILL NOT be in Heaven.

The sun and the moon will not be in Heaven. We need them here, but in Heaven there is never any darkness. The glory of God is the light of that beautiful place.



There will be no sin in Heaven. The spots in this heart stand for sin. We cannot go to Heaven with sin in our hearts.

There will be no church buildings in Heaven. We go to church to worship God, but in Heaven we will be living with God. He will be our God, and we will belong to Him forever.

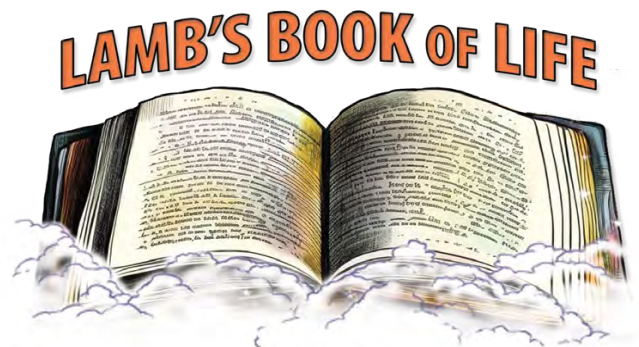
We will not need any medicine in Heaven because no one ever gets sick. There will be no tombstones in Heaven because no one ever dies. God is going to wipe away all tears. There will be no sickness, no sorrow, and no heartaches in Heaven. No one ever gets tired, and no one grows old.

What WILL be in Heaven.

All our friends and loved ones who trusted the Lord Jesus as their Savior will be there. We will know them, and they will know us. God will give special crowns to those who loved the Lord Jesus and served Him here.

God's holy Word, the Bible, will be there. God has said that His Word will never pass away. It will always be with us.

There is another book in Heaven. This book is called "The Lamb's Book of Life." The Lord Jesus is "the Lamb of God," so this is His book. When you take the Lord Jesus as your Savior, your name is written in "The Lamb's Book of Life," and you know that you will be with Jesus in Heaven forever.





The Tree of Life will be in Heaven. This tree will bear twelve different kinds of fruit. There will be beautiful homes in Heaven—far more beautiful than anything we can imagine. Even the street of Heaven is made of pure gold.

Millions of angels will be there. Angels are God’s servants. God sends His angels to watch over us while we are here on earth.

The most wonderful thing about Heaven is this: the Lord Jesus will be there! We will see our Savior face-to-face, the Son of God who loves us so much that He gave His life for us. If you ask anyone in Heaven how they got there, they will point to Jesus and say, “It is all because of Jesus and what He did for me.” In Heaven everyone loves and praises Jesus.

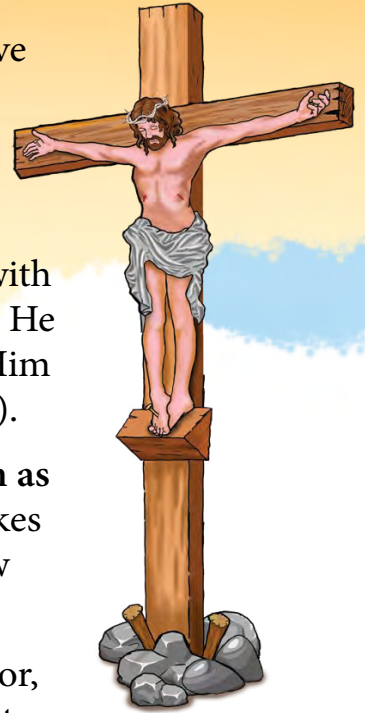
How to get to HEAVEN.

Would you like to know that you will go to Heaven some day? Well, I have some wonderful news for you: *God wants you in Heaven with Him!*

Do you know why God wants you in Heaven? He wants you there because He loves you! You can say, “God loves ME!” Say it right now. Point to yourself and say it again: “God loves ME!”

You may be thinking, “Does God know about all the bad things I have done and all the lies I have told?” Yes, God knows all about them, but that does not keep Him from loving you. He loves you just the same.

God loves you just the way you are! You do not have to do a single thing to get God to love you. He loves you with all His heart—just the way you are—and He has made a way for you to be forgiven of all your sins. He gave His Son to die on the cross for your sins so that you could have everlasting life in Heaven with Him. The Bible says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).



When you believe on the Lord Jesus and take Him as your Savior, God forgives you of all your sins and makes you His child forever. As a child of God, you can know that you will go to Heaven some day.

If you have never taken the Lord Jesus as your Savior, ask Him to come into your heart. You can do this right now. Just tell Him, *“Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I want to stop doing them. I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died on the cross for my sins. Please come into my heart. I am taking You as my Savior right now!”*

Discovered Treasure

God loves **ME**, and He wants **ME** to be in heaven with Him!

Memory verse

“We love Him, because
He first loved us.”

1 John 4:19



Hi there!

Welcome to The Mailbox Club!

Would you like to be a member of an exciting club, learn about God, and receive mail just for you? All you have to do is read the lesson again carefully, fill in the Question Page, and mail it back to us. You will then be a member of *The Mailbox Club*, along with thousands of boys and girls around the world!

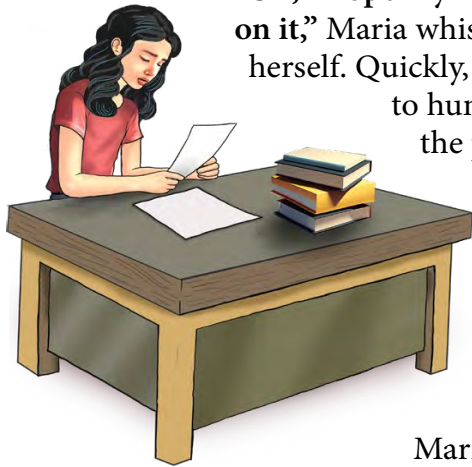
We will check your Question Page and send it back to you with the next exciting lesson and story. When you finish all ten lessons, we will send you a beautiful certificate with your name on it! Please send your Question Page back soon! We want **YOU** to be a member of *The Mailbox Club!*

Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 1: THE TORN LIST

Maria closed the door quietly and tiptoed over to the teacher's desk. Now, if she could only find that list! All the names of those who were to sing at the retirement home the next week were on it.



"Oh, I hope my name is on it," Maria whispered to herself. Quickly, she began to hunt among the papers on the desk. At last, she saw the list under the edge of a book.

Maria pulled it out and read the names eagerly. "Oh no," she thought. "My name isn't on it!"

"That mean old teacher," Maria muttered, tears stinging her eyes. "She knows my grandmother is in that home. And I wanted to go and sing especially for her." With an angry jerk, Maria tore the list in half and pushed it deep into the trash can. Then she rushed out of the room.

"Maria, stop!"

Maria turned slowly. Her teacher, Miss Wilson, was just coming out of the school office. "What are you doing here, Maria?" she asked.

Maria's heart pounded as she said, "I-I went back to put away a book."

"Well, run on home now. You know you should not be here," Miss Wilson said impatiently as she hurried off.

With a sigh of relief, Maria left the building and ran toward home. Her brother Steven was swinging on the gate, watching for her. "I bet you had to stay after school," he said with a grin.

"I did not," Maria snapped back, trying to push past him. "Is Mom home yet?"

"No," Steven said, scowling. "And Mom and Dad are going away tomorrow as usual. This time you are staying with Cousin Anna. But I have to go to dull Uncle Bill's again."

Maria looked at her brother's unhappy face. He was only a year older than she was. It didn't seem fair that he had to spend so much time at Uncle Bill's gloomy house. "If only Grandma still lived here," Maria thought sadly.

"Then Steven and I wouldn't have to stay with relatives so often."



The next day the hours passed swiftly as Maria and Anna played together. Maria enjoyed spending time with her cousin. When they were getting ready for bed that night Anna said, "Tomorrow we will go to Sunday School and church. It is really great! You will like it a lot."

Maria was not sure about that. But the next morning as they entered the Sunday School room, she saw what Anna meant. The teacher was young and cheerful. The other boys and girls seemed happy and eager to begin learning about God.

“Today we are going to talk about a wonderful place called Heaven,” the teacher began. “Heaven is God’s home. Heaven is where God lives. His Son, the Lord Jesus, lives there too. It is a very beautiful place, and it is full of joy. Nothing mean or bad can happen in Heaven. No one will ever get sick there. And no one will die in Heaven.

“The reason Heaven is such a wonderful place is because there is no sin there.”



Maria nudged Anna. “It’s not a true story,” she whispered. “Everybody dies, you know they do.”

Anna shook her head. Then she held up her hand and asked, “Teacher, is this really a true story?”

“Yes,” the teacher smiled as she answered. “It is all written in God’s Book, the Bible. Best of all, the message of the Bible is that we can go to Heaven and live there with Jesus forever.”

“How?” Maria asked the question without thinking.

“It’s like this,” the teacher explained. “We are happy when our name is written on a special list or honor roll. The most

important place to have our name written is in ‘The Lamb’s Book of Life.’ This book is in Heaven. It belongs to the Lord Jesus. All who have their names written in this book will go to Heaven. Jesus will write your name there if you take Him as your Savior. We are never too young or too old to have our names written in ‘The Lamb’s Book of Life.’”

The teacher held up a large sheet of paper with a Bible verse printed on it. “This verse is found in Revelation 21:27. It tells us that all who do bad things and tell lies cannot go to Heaven. Only those who have their names written in ‘The Lamb’s Book of Life’ can enter Heaven.”

While the rest of the class read the verse aloud, Maria sat very still. She had suddenly remembered the torn list and the lie she had told Miss Wilson. “It’s no use,” Maria thought. “I didn’t get my name on the list at school. And now Jesus will not put my name in His beautiful book either.” Maria was so troubled she didn’t hear another word the teacher said.

Right after church Maria’s father came and hurried her into the car.

“Anna,” Maria whispered as she was saying goodbye, “can a person who has told a lie ever get her name into God’s Book?”

“Yes,” Anna answered quickly. “If they are truly sorry and confess it. Jesus will...” Just then Maria’s father started the car, and Anna’s words were blown away as the car sprang forward.

Poor Maria...

Will she learn Anna’s answer to her question?

What **WILL** she do about the list?

Don’t miss the next chapter—
coming with your **NEXT** lesson!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 1

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.

1. The most wonderful thing about Heaven is this:

- a. the street of gold.
 b. the Lord Jesus will be there.

2. Why does God want me in Heaven?

- a. Because I am so good.
 b. Because He loves me.

3. How can I become a child of God?

- a. By being really good and not sinning.
 b. By believing on the Lord Jesus and taking Him as my Savior.

4. Cross out the letters F, K, P, T. When you find the word, put YES in the space to the right if it will be in Heaven and NO if it will not.

K	F	T	P	A	N	G	E	L	S	F	T	_____
P	T	F	K	T	P	K	S	I	N	K	P	_____
T	K	P	F	C	R	O	W	N	S	T	K	_____
F	K	M	E	D	I	C	I	N	E	P	T	_____
K	P	G	O	D	S	F	W	O	R	D	P	_____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Have you taken the Lord Jesus as your Savior? _____

When? _____

Important! You must send this page back to us to get the next lesson.

Put a smile on Steven or Maria! Look on the back for instructions.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



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▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1-LESSON 1

From:

The Mailbox Club presents...

BEST FRIENDS 1
LESSON 2



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

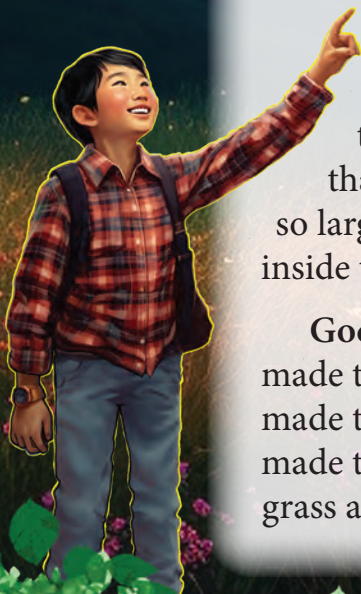
GOD CREATED ALL THINGS

Dear Friend,
Have you ever looked at the stars at night and wondered how they got there? I'll tell you how they got there—God created them! The first book in the Bible tells us that God created all things.

The word "create" means to make something out of nothing. Only God can do this. The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

God made the sun, and He made the moon and the sky. He made the stars that twinkle at night. Some of these stars are so large that we could put the earth and the sun inside them and still have plenty of space left!

God made this earth on which we live. He made the land, and He made the mountains. He made the rivers and the lakes and the seas. He made the clouds that bring the rain. He made the grass and the trees and the beautiful flowers.



God made the fish that swim in the rivers, lakes, and seas. He made many different kinds of fish. He made the tiny goldfish, and He made the catfish. He also made the great whale and the dolphin.



God made the birds that fly in the sky. God made many different kinds of birds. He made the eagle with his strong claws, and He made the pretty little red bird. He made the noisy blue jay, and He made the canary which sings so beautifully. He made the funny looking pelican, and He made the gentle dove.

God made the animals. He made many different kinds of animals that live on the earth. He made the lions that roar in the jungle, and He made the little rabbits. He made the mighty elephants, and He made the frisky squirrels. He made the horses and the cows and the sheep and the pigs and the goats. God made all of the animals.



God told the birds, fish, and animals to be fruitful and multiply “after their kind.” This meant that every living creature

would have babies just like itself. Horses have baby horses. Birds have baby birds. And fish have baby fish. This is true of people also! People have babies like themselves.



Every living creature has babies just like itself. It is very important to remember this!

Where did PEOPLE come from?

Where did we come from? God made us! People did not evolve (come) from animals. The Bible says, “...the Lord He is God: it is He that has made us...” (Psalm 100:3).

We are different from the animals, aren't we?

God created the first man out of the dust of the ground. His name was Adam. God made a beautiful wife for Adam. Her name was Eve. They were created “in the image of God.” The Bible says, “God created man in His own image...” (Genesis 1:27). The whole human race came from Adam and Eve, the first man and the first woman.

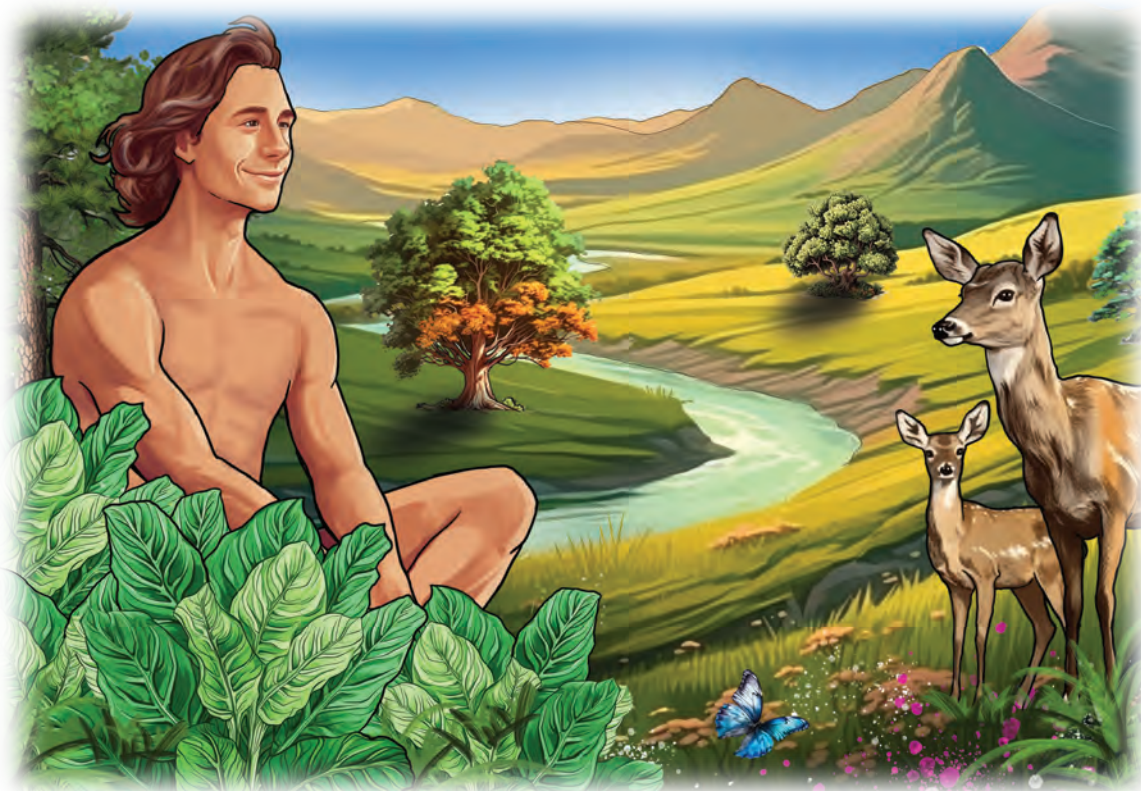
Because we are created in the image of God, we are very special creatures. We are also special because we can know God. Animals cannot know God, but you and I can. We can learn about Him in His Word, the Bible. We can love Him. We can talk to Him in prayer.

The most wonderful thing about us is this: We were made in such a way that God can live in us. Yes, this is true. God can come and live in our hearts.

A special GARDEN

When God created Adam and Eve, He made a place for them to live. It was a beautiful garden which God Himself had planted. It was filled with delicious fruit of all kinds. A river of pure water flowed through the garden. Adam and Eve had everything they needed to make them happy.

The best thing of all was this: God Himself came down each day to visit Adam and Eve. Every day God came to walk and to talk with them. How happy they were!



When God finished creating everything, He looked at all that He had made and saw that it was “very good.” God was pleased with His beautiful creation.

Why do you suppose God made all these things? He made them for His glory! The Bible says, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

God loves YOU!

Now I want to ask you a question. Of all the great and wonderful things which God created, what do you think He loves most of all? He loves people most of all!

God is so great that He knows each one of us. He knows you, and He loves you. You are worth more to God than the whole world. Isn't that wonderful!

God showed His love for you by giving His Son to die on the cross for your sins. God gave Jesus to you to be your Savior and your special Best Friend.



Discovered Treasure

God created **ALL** things! He knows **ME**, and He loves **ME**!

Memory verse

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

Genesis 1:1

Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 2: THE NEW PUPPY

The story so far: Maria wanted to be one of the singers going to the retirement home where her grandmother lives. When her name was not on her teacher's list of those going, she tore up the list. Then Maria lied to her teacher.

Maria leaned back in the car seat with a sigh. “Did Anna mean I would have to tell Miss Wilson about that lie?” she wondered. “I could never do that.” Her head was full of questions. She glanced at her father, but his mouth was set in a grim line. “He doesn’t like to answer questions,” she thought. “Only Grandma ever has time to answer questions. I’ve just got to see her. I will go singing with the group next Friday—somehow, I *will* go.”

All day Monday, Maria watched Miss Wilson and wondered if she had missed the list yet. Just before school let out Miss Wilson said, “Did anyone see a pink slip of paper? It was a list of those who will be singing at the retirement home on Friday.”

As Miss Wilson paused, Maria felt as if everyone was looking at her. She kept her eyes on her book and scarcely breathed.

At last Miss Wilson said, “Well, I have made another list, and I want to check it. Please stand up as I call your name.” One by one, each member of

the group stood as their names were called.

“Even my friend Susan is going. Why not me?” Maria thought crossly as a pale, thin little girl stood up. “I think I can sing just as well as she can. And I’d wear nicer clothes and look better, too.”

On the way home, Maria’s feet dragged. Her mind was busy trying to think of a way she could go with the group on Friday so she could see her grandmother.

As she reached the house, Steven popped his head out of the garage door. “Maria, come here,” he called. “Look at what I have.” He pointed to a small puppy curled up on an old rug in the corner of the garage.

“Oh, he is so cute!” Maria cried, falling down beside the brown and white puppy.

“Watch out!” Steven warned. “His foot is hurt. Don’t pick him up.”

“Where did you get him?” Maria asked, gently smoothing the puppy’s head.

“I was coming down Main Street,” Steven’s words tumbled out with excitement. “A car passed me. Then it slowed down. I thought they wanted to ask me a question or something. But they just opened the car window and dropped this puppy out. Then they roared away. The puppy yelped and rolled over, so I ran and picked him up. I am going to



keep him. I know we will take good care of him. I've decided to call him Captain."

"Yes, of course," Maria agreed. "I think 'Captain' is a great name. Do you think he feels badly because he wasn't wanted, Steven?"

Steven nodded. "I guess so. But we will show him that we want him. He will soon forget them."

Maria laid a soft finger on the hurt paw. "Poor little Captain," she said. "I am so glad they did not kill you, but I don't suppose dogs can get their names in Jesus' Book and go to Heaven."

Steven sat back on his heels and stared at Maria. "WHAT are you talking about?" he asked.

Maria explained about the lesson she had heard on Sunday. "But I don't think Jesus will write my name there," she finished sadly.

"Why not?" Steven wanted to know.

"Oh, just because," Maria answered. Then she quickly changed the subject and said, "Steven, we could take Captain across the park to Mr. Warren's. He might fix Captain's foot. He made Billy's cat better, remember?"

Steven grinned. "Hey! That's a good idea." Maria helped Steven cuddle the puppy in his arms. "Come on, Captain, we're going to get you all fixed up," he said to the whimpering little dog.

Mr. Warren welcomed Maria and Steven with a smile. They both felt better when he told them the puppy's foot was only slightly sprained. "This pup will soon be chasing squirrels again," Mr. Warren said, chuckling. "Right now, though, he wants you to comfort him. I am glad you are kind to animals. God gave them into our care you know, but some people do not treat them very well."

Maria moved closer. "Mr. Warren," she asked softly, "are dogs different from people? On the inside I mean?"

Mr. Warren nodded. "Yes, Maria. God made the animals and the birds and the fish in the sea. But animals are different on the inside because they cannot know God. God made us with a special place in our heart. He did this so we could get to know Him and love Him. God wants us to talk to Him—that is called prayer."

"Aw, I think God is too busy for that," Steven said, holding out his arms for Captain.

"What do you mean, Steven?" Mr. Warren asked quietly.

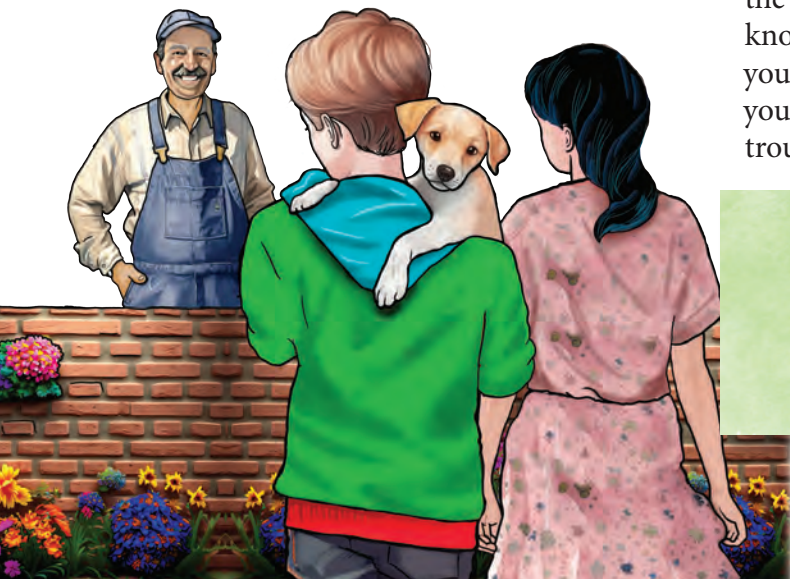
"Well—," Steven hesitated. "Most of the time our parents are too busy to bother with us. I just thought God was like that too."

Mr. Warren looked sad for a minute, then he said, "No, children. God is not too busy. He loves you both very much. He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus to die on the cross for you so you could come to know Him in a personal way. God wants you to take Jesus as your Savior. Then you can talk to Him and tell Him all your troubles."

Will Steven and Maria learn more about Jesus?

Will Maria get to sing in the school group and be able to see her grandmother?

Find out in the next chapter!



QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 2

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



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1. The word “create” means

- a. to make something out of nothing.
 b. to make something out of something else.

2. All living creatures multiply “after their kind.”
This means that

- a. their babies will be different from them.
 b. their babies will be just like them.

3. Where did people come from?

- a. People came (evolved) from animals.
 b. People came from Adam and Eve,
who were created by God.

4. The most wonderful thing about us is this:

- a. God can live in us.
 b. We can make spaceships that go to the moon.

5. Of all the things that God created, what does He love
most of all?

- a. People.
 b. The beautiful stars and planets.

What do you think?

*Do you think God loves you and cares about you all
the time?*

Does God want you to talk to Him in prayer? _____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____ . I am in the _____ grade.

Remember to look for Steven and Maria on the back of this page!



EN:BF1 L2 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Maria if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 2

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

WHERE DID COME FROM?

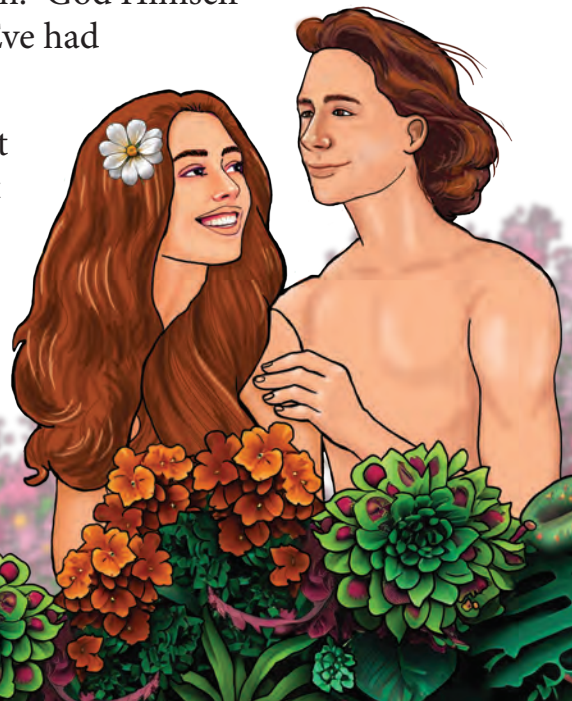
Dear Friend,
In our last lesson we learned that God is the Creator of all things. When God created the world, everything was beautiful and good, but now things are different. Many things are not beautiful and good. What happened? Sin ruined God's beautiful creation!

SIN and SATAN

What is sin? Sin is what we do wrong. The Bible tells us that sin came into the world because Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Let us see how this happened.

You remember that God made a beautiful garden for Adam and Eve to live in. It was called "the Garden of Eden." God Himself planted this garden for them. Adam and Eve had everything they needed in this garden.

God told Adam and Eve they could eat the fruit of every tree in the garden except one. God told them that they would surely die if they ate of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." God said, "...in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).



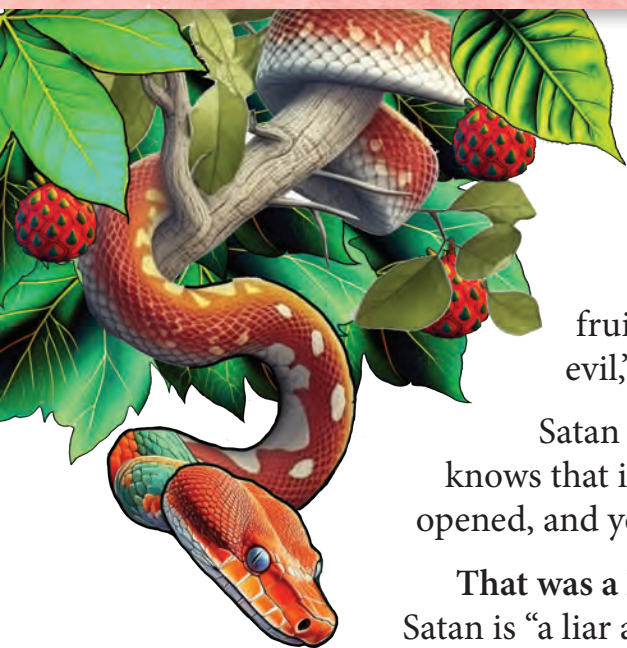
At first, Adam and Eve were very happy in the beautiful garden which God had planted for them. But one day someone else came into the Garden of Eden. That “someone” was Satan!

Who is Satan? Satan is God’s great enemy. When God created him, he was a beautiful angel named Lucifer. Lucifer means “shining one.” He was the wisest and most beautiful angel God ever created.

How did Lucifer become God’s enemy? One day pride entered Lucifer’s heart. He thought about how wise he was and how beautiful he was, and he decided that he would take over God’s place. He rebelled against God!

At that moment, Lucifer became God’s enemy, and God sent him out of Heaven. His name was changed to Satan, which means “enemy.” Satan is God’s enemy, and he is our enemy too.

Adam and Eve **DISOBEYED**



Satan wanted Adam and Eve to disobey God. He wanted

them to rebel against God as he had done. Satan came to Eve in the form of a serpent. He asked Eve if she and Adam could eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden.

Eve said God had told them not to eat the fruit of “the tree of knowledge of good and evil,” and that, if they did, they would surely die.

Satan replied, “You shall not surely die: for God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods...” (Genesis 3:4, 5).

That was a lie! Jesus said that Satan is “a liar and the father of it” (John 8:44b). Satan used a lie to trick Eve into disobeying God.

Satan tries to trick us with his lies. He may say to you, “You do not have to obey your parents and your teachers. Other kids disobey them, and you can too.” When you get in trouble, Satan says, “Tell a lie.”



Eve was deceived by Satan. She should not have believed Satan's lie but she did. She took the forbidden fruit and ate it. She gave the fruit to her husband, and he ate it too.

Adam and Eve had disobeyed God! They had followed Satan in his rebellion against God. They had sinned. Instead of having God in their hearts, they now had sin in their hearts.

Sin is a terrible thing! Because Adam and Eve sinned, they could no longer live with God. God sent them out of the beautiful garden which He had prepared for them. God placed an angel with a shining sword at the garden's entrance to keep them out.

Just like ADAM

Do you remember what we learned in the last lesson—that every creature has babies just like itself? This was also true of Adam and Eve.

Because Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, they now had sin in their hearts. When they had children, the children were just like them. They had sin in their hearts also.

Adam was the head of the human family, and he passed his sinful nature on to his children and to the whole human family. I was born with sin in my heart. You were born with sin in your heart. Every person is born with sin in his heart.



*Every creature has babies like itself.
Adam's children were like Adam; they had sin in their hearts.*

God's PROMISE

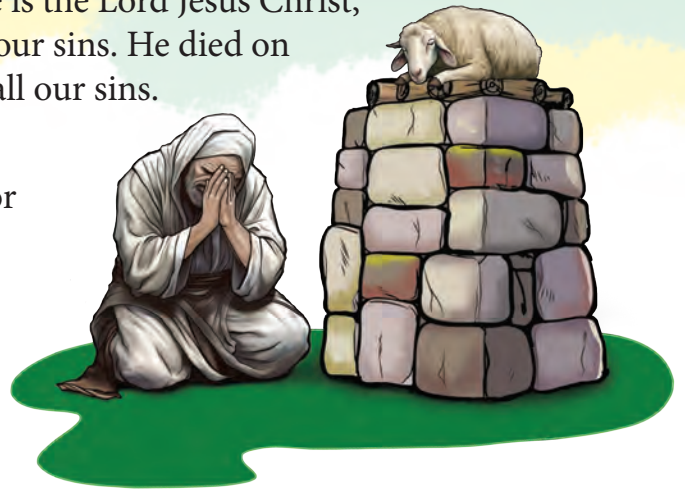
Adam and Eve had disobeyed God, but God still loved them. He made a wonderful promise that one day He would send a Savior into the world.

Who is this promised Savior? He is the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son. He came to save us from our sins. He died on the cross so we could be forgiven of all our sins.

Before Jesus came, God told the people to bring a lamb and offer it for their sins. Why? Because the Bible says that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). This means something had to die for sin.

Each person had to offer a lamb for his own sin. That lamb died for that person's sin. This was a "picture" of how Jesus would one day die on the cross for our sins.

When John the Baptist first saw Jesus, He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The blood of the Lamb of God takes away all our sins. The Bible says, "...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from ALL SIN" (1 John 1:7b).



the **Main Things**

- God has a great enemy.
His name is Satan.
- Sin came into the world because Adam and Eve disobeyed God.
- Adam passed his sinful nature on to his children and to the whole human family.
- God promised to send a Savior into the world to save us from our sins.
This Savior is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Discovered Treasure

God promised a Savior who would save us from our sins.

Memory verse

"...the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

1 John 1:7b





Steven AND Maria

CHAPTER 3: MARIA GETS HER OWN WAY

The story so far: Maria learned of a special book in Heaven, but she is very sad when she hears that liars are not included in “The Lamb’s Book of Life.” Steven found an unwanted puppy.

Maria felt a lump rise up in her throat. With all of her heart she wanted to belong to Jesus and get her name in His book. “If only I had not told that lie!” she thought to herself.

Steven looked thoughtful as he thanked Mr. Warren and said goodbye. Maria slowly followed her brother home. Her heart felt heavy, and tears burned in her eyes. Her grandmother could tell her what to do. She thought, “If I do not sing on Friday, perhaps Mother will take me to see Grandma on Saturday.”

When they got home, Maria pushed open the kitchen door and called, “Are you home, Mom?”

“I’m in here,” her mother answered from the living room.

Maria stood in the doorway and took a deep breath. “Mom,” she asked, “will you please take me to see Grandma on Saturday?”

Her mother sighed as she put down her empty coffee cup. She looked at Maria’s tear-stained face and tangled hair.

“What a sight you are!” she said with frustration in her voice. “I suppose you have been fighting with Steven again. No, I won’t take you to see your grandmother. I don’t think she wants to be bothered with you children. Run on now and clean up.”

Maria whirled around and flew up the stairs to her room. Throwing herself on

the bed, she pressed her face hard into the pillow. “Grandma does so want to see me,” she sobbed. “I know she does. And I will get to see her some way. I will...”

Suddenly Maria choked back her sobs and sat up. An idea had popped into her head. Jumping up, she opened a dresser drawer and pulled out a dark red sweater. It was almost new. “I know what I’ll do,” she told herself. “I’ll give this sweater to Susan Blake if she lets me go sing in her place. And I’m sure she will.” Carefully she folded the sweater and put it in a bag.

The next day at recess, Maria called Susan aside. She explained to Susan what she wanted and showed her the sweater. “You can have it for keeps, Susan, if you let me go in your place,” Maria said. “Just tell Miss Wilson your parents don’t want you to go.”



Susan reached for the sweater and held it up against herself. “Oh, Maria, it’s so pretty. I’ve always wanted a red sweater. But what if the teacher calls my mother and asks why I can’t go?”

Maria thought a minute. Then she said, “Don’t tell Miss Wilson until Friday morning. She will be too busy to call then. But be sure and tell her that I’m ready to go in your place.”

“Okay,” Susan agreed. “And thanks for the beautiful sweater, Maria.”

The next two days passed slowly. Maria felt bad about the lie she had told.

She was afraid her teacher Miss Wilson would find out and then she would be in big trouble.

Steven kept asking Maria to tell him more about “The Lamb’s Book of Life.” She told him all she could remember. But when he wanted to know why she could not get her name written in Jesus’ Book, she would not tell him. She could not tell him about her terrible lie.

Just before the bell rang on Friday morning, Miss Wilson hurried into the classroom. “Oh, there you are, Maria,” she said. “Susan has just told me her parents don’t want her to sing at the retirement home today. She said you will go in her place. Is that right?”

“Yes,” Maria nodded. “I would like to go.”

“Well, if it is all right with your mother, I guess you can go,” Miss Wilson said, writing Maria’s name on the list she held.

“Thank you, Miss Wilson,” Maria said in a small voice. Then she added, “I know it will be okay with my parents.”

That afternoon Maria’s heart beat fast as she sang in front of the crowd of elderly people. Her grandmother was sitting right in the first row. She looked so pleased when she saw Maria, that Maria could hardly keep her mind on the words she was singing.

When the program was over, Miss Wilson led the students off on a tour of the building. Maria watched for her chance to slip away from the group unnoticed. Soon she ran back to her grandmother.

“Oh, Grandma,” she cried, throwing her arms around her. “When are you coming home again?”

Her grandmother held her close. “Dear little Maria,” she said softly. “I have been wanting to see you so much. How are you and Steven doing?”



Maria brushed back her hair and smiled into her grandmother’s eyes. “Steven is all right. He has a new puppy. His name is Captain and...”

“What about you, Maria?”

Grandmother’s voice was kind. “How are you getting along without me?”

Maria was quiet for a minute. Then she kneeled close to her grandmother and whispered. “Grandma, I have to ask you something. Why do people do bad things?”

“Do you remember the Bible story I told you, Maria? It was about the beautiful garden that God made for Adam and Eve. He told them they could eat the fruit of every tree in the garden except one. Then Satan came and tempted them. They ate the fruit God told them not to eat. Adam and Eve wanted their own way. They sinned, and they passed their sinful natures on to us. Now we are all born with sin in our hearts. That is why we do wrong things, Maria.”

“But Grandma! How can I stop doing bad things? I want to get my name in Jesus’ Book. It is a beautiful book and I...”

“Maria!” Miss Wilson cried out.

Oh no, Maria is in trouble!

Now that Maria knows why people do bad things, will she find out how to stop doing them?

Don’t miss the next chapter of Steven and Maria!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 3

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. Sin came into the world because

- a. Adam and Eve did not know what God wanted them to do.
- b. Adam and Eve disobeyed God.

2. Where did Satan come from?

- a. God created him like he is today.
- b. God created him as a beautiful angel, but he rebelled against God.

3. Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God,

- a. they could no longer live with God.
- b. they could do what they wanted to do.

4. When Adam and Eve had children,

- a. the children had no sin in their hearts.
- b. the children had sinful hearts just like their parents.

5. When a lamb died for a person's sins,

- a. it was a "picture" showing that, one day, the Lord Jesus would die for our sins.
- b. it was something people did to make them feel better.

What do you think?

What wrong thing did Maria tell Susan to do?

Why did Maria want to stop doing bad things?

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.



Remember to look for Steven and Maria on the back of this page!

EN:BF1 L3 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 3

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15



Jesus died for **MY SINS**

Dear Friend,

Did you know that the Bible contains "bad news" and "good news"? The "bad news" is about us—what we are like. The "good news" is about God—what He is like and what He has done for us.

BAD NEWS and GOOD NEWS

The "bad news" is that we have sin in our hearts. In our last lesson we learned that every person is born with sin in their heart.

Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever disobeyed your parents? Have you ever taken anything that did not belong to you? Have you ever hated someone? Have you ever said bad words? We do these things because we have sin in our hearts.

The "good news" is that God gave His Son to us to be our Savior. The Lord Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. But Jesus did not stay dead. He rose again on the third day. He rose to be our living Savior and our special Best Friend!



When we take God's Son, the Lord Jesus, as our Savior, God forgives us of all our sins and makes us His child forever. That is really good news!

God's GIFT to us

Because God loves us so much, He gave us the greatest gift He could ever give to us. He gave His Son to us to be our Savior. The Bible says, "...the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14).

The Lord Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Jesus had a mother just like any other baby, but He did not have a human father as you and I have.

Who was His father? God was His Father! Jesus came into the world as a tiny baby, but He was different from us because He did not have sin in His heart. He is the sinless Son of God!

Have you ever wondered how Jesus got His name? God gave it to Him! The name "Jesus" means "Savior." Jesus is the One who saves us from our sins. God said, "You shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

When Jesus became a man, He began to preach and teach. One day John the Baptist saw Jesus. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

John called Jesus "the Lamb of God" because Jesus was going to die for the sins of the world. Jesus is the only One who could die for our sins because He is the Son of God. He never sinned. He was pure and holy. That is why He was able to take the punishment for our sins.

"I have been trying to be a Christian."

Jonathan had a worried look on his face as he came up to his Bible teacher after class. He said, "I have been trying and trying to be a Christian, but I just cannot be one."

"Why do you say that you cannot be a Christian, Jonathan?" asked the teacher.

"Because I do bad things," said Jonathan, as he hung his head.

"Jonathan," said the teacher, "you do not become a Christian by trying to be one. You become a Christian by taking the Lord Jesus as your Savior. When Jesus comes to live in us, He gives us the power to stop sinning."

This was really good news to Jonathan. He prayed and asked the Lord Jesus to come into his heart.

Jesus' death on the CROSS

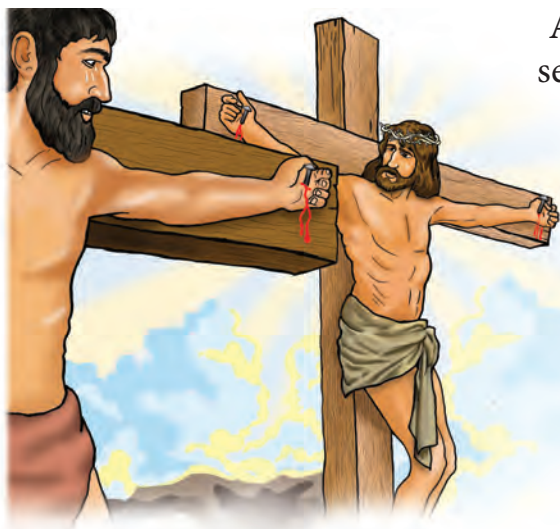
Now we come to the saddest, but most wonderful, event that ever took place in this world—the time when Jesus suffered and died on

the cross for our sins. Men did not take Jesus' life from Him. He chose to lay it down for us. He said, "Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life...No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (John 10:17, 18).

Jesus was taken to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. Pilate told the soldiers to take Jesus out and whip Him. He was beaten terribly. Some people pulled the hair from His face. Some placed a blindfold over His eyes and took turns hitting Him in the face with sticks. Some even spit in His face and made fun of Him.

They made a crown for Jesus—not a crown of gold, but a crown of thorns. Then they took Him to a place called Calvary and crucified Him. This means that His hands and feet were nailed to the cross.

Two thieves were crucified at the same time, one on each side of Jesus. These two men had done a lot of bad things. But Jesus had never done anything wrong. Jesus, the Son of God, was dying for our sins.



As Jesus hung on the cross, He could see the people who had beaten Him.

He could see the ones who had nailed Him to the cross. He looked toward Heaven and prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Jesus prayed for His enemies. He wanted them to be saved.

One of the thieves who was crucified with Jesus was saved because he took the Lord Jesus as his Savior. He said, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." Jesus said to him, "Today you shall be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43).

The other thief would have been saved too if he had taken the Lord Jesus as his Savior. Jesus loved him and wanted to be his Savior, but he did not believe on Jesus. He was not saved. He did not go to Heaven.

Jesus died for MY sins

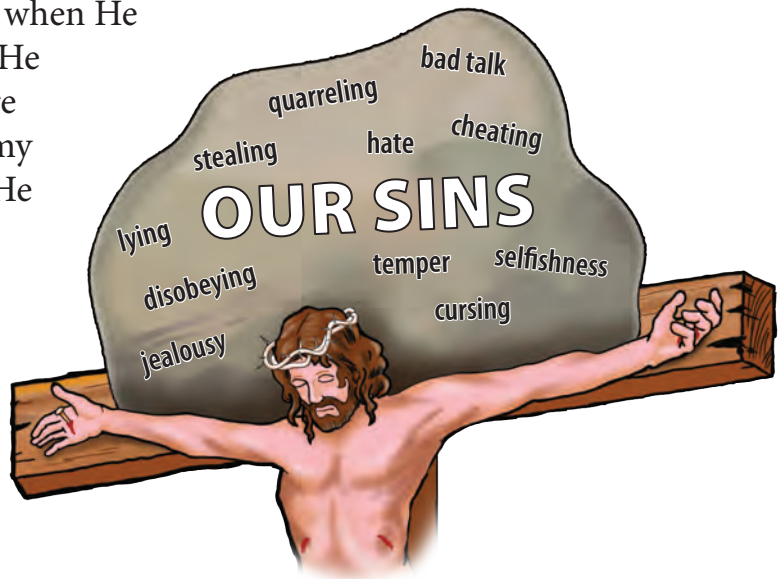
Why did God's Son die on the cross? Jesus died so we could be forgiven of all our sins. Jesus is the Son of God. He never committed a single sin in His whole life, but He took the punishment for my sins and your sins.

God took all my sins, all your sins, and the sins of all people and laid them on His Son. All of my lies, my disobedience, my bad talk, my selfishness, my bad temper, all my sins were laid on Jesus. The Bible says, "...the Lord has laid on Him [Jesus] the iniquity [sins] of us all" (Isaiah 53:6).

Think of God's Son dying on a cross like a criminal! Why did He do it? He did it because He loved us.

We have learned a wonderful truth: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for our sins. It is even more wonderful when you say, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for MY sins!" Will you say this to yourself right now?

All my sins were on Jesus when He hung on the cross, but when He rose from the grave, they were all gone. What happened to my sins? God blotted them out. He erased them. They are gone forever! God says that He will not even remember them. In His Word, He says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17).



Would you like to thank the Lord Jesus for dying for your sins? You can do this right now. Just tell Him, "Lord Jesus, I do thank You for loving me so much that You died for my sins. I want You to be my Savior and my special Best Friend."

Discovered Treasure

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for **MY** sins!

Memory
verse

"...the Son of God...loved me,
and gave Himself for me."

Galatians 2:20



Steven AND Maria

CHAPTER 4: FINDING THE ANSWER

The story so far: Maria told a lie so she could get to see her grandmother. Then she got her friend Susan involved in her lie. Maria's visit with her grandmother ends just as she was about to find out why people lie and do bad things.

“**Maria!**” Miss Wilson cried out, hurrying up to them. “I have been looking everywhere for you. I told you all to stay together. You disobeyed me, and I will have to punish you.”

“Maria and I have not seen each other in a long time,” Grandmother told Miss Wilson. “It was my fault for keeping her here. Please don’t punish her for it.”

“Well, we will see,” Miss Wilson answered in an irritated huff.

On the way home in the bus, Maria felt disappointed. If only her grandmother could have finished explaining things to her. “I am just like Adam and Eve. I wanted my own way,” Maria told herself. Every day she felt worse inside. “Who could explain things like Grandma?” Maria wondered.

The next morning Maria went out to the back yard where Steven was playing with Captain. “Steven,” she asked, “would you like to go to Sunday School tomorrow?”

Steven tossed the ball toward the eager puppy and watched him scamper after it. Then he said, “Sure! I’d like to go and find out if that book in Heaven you talk about is true.”

“It is,” Maria said. “Just ask the teacher tomorrow. Come with me to call Anna. We’ll ask if Uncle Jim can pick us up.”

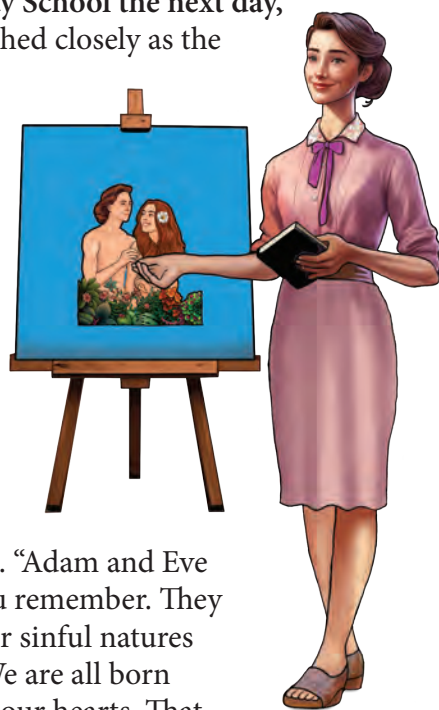
As soon as Anna heard what they wanted, she called her father to the

phone. Uncle Jim sounded pleased. He promised to come pick them up and take them home after lunch.

When their mother came home, Maria and Steven asked her if they could go to church and Sunday School. “Oh, I don’t care,” she said with a shrug. “But you’ll have to get yourselves ready. And don’t make any noise. Your father and I are going out tonight, and we will want to sleep late tomorrow.”

In Sunday School the next day, Maria watched closely as the teacher put up pictures of Adam and Eve on a board.

The teacher began by reviewing previous lessons taught in the class. “Adam and Eve sinned; you remember. They passed their sinful natures on to us. We are all born with sin in our hearts. That is why we do wrong things and say bad things. We all want our own way. God has told us that no sin can enter Heaven.”



Maria was amazed she was hearing what her grandmother had started to tell her on Friday. Maybe her teacher could answer her questions. Maria raised her hand. "How can anyone ever get to Heaven? How can our names be written in Jesus' beautiful book?" she asked with a troubled face.

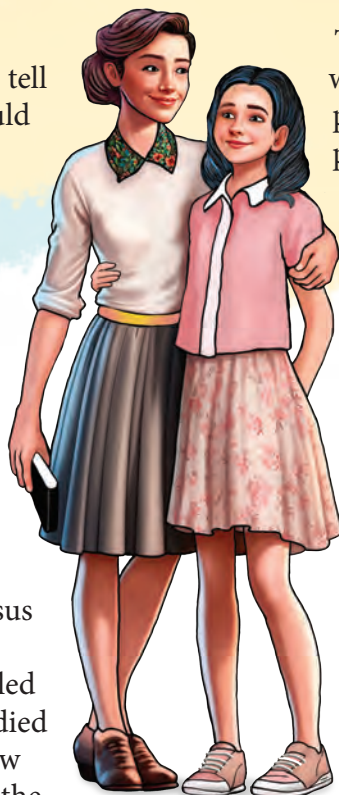
The teacher smiled as she answered, "Maria, God loved us too much to leave us in our sins and unhappiness. He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to take the punishment for our sins." She put a picture of the cross on the board and continued. "The soldiers took Jesus and whipped Him. They put a crown of thorns on His head. Then they nailed Him to the cross where He died. He died for your sins and for mine. This is how Jesus saves us from our sins, just like the Bible says in Matthew 1:21."

"Do you mean Jesus took the punishment for things we do, like telling lies and disobeying?" Maria asked.

"Yes, dear," the teacher answered. "God took all the bad things we have done, and He laid them on Jesus. Now we need to believe that Jesus died for our sins and receive Him as our Savior. The moment we do that, God forgives us of all our sins. The Bible says in Acts 16:31, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.'"

At last Maria understood. "I want to do that," she said.

There was delight in the teacher's face as she said to the class, "Maria, you can do that right now. Any of you children can receive Jesus right now. Let us all close our eyes." Then she said to Maria, "Now, Maria, you pray and tell Jesus you believe He died for you. Tell Him you are sorry for your sins. Ask Him to come into your heart and be your Savior."



The other children were very still as Maria prayed. The teacher prayed, and the class was dismissed.

As Maria was leaving, the teacher put her arm around her and said, "I hope you will come to Sunday School every week, Maria. And remember you can take all of your troubles to Jesus now."

"Is my name written in the beautiful book in Heaven now?" Maria asked.

"Yes, Maria, your name is written in Jesus' beautiful book." The teacher nodded her head and gave her a warm smile as she said goodbye. Maria's eyes sparkled as she and Steven left the church that morning.

On their way home in the car that afternoon, Maria leaned close to Steven. "I have some wonderful news! I belong to Jesus now," she whispered. "And my name is written on the list in Jesus' beautiful book."

"WOW!" Steven exclaimed "Our teacher told me all that you said was true. He told us a lot of other good things too. If Uncle Jim will take us, I want to go back next Sunday."

"Me, too" Maria said. "Now, Jesus will help me do the right things I need to do."

What will Maria tell her teacher?

Will Maria finally tell Miss Wilson the truth about the list?

Don't miss the next exciting chapter
in the story of Steven and Maria.

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 4

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. The “bad news” in the Bible is that

- a. we all have sin in our hearts.
 b. most people have sin in their hearts.

2. The “good news” in the Bible is that

- a. we can get rid of our sins if we try hard enough.
 b. God gave His Son to us to be our Savior.

3. John called Jesus “the Lamb of God” because

- a. He was so pure and gentle.
 b. He was going to die for the sins of the world.

4. One of the thieves on the cross was saved

- a. because he took the Lord Jesus as his Savior.
 b. because he was a better person than the other man.

5. When I take Jesus as my Savior,

- a. God forgives me of most of my sins.
 b. God forgives me of ALL of my sins.

What do you think?
Do you believe Jesus can forgive ALL of your sins?

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Find Steven and Maria on the back of this page!



EN:BF1 L4 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1-LESSON 4

From:

The Mailbox Club presents...

**BEST FRIENDS 1
LESSON 5**



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15



JESUS is
alive **TODAY!**

Dear Friend,

We know that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, but what happened after that? Did Jesus really rise from the grave? Is He alive today? If so, where is He now? We will find the answers to these questions in this lesson.

JESUS rose from the DEAD.

His body was taken down from the cross, and He was buried in the tomb of a rich man. This tomb was a cave in the side of a mountain. A big stone was rolled in front of His tomb.

Jesus was in the tomb three days. Early in the morning of the third day, the Lord Jesus rose from the dead. There was a great earthquake. An angel came from Heaven, rolled the stone back, and sat on it.

The Lord Jesus died about three o'clock in the afternoon.



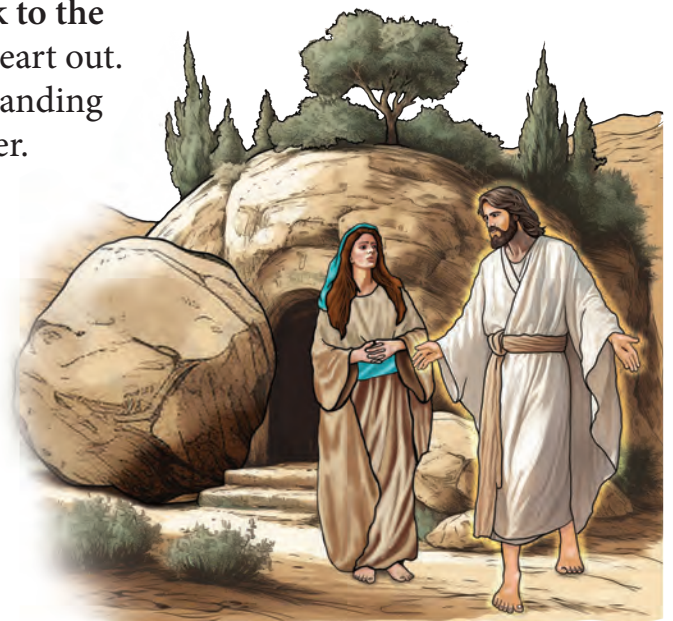
Shortly after this, three women came to the tomb. When they arrived, they found that the tomb was empty.

The angel said, “**Fear not**: for I know that you seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matthew 28:5, 6). The three women were very excited. They ran back to tell the disciples. They met Peter and John and told them what they had seen and heard.

Peter and John ran to the tomb. When they arrived and looked inside, they saw an amazing sight. The body of Jesus was gone! The linen cloth, which had been wrapped around Jesus’ body, was lying there. He had risen!

Later, Mary Magdalene came back to the tomb by herself. She was crying her heart out. Suddenly she realized someone was standing nearby. She thought it was the gardener. She asked him where they had taken the body of Jesus. But it was not the gardener; it was Jesus Himself. He said, “Mary!”

She recognized the Lord’s voice, and she turned and said, “Master!” Then she ran and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord.



JESUS had a NEW BODY.

That night ten of the disciples met in an upper room. Thomas was not there. They had the doors shut because they were afraid.

Suddenly Jesus came and stood in the middle of them. He said to them, “Peace be unto you.” The disciples thought they were seeing a spirit and not a real person.

Jesus showed them His hands with the print of the nails in them and His side with the spear wound. Jesus told them to look at His hands and His feet. He told them to touch Him, handle Him, to see that He was not a spirit, but a real person with flesh and bones. To further show them He had a real body, He sat down and ate fish and honey with them.

The Lord Jesus was the same Person whom His disciples had known and loved, but now He had a glorious, new resurrection body.

In His powerful, new resurrection body, Jesus could go from one place to another instantly. He had a real body that you could see and touch and handle, yet He could go through locked doors.

THOMAS did not BELIEVE.

The ten disciples were filled with joy. Jesus was alive again!

They found Thomas and told him the good news.

But Thomas did not believe them. Thomas said, “Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe” (John 20:25).



Eight days later, the disciples were again in the upper room. This time Thomas was with them.

Jesus appeared to them again and said, “Peace be unto you.” Then He turned to Thomas and said, “Thomas, behold My hands. Put your finger in the nail prints in My hands! Put your hand in the spear wound in My side! Don’t doubt any longer. Believe!”

Thomas felt ashamed that he had not believed. He worshiped Jesus, saying, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

The Lord Jesus appeared on the earth for forty days after He rose from the dead. He appeared to His believers many times. He was seen by many people. On one occasion, over 500 people saw Him after He rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:6).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ proves He is who He said He was—the Son of God. The Bible says Jesus Christ was “declared to be the Son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4).

JESUS has ALL POWER.

When it was time for Jesus to return to Heaven, He told His disciples

to meet Him on a certain mountain. When they came and saw Him, they worshiped Him. Jesus said to them, “All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18).

Jesus blessed His disciples, and, as they watched, He went up, up, up into the sky. They watched Him until a cloud hid Him from their sight. Their beloved Jesus had gone back to Heaven.



While the disciples were standing there, looking up into the sky, two men in shining white clothes appeared to them and said, “You men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into Heaven” (Acts 1:11).

Today Jesus is in Heaven, in His glorious resurrection body, seated at the right hand of God the Father. He has all power in Heaven and in the earth. Some day He is coming back to take us to be with Him in Heaven forever. This is the Person whom God wants me to believe in, love, and have as my Savior, my Lord, and my special Best Friend.



the Main Things

- Jesus rose from the dead in a glorious, new resurrection body.
- Jesus has all power in Heaven and in the earth.
- Jesus is in Heaven today, seated at the right hand of God the Father.
- Jesus is coming back some day to take us to be with Him forever.

Discovered Treasure

Jesus Christ is in Heaven today, seated at the right hand of God.

Memory verse

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved...”

Acts 16:31



Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 5: MAKING THINGS RIGHT

The story so far: At Sunday school Maria asked God to forgive her and received Jesus as her Savior. She knows that she must tell her teacher about her lies.

At school the next day, Maria knew she would have to tell Miss Wilson about the lie and the torn list. “And I will have to tell her how I got Susan to lie, too,” she thought, feeling scared. Then she remembered Jesus would help her, and she began to feel better.

Just before the last bell rang Miss Wilson said, “Some friends of mine are offering a free week of camp to five students who make the most improvements during the rest of this year. You will be chosen for your effort in school and most of all for good behavior. I hope you will all do your best.”



Maria’s heart sank. How could she tell Miss Wilson now? It would spoil her chance of going to camp.

Maria stood up slowly. The other children pushed past her and rushed out of the door. Maria began to follow them.

Suddenly she turned and ran back to the teacher’s desk. “Miss Wilson,” she said, “I have to tell you something.”

“Maria, I would like to talk to you,” Miss Wilson said with a rush, “but I have to go to a teacher’s meeting right now. You’ll have to come in to see me before school. Run along now, and we will talk in the morning.”

Maria sighed. It had taken all day to build up her nerve to confess her lies to her teacher, and now she had to wait until tomorrow. How could she get through this? It seemed like things should be getting easier instead of more difficult.

As Maria reached the school gate, Susan came running up to her. She looked worried. “Maria,” she asked, “why were you talking to Miss Wilson? Has she found out about what we did?”

“I was going to tell her what I did,” Maria said. “But she didn’t have time to listen now.”

“**Maria Ortega!** Are you going to tell her about me, too?” Susan started to cry.

Maria began to explain how she had taken Jesus as her Savior. And now she wanted to tell the teacher about the wrong things she had done and say she was sorry.

But Susan did not understand what she was saying. “I think you’re really mean, Maria,” she said. “If you tell Miss Wilson, she won’t let me be in the camp contest. And I suppose you’ll tell your mother about the sweater, too. I’ll have

to give the beautiful red sweater back to you. How could you do this to me after I helped you go see your grandmother?"

Maria caught her breath. She had not thought of all the consequences of what she had done wrong. Susan did make it possible for her to sing for her grandmother. She also knew she should tell her mother about the sweater.



Maybe this was not the way to show Susan how she appreciated her help, Maria thought. "I'll beg Mom to let you keep the sweater, Susan," Maria promised. "And I will tell Miss Wilson that everything was all my fault on Friday. I don't think she will blame you. Please don't be mad at me, Susan," Maria pleaded.

Susan's face was like a storm cloud. "I *am* mad at you, Maria!" she said. "And if you go and tell everything you'll be sorry!" She quickly turned around and ran down the street.

Maria did not go home so quickly. She wondered if things could get any worse. Soon she turned the corner and slowly walked through her front yard.

"Hi, Maria!" Steven called as Captain chased him around the corner of the house. "How was school today?" he asked, laughing at Captain.

"Oh, all right I guess," she answered with a sigh.

Steven stopped and stared at Maria, then asked, "What is wrong with you? You look like you lost your best friend."

"I think I did, Steven. I have done some terrible things. I'm in a lot of trouble. Now Susan is very upset with me. I don't know what I'm going to do." Tears rolled down Maria's face as she began to cry.



"I am sure things will work out with Susan. You can't be in *that* much trouble!" Steven said, doing his best to comfort her.

"Yes, I can, Steven," Maria insisted. "I have to tell someone about everything I have done."

Steven and Maria walked over and sat down on the front porch. Maria took a deep breath and began to tell Steven about the torn list and how she got Susan to lie by giving her the red sweater.

"Wow!" Steven burst out. "What a mess! You really are in big trouble. You have to tell Mom everything, and she'll be really upset with you. Your teacher could also be mad at you, and then there's Susan. I know you like her a lot. I wonder if this is the kind of trouble my Sunday school teacher was talking about?"

"Now, what are you talking about Steven?" Maria asked.

Will Maria be able to tell the truth?

Will she ask Jesus for the courage she needs?

Will Susan be able to forgive Maria?

Don't miss the next chapter in Lesson 7!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 5

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.

1. Did Thomas believe the disciples when they told him that Jesus had risen from the dead?

- a. Yes, he did.
 b. No, he did not.

2. What did Thomas do when he saw Jesus?

- a. He felt bad, but he did not say anything.
 b. He worshiped Jesus saying, “My Lord and my God!”

3. After His resurrection, Jesus was seen

- a. by many people, over 500 on one occasion.
 b. by only a few people.

4. The resurrection of Jesus Christ proves

- a. that He is who He said He was—the Son of God.
 b. that He is a very great man.

5. Did the disciples see Jesus as He was going back to Heaven?

- a. No, they did not. He just disappeared.
 b. Yes, they did.

Who can help Maria to tell her teacher the truth?

Who do you ask for help when you need to do something hard?

What do you think?

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Find Steven and Maria on the back of this page!



EN:BF1 L5 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Maria if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 5

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

YOU can become a Child of God!



Dear Friend,

The most wonderful thing in all the world is knowing that you are a child of God. We will find out how to become a child of God in this lesson, but first let us answer some questions.

? **What does it mean to be saved?** It means that God has forgiven you of all your sins; He has made you His child.

? **"Can I be saved by being good?"** No, you cannot. Being good may keep you out of trouble, but it can never take away your sins. Jesus is the only Person who can take away your sins. He died on the cross to take away all your sins.

? **"Can I be saved by keeping the Ten Commandments?"** No, you cannot. No one, except the Lord Jesus, has ever kept the Ten Commandments perfectly. We have *all* sinned. We *all* need a Savior.

? **Can anyone be saved?** Yes, they can! Even little children can take Jesus as their Savior and be saved. Jesus loves children! He said, "Let the little children come unto Me..." (Mark 10:14). If you are old enough to know you have done wrong things, then you are old enough to be saved.

Now we are going to find out how to be saved. Look at the steps on the right. Start at the bottom and read each step.

Now let us talk about each step and the Bible verse that goes with it.



STEP 1 I HAVE SINNED.

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

Romans 3:23

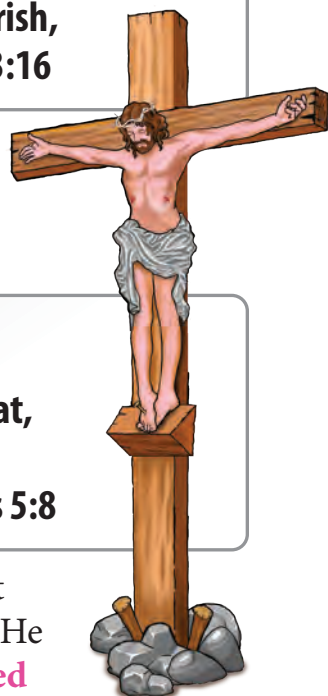
God says that every one of us has sinned. If you want to be saved, you must see that you are a sinner, and you must be truly sorry for your sins. Do you know that you have sinned? Are you truly sorry for your sins? Do you want to stop doing them?

STEP 2 GOD LOVES ME.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16

Whom does God mean when He says “the world”? He means everyone. That includes you and me. You can say, **“God loves me!”** Say it right now—**“God loves me!”**



STEP 3 CHRIST DIED FOR ME.

“God commends [shows] His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8

Because God loved us and wanted us to be saved, He sent His Son to be our Savior. The Lord Jesus died for sinners. He died for you, and He died for me. You can say, **“Christ died for ME!”** Say it right now.

**STEP
4**

I RECEIVE HIM.

“As many as received Him [the Lord Jesus], to them gave He power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His name.”
John 1:12

To become a child of God, I must come as a sinner to the Lord Jesus and receive Him as my Savior. God has given the Lord Jesus to me to be my Savior, but I must receive Him. That is, I must take Him as my very own Savior. When I take the Lord Jesus as my Savior, I become a child of God.

“How do I take Jesus as my Savior?”

You take Him as your Savior by inviting Him into your heart. Your heart is like a house with a door. The Lord Jesus said,

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man [anyone] hears My voice, and opens the door, I WILL COME IN...”
Revelation 3:20

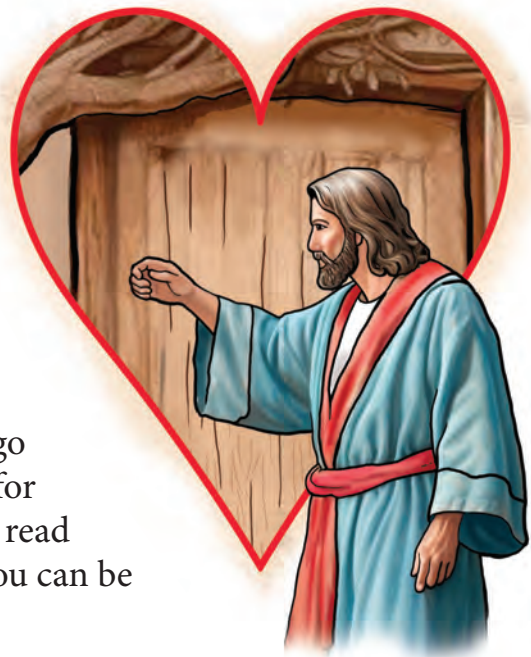
When you believe that Jesus died for your sins and you invite Him to come into your heart, He comes in. He becomes your Savior. You are saved. You are a child of God.

The Lord Jesus is knocking at your heart’s door. He wants to come in. He says, “Let Me come in so I can forgive you of all your sins and make you a child of God.” Will you invite Him to come into your heart? If you are not sure that you have already done this, you can do it right now.

Because this is just between you and the Lord Jesus, it will be best if you can go to a quiet place where you can be alone for a few minutes. So, right now, before you read the next part, find a quiet place where you can be alone with the Lord Jesus.

Now you are ready to talk to the Lord Jesus. Here is a prayer that will help you. Say it quietly to the Lord:

“Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I want to stop doing them. I thank You for loving me so much and for dying on the cross for me. Please come into my heart. I take You as my Savior right now!”



STEP 5 I HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE.

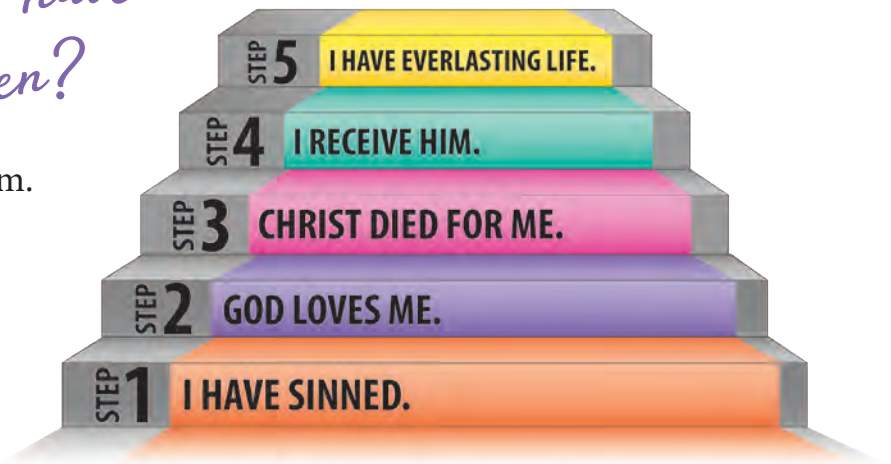
"He that believes on the Son has everlasting life...." John 3:36

What does the Lord Jesus say that He will do when you ask Him to come into your heart? He says, "I will come in." Does He keep His word? Yes, He does! If you asked Him to come into your heart, and you really meant it, He came in! If Jesus has come into your heart, you are saved. You are a child of God. You have everlasting life. The Bible says, "He that believes on the Son has everlasting life..." (John 3:36).

Would you like to thank the Lord Jesus for coming into your heart? You can do this right now. Just pray and tell Him, "Lord Jesus, I thank You for coming into my heart and making me a child of God."

Which steps have
YOU *taken?*

Start at the bottom.
Read each step.
Draw a circle
around each step
that is true in
your life.



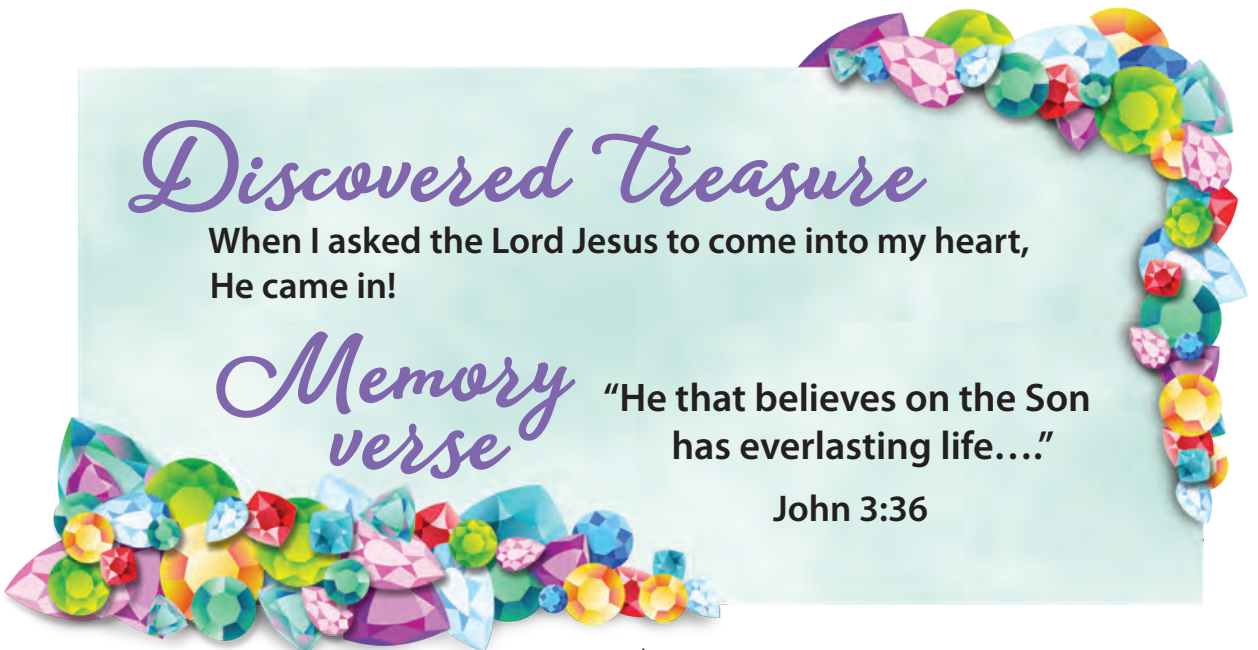
Discovered Treasure

When I asked the Lord Jesus to come into my heart,
He came in!

*Memory
verse*

**"He that believes on the Son
has everlasting life...."**

John 3:36



Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 6: TELLING THE TRUTH

The story so far: Maria tried to tell Susan about God's forgiveness and that she must tell Miss Wilson about her lies. When Susan found out about this, she became very angry with Maria.

Steven began to talk softly to Maria, "On Sunday, my teacher said that we can give our problems to Jesus.

"Three days after Jesus died, He rose from the dead. Then He went to Heaven.

"**Today Jesus is alive and sitting at God's right hand.** Because He is alive, we can give our problems to Jesus, and He will listen to us. My teacher told us to memorize 1 Peter 5:7 from the Bible. If we have troubles, then we can remember the verse. It says to 'Cast all your care upon Him; for He cares for you.' Maybe I memorized the verse so I could tell it to you now."

"Thank you, Steven. My teacher told us the same thing—that we can always take our troubles to Jesus."

After supper Maria had a chance to talk to her mother about the sweater, but she could not find the words to tell her.

In bed, Maria tossed and turned, trying to think of what to tell Miss Wilson and what to say to her mother. She was worried about Susan being so mad at her. Then she thought of the verse Steven had shared with her.

Maria got up and knelt down next to her bed. She began to tell Jesus about all the trouble she was in. "Dear Jesus," she

prayed, "I am so glad You are alive and can listen to me. Please help me to do what is right." Then she got back into bed and went to sleep.

The next morning Maria found Miss Wilson waiting for her. Maria began to explain to her teacher all she had done. She told her about tearing up the list and telling lies to cover up what she had done. Then she admitted that she had persuaded Susan to lie too. "Please don't blame Susan. It was all my fault, Miss Wilson, and I am very sorry for what I have done," Maria finished.

Miss Wilson was quiet for a moment. Then she said softly, "I am sorry that you don't see your grandmother more often, Maria. If I had known before, I would



have let you be a part of the singing group so you could see her. I know it was difficult to come and tell me what you did. It took a lot of courage to confess what you've done. I will forgive you. I hope you won't lie or do anything like this again. Tell Susan it's all right."

"Oh, thank you, Miss Wilson," Maria said, smiling and very relieved. "And I promise to try hard to do the right thing from now on."

Maria was eager to talk to Susan, but she was not at school all day. Maria wondered why.

At home that afternoon, Maria looked for Steven, but she could not find him anywhere. Suddenly she saw him coming across the park with Captain close at his heels. "What have you been doing?" she asked.

"Getting rid of Doubting Thomas," Steven answered with a grin.

Maria looked so puzzled that Steven laughed out loud.

"Did your Sunday school teacher tell you about what happened when Jesus rose from the dead?" Steven asked, sitting down on the step.

Maria sat down beside him. "She told us that Jesus came out of the grave three days after He was crucified. Lots of people saw Him, but I can't remember how many."

"As many as five hundred at one time," Steven said. "I told some of the boys at

school that Jesus had risen from the dead, and they laughed at me. They said I was dumb to believe all that. Then I began to wonder if it really was true. So, after school I went over to talk to Mr. Warren.

"Mr. Warren said I had doubts just like one of Jesus' disciples named Thomas. The other disciples told Thomas Jesus was alive again, but Thomas didn't believe them. He said he would not believe it until he put his finger into the nail prints in Jesus' hand. After a while Jesus came and said to Thomas, 'Thomas, come and put your finger in My hand. Do not doubt any longer. Believe!'"

"Oh," Maria sighed. "Thomas must have been ashamed."

"I'm sure he was," Steven agreed. "And so was I when Mr. Warren got finished telling me the story. I asked Mr. Warren if I could take Jesus as my Savior right then. He said I could. So, I did, and now I *know* it's all true."

"Steven!" Maria cried out. "I am so excited for you! It's amazing that Jesus is living now, and He helps us when we ask Him to!" Then she told Steven about how Jesus had given her the courage to talk with Miss Wilson. She felt better because she had done the right thing by telling her teacher.

"Wow!" Steven said. "Now I understand why it's so important to know Jesus was raised from the dead. Because He is alive today, He can help us do the things we should. You know you still have to talk to Mom about the sweater."

"I know," Maria answered. "Not tonight, though, because Mom and Dad said they will be gone again."

Maria finally told Miss Wilson the truth!

Will she find the courage to talk to her mother?

Don't miss the next chapter!



QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 6

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. To be saved means that

- a. I am a really good person who does not sin anymore.
 b. God has forgiven me of my sins and made me His child.

2. Can I be saved by being good?

- a. No, I cannot.
 b. Yes, if I try hard enough.

3. Can children be saved?

- a. No, they must wait until they grow up.
 b. Yes, they can, if they take Jesus as their Savior.

Start at the bottom and write in the five steps we learned in this lesson.

5. _____
4. _____
3. _____
2. _____
1. _____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Have you taken the Lord Jesus as your Savior? _____

When? _____



Look for Steven and Maria on the back of this page!

EN:BF1 L6 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Maria if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 6

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15



Dear Friend,
Many wonderful things happened when I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior. These wonderful things are true of every believer.

1 GOD FORGAVE ME OF ALL MY SINS.

The very moment I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior, God forgave me of all my sins. God forgave me because Jesus died for my sins. The Bible says, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake [for Jesus' sake]" (1 John 2:12).

2 I BECAME A CHILD OF GOD.

Another wonderful thing happened when I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior: I was born into God's family. The Bible says, "As many as received Him [the Lord Jesus as their Savior], to them gave He power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1:12).

Have you taken the Lord Jesus as your Savior? If so, you are now a child of God. God is your heavenly Father, and you are His beloved child forever. God loves to have His children talk to Him, and you can talk to Him in prayer at any time and in any place.

3**CHRIST CAME
TO LIVE IN ME.**

The moment I was saved, the Lord Jesus came to live in my heart. The Lord Jesus Himself is in Heaven, but He also

lives in my heart by His Spirit. The apostle Paul said, “Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20).

Has the Lord Jesus come to live in your heart? If so, you can say, “Christ lives in me!” Say it to yourself right now, “Christ lives in ME!”

When the Lord Jesus comes to live in your heart, you belong to Him, and He belongs to you forever! He will never leave you. No matter what you do or where you go, He is always with you. He said, “I will NEVER leave you...” (Hebrews 13:5b).

Jayden waited to talk to the preacher after the message. Soon the preacher saw him and asked, “What can I do for you, Jayden?”

“I want to talk to you about my sins,” said Jayden. “I’ve done a lot of bad things.”

“I am glad you are concerned about your sins, Jayden,” said the preacher. “Let me ask you a question: For whose sins did Jesus die? Did He die for His own sins or for our sins?”

“He died for our sins,” replied Jayden.

“That’s right, Jayden, but let me ask you another question: Did He die for YOUR sins?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Jayden. “He died for MY sins.”

“Did He die for some of your sins or for all of them?” asked the preacher.

“He died for all of them,” said Jayden.

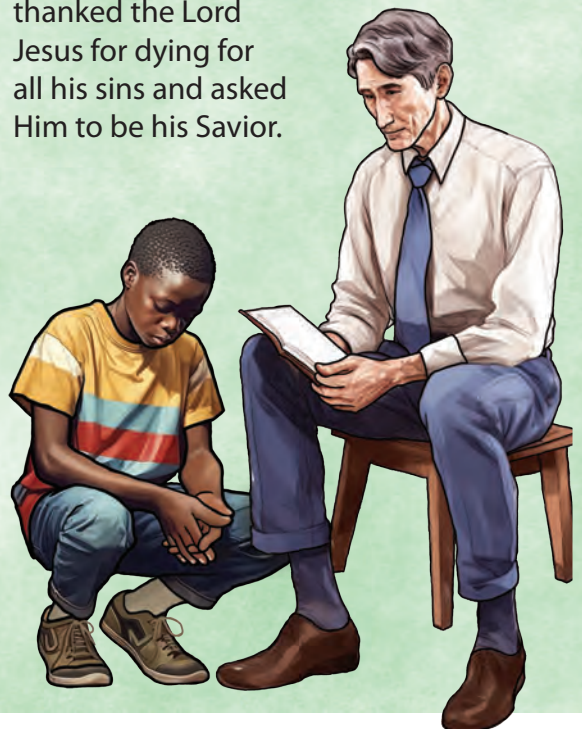
“Well, if Jesus died for all of your sins, and you take Him as your Savior, will you still have to pay for them?”

“I’ve done a lot of bad things.”

“No, sir,” said Jayden. “If Jesus died for all my sins and I take Him as my Savior, they are all paid for.”

“That’s true, Jayden. Would you like to take Him as your Savior right now?”

“I sure would,” said Jayden. Right there Jayden bowed his head and thanked the Lord Jesus for dying for all his sins and asked Him to be his Savior.



4

THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME TO LIVE IN ME.

When I took Jesus as my Savior, the Holy Spirit came to live in me. He is called “the Spirit of Christ”

because He is the same Spirit who lives in Christ. Every child of God has the Holy Spirit living in him. The Bible says, “Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts...” (Galatians 4:6).

*I love you!
I love you!
I love you!*



God sends the Holy Spirit to live in me that I might know how God feels toward me. The Holy Spirit impresses on me the wonderful fact that God loves me with all His heart. The Bible says, “...the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5).

The Holy Spirit fills my heart with the love of God. Through the Holy Spirit, God is saying to me, *“I love you! I love you! I love you!”*

5

GOD GAVE ME EVERLASTING LIFE.

The moment I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior, God gave me everlasting life. My name is

written in “The Lamb’s Book of Life.” Now I belong to the Lord Jesus forever. I have everlasting life. The Bible says, “He that has the Son has life [everlasting life]...” (1 John 5:12).

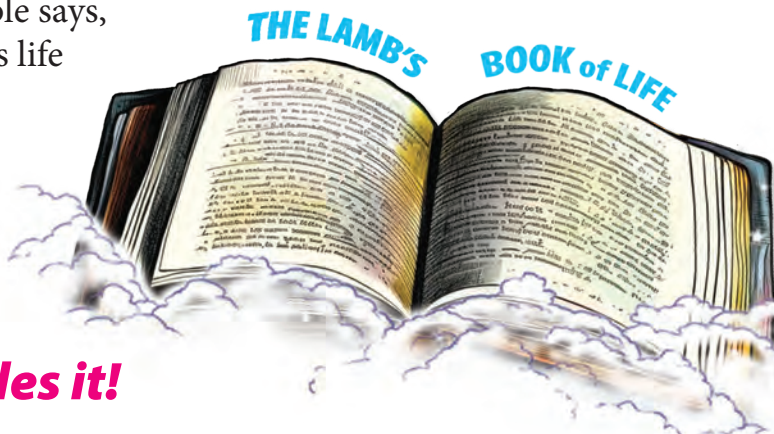
What does it mean to have “everlasting life”? It means that I will live forever with Jesus in Heaven. Because the Lord Jesus is living in me, I am not afraid to die. The moment I die, I go to be with the Lord Jesus, and I will live with Him in Heaven forever and ever.

How do I know for sure that I have everlasting life? I know because GOD SAYS SO! The Bible says, “He that has the Son has life [everlasting life]...”

God Says it!

I Believe it!

That settles it!



What happens if I sin after I am saved? Does this mean that I am no longer a child of God? No, it does not mean this. Once I become a child of God, I am always a child of God. But sin hurts God's heart, and sin comes between my heavenly Father and me. I feel bad inside.

What should I do? I should confess that sin to God at once. I tell Him what I did wrong; I tell Him I am sorry for my sin; and I ask Him to forgive me. God promises to forgive me when I confess my sin to Him. The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

"How can I please the Lord Jesus?"

If the Lord Jesus has saved you, then you will surely love Him and want to please Him. Here are ways you can please the Lord.

- ♥ **Love Him with all your heart.** The Lord Jesus loves you with all His heart, and He wants you to love Him the same way. If you truly love Him, you will obey Him. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).
- ♥ **Love Jesus' friends.** Jesus wants us to love other people, especially those who have trusted Him as their Savior. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus said, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).
- ♥ **Spend time alone with Jesus each day.** If you really love a person, you want to spend time with that person. Take time each day to be alone with the Lord Jesus, to read His Word, and pray to Him. Tell Him all that is on your heart.



Discovered Treasure

Wonderful things happened when I took Jesus as my Savior.

Memory verse

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His name."

John 1:12



Steven **AND** Maria

CHAPTER 7: A RUINED NOTEBOOK

The story so far: Maria told Miss Wilson the truth about the list and her lies. Steven took Jesus as his Savior at Mr. Warren's house.

The next day Maria worked hard on a school project in her notebook. She knew Miss Wilson would be pleased when she saw how neat it was. Susan was not at school in the morning. After lunch Maria came back early to finish her notebook. As she entered the hall, she saw Susan run out of the classroom and through the side door. "Susan, wait!" Maria called. But Susan dashed on without turning her head.

"Maybe she forgot something," Maria thought. She sat down and opened up her notebook. Then her eyes grew wide with dismay. There were big black lines and smudge marks all over the pages. Maria's heart began to thump painfully. "Oh, what will Miss Wilson say?" she whispered. "Will she believe me when I say I didn't do this?"

As Miss Wilson came into the room, she asked to see Maria's notebook. There

it was, full of those dirty smudges. "I did not do this, Miss Wilson," Maria said, "Honest, I didn't do this."

"Now, Maria, I don't want you to lie to me again." Miss Wilson said sternly. "You will have to stay after school and do your assignment over again."

"She doesn't believe me," Maria thought, going back to her desk. "But someone did do this. Who would have wanted to get me in trouble with Miss Wilson?" she wondered.

Then Maria remembered Susan had come running out of the classroom. At first Maria thought she had picked up schoolwork she had missed for being absent, but maybe she had another reason for being at school. "I bet Susan did this," Maria told herself angrily. "Just wait until I see her again!"

Maria stayed after school and worked on her assignment. She was so angry she kept making mistakes, which upset her even more. At last, she put down her pencil and closed her eyes.

"Dear Lord Jesus," she whispered, "please help me to forgive Susan for what I think she did. And help me now to finish my schoolwork." Maria sighed and finished her work.

On her way home from school, Maria kept thinking of her school project and Susan. She was grateful that she was able to do her work over. "Susan must be very



mad at me if she was the one who messed up my notebook,” she thought to herself. “And what if she has to give the sweater back? We will never be friends again.”

When Maria got home from school, she found her mother preparing supper. “Mom,” Maria said, “I have something to tell you. I...I... hope you won’t be angry with me.”

Her mother looked at her sternly. “What is it now, Maria?” she asked.

Maria started at the beginning. She told her mother everything about going to the retirement home to sing for her grandmother and the red sweater she had given Susan. She ended by telling her mother how she had asked Jesus to be her Savior, and now she was sorry for the wrong things she had done.

When Maria finished, her mother shook her head slowly. “I never thought a child of mine would do all those bad things,” she said. “I really should punish you, Maria. You must get that sweater back tomorrow.”

“Oh, Mom,” Maria begged. “Please, please, let Susan keep the sweater. It wouldn’t be fair to take it back since I did go in her place. I promise I will wear my blue sweater all the time without complaining.”

Her mother looked at Maria’s pleading face. Finally, she agreed, “Well, I suppose she should keep it since you gave it to her. And, Maria,” her mother paused for a minute, “if you want to see your grandmother so much, I guess I can take you and Steven to see her on Saturday.”

“Oh, Mom, thank you,” Maria said, with a big smile.

The next day Susan was still absent, so after school Maria decided to go to Susan’s home. The sky was full of dark, gray clouds. In a few minutes, the rain came pouring down. By the time Maria

reached Susan’s house, she was wet and cold.

Maria knocked on the door, but no one answered. She was just turning away when she saw Susan peek through the curtain.



Maria pushed the door open and stepped inside. “Susan,” she called, “it’s me, Maria. Why didn’t you answer the door?”

Susan came slowly into the room. “I suppose you came for the sweater,” she said frowning.

“No,” Maria answered as she wiped her shoes on the mat and began to unbutton her jacket.

“You better not take your jacket off,” Susan warned. “It is cold in here because the heater has gone out.”

“**Is there anyone else at home?**” Maria asked. She shivered as she sat down and pulled the damp jacket close around her.

“No. Mom is working,” Susan answered. “Did you tell your mother about the sweater?”

“Yes,” Maria said, smiling. “You can keep the sweater, Susan, and Miss Wilson said to tell you it was all right about last Friday.”

Will Maria be able to share about Jesus with Susan?

Find out in the next chapter of Steven and Maria!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 7

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



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1. The moment I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior,
God forgave me

- a. of all my sins.
 b. of most of my sins.

2. God forgave me because

- a. I am trying to obey Him.
 b. Jesus died for my sins.

3. A person is born into God's family

- a. by keeping God's commandments.
 b. by taking the Lord Jesus as his Savior.

4. The Holy Spirit impresses on me this wonderful fact:

- a. that God loves me with all His heart!
 b. that God will love me if I please Him.

5. When I sin after I become a child of God,

- a. I am still in God's family, but that sin comes between me
and my Heavenly Father.
 b. I am no longer in God's family.

What do you think?

Do you think Susan ruined Maria's notebook? _____

Will Jesus help you when you are upset

or angry, like He helped Maria when she prayed? _____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Look for Steven and Maria on the back of this page!



EN:BF1 L7 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1-LESSON 7

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

I am
ACCEPTED in
Christ

Dear Friend,

We all like to be accepted by our friends and classmates. It is such a good feeling to know that someone loves you and accepts you just as you are! But there is something more important than being loved and accepted by other people. What is it? It is being loved and accepted by God!

God did something wonderful for me when I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior! He made a way for me to be perfectly accepted by Him at all times.

How did God make me acceptable to Him? He put me *in Christ*. The moment I trusted the Lord Jesus as my Savior, God put me *in Christ*.

What does it mean to be *in Christ*? It means that I have a new "position" in God's sight. My position is the way God sees me. How does God see me now? He sees me *in Christ*. When He looks at me, He is thinking about His beloved Son. He always sees me *in Christ*.



How did I get *in Christ*? God put me there! The Bible says, “But of Him [God] are you *in Christ Jesus*...” (1 Corinthians 1:30).

in Christ

“...to them that are sanctified [set apart for God] *in Christ Jesus*...” 1 Corinthians 1:2

“For we are His workmanship, created *in Christ Jesus* unto [for] good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

“...God...has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places *in Christ*.” Ephesians 1:3

“...we are in Him that is true, even *in His Son Jesus Christ*...” 1 John 5:20

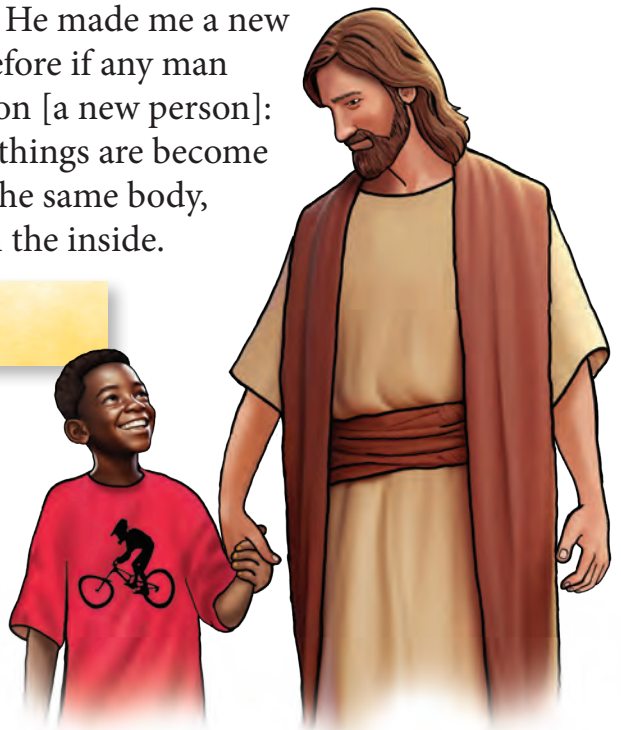
“According as He has chosen us *in Him* before the foundation of the world...” Ephesians 1:4

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*...” Romans 8:1

God not only put me *in Christ*, but He made me a new person *in Christ*. The Bible says, “Therefore if any man [anyone] is *in Christ*, he is a new creation [a new person]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). I still have the same body, but God has made me a new person on the inside.

***In Christ* I am accepted.**

God wants every believer to know that he is *in Christ*. God wants us to know that He loves and accepts us *in Christ* the same way that He loves and accepts His own beloved Son. The Bible says, “...He has made us accepted *in the beloved* [His beloved Son]” (Ephesians 1:6). The following story may help us understand what it means to be “accepted in the Beloved.”



Once there was a beautiful young girl who lived in a far country. Her family was very poor, and she did not have a bright future. One day she decided to leave her home and go to another country to be a servant in the home of a wealthy man.

This man was very rich, and his home seemed like a palace to her. He was good to her, and she worked hard to please him.

This wealthy man had a son whom he loved very much. In time this son fell in love with the beautiful servant girl. She loved him also, and one day he asked her to be his wife.

The father was pleased that his son had found the girl he wanted to marry. One day the son and the servant girl were joined in marriage.

Suddenly everything changed for this young girl. She was no longer a servant, but she was accepted in the family of the wealthy father. Why was she accepted? She was accepted because she had

become the wife of the beloved son. She was “accepted in the beloved son.”

This is an illustration of what God has done for me. The moment I took the Lord Jesus as my Savior, God put me *in Christ*. Now I am loved and perfectly accepted by God at all times. **God has made me accepted in His Beloved Son.**



God is for me!

Because I am *in Christ*, God is for me! This means God always wants what is best for me. When something bad happens to us, our enemy Satan may say to us, “God does not love you! If God really loved you, He would not have let that happen.” But Satan is a liar!

The truth is that God is working all things together for the good of those who love Him and love His Son. The Bible says, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God...” (Romans 8:28).

You may ask, “What if some people are against me?” If God is for us, it does not matter who is against us. The Bible says, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). God is for me! That is what counts. Say it to yourself right now, “God is for me!”

“What if some people do not accept me?” Being loved and accepted by God is far more important than being loved and accepted by other people. God is for me and accepts me at all times because I am *in Christ*. He is always thinking of me.

“What if some people do not love me?” Remember, the Lord Jesus loves us, and the Father loves us. Every believer can say, “God loves ME! He loves me in a special way because of my love for Jesus which He has put in my heart.” The Lord Jesus said, “The Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me...” (John 16:27).



What happens if I sin?

Once I am *in Christ*, I am always *in Christ*, but sin comes between me and my Heavenly Father. What should I do? I should confess that sin to God at once and ask Him to forgive me. When I do this, my fellowship with God is restored.

the Main Things

- God put me *in Christ*. God did the most wonderful thing for me when I was saved! He put me *in Christ!* This means that, when God looks at me, He sees His beloved Son.
- God accepts me *in Christ!* Because I am *in Christ*, God loves and accepts me just like He loves and accepts His own beloved Son.
- God is for me! Because I am *in Christ* and I love God's Son, God is always for me. Since God is for me, it does not matter who is against me.

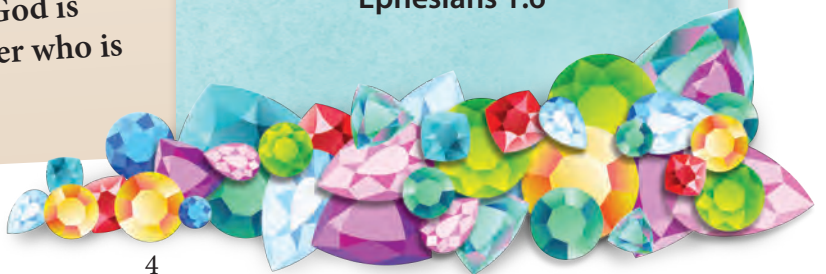
Discovered Treasure

When I was saved, God put me *in Christ*. Now He loves and accepts me just like He loves and accepts His own Beloved Son.

Memory verse

“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He has made us accepted *in the Beloved*.”

Ephesians 1:6



Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 8: MARIA SHOWS THE WAY

The story so far: Maria told Miss Wilson and her mother about her lies. Then she went to Susan's house to let her know that she was not in any trouble.

“Oh! Thank you,” Susan said with a surprised look. “I didn’t want to come to school because I thought I’d be in so much trouble.” Then Susan looked down at the floor and was quiet.

Suddenly Maria had an idea. “Susan, she asked, “will you come to Sunday school with me on Sunday?”

Susan shook her head back and forth. “I tried going to Sunday school once. I thought it would make me good enough to go to Heaven. But it was no use. I still did bad things, just like before. So, I stopped going.”

“But, Susan,” Maria said, “we can’t get to Heaven by being good. Do you remember what I told you about Jesus dying on the cross? He died to take away our sins.”

Susan looked as if she were going to cry. “You don’t know what a mean thing I’ve done, Maria. If you did—”

“Oh, yes I do!” Maria broke in. “I saw you run from the classroom. You marked up my notebook, didn’t you?”



Susan nodded slowly. Large tears ran down her cheeks as she whispered, “I am so sorry for what I did. I feel terrible. Did you tell on me, Maria?”

“No,” Maria said. “I forgive you, Susan. Jesus will forgive you too if you ask Him.”

“Will I have to wait and do it in church, Maria?” Susan asked.

Maria thought for a moment. “No, I don’t think so,” she said. “Steven took Jesus as His Savior at Mr. Warren’s house. And my Sunday school teacher told me we could talk to Jesus any time we wanted to.”

“Then I want to ask Jesus to forgive me and be my Savior right now,” Susan said. “I want to belong to Jesus, so I can go to Heaven.” The two girls knelt in the chilly room. Susan prayed, asking the Lord Jesus to forgive her and to come into her heart.

Maria and Susan hugged each other, glad they were friends again. Then Maria said goodbye and ran all the way home in the cold wind. She did not notice the chill because Jesus had helped her do the right thing once again.

That night Maria could not sleep. She tossed and turned. Finally, Maria called out, “Mom, my throat hurts.” Her mother came to check on her. She felt Maria’s forehead, then left the room. Quickly she returned with a thermometer and took Maria’s temperature.

For the next few days, Maria was very sick. Her head and chest ached, and her

temperature was high, even after taking medicine. Her parents often looked worried as they bent over her bed.

Steven came to sit with Maria each day after school. One day Maria whispered to him, "I want to see Grandma. Do you think Mom and Dad would let her come?"

"I'll ask Dad if she can come," Steven said, getting up.

The next day Maria dozed off to sleep for a few moments. When she woke up, her grandmother was sitting next to her bed. She smoothed Maria's hair back from her hot forehead and talked to her in a soft voice.



Maria gave a tired sigh. "Oh, Grandma, I prayed you'd come, and now you're here. God does listen to us, doesn't He?"

"Yes, Maria," Grandmother answered. "Steven told me that you both belong to Jesus. God is your heavenly Father, and you are His child. He loves you, Maria, and He wants you to ask Him for everything you need."

"I just needed you," Maria said as she fell asleep again.

The next afternoon Maria's father came to sit with her while Grandmother was resting. Maria asked, "Dad, will you read to me about the 'Lamb's Book of Life' where my name is written?"

"What book is it in, Maria?" he asked.

"It's in Grandma's Bible on the table," Maria told him. "I think she left it open at the right place."

Her father picked up the Bible and found Revelation 21:27. He read it out loud then said, "It seems to say those who do bad things and tell lies cannot go to Heaven, but only those whose names are written in the 'Lamb's Book of Life.' Do you understand it, Maria?"

"Yes," Maria answered. "Grandma explained it to me. You know I lied, but I asked Jesus to forgive me and come into my heart. I know He did. Now I'm not afraid to die, because I know I'll go to live with Jesus in Heaven."

"You aren't going to die," her father said quickly. "Don't even think about such things, Maria!"

Maria smiled. "But, Dad, I like to think about Heaven and about my name being written in Jesus' beautiful book. Is your name in the book, Dad?"

Father looked thoughtful and replied to Maria, "I guess not. I've been too busy to think much about it."

Maria lay quietly and watched her father as he looked through the Bible, stopping now and then to read silently. He seemed to have forgotten all about her.

At last Maria said, "Dad, you could come to church with us. Maybe that would show you the way to Heaven so you could get your name in Jesus' Book."

Maria's father whispered, "Don't worry. You have shown me the way clearly enough. I'm just not ready yet. But I promise to think about it. Now, it is time you went to sleep."

What is next for Maria and her family?

There are only two more chapters left in the adventures of Steven and Maria!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 8

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. Which is more important—

- a. that I am loved and accepted by God?
 b. that I am loved and accepted by other people?

2. God made a way for me to be perfectly accepted by Him

- a. by overlooking my sins.
 b. by putting me *in Christ*.

3. God has made us accepted "*in the Beloved*." Who is "the Beloved"?

- a. The "Beloved" is myself.
 b. The "Beloved" is Christ.

4. What happens if I sin?

- a. I am still *in Christ*, but I lose my fellowship with God.
 b. I am no longer *in Christ*.

5. What should I do if I sin?

- a. Just try to do better next time.
 b. Confess that sin to God at once.

What do *you* think?

Susan thought she could get to Heaven by being good. Was she right? _____

What did she do to be saved? _____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

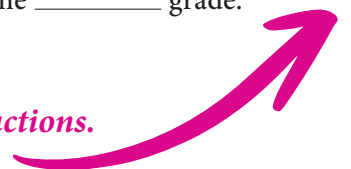
Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Put a smile on Steven or Maria! Look on the back for instructions.



EN:BF1 L8 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1-LESSON 8

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15



How do I live the Christian Life?

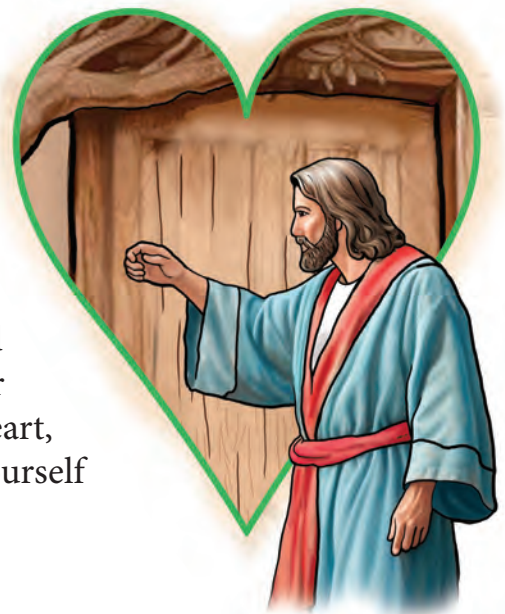
Dear Friend,
What is a Christian? What is the Christian life? How do I live the Christian life? These are very important questions. We will find the answers to them in this lesson.

What is a Christian?

A Christian is a person in whom Christ lives. I became a Christian by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. The Bible says, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons [children] of God..." (John 1:12).

My heart is like a house. The Lord Jesus said, "I stand at the door, and knock: if anyone hears My voice, and opens the door, I WILL COME IN..." (Revelation 3:20).

When Christ "knocked" at the door of my heart, I invited Him to come in. What did He do? He came in, just as He said He would, and He has been in my heart ever since. If you have received Him into your heart, you can say, "Christ lives in me!" Say it to yourself right now, "Christ lives in me!"



What is the Christian life?

His life in me so that others will see Him. Most unsaved people do not read the Bible. How can they come to know Christ? They must see Him in you and me.

The Christian life is Christ living His life in me. Christ wants to live

How do I live the Christian life?

who lives in me. I may want to always be kind and loving to others, but no matter how hard I try, I cannot do it.

I live the Christian life by counting on Christ

What is my problem? My problem is that I am trying to live the Christian life myself. I must count on Christ who lives in me. The Bible says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). The following story will illustrate this.



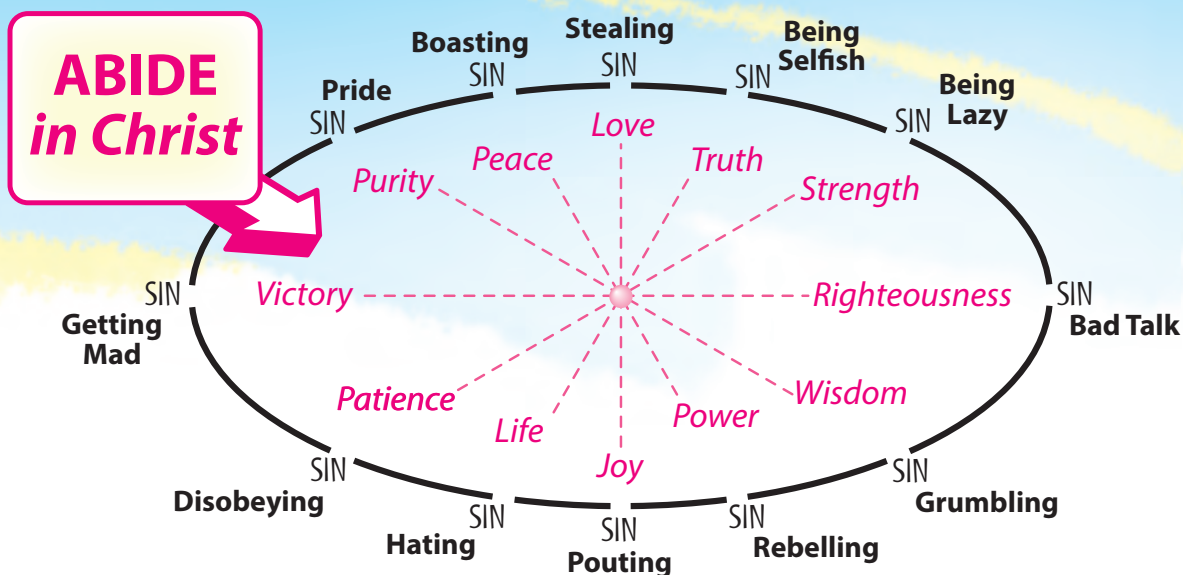
It was no wonder that Josh hated to go to school. There was a big bully there who teased him, picked on him, and beat him up. He made life miserable for Josh.

But one day, a new boy enrolled in the class. He was not only kind and friendly, but he was very strong. He became Josh's best friend. One day, when the bully picked a fight with Josh, his new friend took his place and fought the bully. He beat the bully soundly.

Then he said to Josh, “Don't be afraid of him anymore. Just stay close to me, and I will take care of you.”

Suddenly things were different! Josh no longer feared the bully. All Josh had to do now was stay close to his friend and count on his friend to take care of him. God's Son, the Lord Jesus, has defeated Satan! God has given Him to me, to live in me, and to be my best Friend.

The secret of victory in the Christian life is to “abide in Christ.” How do I “abide in Christ”? I abide in Him by doing what He wants me to do—loving Him, obeying Him, and counting on Him to take care of me.



A great man of God, Evan Hopkins, once explained to his little six-year-old son what it means to “abide in Christ.” Little Evan had received Christ as his Savior when he was just six years of age, and his father wanted him to understand this truth of abiding in Christ.

The father called his son into his office. He took a card and drew a circle. Inside he listed all of the things Christ is to us.

Putting the point of his pencil in the center of the circle, he said, “There, son, you see that pencil. I want you to abide in Christ as the pencil is in the circle. Inside you will find everything to make you happy, loving, and obedient. But there are a lot of little doors all around the circle. It is when you go out by one of these doors that you are naughty.”

Then he drew little doors leading out from the circle. These doors represented the sins that take us out from abiding in Christ.

Little Evan was so happy to understand this, and he told others in his own language what he had just heard. He carried the card around so he could explain what it meant to abide in Christ, and how he was staying in the circle.

But one day, the little boy came to his father crying. When his father asked why he was crying, his son said, “I have gotten out of the circle.” His fear was that he could not get back in.

The father knelt down with his son, and they looked at the card together. The father said, “Now, Evan, tell me which door you went out by.” The son showed it to his father.

“Well,” said the father, “the way to get in again is to enter by the same door you went out by. And the way to do that is to confess that very sin to God. The moment you do this, God forgives you of that sin, and you come back into the circle and once again you are abiding in Christ.” How happy little Evan was to learn this!

The Lord Jesus wants me to know that He is my special Best Friend. He wants me to do three things so I can really enjoy Him:

- **Love Him.** This pleases the Lord Jesus! He loves me with all His heart, and He wants me to love Him the same way—with all my heart. The Father Himself is pleased when we love and appreciate His Son.
- **Obey Him.** I may say, “I really love the Lord Jesus,” but the test of my love is this: Am I obeying the Lord Jesus? If I am not, I do not really love Him. Jesus said, “He that has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me...” (John 14:21).
- **Count on Him.** The Lord Jesus really is my special Best Friend! There is no friend like Jesus, and He lives in me. I can always count on Him to help me. He wants me to tell Him about all of my problems and then count on Him to help me. The Bible says, “Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

the Main Things

- Christ lives in me! He knocked at the door of my heart, and I invited Him in.
- Christ wants to live His life in me. He wants others to see Christ in me.
- The secret of victory in the Christian life is “abiding in Christ.” I abide in Him by doing what He wants me to do—loving Him, obeying Him, and counting on Him to help me.

Discovered Treasure

Christ wants to live His life in me so that others will see Him.

Memory verse

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Philippians 4:13



Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 9: BACK TO SCHOOL

The story so far: Maria showed Susan how to be saved, and she asked Jesus to come into her heart. While sick, Maria also shared with her father about the “Lamb’s Book of Life.”

A few days later, Susan came to see Maria. “Oh, Maria,” she said, “I am sorry you have been so sick. Miss Wilson gave me your books and said I could help you catch up on your lessons. She said it was one way I could show you how sorry I was for spoiling your notebook.”

“You told her?” Maria said, surprised. “I’m glad, Susan. Now she knows that I was telling her the truth.”

“Yes,” Susan said. “And when I told her that I had asked Jesus to come into my heart, she said she was going to let us both participate in the camp contest. She liked it that we told her about the wrong things we did.”

“That is wonderful!” Maria said. “I hope we can go together, Susan.”

The girls were still working on lessons when Grandmother came into the room. They told her all about what Miss Wilson had said. Then Grandmother asked, “Maria and Susan, do you think you will ever do anything wrong again?”

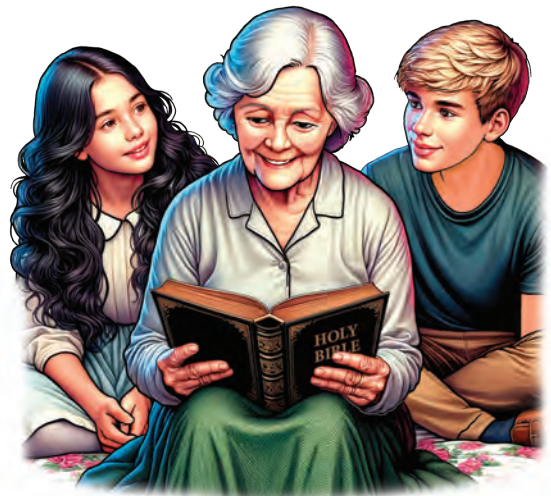
“I hope not,” Susan said, “but maybe...”

“Jesus can keep us from doing bad things,” Maria added.

“You are both right,” Grandmother said. “Because Jesus is living in your heart now, you won’t want to do bad things. But sometimes you will do wrong. Just remember that Jesus is ready to forgive you, and He will help you to do what is right, if you ask Him.”

“I am going to ask Him every day,” Susan said as she got up to leave.

That evening when Grandmother had finished reading the Bible to Steven and Maria, Maria asked, “Grandma, do you think Mom and Dad will take Jesus as their Savior?”



“Yes,” Grandmother answered. “If we pray for them and keep showing them that Jesus changes us.”

“I think Mom will pretty soon,” Steven said. “This morning when I took out the trash for her, she asked me why I didn’t complain anymore. I told her it was because I had Jesus in my heart.”

“And Dad promised to think about it, too,” Maria told them. “Now, if only you could stay with us, Grandma, everything would be just right.”

“Well, I have a surprise for you,” Grandmother said with a smile. “Your

parents have arranged for me to spend the weekends with you.”

“Great!” Steven shouted. “No more Uncle Bill’s.”

“Oh, Grandma,” Maria said. “I have my name in Jesus’ beautiful book, and now I will have you, too.” Maria’s eyes sparkled. Her heart was filled with joy.

Maria began to feel much better as the days passed. She wanted to go back to school, but the doctor told her to stay at home for a few more days. At first Maria objected because she did not want to fall behind in her schoolwork and miss an opportunity to go to camp.

Maria’s grandmother volunteered to stay with her until she could return to school. Maria always looked forward to her special times with her Grandmother who told her stories about Jesus out of the Bible and helped her with her schoolwork.

One morning Maria leaned back on her pillow and said to her mother with a sigh, “I will miss Grandma so much when she goes back home. She has been helping me with the schoolwork that Susan brings me every day. Susan is my best friend. We want to go to camp together. I just have to keep up with my lessons so I can go. Will you let me go to camp if I win, Mom?”

Maria’s mother looked out the window as she asked, “Why do you want to go to that particular camp, Maria? There are several other camps closer to home where we could send you.”

“**But this is a Christian camp**, which makes it very special. It’s called ‘Camp Good Hope.’ I think that is such a wonderful name. I want to learn more about Jesus and the Bible. Please say ‘yes’, Mom,” Maria begged.

Mother turned from the window and looked at Maria. “We’ll see when the

time comes,” she answered. “Be a good girl and don’t bother your grandmother. Get some rest now, so you can get back to school soon.”

The days passed by quickly. When Maria went back to school, she found out that she was not behind in any of her schoolwork. She knew she couldn’t have done it without her friend Susan’s help.

That afternoon Maria and Susan left school together.

“**Thank you for being such a good friend, Susan,**” said Maria. “It would have been hard for me to catch up if you hadn’t brought my schoolwork every day while I was sick.”

Susan’s thin face turned red at the praise. “I wanted to do it, Maria. You’ve been a special friend, too. You were my friend even when I didn’t deserve it. You forgave me when I messed up your notebook, and I know you got sick because you came to see me in the rain.”

“**Oh, well,**” Maria shrugged. “I’m better now, so you don’t have to think about that anymore. We have to help each other do our best in school, so we can go to camp together. Have you told your mother about the camp contest?”

“No, not yet,” Susan looked down at the sidewalk as she answered. “I’m not sure that Mom will let me go, so I keep putting off telling her.”



The camp contest is almost over. Will Susan and Maria win?

Don't miss the last chapter in your next lesson!

QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 9

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. A Christian is

- a. a person in whom Christ lives.
 b. a person who is religious.

2. The Christian life is

- a. my trying to be a good Christian.
 b. Christ living His life in me.

3. The secret of victory in the Christian life is

- a. doing my very best to be kind to everyone.
 b. to abide in Christ by loving Him, obeying Him, and counting on Him to help me.

4. I get out of "the circle of abiding in Christ"

- a. when I commit a sin.
 b. when I do not feel good.

5. I get back in "the circle of abiding in Christ"

- a. when I confess that very sin to God.
 b. when I make up my mind to do better next time.

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Do you know someone who would like to take Mailbox Club lessons?

Please fill in their information below, and we will send an age-appropriate Bible lesson to them!

Name _____

Age _____ Birthday ____/____/____

Parent or Guardian _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Put a smile on Steven or Maria! Look on the back for instructions.



EN:BF1 L9 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Maria if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 9

From:



Best FRIENDS

Jesus said, "I have called you friends..." John 15:15

Jesus is my
**Special
Best Friend**



Dear Friend,
Jesus is my Savior and my Lord; He is also my special Best Friend! Perhaps you are thinking, "Why do you say that Jesus is your special Best Friend?" I was hoping that you would ask that question! Let me tell you why He is my special Best Friend.

Jesus KNOWS me.

Jesus is my special Best Friend because He knows me better than anyone else. He is God, and He knows all about me. He even knows my thoughts!

I am very important to Jesus! I may not be important to some people, but Jesus really cares for me. He even knows how many hairs I have on my head. He has them all numbered! He said, "...the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30).

Jesus LOVES me.

A best friend is one who loves you just the way you are, and yet helps you to be all you can be. Jesus is my special Best Friend because no one has ever loved me as He does. He loved me so much that He gave His life for me. And He loves me today just as much as He did then. Jesus said, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

The Lord Jesus loves me just the way I am, but He loves me too much to leave me the way I am. He is living in me, and He is making me more like Himself day-by-day. He knows about my faults, but He loves me, and He will never take His love away from me.

Jesus wants the BEST for me.


Jesus is my special Best Friend because He wants

only what is best for me. He will guide me in making decisions if I will ask for His help and trust Him.

In His Word, the Bible, the Lord Jesus tells me the things I should do, such as obeying my parents and teachers. He also tells me things I should not do, such as telling lies and saying hurtful things to others.

What about things that are not mentioned in the Bible? In this case I should ask, "Would Jesus like to see me do this?" If I think that He would not like to see me do it, I must NOT do it!

A third-grade teacher gave her class an assignment to write a report about a "special person." Amanda wanted to tell her classmates about Jesus, so she chose Jesus as her "special person." She was able to read her report to the class. Here is what Amanda wrote:



my Special Friend by Amanda Rawlings

He is special because He is God's Son Jesus. He is special because He is always there when I need Him.

I talk to Him a lot. my special Person is nice and forgiving. He came to be special to me when I went to church and learned about Him.

I felt even more love for Him when I read my Bible in my room. I chose Jesus as my special Person because He is the most important Person in my life.

I always put Him first in my life. I always trust Him to lead my path. If I am ever in trouble, He can always help me.

I really love Him, and He loves me even more. I cannot imagine ever living without Him. I never go to bed alone; I never am alone because Jesus is always there.

Have you ever felt like you are alone? Have you ever been afraid? You don't have to be afraid, and you don't have to feel alone because Jesus is always there. He is truly my special Best Friend!

Jesus always has **TIME** for me.

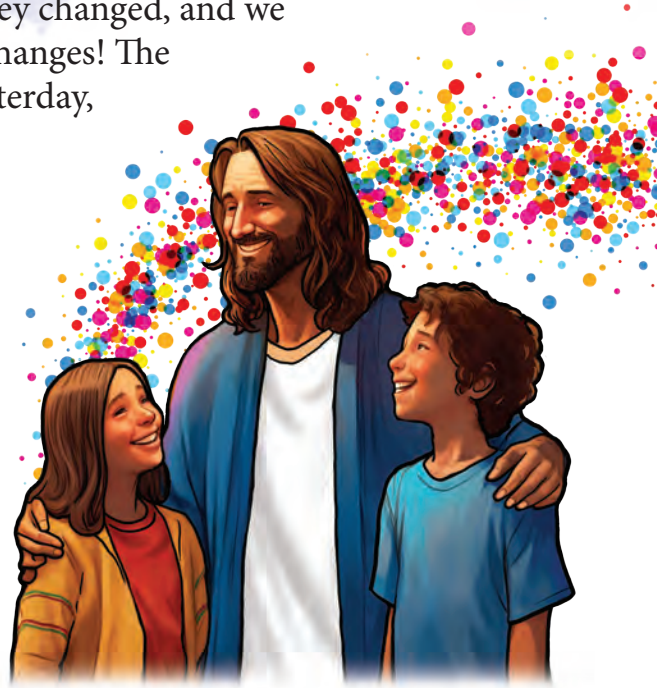
Jesus is my special Best Friend because He always has time for me. I can talk to Him at any time. I can talk to Him in any place. No one cares for me like Jesus. He wants me to come to Him with everything that concerns me.

Jesus never **CHANGES**.

Jesus is my special Best Friend because He is always the same. In the past I have had friends, and somehow, they changed, and we were no longer friends. But Jesus never changes! The Bible says, “Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

The Lord Jesus is always the same wonderful Person who loves me with all His heart. He is always there to listen to me, to help me, to encourage me. He is truly the best Friend I could ever have.

Jesus and I are “Best Friends forever,” but I must never forget who He is. He is my Savior, my Lord, and my God, and I treat Him with respect and reverence. I do not call Him “the Man Upstairs.”



THREE things to remember.

Being a child of God is the most wonderful thing in all the world but let me tell you a secret: Your life here on earth as a child of God will not always be easy. Jesus said, “...In the world you shall have tribulation [many troubles]: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

I will have many trials and troubles in this life, but I do not need to be afraid. The Lord wants me to remember three things:

1 JESUS IS ALWAYS FOR ME.

Jesus has all power in Heaven and in the earth, and He always wants what is best for me. Every moment, there on the throne, He is thinking about me. He wants me to tell Him everything that concerns me. He wants me to bring all my problems and burdens to Him. He wants me to tell Him all that is on my heart.

2 JESUS IS ALWAYS WITH ME.

The Lord Jesus Himself is in Heaven, seated at the right hand of God the Father, but He also lives in the hearts of His believers by His Spirit. The apostle Paul said, "Christ lives in me!" You and I can say this too. Jesus promised that He will never leave us. He said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you". (Hebrews 13:5b).

Since Jesus is always with me, I must ask myself some questions: Is the Lord Jesus pleased when I choose friends who use bad language? No, He is not. Is Jesus pleased when I am watching a TV show or movie with bad stuff in it? No, He is not. Does Jesus enjoy listening to music that has dirty words in it? No, He does not.

This means that I must not hang around those who use bad language. I must not watch bad stuff, and I must not listen to music with dirty words.

Wherever I go, the Lord Jesus goes with me. Whatever I watch, the Lord Jesus watches it with me. Whatever I listen to, the Lord Jesus listens to it also. If I truly love the Lord Jesus, I will not want to do anything that would displease Him or make Him ashamed of me.

3 I CAN ALWAYS ENJOY JESUS.

Jesus is not a "force." He is a Person! He wants me to love and appreciate Him. He wants me to enjoy Him, the way best friends enjoy each other.

The way to enjoy a person is to love that person. The more you love Jesus, the more you will enjoy Him.

The Lord Jesus is the most wonderful Person in all the universe, and He is your special Best Friend. When you fall in love with Jesus, you will be a happy child of God!

Discovered Treasure

A child of God who loves Jesus and has Him as his special Best Friend is a truly happy person!

Memory verse

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...."

Matthew 22:37

Steven AND Maria



CHAPTER 10: THE WINNERS

The story so far: Steven and Maria's parents arranged for their grandmother to spend weekends with them. Susan and Maria have been working hard in school to win a camp contest.

"Don't be afraid to talk to your mother, Susan," Maria said. "We've been praying about this since we heard about the contest. If Jesus wants you to go to camp, I know He will make a way. I'll pray for you tonight. Good friends pray for each other," she reminded Susan.

"I know you're right. Thank you for encouraging me to talk to my mom. I'll do it tonight," Susan said. The girls said good-bye at the corner and headed off in opposite directions.

When Maria reached home, she found Steven waiting for her. She knew he was excited about something. "Maria, I have something wonderful to tell you!" Steven called, running after his dog, Captain.

Maria tossed her books on the step and ran after her brother. "Tell me, Steven!" she begged.

"Guess!" shouted Steven, while he chased Captain around the yard.

"Did you get a one hundred on your math test?" asked Maria.

"It's something much better than that!" Steven stopped

running and sat down. His face showed his excitement as he told her the news.

"Remember when I was no longer Doubting Thomas and asked Jesus to be my Savior?" Steven asked.

"Of course, I remember, but that was weeks ago," Maria answered.

"The next day, I told some of the boys at school. Most of them laughed at me, except Randy Williams. He didn't say anything and just walked away. But since then, he has been very friendly to me. And do you know what he told me today?" Steven asked Maria.

"What was it?" Maria asked eagerly.

"Today, Randy told me he had asked Jesus to be his Savior, but he had been afraid to tell the other boys because he knew they would make fun of him. Then, after he heard what I said to them, he felt so ashamed, he didn't know what to do.

"So, he talked to his teacher at church about it. They prayed he would be able to share with someone this week at school. And something exciting happened!" Steven told Maria.

Maria was impatient to hear the news about Randy, and Steven continued excitedly, "This afternoon, Randy told all the guys at school we were Christian brothers, because he had also received Jesus as his Savior."

"Wow!" Maria responded. "Did the other guys laugh?"



“A few did. I think some didn’t know what to say. Randy also asked me if I would go to Camp Good Hope with him this summer. The camp contest is just for your class, but anyone can go if they pay. I’m going to ask Dad tonight if I can go. What do you think?”

“Wow! Steven, I can’t imagine a more wonderful summer than all of us going to camp together,” Maria said excitedly.

“I’ve always wanted to go to camp during the summer, and now we both have a chance to go,” Steven replied. “I think we should pray about this, Maria.” Steven and Maria sat down on the porch step and prayed.

That night, when supper was over, Steven waited for his chance to talk to his father. While Maria helped her mother with the dishes, she quietly prayed again for both Steven and Susan.

Maria knew part of her prayer was answered when Steven came into the kitchen with a big smile on his face. He told her that Father would pay his camp fee, but he would have to earn his own spending money.

Maria realized she would need some spending money too. She and Steven decided they would ask the neighbors for extra jobs to do to earn some money.

Maria could hardly wait to see Susan the next day. But Susan said sadly, “Mom said I could not go to camp even if I win, because we can’t afford to buy the clothes I would need.”

Maria would not give up. She said, “I have clothes from last summer that are too small for me, Susan, that should fit you. I’ll ask Mom if you could have them. And you can earn some spending money with after-school jobs like we do. Keep praying, Susan. I just know that Jesus will somehow let us go to camp together.”

Susan and Maria continued to work hard during the final weeks of school, and Miss Wilson praised their efforts.

The last day of the school year finally arrived. Maria’s class eagerly awaited the announcement of the camp contest winners. The room became very still as Miss Wilson took a folded piece of paper from her desk. Maria felt a tight knot curl up in her stomach when Miss Wilson began to speak.

“I want to congratulate every one of you in the class this year,” she said. “Most of you have improved in your work and your conduct. I wish I could give more of you tickets to camp, but I only have five to give away.”

“Here are the winners of the camp contest. Please stand up as I read your name: Jim Ferguson, Susan Blake, Paul Burton, Linda Sooter, and Maria Ortega.”

As Miss Wilson called her name, Maria felt glued to her seat. The room was swimming before her eyes. She was so happy! “Maria, are you going to stand up?” the teacher asked.

“Oh, Miss Wilson, I was so excited, I forgot to stand up,” she answered. As Maria stood up, laughing at herself, the rest of the class began to laugh and congratulate the winners.

The End

Read all about Steven and Maria’s summer camp adventures in *Best Friends 2!*



QUESTION PAGE

Best Friends 1
Lesson 10

Instructions: Choose the better answer—a or b. Write it in the box provided.



PLEASE RETURN BY ENVELOPE: 1) Cut out the question page and write the address of the ministry or your teacher in the center of the envelope. 2) Place the question page in the envelope and write your return address in the upper left-hand corner. 3) Add postage to the upper right-hand corner and mail. Soon you will receive your next lesson.



1. A best friend loves you

- a. just the way you are.
 b. when you do everything right.

2. Jesus showed His love for me

- a. by giving me lots of money.
 b. by giving His life for me.

3. In making decisions in life,

- a. Jesus will guide me if I ask for His help and trust Him.
 b. I must do what I think is best.

4. If I truly love Jesus,

- a. I can do whatever my friends do.
 b. I will not want to do anything that displeases Him.

5. What pleases the Lord Jesus most?

- a. Loving Him with all my heart.
 b. Giving money to His work.

Have you taken the Lord Jesus as your Savior? _____

If "yes," please tell us how you came to know Jesus as your Savior.

Do you have a Bible? _____ A New Testament? _____

Please print _____

My Name is _____ My age _____

Parent/Guardian _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My birthday is _____. I am in the _____ grade.

Look for Steven and Maria on the back of this page!



EN:BF1 L10 NA 202312

▲ Put student's address above.



Put a smile on Steven if you mail your Question Page back within **3** days.

▼ Put instructor's address above.

BEST FRIENDS 1- LESSON 10

From: