

God Humanity____and Authority

Life Under the Lordship
of Jesus Christ



STUDY GUIDE

2026

God, Humanity and Authority

Ten lessons exploring God's authority, human responsibility, and life under the lordship of Jesus Christ

Authority is unpopular today, yet it remains inescapable. Jesus is Lord was the first confession of the Church, and it remains our most important. But what does following Jesus as Lord look like? How does His Lordship factor into our everyday life? What kind of authority does God give us, and how do we exercise authority with humility, grace, and love? Join us at First Presbyterian Church for this important, transforming sermon series.

About This Guide

Each lesson begins with the primary Scripture text and includes six questions for personal reflection or group discussion. Cross-references are included throughout to help Scripture interpret Scripture.

Scripture Translation

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. ESV Text Edition: 2025. The ESV text may not be quoted in any publication made available to the public by a Creative Commons license. The ESV may not be translated in whole or in part into any other language. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Series Schedule

Sermon Series: 9/13 - 11/22

LESSON 1 :

The Right Question

Psalms 103:13-19

LESSON 3 :

Scriptural Authority

2 Timothy 3:14-17

LESSON 5 :

Authority in the Church

1 Peter 5:1-7

LESSON 7 :

Authority of the State

Romans 13:1-7

LESSON 9 :

Grace and Authority

Matthew 16:13-21

LESSON 11 :

Love Never Ceasing, Always New

Lamentations 3:19-26

LESSON 2 :

Our Authority

Luke 9:1-6

LESSON 4:

Authority for What?

Matthew 28:16-20

LESSON 6 :

The Authority We Surrender

1 Corinthians 9:12-23

LESSON 8 :

Discipline and Authority

Hebrews 12:7-13

LESSON 10 :

What Does God Seek?

John 15:7-17

Lesson 1

The Right Question

Psalm 103:13-19

13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. 14 For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. 17 But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, 18 to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. 19 The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does the Lord's fatherly compassion toward "those who fear him" (v. 13) reveal both His tender mercy and the reverent fear that marks a true covenant relationship? Why are views of God that are either purely sentimental or purely severe inadequate?
2. Verse 14 tells us that the Lord "knows our frame" and "remembers that we are dust." How does this truth undergird our total dependence on God's grace, and how should it shape our daily lives? How do repentance, prayer, and confidence in Christ's finished work express dependence on Him rather than on our own strength?
3. Verses 15–16 portray human life as fleeting grass and a vanishing flower. How does this biblical realism about human frailty drive us away from self-reliance and toward the everlasting steadfast love of God (v. 17)? How does this perspective confront contemporary assumptions about human autonomy and permanence?
4. The steadfast love of the Lord is "from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him," and His righteousness extends "to children's children" (v. 17). How does this covenant promise speak to God's faithfulness beyond our own lifetimes? What does it teach us about the continuity of His covenant love across generations?

5. Verse 18 connects the enjoyment of God’s everlasting love and righteousness with “those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.” While relying entirely on His covenant of grace, how do we live in obedient response without sliding into legalism or treating God’s law as unnecessary?

6. Psalm 103:19 declares that “the Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.” How does God’s absolute sovereignty over every realm of creation and history comfort believers amid our dust-like frailty (vv. 14–16)? How should this truth fuel both humble worship and bold confidence in the advance of God’s kingdom?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Lesson 2

Our Authority

Luke 9:1–6

1 And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. 3 And he said to them, “Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. 4 And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. 5 And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them.” 6 And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does Jesus’ act of calling the Twelve together and giving them power and authority over demons and diseases demonstrate that all true authority and effectiveness flow from Christ alone (v. 1)? What role do our gifts, talents, and initiative play in our effectiveness for the kingdom?
2. Why do you think Jesus sent the apostles specifically “to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal” (v. 2)? How does this commission reveal the primacy of the Word while also showing that God’s kingdom brings change, healing, and joy to a broken world?
3. What is the significance of the command to “take nothing for your journey—no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics” (v. 3)? How does this instruction underscore radical dependence on God’s power, sovereignty, and grace rather than self-reliance or worldly security? How is this particularly relevant to ministry and service to Jesus?
4. Why were the Twelve instructed to stay in whatever house received them until they departed from that place (v. 4)? What are the implications of receiving one of Jesus’ messengers, and how should His messengers regard those who welcome them? Read Matthew 10:12–13.

6. How can we apply this unique sending of the Twelve to our lives today? What encouragement can we receive from the way Jesus sent His disciples into a hostile world? Do you find this passage discouraging or encouraging, and how might you apply it to your work, family, neighborhood, and community?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Lesson 3

Scriptural Authority

2 Timothy 3:14–17

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does Paul's command to "continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed" (vv. 14–15), together with Timothy's lifelong acquaintance with the sacred writings, affirm Scripture's sufficiency and clarity as the ordinary means by which God produces and sustains faith? What does this suggest about the priority of Scripture in the family, the home, and our personal walk with God?
2. How does the declaration that "all Scripture is breathed out by God" (v. 16) inform our understanding of Jesus' statement that "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35)? What do these texts teach about the absolute reliability and unbreakable authority of God's Word?
3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16–17 again. How do Psalm 19:7–9 ("The law of the Lord is perfect ... sure ... right ... pure") and Proverbs 30:5 ("Every word of God proves true") affirm that God's Word is not only inspired but also infallible in its teaching? Name three practical differences this truth should make in daily life.
4. How do Isaiah 40:8 ("The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever") and Jesus' words in Matthew 5:18 strengthen the claim that Scripture fully equips the servant of God, especially when human wisdom and cultural trends pass away?
5. Connecting 2 Timothy 3:16–17 with 2 Peter 1:20–21 and John 17:17 ("Your word is truth"), how does the Holy Spirit's work in the origin and continuing

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Lesson 4

Authority for What?

Matthew 28:16–20

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does Jesus’ declaration that “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (v. 18) ground the Great Commission in His divine lordship? How does this parallel Psalm 2:7–8 and Daniel 7:13–14 concerning the Messiah’s universal reign?
2. In light of the disciples’ mixture of worship and doubt (v. 17), how should we understand the relationship between genuine faith and remaining weakness? What encouragement does Christ’s subsequent commissioning (vv. 18–20) offer to imperfect yet called servants? Read 2 Corinthians 4:7 and 12:9–10.
3. Matthew 28:19 commands the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the triune God. How does this formula reinforce our understanding of salvation as the work of the one true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? How does this command connect with the covenant promise to Abraham that “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”? Read Genesis 12:3 and Galatians 3:8, 14.
4. Jesus instructs the apostles not merely to baptize but also to teach disciples “to observe all that I have commanded you” (v. 20). How does this call to obedience shape our walk with Jesus and our practice of discipleship? How does it echo Paul’s charge in Acts 20:27 to declare “the whole counsel of God”?
5. The Great Commission ends with Christ’s promise, “And behold, I am

with you always, to the end of the age” (v. 20). How does this assurance sustain the church’s missionary calling? How does it relate to the promise of Emmanuel in Matthew 1:23 and the Spirit’s empowering presence in Acts 1:8?

6. Given that the risen Jesus commissions His church to make disciples through baptism and teaching, how should we prioritize this work in our daily lives and church ministry? What cautions do 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 and Ephesians 4:11–16 offer against reducing the Great Commission to mere activism or numerical growth?

[illegible]

Lesson 5

Authority in the Church

1 Peter 5:1–7

1 So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Discussion and Reflection

1. In 1 Peter 5:1–4, Peter exhorts the elders as a “fellow elder” and “witness of the sufferings of Christ” to shepherd the flock willingly and by example rather than domineering over those in their care. How does this vision of servant leadership under the “chief Shepherd” (v. 4) reflect the pattern of Jesus in John 10:11–15 and Mark 10:42–45? What does it teach about leadership in the church?
2. Peter warns elders against serving “under compulsion” or “for shameful gain” (v. 2). How does this call to eager, selfless oversight guard the church against worldly ambition? How does it connect with Paul’s warnings in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7? What does the story of Simon in Acts 8:9–24 teach about trying to use spiritual authority for personal gain?
3. The promise of “the unfading crown of glory” when the chief Shepherd appears (v. 4) motivates faithful leadership. How does this future hope shape our understanding of work and ministry as temporary stewardship rather than personal ownership? How does it echo the reward language in 2 Timothy 4:8 and Revelation 2:10?
4. First Peter 5:5 commands younger believers to be subject to the elders,

while all believers are told to “clothe yourselves ... with humility,” quoting Proverbs 3:34. How does mutual humility under Christ’s lordship protect the church from both authoritarian leadership and rebellious individualism? How does it relate to the broader New Testament ethic of humility and submission in Ephesians 5:21 and Philippians 2:3–8?

5. Peter grounds the call to humility in the truth that “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” (v. 5). How does this principle, also found in James 4:6, underscore the conviction that true spiritual growth depends on God’s grace rather than on our own will and determination?

6. Believers are commanded to humble themselves “under the mighty hand of God” and to cast “all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you” (vv. 6–7). How does this dual emphasis on humble submission and confident trust in God’s fatherly care provide a response to suffering and anxiety? How does it resonate with Matthew 6:25–34 and Philippians 4:6–7?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Lesson 6

The Authority We Surrender

1 Corinthians 9:12-23

In 1 Corinthians 9:12-23, Paul shows that Christian authority is not primarily about claiming our rights, but about knowing when to surrender them for the sake of the gospel. Because Paul is secure in Christ, he is free to lay aside personal preferences, privileges, and comforts so that nothing unnecessary stands between another person and Jesus. The church exercises authority most faithfully when it asks not simply, “What am I entitled to?” but, “What am I willing to give up so someone else might encounter the good news?”

Discussion and Reflection

- 1. What does Paul’s decision to give up some of his rights teach us about the proper use of Christian authority?
- 2. Why does Paul believe that the advance of the gospel is more important than protecting his own preferences or privileges?
- 3. What does Paul mean when he says that he has become “all things to all people”?
- 4. What preferences, traditions, or expectations might Christians need to reconsider if they become obstacles to reaching others with the gospel?
- 5. How can our church better reflect Paul’s commitment to do everything “for the sake of the gospel”?



Lesson 7

Authority of the State

Romans 13:1–7

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. 7 Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does Paul's teaching that "there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (v. 1) relate to God's absolute sovereignty over human rulers? Consider Daniel 2:21, Proverbs 21:1, and Psalm 75:6–7. How does this shape a biblical view of providence and civil authority?
2. In what sense is the governing authority "God's servant for your good" and "an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer" (v. 4)? How does this connect with the Reformed understanding of the civil magistrate's God-given role in restraining evil and promoting outward justice? Read Genesis 9:5–6 and 1 Timothy 2:1–2. What does this imply about the legitimate use of force by the state?
3. Paul commands believers to be subject "for the sake of conscience" and to pay taxes, revenue, respect, and honor (vv. 5–7). How does this relate to Jesus' teaching in Matthew 22:21 and to the practice of the early church in Acts? How does the biblical reality of our dual citizenship—earthly and heavenly—apply here?

4. How should the command in 1 Peter 2:17—“Fear God. Honor the emperor.”—be held together with Romans 13:1–7? In what ways does fearing God, our higher and ultimate duty, both motivate and limit our honor and submission to earthly rulers? How do Proverbs 24:21 and Ecclesiastes 8:2–5 shape our thought and practice?

5. When may a Christian refuse obedience to civil authority while still affirming the general principle of Romans 13? Draw on Acts 5:29, Daniel 3 and 6, and the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1:15–21. How does God's law as the higher standard inform faithful civil disobedience?

6. How does Romans 13:1–7, read alongside 1 Peter 2:13–17 and the broader biblical teaching on authority, shape a Reformed posture of both respectful submission and prophetic witness toward the state? What does it mean practically to “honor the emperor” while fearing God above all, especially when rulers act unjustly or claim powers that belong to God alone? Read Psalm 2 and Isaiah 40:15–17.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Lesson 8

Discipline and Authority

Hebrews 12:7–13

It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9 Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. 11 For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. 12 Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed.

Discussion and Reflection

1. How does Hebrews interpret hardship as the loving discipline of a heavenly Father who treats us “as sons” (vv. 7–8)? What does this reveal about the doctrine of adoption, and how does it contrast with the common but mistaken view that trials are merely punishment or chance? Read Proverbs 3:11–12 and Romans 8:14–17.
2. Why does this passage insist that “if you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons” (v. 8)? How does this reinforce the understanding that God’s sanctifying discipline is evidence of genuine sonship and His preserving grace?
3. In what ways is God’s discipline “for our good, that we may share his holiness” (v. 10)? How does this connect the temporary pain of correction with the lifelong process of progressive sanctification and conformity to Christ’s image? Read Romans 8:28–29 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3.
4. The passage acknowledges that “for the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant,” yet it later “yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it” (v. 11). How should this shape our view of suffering in the Christian life, neither denying the pain nor

doubting God's wise and good purpose?

5. What do the commands to “lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees” and to “make straight paths for your feet” (vv. 12–13) teach about our active response to God’s discipline? How does this hold together divine sovereignty in our growth with the believer’s responsibility to press on in faith and obedience? Read Philippians 2:12–13.

6. How does Hebrews 12:7–13, set within the larger context of the “great cloud of witnesses” and the call to look to Jesus (Hebrews 12:1–2), encourage perseverance when discipline feels severe? In what practical ways can the church help one another endure as true sons and daughters rather than grow weary or bitter? Read Galatians 6:1–2 and James 1:2–4.

[illegible]

Lesson 9

Grace and Authority

Matthew 16:13–21

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. 21 From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

Discussion and Reflection

1. In verses 13–16, the crowds offer various human opinions about Jesus’ identity, while Peter confesses Him as “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” How does this contrast illustrate the difference between unaided human reasoning and true knowledge of Christ? What does Jesus’ response in verse 17 teach about the necessity of divine revelation for saving faith? Read John 6:44–45.
2. Jesus declares Peter “blessed” because the Father, not “flesh and blood,” revealed this truth to him (v. 17). How does this underscore our need for God’s effective grace in coming to know Him? How should it shape our approach to evangelism and our confidence that God opens hearts to the gospel? Compare Ephesians 2:8–9 and Acts 16:14.
3. Jesus says, “on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (v. 18). How does His promise to build an unconquerable church encourage perseverance amid opposition? How does Isaiah 28:16 anticipate and illuminate this promise?

4. The “gates of hell” (Hades) will not prevail against the church Christ builds. In light of Old Testament imagery involving the gates of death and Sheol (Psalm 9:13; Isaiah 38:10), what does this assurance mean for the church’s mission and endurance? Compare the broader biblical theme that death and the powers of darkness cannot ultimately thwart God’s redemptive purposes in Christ. What does Hebrews 2:14–15 promise?

5. Jesus gives “the keys of the kingdom of heaven,” with authority to bind and loose (v. 19). How is the church to exercise those keys through the ministry of the gospel and church discipline? How does this define the church’s authority? Read Matthew 18:15–20. What safeguards does that passage provide against spiritual abuse and claims of personal infallibility?

6. Jesus strictly charges the disciples to tell no one that He is the Christ (v. 20). Why do you think He gives this command at this point in His ministry? How does it differ from His later Great Commission? Read Matthew 28:18–20.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Lesson 10

What Does God Seek?

John 15:7–17

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Discussion and Reflection

1. Jesus links answered prayer to abiding in Him and having His words abide in us (v. 7). How does this condition reshape our understanding of prayer—not as a blank check, but as the overflow of union with Christ and submission to His Word? Compare 1 John 5:14–15 and James 4:3.
2. Jesus promises that fruit-bearing glorifies the Father and gives evidence of genuine discipleship (v. 8). How does salvation by grace lead us to see good works as the necessary fruit of justifying faith rather than its ground? How does this verse guard against both legalism and the belief that obedience is unnecessary? Read Matthew 7:16–20 and Ephesians 2:8–10.
3. Jesus commands, "Abide in my love," and connects this with keeping His commandments, just as He kept the Father's commandments (vv. 9–10). How does this reveal obedience as the pathway for living in and enjoying Christ's love rather than a means of earning it? What does the parallel between the Son's relationship to the Father and the believer's relationship

to the Son teach about Christian assurance and perseverance? Read John 14:15, 21.

4. Jesus desires that His joy may be in His disciples and that their joy may be full (v. 11). How does this promise of joy rooted in abiding and obedience challenge contemporary ideas of happiness detached from holiness? In what ways does this joy function as both a gift and a mark of authentic Christian experience? Compare Psalm 16:11, Galatians 5:22, and Philippians 4:4.

5. Jesus says, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit” (v. 16). How does this statement of Christ’s sovereign initiative illuminate the doctrines of election and effectual calling? What comfort and responsibility flow from knowing that lasting fruit and answered prayer are grounded in Christ’s choice and calling rather than in our faithfulness or initiative? Read Ephesians 1:4–5 and Romans 8:29–30.

6. Jesus repeatedly commands His disciples to love one another as He has loved them, culminating in the call to lay down one’s life for one’s friends (vv. 12–13, 17). How does Christ’s self-sacrificial love define and empower Christian love within the church? What does it mean that Jesus calls us friends? How is a friend different from a servant, and how does the truth Christ makes known shape our lives and relationships?

Lesson 11

Love Never Ceasing, Always New

Lamentations 3:19–26

Remember my affliction and my wanderings, the wormwood and the gall!
20 My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me. 21 But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: 22 The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” 25 The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him. 26 It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Discussion and Reflection

1. The speaker remembers his “affliction and ... wanderings, the wormwood and the gall,” so that his soul is bowed down (vv. 19–20), yet he deliberately calls to mind truths that produce hope (v. 21). How does this movement from honest lament to intentional recollection of God’s character model faith amid suffering? In what ways does it parallel the psalmists’ practice of preaching truth to their own souls in Psalm 42:5–11 and Psalm 77:7–15?
2. The text proclaims, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (vv. 22–23). How does the Hebrew concept of *hesed*—covenant steadfast love—and God’s never-failing mercies provide an unshakable ground for hope independent of present circumstances? How does this truth find its fullest expression in God’s love and faithfulness in Christ? Read Romans 8:35–39 and Hebrews 13:8.
3. The declaration “The Lord is my portion ... therefore I will hope in him” (v. 24) marks a decisive shift in the passage. In the context of exile and loss, what does it mean for the Lord Himself—rather than land, temple, or circumstances—to be the believer’s true portion? How does this confession connect to the broader biblical theme of God as the inheritance of His people? What does it mean that Jesus is our all-sufficient portion? Read Colossians 2:9–10.
4. “The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him”

(v. 25). How do true waiting and seeking flow from grace rather than from human self-effort? What does this teach about divine goodness and the perseverance of the saints? Read Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 27:14, and Hebrews 11:6.

5. The passage promises, “It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord” (v. 26). How does quiet waiting contrast with anxious striving or despair, and what does it reveal about trusting God’s timing and purposes in affliction? In light of the full biblical story, how does this anticipation of the Lord’s salvation point forward to Christ’s finished work and the hope of final redemption? Read 1 Peter 1:3–9.

6. These verses move from personal memory of bitter suffering to a theological confession of God's character. How does this pattern encourage believers to interpret their trials through the lens of God's unchanging faithfulness rather than through feelings or circumstances alone? How do we see this in Romans 5:3-5?

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
— CHURCH OF EDMOND —

1001 S. Rankin
Edmond, OK 73034
www.fpcedmond.org