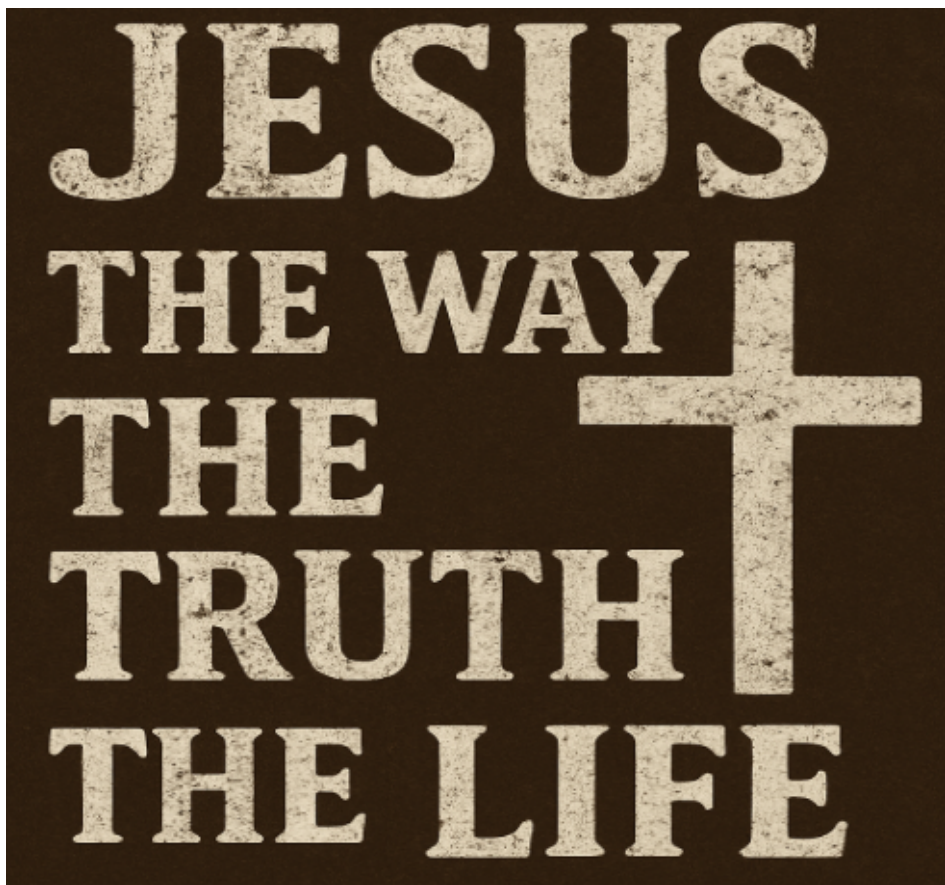




NWOCYC

2026

Name: _____

Greetings,

This is a study of the lessons about Jesus- the Way, the Truth, the Life. It is designed to engage the participant in 5 major lessons about our Savior. We begin with a look at our human troubled state. This is where we understand what we are and that we need a savior. Each of the next lessons focus on how Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. The final lesson is how we find life -both now and eternal- in Him. God calls His children to abundant life!

The Creator of all longs for you to be His. He wants you to choose Him. In doing so, you have to choose to stop doing and being the things that are against His nature. He wants you to become more! But there is not a checklist of things to do to arrive at this destination. It is a life changing commitment. Once you let Him in, He will begin creating something new as the old is cleaned out. Let the Master come in and make you new!

A way to better use this booklet is by the category of questions. The bold questions will be deeper and are worthy of extra consideration as you have opportunities to take discussion beyond surface level.

May God guide our study and shape our thoughts as we show others His path. The best tool a teacher can use is the right question at the right time.

God bless and enjoy the journey.

Josh Derr

Lesson 1

The Troubled Heart

Intro: Get to know your students. Go around the room and have them describe an activity they are both excited and nervous about. Having a connection will open further discussion.

*Younger students may want to focus on how Jesus is our comfort when our hearts are troubled. John 13:36-14:1

As these lessons begin, we don't beat around the bush. We begin with the state of all humans who are without a Savior- in trouble. But more specifically troubled. The reason we start here is because that is where Jesus usually meets people that He is going to touch. They are in a troubled state of life.

What does it mean to be "troubled"? _____

Not in trouble but the emotional situation that brings an uneasiness, anxious, restless, agitated. Have you ever had those thoughts? What causes those thoughts or emotions? _____

Name a few people Jesus meets. What are some of their life situations that might have them in this mental state? _____

Mary, Samaritan woman, Zacchaeus, Nicodemus.

Do you think people worry more today than in the past? Why or why not? _____

Issues of the heart/mind are nothing new.

Ezekiel 36:26+27 God wanted to make His name Holy among the other nations and to do that He needed to remove Israel's old heart of stone.

What turns one's heart to stone? _____

What are some ways God can remove a stone heart and put a new one in its place? _____

Jeremiah 31:33 What does God desire to do AGAIN with His people?

How does God write on a heart? _____
What things has God written on your heart? _____

There was a young boy that could not stop lying to his parents. It started with things like telling them he cleaned his room and hadn't and not getting dessert when he had. This led to lying about doing homework when he hadn't. This led to cheating to get the homework done. The cheating became easier and led to taking things that weren't his. The boy knew what he was doing was not how he wanted to be but couldn't stop. This troubled his heart. It wasn't until his father called him out in a lie about the boy somehow finishing trimming the grass in 10 minutes, and made him redo it 6 times until it was done, that he realized how far his life choices have fallen. Sometimes the things we do are things we don't want to do but we can't get out of the trap and it leads to more bad decisions. These troubles are actions we can work on. Things like health issues and death are troubles we can't do anything about but still must deal with. Everyone has challenges in life but how we view and face these in a Christ like way is the desire of God.

Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus calls to people who are in what condition? _____
Do people who are not struggling or looking for help easily accept help?
Why or why not? _____
He also says His yoke is easy and His burden is light. What is Jesus' yoke that it is easy? _____
(Compare it to the Pharisees' yoke of what they piled on the Jews.)

Our key scripture has some backstory that comes into play right here.

*John 13:36

What question does Peter ask? _____
How does Jesus respond? _____
What is Peter's follow up question? v 37 _____
How does Jesus respond? v 38 _____

How does this response probably sit with Peter? Does Jesus probably know what this could have done to Peter? (This is important because it sets up the very next paragraph and Jesus' response for the apostles) _____

John 14:1

What does Jesus tell His apostles? _____

Why does Jesus need to tell His apostles to not have a troubled heart? _____

What does Jesus instruct the apostles to do to get rid of a troubled heart?
v 1 _____

Let's take a moment here to work through what the word believe means in scripture. In John chapters 11 and 12 Jesus says multiple times to believe in me. But to believe means more than to just have belief. James 2 says even the demons believe. So how does one truly believe in God and Jesus? _____

(Look at Romans 10:10, Mark 1:15, Luke 6:46, John 14:15, John 15:4)

John 16:33

What does Jesus say this world for sure will have for you? _____

What are two pieces of encouragement that Jesus tells us to have in this verse...in spite of our trouble? _____

Where do we find the capability to get through and conquer this world? _____

As a Christian, what troubles occur when interacting with non-Christians? _____

What is the best human trait for handling and getting through life trouble and challenging situations? Brainstorm _____

1 Peter 5:5-7

What is God's expectation for how we view and treat others and situations? _____

How does human humility allow God to lift us up? _____

Why is the phrase "in due time" or "in the end" added? Could we have to wait for God's deliverance? _____

Through humility, how can we not carry troubles and anxiety and cast cares on Him? _____

Lesson 2

Not just the Way but the Way

Intro: Play a game of Simon Says. Use this as a time to have fun but in the end say something about the process of the game taking many different directions and people choosing to listen and follow or not listening to the correct directions.

*Younger groups may wish to focus on Jesus being the way to the Father by His blood Eph 2:13. Not only is Jesus the path/way but the how/way we are supposed to live. Eph 2:18.

How many different decisions do you make in one day? If you consider conscious and unconscious decisions (ones you make that seem natural but your brain still makes a choice) some estimates have a person making 35,000 decisions per day. This is from major life decisions to every finger movement or body motion. This number will vary based on the type of decision considered for the statistics. The idea is that we have MANY decisions to make everyday with some being important and some being pointless.

Do each of these decisions made change the course of our day or life?
Explain _____

There is a theory called the Butterfly effect that basically says systems are so integrated that a butterfly can flap its wings and eventually cause a hurricane half way around the world.

Do each of our actions have those kinds of affects on our life journey?
Can one different decision make drastic huge changes to your day?
Explain _____

Exodus 14:21+22

When God was leading the Israelites out of Egypt they came to the Red Sea. The sea was in front of them and the Egyptian army was behind them and they were trapped. There was no way out!

How did God rescue His people? _____

Daniel 3

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were sentenced to the furnace for not following the king's order to bow down to a false god. The furnace was heated hotter than ever in the king's anger to ensure death.

What was their response? v 16-18 _____
They would not bow down to an idol. They were in the furnace! NO
WAY OUT! But... who was there? v 24+25 _____

*God did not keep them from the fire... He was there with them in it!
*God did not remove the Egyptian army... He led them through the sea!

So what is God's way? Is there a path He has for me everyday that I can't
get off of? Does He have every decision I make laid out for me as His
path?

The fastest player I ever coached in middle school could run circles
around any other player we had on the team. One day during sprints, the
boy finished first as usual but knowing him I noticed he was not giving
his best effort and I said "Hey! Why aren't you sprinting your best?" To
which he replied "I'm beating everyone else. Ain't that good enough?"
That response has stuck with me and haunted me to this day because I
know what he was capable of but he showed me what his heart was
willing to give...just enough to beat others and not his best.

God doesn't want us to just check the boxes of doing the right Christian
things but it is about the way we walk the walk. It's not just about the
end product but the process.

*** It's not just the way (direction) you are going but the way (HOW)
you get there. What does that mean for you? _____**

Hebrews 10:19+20

What was important about the curtain in the Holy of holies? _____

Who could enter? _____

(The high priest was the only one who could enter. It was closed off to
everyone else. It was separated by a curtain that was torn in two when
Jesus died on the cross. His sacrifice was the symbolism of a new
covenant in which we participate with God and now we also have access
to enter into God's presence. What an awesome connection between the
old testament and the new testament with the creation of a new covenant
and fulfilling the old.)

What is the foundation of our confidence in God? v 19 _____

Ephesians 2:13

What does Jesus' blood allow us to gain when we have Christ? _____

Ephesians 2:14-19

How do we now have direct access to the Father? v18 _____

When we connect how Jesus is the bridge from the old - where humans don't have access because of sin- to the new - where Jesus is our means of access to the Father through His blood sacrifice fulfilling the covenant- we can honestly see with our head and heart He is the only way to be in the presence of YAHWEH.

Hebrews 4:14-16

How many ways give us access to eternal life with God? _____

Where does this mercy and grace come from? v16 _____

Describe how mercy and grace are gifts and not payment or owed to us? _____

Colossians 2:6

What does it mean to receive Jesus as Lord? _____

Most Christians find it easier for Jesus to be our Savior but how do we make Him Lord? _____

How do we live our life "in Him"? What does that look like? Dig deep here for daily practical happenings. _____

Lesson 3

Truth- It's more than a feeling

Intro: I do this experiment with classes sometimes. On a piece of paper draw a capital L. Now hold it upside down for the class to see. Ask them what they see. Wait for answers. Now tell them it is an L. Be adamant it is an L. Almost always someone will say “Well to me it's a 7.” This is the learning moment. I say that I can see where they would call it a 7 but I am the author and I drew an L. That was my original purpose and intent for the drawing. This opens up a deeper discussion about whether there is a right truth or is truth in the eye of the beholder. Make all efforts to lead a discussion on Biblical truth and foundational truth. “My truth” is not a biblical idea and is dangerous idealism. GOD IS TRUTH. SCRIPTURE IS TRUTH.

*Younger students may want to focus on how truth reveals, confronts, and restores from John 1, Mark 10, and John 21 respectively. Jesus gives the hard truth to the woman at the well, the rich young ruler, and Peter. Truth is more than facts and more than a feeling. It is the intent behind the action and path to bring one back.

I had a teacher once that was a no nonsense type. He was starting class when a student ran in late. This student was notorious for doing their own thing and disregarding authority. The teacher asked why they were late, knowing it would be a terrible excuse. The student fumbled around to find words and finally said the halls were just too crowded and blamed it on others. The teacher had had it with all the excuses and very sternly and with increasing loudness exclaimed “Lies, Lies, LIES!” and upon the final “LIES” pounded the table on the front row, at which the metal book rack under the table began to shake and make a clanking noise. (I laugh knowing the characters of the story.)

This story was centered on finding the facts. The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The student had no intent on telling the truth when the teacher wanted an explanation.

Is there only one truth when it comes to facts? _____
Can facts have alternate truth depending on perspective or point of view?

I taught biology and one experiment we did with the nervous system was one for vision, a color-blindness test. I have had multiple students

through the years who are color-blind. When I ask them what color the 27 is on the screen (red) they would say “I don’t see a 27”. Can different circumstances change one's reality/truth? _____

Can the same be said about scripture? Or is all scripture taken as is and no variation possible? (Consider old testament laws and how our upbringing gives a different perception from a biblical era) _____

Describe the traits that would make a teaching a “Biblical truth” _____

Give a Biblical truth about the nature of God and the scripture it comes from. _____

This is important because many people will say “I don’t think God would want that” without any basis for the thought. They want to bend God to their will or place God’s thought in their box.

Psalms 31:5

Where do we see the first part of this verse quoted in the new testament? _____

(Hint Jesus quotes it)

The second half of this verse calls out to God with 2 different names in Hebrew- which is a look into a character description of God. The first one we see with the name LORD in all caps. This is a name YAHWEH the covenant name of God, signifying His eternal nature representing His constant presence, faithfulness, and power to save.

But it also calls God *El Emeth* meaning the God of Truth, which implies He cannot lie, is faithful in all dealings, and is the absolute standard of what is right. What a telling characteristic of our God!

What does this mean God does for us and means to us? _____

What is significant about Jesus quoting this verse in regards to God being *El Emeth*? _____

(In the end when His human life is ending, His submission is to the Faithful Father of all that is true and right. Wow! That is deep!!)

Ps 119:160

What do we know about God’s word? _____

Where does God’s word come from? _____

John 1:14+17

What is the Word that became flesh? _____

What is the Son full of? _____

Do we need to experience/gain both from our Savior? Explain _____

John 8:31+32

What does Jesus say shows one is a disciple? _____

What does being a disciple allow one to know? _____

What does truth do for true disciples? _____

How does truth in being a disciple of Christ bring freedom? (Really think about what true freedom is and how we find that in being a true disciple) _____

John 17:16+17

If your Bible uses the word "sanctify" define it.

(If you read from another translation it might say "make holy") 😊

Jesus prays for his disciples that they are not of this world as He is not.

What makes them holy from the world? _____

How does truth make us holy? _____

As we close these thoughts about truth, there are three ideas that we can see truth working in our lives.

First, when we accept truth honestly, it reveals then heals. John 4

Jesus encounters the Samaritan woman at the well. What does He tell her about her life? v 18 _____

What is her response to Jesus showing His power? v 29 _____

What happened to her and what did she do as a result of Jesus showing her the truth? _____

Secondly, truth confronts that which is not true. Mark 10:17-22

What does the young man ask? v17 _____

What is Jesus' answer? v 18 _____

How does the young man respond? v20 _____

At this point the young man was probably feeling pretty good about himself. On paper, he has checked all the boxes he feels he needs to.

With what spirit of heart does Jesus now call him out? v 21 _____

What does Jesus tell him to do? v 21 _____

What is the man's response? _____

Could he face the truth about his state of heart when it came to his things? _____

The man thought pretty highly of himself and that he was doing good.

What things hold you back from fully submitting to Jesus to make Him truly LORD? _____

Lastly, truth restores the heart that truly seeks it. John 21:3-19

Jesus had died and from the apostles view the party was over. The boys don't know what to do so Peter says "I'm going fishing". After not catching anything all night, someone from shore yells "Cast your net to the right". Then their nets were full of fishes! John is in the boat next to Peter and gets a little deja vu and turns to Peter and says "It's the Lord!" Don't forget that the last big interaction we have of Jesus and Peter is when Peter denies Jesus three times the night of Jesus' arrest before the crucifixion. Now Jesus has breakfast with the disciples and they don't know what to say. Jesus asks Peter what question three times? v 15-17

It may be a coincidence that Peter denied Jesus 3 times and now Jesus asks 3 times do you love me but there is definitely a connection in this conversation to bring Peter back to get him ready to take the roll that we know Peter has in the early church. Peter had to have Jesus restore him through this interaction and conversation. Jesus does not ask Peter the next sentence but directly and lovingly tells Peter to do what? _____

If he truthfully says he loves Jesus, then he must follow.

If you truthfully say you love Jesus, how will you follow? _____

What is another Biblical example of Jesus restoring someone? _____

In what way have you been restored by the Savior? _____

Lesson 4

Life now- Life eternal

Intro: Play “If I were a food I would be _____ because ____.” Have some fun and remind them to be mature and creative. There is no underlying reason for this game but just to have a lighthearted few moments before the lesson.

*Younger students may want to focus on how Jesus is the source of life who sustains us and was resurrected back to life. John 1:1-4

Gen 2:7

How did man come to life? _____

Scripture also talks of a tree of life and a river of life (Gen 2:9, Rev 22:1+2) All life is from God, as He is known as the “giver of Life” (Ps 36:9)

There is an impossible question for science to solve that follows one of the natural laws of science. The law states that “Life comes from life”. Evolution tries to trace all living organisms back from ancestor to ancestor. Science then claims that the first life had to just happen, without EVER being able to replicate life from non-life. This scientist has a very good response. God CREATED life! He is the giver of life! No matter what else you study or believe, life is given by YHWH, the Creator.

John 1:1-4

Who is the Word? _____ (Easy answer: Son of God)

Were the Father and Son together in the beginning? _____

Was Jesus there at creation and also create? _____

What was the creation through the Word called? v4 _____

Life from the beginning was created and is given by God!

Jesus not only is the giver of life but also the sustainer of life. What does it mean to sustain? _____

John 6:32-35

What is the bread Moses gave? (It was when they were in the wilderness) _____

Did they get hungry again? Why? When did God send the bread?

What is the “bread of Heaven” that God sent to the world? _____
What is this bread called and what does it give? _____

As the bread in the wilderness gave temporary life, Jesus as the bread of life offers eternal life. How do we gain access to this bread?

John 11:25

Jesus calls Himself what two things? _____

When is this life He promises here going to take place? _____

So what is eternal life that Jesus gives to those who come to Him?

What does it mean that they will live even though they die? _____

Leviticus 17:11

Where is life found in living creatures? _____

What was the way Israel had to atone for their sins? _____

God designed that blood was the only way sin could be paid for. But the blood of animals could not erase the sins. Sin has to be erased from God being able to look at us and allow us to be in His presence. Only the perfection of Himself could meet the standard to remove sin when God looks at humans.

Romans 3:25+26

What did God want to show by setting His plan up this way? _____

In life, for every choice and achievement there is a cost that must be paid. What does this mindset mean to you? _____

Is there a cost for sin? _____

Is there a cost for being a disciple of Jesus? _____

Is there a cost for eternity? _____

Let's play out a life scenario. You just won \$10 million dollars! Congratulations! The government just took 4 million for all kinds of taxes. You just bought a \$5 million dollar mansion. What you didn't consider is the real estate taxes and insurance on that house is \$100,000 per year. After 5 years everything is now gone and you can't afford to stay in the house. That's how people go broke. They don't consider the long term cost.

Romans 6:15-23

Do you consider yourself a slave? Why or why not? (Use scripture to back up your statement and don't just rely on "I think") _____

*Being a slave to righteousness means that once you are a born again follower of Christ, the change that He has made in your life leads to a mindset of "I can't help but follow Jesus and live a life Christ expects and lays out for me in His word".

What is the outcome of a holy life? v22 _____

What is the wage of sin?v 23 _____

What is the difference between a wage and a cost? _____

What does Jesus expect of you in this life? What is the cost of being His disciple?

Luke 14:27+28, Luke 9:23

Did Jesus hide the difficulty of following Him? How do we bear our cross? _____

Luke 14:33

How does Jesus want us to view our possessions? _____

Is it what we have or our attachment to it? _____

John 15:20

What does Jesus promise will happen to us? _____

Should you be surprised when persecution happens? Why not? _____

Spend some time discussing what persecution means and looks like and if you are not being persecuted why not. _____

Luke 18:29+30

What are we called to do for the kingdom? _____

What does Jesus promise to His followers? _____

Salvation is free. Discipleship costs everything!

What are some things you struggle with to surrender totally to make Jesus Lord? _____

Lesson 5

Finding Life in Him-Our personal response

Intro: Ask students to describe the ideal meal. Appetizer, entree, dessert, beverage. What makes this your best? Does it remind you of somewhere at a specific time? Is it just what you idealize? If you could eat it everyday, would you? Why or why not?

Younger groups may want to focus on Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus and what it means to be "born anew". John 3:1-18. Jesus also tells him about eternal life believing in Him. What does it mean to fully believe? A response is expected when one truly believes.

One of my favorite interactions Jesus has is with Nicodemus. Nicodemus is a pharisee and member of the Sanhedrin council. Very well educated and high standing in the Jewish community. Yet he is curious about this Jesus who is teaching and healing in ways that can only come from God. John 3:3

What does Jesus tell him one must do? _____

What will happen for this person? _____

John 3:15+16

Where does our eternal life rest? (A very important "B" word) _____

What is the response to Jesus of a true believer? _____

Just to finish the story of Nicodemus... when Jesus hung dead on the cross, where were his closest friends, the apostles? Who was there to claim, clean and bury Jesus' body? That's right...Nicodemus. Something happened to him on the inside that made him a true believer. I wish I knew what happened to Nicodemus after he publicly cared for Jesus' body.

Let's not move too quickly past this. Bottom line is Jesus is the reason for us to enter eternal life. Not me or you.

Ephesians 2:8+9

Our salvation is by what means? (G word) _____

How do we accept this gift? (it ends in "aith") _____

Without faith in Jesus are we able to accept the gift of grace? _____

I heard a preacher say that a true believer will not begin an answer for how to get to Heaven with “I” but with “HE”. The He being Jesus. Not the things I’ve done. Nothing I can do. Because of His great mercy.

1 Peter 1:3.

Ephesians 4:21-24

Where is the only place for truth? v21 _____

How are we able to truly follow Jesus in our daily life? v23 _____

When I was younger I would like to tell others when they weren’t doing things the right way and they needed to stop and do good. 😊 I was not being the Christian example the Bible lays out as our pattern. Trying to stop outward actions is not going to stick long term if we don’t address the cause of our actions... our mind/heart. Jesus wants to renew our mind by the Holy Spirit! Only when there is a change of mind/heart will the outward body follow.

Once we allow the Holy Spirit to renew our mind, what happens to us on the outside? v 24 _____

What does that look like for you? What newness have you put on for Jesus? _____

Jesus makes many awesome claims about who He is.

John 10:10

What kind of life does Jesus say he came to bring? _____

What does a full and abundant life look like now? Does it mean fun, relaxing, easy? Explain _____

When does this full life begin? _____

What other fullness of life is Jesus referring to? _____

Truly Jesus is both talking about life now and life to come. Our full life now does not mean one of ease and comfort but full of spiritual abundance and purpose.

What are some aspects to a full spiritual life? _____

To give more guidance and direction for this awesome promise from the Savior, our thoughts should land on this full, abundant life beginning now and stretching into eternity. This full life is packed with spiritual blessings that include the fruit of the Spirit, christian relationships with mentors and guiding the lost. It has purpose and responsibilities that

come with putting off the old self and becoming a new creation. Christians are charged with going into the world and making disciples. We are called to be light in the darkness! Darkness is nothing more than the absence of light. The only way darkness exists is when there is no light. God is light! We are sons of light! Our light is what drives darkness from this world. None of this is possible if we don't know and follow the Good Shepard. He is the reason we have this hope.

Take some time and share where you have seen this full life played out for you as an example. When have you experienced this full life?

Romans 8:10+11

Romans takes the thought of new life to a very deep level. It tells us that the Spirit is our life if Christ is in us! First, Christ and the Spirit are connected/one. Second, the Spirit in us gives us life. Does this mean if the Spirit is in us we won't die? _____

What causes death in this life? v 10 _____

Who is the life found in? _____

There are many spiritual implications in these two verses. Because of sin we are spiritually dead. But we have the Spirit in us. Christ was raised from the dead from the One whose spirit lives in us! What life is promised through the Spirit? Spiritual life? Physical life? Will our bodies be raised like Christ for eternity? _____

Is this life possible any other way? _____

(Use other verses to help back up any thoughts about Christ in you)

Take the rest of the class time to connect on a personal level. Honest answers lead to true learning.

Have you made Jesus your Savior? _____

Are you baptized and have the Holy Spirit? _____

Is Jesus now your Lord? _____

Are you trusting Him and following Him daily? Are you picking up your cross? _____

All of our "daily crosses" are unique but we can gain personal insight into our situations that we can use to help others God brings into our life. Yahweh cares about the way (direction) you are going and the way (how) you get there. Is the Spirit guiding your WAY? _____

I pray you may be ever seeking a deeper relationship with the Creator.