

Theological Background of the Four Spiritual Laws

Purpose Statement: The purpose of this session is to help you understand the biblical basis of the Four Spiritual Laws.

Learning Objectives: This session will help you to:

1. Learn the four major elements of Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well that are contained in the Four Spiritual Laws.
2. Be able to explain the Gospel using only Old Testament Scriptures.
3. Draw a diagram illustrating the history of man and how faith changes our relationship with God.
4. Explain Law Three of the Four Spiritual Laws using a modern parable.

Key Verses: Romans 10:11-13

(Instructor will want to have enough copies of the "Four Spiritual Laws" booklets on hand to give each student a copy. This can also be used with the Campus Crusade booklet "Would You Like To Know God Personally?")

Introduction.

Romans 10:11-13, "For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.' For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call upon Him; for 'Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.'"

God has provided us with a means of salvation. He has also entrusted us with the responsibility of telling the world about this provision. Unfortunately the various religions and philosophies of the world tend to mislead people.

I. Four Common Misconceptions About Salvation.

A. Religious discipline.

Some religions teach that by rigorous religious discipline people may attain perfection and thus unity with God. This is typical of eastern religions.

B. Good works.

Others feel that by doing good works (helping others, giving away money) they will merit

God's favor. They are hoping that their good works will out-weigh their shortcomings.

C. Philosophies.

Others think they will be accepted by God because of their wisdom. They develop a philosophy of life which they feel will impress God and cause him to accept them.



D. Pseudo-Christianity.

Some believe that by attending a Christian service from time to time (once a week or once a year), they are accepted by God.

There are many different ideas about how to please God and gain His acceptance. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through me" (John 14:6). This lesson will look at the Biblical basis of the Four Spiritual Laws and how this booklet is used to lead people to Christ. We will see how Jesus demonstrated this with the Samaritan woman in John 4.

Before going to the next page, explain the Gospel using only Old Testament verses:

II. Law One. God's Perspective

A. God Loves You.

1. Jesus demonstrated **love** for the Samaritan woman (John 4:4-14).
2. In the Old Testament God demonstrated His love for sinful people (see Isaiah 1:18-20).

The booklet begins with a positive statement, communicating God's love to the individual. Jesus would often begin positively before revealing a person's sin. For example, look at John 4.

We will study this passage throughout the session. Note that Jesus demonstrated love and acceptance to this Samaritan woman by talking with her. Even she is surprised by his friendliness in verse 9. However, it is important to realize that to say God loves people is not to say that God loves their sin, or that he will excuse them at the judgment. **God loves sinners, but hates their sin.** Unless people repent, or change their minds, and turn to Christ for forgiveness of sin, they will not have eternal life.

Isaiah 1:18-20, "'Come now, and let us reason together,' says the Lord. 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool. If you consent and obey, you will eat the best of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.' Truly, the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Here God expresses His love and desire to fellowship with sinful people. Yet, this love does not negate His righteousness and His judgment of sin as explained in verse 20.

Jeremiah 31:4, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness."

B. God offers a wonderful plan for your life.

1. Jeremiah 29:11. His plans are for your welfare. (also Psalm 16:11)

Jeremiah 29:11, "'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'"

2. The life He offers us is a life of joy.

Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit isjoy..."

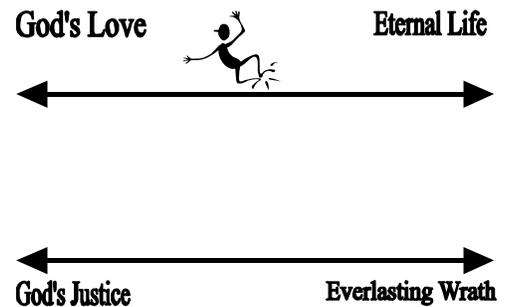
As we allow God's Spirit to control our lives, we will experience a satisfying life--a life of joy.

3. Jesus is the source of the overflowing life (John 4:13,14).

John 4:13,14, "Jesus answered and said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.'"

Notice also that as Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, He offered her new life, an overflowing life--a life which is eternal. He offered her a relationship with God through Himself. Note further, John 10:10 explains that God's plan is not only for eternity, but also for today.

These two parallel lines suggest two of God's characteristics: His love and His justice. Each characteristic is equally important and therefore each must be satisfied totally. In the beginning Adam had perfect fellowship with God. Because he had not yet sinned, he was not under God's wrath.



III. Law Two. Our Condition

- A. Man is sinful and separated from God.

1. Jesus reveals the Samaritan woman's sin (John 4:16-19).

John 4:16-19, "He told her, 'Go, call your husband and come back.' 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.' 'Sir,' the woman said, 'I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.'"

After first demonstrating his love and concern for the woman, Jesus began to reveal her sin. Before people can establish a relationship with God, they must first come to a clear understanding of the reason they do not have a relationship with him.

2. Man is sinful (Romans 5:12-14).

Man was created to have fellowship with God, but chose to go his own independent way. This sin nature that originated with Adam is now passed on to all human beings and results in spiritual death. God continues to love people but his righteous nature cannot love the sin that is a part of everyone's nature.

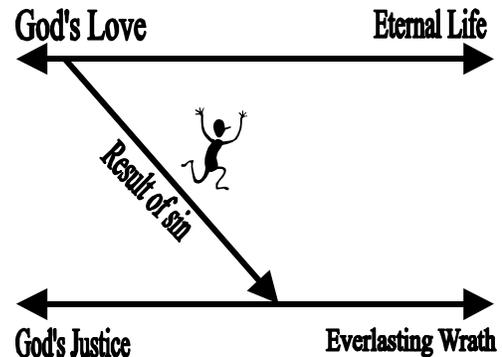
3. The moral decay in society is evidence of sin (Galatians 5:19-21).

The fact that Adam's sin nature is passed on to all is evidenced by peoples' actions.

Today's world is a testimony of continual rebellion and separation from God.

B. Man cannot experience God's love and plan for his life.

This illustration shows that fellowship with God was broken when man chose to rebel against God and go his independent way. Man entered into God's judgment and wrath. Sin has rendered man incapable of doing anything to save himself.



1. No one is justified by the law (Galatians 3:11).

Galatians 3:11, "Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, 'The righteous will live by faith.'"

2. No one is justified by works (Romans 3:27).

Romans 3:27, "Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith."

No one can find God by practicing physical or religious disciplines. No matter how hard people try, they will never conquer their sin nature, nor will they manage to pay for past sins.

C. Old Testament verses showing that all are guilty and separated from God:

- Proverbs 20:9
- Psalm 14:2,3
- Isaiah 59:2
- Ezekiel 18:4,20
- Ecclesiastes 7:20
- Isaiah 64:6
- Habakkuk 1:13

IV. Law Three. God's Response

A. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin.

1. Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah to the Samaritan woman (John 4:23-26).

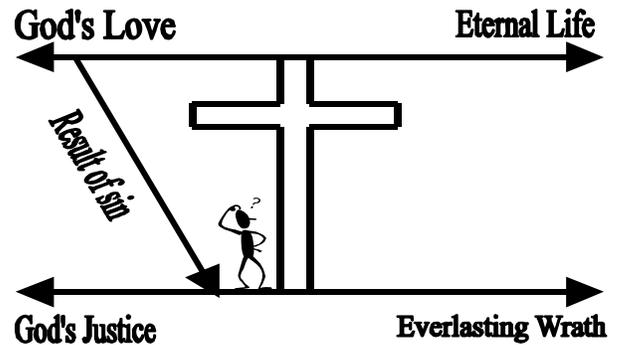
John 4:23-26, "'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is Spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said, 'I know that Messiah' (called Christ) 'is coming. When He comes, He will explain

everything to us.' Then JESUS declared, 'I who speak to you am He'".

Jesus first expressed love to this woman, and then began to discuss her sin. We now see that He has revealed Himself as Messiah to her. This is His third major step in this witnessing situation."

2. Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins (1 John 4:9,10).

1 John 4:9,10, "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins".

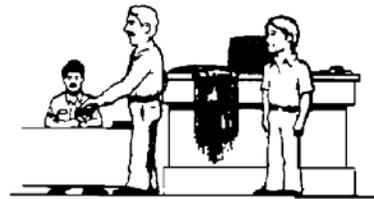


In the Old Testament, see Isaiah 53; Leviticus 17:11; and Psalm 49:7-9.

Jesus showed His love to various unlovable people such as tax collectors and prostitutes. The Bible clearly teaches that God loves sinners. Because of His love for sinners, He had to solve the problem of His judgment against sin. He did this through substitution. The cross is the place where Christ took our sins on Himself and endured God's wrath in our place. His shed blood and His death on the cross satisfied God's just requirement for the payment of our sins (propitiation). This is the ultimate demonstration of God's love for us. Even though we did not love Him, yet He loved us and sent His sinless Son to die for us.

3. Jesus' death demonstrates God's love and satisfies His justice.

One day a man, who was a judge, tried his own son who was brought into court on a traffic violation. The judge was faced with his responsibility to pass sentence on the guilty one, but he was also full of compassion, since the guilty one was his son. Since he was just, the judge passed sentence on him and fined him, even though the boy had no money. Then he took off his robe, came down from his place of authority, stood beside his son and paid the fine himself.



Point of the story: We were unable to pay the penalty for our sins. God passed the sentence of death on us, but stepped down from heaven in the person of Christ (Philippians 2:5-8) and paid the penalty for us by bearing our sins on the cross. Thus, He expressed His love for us, yet He did not violate what is just to do so. The crucifixion of Jesus demonstrates God's justice against sin and His love for sinners.

B. Through Him you can know and experience God's love and plan for your life.

1. He who believes in Jesus abides in God's love (1 John 4:15,16).

1 John 4:15,16, "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God."

Here John explains that those who receive Christ abide in God and thus experience his love.

2. Jesus promised the Samaritan woman an abundant life (John 4:10-14).

We see here that Jesus promised the Samaritan woman an abundant spring of life. That is God's intention for every Christian.

V. Law Four. Our Response

A. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

1. The Samaritan woman repented (turned from self to Christ for forgiveness) and believed (John 4:26-29; 39-42).

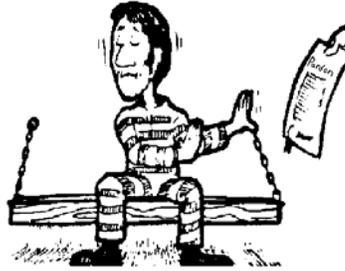
John 4:26-29, "Then Jesus declared, 'I who speak to you am He.' Just then His disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, 'What do You want?' or 'Why are You talking with her?' Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?'"

John 4:39-42. "Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in Him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to Him, they urged Him to stay with them, and He stayed two days. And because of His words many more became believers. They said to the woman, 'We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world.'"

At the moment Jesus presented himself as the Messiah to the woman, she was left with a decision. She could either accept Him or reject Him. She chose to accept Him and proclaimed Him to the rest of the town.

2. An example of a Presidential pardon.

In 1830 George Wilson was tried by the United States court in Philadelphia for robbery and murder. Subsequently he was sentenced to be hanged. Andrew Jackson, President of the United States, granted him a Presidential pardon. But Wilson refused the pardon, insisting that it was not a pardon unless he accepted it. The question was brought before the Supreme Court, and Chief Justice Marshall wrote the following decision: "A pardon is conditional upon its acceptance by the person implicated. It is hardly to be supposed that one under sentence of death would refuse to accept a pardon, but if it is refused, it is no pardon. George Wilson must hang." And he was hanged.

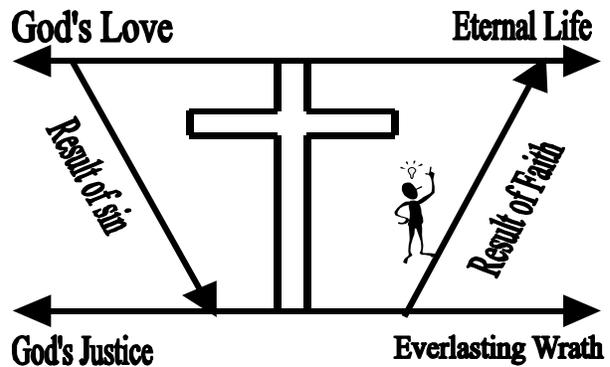


Point of the story: Wilson refused his pardon and people can refuse Jesus' pardon. Each person has a choice: life or everlasting judgment.

B. Two destinies.

1 Thessalonians 5:9,10, "For God has not destined us for wrath; but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him."

Salvation from the results of sin and establishment of a love relationship with God is accomplished as people put their faith (trust, reliance, confidence, dependence) in Christ's sacrifice and His resurrection. Whether they place their trust in Christ or not determines their eternal destiny. Those who do not put their faith in Christ will be faced with eternal separation from God; while those who accept Christ and His death on the cross will have the promise of eternal life.

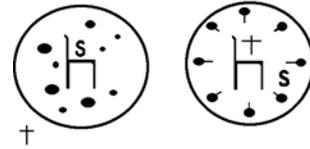


John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

The most important decision in life is your decision to accept or reject Christ. Those who reject Him face an eternal judgment.

C. The two circles.

Now let us look at the circles on the bottom of page 9 of the booklet. The circles are intended to bring a person to the point of making a decision (Romans 10:9-13). They are not intended to imply that when we receive Christ, our lives immediately and automatically become perfect. But the emphasis is upon living a life in constant faith and dependence on Christ. "S" represents the self, and the cross represents Christ.



Now that we have considered the biblical basis for each of the four laws, let us concentrate on a central issue--faith. What is biblical faith and how is it presented in the "Four Spiritual Laws?"

VI. The Issue of Faith.

A. Faith in the Old Testament.

1. Abraham believed God (Genesis 15:6, Romans 4:3,9) and God accepted his faith.

"Then he (Abraham) believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness" (Genesis 15:6).

God justified Abraham through his faith (Romans 4). Animal sacrifices in the Old Testament were a temporary covering for sin, a help for people to understand the severity of sin. Old Testament believers were justified by faith. Animal sacrifices also symbolized a 'type' of the coming Messiah, who as the lamb of God (John 1:29,30), would take away the sins of the world and be the one perfect sacrifice for all time (Hebrews 10:1-14, especially verses 10-14).

2. The righteous will live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4).

"Behold, as for the proud one, his soul is not right within him; but the righteous will live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

B. Faith in the New Testament.

1. Faith defined. Hebrews 11:1; Romans 4:21
2. Faith pleases God (Hebrews 11:6).

Hebrew 11:6, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

3. The just shall live by faith (Galatians 2:16).

Galatians 2:16, "Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified."

See also Habakkuk 2:4; Philippians 3:9; and Romans 5:1.

God has given us His righteousness as a free gift apart from our works (Romans 4:1-5). Redemption is through the shed blood of Christ and is applied to our lives the moment we come to Christ in faith.

C. Prayer as an expression of faith.

1. Believe and you shall receive (Mark 11:24).

Mark 11:24, "Therefore, I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you."

As we pray, we express our faith or trust in God's ability to answer. We place our trust in God's provision through Christ. Therefore, as we are trying to discern if a person is already a Christian, we shouldn't ask, "Did you pray a prayer," but rather "Do you trust (rely on, depend on, have confidence) in Christ's death to save you from your sins?"

Let's examine a verse which states how we can respond by faith through prayer.

2. Claim Revelation 3:20 by faith.

Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me."

Revelation 3:20 pictures an invitation to have fellowship with Christ. It expresses his desire to have a relationship with each person. By using this verse we make clear the fact that Christ desires a personal relationship with individuals.

3. The prayer in the Four Spiritual Laws booklet.

"Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive You as my Savior and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be."

When you are sharing with a person and reach the prayer on page 10, be sure to make it clear that the prayer is an expression of faith. It is not the prayer that guarantees salvation. The prayer helps a person express his decision of faith to God, to turn from self (repent) and trust Christ.

D. Results of faith.

1. Eternal life (John 5:24).

The Bible assures a person of eternal life as a result of putting faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. However changes in lifestyle should also take place as a result.

2. Changed life.

2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

When we receive Christ, the Holy Spirit enters our life and begins to change us from the inside. Old sinful habits, which formerly were attractive, become unattractive, and the Spirit replaces them with godly habits.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Jesus express the points in the "Four Spiritual Laws" with the Samaritan woman in John 4?
2. Assume you want to share the Gospel with a Jewish person, but they don't care to hear from the New Testament. Use the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) to share the Gospel.
3. Draw a diagram illustrating the history of man and how faith changes our relationship with God.
4. Using Scripture, defend the statement, "Saved by Christ alone, grace alone, faith alone."