

**We Are Teammates (“Fellow workers”) on
God’s Team**

**“For we are God’s fellow workers.” (1
Corinthians 3:9)
September 12, 2021**

Bible Study 1



Dear heavenly Father, we ask for Your blessings on this discipleship emphasis as we discuss being teammates on Your team. Grant us wisdom, energy, and guidance to be the kind of teammates You want us to be. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Think of a time you were a member of a competitive sports team. What sport was it? What was the object of the game? What constituted a “win?” What equipment did you have to use? What were the rules of the game? What skills were required to play the game? What were the expectations of the members of the team? What did the members of the team expect of one another? What role did you have on the team? Who was the opposition? What constituted a “win?”

During the next four weeks, we will discuss many of these questions as they relate to the “game” we are playing as teammates on God’s team.

What is the “game” we are playing?

- **Luke 2:30**, *“He [Simeon] took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have **seen your salvation** that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.”*
- **Acts 4:12**, *“And there is **salvation in no one else**, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”*
- **Acts 13:47**, [Paul quoting Isaiah 49:6 says] *“For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that **you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.**””*
- **1 Thessalonians 5:9**, *“For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain **salvation** through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- **Romans 1:16**, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is **the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”*
- **Ephesians 1:13**, *“In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, **the gospel of your salvation**, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.”*

- **2 Timothy 3:15**, “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.
- **2 Corinthians 6:2**, “For he says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a **day of salvation** I have helped you.” Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, **now is the day of salvation.**”
- **1 Peter 1:8-9**, “Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, **the salvation of your souls.**”
- **Romans 13:11**, “Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For **salvation is nearer to us** now than when we first believed.”
- **Revelation 7:9-10**, “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, “**Salvation belongs to our God** who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

What is the “object” of the game?

- **1 Timothy 2:3-4**, “This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who **desires all people to be saved** and to **come to the knowledge of the truth.**”

How is the goal of the game accomplished?

- **Matthew 28:18-20**, “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go[ing] 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.”
- **John 20:21-23**, “Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. **As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.**” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”

Who wins?

- The person whom God has chosen and forgiven in Jesus Christ perseveres to the end and receives eternal life in the new heaven and earth.
- **2 Timothy 4:7-8**, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.”

When is the game over?

- **Matthew 24:13-14**, *“But the one who endures to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”*
- **Matthew 24:29-31**, *“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”*

Who are our opponents?

- **Internal struggle with sin: Matthew 15:19-20a**, *“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person.”*; **Romans 3:10-18**, *“None is righteous, no, not one.”* (10)
- **The world is beset with traps: 1 John 2:15-17**, *“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.”*; **Matthew 13:22**, *“As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.”*; **Matthew 16:26**, *“For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?”*; **1 Corinthians 1:27**, *“But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;”*; **Galatians 4:9**, *“But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?”*; **Titus 2:12**, *“training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,”*; **James 4:4**, *“You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”*
- **The devil: 2 Corinthians 4:4**, *“In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*; **Ephesians 4:27**, *“And give no opportunity to the devil.”*; **Ephesians 6:11**, *“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.”*; **2 Timothy 2:26**, *“And they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.”*; **Hebrews 2:14**, *“Since therefore the*

children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.”; **James 4:7**, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”; **1 Peter 5:8**, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

- **False teachers: Matthew 7:15-20**, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”; **2 Timothy 4:3-4**, “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound[a] teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”; cf. 1 John 4:1-6; 2 Peter 2
- **Death: Romans 5:12**, “Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned.”; **Romans 6:23**, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”; **James 1:15**, “Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.” Cf. **1 Corinthians 15:54-57**.

What “equipment” do we use for the game?

- **God’s Word: Psalm 119:105**, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”; **2 Timothy 3:15-17**, “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. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” **1 Peter 1:23-25**, “You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.”; **Romans 1:16**, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”; **Ephesians 6:17**, “Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,”
- **The Sacraments** (Baptism; Lord’s Supper)
- **Prayer: Ephesians 6:18**, “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” **1 Thessalonians 5:17**, “Pray without ceasing.”

The “Strategies” of the Game?

- **Worship and serve God: Mark 12:30**, *And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ Cf. Romans 12:1-2, “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*
- **Love our neighbour: Mark 12:31**, *“The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’*
- **Storm the gates of hell: Matthew 16:17-19**, *“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. 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. 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.”*

When were we selected to be on the team? Who are our teammates?

- **Ephesians 1:4-5**, *“Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will.”*
- **Acts 2:38-39**, *“And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”*
- **Acts 22:16**, [Ananias said to Paul], *“And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.”*
- **Colossians 1:13-14**, *“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”.*
- **Titus 3:5-7**, *“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*
- **1 Corinthians 6:11**, *“And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”*

God's team plays to "win." There are "*personal wins*" like maturing in our faith and there are "*other person wins*" as the Holy Spirit uses the witness of God's team to call other people to faith in the one true God rescuing them from our enemies and enabling them to persevere until they are received into their eternal home.

Closing Prayer

Dear Father in heaven. We thank you for selecting us to be on Your team and for having confidence and trust in us as teammates. Open our eyes to the opportunities we have use our time, talents, and money in order to develop ourselves as your disciples and as we make disciples of other people Thank you for Your love and grace that sustain us each and every day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

