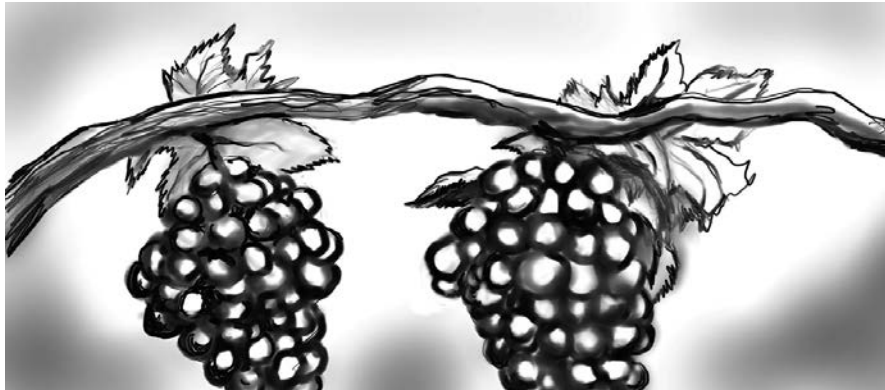


# Jesus Gives Us Life



## SABBATH—NOVEMBER 23

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** John 1:29; John 6:61–68; John 1:12, 13; Numbers 13:23–33; John 3:18, 36.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. The only way to the Father is through [because of] me’ ” (John 14:6, ERV).



The “I AM” appeared to Moses in the burning bush and said, “‘I AM WHO I AM.’ ”

**IN THE BOOK OF JOHN**, people often asked Jesus who He was. Jesus used the words “I AM” in His answer. These words showed that Jesus was God. The “I AM” appeared to Moses in the burning bush and said, “ ‘I AM WHO I AM’ ” (Exodus 3:14, ICB). Later, this same God “became human flesh [a man] and lived among us. We saw His shining-greatness [glory]. This greatness is given only to a much-loved Son from His Father. He [the Son] was full of loving-favor [mercy and forgiveness] and truth” (John 1:14, NLV).

The “I AM” topic is an important idea in the Book of John. This week’s memory verse shows this important idea: ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. The only way to the Father is through [because of] me’ ” (John 14:6, ERV). The “I AM” is the Light of this earth. He is the Bread of Life. He is the Gate or the Door for the sheep. He is the Good Shepherd and the True Vine.

This week, we continue to study more of the powerful proof John gives us to show that Jesus is God. Sad to say, many people didn’t accept Jesus as the Savior. We want to avoid making this same mistake ourselves. Also, we want to help other people who are in danger of making this same mistake, too.

## IN HIM WAS LIFE (John 1:29)

In John 1:1, John says that Jesus is God the Son. In John 1:4, John also tells us that “life began [started] by [with] Him. His Life was the Light for men” (NLV). The “life” that John is talking about is the life that comes only from God. Jesus has life in Himself. So, He can give up His life as a man and get it back again (John 10:17). Because life starts with Jesus, He can give life to anyone He wants (John 5:21; compare with John 14:19).

The word “life” comes from the word “zoē” in the Greek language. John uses the word “zoē” 36 times in the Book of John. In John 1:4, 5, John tells us that all life started with Jesus. In these same verses, John also uses the word “zoē” to mean God’s plan to save people from sin. In the rest of the Book of John, John uses the word “zoē” to talk about God’s promise of everlasting life (read John 3:15, 16, 36; John 4:14, 36; John 6:27, 40, 47, 54, 68; John 10:27, 28). So, the Person who gave life to every living thing on planet Earth is the same Person who saves us and gives us everlasting life.

**Why did Jesus come to this earth? Read John 1:29; John 3:16; John 6:40; John 10:10; and John 12:27 for the answer.**

“Moses lifted up the snake in the desert. It is the same with the Son of Man. He must be lifted up too. Then everyone who believes in him can have eternal [everlasting] life” (John 3:14, 15, ERV).

The brass snake was a substitute for the Israelites in the desert who were dying from snake bites. In the same way, we are dying from sin. Jesus is our substitute. He hung on the cross for us. He accepted the penalty that was ours so that we may get the life that is His.

Jesus does not want us to die. Jesus wants us to enjoy life in every possible way (John 10:10). That is why Jesus helps the ones who accept Him “to become children of God. They became God’s children, but not in the way babies are usually [almost always] born. It [becoming God’s children] was not [did not happen] because of any human desire [wish] or plan. They [the ones who accepted Jesus] were born from God himself” (John 1:12, 13, ERV).

Jesus came to show the Father to us (John 1:18). When we see Jesus’ love, we also see who the Father is.



**The brass snake was a substitute for the Israelites in the desert who were dying from snake bites.**

## THE WORDS OF EVERLASTING LIFE (John 6:61–68)

When Jesus asked His followers if they would leave Him, what did Peter say? What do Peter’s words mean? Read John 6:61–68 for the answers.



In the same way,  
when Jesus wakes us up  
from the dead,  
we will wake up  
in a new body.

Peter’s words about “everlasting life” are written in the Book of John. Peter’s words help us understand this important topic. John talks about everlasting life in John 6:27, 40, 47, 54, and 68. In John 6:35, Jesus says that He is the Bread of Life. So, Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection or waking up from the dead are the reasons He can give us the gift of everlasting life.

John uses the words “everlasting life” or words that have this meaning at least 17 times in the Book of John. These words don’t mean “living as a ghost with no body” or “becoming part of a spirit that doesn’t die.” The words “everlasting life” mean God’s life-giving power. This power saves us and gives us new life now and everlasting life when Jesus comes back. Jesus had a body when He lived on this earth. In the same way, when Jesus wakes us up from the dead, we will wake up in a new body. Then Jesus will give back to us the life we lost in Eden.

**How do we get everlasting life? Read John 3:15, 16; John 5:24; John 6:40, 47; John 8:31; John 12:46; and John 20:31 for the answer.**

We believe with faith because of God’s mercy that Jesus came to live and die for us. God gives us this faith as a gift. But we must decide to give ourselves to Jesus. We must feel sorry about sinning and accept Jesus’ blood. With His blood, Jesus forgives and makes us clean from sin.

When Jesus asked Peter if he, too, was going to leave, Peter said, “ ‘Lord, who can we go to? You have the words of eternal [everlasting] life’ ” (John 6:68, Nlrv). Peter’s words show us what God’s saving plan is all about and how we can get everlasting life. We don’t get it from studying history or science. All these things are human ideas. We get everlasting life from Jesus. Jesus has everlasting life in Himself. He offers it to everyone who will accept it.

**How should the promise of everlasting life in the future change the way we live now?**

## BORN AGAIN (John 1:12, 13)

**How do we become Christians? Read John 1:12, 13 for the answer.**

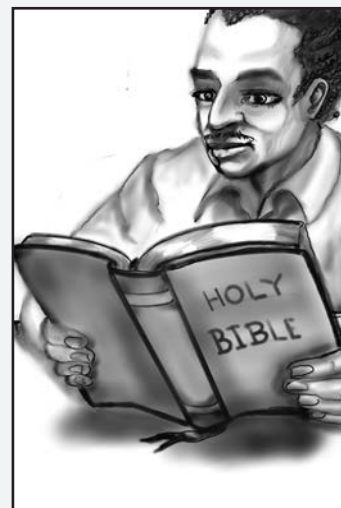
John wrote his book to help us believe in Jesus and accept His gift of everlasting life (John 20:31). In John 1:12, 13, we read about how God saves us. His saving plan has two parts: (1) We accept Jesus or believe in Him. (2) Jesus helps us to become God's children. John 1:13 explains the second part of God's plan with a word picture. We become God's children when we become born again. So, as we see, God has a part in our becoming Christians, and we have a part, too. We must act in faith. When we believe, we accept Jesus. We must be willing to accept Bible truth. God makes our hearts new.

Faith is a gift from God. We get faith when we hear and obey Bible truth (Romans 10:17). "Do we want to have a real, living faith in Jesus? Then we must know Him as He is shown to us in the Bible."—Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 433, adapted. "The Holy Spirit works on the human mind and helps fill us with faith in God."—Ellen G. White Comments, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, page 940, adapted.

When people believe and accept Jesus as their Savior, they get everlasting life. John also says that we must accept or believe the words that Jesus said (John 5:24, 38, 47). The Holy Spirit helps us believe (John 16:7, 8; compare with Romans 8:16).

**Read Romans 8:16. What important rule about being saved in Jesus do we read about in this verse?**

Real Bible faith comes from the Holy Spirit's work in our hearts. "Faith is an important blessing. Faith is understanding. Faith is also hearing and obeying Bible truth."—Ellen G. White, *In Heavenly Places*, page 104, adapted. Human thinking says that we must first find a reason for our faith, and then we can believe. But the Bible says that faith **is** the reason. Faith is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 1:17–24; 1 Corinthians 2:1–6). We start with faith. From there, we grow in understanding and in God's gift of mercy.



**We get faith when we hear and obey Bible truth (Romans 10:17).**

## REJECTING THE ONE WHO GIVES US LIFE (Numbers 13:23–33)



**They said the land of Canaan was filled with giants, cities with big walls around them, weapons, and armies.**

The Book of John shares some very sad stories. “The Light shone where it was dark and the darkness did not stop the Light from shining. . . . He, the Word [Jesus], was in the world [on the earth among people]. Yes, he even [also] made the world [the skies and the earth]. And yet [at the same time] the world [the people] did not know him. He came into the world [the earth] that was his own, but his own people did not receive [accept] him” (John 1:5, 10, 11, WE). Many of the Jews rejected Jesus, the “I AM.”

No wonder Paul later warns, “So don’t throw away your bold [brave] faith” (Hebrews 10:35, NIV). As we saw already, people rejected Jesus because they didn’t accept His message.

“The modern way of thinking starts with doubt. People doubt everything to understand what is truth. They accept those things that they can’t doubt. Some people study and try to understand the Bible in the same way. They measure the truth about the Bible with knowledge from science and history. This way of Bible study starts with doubt in Bible truth. Jesus asked, ‘When the Son of Man comes, will he find people on earth who have faith?’ (Luke 18:8).”  
—E. Edward Zinke and Roland Hegstad, *The Certainty of the Second Coming* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), page 96, adapted.

**Read about the spies in Numbers 13:23–33. The spies brought back two different reports about the Promised Land. What made the reports different?**

At Kadesh Barnea, the Israelites sinned because they doubted God’s command. God asked them to go take the land of Canaan. Moses sent 12 spies to Canaan to spy out the land. The spies came back with two different reports. Most of the spies gave a bad report. They said the land of Canaan was filled with giants, cities with big walls around them, weapons, and armies. This group of spies also remembered that they were slaves in the land of Egypt. So, they didn’t have much experience fighting war. Ten spies voted against taking the land of Canaan. Two spies voted yes. These two had faith in the power of God’s command.

**How do we avoid making the same mistake the ten spies made?**

## THE ONES WHO ARE ALREADY JUDGED (John 3:18, 36)

“People who believe in God’s Son are not judged guilty. But people who do not believe are already judged, because they have not believed in God’s only Son. . . . Everyone who does evil hates the light. They [people who do evil] will not come to the light, because the light will show all the bad things they have done. But anyone who follows the true way comes to the light. Then the light will show that whatever they have done was done through [because of] God” (John 3:18–21, ERV; compare with John 1:10).

**Why does God judge people? Read John 3:18, 36; John 5:24, 38; John 8:24; and John 12:47 for the answer.**

Jesus is the Light of this earth. When we refuse to accept the Light, or Bible truth, we are in danger of doubting the Bible and sinning. When we reject Jesus, we turn from the light and accept the dark.

Eve doubted God’s command. She thought that a God of love wouldn’t destroy the people and animals that He made. Eve trusted the snake. Eve saw that the snake ate the forbidden fruit and now could speak! Eve wondered if the snake was right. She thought, “Maybe if I eat the fruit, I will be the same as God!” The snake tricked Eve. She chose to reject God’s command. Her husband made the same choice.

**Read Matthew 4:1–4. What important rules does Jesus use in the desert to fight against Satan’s tricks?**

Jesus could have made the same wrong choice that Adam and Eve made. The people who lived before the Flood also made this same wrong choice. The Israelites at Kadesh Barnea made this wrong choice, too. Jesus could have asked why a loving God left His Son in the desert for 40 days and nights with no food or protection. Jesus also could give the devil proof that He was God. Jesus could turn the stones into bread! But Jesus didn’t. Jesus answered Satan with verses from the Bible. Jesus did not need to make excuses for His choices, as most people do when they make a wrong decision. That’s because Jesus always chose to do the right thing.



**When we reject Jesus,  
we turn from the light  
and accept the dark.**

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** Ellen G. White, “‘God With Us,’” pages 19–26; “Controversy,” pages 601–609, in *The Desire of Ages*.



But Jesus “was wounded [punished] for the wrong things we did.”

“When Jesus became a man, He showed that He was completely different from Satan. But Jesus didn’t stop there. ‘And when he was a man, he was humble [without pride]. He was even [also] willing to die, yes, to die on a cross.’ Philippians 2:8 [WE]. When the high priest, or top spiritual leader, served in the temple in Old Testament times, he removed his beautiful clothes. He put on the same clothes that the other priests wore. In the same way, Jesus became a servant. Jesus gave Himself as an offering for sin. Jesus was both the priest and the offering. But Jesus ‘was wounded [punished] for the wrong things we did. He was crushed for the evil things we did. The punishment, which made us well, was given to him. And we are healed because of his wounds [cuts].’ Isaiah 53:5 [ICB].

“God gave Jesus our punishment, and gave us the love that belonged to Jesus. Jesus wasn’t guilty of doing any sin. But God punished Jesus for our sins, so that God could accept us because of Jesus’ holy life. We did nothing to earn God’s mercy. Jesus suffered the death meant for us. Jesus did that so that we could get the life that belonged to Him. ‘We are healed because of his wounds [cuts].’”—Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 25, adapted.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Jesus gave so much to save us. How can you help other people to understand this wonderful Bible truth and come to Him in faith?
- ② Do you trust the Bible to help you make good decisions? Or do you trust your own thinking and ideas? How are these two ways of making decisions different from each other?
- ③ What reasons do we have for our faith? How do special messages about time in the Bible help our faith? Or how do the amazing things in nature help make our faith strong? How are these things proof that God is real and lives?
- ④ If someone asked you why you believe in Jesus, how would you answer?

## “PLEASE STAY”

At 8:00 P.M., an old married couple knocked on the door of the preacher’s house next to the Seventh-day Adventist church in Savoonga, Alaska. The summer sun shone bright in the sky. At that time of year, the sun didn’t set until 2:30 A.M.

The old married couple were in their mid-80s. The husband’s name was Eugene and his wife’s name was Marie. They didn’t wait for me to open the door. I was staying at the preacher’s house to collect stories for *Adventist Mission* magazine.

Marie asked me, “Are you a pastor?”

I shook my head no. Marie’s eyes filled with tears. She said, “Please stay. We need someone to keep the church open and to teach us.”

The church had closed several times since it was built in 1972. Pastors preached and lived there for a while. But for 20 years, the church had very few members left. Then, in 2010, the church opened again when two retired nurses arrived from North Carolina. The nurses were named Bill and Elouise Hawkes. They came to Alaska as Bible workers. Bill died in 2016, but Elouise stayed. Shortly after I came to visit, Elouise left because she was sick.

Marie missed Elouise very much. Marie told me how Elouise invited villagers to her home for meals and made packs of food for many of the Alaskan Indians. Marie said, “We need Elouise.”

I never met Elouise. She was very helpful when I emailed her about my trip. My respect grew for her as I heard about her love for the villagers.

My conversation with Marie ended at 9:00 P.M. Marie looked at me again and said, “Please stay. We need someone to teach us about God.”

Marie’s words helped me to imagine in my mind how Jesus felt during His work on earth. “He saw the crowds of people and felt sorry for them because they were worried and helpless. They were like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36, ICB). I didn’t want to leave. I wanted to help these precious people in Savoonga and the other 200 Indian communities in Alaska. Only 11 of those communities have an Adventist church.

Jesus said to His followers, “ ‘There is much grain [crop] ready to gather [collect]. But the workmen are few. Pray then to the Lord Who is the Owner of the grain fields that He will send workmen to gather His grain’ ” (Matthew 9:37, 38, NLV).

Pray for Savoonga. Pray for Alaska. Thank you for your 13th Sabbath Offering this quarter that will help open a center to share God’s love with Indians in Bethel, Alaska.

## INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



**Elouise made packs of food for many of the Alaskan Indians.**



**Elouise Hawkes**