

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

Foundations of Biblical Law

Study Guide

Biblical Law

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A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

The Prison Ministry

March 12, 2002

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-23.

Major Themes

Spiritual Imprisonment

All people are prisoners either of Christ or Satan, and true freedom comes only through repentance and acknowledgment of the truth.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Ephesians 3:1, 2 Timothy 2:24-26, and 2 Peter 2:19 to show that believers are prisoners of Christ and unbelievers are captives of Satan.

God's Heart for Prisoners

God actively hears and cares for prisoners, and the Messiah's mission included setting captives free.

Lecture support: Weaver references Psalm 69:33, Psalm 102:19-20, Isaiah 42:6-7, Isaiah 61:1, and Zechariah 9:11 to show God's concern and Christ's fulfillment in Luke 4.

The Dignity of Imprisoned Saints

Many of the most godly individuals in Scripture were imprisoned, and imprisonment does not disqualify one from God's use.

Lecture support: Weaver lists Joseph, Micaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, and Christ, and quotes Hebrews 11:36-38 that the world was not worthy of them.

Fruitful Ministry in Chains

Prison can be a mission field where the gospel advances and significant works are produced.

Lecture support: Weaver points to Paul's prison epistles, the conversion of Onesimus and the Philippian jailer, and the impact on Caesar's household (Philippians 1:12-13).

The Command to Identify with Prisoners

Believers are commanded to remember prisoners as if they themselves were bound, and to visit them as an act of service to Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver expounds Hebrews 13:3 as an imperative and connects it to Matthew 25:31-46, where Christ identifies with the imprisoned.

Practical Compassion and Stewardship

The church must tangibly support prison ministry through finances and prayer, trusting God to supply needs.

Lecture support: Weaver shares the financial need for Bibles (\$7,500), recounts letters from grateful inmates, and urges a special offering.

Key Arguments

Modern prisons are unbiblical, but we must minister within the system.

Weaver argues that biblical law did not include prisons as we know them, but since they exist, Christians have a duty to minister to prisoners.

Lecture support: He lists the five biblical punishments (death, whipping, restitution, bondservitude, city of refuge) and states that prisons are 'anti-God, anti-Christ, and anti-Bible.'

Spiritual bondage is universal.

Every person is either a prisoner of Christ or a prisoner of Satan, and this spiritual reality should shape our view of physical prisoners.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Paul's self-identification as a prisoner of Christ and 2 Timothy 2:26 about being taken captive by the devil.

God's redemptive plan includes prisoners.

The Messiah's mission was explicitly to set prisoners free, both physically and spiritually, as seen in Isaiah and fulfilled in Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver reads Isaiah 42:6-7, Isaiah 49:8-9, Isaiah 61:1, and Zechariah 9:11, and notes Jesus' reading in Luke 4.

Imprisonment is not a sign of God's disfavor.

Many righteous people in Scripture were imprisoned, and God declared the world unworthy of them.

Lecture support: Weaver lists Joseph, Micaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, and Christ, and quotes Hebrews 11:36-38.

Prison can be a platform for gospel advance.

Paul's imprisonment led to the conversion of many in Caesar's household and the writing of several New Testament books.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Philippians 1:12-13, Philemon 1:10, and the prison epistles.

Visiting prisoners is a direct command with eternal consequences.

Hebrews 13:3 commands believers to remember prisoners as bound with them, and Matthew 25 shows that neglecting prisoners is neglecting Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver emphasizes the imperative mood of Hebrews 13:3 and reads Matthew 25:31-46.

Supporting prison ministry is an investment with spiritual returns.

Giving to provide Bibles for prisoners is a practical way to obey Christ and may result in reciprocal care if believers themselves are imprisoned.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'we reap what we sow' and expresses hope that others would care for him if he were in prison.

Scripture References

Hebrews 13:3

The foundational command to remember prisoners as bound with them.

Psalms 69:33

God hears the poor and does not despise His prisoners.

Ephesians 3:1

Paul calls himself the prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:1

Paul refers to himself as the prisoner of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:20

Paul is an ambassador in bonds.

Philemon 1:1, 9

Paul identifies as a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 1:8

Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of Paul His prisoner.

2 Timothy 2:24-26

The servant of the Lord must gently instruct, hoping God grants repentance, and that they may escape the snare of the devil who takes them captive.

2 Peter 2:19

A man is brought into bondage by whatever overcomes him.

Psalms 79:11

Let the sighing of the prisoner come before God; preserve those appointed to die.

Psalms 102:19-20

God looks down from heaven to hear the groaning of the prisoner and to loose those appointed to death.

Psalms 146:5-7

The Lord executes judgment for the oppressed, gives food to the hungry, and looseth the prisoners.

Isaiah 42:1-7

The Messiah is sent to open blind eyes and bring out prisoners from the prison house.

Isaiah 49:8-9

The Messiah will say to the prisoners, 'Go forth.'

Isaiah 61:1

The Spirit of the Lord anointed the Messiah to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

Zechariah 9:10-11

By the blood of the covenant, God sends forth prisoners out of the pit.

Hebrews 11:36-38

Others had trial of bonds and imprisonment; the world was not worthy of them.

Isaiah 53:8

Christ was taken from prison and from judgment.

Philemon 1:10

Paul begot Onesimus in his bonds.

Philippians 1:12-13

Paul's imprisonment fell out for the furtherance of the gospel, and his bonds in Christ were manifest in all the palace.

Study notes

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.

Discussion Questions

1. In what sense are all people 'prisoners' according to the sermon, and how does this change our view of incarcerated individuals?

Consider: Weaver argues that everyone is either a prisoner of Christ or a prisoner of Satan.

2. How does the Old Testament portrayal of God's concern for prisoners challenge common attitudes toward inmates today?

Consider: Weaver cites Psalms and Isaiah to show God hears and delivers prisoners.

3. Why is it significant that many godly biblical figures were imprisoned, and how should that affect our willingness to associate with prisoners?

Consider: Weaver lists Joseph, Jeremiah, Paul, and others, and notes Hebrews 11:38.

4. What examples from Paul's life demonstrate that prison can be a fruitful mission field?

Consider: Weaver discusses the prison epistles, Onesimus, and the Philippian jailer.

5. What does it practically mean to 'remember them that are in bonds as bound with them' (Hebrews 13:3)?

Consider: Weaver explains this as an imperative to empathize and suffer with prisoners.

6. How does Matthew 25:31-46 connect our treatment of prisoners to our relationship with Christ?

Consider: Weaver reads the passage where Christ says visiting prisoners is visiting Him.

7. What are some practical ways our church can support prison ministry beyond financial giving?

Consider: Weaver mentions sending Bibles, but the sermon implies broader visitation and support.

Applications

Pray for the prison ministry and give financially.

Weaver urges the congregation to pray about the need and to contribute to a special offering for Bibles.

Lecture support: He asks them to pray and designates a Sunday for a special offering, emphasizing it should be in addition to regular giving.

Remember prisoners as if you were in their place.

Obey the command of Hebrews 13:3 by actively empathizing with and supporting prisoners.

Lecture support: Weaver expounds the verse as an imperative and connects it to Ezekiel's example of sitting where they sat.

Visit prisoners as an act of service to Christ.

Recognize that ministering to prisoners is ministering to Jesus Himself, as taught in Matthew 25.

Lecture support: Weaver reads the passage and emphasizes that neglecting prisoners is neglecting Christ.

Do not be ashamed of imprisoned believers.

Follow Paul's instruction to Timothy not to be ashamed of those imprisoned for the faith.

Lecture support: Weaver cites 2 Timothy 1:8 and notes that many are imprisoned unjustly or for righteousness' sake.

View prison as a potential mission field.

If imprisoned, continue to serve Christ and witness, as Paul did, rather than seeing it as an end to ministry.

Lecture support: Weaver states that imprisonment is just a change in mission fields and points to Paul's fruitfulness.

Support the Bible distribution ministry.

Help provide large-print study Bibles to inmates who request them, as a tangible expression of Christ's love.

Lecture support: Weaver shares the financial need and reads a thank-you letter from an inmate, showing the impact.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: The Prison Ministry

Lecture JW01077

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01077&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01077&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.