

(English Transcript)
Foundations of the Christian Faith - Course 3
Lesson 1 - Good Angels

Welcome to Global Training Network's, Foundations of the Christian Faith, Course Three. In this course, we will talk about our final three areas of doctrine. We will discuss Angels, The Church, and Last Things or End Times.

As we begin all of our training, we emphasize two important points. First, we always teach to the head, heart, and hands. When we think of the Head, this is where we take in biblical truth. We will call this information. Biblical truth should impact our hearts through deeper belief and conviction. We call this inspiration. This information and inspiration should impact our lives. We should put these truths into practice in our lives. This represents our hands leading to transformation into the likeness of Christ.

So, head equates with information, the heart means inspiration, and hands leads to transformation.

This also relates to the key verse for all GTN training, 2 Timothy 2:2. The apostle Paul was teaching Timothy, who was responsible for teaching others, who would be responsible for teaching others, and the cycle would continue.

So, as we consider this training, the goal is not just to impact your heads, but it should impact your hearts, which would then ultimately impact your life. You will be moved to be train others in your church and community, who would then have a motivation to train others.

With that as introduction let us begin course 3. On page 2 you can see the Table of Contents for the course. Lessons 1 and 2 will focus on doctrine related to Angels. Lessons 3 through 5 will focus on the doctrine of the Church: Its Nature and Purpose, its Purity, Unity and Power, and finally its Governance, Ordinances and Worship. Lessons 6 and 7 will focus on the things that are still to come: The Return of Christ, the Millennial Kingdom, Final Judgment, and Eternal states for the righteous and the wicked.

Turn with me to page 3 as we begin Lesson 1 and the doctrine of Good Angels.

In this lesson we will explore the origin and nature of all angels. We will focus on the good, holy or elect angels considering their organization, work and destiny.

Look with me at the introduction on page 3.

There is an unseen realm all around us, occupied by spiritual beings with great power and abilities. These beings are called angels.

The Bible offers us glimpses into their world. While this realm is unseen, it is highly relevant to our lives. Like humans, some angels have chosen to rebel against God, so that in the spiritual realm of which I speak, there is a conflict between good and evil, which in some ways mirrors and relates to the war between good and evil in the world that we see.

Based on biblical revelation, there is no question about the existence of angels. There are at least three significant characteristics about this biblical revelation. First, it is extensive. The Old Testament speaks about angels 108 times, while the New Testament mentions angels 165 times.

Second, angels are mentioned throughout the Bible. The truth about them is not confined to one period of history or to specific biblical authors. Their existence is mentioned in 34 books of the Bible from Genesis through Revelation.

Third, the teaching of the Lord Jesus includes a number of references to angels as real, spiritual beings. To deny their existence is to cast doubt on the veracity and truth of Lord Jesus. In addition, angels were influential in the various events throughout the life of Christ with His birth, temptation in the wilderness, His death, resurrection, ascension and future return.

Our first lesson will focus on angels who have not rebelled against God, and these are often referred to as good angels, holy angels, the elect angels. There is a key verse at the top of page four.

Hebrews 1:14

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

What comes to mind when you read or hear the words ministering spirits?

First, you may think of anyone who ministers as a servant or helper.

The word "spirits" leads you to think of non-human beings.

This verse states that angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation. Who sent them out? Since God created angels and all of creation, it would make sense that God sends angels to do His work, Angels exist to accomplish God's will, and we will talk about the works of angels in this lesson.

Who are those who are the heirs of salvation? Well, it would be those who are made in the image and likeness of God. Angels are sent to serve humanity at God's command.

And what do angels do when they minister to the heirs of salvation? In this lesson, we will discuss the work of angels. There are a various ways that angels have worked in the past and continue to accomplish the work that God gives them to do.

On the bottom of page four, there is an activity for you to complete. Take a few minutes to write down what you already know about good and fallen angels. Pause this recording while you complete this activity. When you have finished, restart the audio.

Pause recording to complete the activity on page 4.

Welcome back. As we continue with this lesson, take note of things you will learn and be reminded of related to "good" angels that you can add to your list on page 4.

On the top of page five we will discuss the origin and the nature of angels.

The Bible assumes the existence of both good and evil angels. Their creation is hinted at in Colossians 1:16 speaking about Jesus,

“For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.”

Psalms 148:1-5 states that God created angels along with the rest of the heavens and the earth at His command.

“Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts! Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars! Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! Let them praise the name of the LORD! For he commanded and they were created.”

When the Bible speaks about thrones, dominions, rulers and authorities, this is a reference to not only the natural order but the angelic realm as well.

Angels must have been created before the seventh day of creation because Genesis 2:1 says, *“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.”* This reference to *all the host of them* speaks of spiritual creatures beyond the heavens and the earth.

It is deduced from Scripture that angels were created before the earth was formed. Job 38:4-7 says,

“Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”

There are other references to angels being called “the sons of God” (Job 1:6 and 2:1). This implies that God created angelic beings before the earth was being formed. However, we only have what Scripture explains, so we must be content with the fact that God has not given us much information about the time of when angels were created.

Sometime before Satan tempted Eve in the garden in Genesis 3, a number of angels sinned and rebelled against God. We read of this in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

“For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; (2 Peter 2:4)”

“And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— (Jude 6)”

This event occurred apparently after the sixth day of creation when God saw everything he had made and behold, it was very good (Genesis 1:31). But beyond this, Scripture gives us no further information of the timing of when angels fell.

The Bible is also clear that angels are extremely numerous, a number only God can count.

"The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary (Psalm 68:17)."

"Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? (Matthew 26:53)."

"Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands (Revelation 5 11)."

What can we know about the Nature or Character of angels from the Bible?

- When God finished his work of creation, he pronounced everything to be very good. And Jude 6 also indicates that originally all angels were holy creatures. These were given the title of "elect" angels (1 Timothy 5:21).

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality."

Presumably all angels might have remained in their original state of holiness if they had not chosen to rebel against God. Those who rebelled are now confirmed eternally in their evil rebellious state.

- Angels are not glorified human beings. In Matthew 22:30, we read that we will be like angels when we are in heaven with respect to marriage. This does not say that we will become angels. Throughout the Bible, we see that angels are clearly distinct from humans. In Psalm 8 humans are said to made a little lower than angels. In Hebrews 1:14 angels are sent to serve those who will inherit salvation. In 1 Corinthians 6:3, glorified mankind will reign with Christ and even judge angels.
- Angels are spiritual beings, sometimes referred to as winds and spirits. As spirits, angels do not have permanent physical bodies. However, they have often revealed themselves temporarily in a bodily form as they carry out God's work.
- It appears that angels do not marry or reproduce, nor do they ever die. You can read about that in Matthew 22:30 and Luke 20:34-36.

"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven."

"And Jesus said to them, 'The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the

dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

This would suggest that angels do not have the kind of family relationships that exist among human beings. Once again, scripture is otherwise silent on this point, so it is wise not to attempt to engage in speculation much further. However, the fallen angels will be punished in a place of separation from God. This is clearly stated in Scripture.

- Some, but not all, angels fell into sin. We referenced that in 2 Peter 2 :4, Revelation 12:4. Therefore, it seems that angels sinned individually and not corporately as the human race did through Adam. Adam was the legal representative for mankind when he sinned. His sin was imputed, credited to all of humanity. We also took on his sin nature that was passed from Adam to every generation through inherited sin. And we all have personal sin, as the Bible says, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God in Romans 3:23. The sin of one angel did not bring judgment to all other angels as with Adam and humanity.
- Angels have greater knowledge than humans, but they are not omniscient. While superior to humans in wisdom and knowledge, angels do not possess all knowledge. That is reserved for God alone. (Luke 4:34; Matthew 24:36; 1 Peter 1:11-12.
- Angels are stronger than humans. They are often referred to as “mighty ones”. Angels were able to roll away the stone from the tomb at the resurrection. However, they are not omnipotent. The ongoing warfare between good and evil angels indicates their strength is limited (Revelation 12:7; Daniel 10:13; 2 Peter 2:11). At least for the time of their earthly existence, human beings are made lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:7). When the Lord returns, we will be raised to a position higher than the angels. In words in 1 Corinthians 6:3, we will rule over angels.
- Angels are more mobile than humans are, but they're not omnipresent. They have the ability to move about with greater ease and speed than human beings (Job 1:7). Like humans, they are sometimes delayed in their travels (Daniel 10:10-14). Scripture nowhere indicates angels are omnipresent though.

Turn with me to the top of page 7 as we discuss various categories and the organization of angels. Though Scripture does not give us a figure for the number of angels God created, it is apparently a very large number. There appears to be no increase or decrease in the number of angels that were created in the beginning.

Angels may be broadly grouped into two categories, good angels and evil or fallen angels. However, there are other categories mentioned in Scripture which help to understand their various functions.

- Angels is one descriptive term which in both Hebrew and Greek simply means “messenger”. This appears to be the most general term used to describe these spiritual beings.

- Cherubim is a word used to describe a group of angels 95 times in the Old Testament. The word cherub is singular, and the plural of that is cherubim. It means “to cover” or “to guard”. God placed cherubim in the Garden of Eden to guard access to the Tree of Life (Genesis 3:24). There are images of two cherubim positioned on top of the Ark of the Covenant in the tabernacle in the temple. As well as two tall statutes of Cherubim whose wings span the width of the Holy of Holies. The Cherubim in some way support and guard the throne of God.
- Seraphim represent another classification of angels.. This term is used two times in the Old Testament. Seraphim lead all heaven in worshiping the Lord and purify his servants in preparation for worship. We see this in Isaiah 6:1-3

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!”

The word means “fiery” or “burning”. They act as attendants at the throne of God and agents of cleansing. Their duty was to continually worship God and call to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty. The whole earth is full of his glory.”

Their description suggests a six-winged, human-like creature. The word may be derived from the root meaning to burn or possibly from the root word “to be noble”.

- Another unique classification are the Living Creatures. Some identify the Living Creatures as Seraphim, while others say they are Cherubim. However, it seems best to identify them as a separate class of angels because they seem to have a somewhat different function. In addition to ministering around the throne of God like Cherubim and Seraphim, you can read about them in Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4. They appear to direct the judgments of God and are witness to the worship of the 144,000 before the throne of God in Revelation 14.

With their appearances like a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle, some think they represent the mightiest aspects of God's creation depicting wild beasts, domesticated animals, human beings, and birds, and they worship God continually.

There are some who think these four faces point to the Lord Jesus in his incarnation. If you remember back to The Story of the New Testament, each gospel writer wrote to a different audience, and they were presenting Jesus in a different light. For example, Matthew wrote to a primary Jewish audience, and he was presenting Jesus as the promised King, the Messiah. The face of a lion represents the king. Mark wrote to a Roman audience. He was presenting Jesus as the suffering servant. The ox represent a servant animal. Luke wrote to a Greek audience and presented Jesus as our substitute, the perfect human, the Savior, the Son of Man. Here we see the face of a man. And John wrote to the world, proving that Jesus is God, the deity of Christ. Some think the eagle might represent taking the word of God and spreading it throughout the world on

eagles' wings. Beyond those thoughts, the scriptures don't give us much more information.

All we know is these living creatures were mighty. They were involved in worship, judgment of God, and they had these four faces and six sets of wings as well. Very awe-inspiring creatures.

- At the bottom of page 7, there is yet another category of angels called the Archangels. We don't know the exact number of archangels. However, Michael is referenced five times in the Bible, and he is the only one named as a specific archangel.

Michael has authority over the other angels (Revelation 12:7). He is called the "great prince" and is charged with the protection of Israel (Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1). Other duties of archangels involved protection of the Christ child from Satan (Matthew 2:13). An archangel will also herald the rapture of the church in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

- At the top of page 8, we are introduced to the Watchers. They are angels with the task of observing. They are also involved in bringing a message from God to man (Daniel 4). The term watchers may refer either to a class of angel or a particular assignment given to angels.
- Mentioned previously, angels are referred to as "sons of God", including Satan, in Job 1:6-7 and 2:1.

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the LORD.

They are sons of God in the sense of having been created by God.

- Angels appear to work within an organizational framework. Colossians 1:16 refers to "thrones, dominions, rulers, and authorities in the heavenly realms. These terms do not represent categories of angels but instead indicate levels of authority or placement within an organizational plan. The same terminology is used of fallen angels in Ephesians 6:12.
- There is one final category, The Angel of the Lord. At a minimum, the angel of Lord is a Theophany. A special appearance of God stepping into time and space to communicate with man. It could also be what many theologians believe to be a Christophany. This is a pre-incarnate manifestation of the Lord Jesus. A list of references to The Angel of the Lord is found on page 8 in your in your handout.

After the incarnation of Christ, there are no further references to The Angel of the Lord.

On page nine, We will review the work of these holy or good angels sent by God. This work can be divided into two categories: the work of angels concerning Jesus and the work of angels in general.

You see a list of different ways that angels ministered to the Lord Jesus throughout his life, his death, his ascension, and even when he returns in the future

The angels have general tasks as well.

- They constantly worship God.
- They protect God's people.
- They guide and strengthen God's servants.
- They interpret God's will for mankind.
- They carry out God's judgments.
- And as presented in the parable of the rich man Lazarus, angels are used to carry the saved home to the Lord after physical death.

The Scriptures are also very clear that angels will be involved in future events.

- An archangel will announce the rapture of the church.
- Angels will carry out God's judgments during the tribulation.
- Fearsome angels will accompany Christ Jesus when he returns.
- Angels will gather the elect at Christ's return.
- Angels will separate believers from the unsaved at the end of the Tribulation.
- And angels will protect the new Jerusalem.

There are a few things to be cautious of when dealing with angels.

- Beware of false doctrine influenced by angels. Galatians 1.8 ...

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed."

Fallen angels can appear like an angel of light as they look to deceive humanity. False teachers will come who are influenced by demons. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 ...

"For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."

We are not to worship angels, pray to them, or to seek them.

- The worship of angels is one of the false doctrines taught at Colossae.

- The angel told John in the book of Revelation not to worship him.
- There are no examples in Scripture of anyone praying to any specific angel or asking angels for help.
- Our role is to talk to the Lord who is himself the commander of all the angelic forces.
- However, it would not be wrong to ask God to fulfill his promise in Psalm 91:11 to send angels to protect us in times of need.

So, do angels appear to people today?

There seems to be no compelling reason to rule out the possibility of angelic appearances today. However, we should use extreme caution in receiving guidance from an angel. In the spiritual realm, fallen angels can appear as angels of light. They can be deceptive. So, we should always filter whatever we think may be happening in the spiritual realm and align it with what the Word of God tells us. Always use discernment when considering things in the spiritual realm.

What is the Destiny of Good Angels?

Angels will apparently minister throughout eternity in much the same way they do now. They will minister in the New Jerusalem which will be an eternal city (Revelation 21:1, 12). They are sent to minister to those who are heirs of salvation (Hebrews 1:14). There is no indication in Scripture that this ministry ever ceases.

In summary, all angels have been individually created by God. They have great power and ability. Their purpose is to minister before God in various ways and to carry out His decrees on earth. Some have remained true to God while others have rebelled. Among the good angels, their functions vary, but much of their work on earth involves ministering to the heirs of salvation.

As we close Lesson 1, it might be helpful to go back to the chart that you started on page four. Review what you wrote about good angels, and consider what you have learned in this lesson. Take a few minutes to update your chart with your new learnings.

Here is what I have listed on my chart for Good or Holy Angels:

- Angels are talked about throughout the Bible, 108 times in the Old Testament and 165 times in the New Testament.
- They are created, spiritual beings.
- It seems that all angels were created in a holy state and they were given free will to serve God or rebel against God.
- The eternal destiny of angels appears to be sealed. Good angels can not become evil angels and evil angels have no opportunity for repentance and salvation.
- Apparently they were created before the foundations of the earth were laid.
- Angels are messengers of God.
- Angels worship God continually.
- They do not have permanent physical bodies, but can take on a physical form to fulfill what God has sent them to do.
- Angels are not usually visible to humans.
- Angels appear not to marry, reproduce, and are not subject to death. They are eternal.
- Their headquarters are in heaven, in the presence of God.
- There are classifications of angels such as Cherubim, Seraphim, Living Creatures, Archangels, and Watchers).
- The Angel of the Lord appears to be a unique type of angel, surely a Theophany or an appearance of God, and possibly a Christophany or a pre-incarnate appearance of the second person of the Trinity.
- There appears to be a hierarchy of some sort in the heavenly realm.
- Angels are sent by God to guard, protect, guide, and serve humanity.
- Angels are powerful but not all powerful, they know more than humans but are not all knowing, and they can move faster and in different ways than humans but they are not ever present. These attributes are reserved only for God.
- Angels are numerous, beyond our ability to number.
- There are only two good angels who are named. They are Michael and Gabriel.
- Angels were present at the creation of the earth, during the time of Moses with the 10 plagues and the giving of the Law, even the birth of John the Baptist.
- Angels were actively involved in the life and ministry of Jesus at his birth, in the wilderness, surrounding his death, resurrection, and ascension. They will also be part of the return of Jesus and his reign as King of kings.
- There is no indication in Scripture that angels can not appear to us today. Their ministry before God appears to continue throughout eternity.
- Angels should not be worshipped or prayed to.

When we continue with lesson two, we will look at the angels who rebelled against God. These are fallen angels, demons, or unclean spirits.