# Bible Study Lesson: “Reformed by Grace, Faithful in Waiting”

Reformation emphasis: The church is always being reformed by God’s Word and grace—called to repentance, humble dependence, watchful hope, and faithful stewardship as we wait for Christ.

## Theme

God’s people live between deliverance and Christ’s return: we turn from sin, look to God for mercy, watch in hope, and steward His gifts faithfully—not to earn salvation, but because grace has claimed us.

## Scripture Focus

- Judges 4:1–7, - Psalm 123, -- 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11, - Matthew 25:14–30,

## Summary

These passages together call God’s people to continual reform under His Word. Judges shows that sin brings bondage and that deliverance begins with God’s initiative and command. Psalm 123 teaches humble, corporate dependence on God’s mercy rather than self-reliance. 1 Thessalonians 5 reminds us that the day of the Lord is coming, so we live as children of light—sober, hopeful, and encouraging one another. Matthew 25 warns against fearful inactivity and calls for faithful stewardship of what God has entrusted to us. The Reformation theme is clear: salvation is by grace through faith in Christ, not by works—but saving faith produces repentance, watchfulness, and faithful service. Good works are the fruit, not the root, of our acceptance with God.

## Key Points

1. Judges 4:1–7 — God initiates deliverance.

Israel’s sin leads to oppression, but God speaks through Deborah and commands Barak to act. The Lord does not merely tell Barak to try harder; He promises His presence and victory. Reformation begins with hearing God’s Word and turning from sin, trusting that God

goes before His people. Obedience is a response to God's initiative, not a way to earn His favor.

2. Psalm 123 — Mercy-seeking dependence.

The psalmist lifts his eyes to the Lord, asking for mercy. This is the posture of God's people: not boasting in merit, but looking to the God who shows grace. Reformation humility says, "Have mercy on us, O Lord," and rejects both pride and despair. We depend on God's mercy in Christ and wait on Him together.

3. 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11 — Watchful hope.

The day of the Lord comes unexpectedly, but believers are children of light, not darkness. We are called to stay sober-minded, put on faith, love, and hope, and encourage one another. The gospel gives both comfort and vigilance: Christ died for us so that we might live with Him. Reformation hope is not passive; it makes us alert and strengthens the church.

4. Matthew 25:14–30 — Faithful stewardship, not fearful paralysis.

The master entrusts his servants with resources and expects faithful use. The third servant hides his talent out of fear and misrepresents the master. Faithful servants risk action because they trust the one who entrusted them. This parable does not teach salvation by works; it shows that grace produces faithful stewardship. Fear and sloth are not neutral—they rob God of glory and others of blessing. We serve from grace, not to earn grace.

Discussion Questions

1. Where do you see a need for personal or corporate reform—areas where we have drifted from God's Word or grown comfortable with sin?

2. In Judges 4:1–7, what does this passage reveal about sin, oppression, and God's initiative in deliverance? How is Barak's task a response to God's promise rather than self-salvation?

3. Psalm 123 is a corporate prayer for mercy. Why is it important to pray together as people who have no claim on God except His grace? What makes self-reliance so tempting?

4. How does the certainty of Christ's return shape the way we live now? What does "watchfulness" look like in ordinary life?

5. In 1 Thessalonians 5:11, how can our group better "encourage one another and build one another up"? What discourages us from doing this?

6. In the parable of the talents, why does the third servant fail? What fears, false views of God, or comparison keep us from using what God has entrusted to us?

7. How do these texts correct both errors: “I must earn God’s favor by my works” and “I can live carelessly because grace is free”?

8. How does Christ fulfill what these passages long for—deliverance, mercy, watchful hope, and faithful stewardship? What would it look like for our group to be “always reforming” under Scripture?

Application

Personal: This week, identify one area of sin or bondage and bring it to God in repentance. Pray Psalm 123 slowly, asking for mercy. Name one gift, resource, or opportunity God has entrusted to you and take one concrete step of faithful use. Examine your motives: Are you serving to earn God’s approval, or from gratitude for grace in Christ?

Group: Choose one way to encourage one another this week—send a note, pray specifically, or check in on someone who is discouraged. Consider a simple service project that uses the group’s gifts for others. Memorize 1 Thessalonians 5:11 or 1 Thessalonians 5:9–10 together.

Church/Reformation: Celebrate Reformation truth by returning to Scripture, keeping Christ and grace central, and asking, “What needs reforming in our life together so that God’s Word is heard and obeyed?” Avoid both proud traditionalism and careless novelty; test everything by Scripture.

Closing Prayer: Lord, we thank You that You are merciful and that Christ has died for us. Reform us by Your Word. Turn us from sin, fix our eyes on Your mercy, make us watchful in hope, and faithful with what You have entrusted to us—for Your glory and the good of others. Amen.