

FOUNDATIONS
of the
FAITH

Doctrine I - II



Dr. Paul G. Caram

“Foundations of the Faith”

Copyright © by Paul G. Caram

January 2004 / Fourth Printing

Textbook of Zion Christian University

Used by Permission

All Rights Reserved

Printed in the United States of America

All scripture quotations in this book are taken from the
King James Version Bible unless otherwise stated

Printed by:

Zion Christian Publications

Box 256

Ulysses, Pa. 16948 USA

Zion Christian University

www.zion.edu

Table of Contents

DOCTRINE ONE

I. Introduction to Doctrine	Page 1
II. The Doctrine of God	Page 11
III. The Doctrine of Christ	Page 28

DOCTRINE TWO

I. The Doctrine of Man	Page 59
II. The Doctrine of Sin	Page 80
III. The Doctrine of Salvation	Page 105

DOCTRINE
ONE

DOCTRINE ONE

General Outline:

- I. INTRODUCTION TO DOCTRINE
- II. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD
- III. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

I. INTRODUCTION TO DOCTRINE

A.) BASIC DOCTRINES OF THE WORD OF GOD

B.) NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

C.) THE POWER OF TRUTH AND ERROR

D.) THE POWER OF THE MOUTH

1.) Negative Power of the Mouth

2.) Positive Power of the Mouth

E.) LIGHT AND DARKNESS

F.) REASONS CHRISTIANS HAVE ERROR

G.) THE PROBLEM OF TRADITION

I. INTRODUCTION TO DOCTRINE

Doctrine in its simplest form means “teaching.” In the New Testament it means both the act and content of teaching. Doctrine is “a body of teaching used as a standard of orthodoxy; a set of principles and practices.”

A). MAJOR DOCTRINES OF THE BIBLE

- 1. Theology** - *the study of God*, including His names, attributes, character, and the Trinity.
- 2. Bibliology** - *the study of the Scriptures*, their canonization, authenticity, and authorship. This is covered in a course entitled “Biblical Introduction.”
- 3. Christology** - *the study of the Lord Jesus Christ*. His deity and humanity, names and titles, death and resurrection, and His ministries as Prophet, Priest, and King are studied.
- 4. Pneumatology** - *the study of the Holy Spirit*. As the third member of the Trinity, His Person and ministry is analyzed. His involvement in creation until the present is considered. Also the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the seven spirits of the Lord are compared. This study is covered in another course entitled “The Comforter.”
- 5. Anthropology** - *the study of man* as a tri-part being—body, soul, and spirit. His creation and fall are looked at, along with God's original purpose for man and woman.
- 6. Hamartiology** - *the study of sin*. Original sin, inherited sin, and deliberate sin are differentiated.
- 7. Soteriology** - *the study of salvation*. This would include the definition of many terms such as redemption, atonement, propitiation, sanctification, justification, and eradication.
- 8. Ecclesiology** - *the study of the Church*. This is a look at the universal church and God's eternal purposes. Also studied is the local church, its government, offices, functions, and ordinances such as water baptism and communion. This is covered in another course called The Local Church.
- 9. Angelology** - *the study of angels and demons*. Angelology will look at the fall of Lucifer and the rebellion in heaven, and how this affects the world today. We have a separate course on Angelology.
- 10. Eschatology** - *the study of the end times*. The Second Coming of Christ, the Antichrist, the Great Tribulation, the Millennium, and the new heaven and earth are looked at in depth. These topics are covered in two other courses—Daniel and Revelation.

The above are the *major fields of doctrine* in the Bible. In addition to these, there are many other doctrines which are subheadings of the above ten. They would include: divine healing, finances, marriage, music and worship, unity, the restoration of the Church and of Israel, and many others. DOCTRINE ONE focuses on the Doctrine of God and of Christ. DOCTRINE TWO is the Doctrine of Man, Sin, and Salvation. Therefore, we are analyzing *five* main areas of truth in this textbook.

B). NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

What is Doctrine? As we have already said, doctrine in its simplest form means “teaching.” In the New Testament it means both the act and content of teaching. Doctrine basically refers to “some body of teaching used as a standard of orthodoxy; a set of principles and practices.” Doctrine is not something to be shunned. Right doctrine is truth. It is refreshing like the morning dew of heaven (Deut. 32:2).

Jesus had Doctrine: “The people were astonished at his doctrine (or teaching) for he taught them as one having authority...” (Mt. 7:28-29). Jesus claimed that his doctrine was divine. He declared: “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.” (see Jn. 7:16-17).

The Doctrine of the Apostles: “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship” (Acts 2:42). After the Day of Pentecost, Christian doctrine (the body of orthodox teaching) began to be formulated and presented to those who responded to the gospel. The apostles received their doctrine from Christ, the Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20, 3:5).

Where Do We Receive Our Doctrine? We must forfeit our own ideas and convictions. Some people are ready to die for their convictions. Thus, we better be sure they are God's convictions and not our own. Paul received his gospel from God (Gal.1:11-12). We must get our doctrine (teachings, ideas, and convictions) from God. We must not present our own opinions. Only truth that is spoken in season, under the anointing, will help people. Our own ideas will not help but only hinder others. God will not anoint our ideas. We must obtain our doctrine from:

- The Lord Himself. This comes from an intimate fellowship with Him and being anointed.
- The Holy Scriptures. The doctrine of the apostles and prophets.
- Anointed Teachers. God has placed teachers in the Body (Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor.12:28).

Teachers of Doctrine: (Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor.12:28-29) There are some in the Church whose official function is to teach the believers. Some truths are simple and foundational, but then there are also deeper truths (1 Cor. 3:2 milk vs. meat). Some teachers *specialize* in certain areas of truth. For example, one man may place his emphasis on marriage and order in the home. Others may stress the importance of finance, or music. Still others may teach on the gifts of the Holy Spirit or divine healing. In the Old Testament, the Levites and prophets taught the people (2 Chron.17:8-9, 30:22). There is a tremendous difference between a Sunday school teacher in a local church, and a teacher sent from God to the Body of Christ. This is one of the fivefold ministries of Christ.

Importance of Doctrine: Right doctrine can literally save us and those who hear us (1 Tim. 4:16). It will lead us to full redemption from sin and perfection (2 Tim. 3:16-17). “But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you ...being then made free from sin ...” (Rom. 6:17-18). Obeying the truth purifies our soul, over and over again (1 Pet.1:22). On the other hand, some doctrines can defile or even destroy us (2 Cor.11:3-4, 11:15, 2 Pet. 2:1). What we believe produces a life-style and ultimately determines our destiny. Do not let anyone tell you that what you believe is not important, as long as we just love one another. We need to walk in the light as well.

Key to Having Right Doctrine: (See page 9—“Reasons Christians Have Error”). The key to having right doctrine depends upon the condition of our heart, not being an intellectual giant. In John 7:17 it says that the man or woman who is *willing to do God’s will* shall know if a doctrine is from God, or from man. When people evade God’s will to do their own, they always have cloudy doctrine, but obedience brings a clear mind. I cannot overemphasize this.

“The pure in heart will see” (Mt. 5:8). Obey the will of God for your life and your whole being will be flooded with light and understanding. Israel could not perceive what God was doing because their hearts were so hard and unbelieving. Thus, God deprived them of understanding. Read Deuteronomy 29:2-4, Hebrews 3:7-11. Disobedience brings darkness into the heart (cf. Rom. 1:21).

We Must Have Growing Doctrine: No matter how much we have learned, Jesus has more to reveal. We must never stop growing and learning as the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:17-19). Paul said in the maturity of his life; “I have not yet attained.” He was still stretching forward to reach the mark, the prize (Phil. 3:12-14). May we never feel that we have come to the apex of spirituality. On the contrary, we should realize that we have barely scratched the surface of what God has to reveal.

People who are locked up in the prison of *tradition* believe that they have reached the summit! Often there is a feeling, even among Spirit-filled people, that everything that can be known about spiritual matters is already known and understood, but this is a false notion (1 Cor. 8:2). We must not limit God! He always has much more to show us. God is infinite (Psa. 147:5). He will be unfolding the unsearchable riches of His grace unto us for all eternity (Eph. 2:7).

True and False Doctrine: True doctrine [or teaching] comes from the Holy Spirit. He is called “The Spirit of Truth” in John 16:13. False doctrine comes from the mind of man or from an evil spirit. There is tremendous error with our natural mind. It is an enemy of God (Rom. 8:6-7).

False doctrine, though it is sometimes the result of ignorance, is more often because of impure motives. “He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him” (Jn. 7:18). This was said in the context of having right doctrine (Jn. 7:16-18). If we want discernment and right doctrine, we must not seek our own glory. Faith and understanding are hindered by selfish motives (Jn. 5:44).

Words and ideas have a tremendous spiritual force in them. Doctrines (teachings, ideas) are inspired by either the *Spirit of Truth* or the *spirit of error* (1 Jn. 4:6). The tongue, which is the most powerful member of our body, releases one or the other. Adolph Hitler’s tongue destroyed a whole nation and started a world war. He spread the same venomous spirit he had to all of Germany—by his mouth. Hitler threw his mantle over all of Germany. Thus, we see the power of the mouth.

PRIDE is the greatest reason for deception, false doctrine, and false religions. People want to claim sole ownership of some new idea or concept that no one else has ever thought of before. *Prediction*, too, can be pride, a golden idol. Men want to glory in their ability to forecast future events.

C). THE POWER OF TRUTH AND ERROR
(Truth and Error Compared)

Doctrine is a belief or concept. What we believe has a great effect upon us. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Prov. 23:7). Often our *ways* are not God's ways and that is because our *thoughts* are not His thoughts (see Isa. 55:8-9). What we believe is important because:

- An idea makes us live a certain way. If we *think* wrong, we will *act* wrong.

- It will produce fruit in our life. Truth produces Christlikeness within our lives. Something false can hinder, distort, and even warp a person. This is the reason Paul was jealous over the Corinthian believers. He knew that a wrong belief would produce the wrong fruit (2 Cor.11:2-4). He told them that if they received *another Jesus* and *another gospel*, they would be receiving *another spirit*.

- It will take us somewhere. An idea produces a lifestyle which will lead us somewhere. It will either take us toward God's goal, or away from it.

- Believing the truth can *save* our soul. Believing a lie could make us *lose* our soul. It depends on what doctrine it is. Some doctrines are much more serious than others.

Doctrine is a belief. It produces a way of life. Thus, we should be careful what we imbibe. Remember, an idea takes us somewhere. Consider *where* the idea came from and from *whom*. Whenever there is a new doctrine or movement going around, observe who follows it. This should give us a clue whether it is of God or not! Where are those who propagate the “cause” going, and where are they going to end up? Hebrews 13:7 tells us to follow the godly: “Whose faith follow, considering *the end* of their [lifestyle].” Remember, we take on the characteristics of those to whom we listen. By adhering to the words of the godly, we are fashioned like the One they are following. But if we hearken to those who are going their own way, we receive their mentality and become like them.

SUMMARY

Right Doctrine

(Truth)

Light

- Exposes our need. Shows us where we need to change.
- Makes us like Christ. Produces the fruit of the Spirit within us.
- Promotes humility.
- Brings liberty.
- Causes us to hit the mark!
Keeps us on course.

Wrong Doctrine

(Error)

Darkness

- Hides the real condition of our hearts, making us think we are all right as we are.
- Makes us like Satan. Strengthens the fallen nature. Produces the works of the flesh.
- Exalts pride.
- Brings bondage.
- Causes us to miss the mark.
Gets us off on a tangent.

D). POWER OF THE MOUTH (The power of a concept)

Every doctrine promotes a concept, a mentality, and therefore a way of life. Behind every doctrine or teaching is a spiritual force. This is the reason doctrine is so important. As we have already mentioned, wrong doctrine is not just an error. It is “the spirit of error.” On the other hand, right doctrine comes from the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit. Every time someone speaks, a spiritual force issues from the mouth and it is coming from one of three sources:

- From the human spirit
- From the Holy Spirit
- From an evil spirit Let's consider the negative power of the tongue, then the positive.

1.) Negative Power of the Tongue

Wrong words - eat like a canker. 2 Timothy 2:17-18 “Their word will eat as doth a canker...who concerning the truth have erred...and have overthrown the faith of some.” Wrong doctrine is a devouring spirit. It devours faith. Words are spirit and can build up or tear down (Job 19:2, 6:24, 4:4).

Wrong words - deflect us from the mark. 2 Corinthians 11:4 Others were preaching “another Jesus” “another gospel” to the Corinthians. The Corinthians, in receiving a false message, were actually “receiving another spirit.” When you accept a wrong doctrine, you are accepting another spirit. It will produce the wrong fruit in your life and take you away from the mark.

Wrong words - bring bondage. Galatians 2:4-5 Paul said *false brethren* were propagating wrong doctrine ... “that they might bring us into bondage.” Wrong teaching brings people into *bondage*. In verse 5, Paul would not tolerate it ... “that the truth of the gospel might continue” with them. Paul knew his converts would not come to Christian perfection if they embraced a false idea, a false spirit. He knew it would blemish and distort them.

People with no convictions are termed “simple” in Scripture (Rom.16:18). These create no strife, for they can flow with anyone and everything, whether it is good or evil. We must learn to draw the line! Do you realize that it is an evil thing to be simple and undiscerning? A person could lose his soul because of it. It is really that serious! We better read Romans 16:18 again.

Wrong words - take our peace. 2 Thessalonians 2:2 “That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter [supposed to have come] from us.” Read 2:3. People were forging letters in Paul’s name, saying that the Lord was about to come or had already come. Paul said, “The Lord will not come until the Man of Sin is revealed first.” The point I want to make is this: words can upset us—not just spoken words, but *written* words too. When I was in college, my mother wrote me a short note, saying that a friend had been killed in the Viet Nam war. Those few words scratched out on a piece of paper tremendously affected my spirit. I was devastated. In a sense, *spirit*, *word*, and *letter* are synonymous. Words are spirit! They are powerful, whether spoken or written. Books have spirits in them. You will receive the spirit of the author and the spirit that inspired the author. I am referring to Christian books and magazines as well as others. Be selective in what you digest.

Wrong words - a wrong spirit. 1 John 4:1 “Believe not every spirit, but [test] the spirits whether they are of God.” How do these spirits manifest themselves? Usually through people! “Because many false prophets are gone into the world.” Read also verses 2-3— “Every spirit that confesses [through people] that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God ... this is the spirit of antichrist.” This spirit is in people. It is manifested through their mouths by preaching and teaching, and also writing.

Wrong words - doctrines of demons. 1 Timothy 4:1 “...Some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.” 4:2 - “Speaking lies in hypocrisy.” This shows us *the origin* of false doctrines that people speak and propagate. It comes from evil spirits. When people get these evil spirits in them, it energizes them with supernatural strength to propagate their “cause.” This is the reason a Mormon or Jehovah's Witness has boundless energy. Satan is not there to hinder them, but in actual fact, to help them.

Why do deceiving spirits get into people? Often the deception thrives because of *a proud heart*. (See Obadiah 1:3). “The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee.” Paul later reminds Timothy to take heed to the established doctrine; it would save both him and his hearers (1 Tim. 4:16). The truth can save men, but error can absolutely ruin them and cause them to lose their souls. Such is the power of words, concepts, and doctrines. Remember, *the truth* will set us free (Jn. 8:31-32).

Wrong words - damnable heresies. 2 Peter 2:1 “Damnable heresies” by false teachers will bring “swift destruction.” Believing a lie can utterly destroy a person. Once again, we see the power of words. In believing a lie one is accepting a wrong spirit and it will cause him or her to live wrong. Some wrong doctrines are serious enough to damn someone. Others, however, are not as serious.

Wrong words - a lying spirit. 2 Chronicles 18:22 “The Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets.” Ahab followed their prophecies and died. Because of wickedness, God sends strong delusion to induce people to believe a lie (2 Thes. 2:10-12). Once again we see that the mouth is able to bring men and women to ruin. While we are on the subject of prophecy, we should also understand that prophecies pronounced over us tend to pull us in a certain direction, even if they are not from God but merely from the natural mind. The power of suggestion can sway us.

Wrong words - a river of slander. Revelation 12:15 “The serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman [or Church] that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.” This flood cast out of the serpent's mouth is *slander*. It is a verbal attack against the Christians. In Revelation 13:5-6, Satan speaks through his man, the Antichrist. “And there was given him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies.” The serpent's power is in his mouth. Even Satan has a “river” flowing out of him. He has a tremendous anointing but it is a counterfeit of the true.

Wrong words - wrong fruit. 2 Corinthians 10:5 “Casting down [reasonings].” Many rationalizations come from Satan. These thoughts are converted into words and then propagated to others. The poison is spread to others by *words*. The unsundered tongue is a “world of iniquity” according to James 3:6. Words are powerful. The universe was created by them. Most of our problems stem from the wrong words that were planted in us when we were young which have shaped our character and self-image. We need renewed minds. Our *thoughts* are not God's thoughts, therefore, our *ways* are not his ways (Isa. 55:8-9). Right thoughts produce the right ways and the right fruit.

Two Rivers in the Last days:

There will be two great spiritual forces unleashed in the last days. This is the conflict of the ages.

- *Out of the mouth* of Satan and his followers will flow a river of slander and abuse (Rev.12:15).
- *Out of the mouth* of the Lord and His people will flow rivers of living waters (Jn. 7:38, Joel 2:28).
This stream will have words of life. The other stream will have words that kill and destroy.

2.) Positive Power of the Tongue

Right words - bring life. John 6:63 “The words that I speak unto you are spirit and life.” The right words bring life unto us. Of Christ it was said: “Never man spake like this man” (Jn. 7:46). Christ is within us. He desires to speak great things through us. Lord, make us your mouth, your voice! Remember, *words are spirit*. Man is spirit too. This is the reason words can so affect us.

Right words - make us clean. John 15:3 “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” Anointed words can wash and make us so clean (Eph. 5:26). The Word of God can show us our deepest motives (Heb. 4:12). When you have been in a church service and after the message has been delivered, ask yourself this question: “Do I feel washed and clean?” Sometimes you might feel contaminated and that is because the fountain that was issuing from the speaker was polluted.

Right words - bring remedy. Job 6:25 “How forcible are right words!” The right words really get the job done. In counseling it means the right diagnosis has been made and the right solution given. Arguing is sometimes *the reaction* of not making the right diagnosis. When you tell people that they love their problems and their bondages, and they only want pity, you better be sure you are right! Otherwise you will make their problems worse and their burdens heavier. In Job's situation, his friends had misjudged the situation.

Right words - God speaking through us. 2 Samuel 23:2 “The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” God spoke *through* David and this is something to desire greatly. Paul said to desire earnestly the best gifts, but especially that you may prophesy (cf. 1 Cor.14:1). God said *in David*, “Today if you will hear my voice” (Heb. 4:7). God cleansed Isaiah's lips so that He could speak more effectively through him (Isa. 6:5-8). According to Acts 28:25, the Holy Spirit spoke mightily through Isaiah. “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet...” The Holy Spirit is looking for people through whom He can speak.

Matthew 10:19-20 is an exhortation and encouragement to saints who are persecuted. Those who are called upon to give an account of their faith are not to premeditate what to say, “For it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” God wants to speak through us. The Creator who spoke this world into existence wants to speak through us.

To Jeremiah God said, “This day have I put my words in thy mouth” (Jer.1:9). In 5:14 He said: “Behold I will make my words in thy mouth fire.” Fire can come out of our mouth when we are preaching and it can burn up dross in the people we are ministering unto. It can feel very uncomfortable. God can speak dramatically through us, but He can also speak very gently. It all depends on the mood of the Spirit. He can manifest Himself through us as fire to burn up dross in the lives of our hearers, or He can flow through us as a refreshing river.

Right Words - quench spiritual thirst and feed spiritual hunger. Proverbs 10:11 “The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life.” When anointed, our words can quench a thirsty soul and bring refreshing to one who is dry. “The lips of the righteous feed many” (Prov.10:21). Words spoken under the anointing can also nourish a hungry and feeble soul. Christ promises that every one who hungers and thirsts for righteousness shall be filled (cf. Mt. 5:6). But how are they filled? Often they are fed and watered by shepherds with an anointed ministry. Our mouth can feed the hungry and water the thirsty. According to Isaiah 50:4, God can give us the tongue of the learned to know how to speak to those who are weary. We should encourage and praise people often, especially the younger ones. The right word can make a stooping heart revive (Prov.12:25).

Right words - a right confession that brings the victory. Malachi 3:16 When the saints make Christ the center of their conversation, it brings His presence. God comes where He feels welcome. It starts in our thoughts and then permeates our conversations. In Malachi, the saints who *thought often* about the Lord, spoke often about Him too. This invites His presence. Let us make Him the focus, the center of our attention. The confession of our mouth means a lot.

On the other hand, if we speak often about the devil and demons, it actually invites them. They love attention. Besides this, demons need “food.” They stay where they have attention and where they are well fed. They are attracted to and feast upon unsavory topics. They feed upon depressing things: gloom, problems, miserable experiences, anguish, regret, self-pity, unforgiveness, hatred and bitterness. For this reason we must give them nothing to eat. Starve them out! The demons will not want to stay around if we are talking about the things of light and about Him who is the Light. Instead we should feed the life of Christ who is within us. Let us feed upon His Word, upon His faith, upon His goodness, and upon the fact that He makes all things beautiful in His time. Paul tells us to be “nourished up in the words of faith” (1 Tim. 4:6).

Philemon 1:6 says we should “acknowledge all the good things that are in us by Jesus Christ.” Instead of dwelling on all our faults, we should start thanking God for all the good things He has wrought in our lives. Give the Holy Spirit a lot of credit for what He has done.

Right words - a sword that slays evil. Revelation 1:16, 19:15 “Out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.” The sword that comes from the mouth of the Lord judges evil (Rev. 2:16). The sword (Word of God) divides soul and spirit (Heb. 4:12), separating good from evil in the hearts of men.

Anything that proceeds from the mouth of Satan and his ministers is an attempt to undermine righteousness, whether it is subtle or blatant. In the last days, an unclean spirit will come from the mouth of Satan, the False Prophet, and the Antichrist (see Rev.16:13).

Everything Satan says brings death! Everything God says brings life! Remember, the power is in the mouth. Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov.18:21). The mouth will be *the source* of the two great spiritual forces that will be released in the end times.

Doctrine divides—it is supposed to bring division! It divides soul and spirit, the holy from the profane, and the children of God from the children of the Wicked One. Real doctrine is *truth*, and it will separate all that is false from our lives. If we want to come into full freedom, we must continue to grow in the Word, in the doctrine of the Lord. (Compare John 8:31-32 with John 6:60-61, 66.)

E). LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Truth is far more than just a standard of right and wrong. Truth is light! It is a liberating power. David said, “The entrance of thy word giveth light” (Psa.119:130). We have many dark areas in our soul that need illumination. The subject of light and darkness is not figurative. It is a very real thing in the spiritual realm. There is an actual light inside each Christian. People who are just saved only have a little light in them. This light grows brighter and brighter as greater truth and revelation permeate the soul (Prov. 4:18). Demons can see the light in people. This was why the demons could say to the unconverted exorcist, “Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you?” (Acts 19:15).

A VISION - A number of years ago a lady had a vision of the earth. Thick darkness was covering the people but then she saw lights everywhere emerging out of this darkness. She asked the angel, “What are all these lights?” He explained, “It is the light of Christ in the Christians.” Jesus tells us, “I am the light of the world.” But He also said, “Ye are the light of the world” and that is because He is in us. The Bible is much more literal than we think. In Matthew 6:23 Christ warned: “If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.” This is referring to one who has backslidden, whose light has been snuffed out. Paul explained that the foolish heart becomes filled with darkness when it turns from God unto vanity (Rom.1:21). In First Thessalonians 5:5, the “children of light” are the redeemed, and the “children of darkness” are the unredeemed. May we not only be a child of light, but may that light grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

F). REASONS CHRISTIANS HAVE ERROR

- 1. A Lack of Knowledge.** Jesus said, “Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures” (Mt. 22:29).
- 2. Immaturity.** Sometimes a Christian has error simply because he is young and uninformed.
- 3. People are Taught Wrong.** The problem then is in the leader (Lev. 4:13, 4:3).
- 4. The Sin of Overconfidence.** Some believe they are infallible, but this is being foolish and cocky.
- 5. Failure to Test a Revelation.** Paul said, “Prove all things.” John said “[Test] the spirits.”
- 6. Sincerely Wrong.** Sincerity is not enough to keep us on course. Are we willing to listen to others?
- 7. Willingly Ignorant.** Sometimes believers are purposely evasive of truths they would rather not face.
- 8. A Closed Mind.** This is stubbornness, unteachableness, and an independent spirit.
- 9. Tradition.** Often Christians are satisfied with what they know and do not want anything to interfere.
- 10. Desire for Anything Sensational.** An insatiable curiosity for the mysterious (Psalm 131:1 is the cure).
- 11. Imbalanced Truth.** An overemphasis of something to the exclusion of other important truths.
- 12. Simple.** This is being naive or gullible, and it puts no distinction between good or evil.
- 13. Wrong Motives.** Deception gains a stronghold when people have impure motives (Obad.1:3).
- 14. Pride.** The greatest culprit of deception. People want to claim something no one else has ever had.
- 15. Delusion Sent From God.** God sends blindness to those who reject the truth but love sin.

G). THE PROBLEM OF TRADITION

By nature we resist change. Often we resent anything that challenges our routine or interferes with the way we are accustomed to doing things. For many, it is easier to be safe and secure in the old established patterns of life. Yet, old mindsets, habits, and traditions are often *a major hindrance* to a new moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives and churches. We cannot expect God to visit His Church in the same fashion He did in the past. God is a God of variety. This is seen by the fact that every blade of grass He created is uniquely different. The same is true of every snowflake and every drop of water. We cannot predict just exactly how and when He will move the next time. But we do know that God is a God of motion, and if we sit still in our traditions, our spiritual life will dry up. Therefore, we must be flexible and open for change.

Every time God moves afresh, men are astonished. It staggers the minds of those in the world and also in the Church. On the Day of Pentecost, everyone was *amazed* and *confounded* (Acts 2:6-7). God had never moved this way before. With each new visitation of God, there are always some who mock and reject it because it goes a step beyond everything else that was known previously. Israel was used to the old covenant and many would not submit to the new covenant and the new message. They were *satisfied* with “the old-time religion.” Many Bible-believing Israelites missed the day of their visitation because of the mind-sets of tradition and prejudice. The Lord Himself visited Israel but He was not recognized by most.

Ironically, *the greatest opponents* of every new move of God are those who were in the center of the previous one. History bears this out repeatedly! Those who were an integral part of the previous move of God feel they have a monopoly on the Holy Spirit, and that they understand the ways of God better than anyone else. But God moves on. If we settle on previous experiences, we will be left behind. God will have to look for new people who will hear what He is presently saying.

God used John the Baptist to bring a new move of God, but it was to prepare the way for another—the Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus came, John stepped aside saying, “He must increase, I must decrease” (Jn. 3:30). Some of John's disciples, instead of following Jesus, tried to keep the past revival going (Mt.11:1-6, Mk. 2:18). According to Acts 19:1-7, nearly thirty years later, some of John's disciples still had not moved on. The disciples of John represent people who are trying to perpetrate a former move of God. Many believers are not able to change their emphasis when God changes it. The momentum of the old order just keeps going. Many people live in the past and are always remembering how God used to move. However, Jesus wants us to have an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches *today*.

Old wineskins are brittle and cannot hold new wine (the Spirit). Be elastic! Allow God to expand and change your mind, convictions, and doctrines. Every year, computers are made better and more efficient. Improvements are being made in every field. Doctors are learning how to do surgery better and quicker. The Bible says, “First the natural, then the spiritual.” Thus, we should learn from what is happening in the natural and be kept abreast with what God is saying today. No matter what we have learned in the past, God has new and improved ways to show unto us. Are you still living in *the horse and buggy days* and satisfied with what your forefathers had? Our forefathers were reckoned righteous and perfect when they lived up to the light God gave them in their generations. Since then God has given more light and He requires more of us. The definition of sin is “to come short of the glory of God.” Therefore, if we do not move on with God, we are sinning!

II. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

Outline

A.) PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

B.) MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

C.) ATTRIBUTES BELONGING ONLY TO GOD

1. A Development of the attributes of God

D.) NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

E.) THE GODHEAD (The Trinity)

II. THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

We are created in the image of God (Gen.1:26); therefore, God has a form. His appearance is that of a man. He has arms, legs, hands, and a head. God is a person! He has emotions, senses, and reasoning powers. Scripture says, He *saw, sat, spake, heard, thought*—just the same way man does. Man is made very much like God.

In Hebrews 1:3, the Son is declared to be “*the express image of His person,*” meaning that the Son and the Father are much alike, although the Son now has a physical body. The Father, though He has a form, does not have a tangible, physical body. God the Father is a Spirit. Man also is a spirit, but living in a body. At the incarnation, the Son was given a body and is now both God and Man. The Son is so similar to the Father that He was able to say, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father”, and “I and my Father are One” (Jn.10:30, 14:9). The Father is called, “The Ancient of Days” in Daniel 7:22, and would most likely have a *grandfather* appearance.

A). PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

1. GOD IS A PERSON—He has a form. We are created in His likeness. By grace, man is capable of communication with God.
2. GOD HAS EMOTIONS—He has feelings ... love, joy, humor, grief, anger, jealousy.
3. GOD HAS A SOCIAL NATURE—God is a seeking God who seeks for fellowship. From the beginning of the human race, God has sought to dwell and walk with man. Above all things, God wants what every man wants—a bride who loves and understands Him, one to whom He can open His heart.
4. GOD HAS SENSES—Faculties of communication: Seeing, hearing, touch, taste, smell, speech.
5. GOD HAS LIKES AND DISLIKES—Observe in the Scriptures what God loves and hates. It is imperative to know what pleases God in order to have His favor and presence.
6. GOD HAS A WILL—Man too has a will because he is made like Him. God deliberates, reasons, and makes decisions. We also have choices and decisions to make all of our lives.
7. GOD CHANGES HIS MIND—God can be reasoned with. God repents (changes his mind). Moses changed God’s mind on several occasions.

B). MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

8. GOD HAS CHARACTER—He is righteous, holy, merciful, longsuffering, forgiving, abundant in goodness and truth, and faithful. These are *some* of His moral attributes. In order to become like Him, man must understand His nature and character.

(1 John 3:2) “When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” The more we see Him, the more we will be like Him. We cannot hope to model ourselves after Him until we first understand what He is like. Thus, we need a continuous revelation of His nature and character.

C). ATTRIBUTES BELONGING ONLY TO GOD

9. GOD IS OMNISCIENT (all-knowing). God knows all things, past, present and future. His understanding is infinite (or limitless). See Psalm 147:5. His eyes are everywhere, beholding the evil and the good (Heb. 4:13).

10. GOD IS OMNIPRESENT (He can be present everywhere at the same time). He fills heaven and earth. There is nothing too hard for Him (Jer. 32:27). Yet, He can “localize” His presence too.

11. GOD IS OMNIPOTENT (all-powerful). The Father gave the Son all power in heaven and in earth. The Father had it to give, thus, He is the most high (Matt. 28:18).

12. GOD HAD NO BEGINNING He always existed and is self-existing (Jn. 5:26). He inhabits eternity (Isa. 57:15). Man has a beginning, but has no end. Man was made to live forever and will be resurrected at the end of time.

13. GOD IS IMMUTABLE / UNCHANGING God does not change. He is the same from everlasting to everlasting (Psa. 90:2). With Him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning (Jas.1:17, Mal. 3:6, Heb.13:8). He has nothing to improve upon or any lessons to learn. His foresight is just as perfect as His hindsight.

A Development of the Preceding Attributes of God

GOD HAS A FORM—Moses saw God! “And the similitude of the Lord shall he behold” (Num.12:8). Similitude means *form or shape*. If God did not have a form, what was there for Moses to behold? In Revelation we find the Father sitting on the throne with a book in his right hand. Thus, God has a form. In Exodus 33:23, Moses saw the “back parts” of the Lord. He could not have seen God’s face in His full glory and lived.

In Revelation 5:1-7, we see God the Father sitting on the throne, and in his right hand there was a book. In 5:7, the Son (the Lamb) came and took the book out of his right hand. Can we see that God has a form? He was seated, and He had a book in his hand. God the Father is a Spirit, yet He has a form. (Man also is a spirit but lives within a body; At death our spirit, which very much resembles our body, is separated from our body.)

GOD IS INVISIBLE—God is invisible to the natural human eye until He opens our eyes to see Him. He is entitled “the invisible God” (Col.1:15, 1 Tim. 6:16). Thus, God is a Spirit. Luke 24:39 says, “a spirit hath not flesh and bones.” God the Father does not have a tangible material body, nevertheless he has a form. God the Son has had a tangible, visible body since the incarnation, and He will have one for all eternity. He became a man.

GOD HAS EMOTIONS—John 3:16 describes the Father as *loving* man so much that He sacrificed His dearest possession - his only Son. God **is** love! According to Luke 6:35, He is *kind*, even to the undeserving and to the unthankful. God has a very tender heart and He is sensitive to grief (cf. Gen. 6:6, Eph. 4:30). God is a Person and can be grieved. God shows anger when He has been seriously hurt or grieved. His Spirit can be vexed (Isa. 63:10). When we are hurt, He is hurting with us (Isa. 63:9, Zech. 2:8). Not only does God weep, but He can also laugh (Psa. 2:4).

Joy comes from God. Joy is a very part of his nature. It is a fruit of His Spirit. Nehemiah 8:10 declares, “The joy of the Lord is your strength.” The Lord rejoices over the repentance of one sinner (Lu.15:10). The Lord rejoices over us with joy, especially when we pass a test or we have pleased Him. Zephaniah 3:17 says he joys over us with singing. God also has a very good sense of humor. God is not overserious or depressed. God is light. Darkness, depression, discouragement, and fear are alien to His nature. God delights in his people (Psa.149:4). He takes pleasure in His people, especially when they walk in righteousness.

God has capacity for anger. “God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psa. 7:11). But to balance this, the Lord is “slow to anger” and longsuffering (Jonah 4:2). Sometimes the Lord is angry with a believer. In Numbers 12:9, He was angry with Miriam because of her spirit of criticism. God hates a tongue that sows discord and division among brethren (Prov. 6:16-19). See 2 Sam.11:27.

We can see clearly that God has likes and dislikes. He loves righteousness but hates iniquity, as it is stated in Psalm 45:7. He hates a froward mouth (Prov. 8:13); delights in justice, mercy, and uprightness (Prov.11:1, 11:20, 12:22); delights in the prayers of the righteous (Prov.15:8); but He hates pride and resists the proud because the proud resist Him (Jas. 4:6). Jealousy is also an integral part of God's nature (Ex. 34:14, 20:5). When He loves someone, He is very jealous for their full affections. The Spirit of the Lord in Paul was jealous for the Corinthian believers (cf. 2 Cor.11:2).

GOD HAS A SOCIAL NATURE. God took the initiative to seek for us. We did not seek him. He sought us and we responded to a loving, seeking God. We love him only because He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19, Rom. 3:10-12). After Adam sinned against God, the Lord took the first step toward Adam, seeking for restoration of fellowship. And after God found Adam hiding, He made it easy for him to confess by asking gracious questions. “Where are you Adam; have you eaten of the tree; how did you know you were naked?” In Exodus 25:8, God took the initiative to dwell among man.

Exodus 25:8 “*Let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.*” God has longed to dwell among man and be in man. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn.1:14).

- Leviticus 26:11-12 - God walks **among** his people.
- 2 Samuel 7:7 - God walks **with** his people (individually and corporately).
- Isaiah 57:15 - God **dwells** (lives) *with* his people.
- 2 Corinthians 6:16 - God **dwells** (lives) *in* his people.
- Numbers 23:3-4 - God **meets** man, Revelation 3:20, and **communes** with man (Gen.18:1,33).
- 1 Kings 3:3, 2 Samuel 12:24 - A **love relationship** is possible between man and God.
- Psalm 91:14-16, Proverbs 8:17 - God appreciates our **affections**.
- Exodus 33:11 - God loves to **share** intimate things with his friends (Jn. 15:15).
- Psalm 103:7 - God **reveals** his ways. Numbers 12:8 - God reveals Himself.
- Revelation 19:7-8 - The Lord longs for a mature bride and wants **to be understood** (Jer. 9:24).

GOD'S SENSES AND FACULTIES OF COMMUNICATION.

- **Hearing** - Psalm 94:9a “He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?” The Lord *heard* Aaron and Miriam criticizing Moses and undermining his leadership. He was greatly displeased with them (Num.12:1-5). God created the ear, and He himself has ears. His ears are open to the prayers of the righteous, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (cf. 1 Pet. 3:12).
- **Seeing** - Psalm 94:9b “He that formed the eye, shall he not see?” God beholds all of man’s ways. (Prov. 5:21, 15:3). The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout all the earth (2 Chron.16:9). He sees into the hearts of all men. “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Heb. 4:13, Psa.11:4). The eyes of the Lord see all the oppressions inflicted upon men. Nothing goes unnoticed by the Lord. He said to Moses: “I have surely *seen* the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows” (Ex. 3:7).
- **Smelling** - Genesis 8:21 “The Lord smelled a sweet savour.” God has a nose and can discern true worship. This is illustrated in Revelation 5:8. Our prayers and worship have an *aroma*. In Amos 5:21-23, the sacrifices of the people were an ill-savour to God. Read Isaiah 65:3-5—God said their actions and attitudes are “a smoke in my nose.” The nose is the instrument of discernment, and God discerns all things.
- **Touching** - Jeremiah 1:9 “Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth.” God has hands and at times we can feel His touch. When His hand *touches* your mouth as it did Jeremiah's, you can become very prophetic. Often in Scripture we hear the expression: “The hand of the Lord was upon them.” In 1 Kings 19:5-7, the angel of the Lord *touched* Elijah. In this case, the angel was the Lord Himself. At least twenty times in the New Testament the Son of God is declared to be seated at *the right hand* of the Father. Christ went and took the book out of *the right hand* of the Father in the heavenly scene presented in Revelation 5:1-7, and then He opened it.
- **Tasting** - Certainly, if the Lord has created man with the ability to taste, then He himself has the same capacity. In Exodus 24:9-11, Moses and Aaron and the seventy elders saw God and feasted with Him. After the resurrection, Jesus dined with the disciples (Jn. 21:5,12,15, Acts 10:40-41). In heaven there is food and festivities. Can you image what the marriage supper of the Lamb will be like! If God created us with appetite and hunger, certainly the Lord has desires and appetites He wants satisfied. There are spiritual sacrifices we make to God that are “food” to Him. These are delicacies and dainties to His taste. Also, we can actually taste the presence of the Lord at times. “Taste and see that the Lord is good” (1 Pet. 2:3, Psa. 34:8). The presence of the Lord has a taste that is better than the finest wine (Song 1:2). “Thy love is better than wine.”
- **Speech** - Hebrews 1:1-2 “God ... hath spoken.” God’s voice created the world. At the sound of His voice, all men will be resurrected (Jn. 5:25). God spoke directly to Moses and to many others. To Adam He called, “Where art thou, Adam?” To Job he asked in a loud voice, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?” To Elijah He communed with a still small voice. At the baptism of Jesus, the voice of the Father thundered from heaven proclaiming, “This is my beloved Son.” The expressions, “God said” or, “Thus saith the Lord” or their equivalents, are found over 3,800 times in Scripture.

GOD HAS A WILL. Because we are made in His image and likeness, we too have a will. Life is filled with choices and decisions. Anyone who goes to hell has chosen of his own free will to go there (Acts 13:46). People *judge themselves* to be unworthy of everlasting life. God is not willing that any should perish. If anyone perishes, it is not God's will, but man's. May the Lord help us to make the right decisions in life. However, it even requires God's grace [divine enablement] to help us make the right decisions.

GOD CHANGES HIS MIND AT TIMES. God “repents” [or changes his mind]. The Lord had determined to destroy Nineveh, but when Nineveh repented, God repented too. He changed His mind and did not destroy Nineveh in forty days as He had said He would. Moses changed God's mind. This account is recorded for us in Exodus chapter 32. God was about to wipe out Israel, but Moses reasoned and pleaded with God to spare them. (cf. Hosea 12:13).

“They will know my breach of promise” (Num.14:22-23, 34). Repeatedly God promised to give the Israelites the land of Canaan. However, because of their wickedness, He changed His mind and determined they would never see the land, only their children would inherit it. That generation died with unfulfilled promises. God always keeps His Word. Many promises, however, are conditional. Paul says we will only inherit the promises *after* we have accomplished the will of God (Heb.10:36).

GOD HAS CHARACTER. Some of His moral attributes include righteousness, holiness, mercy, faithfulness, truth, graciousness, perfection, and all the nine fruits of the Spirit.

- **God is Righteous**—He loves equity and justice. He is impartial to all. He hates oppression and injustice. Every action of the Lord God is completely just. He is the Judge of the whole earth (see Gen.18:25, Ezra 9:15, Psa.116:5, Dan. 9:7, Rev.15:3, 19:2).

- **God is Holy**—“There is none holy as the Lord ” (1 Sam. 2:2, Rev.15:4). He is absolutely pure in word, thought and deed. His motives and thoughts are immaculate.

- **God is Merciful**—He shows pity and compassion to man (Psalm 103:8-11). Everything God does is in His mercy. Mercy is the highest revelation and attribute of God. His mercy is even above His law. However, it is His sole prerogative to show mercy (Ex. 33:19). There are reasons He does not choose to show mercy to some.

- **God is Faithful**—In Revelation 3:14, He is entitled, “Faithful and true.” God does what He says He will do. He even puts His Word above His name (Psa.138:2). He is ever loyal to us. “Lo, I am with you always” (Mt. 28:20). He is worthy to be trusted. He is girded with faithfulness (Isa.11:5).

- **God is Truth**—He is totally genuine. He is Light. Light is truth. There is no darkness in Him.

- **God is Gracious**—God extends goodness, even to the undeserving (Ex. 34:6, Eph. 2:8, Lk. 6:35).

- **God is Perfect**—God is absolutely perfect! Absolute perfection belongs only to God. “Who is like unto thee O Lord.” Nothing can be added to God. Romans 11:34 says, “Who has been his counsellor?” We are called to be *perfect* in the sense of maturity, wholeness, and becoming all that God has ordained for us (Mt. 5:48), but absolute perfection belongs to God alone.

All the nine fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 are attributes of God. He is the very essence of these. God is love, He is peace, He is meek, longsuffering, self-controlled, gentle, and good. The object of the Holy Spirit is to produce all of these fruits in our lives. When this is accomplished, we will be very much like our Lord. Let us consider these nine attributes of God.

Love—“God is love” (1 Jn. 4:7, 21). Love is more than a feeling. Love is character; love is sacrificial and totally unselfish. Love is a commitment to another. God loved us when we were unlovable (Rom. 5:8). God loved us so much that He gave his only Son to be a ransom for our endangered and imprisoned souls. Love is the strength to put others before ourselves. God is totally unselfish. If marriages were built upon this kind of love, they would never fail.

Joy—“The joy of the Lord is our strength” (Neh. 8:10). Joy is an attribute of God. He is the very essence of joy. God is not gloomy or depressed, and He is not nervous. He is full of light. He beams with glory and joy. Joy is a strength. It is not possible for the heart to have hurts, grudges, sorrow, or bitterness when it is filled with God's joy. Joy cleanses the heart of all these maladies.

Peace—He is the “God of peace” and the “Prince of peace” (Rom.16:20, Isa. 9:6). God is peace. His presence brings calmness and strength. Christ was sleeping and totally relaxed during a ferocious storm. When the disciples were terrified and awakened Him, the Master simply commanded, “Peace, be still.” Instantly there was silence and serenity. Peace is strength. Nothing can shake us when we are under the canopy of God's peace.

Longsuffering—“The Lord God, merciful and gracious, *longsuffering*, and abundant in goodness and truth” (Ex. 34:6b). Longsuffering is rendered “patience.” It means to be even-tempered and forbearing. God often bears with people for a long time. This is strength of character.

Gentleness—David said, “Thy gentleness hath made me great” (2 Sam. 22:36b). Gentleness means to be easy and mild with others. It is the opposite of a strict, legalistic, demanding nature. God's gentleness affords Him the ability to show clemency to others. We should do likewise.

Goodness—“Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psa. 34:8, Ex. 34:6). Goodness is a strength and firmness to do what is best for others. Every thought and action of the Lord is directed only to the highest eternal good of another. He is thoroughly good. Every part of Him is good.

Faith—“Have the faith of God” [or God's faith] (Mk.11:22). This is the literal meaning of this verse. Faith is totally divine. Faith brings understanding (Heb.11:3). It sees beyond circumstances. It sees into the unseen. God not only has faith, He is the very essence and substance of faith.

Meekness—“I am meek and lowly in heart” (Mt.11:29). God is meek. Meekness was demonstrated in the life of Christ who is the perfect image of the Father. Meekness is a *holy acceptance* of circumstances with joyfulness. It takes no vengeance in thought or deed. Meekness is an important key to good mental and emotional health. It keeps our heart free of bitterness.

Temperance (self-control)—“I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself” (Isa. 42:14). Self-control is a mark of great spiritual strength. God has power and authority but He uses it sparingly (cf. Mt. 26:53). Self-control is the ability to control passions and appetites.

GOD IS OMNISCIENT—(all knowing). God knows all things—past, present, and future. There are, however, certain things He chooses to put out of his mind and forget. For example, Hebrews 8:12 says: “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Isaiah 65:17 says: “Behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.” God will create a new heaven and earth after this present creation is dissolved, and He will not think about this one anymore. Also, the unredeemed who are in the lake of fire will be forgotten.

God's omniscience is seen in Isaiah 46:10, Psalm 147:5, Ephesians 1:4, Revelation 13:8, only to mention a few. God knew before the creation of the world which people would choose Him and which ones would reject Him. God knows the hearts of all men. God could say of the city of Corinth where the Gospel had not yet been preached, “I have much people in this city” (Acts 18:10). He knows which fields are fruitful, and which fields are barren.

- There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known (Mt.10:26).
- Nothing is forgotten by God (except for what He chooses to forget) (Isa. 65:17).
- Not one sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice (Mt.10:29, Lu.12:6).
- Even the hairs on our head are numbered (Mt.10:30). Every idle word is recorded (Mt.12:36).
- God understands everything about us, long before our birth (Psa.139:1-18).
- Everything hid shall be manifested. Anything kept secret shall be known abroad (Mk. 4:22).
- His eyes see everything (Heb. 4:13). He sees every heart (2 Chron.16:9, 1 Chron. 28:9).
- Everything in darkness shall be brought to the light (Lk.12:3).
- The smallest deed done for Christ shall be remembered (Mt.10:42) such as a cup of cold water.
- He knows the future and can foretell exactly what is going to happen (Isa. 46:10).
- All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him (Col. 2:3).

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT—(He can be present everywhere at the same time). He declared through the prophet Jeremiah—“Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord,” and again, “Is there anything too hard for Me?” (Jer. 23:23-24, 32:27). We cannot hide from Him anywhere (Psa.139:7-12).

“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst” (Mt.18:20). Jesus Himself can be everywhere at the same time, and when He comes again, “every eye shall see him” (Rev.1:7). At the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, He will cause Himself to be seen everywhere in the earth at one time. Men everywhere will be pleading for the mountains to cover them and to hide them from His face (Rev. 6:14-17). Do not be natural minded about the second coming of Christ. Christ is omnipresent as well as the Father. He can make Himself visible everywhere at once. Although God can be everywhere at once, still He can *localize* his presence (1 Sam. 3:10).

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT—(He is all-powerful). Matthew 28:18 “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” “With God nothing shall be impossible” (Lu.1:37, Isa. 40:13-18, Jer. 32:17). God has the final word on everything. He is sovereign and has the power to overrule every decision made by man or spirit. He determines all governments and leaders (Psa. 75:6,7). Nothing can happen without his consent (Dan. 4:35, 2:20-22). People cannot even die unless God permits it (Rev. 9:6). God even determines *how* a person will die (Ezek. 5:12). Satan can only go as far as God says, and not an inch further. This is clearly seen in Job 1:12, 2:6.

GOD HAD NO BEGINNING—He always existed. From everlasting to everlasting, He is God. He inhabits eternity (Isa. 57:15). He is the beginning and ending, the Alpha and Omega. God is the same, yesterday, today and forever. He has not changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament. God did not become more loving and merciful in the New Testament. He is ever the same—The I AM (I always was, I always will be). He is Yahweh (Jehovah)—The Self-Existent One. God was not created or assisted in any way.

“His understanding is infinite” (Psa.145:7). Infinite means limitless. Man is finite (limited). God is eternal and infinite. Man had a beginning and cannot comprehend eternity. Mathematically, the older we grow, the faster time goes. To a five-year-old child going to kindergarten, one year is 20% of his life. To a fifty-year-old man, one year is only 2% of his life. To the Ancient of Days who had no beginning, a thousand years is like one day (2 Pet. 3:8). It is like a “watch of the night” (Psa. 90:4) which is only part of a night. The Jews divided their night into three watches (cf. Jud. 7:19).

Eternity has no end. This is why it is so serious to miss eternal life. When a lost soul has been in the lake of fire for a million years, he has only started his length of stay there. It will never have an end! Oh, the awesomeness of eternal judgment. This should make us forget about our timidities when we witness to the lost. We possess the only thing that can save them. We have the words of eternal life.

“Behold the goodness and severity of God” (Rom.11:22). We cannot fathom the love of God but neither can we fathom His wrath. One is just as extreme as the other. When we understand the character of God, our doctrines and beliefs become very clear.

Knowing God

Who is God? How Does He Want to be Known? The Lord described Himself in Exodus 34:6-7, proclaiming to Moses, “The Lord God, merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy unto thousands, forgiving iniquity, and will by no means clear the guilty [the unrepentant].” When Moses requested for God to describe himself...the first thing God said about Himself was - Merciful. This is how He wants to be known. In the New Testament, Jesus describes Himself above all other attributes as being “meek and lowly in heart” (Mt.11:28-29). Therefore, although the Lord is a sovereign king, the great judge, and all-powerful, yet the Creator of the universe wants to be known first of all for three things: He is *Merciful, Meek, and Humble*.

Furthermore, when the Son of God became a man, He revealed God to us as *Father*. God was not vividly known as Father in the Old Testament. It was the Son who revealed Him as such. He taught us to pray, “Our Father.” And the Holy Spirit within us cries. “Father, Father.”

Perfect love removes all fears

Most fears stem from not being loved or treated right when we were young. God has not given us the spirit of fear, but love, power and a sound mind (2 Tim.1:7). God has no fears. God is love! “*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love*” (1 Jn.4:18). This is the reason we need a revelation of God’s love to us because this will cleanse us of many fears. Also, the ability to love others and to be transparent with them increases as we grow in love.

God is a God of Order

“God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (1 Cor.14:33). The whole creation reveals how the Lord has *order* in everything He does. Everything is made with mathematical genius and extraordinary exactitude. And this is how it should be in our spiritual lives. God is not confused or disorganized. Satan, on the other hand, is disorganized and is also very confused. Satan has terrible doubt in his heart, and his presence brings these things.

God is not a Loner

It is not natural or healthy to be alone. God Himself is social, friendly, open, and courteous. Jesus was versatile. He could mingle with people of all walks and meet their needs on any level. He was a guest at the wedding of Cana, and He was invited to numerous homes for meals and fellowship. He addressed dignitaries— Nicodemus, Pilate and Herod. Yet He condescended to outcasts such as the woman at the well, the thief on the cross, tax collectors, and lepers.

God is Industrious

God is hard working. This is a very important part of His nature. He is not unmotivated or passive. But on the other hand, neither is He *driven*. Slothfulness is the very opposite of His personality. In the Word, God has much to say about sluggards and idleness. When the Lord became a man, He was intense, setting His face as a flint to do the Father’s will. The Son of man was highly disciplined, even sweating great drops of blood as He chose to go the way of the cross. Jesus poured out his soul unto death to rescue man (Isa. 53:11-12). A person's vision will determine how much he or she is motivated in life. When people have no vision or goal to press toward, they live carelessly. The fear of the Lord also makes us afraid to come short of the mark (Heb. 4:1).

Jesus was supernaturally natural and well-balanced in every respect. Believers are called to be just like Him. We are called to be “conformed to His image.” As we go on in our Christian walk, our thought patterns, nerves, brain power, gestures, and movements will become more and more like the Lord’s. God will clear up all confusion, timidity, fears, insecurities, complexes, and pride.

D). NAMES AND TITLES OF GOD

Observe the difference between: LORD, Lord, LORD, Lord God, God, and GOD Almighty. Some names are in capital letters, some are in small capitals, and some are compound words. This is because there are many different names of God in the Scriptures. The names of God reveal the character and many-sided aspects of God's nature. Let's consider some of their differences.

1. ELOHIM (God). This word occurs 2,700 times in Scripture. This denotes God as the *Creator of all* things. It indicates His ownership and relationship to *all* His creatures.

2. JEHOVAH (LORD). LORD is written in small capitals. Jehovah means the Eternal or Immutable One. While Elohim is the Creator of *all* things, Jehovah is the same God but specifically to those who are *in covenant relationship* with Him (cf. 2 Chron.18:31, Gen. 21:33, Ex. 6:2-3). JEHOVAH is also indicated by (GOD), small capitals, when it occurs in combination with Adonai, in which case it is Lord GOD, or Adonai Jehovah. Jehovah appears 5,321 times in the Old Testament, and can refer to either the Father or the Son.

3. JAH is Jehovah in a special sense of the Lord “as having become our salvation.” It first occurs in Exodus 15:2, and is mentioned 49 times. See Psalm 68:4, 18.

4. EL (God). El is Elohim in all His strength and power. El is stronger than Elohim. Elohim is God the Creator. But El is God the Omnipotent. El possesses *all* power. He knows *all* (Gen.14:18-22) and sees *all* (Gen.16:13), and performs *all* things for His people (Psa.57:2).

5. ELOAH (God). This is the singular form of Elohim, who is to be worshipped. Eloah is God in connection with *His Will* even more than His power. The first occurrence associates this name with worship (Deut. 32:15,17). Hence Eloah is the title used where there is a contrast with true or false worship, man's will or His will. It is used 57 times in the Old Testament, 41 times in Job alone.

6. ELYON (The Most High). First occurring in Genesis 14:19 with El, it is rendered “the most high (God).” God is revealed, not so much as the powerful Creator, but as “the possessor of heaven and earth.” It is Elyon, as possessor of the earth who divides the nations “their inheritance” (Deut. 32:8, Psa. 83:18). Christ is the Son of Elyon the Highest (Lk.1:35) and is the Dispenser of God's blessings in the earth. The title Elyon occurs 36 times.

7. SHADDAI (Almighty). Used with El it means “God Almighty.” It is God (El), not as the source of strength, but more specifically of grace; not as Creator, but as the Giver. Shaddai is the All-Bountiful One. It refers, not to creative power, but to His power to supply all the needs of His people. It comes from the word “Shad” meaning “Breast” (i. e. the One who supplies and satisfies). El Shaddai is used seven times in Scripture: (Gen.17:1, 28:3, 35:11, 43:14, 48:3, Ex. 6:3, Ezek.10:5).

8. ADON (Generally rendered Lord). Adon is one of three titles: Adon, Adonai, and Adonim. Each has its own peculiar usage and association. They all denote *headship* in various aspects. They all have to do with God as “overlord.” Adon is the *Ruler in* the earth. Adonai is the *Blesser* of the earth. Adonim is the *Owner* of the earth. Adonim is the plural of Adon.

The Lord (Adon) rules others who are not His (the unredeemed), but the Lord (Adonim) rules those who are His own (the redeemed). At any rate, the Lord is the Master, Owner, and Ruler of the earth.

E). THE GODHEAD (The Trinity)

The subject of the Trinity has baffled many over the centuries. Yet, it can be easily understood by faith. The Godhead (or Trinity) is made up of three individual Persons. The Father is the Most High. He holds the highest position of the Three. All life comes from Him. He is called the “Ancient of Days” in Daniel 7:22, and perhaps would have a “grandfather” appearance.

All life comes from the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit are two other Persons who came out of the Father. Out of the bosom of the Father came the other two members of the Trinity, and both are subject to the Father. In appearance, all Three would resemble each other to a certain extent, although the Father would look somewhat older. All Three have the same mind and purpose.

One Lord - But A Plural One

Deuteronomy 6:4 says: “Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is *one* Lord.” From the original Hebrew, this word “one” means—a *compound one, a plural one, one made up of several*. The Hebrew word for *one* is “echad.” America has 50 states but is only one nation. Paul refers to the Body of Christ as having many members, yet remaining one body. When Scripture says “One Lord”, it means there are several members in the Godhead. This same word “echad” (one) is used in Zechariah 14:9: “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day there be *one* Lord, and his name *one*.” Once again, it means a compound one, or one made up of several.

When God created man, He spoke in the plural, saying, “Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness” (Gen.1:26a). The Father and Son worked together in the forming of man. I am sure the Holy Spirit was at work too. After man fell, God said: “Behold, the man is become *as one of us*, to know good and evil” (Gen. 3:22a). At the Tower of Babel we hear God speaking again in the plural. “[Come now], let *us* go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech” (Gen.11:7). Read verses 5-9.

Christ Came Forth From the Father

According to Proverbs 8:22-31, there must have been a time, long before the creation of the world, when God the Son came forth from the bosom of the Father. In Proverbs chapter eight, the spirit of prophecy is looking beyond *wisdom* here and pointing to Christ Himself. Jesus Christ is the very embodiment of wisdom. Proverbs 8:22-31 is revealing a time back in eternity when the Son was *brought forth* from the Father's bosom. This is not to say that the Son had a beginning. He *always existed* in the bosom of the Father, but there was a time when He proceeded forth from Him. This is probably true of the Holy Spirit too. This will be further developed in the section on The Doctrine of Christ.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all Persons. Even the Holy Spirit is a Person and has a form. The Holy Spirit, although He is a Person, can instantaneously transform Himself into many things such as wind, fire, or a rushing stream of living waters. Also, He can dwell within each believer and be everywhere at the same time. The Godhead has the ability to diffuse themselves and appear in many places simultaneously.

One God - Three Persons

We should not be natural minded about these matters. We are discussing issues that are *supernatural*. By faith we accept the fact that the Son proceeded out from the Father (though He always existed), and that in all probability the Holy Spirit who is also a Person, came out from the Father too. All life has its source in God the Father. God the Father is all in all. Both the *Son* and the *Holy Spirit* submit themselves to God the Father and obey His will. There is order, even in the Godhead.

The Son and the Holy Spirit both are subject to the Father. The Son does the will of His Father. He is not independent of the Father and does not do His own will. The Holy Spirit, too, does not speak on His own accord. He only speaks as He is beckoned by the Father and Son (Jn.16:13). Although all power in heaven and in earth is given unto the Son, He lays it all down at the feet of His Father and is subject unto Him. (Here please read Matthew 28:18 and 1 Cor.15:24-28.) Jesus declared; “My Father is greater than I” (Jn.10:29, 14:28).

The Son and the Holy Spirit are Persons. They are equally God, even as the Father is. Jesus claimed to be equal with God (Jn. 5:18). Jesus indeed is God (Phil. 2:6). He is, however, submitted to His Father and honors Him as being greater. Remember—all life comes from the Father. The Son and the Holy Spirit came out from the Father and are both just as much God as the Father. Positionally, however, the Father is greater. We are not speaking of three Gods here. They together are One God in three Persons. They function as One, but the Father is supreme.

The Holy Spirit is a Person

The Holy Spirit is a Person. He is not an influence or a force, or something nebulous. He is a Person! He has a form just as the Father and Son. He thinks and acts (and perhaps looks) similar to the Father or Son. He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30), quenched (1 Thes. 5:19), tempted (Acts 5:9), insulted (Heb.10:29), and vexed (Isa. 63:10). You cannot do these things to an influence. He is a Person. He dwells within every believer. He can be *within* us, yet also come *upon* us. He can also transform himself into fire and burn up dross in a believer, while to another He could be a refreshing stream of living water. The Holy Spirit has many moods. Try to be sensitive to his changing moods. You will notice in Scripture that the Holy Spirit is never referred to as an **it**, but a **He**.

John 14:17—HE dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 14:26—HE shall teach you all things.

John 15:26—HE shall testify of me.

John 16:7 — I will send HIM unto you

John 16:8 — And when HE is come, HE will reprove the world of sin...

John 16:13—When HE the Spirit of truth is come, HE will guide you into all truth

John 16:13—HE shall not speak of HIMSELF, but whatsoever HE shall hear, that shall HE speak

John 16:13—HE will show you things to come.

John 16:14—HE shall glorify me.

John 16:15—HE shall take of mine and show it unto you.

Rom. 8:26 —The Spirit HIMSELF. It is better rendered *Himself*, not itself.

REVIEW: (Proverbs 8:22-25). The Eternal Son was birthed from the bosom of the Father, long before the creation of this world. He always existed in the bosom of the Father but was separated from Him before the beginning of time. Perhaps we could say that as Levi was in the loins of Abraham, so also was the Son within the Father (Heb. 7:9-10). Jesus said, "...I proceeded forth and came from God" (Jn. 8:42, 16:28, 17:8). He declared, "I came forth from the Father."

The Son is just as much God as the Father (Jn. 5:18, Phil. 2:6, Jn.10:33). Jesus is uniquely the *only* begotten Son of the Father. He is God the Son. As a man He was "God in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). Believers are "sons of God" only by adoption and by new birth. Before that, we were the sons of fallen Adam, and we were the children of wrath, just as everyone else (Eph. 2:1-10). Now we are joint-heirs with Jesus, but still we are *not* divine. Deity belongs only to the Son of God. He is the *only* begotten Son of God. He existed before the beginning of time. He is God and the co-creator of the world and of man. The only thing that brings us into the family of God is adoption, new birth, and a large debt that Christ has paid for us.

The Trinity is Seen Throughout Scripture

1. The Creation—Ephesians 3:9. "God created all things *by* Jesus Christ." God created everything by his Word and that Word is the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:3,10). The Father issued a decree to the Son, the Son declared the decree ("Let there be light"), and then the Holy Spirit moved to accomplish the decree.

2. The Incarnation—Hebrews 10:5. "Wherefore when He cometh into the world He saith ... a body hast thou prepared me." When Jesus came into the world He declared unto his Father—"A body hast thou prepared for me." How did He receive this body? The answer is found in Luke 1:35. "The angel said to Mary; The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." God the Father prepared a physical body in the womb of Mary for His Son by the working of the Holy Spirit in Mary. When Jesus entered the world as a man, instantaneously He was transformed into an embryo and entered the womb of Mary. By the work of the Holy Spirit, a human body was being fashioned, and this body surrounded His eternal spirit. His conception was supernatural. He had no earthly father (Mt.1:18-21, Luke 1:26-35).

3. The Baptism of Jesus—Matthew 3:16-17. Jesus was standing in the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove came upon Him and empowered Him, and then the Father spoke from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Clearly there are three separate persons in the Godhead. When Jesus said, "I and my father are one" or, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father", He simply meant that He was a replica of his Father and that they thought alike, acted alike, and probably even look very much alike (cf. Heb.1:3, Jn.14:9-10, 10:30). It is only natural that a father and son would be so much alike!

4. The Transfiguration—Luke 9:34-35. As a man, Jesus was transformed by this experience on the Mount of Transfiguration. Here again we see three distinct Persons. The cloud of glory that enveloped the Son of God was the Holy Spirit. Then the voice of the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him."

5. The Crucifixion—Hebrews 9:14. The Son of God, by the power of the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to the Father. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son of God offered up his spotless life to the Father when He went to the cross. We see the Trinity working together all the time.

6. The Resurrection—Romans 6:4, 8:11. Jesus was raised up by the glory of the Father. In Romans 8:11, it says the Spirit raised Him up. God the Father raised up His Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

7. The Giving of the Holy Spirit—John 14:16-17, 14:26. The Son was praying to the Father to send the Holy Spirit (the Comforter). He said, “I will not leave you comfortless.” The Son had to return to heaven, and He was going to send Another One to be with His followers. He asked the Father to send the Holy Spirit. This was the fulfillment of Isaiah 44:3—“I [the Father] will pour out my Spirit [the Holy Spirit] upon thy [Christ's] seed.” The *seed* are believers.

8. The Martyrdom of Stephen—Acts 7:55. While Stephen was being stoned, he was full of the Holy Spirit. This enabled his spiritual eyes to be opened to look into heaven and see the Son of God standing at the right hand of the Father. Normally the Son is *seated* at the Father's right hand but now we see him *standing* as Stephen is being martyred.

9. The Election—Ephesians 1:3-5. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has *chosen* us for his Son. 1:5-7—We are *accepted* because of the beloved Son. By His blood, we are redeemed and forgiven. The Son paid our debt. And then we are *sealed* by the Holy Spirit. We are sanctified (set apart) by the Holy Spirit (2 Thes. 2:13, Rom.15:16).

10. John's Vision of the Godhead—John had been exiled to the Isle of Patmos. Suddenly the beloved Apostle was taken up in the Spirit on the Lord's day (Rev.1:10). The Spirit took John to heaven in a vision (4:1). He saw the symbol of the Holy Spirit in seven lamps of fire that were burning before the throne (4:5). But then he saw the Father sitting on the throne in 5:1, and the Son coming to take a book out of the Father's right hand (5:7).

Jesus is not the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is not the Father. He is God the SON! Jesus often prayed to the Father, and at times the Father audibly answered Him back (cf. Jn.12:28). Jesus was not praying to Himself, nor was He answering Himself. He was obviously speaking to another. It is actually quite ridiculous to think otherwise.

On the next page, we will see other examples of the Trinity found in Scripture.

The Trinity is also seen in:

- *The forming of man* - “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen.1:26).
- *At the fall of man* - “The man has become *as one of us*” (Gen. 3:22).
- *At the Tower of Babel* - “Let us go down and there confound their language” (Gen.11:7).
- *Isaiah's commission* - “Who will go for us?” (Isa. 6:8). The Godhead speaking.
- *Christ's commission* - “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me” (Isa. 61:1). The Holy Spirit was upon Christ who was anointed by the Father.
- *The Great Commission* - “Baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (Mt. 28:19).
- *Paul's Benediction* - “The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost” (2 Cor.13:14).
- *Paul's Prayer* - “The Father of our Lord Jesus ... would grant you to be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man” (Eph. 3:14-16).
- *Peter's Election* - “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, through sanctification of the Spirit ... and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet.1:2).
- *John's Command and Confirmation* - “That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ ... And hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit he hath given us” (1 Jn.3:23-24).
- *Jude's Exhortation* - “Praying in the Holy Ghost, keeping ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:20-21).
- *John's Salutation* - “Grace and peace from the seven spirits of the Lord ... and from Jesus Christ ...who hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father” (Rev.1:4-6).

The Son and the Holy Spirit are to be Distinguished (as two separate entities):

John 14:16 The Holy Spirit is another Comforter, after Jesus leaves.

John 16:7 “If I depart, I will send Him unto you.”

John 16:13,14 The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself, but of Jesus.

John 15:26 The Comforter (Holy Spirit) testifies of Jesus.

Matt.12:32 Blasphemy against the Son is forgivable, but not against the Holy Spirit.

Luke 24:49 Jesus sends the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 28:19 Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinguished.

Jesus was going back to heaven. He was going to send another (the Holy Spirit) to take His place. They are separate beings, yet they are so similar because one reveals the other. The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus (Jn. 16:13-14). When we say that Christ is in us, it is because the Holy Spirit within us is revealing and manifesting Christ in us, to us, and through us.

The Father and the Son are to be distinguished:

The Father and Son are likened to two men (Jn. 8:17-18).

“The *Lord* said to my *Lord*” (Mt. 22:43-44). The Father was speaking to the Son.

The time of the Second Coming was known only to the Father, not the Son (Mk.13:32).

The Father is greater, according to the Son’s testimony (Jn.14:28).

The Father’s will and the Son’s will are distinguished (Lk. 22:42).

The Father hid His face from the Son while on the cross (Mt. 27:46).

The Son confesses and acknowledges a believer before the Father in heaven (Mt.10:32).

Jesus said: “I and my Father are One” (Jn.10:30). They had one purpose, one mind, and had perfect unity. The Son declared, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (Jn.14:9). Jesus is the express image of the Father (Heb.1:3), but He is not the Father. Jesus is a perfect replica of the Father.

The Father / Son relationship was not obvious in the Old Testament. However, it was clear that God was more than One person because His name implied “plurality” on several occasions. Proverbs 30:4 makes an interesting statement when it asks: “Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, *and what is his son's name*, if thou canst tell?” This is a unique revelation of the Creator and His Son.

God was not clearly revealed as “Father” in the Old Testament, although He is mentioned as such in a few of the Psalms and prophets. The first allusion to God as a Father was in 1 Chronicles 17:13 when God spoke of Solomon, saying: “I will be his father, and he shall be my son” (22:10, 28:6). David had the concept of God being a father, saying, “A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.” See also Psalm 89:26, 103:13.

Isaiah said, “Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting (Isa. 63:16). He said again, “But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are the work of thy hand” (Isa. 64:8). (See also Jeremiah 3:4, Malachi 1:6, 2:10.)

However, the great revelation of God the Father came to us when Jesus the Son came to earth. The God of the Old Testament, up to that point, was someone to fear, reverence, and be appeased. Christ came to reveal the true nature of God—an all-wise, kind, loving, powerful Father, yet requiring obedience and desiring love from His children.

The favorite title Christ used for God was “Father.” He used that 170 times in the Gospels. Christ became man and revealed the Father unto us as none other could. The very first words of Jesus in Luke 2:49 were these—“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?” He was so much a replica of His Father that He could say: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father!” He taught us to pray: “Our Father, which art in heaven” (Lu.11:1-2). In His high priestly prayer (John 17), Jesus directed His prayer to the Father six times. After His resurrection he sent word to the disciples, saying: “I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (Jn. 20:17).

In the other epistles of the New Testament, “Father” is one of the favorite titles used by the writers. It is found over seventy times. Paul often said, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

III. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Outline

- A.) THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST**
- B.) CHRIST IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE**
- C.) CHRIST IS JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**
- D.) DIVINE ATTRIBUTES OF CHRIST**
- E.) CHRIST IS GOD IN THE FLESH**
- F.) THE DUAL NATURE OF CHRIST**
 - 1.) Jesus - The Son of God**
 - 2.) Jesus - The Son of Man**
 - a. The Incarnation
 - b. His Growing Up Years
 - c. The Sufferings of Christ
- G.) THE MINISTRIES OF CHRIST - Prophet, Priest, King**
- H.) THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST**
- I.) THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST**
- J.) ALL JUDGMENT IS GIVEN TO CHRIST**
- K.) THE NAMES AND TITLES OF CHRIST**
- L.) CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY**

III. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

A). THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST

Read Proverbs 8:22-31 — In these passages, the spirit of prophecy is looking beyond *wisdom* to Christ Himself who is the Personification of Wisdom. It is revealing a time back in eternity long before creation when the Son was *birthed* from the Father's bosom. This is not to say that the Son had a beginning. He always existed in the bosom of the Father, but there was a time back in eternity before the beginning of time when He emerged and came forth from Him. Later, the Father and Son created the world together. And then the Son dwelt among the sons of men. Let's have a careful look at Proverbs 8:22-31.

“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Where there were no depths, I was brought forth; where there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was [beside] him [as a master and director of the work...as one constantly with him] and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.”

There are four main things we should remember from these verses:

- The Son was “possessed” by the Father from everlasting. He *always existed* in Him.
- Before the earth was made, he was “brought forth.”
- When the Father made the earth, the Son was beside Him, helping Him direct the work.
- Then the Son visited the sons of men. He made appearances to them.

Jesus did not have his beginning in the womb of Mary. The Son of God existed long before the world was created. In fact, He and his Father created the world together. The incarnation was an act where Deity became man and took upon himself a body of flesh. After the miracle of the Incarnation, Jesus Christ was one-hundred percent God, and one hundred percent Man. He was the Son of God and also the Son of man at the same time.

Jesus was Jehovah God in the Old Testament. However, at that time He did not have a human body. He appeared frequently to men like Moses, Joshua, Abraham, and David. His appearance was like that of a man, yet without possessing a mortal body. I think we could conclude that the One who made these appearances to men in the Old Testament was God the Son, not the Father. The Son always *revealed* the Father.

B). CHRIST IS THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE

- John 1:3—All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.
- John 1:10—He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him not.
- Ephesians 3:9—God...created all things by Jesus Christ. (i. e. by His Word). Jesus is the Word.
- Colossians 1:16-18—For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, earth, visible and invisible. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.
- Hebrews 1:2—Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.
- Hebrews 11:3—The worlds were framed by the Word of God. Jesus is the Word of God.
- Proverbs 30:4—Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his son's name...?
- Hebrews 1:8-10—Unto the Son he saith, ...“Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the world...”

All wisdom and knowledge, and all the mysteries of science and of life have their source in Jesus Christ. By Him all things consist. Even the atoms are held together by the word of His power. Things visible and invisible are created by Him ... atoms, radio waves, things microscopic, etc. Thrones, dominions, principalities and powers—even Lucifer and all the angels were created by the Lord Jesus Christ (Col.1:16-18, 2:3). Nothing invented is new to Jesus. He granted the wisdom to produce all cunning devices. There are still many mysteries all around us that are yet to be discovered. If you know Jesus, you will understand life because He created life. Seek to know the One who made all things (Jer. 9:24).

C). CHRIST IS JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

- It was the Son who called to fallen Adam, saying—“Where art thou?” Christ is the Last Adam.
- It was the Son who appeared to Abraham—John 8:56-58. Abraham rejoiced to see Him.
- It was the Son whom David saw constantly at his right hand—Acts 2:25, Psalm 16:8
- It was the Son who was with Moses and the Israelites in the wilderness—I Corinthians 10:4,9
- It was the Son who wrestled with Jacob—Genesis 32:24-30
- It was the Son who appeared unto Job out of the whirlwind—Job 38:1
- It was the Son who appeared to Moses saying to him—I AM THAT I AM—Exodus 3:13-14
- It was the Son for whom Moses was willing to forsake Egypt—Hebrews 11:26
- It was the Son who appeared to Joshua, and the ground then became holy—Joshua 5:13-15
- It was the Son who became flesh and dwelt among us; the living Word—John 1:14
- It was the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the I AM of the Old Testament.
- It was the Son whose voice shook the earth and was heard by Israel—Deut. 4:12, Ex. 20:18-19
- At the mention of His name I AM, an army fell down backwards to the ground—John 18:5-6
- Truly Jesus is the I AM (Yesterday, Today, and Forever the same)—Hebrews 13:8, Malachi 3:6

D). DIVINE ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS

- **Omnipotent.** Matthew 28:18 - All power is given Him in heaven and in earth. Every knee shall bow to Him (Phil. 2:10-11). In Him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells (Col. 2:9). He is the ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev.1:5, 19:16). He is subject only to the Father (1 Cor.15:24-28).

At the revelation of His name I AM, a whole band of men fell backward to the ground (Jn.18:4-8). “As soon as he had said unto them, **I am** [he], they went backward, and fell to the ground,” v6. Again when they told Him they were seeking Jesus of Nazareth, “Jesus answered, I have told you **that I am**” [he]. Here is His full name *I am that I am*. At the revelation of the name of Deity, they were struck to the ground. Unless He had allowed them, they could not have stood up again.

- **Omniscient.** John 2:24-25 “Jesus ... needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” In Him are hidden *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3).

- **Omnipresent.** “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Mt. 28:20). Every eye shall see Him (Rev.1:7). Christ will be everywhere at once. He will cause Himself to be seen by everyone when He comes again.

- **Eternal.** Colossians 1:17 “He is *before* all things, and by him all things consist.” He came down from heaven. He had glory with the Father before the world was (Jn.17:5). He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the Almighty (Rev. 1:8, 22:13).

- **Immutable.** Hebrews 13:8 “Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, today, and forever.” He is the great I AM THAT I AM who appeared to Moses. (I always was, I always will be).

- **Creator.** John 1:3 “All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made.” God created all things by Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9). He is the WORD OF GOD.

- **Holy.** 1 John 3:5 “In him is no sin.” Hebrews 7:26 “For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

- **Faithful.** Revelation 19:11 “And behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True.”

- **Forgiver of Sins.** “But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins.” No man can come unto the Father except through Him (Jn.14:6). He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

- **Self-Existent / Life-giving.** John 5:26 “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” John 1:4 “In him was life.”

- **All the fruits of the Spirit.** (Gal. 5:22-23) He possesses all the moral attributes of the Father and Holy Spirit. He is Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentle, Good, Faith, Meek, and Self-controlled. Since we are called to be like Christ, when all these fruits are in our lives, we will be like Him.

E). CHRIST IS GOD IN THE FLESH

“God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). “The Word was God ... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn. 1:1, 1:14). This is a crucial point! All false religions depreciate Jesus and make Him less than He really is. Jesus Christ indeed is God in the flesh. Therefore, it was God who bled and died for us on the cross. First John 3:16 says: “God laid down his life for us.” In Acts 20:28 it says that God purchased us with His own blood.

Mark 2:5-10. v7—The question was asked, “Who can forgive sins but God only?” Even while Jesus was on earth, He had the authority to forgive sins. He could forgive sins for one simple reason—He is Deity. People questioned His authority because they could not recognize that this ordinary looking Man of Galilee was God disguised as a man! To reject Jesus Christ is to reject God.

Rejecting Christ is Rejecting God

Any person who depreciates Jesus Christ is undermining *the only means* by which he can find pardon and be redeemed. Christ alone is God's provision for our salvation. To oppose this truth, a person is opposing himself and judging himself to be unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13:46, 18:6). God never sends anyone to hell. As we have already stated, anyone who goes to hell has chosen of his own accord to go there.

Jesus was not just a good moral man, a fine example, or a great prophet or teacher. No! That worthy One who died on the cross was none other than God in the flesh. Only God could be spotless enough to die for man. All other men are sinners. Christ alone was a spotless sacrifice! He is the Father's only means to everlasting life. There is no other way. God only accepts the means He has provided. When man tries to come some other way, it is unacceptable (Rom. 9:32).

The Pharisees often quoted Moses and the other Scriptures to Jesus: “Moses in the law said this, but what do you say?” There was a veil over their minds and hearts as they read the Old Testament, as stated by Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:14-17. They knew the Bible by heart (the letter of the law), but could not recognize the One who stood before them, the One of Whom all the Scriptures bore witness. They were confronting the One who created the universe, the One who gave the law to Moses.

In actual fact, the Scribes and Pharisees were worshipping the Bible, not God. They worshipped the Scriptures, the Law, and their traditions, but they were rejecting the One who was written on every page of Scripture (Jn. 5:39-40). Then they murdered Him. Religious blindness is perhaps the most cruel and wretched form of blindness.

F). DUAL NATURE OF JESUS (Son of God / Son of Man)

Jesus is uniquely God and Man combined. This was made possible by the incarnation. The angel Gabriel said to the virgin Mary, “With God nothing shall be impossible” (Lu.1:37). God was His Father (He did not have a natural father); and Mary was his mother. Thus, He had a dual nature. He was one hundred percent God, and one hundred percent man. He had the nature of God His Father, and the nature of Mary which was the fallen, human nature of Adam. As the Son of God He could not have been tempted, nor could He have sinned, but as a human being He could have sinned.

“He took upon him the seed of Abraham” (Heb. 2:16). Christ was “made of the seed of David according to the flesh” (Rom.1:3). His human body was formed of Mary's substance and she was a descendent of David and Abraham. His spirit, however, was eternal and divine.

“In all things he was made like unto his brethren” (Heb. 2:17). His identification with man was total. He became one of us so that He might bring mercy and compassion to us. Christ was tempted in all points like we are. He felt every passion and temptation we feel (Heb. 2:18, 4:15). Therefore, He is able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Jesus completely understands man! He can minister to those who are the greatest in need because He has been there.

When we are rough with people, usually it is because we do not understand them. Our experience often is not deep enough to comprehend the particular problems others are facing. Thus, we lack empathy and feeling. The more we know, the less we talk (Prov.17:27).

Jesus often referred to himself as the *Son of Man*. Christ became a man at the incarnation. He will remain a man for all eternity. At the same time He is totally God too. He is the Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5), and the only means of salvation.

Christ is also the *Son of David*. Joseph and Mary (the parents of Jesus) were both descendants of David and can trace their ancestry back to him. Matthew 1:1-16 gives the genealogy of Joseph. Of course, Joseph was only the *supposed* father of Jesus. Luke 3:23-38 gives the genealogy of Mary. Jesus *inherited* the rights to David's throne through His *adopted* father, Joseph.

David and his descendants were promised the throne of Israel. Therefore, Jesus owned the *rights* to David's throne by inheritance. He will yet sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem during the Millennium (Lu.1:32-33). Also, He is the King over all the rulers of the earth.

Christ is both God and man combined. He is:

- The Son of Man - He became a man, and for all eternity He will be a man.
- The Son of God - He always was and always will be Deity. He is God.
- The Son of David - He is a descendant of David, and heir to the throne of Israel.
- The Son of Abraham - He is the promised “seed” in Whom all the world will be blessed.

1.) Jesus—The Son of God

Christ declared: “I came down from heaven” (Jn. 6:33, 6:38, 6:41, 6:42, 6:51). He made it very clear that His origin did not begin at birth. He said - *I came down from heaven*, and that He was “before Abraham” and “before the world began” (Jn. 8:58,17:5). He claimed that God was His very own Father, making himself equal with God (Jn. 5:18).

The Lord Jesus Christ is written on every page of Scripture. He is entitled “The Word of God” (Jn.1:1, Jn. 5:39, Rev.19:13). He opened the minds of His disciples and revealed Himself in the Law, the Prophets, and in the Psalms (Lk. 24:27, 44, 45).

THE VIRGIN BIRTH – The belief in the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus is an essential part of Christian doctrine. If Jesus had descended from an earthly father, He would not be Deity. He could not, therefore, have qualified to take away the sins of the world. The whole foundation of our belief in Christianity is the fact that the Founder was sinless. Every man who has descended from Adam is infected with iniquity, for “all have sinned” (Rom. 3:23). Christ alone is the only Perfect Man in history. His claim to be the Eternal Son of God is based on his supernatural birth. We should not think it unlikely that a supernatural God would need to have a miraculous entrance into this world. “And when he cometh into the world He saith, a body hast thou prepared me” (see Heb.10:5-7).

Genesis 3:15. The first promise of a Redeemer was given after Adam and Eve transgressed in the Garden of Eden. God foretold that a coming seed which was born of woman would [crush] the head of the serpent. In crushing the serpent's head, He would bruise His heel. A crushed head is *fatal*, a bruised heel is *temporary*. Christ utterly crushed Satan when He died as a perfect sacrifice. In doing so, He was injured temporarily. He had a bruised heel but would soon recover, rising from the dead.

Isaiah 7:14. Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would conceive and bare a son, and his name would be called Emmanuel. Emmanuel means “God with us.” This child who was supernaturally conceived by Mary was none other than God Himself. God became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn.1:14).

Isaiah 9:6. Isaiah foretold that a child would be born, but a son given. The names of this child show his Deity: Wonderful-Counsellor, *the Mighty God*, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace. This child was God's own Son. His name is “The Mighty God.” The fact that He is called “Everlasting Father” does not suggest He is God the Father, but that Christ is a father. We are his seed.

Isaiah 53. In this chapter we see a child growing up “as a root out of a dry ground.” As a man, He would be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He was “cut off out of the land of the living” meaning He died for us. His *soul* was made an offering for sin. Normally, animals were sacrificed for sin, but here we see that a man is sacrificed. It was a Man dying, not an animal. Yet he would *prolong his days* and see his seed, a reference to his resurrection. Philip makes it clear in Acts 8:30-35 that these passages in Isaiah are referring to Jesus Christ.

Micah 5:2. Out of Bethlehem would come forth the chief ruler, “whose *goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*” The infant born in Bethlehem's manger was the Eternal Son of God.

Jesus received worship. He attested to the fact that He was Deity by accepting worship. Only God can be worshipped (Ex. 34:14). In Revelation 22:8-9, when an angel appeared to John, he refused to accept John's worship, admonishing John to worship God alone. Paul and Barnabas refused the worship of the people at Lystra (Acts 14:11-15). Peter would not allow Cornelius to worship him (Acts 10:25-26). Herod was smitten by God and died because he allowed the people to worship him as a god instead of giving God the glory (Acts 12:20-23).

If Jesus had not been Deity, He could not have received worship. At His birth, all the wise men worshipped Him (Mt. 2:2, 2:11). In Matthew 8:2, 9:18,14:33, 15:25, 20:20, 28:9, 28:17, Jesus was repeatedly worshipped. When the Father brought His Son into the world, the angels of God were commanded to worship the infant Son (see Heb.1:6, Lk. 2:10-14).

Jesus is truly God! He is the full and final revelation of God. John 1:18 says: “No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” The word *declare* literally means: “to make clear, to bring what is hidden, obscure, or mysterious into light.” Jesus came to make the Father clear to us. To reject Jesus is to reject God. No man can know God or come to the Father except by Him. Jesus is repeatedly called “Lord” and “God”:

- Thomas said to the resurrected Christ, “My *Lord* and my *God*” (Jn. 20:27-28).
- The dying thief said, “*Lord*, remember me when you come into your kingdom” (Lk. 23:42-43).
- John came to prepare the way for the *Lord*. Jesus is the Lord! (Mk.1:3, Phil. 2:11).
- It was said to the Son, “Thy throne, *O God* is forever and ever” (Heb.1:8).
- Titus 2:13 calls him, “the great *God* and our Savior, Jesus Christ.”
- He is the Last Adam and is called “the Lord from heaven” (1 Cor.15:47).

2. Jesus—The Son of Man

The Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy, saying, “Because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God” (Jn.10:33). When they wanted to put him to death, they were unable to do so because they were subject to the Roman government. Thus, they brought political complaints to the Roman governor Pilate saying: “We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ, a King” (i. e. a king to replace Caesar - Lu. 23:2). They complained that He was stirring up the people everywhere (Lu. 23:5). The real charge was that He should die because “he made himself the Son of God” (Jn.19:7). But Christ had not *made* Himself the Son of God, He was indeed the Son of God. When the Jews saw that Pilate wanted to release him, they complained even louder to him: “If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar” (Jn.19:12). As a man, Jesus was on trial for claiming to be God. Yet indeed He was one hundred percent God, and one hundred percent man.

As a man, Christ never sinned. He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). Christ was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3). That is, His human body was subject to temptation because it was made of Mary's substance. But He never yielded to temptation, and thus He “condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). Therefore, He won the victory for fallen man, and offers grace to those who are likewise tempted (Heb. 4:15-16) that they may overcome temptation. Of all His titles, Jesus preferred to call Himself “the Son of Man” more than any other. He referred to Himself as the Son of Man over eighty-five times in the Gospels. He rejoiced to *completely identify Himself* with mankind. He will remain a Man for all eternity.

a.) The Incarnation

As we have already stated, the miracle of the incarnation made it possible for Christ to become both God and Man simultaneously. The humanity of Christ is one of the most disputed tenets of Christianity. Yet, it is clearly taught in the Scriptures. To deny either the deity or humanity of Jesus is to have the spirit of Antichrist. “Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already it is in the world” (1 Jn. 4:3). “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2 Jn.1:7).

Jesus was born of a woman. “But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal. 4:4). This woman was a young virgin who had no contact with a man when the Son of God was conceived in her womb (cf. Mt. 1:18-25, Lu.1:26-38). His birth was in a lowly stable because there was no room for Him in the inn (Lu. 2:7). The Lord of glory came disguised as an ordinary infant. What condescension! God created a body for His Son in the womb of Mary (Heb.10:5-7), and He will have this body for all eternity (Lk. 24:3-6). Also, we will have our bodies forever too. This is the reason we want to have the best resurrection possible.

b.) His Growing Up Years

Jesus was the Jewish Messiah, born of a Jewish mother, in a Jewish home, born under the Law of Moses, who fulfilled all the requirements of the Law.

- He was circumcised on the eighth day (Lu. 2:21, cf. Gen.17:12, Lev.12:3).
- He was dedicated when He was forty days old (Lu. 2:24, Lev.12:4-8). His parents offered two turtledoves. This shows us that they were a poor family. One turtledove was for the burnt offering, consecrating or setting Him apart to God, and the other for a sin offering. The sin offering signified that the original sin nature of Adam was in His flesh. Thus, He could be tempted. Of course, Jesus never yielded to the sin nature in the members of his body.
- At the age of twelve, He went to the temple in Jerusalem (Lu. 2:41-52). At twelve, the Jewish boys traditionally took upon themselves the moral responsibilities of the Law. Jesus astounded the doctors of the Law by His understanding and answers. In Luke 12:49, He said He was doing His “Father's business.” Thus, at age twelve, Jesus knew and understood that He was the eternal Son of God. At birth, there had been an erasure of all knowledge of His deity and pre-existence. Jesus had to learn and be trained, just as we do. Much of His training involved learning the lessons of life *at home* (Lk. 2:51-52) which is where many people fail.
- At thirty He began His ministry (Lu. 3:23, Num. 4:30). Age thirty was when the priests were admitted to their office. Jesus was baptized by John in the River Jordan, and started His ministry. Joseph was also thirty when he came into power in Egypt, and David became king at the age of thirty. All the Old Testament prophets were *types* of the coming Christ. There were very few types of God the Father in the Old Testament. Perhaps Abraham is the only vivid one. He is the one who was willing to sacrifice his only son (Gen. 22:12, 16, Heb.11:17-18). He believed God could raise him up again.

c.) The Sufferings of the Son of Man

As a human, Jesus suffered much! Isaiah 53:3 describes Him as the “Man of sorrows.” Jesus is the Eternal Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world (1 Pet.1:19-20, Rev.13:8). Long before the Father and Son created the world, they fully understood that man would fail and that a Redeemer would be necessary. Therefore, they determined long ago before the beginning of time that the Son of God should come to earth and become a man to die for the sins of the world. At the commencement of Christ's ministry, John the Baptist announced: “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn.1:29, 36). Jesus knew that His mission in life was to die as a sacrificial Lamb for the sins of the world.

His sufferings were not only on the cross. Jesus suffered in His personal life for many years prior to the cross in order to be “made perfect” (Heb. 2:11, 5:8-9). There were many years of training in the life of Christ before He started His ministry, and before He offered Himself as a spotless sacrifice. Having been made perfect, He *became* the Author of eternal salvation.

Many of His sufferings were in the open. He was rejected by the religious leaders of Israel, and by His own home town. Jesus did not have the comfort of a home. He had to depend on the hospitality of others. The Son of man had nowhere to lay His head. However, many other sufferings in His life were *private*, and that is the way it is for us too. Christ had many temptations. He had to depend on His Father continually for strength to endure. There were eternal consequences at stake, and the Adversary tried repeatedly to deflect Him. The Son of Man had “strong crying and tears” often in His personal life (Heb. 5:7-9). He suffered in his body, soul, and spirit.

The anguish He felt in the Garden of Gethsemane was indescribable. All the demons of hell were trying to hinder Him. The pressure against His mind was so great that the blood vessels in His head broke, causing Him to sweat great drops of blood. The battle was so fierce that the Father sent a mighty angel to strengthen Him (Lk. 22:43-44).

Jesus was a real man. He had all the attributes of physical man. He looked like any ordinary person. He hungered (Mt. 4:2), thirsted (Jn.19:28), grew weary, even to the point of exhaustion (Jn. 4:6), He slept (Mt. 8:24), desired human sympathy (Mt. 26:36-40), and wept (Jn.11:33, Lu.19:41). He had spiritual battles. Satan attacked Him in the wilderness with doubts, saying, “If thou be the Son of God.” The man Jesus was betrayed, forsaken, misunderstood, lonely, humiliated, oppressed, and afflicted. All of these can be seen, just in Isaiah chapter 53 alone.

Yet, the Lamb overcame all of life's injustices. Becoming a “lamb” is the key to winning the victory. Meekness is the key to overcoming; it is also the key to good mental, emotional, and spiritual health. Meekness takes no vengeance in deed or thought. It is a holy acceptance of those things God brings into our lives. It pleased the Father to bruise Him (Isa. 53:10) because He saw the eternal dividends. The Son willingly accepted the Father's will, even though it was filled with injustices. Christ was willing to go down to the lowest, therefore the Father has exalted Him to the very highest (Phil. 2:6-11). If we want to sit on the throne with Christ, it requires the outworking of Revelation 3:21: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, *even as I also overcame*, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Can we see this? —The Captain of our Salvation had to overcome unbelievable injustices in order to inherit the throne, and so do we!

The sufferings of Christ were foretold throughout all the Old Testament (1 Pet. 1:10-11). His sufferings were represented in *types*, such as the passover lamb. Christ was the Passover Lamb, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 5:7: “For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.” He was represented by the Rock that was smitten in the wilderness. Christ was to be smitten *once* by the rod of God upon the cross, and it would bring the waters of salvation and life to the thirsty souls of men. When Moses smote the Rock twice, he was destroying an eternal type. The fact that it was smitten twice meant (in type) that He would have to die more than once. Thus, Moses was severely reprimanded.

The serpent on the pole is another example (Num. 21:8-9). In John 3:14 it says: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” The serpent was defeated on the cross, and those who look to the cross will find release from the clutches of the Adversary.

Christ fulfilled *all* the offerings of Leviticus. On the cross He became our sin offering (for our nature of sin), and our trespass offering (for our acts of sin). He made provision not only for the forgiveness of our sins, but for the *nature of sin* which produces our sins. Our “old man” or old nature can be rendered powerless when we experience Romans 6:6. Christ suffered for our healing, and He even suffered to release us from sorrow and depression. Isaiah 53:4 says, “Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” Even when we lose a loved one, He can take away the sting of bereavement. But we have to learn to cast our cares upon Him, and give Him our sorrows. Otherwise, we will continue to carry them ourselves.

Psalm 41:9 is a prophecy that Christ would be betrayed by a close friend. “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” David was writing this out of personal experience. A close friend and advisor named Ahithophel turned against him and sided with an insurrection. David was a type of Christ and Psalm 41:9 was prophetic of Judas who would become the arch-traitor of our Lord.

The tauntings and ridicule He endured on the cross were prophesied in Psalm 22:6-8. The actual piercing of His hands and feet, and the parting of His garments and casting lots for His robe is foretold in Psalm 22:16-18. Isaiah 50:6 reveals the many stripes laid on His back, and the tearing out of His beard by the roots. Zechariah 12:10 prophesies the piercing of His side, and 13:6-7 predicts the forsaking of His friends.

Even Caiaphas (the high priest who opposed Jesus during His ministry) prophesied concerning the *purpose* of His death. He did this unwittingly, not even realizing what he was saying. However, being the high priest, God honored His office and spoke through Him, even though Caiaphas himself was an evil man. He was the one responsible for turning Christ over to the Roman authorities, pressuring them to crucify the Lord. Let's read John 11:49-52:

“And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. *And this spake he not of himself*; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”

G). THE MINISTRIES OF CHRIST (Prophet - Priest - King)

The threefold ministry of Christ was that of Prophet, Priest, and King. These offices can also be worked out in our lives. We are called to be kings and priests unto God (Rev.1:6, 5:9-10). We are also called to be a prophetic people (Num.11:25,29, Joel 2:28-29).

Prophet: In Deuteronomy 18:15-19, Moses declared that the Lord would raise up a prophet like unto himself. In other words, the Prophet would be very similar to Moses. That Prophet, of course, was the Lord Himself who would later become a man. The people were terrified of the fire from Mount Sinai, and the dreadful voice of God. They preferred to hear God through a man. They wanted someone like themselves. Thus, God was going to become a man and dwell with them, and teach them. Anyone who would not hearken to the words of that Prophet would be cut off, or perish.

When John the Baptist came in “the spirit and power of Elijah” [with the same anointing as Elijah], the priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked him: “Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not.” Then they proceeded to ask: “Art thou *that prophet*? And he answered, No” (Jn.1:19-21). The Jews were conscious of Deuteronomy 18:15-19 when they questioned whether John was “that prophet.” In John 6:14 and 7:40, some believed Jesus was “that prophet who should come into the world.” The Apostle Peter confirms in Acts 3:20-26, that Jesus was indeed that Prophet spoken of by Moses, and “that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.”

The prophet is representative of the Word of God. He is God’s spokesman—God’s voice. But first he must *become* his message. In order to become a divine messenger, we must partake of Christ (the Living Word) and thoroughly imbibe Him. The prophets of old were commanded to “eat the book” and digest the Word of God (Ezek. 3:1). Theory must be converted into reality and life. Initially, the Word may be as sweet as honey in our mouth but then it will make our belly *bitter* (Eze. 3:14, Rev.10:8-11). Thus, it is cleansing the inward parts so that a pure river of life can flow out from us. God only anoints *earned* truth, truth that has been worked out in our lives. When we speak, our whole being must speak! They said of Jesus: “Never man spake like this man” (Jn. 7:46). He spoke as one having authority. As a man, He became the Word. God will grind and sift us until we become as fine flour to be made into bread for the nations. We must *become* our message.

Priest: Jesus was appointed by His Father to be a priest (Heb. 5:4-5). The priestly office speaks of sacrifice, intercession, bearing the needs and sins of others, and suffering. Also, the priest was a teacher, an example. Jesus was all of these things and more. In the Old Testament the priest offered the sacrifice. In the New Testament, Jesus, our High Priest, *became* the Sacrifice.

A priest must have empathy and be identified with the feelings and needs of the people. “Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are [going] out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity” (Heb. 5:2). Jesus was made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest (see Heb. 2:17-18). He can have compassion on us because He also suffered, being tempted in all points as we are.

Jesus is our intercessor. “Who ever liveth to make intercession for us” (Heb. 7:25, Rom. 8:34, Isa.53:12). He is the Mediator between God and men (1 Tim. 2:5). He is praying for us today.

Jesus is a priest, fashioned after the order of Melchizedek, not Aaron. In Psalm 110:4, King David prophesied: “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Paul confirms that this prophecy was fulfilled by Christ (Heb. 5:5-10, 6:20, 7:1-21). The prediction of another priest literally meant a new covenant was coming (Heb. 7:12). Under the old covenant, a priest had to be from the tribe of Levi, and a king from the tribe of Judah. Melchizedek was both a king and a priest. He combined the two offices. Under the Law, it was not possible to be both a king and priest. Thus, a coming priest after Melchizedek's order signified *a new covenant*.

David personally experienced Psalm 110:4. He was *a type* of the coming Priest made after Melchizedek's order. David acted as *a king and priest together* which was not according to the Law of Moses. He intruded into the priest's office when he was hungry and ate hallowed bread which was lawful only for the priests (1 Sam. 21:3-6, cf. Mk. 2:25-26). Even Christ justified his action. David was leaping ahead of his generation into the era of the new covenant. He was led by God to do so.

The ark of the covenant had been lost to the Philistines. It had been displaced from the holy of holies for many years, When the ark was finally retrieved, David did not have it placed in its normal location in the holy of holies in Gibeon. The tabernacle of Moses was in Gibeon at that time. Instead, David pitched a tent for the ark on Mount Zion and set it there. This enabled *everyone* with clean hands and a pure heart to ascend the hill of the Lord and to stand in His holy place. David was led by God to do this, and it was contrary to the Law of Moses. At that time, only one man (once a year) could come into the holy of holies, and that was the High Priest. For nearly forty-five years during the Old Testament, everyone with a pure heart was welcomed to come within the veil into the holy of holies wherein was the ark of the covenant. David was a type of another High Priest who would open up the veil for all who were holy to come into the presence of God.

Christ was that priest after the order of Melchizedek. As a forerunner, he opened the veil and entered, beckoning others to follow. “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:19-20).

God is calling all of us to be made into priests and kings (Rev. 5:9-10). When Christ came to earth, He functioned primarily in the office of a priest. He came as a Sacrifice, as a suffering Lamb. When He comes again, He will come primarily as King. He will reign over all the earth. Let us conclude by saying that if we desire to reign as kings, may we first be willing to suffer as priests, even as Christ. Paul said, “If we suffer with him, we will also reign with him” (2 Tim. 2:12). According to Peter, glory *follows* suffering (1 Pet.1:11, 5:6, cf. Rom. 8:18). As the Captain of our Salvation did, may we also, by the mercies of God, present our bodies as a living sacrifice unto God.

King: Christ was acknowledged to be king at His birth (Mt. 2:2) and at His death (Mk.15:26). The prophets declared him to be so (Isa. 9:6, Jer. 23:5), as also did His disciples (Jn.1:49). At His trial before Pilate, He acknowledged that He was King. In Revelation 17:14 and 19:16 Christ is declared to be “King of kings and Lord of lords.” However, Jesus said that His kingdom was not of this world (Jn.18:36). His is a spiritual kingdom. He wants to conquer the hearts of men first. Christ teaches us to pray that His kingdom will come to earth. When Christ returns, He will rule the nations with a rod of iron. If we would rule the nations, we must first learn to rule our own spirit (Prov.16:32). We must also *learn* to rule in the midst of our enemies (Psa.110:2), in all of our circumstances.

H). THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is highly attested to. It is an integral part of the Christian faith. No other religion can claim to have a resurrected founder. Such a claim would be ludicrous for it could be easily disproven. The uniqueness of Christ is that He indeed is the eternal Son of God possessing resurrection life within Himself.

First Corinthians 15:17 says, ...“If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” If Christ had not risen, our faith would be in vain. Romans 1:4 says that Christ was “declared to be the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” The resurrection of Christ proved once and for all that He is Deity. He *ever lives* to make intercession for us (Heb. 7:25, Rom. 8:24, Acts 7:55-56). And, of course, He is coming to earth again.

- His ministry does not cease. David proclaimed: “Thou art a priest forever” (Psa.110:4). When the priests of the Old Testament died, their ministry ceased. “But this man, *because he continueth ever*, hath an unchangeable priesthood” (Heb. 7:23-24).
- Jesus was seen by over 500 witnesses. In 1 Corinthians 15:6, the Apostle Paul said that Christ was seen by over five hundred witnesses at once, and that most of them were still alive some twenty-seven years later. (Corinthians was written 27 years after the resurrection). There are at least ten accounts in Scripture where Christ made appearances after His resurrection. Acts 1:3 says Christ “showed himself alive after his [death] by *many* infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days...”
- Jesus predicted His death and resurrection. (see Mt.16:21, 17:9, 20:19, Jn. 2:20-22, 10:17-18). Christ declared: “For as [Jonah] was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Mt.12:40). See Jonah 2:1-10. Being in the belly of the fish was like being in “the belly of hell,” or sheol, the place of departed spirits (Jonah 2:2). In chapter 2:6 the prophet says: “I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me forever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.” This was prophetic of the resurrection. After the fish vomited Jonah upon the beach, it was like coming alive from the dead. Immediately he preached to the Gentiles and was readily accepted. This also depicted Christ's resurrection and consequent ministry to the Gentiles.
- Two of the Gospel writers (Matthew and John) were *eyewitnesses* of the resurrection. Both give eyewitness accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (see Mt. 28:1-20, Jn.20:20-21). John was present when Christ restored Peter in the presence of his brethren and recommissioned him to “feed his sheep” (Jn. 21:15-20).
- The Resurrected Christ was seen by Paul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:4-7, 22:6-10, 26:12-18, 1 Cor.15:4-8). Later Christ made appearances to Paul in the Arabian desert for three years, teaching him the gospel (Gal.1:11-19). Paul had not met the twelve apostles (except Peter) until seventeen years after the resurrection. He was personally taught the gospel by the resurrected Christ, not man.
- Numerous miracles in the Name of Jesus confirmed His resurrection. (See Acts 3:11-16). “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).

- There were many Old Testament prophecies about the resurrection. We are listing only several. David foretold the brief time Christ's body would be in the grave while His soul descended into the lower parts of the earth for three days. Christ was not dead long enough for His body to become corrupt. Thus, David testified: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psa.16:10). This was quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost in reference to the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2:25-31). Paul also confirms this in Acts 13:34-37.

In Isaiah 53:8-10, it was prophesied that Jesus would be "cut off out of the land of the living." There was no one to "declare his generation" because He would die without any natural offspring. His soul was made an offering for our sins. Yet, the Scriptures continue ... "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days..." This is speaking of His resurrection after being cut off. He would see His seed, even after pouring out His soul unto death (v12).

Paul quotes Psalm 2:7 as being prophetic of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "God hath ... raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (Acts 13:33).

Peter makes it clear that Psalm 118:22 is a reference to the resurrection. Christ confirmed that He indeed was the Stone which the builders rejected (Mt. 21:42). Christ became the *Head Stone* of the building at His resurrection. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man [the lame man who was healed] stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner" (Acts 4:10-11).

- The Resurrection was foremost in the mind of the Early Church. The truth of the resurrection was never refuted. The tomb was empty, even the priests and rulers could not deny that fact. He appeared to Peter, to James the Lord's brother, to the Eleven, to Mary and other women, and to over 500 brethren at one time (1 Cor.15:4-8), and of course, to the Apostle Paul. He showed Himself alive "by many infallible proofs" being seen of them forty days after his death (Acts 1:3). They watched as He ascended back into heaven (Acts 1:4-11). The greatest evidence of all is the fact that He lives today in the hearts of millions of believers.

- The Lord's Day is observed on the first day of the week since the resurrection. Instead of honoring the seventh day as they did in the Old Testament, the Church celebrates the resurrection of Christ on Sunday, the first day of the week (cf. Acts 20:7, 1 Cor.16:2). In a sense, Sunday is the eighth day, and eight speaks of resurrection.

- The Resurrection was pre-eminent in the preaching of all the apostles. Paul's preaching was saturated with the theme of the resurrection (Acts 13:30-34, 17:31, 26:8, 1 Cor.15, Phil. 3:21, 1 Thes.1:10). After all, it was the resurrected Christ who appeared to him on the Damascus road, and it was the resurrected Christ who taught him three years in the Arabian desert. The Twelve apostles were taught by the earthly Jesus for three years, but Paul was taught by the resurrected Christ. Paul was also striving to have a better resurrection (Phil. 3:10-14, Heb.11:35, cf. Rev. 20:5-6). Peter emphasized the resurrection (Acts 2:24, 3:15, 1 Pet.1:21-23). Peter raised the dead in the power of Him who is "The Resurrection of the Life" (Acts 9:36-42).

• The Resurrection of Christ was a literal, physical resurrection from the dead. We want to emphasize this fact—the resurrection of Jesus was a very literal happening. It was not ethereal, mystical, or spiritual. It was real and tangible, and He lives today. Stephen saw Him standing at the right hand of the Father three-and-a-half years after the crucifixion. Please observe the following:

a.) His resurrected body was made of flesh and bone, but it was glorified and incorruptible. Christ beckoned close friends to touch him. “Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have” (Lu. 24:39).

b.) His resurrected body bore the scars of the nails which pierced his hands, and the spear that was thrust into His side. “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing” (Jn. 20:27). He will continue to bear these scars for all eternity. When Christ comes again and makes Himself known to Israel, “One shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands?” (Zech.13:6). They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and this was prophesied long before the Incarnation (Zech.12:10).

c.) His resurrected body was in the same form as before. “The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord...” (Jn. 20:25). Jesus was recognizable! He was the same height, and had the same face. It will be that way for us too in the resurrection. We will have this same body but it will be glorified and incorruptible. Remember, Moses was given his original body when he was resurrected by Michael the archangel (Jude 1:9). It was the same Moses (body, soul, and spirit) who had died 1450 years earlier who appeared to Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration.

The resurrected body of Christ could appear or disappear at His will. “And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight” (Lu. 24:31). He could walk through walls and locked doors (Jn. 20:19).

d.) His resurrected body was glorious. It is incorruptible, and it will always be young and exempt from sickness or infirmity of any kind. Paul said He “...shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:21).

Note: The IMMACULATE CONCEPTION is a doctrine which states that the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin, making her divine. It was proclaimed as a dogma by Pope Pius IX in 1854. The Immaculate Conception is sometimes confused with the *virgin birth*. The virgin birth of Christ is supernatural and it is clearly supported by Scripture. The Immaculate Conception is a doctrine of man, and is refuted by Scripture. Although pious, Mary was entirely human. Her body contained the original sin of Adam. In fact, her genealogy goes all the way back to Adam. Since Christ's body was made of her substance, He was able to be tempted in all points as we are. God cannot be tempted, but when God became a man, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, He was able to be tempted. Yet, He never yielded to sin, and as a man, condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3).

I). THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

Although Christ was Deity, He came into this world as a man, living and dying as a man. He rose from the grave as the all-powerful Lord and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. Christ will continue to be exalted throughout all eternity.

Very early on resurrection morning Jesus showed Himself first to Mary. He had not yet ascended to the Father. When Mary wanted to touch Him, He said: "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father" (Jn. 20:16-18). Jesus was going to ascend to the Father to present Himself as "the firstfruits of those who slept" (1 Cor.15:20). He was fulfilling Leviticus 23:10-14. The feast of Firstfruits was always celebrated on Sunday, the "morrow after the sabbath." Israel had to wave an offering of the firstfruits of their harvest to the Lord. When God accepted it, He was also accepting the whole harvest. Jesus was the Firstfruits from the dead and when He appeared before the Father, the Father accepted us also.

That same day, Christ returned to earth. This time He beckoned others to "touch him." He told Thomas to put His hand upon the wound in His side (Jn. 20:17-27). Jesus then remained on earth another forty days, establishing the truths of the kingdom in the hearts and minds of the disciples (cf. Acts 1:3, Lk. 24:27, 24:44-45). Forty days later Christ made His final ascension into heaven as we have already seen in Acts 1:4-11. His position at the right hand of God is mentioned or alluded to no less than twenty times in the New Testament alone.

- *He is seated at the right hand of God.* God placed Christ at His own right hand above every other power in the universe. "...When he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:20-22).

- *All power is given unto Him in heaven and in earth* (Mt. 28:18). Christ was "the heir of all things" according to Hebrews 1:2. Even though Christ was Co-Creator with the Father, the Father did not entrust the universe unto Him until Christ accomplished the will of the Father. Christ had to come to earth and give Himself a ransom for many before He obtained the promise of being the heir to the universe. In Hebrews 10:36, it is also clear that we do not receive personal promises until we have first performed the will of God.

- *He has the keys of death and of hell.* When Christ rose from the dead, He held in His possession the keys of death and hell. He said, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev.1:18).

- *He led captivity captive* (Eph. 4:8-11). When Christ ascended into heaven, He did not go there alone. He took many righteous saints with Him. He released the spirits of righteous men and women from a resting place in the lower parts of the earth so that they could go into heaven. Before the ascension, the righteous did not go to heaven when they died. At death, they went into the lower parts of the earth into hell (hades - Greek; Sheol - Hebrew), into a temporary resting place. This is the reason David could say, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there" (see Psa.139:7-8).

- *He gave gifts unto men* (Eph. 4:8-11). After Christ ascended into heaven, He and the Father sent Another One to take His place—the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church, and many ministry gifts were given to the Church by Christ.

The giving of gifts was like a celebration after winning a victory. In Bible times it was customary for a general to parade down the street with his enemies tied to his chariot. This showed that he had utterly conquered them, stripped them of their power, and was exposing them to public humiliation. This is what Jesus did when He defeated Satan and his hosts at the cross and rose from the dead. “Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it” (Col. 2:15).

- *He ever lives to make intercession for us.* The exalted Christ is the believer's High Priest, Intercessor, and Mediator. Christ prays for us to the Father, and He is strengthening us. He is our Advocate (Comforter, Intercessor), pleading our cause on the merit of His own blood. When Satan comes to accuse us before the Father, Jesus stands as our Advocate (1 Jn. 2:1, Rom. 8:34).

- *He is eternally exalted above all.* “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father” (Phil. 2:9-11).

“But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, *O God*, is forever and ever ... And thou *Lord*, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands ... they shall perish; but thou remainest; ... they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, sit on my right hand ...” (Heb.1:8-13).

In these verses, Christ is called “God”, “Lord”, “Creator,” and the unchanging One who sits at the right hand of the Father.

- *He is worshipped and adored.* Christ was the only one worthy to take the seven-sealed book from the right hand of the Father and open it. And when He had taken the book, the four [living creatures] and the twenty-four elders *fell down before the Lamb* in worship and adoration. Only God is worthy of worship, and Christ is God, as well as the Father (cf. Rev. 5:1-14). This entire chapter is dedicated to the worship and adulation of the Lamb and His Father.

“*Worthy is the Lamb* that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing ... And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, *and unto the Lamb* for ever and ever” (Rev. 5:12-13). Only God is worthy of worship, and this chapter emphasizes that Jesus is God, as well as His Father.

Remember, God died for us! Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and every other cult does not believe that Jesus Christ is God. “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us” (1 Jn. 3:16). God died for us! Acts 20:28b exhorts shepherds to “feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.” “God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16).

J). ALL JUDGMENT IS GIVEN TO CHRIST

- John 5:22—“For the Father judges no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” The Scriptures teach us that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, not of the Father. On the final day of reckoning, we will all give an account to Christ (2 Cor. 5:10-11).

Even during the earthly life of Christ, He was already functioning as the Judge. In John 19:10-11, Jesus was standing before the judgment seat of Pilate, but on the final day of judgment, Pilate will be standing before the judgment seat of Christ. Already Christ was judging Pilate when he said: “Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above ... He that delivered me to thee [Caiaphas] hath the greater sin.” Caiaphas the high priest was the one responsible for delivering Jesus to the Roman governor, insisting that Christ be put to death.

- Matthew 7:21-23—Here is a scene of the judgment seat of Christ. It is clear that Jesus is acting as the Judge. These verses refer to the final day of judgment. You will notice that the Father does not do the judging, but the Son. “Many will say to ME [Jesus Christ] ... Lord, Lord!” (v23) “Then will I [Jesus] profess unto them ... depart from me, ye who practice lawlessness...” Jesus is the one who determines whether a person is worthy of eternal life or not. And this was determined before the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8, Eph. 1:4). It is not the Father's Book of Life, but the Lamb's.

- John 5:28-29—At the awesome voice of the Son of God, all the dead (good and evil) shall be resurrected at the last day and stand before Him (see Jn. 6:39, 40, 44, 54). That same voice that created the world will also awaken all the mortal bodies that sleep, and they shall be judged by Jesus Christ, not the Father. All whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, Christ will command to be cast into the lake of fire.

- Matthew 13:41—It is the Son who removes all things that are offensive in His kingdom when He comes again. “The Son shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend.”

- Matthew 25:31-32, 31-46—Jesus judges the nations, and separates the sheep nations from the goat nations. The deciding factor that determines whether a nation is a sheep (submissive) or a goat (rebellious) is the manner in which they treat the afflicted in their society. Jesus said: “Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have not done it unto me.” How we treat people is a reflection of how we treat the Lord.

- In the Book of Revelation, Jesus is revealed as the Judge. “He cometh to judge the world.” In chapters 2-3, He starts off judging His own Church. Then He brings a triple-judgment upon the earth (seals, trumpets, vials) in an attempt to bring men to repentance (Rev. 9:20-21). At His second coming there is a tremendous judgment and slaughter. Then at the final resurrection, Christ judges all men. One of the outstanding themes of Revelation is that Jesus is the judge of the whole universe. The Son shares His authority as Judge with his overcomers. (See Rev. 2:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:2-3). He will divide the spoil with the strong, the overcomers (Isa. 53:12, Rev. 21:7).

K). THE NAMES AND TITLES OF CHRIST

- **Lord Jesus Christ** - This fully denotes the Person of Christ.

Lord - speaks of His Deity.

Jesus - is His earthly name, meaning “Savior.” Thus, He came to save us.

Christ - means “Messiah” or “the Anointed One.” He is the Anointed One in Whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells (Col. 2:9), having received the Spirit without measure (Jn. 3:34-35).

Jehovah (LORD). Notice the small capitals of LORD. Jehovah means the Eternal or Immutable One. Jehovah is also indicated by (GOD), small capitals, when it occurs in combination with Adonai, in which case it is Lord GOD. Jehovah (translated LORD or GOD) appears 5,321 times in the Old Testament. *Jehovah* can refer to the Father or the Son.

Before the incarnation, Christ was the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Here are seven special names by which He was known. We come to know Him by experiencing Him in these seven aspects:

Jehovah Shammah - (Ezek. 48:35) The Lord is There. (His literal presence in our lives.)
Jehovah Shalom - (Judg. 6:23) The Lord our Peace. (He is our Prince of Peace.)
Jehovah Raah - (Psa. 23:1) The Lord our Shepherd. (He is our Good Shepherd.)
Jehovah Jireh - (Gen. 22:14) The Lord our Provider. (He meets our needs.)
Jehovah Nissi - (Ex.17:15) The Lord our Banner. (He is our victory.)
Jehovah Tsidkenu - (Jer. 23:6) The Lord our Righteousness. (Phil. 3:9, Isa. 54:17)
Jehovah Rapha - (Ex.15:26) The Lord our Healer. (He heals us, body and soul.)

- **The Last Adam** - He is the Father of a new race, of those born again (1 Cor.15:45-47). Adam is the father of the human race which is fallen.

- **The Alpha and Omega** - “The first and the last.” The I AM of God. Jesus always was and He always will be (Rev.1:8, 22:13, Ex. 3:14, Jn.1:1-2, 8:58, 18:6-8, Heb.13:8).

- **The Almighty** - (Gr. Pantokrator) This refers to God our Creator who expresses His relationship to all He has created by the exercise of His power over “all the works of His hands.” *Almighty* is found nine times in Revelation, and can refer to the Father or Son, depending on the context.

- **The Amen** - Amen means “true” or “sure.” In the New Testament it is often translated *verily*. Jesus is the “Amen.” Everything He says is true and sure, and through Him the purposes of God are established. All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in him Amen (2 Cor.1:20, Rev. 3:14).

- **The Author and Finisher of Our Faith** - Jesus is the Captain [Leader, Prince] of our salvation. He started the work of redemption in our lives, and He will also be the Perfecter of it (Heb.12:2, Phil.1:6). Christ finishes what He starts and will not abandon us. He will confirm us unto the end that we may be blameless (1 Cor.1:8).

- **The First Begotten From the Dead** - Christ is “the firstborn from the dead” (Col.1:18). In Scripture, the *firstborn* had authority over his brethren. He was looked up to and feared. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead. Death is terrified of Him. Christ has authority over death (Heb. 2:14-15).

- **The Firstborn Among Many Brethren** - Christ is our Elder Brother. He has power and authority over us, and He is responsible to the Father for us (Rom. 8:29).
- **The Firstborn of Every Creature** - He has authority over the whole creation (Col.1:15-19).
- **The Branch** - This is a reference to Christ being the Messiah. He is a “branch” of David. The fruit of this Branch is excellent and comely (Isa. 4:2, Jer. 23:5-6, 33:15, Zech. 3:8). This Branch would grow and build the house of God (Zech. 6:12). Jesus said, “I will build my church” (Mt.16:18).
- **The Root and Offspring of David** - Jesus was *both* the root [Source] and offspring of David. He created David, and descended from him too. David committed the sins of adultery and murder, yet we see the willingness of Jesus to be identified with him. What amazing grace to David, and what humility on the part of Christ (Rev. 22:16). From Isaiah 11:1, we see that Christ was “a rod out of the stem of Jesse.” David had many descendants but it was *a little shoot* out of his family tree that really fulfilled God's purposes. It is that way in many movements.

The Seven I AM's of John's Gospel

- **I AM the Bread of Life** (Jn. 6:35) - Christ is our strength, nourishment, and sustainer.
- **I AM the Light of the World** (Jn. 8:12) - He is the only source of true light. All others are false.
- **I AM the Door of the Sheep** (Jn.10:7) - He is the only way into heaven, into the fold.
- **I AM the Good Shepherd** (Jn.10:11) - He is the only one who can keep us from going astray.
- **I AM the Resurrection and the Life** (Jn.11:25) - He is the only one who can give life.
- **I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life** (Jn.14:6) - He is the only way to God.
- **I AM the True Vine** (Jn.15:1-17) - The Vine symbolizes Christ's wonderful life-giving power as we abide in Him. May we allow Him to prune us, even of good things that are *excesses*.
- **The Dayspring** - Dayspring is used of the rising of the sun and stars. Jesus is the One through Whom light came into the world. He is also called the *Day-star* (the one who bears light), and He rises in the hearts of believers (2 Pet.1:19).
- **The Deliverer** - Christ is the only one who can deliver and redeem us from sin and from all our troubles (Rom.11:26). He is able to break every bondage. In Him is plenteous redemption.
- **The Savior** - Christ brings us salvation which includes deliverance, safety, preservation, healing and soundness (Lu. 2:11).
- **Our Advocate** - He is our Comforter Who comes to our side and defends us. The word advocate is used in a court of justice to denote a defense attorney who pleads the cause of another. Thus, Christ is our defender and comforter (1 Jn. 2:1).

- **Our Mediator** - Christ is our “Go-between.” He mediates between God and man to produce peace and bring us both together (1 Tim. 2:5). He also acts as a “guarantee” so as to secure something which could not be otherwise obtained. Thus, Christ is the *Surety* of the new covenant, guaranteeing its terms for His people (Heb. 8:6, 9:15, 12:24).
- **Our Great High Priest** - As our High Priest, Christ has compassion upon us, and ever lives to make intercession for us. Only the high priest could come within the veil, and Christ our High Priest is the One who opened the veil, allowing us to have full access to God (Heb. 4:14, 5:1-2, 5:10, 6:20).
- **The Horn of Salvation** - God “hath raised up an horn of salvation for us” (Lk.1:69). This is a Hebraism found in Psalm 18:2, 132:17, 1 Sam. 2:1,10, Lam. 2:3, Ezek. 29:21. Horns are a symbol of strength. In Revelation 5:6, the Lamb had seven horns. In Habakkuk 3:4, the Lord had horns coming out of his hand. This was the secret of His power. Christ is the source and strength of our salvation.
- **The Lamb of God** - Christ is known for meekness. In Revelation, the reference to Christ being a Lamb is found twenty-seven times. In every instance, it means “tender little lamb.” When it was announced that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah had prevailed to open the book and loose the seven seals, a *tender little Lamb* stood and took the book out of the right hand of the Father (Rev. 5:5-7). Before we can become a lion, we must become a lamb. We can only defeat Satan by having the nature of a lamb. All vengeance and bitterness must first be removed, even from our thoughts. Otherwise, we will act just like the devil. (See Isaiah 53:7, 1 Peter 2:22-23.)
- **The Messiah** - Messiah means the Anointed, the Christ. It was foretold in Daniel 9:25-26 that when the Messiah came, He would be “cut off” [or killed]. Consequently, the city and temple would be destroyed as a judgment by a coming prince. That prince was the Roman General Titus. Christ based many of his parables and the discourse on His Second Coming on Daniel 9:25-27.
- **The Chief Cornerstone** - In Ephesians 2:20 and 1 Peter 2:6, Christ is called the Cornerstone. All dimensions of a building are taken from the corner. The apostles and prophets are the foundation stones upon which we are built (i. e. the Scriptures they wrote). But they received their orders from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone. Christ Himself is “The Word of God.”
- **The Desire of All nations** - Haggai 2:7 prophesies that the One who alone could satisfy the emptiness of the hearts of men would come. This is a reference to the Second Coming of Christ.
- **Emmanuel** - “God with us.” Isaiah 7:14 mentions the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. His Name would be called Immanuel. This child was God Himself dwelling with man (Jn.1:14, Mt.1:23).
- **The Faithful Witness** - In Revelation 1:5, 3:14, Christ is called the “Faithful witness.” This particular word (witness) is *martus* in the original Greek, from which we derive *martyr*. It is someone who bears witness by his death. It is someone who affirms what he has seen, heard, or knows. Christ has been faithful to declare all the revelation of His Father to us, even to the point of dying for doing so (Jn.15:22-25, 17:8).

- **I AM** - Christ is the One who appeared unto Moses in the burning bush, declaring His Name - "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:13-14). This was nearly 1500 years before the Incarnation. Paul states that the Israelites "tempted Christ" in the wilderness, and that the Rock who accompanied them was "Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4, 9). Christ revealed Himself as "I am" repeatedly in John's Gospel.
- **The Holy One** - Even the demons called Christ "the Holy One of God" (Lu. 4:34). God alone is holy (Rev.15:3-4). He is perfect in thought, word, deed, and motive.
- **The Image of God** - In 2 Corinthians 4:4, Christ is called "the image of God." In Colossians 1:15, Paul calls Him "the image of the invisible God." Hebrews 1:3 says He is "the express image of his person." The word used in Hebrews 1:3 (charakter) means the exact impression as when metal is pressed into a die, or as a seal upon wax. Christ is the perfect replica of His Father, except that the Father does not have a tangible, physical body.
- **The Just One** - In Acts 3:14, 7:52, 22:14, Christ is referred to as "the Just One." He is totally righteous. Christ is our righteousness (Phil. 3:9, 1 Cor.1:30). Our own righteousness is like filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). In 1 John 2:1, He is called "Jesus Christ the Righteous."
- **The Forerunner** - Christ is called "the forerunner" in Hebrews 6:20. He has gone ahead of us, opening the veil. The primary purpose of a forerunner is that others should follow the same course or action. Thus, we see that Christ is beckoning us to follow Him within the veil (Heb.10:19-22). He is the "Messenger of the [New] Covenant" mentioned in Malachi 3:1.
- **The Sun of Righteousness** - Jesus is the Light of the world. The light of Christ has healing in His beams and rays. When He lifts up the light of His countenance upon us, we are healed, favored, and uplifted (Psa. 42:11, 44:3, 89:15, Num. 6:25-26).
- **The Lion of the Tribe of Judah** - This denotes the kingly descent of Christ (Rev. 5:5). Out of the tribe of Judah was to come the sceptre or rulership (Gen. 49:10).
- **The King of kings / Lord of lords** - Christ has the sovereign rule over all the earth, including its rulers. He is the One who raises up one, and puts down another. Nothing can happen without His consent (1 Tim. 6:15, Rev.1:5, 17:14, 19:16). He is also called "the prince [or ruler] of the kings of the earth."
- **The Lord of Glory** - Jesus is the Lord of Glory (1 Cor. 2:8). He came to bring many sons and daughters to glory (Heb. 2:10). The definition of sin is to come short of His glory (Rom. 3:23). Thus, we are sinning if we fail to march forward in our Christian walk. When believers are "satisfied" as the Laodiceans, they are sinning (Rev. 3:15-17). He said to Moses in the wilderness: "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord" (Num.14:19-23). This was said to a generation who had come short of the glory of God. They were *tempting Christ* in the wilderness (1 Cor.10:9), and falling short of the mark.
- **The Mighty God** - "Unto us a child is born...His name shall be called...The Mighty God." According to Isaiah 9:6, the child who was going to be born was God Himself. From this one verse alone we can see that the Second Member of the Godhead was going to be born and become a man.

- **The Mighty One of Jacob** - “I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob” (Isa. 60:16b). Christ was the Savior, Redeemer, and Mighty One of Jacob, not only of the nation, but of Jacob himself. Jacob wrestled with the pre-incarnate Christ, saying, “I have seen God face to face” (Gen. 32:30). Christ visibly appeared to Jacob and reaffirmed, not only his change of name from Jacob to Israel, but also His future purposes with Jacob (cf. Gen. 35:9-15).
- **The Prince of Peace** - One of the titles of Christ is “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6). He is the God of peace who commanded the winds and the sea to “be still” (Mk. 4:37-41). He has all power over nature, for He is the Creator of the universe. He is also called “Everlasting Father.” See below.
- **The Lawgiver** - (Isa 33:22, Jas. 4:12). The Lord is the Lawgiver. The great I AM who appeared to Moses in the burning bush was the same One whose voice shook the earth from Mount Sinai. That Lawgiver on Sinai was none other than the Pre-incarnate Christ. The Jews gloried in Moses and the Law but when the Lawgiver became a man and taught in their midst, they could not recognize him (Jn. 5:39-40). They worshipped the Bible and the Law, but murdered the One who gave it. The “letter” of the word kills without *the Life-giver* of the Word. Christ is the Living Word of God.
- **The Ruler in Israel** - “Yet out of thee [Bethlehem] shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). It is clear that the Chief Ruler (the Messiah) did not have His beginning in the womb of Mary. He had been “from of old, from everlasting.” John the Baptist was older than Jesus, yet John said, “He is preferred before me *for he was before me*” (Jn.1:15, 30). He came down from heaven (Jn. 6:38, 42, 51, 58).
- **The Everlasting Father** - Although Jesus is not God the Father, still He is a father to us. Hebrews 2:13 says of Christ, “Behold, I and the children which God hath given me.” We are his “seed.” “He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days...” (Isa. 53:10). In Isaiah 44:3, the Father said to His Son: “I will pour my Spirit upon *thy seed*, and my blessing upon *thine offspring*.”
- **The King of the Jews** - Christ was proclaimed “the King of the Jews” at His birth and also at His death (Mt. 2:2, 27:37). He will literally sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem during the Millennium (cf. Lk.1:32-33). He is indeed the “King of Israel” (Jn.1:49), another title of Christ.
- **The Governor** - In Micah 5:2, Christ is called the Ruler; in Matthew 2:6, the “Governor.”
- **Rabboni** - This meant, “My Great Teacher or Master.” Christ is our great Teacher. He is the Teacher of all teachers. The mark of a great teacher is his ability to explain in simple terms what is complex. This He did marvelously. The vocabulary of Christ was within a range of about 600 words in the Gospels. He was able to summarize all the Law and the prophets in two simple statements (Mt. 22:36-40). Christ spoke as one having authority (Mt. 7:28-29).
- **The Rock** - “And a *Man* shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a *great rock* in a weary land” (Isa. 32:2). That Man is Jesus Christ. Christ is known from numerous verses as the Rock. “There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God” (1 Sam. 2:2). See also Deut. 32:4, 15, 18, 30, 31. Christ was that Rock in the wilderness (1 Cor.10:4). He is our stability and our fortress, but a Rock of stumbling to the disobedient (Isa. 8:14, 1 Pet. 2:7-8, Mt. 21:44).

• **The Man of Sorrows** - Normally Christ is beaming with light. He is light (1 Jn. 1:5). There is no darkness, discouragement, fear, and depression in Jesus. Yet there are times when we have to know Christ as the Man of sorrows, the One acquainted with grief (Isa. 53:3). This is the only way to experience “the *fellowship* of his sufferings” (Phil. 3:10). It is imperative to know Christ in all of His aspects, not just in some of them.

• **The Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls** - Not only is Christ a faithful Shepherd who brought us into the fold when we were lost, He is also the Bishop (or Guardian) of our souls (1 Pet. 2:25). He watches over us so we will not stray. Christ is faithful to warn us when we are getting off course. This is seen in Philippians 3:15. When we are being deflected even slightly from God's highest plan for our lives, He promises to reveal even this to us.

• **The “Shiloh” of Jacob's Prophecy** - Christ is the One who would *gather all people unto Himself* as it is mentioned in Genesis 49:10. He alone can bring true unity and love amongst brethren.

• **The Only Begotten Son** - This is a title given uniquely and only to Christ. It refers to the episode before time began when Christ came forth from the bosom of the Father (Prov. 8:22-31). It is also mentioned in Acts 13:33 when Christ was begotten from the grave.

• **The Beloved Son** - When Christ was baptized in Jordan, and when He was transfigured, the voice of the Father proclaimed audibly: “This is my beloved Son” (Mt. 3:17, Lu. 9:35). Not only did the Father put His approval upon Him, saying, “in whom I am well pleased,” He also commanded us to “hear him.” In Psalm 2:12, all the kings of the earth are commanded to “kiss the Son” (i. e. be submitted unto Him.) There is a special blessing for all those who put their trust in Him (Psa. 2:12).

• **God** - Jesus is God! He is just as much God as the Father, although He is submitted to Him.

- He is eternal

- He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever

- He is the Creator

- He is worshipped

- He is able to forgive sins

- He is the Judge of all

- His voice causes all the dead to rise

- He controls nature

- He holds the atoms and the universe together by His Word

- He owns all power in heaven and earth, subject only to the Father

- He is the King of all the princes of the earth

- He is written on all the pages of Scripture

- He is the only answer to man's problems

- He is the only way to have forgiveness, and He is the only way to heaven

“But *unto the Son* he saith, Thy throne O God is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom ... And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail” (Heb.1:8, 10-12).

L). CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY

Jesus is God in the flesh. He is the Father's only means by which men can be cleared from the guilt and debt of their sins. To try to come to God any other way is not acceptable. "No man cometh to the Father, except by me" (Jn.14:6). Too often men and women try to establish their own righteousness, being ignorant of God's provision for righteousness (see Rom. 9:30 to 10:4).

John 15:23 — "He that hateth me hateth my Father also." Anyone who rejects the Son is rejecting the Father. But he that believes on the Son is believing on the Father also (Jn.12:44).

Matthew 11:27—"No man knows the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." It is impossible to know God except through the Son. A man may say he believes in God, but if he rejects the Son, he does not know God at all. It is not possible to go to heaven without acknowledging the Son. "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn. 5:12). "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Mark 16:16—"He that believeth not shall be damned." John 3:18—"He that believeth not is condemned already." John 3:36—"He that believeth not the Son...the wrath of God abideth on him." The entire human race is guilty of sin and rebellion, and is worthy of judgment. When the good news of the gospel is offered to men and they reject it, they have refused God's only means of pardon and will remain in a state of condemnation. He that believeth not is condemned already.

1 Timothy 2:5—The *only* Mediator between God and men is Jesus Christ ... not another man, or a priest, or a saint. Jesus Christ is the only go-between man needs to come to God. All have sinned, and therefore all need pardon. Jesus Christ is the only means by which to receive pardon. John 8:24—"If ye believe not that I AM ... ye shall die in your sins."

This subject will be covered more extensively in Doctrine Two - The Doctrine of Salvation.

DOCTRINE

Two

DOCTRINE TWO

General Outline:

- I. DOCTRINE OF MAN
- II. DOCTRINE OF SIN
- III. DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

I. THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

A.) THE BEGINNING OF MAN

B.) THE REASONS GOD CREATED MAN

C.) THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

D.) THE FALL OF MAN

E.) THE FINAL DESTINY OF MAN

F.) THE COMPOSITION OF MAN

1. Spirit

2. Soul

3. Body

I. DOCTRINE OF MAN

A.) THE BEGINNING OF MAN

God's Highest Creation

Man is the greatest of all God's creatures upon earth. Man is made in God's image and likeness. All other created objects (animal, vegetable, or mineral) were spoken into existence by His Word, but man was made with God's own hands. Then He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. Thus, man was made to live *forever*. He was made like God. His spirit came from the life-giving breath of the eternal God. Man's origin is seen in Genesis 1:26-27.

Made In God's Image and Likeness

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

“*Let us make man in our image.*” Man was made in the *image* of God in physical appearance. This means that man resembles God. All those who have been privileged to see the Lord will attest to this. God has a form. James 3:9 says we “are made after the similitude of God.” God said of Moses, “the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.” If God does not have a shape, what was there to behold? When Ezekiel saw the throne of God, he saw the likeness of a man upon it (Ezek.1:26). Thus, God has a form similar to man. The angels and living creatures are much like man, except they have wings (Ezek.1:5). Of course, these heavenly beings were created before man.

“*Let us make man after our likeness.*” Man was made not only in the *image* of God but also in the *likeness* of God. “Likeness” refers to the soul and character of God. This includes the Godlike attributes of love, joy, and peace, and the other fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), as well as the power of thought, reason, will, and associated emotions. Because man is made in God's image and likeness, we are capable of communing with Him.

Man Did Not Evolve - He Was Created in One Day

Man did not evolve over a long period of time. He was created by God in one day, on the sixth day of creation. Three times in Genesis it says that God created man, and three times it says he was created in His likeness (Gen.1:27, 5:1-2, 6:7). Man is called *the offspring of God* in Acts 17:28-29. God himself later became a man at the Incarnation. He will remain a man for all eternity.

Adam was the first man ever (1 Cor.15:45). Man was made in one day. He did not evolve from a monkey. Evolution is only a theory and it is filled with contradictions. There is no evidence of evolution today, nor has there ever been. If man evolved from a monkey, why is it not still happening today, and why are there not some in-betweens today? There are no in-betweens of *anything* today. All the human race descended from Adam, and his race is only about 6000 years old.

Man's Creation Should Be Received With Complete Faith

The story of the creation and the beginning of man should be received with complete faith. In Hebrews 11:3 it says, “*Through faith we understand ...*” Only a believing heart can understand the creation account and the beginning of man. Jesus taught, “Except ye become as a little child ye cannot see the kingdom of God.” Man loses the ability to believe with childlike faith because he becomes hardened by life and by sin. The “natural mind” cannot receive divine truth for it is foolishness unto him. “The world by wisdom knew not God” (1 Cor. 2:14, 1:21).

The crux of man's problem is that sin has hardened his heart and darkness sets in. Almost always there has been a moral breakdown in the man or woman whose heart is destitute of faith. Atheism, agnosticism, evolution, and a denial of judgment are distorted rationalizations. These are the result of moral impurity and a hardened conscience because of guilt. Unthankfulness, pride, immorality, and a rejection of God cause man's light to be snuffed out (Rom.1:21-32, Mt. 6:23). Daniel 9:13 exhorts, “Turn from iniquity, and understand truth.” Hosea 13:9 is man's only hope and solution.

B.) THE REASONS GOD CREATED MAN

To Fulfill His Own Pleasure

To Have a Family

To Replenish the Earth

To Have Dominion Over the Earth

To Show His Love and Wisdom

To Demonstrate His Glory

To Be Wedded to a Glorious Bride

To Have a Tested People

To Replace the Fallen Inhabitants of Heaven

To Fulfill His Own Pleasure

All things are made *by* God, and *for* Him. Revelation 4:11 tells us this fact. It is for God's pleasure that all things are and were created. This is the purpose for everything God has made. Man in particular was made to bring God pleasure. After all, man is supreme among God's earthly creatures, and he is made in God's image and likeness. If we are not bringing God pleasure, we are living in vain. As we have said before, fulfillment in life is when we have found the reason for our existence, and that is to bring joy and pleasure to our Maker. When we live to bring pleasure and attention to ourselves, we are miserable. This is the reason people are *unfulfilled*. (see 1 Tim. 5:6).

We were created for another—God! Man would never suffer from an “identity crisis” if he properly understood this. The human heart so often is restless and unsatisfied because it is trying to be something on its own, independently of God. The heart is filled with ambition and self-exaltation. However, God did not create us to be the world's greatest achiever—athlete, musician, teacher, or kingdom builder. What would it accomplish anyway if we attained our ambition? All it would do is draw attention to ourselves (not God), and still we would not be fulfilled. It is ironic that so many strive to be famous, and yet most people who are famous are dreadfully unhappy! Let us be freed from the illusions that lead us astray, and find our full joy in the presence of Christ (Psa.16:11).

To Have a Family

God created man because He wanted *many* sons and daughters. He has the heart of a Father. His Spirit within us cries, “Father, Father” (Gal. 4:6). The title Jesus used most frequently to describe God unto us was “Father.” God wants His children to act like Him so that we can truly be called His children. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor. 6:17-18). God loves all His children. Some bring Him much joy but others a lot of sorrow. He deserves sons and daughters who *delight* His heart. Let's be one of those who delights to do His will.

We see that God yearns for man, and longs to dwell with man. He took the initiative, saying: “Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them” (Ex. 25:8). God is a very social being and longs to be surrounded by His people (see page 14, para. 6). He inhabits the praises of His people (Psa. 22:3). True praise and speaking kindly to Him, opens His heart to us. This invites His presence. When He comes to earth, “He will be *admired* in all them that believe” (2 Thes.1:10). The Lord seeks deep intimacy, and longs to be understood (Jer. 9:24). Thus, God wants a family.

To Replenish the Earth

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it...” (Genesis1:28).

It is evident that God wanted *many* children. “Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.” The thought of “replenishing the earth” suggests that the earth had once been inhabited, but not with man. The events of Genesis chapter one (the seven days of creation) were actually a restoration of the world. It is believed that there was once an intelligent civilization here, long before man, but it was not man. At the time of Genesis chapter one, the earth had become “without form and void” and the Lord was restoring order. God created the earth to be inhabited, not to be desolate.

God created man as “male and female” from the beginning. He did so for several important purposes. One reason was for the reproduction of the human race. Also, the man and woman were to be a mutual strength to each other, thus enabling them to fulfill their appointed tasks in this life. However, God instituted marriage at the very beginning of mankind for another reason. Marriage is His greatest object lesson by which He teaches us about our relationship with Himself. The very things a man looks for in a woman, God looks for in His people: intimacy, understanding, loyalty, compassion, and other mutual interests and goals.

“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply ...” Here is another significant truth. God's blessing brings multiplication! It honors God when we are fruitful in everything we do. “And God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply.” This is repeated again in the Lord's promise to Abraham when He said to him, “In blessing I will bless thee and in multiplying I will multiply you” (Gen. 22:17). God desires fruit, and He wants *abundance*.

God wants His house to be filled. This honors Him and brings Him glory. In Luke 14:22-23, the Lord invited many to a feast at His house. When the servant of the Lord told the Master that there was yet room, the Lord was not satisfied until the house was *filled*. He wants our churches filled too.

To Have Dominion Over the Earth

“And let them have dominion.” God made man to be the caretakers and stewards of His creation. Being made like his Creator, man was given dominion, power, and authority over all the other creatures. The Lord even put the fear of man within animals so they would submit to man. Psalm 8:6-8 says: “Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.”

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” It was not just the man who was to have dominion over the earth. In Genesis 1:28, God said unto “them” [male and female together], “Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” God created both the man and woman. *Together* they were to have dominion over the earth. By this we can better understand the reason Satan attacks marriage. When he destroys unity between man and woman, he can undermine their ability to have dominion. Also, they lose their power to produce a godly seed.

To Show His Love and Wisdom

God is love! Love is the very essence of His nature. After Lucifer's rebellion (Isa.14:12-15) and consequent dethronement, there is every indication to believe that the Adversary charged God with having no love. The Father and the Son took counsel together and determined to create a beautiful earth in which they could thoroughly manifest their love and wisdom. God desired creatures who would love Him out of their own free choice. He longed to demonstrate His love and lavish His kindness upon the sons and daughters who were created in His image and likeness.

He understood, however, that the cost of this love would be very great. God in His foreknowledge knew that man would fail. Thus, it was decided beforehand, even before they created the earth, that the Son would come to earth as a man and die for the sins of the world. He was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (1 Peter.1:19-20, Eph.1:4, Rev.13:8, 17:8, Acts 2:23). The fact that God purchased us with His own blood and laid down His life for us (Acts 20:28, 1 Jn. 3:16) is ample proof of His love and an answer to Satan's accusation that God is unloving.

God also created the world and mankind in order to show forth His wisdom. The earth and everything in the earth is created with wisdom. “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens” (Prov. 3:19). According to Ephesians 2:7, the Lord will be unfolding the riches of his grace and wisdom unto us for all eternity. In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:3). God even teaches the angels and principalities his wisdom by the way He works on earth, and in the Church (cf. Eph. 3:10).

“O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches” (Psa.104:24). Every single thing is created with wisdom. There is divine truth and a divine message in everything God has made. Romans 1:20 makes it clear that the creation reveals much about its Creator. The Designer is known by his design. Thus, man is left “without excuse” when He charges that there is no God, or that God cannot be known.

To Demonstrate His Glory

The purpose for creating man was to fashion him like his Creator. Man was intended to be filled with the glory, splendor, and majesty of God. He was made to glorify God in every situation and to *render* the glory due His name. Man was made to *receive* the glory and approval which God bestows. Man was created to *reflect* the glory of God by coming to maturity and bearing Christ's image. Man was made to *partake of* God's glory.

It is clear from Hebrews 2:10 that Christ came, not only to save men from hell, but to bring many sons and daughters unto glory. This was the original purpose of God—for men to bear God's glory. When the generation of Moses rebelled in the wilderness, they failed to glorify God and they failed to show forth His glory. Sin is coming short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23). In spite of Israel's failure, God declared to that generation: “But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord” (Num.14:21). May we learn from their mistakes and not fall short of the mark.

To Be Wedded to a Glorious Bride

The whole creation is based upon marriage. God's *ultimate objective* for creating man was to have and to cherish a glorious Bride without spot or blemish. This was His utmost desire. It is the crowning joy and prize of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Bride is a beautiful many-membered body of choice believers who have been “conformed to the image of Christ” (Rom. 8:29).

Christ will not be wedded to those who have refused to grow out of spiritual infancy. The corporate Bride is made up of select members who have allowed God to make them holy and glorious. The Scripture declares: “His wife hath made herself ready” (see Rev.19:7-8). The fact that she *made herself ready* suggests that believers have to apply themselves if they would be in this favored group. It costs something to change from the person we are to be like Him. The cost is obedience. Not everyone is willing to submit to this special work of transformation. Christ looks for those who are like himself, those who are compatible with himself. He will bypass those who have their own agendas and their own ideas. Christ will ignore the proud, the stubborn, and those who resist His Spirit. This subject will be covered in more detail in another course entitled *True Christianity*.

To Have a Tested People

The Lord created man and woman with the power of choice. God offered all of his love to man and desired creatures who would reciprocate this love back to Him out of their own free will. God has done everything to prove His love to man. He has made a beautiful earth and provided every imaginable blessing for man. Even so, there is an Adversary on the loose who challenges God's love, and God purposely has him around to prove our hearts. Man can either listen to God, or he may harden his heart and follow the devices and slander of the Evil One.

There is a controversy in the universe today. This controversy existed long before the beginning of time. The issue is obedience—Whose will am I going to follow? My own, or God's? Lucifer decided to do his own will. He believed his will was better than God's. Man faces that same test. The serpent persuaded Eve that God did not really mean what He said! Then Adam sided with Eve. It is obvious that Adam (and mankind overall) was created to be tested (cf. Job 7:17-18).

To Replace the Fallen Inhabitants of Heaven

Man was created to be tested and proven, but for what purpose and to what end? Certainly, God wants a people who love and choose Him *above* their own will, but there is another issue at stake here. We are called to “judge angels” (1 Cor. 6:3). This means we have to pass the tests that Lucifer and the fallen angels failed. We are called to dispossess Satan and all his domain. To do this, we need a personal victory over him. Christ has already defeated Satan, but we need to have a personal victory over the Adversary also.

Satan still has access to heaven as seen in Revelation chapter 12. He is not cast out of heaven until his peers have beaten him. Those peers include Michael the archangel, the godly angels, and the overcomers described in Revelation 12:11. The overcomers defeat the Accuser by three things:

- By the blood of the Lamb—Christ conquered Satan by dying as an innocent lamb without any vengeance. He paid our debt. He is our Advocate and the one who pleads our cause as a defense attorney, but Christ did much more than this. His blood provided redemption for every problem in our life (Titus 2:14). The overcomers are those who have appropriated *all* that the blood has purchased for man. Most believers lay claim to only a small fraction of redemption.
- By the word of their testimony—What we confess when we are in pain and under pressure determines whether or not we gain the ascendancy over Satan. When Job lost everything he had, he fell down in worship to God, saying: “The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord” (Job 1:21-22). In responding this way, he dealt a tremendous blow to Satan. Satan is the Bitter One, and all he is able to confess is bitterness. In doing the opposite, Job defeated Satan. We can never have the victory over our Adversary if we react as he does. We overcome him by the words of a right confession during times of distress. Anyone can praise the Lord when life is running smoothly. The fires of affliction reveal who is who.
- By not loving their lives unto the death—Only by becoming a lamb can we defeat Satan. This is a major theme of the Book of Revelation. It is the “tender little Lamb” who prevails (Rev. 5:5-7). It is the Lamb *who was slain* who prevails. If we are unwilling to die to our own ways, and our own will, and if we love and carefully protect our life and routine, we will never defeat the Self-willed One. If we are ever going to take possession of what the Proud One forfeited, we will have to go the way of the Lamb, the way of the cross.

C.) THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

- **Monogamous**—Man had one wife. God only created one woman for Adam. Polygamy and divorce were results of the Fall. Regarding divorce, Jesus declared: “In the beginning it was not so.” Christ came to bring fallen man back to His original purpose in the Garden of Eden (Mt.19:3-9).
- **Industrious**—Man was filled with activity. He had spiritual vision and purpose. When people have no goal, they are bored and unmotivated in life. It was not so with Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were caretakers of God's creation. They had a sense of destiny also, which is something we must have in our own hearts (Prov. 29:18) or we will dwell carelessly.
- **Dominion**—Adam and Eve *together* had dominion over the earth and all the creatures. They had tremendous authority, having been made in the image of God.
- **Intelligent**—The fact that Adam named all the animals shows the brilliant nature he received from God (Gen. 2:19-20). Today, even the greatest thinkers are only using about ten percent of their mind power and resources. Eve, too, was an equal of Adam. She was Adam's counterpart.
- **They Lived in Paradise**—Paradise is another name for “garden.” This was a literal garden, somewhere in the Middle East. Its exact location is not known today. The beauty of it was exquisite! They lived in ideal conditions. The temperature was always comfortable. The birds were singing, and there was no devouring spirit in the animal kingdom. There was perfect love everywhere. There was no curse. Their marriage must have been extraordinary too. They were exempt from the fallen nature and its maladies. Adam and Eve were perfectly relaxed and adjusted to one another.
- **They Had Sweet Communion With God**—This is evidenced by the fact that they were accustomed to hearing the voice of the Lord God in the cool of the day (Gen. 3:8). Surely, God must have communed with Adam and Eve frequently. His presence must have captivated their hearts.
- **They Had God's Glory**—Man indeed is the image and glory of God (1 Cor.11:7). This beautiful couple, of necessity, must have been saturated with His glory and presence in their undefiled state.
- **They Were Innocent, But Not Holy**—Morally, Adam and Eve were like infants. They did not know good or evil in their environment. They were unclothed and knew no shame or guilt. They were like very young children morally. In their blissful state, they had not eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:9, 16-17).
- **They Were Untested**—Adam and Eve were like babes, not in intelligence, but in regards to knowing good and evil. A baby is innocent but not holy. Only someone who has been tested and found faithful is righteous and holy, and God wanted creatures who were tested and found true.

Now, the test was at hand. Satan had come in the form of a serpent and beguiled the woman to partake of the forbidden fruit. This was the one and only restriction God had placed upon Adam and Eve. Of course, the serpent waited until she was distant from her husband. She was making a major decision independently of Adam who was her head and protector. Eve's curiosity and quest for the unknown got the best of her.

D.) THE FALL OF MAN

The Test

God created a perfect man and placed him in a perfect environment. He lavished upon man every conceivable blessing, and all of His love and affection. Yet, God wanted creatures who would reciprocate this love back to Him out of their own free choice. True love and loyalty can only be tested when there is *an option* to choose something else. Thus, the power of choice was woven inherently into man from his very beginning.

God wanted to test man's loyalty and love. Therefore, He gave them one restrictive commandment, and this commandment was for their good. It is found in Genesis 2:16-17: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." They may not have fully comprehended all the ramifications of this commandment or its consequences. Yet, man is required to obey, even when he does not fully understand.

Love is proven by obedience. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (Jn.14:15, 15:14). Would Adam and Eve be obedient to the commandment not to eat the forbidden fruit? You see, to *continue* in the blessings and favor of God, we must be obedient and pass our tests.

Also, in passing this test, God would have something to say to the Accuser. God wants to have something to say to the one who reproaches Him (Prov. 27:11). Satan charges that people only serve God for the blessings, not because they love Him. He does this because he was guilty of the same thing (Rom. 2:1). Lucifer only served God for the benefits (i. e. the blessings, power, and position). This is the reason he accuses people like Job of having ulterior motives (Job 1:9-11).

Were Adam and Eve loving the Lord only because of the manifold blessings of God? Would they prove their love and loyalty to the Lord by taking His commandment to heart and obeying it? Were they going to provide God with something to say to His Adversary? Unfortunately, from the account given in Genesis 3:15, God could only say that *another Man* would later descend from the seed of the woman and this Man would not fail. He would crush the head of the serpent.

The Failed Test

Satan came to Eve when she was away from her husband. See Genesis Chapter 3. The serpent lured her into making a major decision without first consulting her husband. Eve was clearly deceived, Adam was not. Paul brings this out in 1 Timothy 2:13-14: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

Eve was from Adam, although also created. Adam could not have been deceived because he was made in the likeness of God. There is a great difference between man and woman. Adam was made like God and could not be deceived. But Eve was taken out of Adam and should have come to Adam before doing anything. The wife should never do anything major without first consulting her husband. Likewise, the Church should come to Christ before doing anything. The only reason for the Fall was that Eve was deceived. Otherwise, there would never have been a Fall.

Adam came on the scene and realized what had happened to Eve. Clearly, she had been deceived. Adam took of the fruit also because he did not want to be separated from Eve. In a limited sense, Eve can be compared to the Church. Christ (the Last Adam) identified Himself with the Church and became sin for her. The first Adam was not in the will of God in identifying himself with Eve's sin. However, the Last Adam was truly in the will of God when He became sin for us.

The root of Adam's sin was that he loved Eve more than God. She had been deceived, but Adam had full knowledge that what he was doing was sin. He identified himself with her because he did not want to lose her. Thus, he loved Eve more than God.

Eve fell, but the Scriptures do not ascribe the downfall of the human race to Eve. It attributes it directly to Adam (cf. Rom. 5:12). Adam was not deceived. He willingly disobeyed God. He put the love of his wife over the love of God. Eve was beguiled by the serpent and believed he was right. Adam fully realized the trap. He knew it was wrong to eat the forbidden fruit, but he could not bear the thought of facing an unknown future without Eve.

Points to Remember About the Fall

Genesis 3:1 - Satan first casts *doubt* upon God's Word. "Yea, hath God said?" Sown doubt grows. Eve was away from her husband when Satan came.

Genesis 3:2 - Satan then got Eve to have *a dialogue* with him. This is a grievous mistake.

Genesis 3:3 - Adam and Eve were warned not to even *touch* the fruit. Sin begins with *touch*.

Genesis 3:4 - Satan flatly denies coming *judgment or consequences for sin*. "Ye shall not surely die."

Genesis 3:5 - Satan *distorts* God's message of "good and evil." Satan *rationalizes* that they have misunderstood what God said. "For God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Subtly, he is accusing God of withholding good things from them. They could be wise as gods, and God would not let them have it. He suggests this issue of "being gods" because he always wanted to be God. People speak what is in their hearts. The longer she listens to him, the more she is becoming like him. We become like those we listen to.

Genesis 3:6 - Sin gets into the heart through the eyes. "When she *saw* the fruit." Sin came into the world by *undisciplined appetite*. "It was good for food." Sin is the result of desiring *forbidden* knowledge and wisdom. Curiosity, fantasy, fascination for the unknown brings sin. After she was beguiled, Adam came on the scene and took the fruit also.

Genesis 3:7 - Their eyes were opened, enabling them to know good and evil, just as the serpent said. But it was only a half-truth. Now they saw their shame and disgrace. He told them half-truths. Half-truths are equivalent to blatant lies.

Results of the Fall

- **Man Had Guilt.** They sewed fig leaves together to cover their nakedness (Gen. 3:8). God did not accept man's covering for sin. Later he clothed them with skins of animals (3:21), signifying that the shedding of innocent blood was the only means by which sin and guilt could be covered.

- **Man Hid From the Presence of the Lord.** Instead of anticipating the presence of the Lord, they hid from Him (Gen. 3:8-11). Sin makes man afraid of God, and of one another. It creates walls, suspicions, imaginations and fears. The Fall causes man to shield himself from the light. He evades, withdraws, defends, and retreats from God, and from others. Self-centeredness and self-consciousness are direct results of the Fall.

God was so gracious in his approach to fallen man. In 3:11, the Lord asked questions to make it easy for Adam to confess his sin. He is a seeking God who desires *restoration* of fellowship.

- **Man Blames Others.** In Genesis 3:12-13, Adam blamed Eve, and then God. “The woman thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Job 31:33 states that Adam hid his sin. He was slow to admit his own sin. Then Eve quickly blamed the Devil. Another remarkable trait of the fallen nature is that mankind is overprotective of his ego, and seeks to shift the blame for his own faults onto others. This is done in order to ease his own feelings of guilt. However, the only way to be released from guilt is by an honest confession of our own sin, not our neighbors.

- **Man Chooses Human Love Above God's.** Perhaps one of the most obvious and greatest weaknesses of man from the Fall is that he prefers human love above God's. This is the root sin of Adam. By one man sin came into the world (Rom. 5:12), and that sin was choosing human affection above God's. How many people have made human love, friendships, and the choice of a mate (without consulting God) more important than doing God's will. But when human love is exalted above God's love, the result is always conflict and sorrow.

- **One Man's Sin Infected the Whole Human Race.** “...By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Sin and death has been passed on from our first parents to every one of their descendants. When Adam and Eve sinned, all of mankind fell with them, for we were *in* them.

- **Man Became Rebellious and Selfish.** The first son brought forth by Adam and Eve was a murderer. Cain murdered his younger brother, and then lied to God concerning his whereabouts. Instead of putting God and others first, fallen man promotes *self* first. In the last days iniquity will come to its fullest expression. The Apostle Paul summarizes all the sin of man in one phrase: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves*” (2 Tim. 3:2). All the other sins mentioned in 3:2-7 stem from the roots of “Me first.”

- **Man Surrendered His Dominion.** Man had submitted to the Serpent instead of God. Therefore man was infected with the Serpent's *nature* and forfeited his God-given authority. In yielding to the Devil, man opened the door for hordes of demons to come in and infest the fallen ground. When man fell, the creation over which he ruled fell into the prey of the enemy. Man had to be driven out of paradise and be denied the tree of life until another plan was instituted (Gen. 3:22-24).

• **Man's Nature Was Depraved.** All of man's good instincts became corrupted by the Fall. They were so distorted that God (a little later in history) had to send the flood to destroy all of man from the face of the earth, except one family. Man's sense of self-preservation became *selfishness*. He turned inward instead of outward. Jealousy, anger, supersensitivity, and even murder became perversions of God-given instincts of self-preservation.

The instinct of eating turned to gluttony, envy, and self-seeking. The instinct of acquisition degenerated into covetousness and stealing. Man's desire to reproduce became perverted into adultery, fornication, and immorality of every form. Instead of ruling over God's creatures in kindness and gentleness, it turned into tyranny and quarrelsomeness, with everyone fighting for his rights. Instead of ruling over God's creatures, man began to worship them, making images of them. He worshipped and served the creation, more than the Creator (Rom.1:25).

The Fall brought the universal depravity of man as described in Romans 1:21-32. The entire nature of man was affected by Adam's sin.

His understanding became darkened (Eph. 4:18).

His heart became wicked and deceitful (Jer.17:9).

His will became weak and unstable (Rom.7:18).

His flesh and spirit were defiled (Mt.15:18-20, 1 Cor. 3:17).

His conscience and mind were polluted (Tit.1:15).

His life did not retain the qualities and requirements of God's holiness (Ezek. 22:8, Isa.1:4).

• **Communion Was Lost; Spiritual/Physical Death.** Adam and Eve lost their beautiful communion with God because of disobedience. That wonderful fellowship had been broken. They died spiritually at the instant they took of the forbidden fruit. They had cut themselves loose from God by disobedience. Death means separation. "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Their physical bodies began to deteriorate and would eventually die and return to dust.

The Curse - For Man's Sake

It is important to make a distinction between the Fall and the Curse, although they are related. The Fall refers to man's disobedience which brought a corrupt nature. The Curse (pain, toil, sorrow, and death) are the *restraints* God had to impose upon fallen man to keep him on course. None of these judgments upon man were because of God's anger or vengeance. Rather, they were acts of His mercy.

Because of the Fall, God pronounced the Curse of Genesis 3:16-19 (cf. 5:29) to restrain fallen man. God knows what depraved man will do when he is not held in check. When fallen man is idle or has no adversity, he becomes proud, oppressive, and wicked (Ecc. 8:11, Ezek.16:49-50, Psa. 73:3-6). Strong pain is necessary to curb pride and the evil bents in our nature (Job 33:14-19, 1 Pet. 4:1-2).

According to Romans 8:18-22, God has subjected the creation to vanity [or disappointing misery]. This is a reference to the Curse. He has also subjected it to hope. When the Curse has performed all of its work, God will remove it (Rev. 22:3). Sometimes God allows a lingering *thorn* in our lives until a certain work of grace is performed or something obstinate changes. Then He removes it. Paul needed a thorn to keep him on course (2 Cor.12:6-9). A pearl is formed by irritation. Sometimes a very aggravating situation is prolonged to accomplish something beautiful in our lives.

God Weaves Man's Mistakes into His Purposes

Although God knew that man would fail, certainly He did not predestine the Fall. God is not the author of disobedience, nor should sin ever be attributed to the Most High. In His foreknowledge, God knew that man would fail. Therefore, He planned and ordained a Sacrifice for fallen man before the foundation of the world (1 Pet.1:18-20, Rev.13:8, Gen. 3:15).

Man chose a hard path when he transgressed (Prov.13:15). God had to *reroute* man after the Fall, and it has never been an easy road since. The imposed Curse has four main objectives:

- 1.) To restrain a rampant fallen nature.
- 2.) To keep man on course
- 3.) To teach man about God, and the ways of God.
- 4.) To destroy the fallen nature at death, so that man can be raised incorruptible and sinless.

Nehemiah 13:2b says, “God turned the curse into a blessing.” This is a divine principle. God is able to reverse a curse and turn it around for something good when man is repentant (Rom. 8:28-30). Since the transgression in the Garden of Eden, God has had to work through man's failures, and engineer another plan for the human race.

Trouble – Our Servant

Because of man's downfall by disobedience, God had to curse the ground for man's sake. The Curse (and all of its hardships and afflictions) creates an opportunity for God to develop divine qualities in man. Mercy, longsuffering, meekness, true love, faith, loyalty, forbearance, and many other virtues are developed in adversity. Of necessity, fallen man must have pain, sorrow, toil, and pressure. Even the fact that we can die is God's mercy, for in death the nature of sin is destroyed in the members of our body, and we can be resurrected with a sinless body. However, be sure not to die before your time. God only uses the curse to bless us. When a problem or enemy has served its purpose, God will deliver us from it.

Genesis 3:22-23 - “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

When God drove Adam and Eve from the beautiful Garden, this too, was His mercy. If fallen man had eaten of the tree of life, he would have lived forever with sin. Mercifully, so that man would not continue forever in his sinful condition, the Lord prevented him from eating of the tree of life. Death (as we have said) is also an act of mercy, though it is an enemy. At death our corruptible body of sin is destroyed, and then raised in newness of life at the time of resurrection. It will be exempt of sin in its members. Our redemption is not complete until we receive our new bodies (cf. Rom. 8:20-23). Death, sorrow, pain, and trouble are all acting as our servants. When they have accomplished their purpose, God will destroy them.

E.) THE FINAL DESTINY OF MAN

The fall of man left the human race in a sad state. God had to veil Himself from man's sight and limit man's approach to Him because of his sin and defiled nature. Yet, God did not abandon man or leave him without hope. God understood beforehand that man would fail and need a Redeemer. After the Fall, God promised them *a Man* who would crush the head of the serpent. That Man, of course, was the Last Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ. Every sacrifice offered to God in the Old Testament pointed to the sacrifice of the coming Savior.

The Two Adams

Paul said: "...As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor.15:22). The two Adam's are compared by Paul (see Rom. 5:12-19, 1 Cor.15:45-49). Both Adam's are *fathers* of a race. The first Adam is the father of the human race. The Last Adam (Christ) is the father of all who are born again. Our first father infected a whole race with sin, death, and condemnation. Our new father brought abundance of grace, life, and justification to all who find *new birth* in Him.

The Last Adam Has Recovered All That the First Adam Lost

Man was made to have intimate fellowship with God. He was created in the image and likeness of God. Man was made to glorify God, and to have dominion over the earth. Everything that was lost in the Fall by the first Adam has been restored by the Last Adam, and more. Redeemed men and women will indeed rule and reign with Christ over the earth. They will have the righteousness and holiness of God worked out in their lives, and reflect His glory. God will have a perfected people who know and understand Him (Jer. 9:24). There will be a beautiful bride without spot or blemish for His Son (Rev.19:7-8). There will be a people who have been conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:28-30).

It is Still a Matter of Choice

Even though Christ has provided full redemption for every problem in man, still we have the choice to appropriate what has been purchased, or reject it. Christian maturity is now possible by grace, but if we are not diligent to lay hold of it, we will not have it (Heb. 2:1). Neglecting our redemption is just as serious as rejecting it. The lack of whole-heartedness has caused many to lose their inheritance and settle for something much less (see Josh.13:1, 18:3). This is the reason some are *least* in the kingdom of heaven, and some are *great* (Mt. 5:19). Some are 100-fold believers, some are 60-fold, and some are 30 (Mk. 4:20). All of the promises of God are *conditional*. This is often not understood in the Church world. There are standards and qualifications to be met first (see Heb.10:36, Rev. 21:7). The promises of God are only "to those who overcome."

Because of God's grace, redeemed man is able to enter into everything that the first Adam had, but lost. In fact, redeemed man can have even more. On the next page, we would like to explore a few of the benefits redeemed man can experience. We want to emphasize, however, that all of these blessings can only be inherited by the overcomers. Thus, we must *apply* our hearts to those things the grace of God has provided.

Benefits Made Available to the Redeemed

All of the following blessings are *conditional*

We must continue to respond to God to truly possess them

a.) He is a new man. Paul said: "...If any man be in Christ, he is a new [creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). This *new man* is [being] created in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24, 2:10). This is present tense. God is working on us to remold us into a new vessel, even as the potter (Jer.18:1-6).

b.) He has a new nature. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Pet.1:4). The *nature* of something is its native disposition or constitution. This new nature or change of disposition does not happen overnight. It comes a little at a time as we yield our lives to God. Our soul is purified *each time* we obey the truth (1 Pet.1:22).

c.) He has a new life. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). This new life is an eternal, everlasting life (Jn. 3:15, 36, 5:24). This new life in Christ sets us free from the law of sin and death, even as we refuse to walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-2). It is a life lived by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). Our walk in the ways of life must be maintained. Sometimes men and women who once walked in the ways of life return to the paths of death and darkness (cf. Prov. 2:12-17, 2 Pet. 2:20-22).

d.) He has a renewed mind. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind ..." (Rom.12:2, Eph. 4:23). We are only changed to the degree that our mind is changed. Paul knew the power of an idea. In his past life he had used all of his power and resources to destroy the Church until his mind was changed. Then all of his energy was harnessed for good. Even after our new birth, old thought patterns and concepts need to be changed. Our *attitudes* change when our minds change. Remember, we are *transformed* by the renewing of our minds. This is an on-going process.

e.) He has renewed inner strength. "Our inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). Paul also said we should be "Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Col.1:11). When self-pity and bitterness would normally reign, Christ can strengthen us in our troubles, and even give us patience and joy. This, too, is a choice. We can still flow with our natural feelings and dig ourselves into a pit of depression, if we reject the available grace of God (Heb. 4:16, 12:15).

f.) He has renewed dominion. "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Where sin abounds, grace can *much more* abound (Rom. 5:20). Dominion over the earth starts with dominion over our self, or self-control. This is a fruit of the Spirit rendered [temperance] in the KJV. See Galatians 5:22-23. He that rules his own spirit is greater than he who can take a city, according to Proverbs 16:32. Natural man is unable to control his feelings and instincts. The ability to control our passions requires a divine work of Christ in our hearts, and this comes about as we yield our lives to Him.

g.) He has renewed fellowship with God. “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 Jn.1:3). Full access into the presence of God has been opened since Christ came and rent the veil. The veil in the temple signified that the way into God's presence was not yet revealed (Heb. 9:7-8,10:19-22, Mk.15:37-38). When Jesus died, the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom, showing that the way into God's full presence was now accessible.

Coming into the holy of holies unto a holy God has great requirements. This is clearly seen as we study Leviticus 21:16-24. No man could come within the veil if he was blemished. Christ wants to remove all blemishes from his people, so that they may be part of his glorious bride (Eph. 5:26-27).

h.) He has victory over worldly temptations that first appealed to Eve. Through Christ, we can overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. The believer must grow from the child stage, to the young man stage, to the father stage (1 Jn. 2:12-17, 5:4). Little children have many idols and lusts to overcome (1 Jn. 5:21).

i.) He can glorify the Father. “That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom.15:6). Christ came to bring many sons to glory (Heb. 2:10).

j.) He can rule and reign over God's creation, as he was first created to do. “If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him” (2 Tim. 2:12). We are called to rule and reign as kings and priests with him, if we qualify (Rev. 5:10, 20:6, 22:5). Kings and priests are not born, they are *made* (cf. Rev. 5:10), “by the effectual working of his power” in us (cf. Eph. 3:7).

k.) He can come to full truth and be made totally free. “*If ye continue in my word*, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Jn 8:31-32). Do you hear the heart of God here? There are *conditions to be met* if we want to obtain all that God has destined for our lives.

The truth sets us free of bondages, torments, and other generational curses. The truth sheds light into our beings, and discovers all our hiding places, and all our enemies. However, we will only come to the full light if we *continue* in His Word and not be offended. Many people become offended when the tests come (Jn. 6:60-61, 66). The Word offends them. They close their hearts, but in doing so, they fail to come to all the light God would show them that would make them totally free. Let us pray for *much grace* so that we will not harden our hearts in the day of temptation.

This is the original purpose and also the destiny of man—

- To love the Lord with all our heart. Thus, there must be no other loves that rival His jealousy.
- To love our neighbor also (cf. 1 Jn. 3:11-12, Mt. 22:36-40), and show mercy to those in need.
- To be thoroughly wedded to Christ. To know, comfort, understand, and properly represent Him.
- To gladly surrender our will to the One who created us, and not be independent of Him.
- To bear His image and likeness, have His character, and respond *as He would* to each situation.
- To fulfill the specific task He has ordained for our individual lives, with an excellent attitude.
- To rule and reign with Him, and *bring pleasure and glory* to the Father throughout eternity.

F.) THE COMPOSITION OF MAN

Spirit - Soul - Body

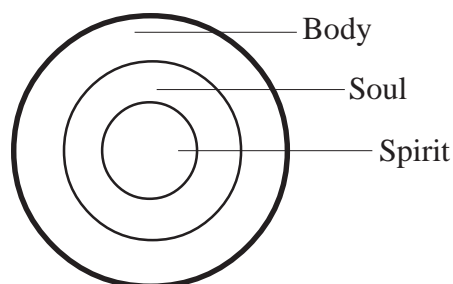
Man is a trinity. He is composed of spirit, soul, and body. Man is a spirit, possessed of a soul, living in a body. Our body is tangible and is made of the elements and minerals of the earth. It is our outer case. From Genesis 2:7, God formed man out of the dust of the ground (cf. 3:19). The soul and spirit are *intangible* but have a form that much resembles the body. First Thessalonians 5:23 says that all three areas of man need to be sanctified (cleansed, renewed, and redeemed). The diagram below in concentric circles illustrates man in three parts.

Man in Three Parts

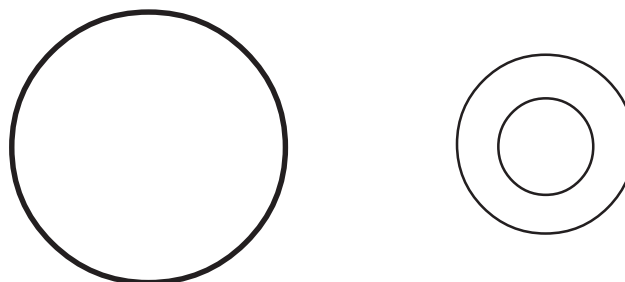
Body - The tangible part of man. Flesh and bones.
The outer case. Created from the elements of the earth, it is very complex and wonderfully made (Psa.139:13-16).

Soul - Our emotions and personality.

Spirit - Our very life. It is God-breathed (Num.16:22). The spirit gives life to our soul and body. James 2:26 says, "The body without the spirit is dead."



At Death
we have this ...



At death the spirit and soul are separated from the body. The body disintegrates into dust again, until the time of the resurrection when the same dust is recreated into a new and incorruptible body. This new body is then reunited with the soul and spirit. At death, the soul and spirit of a believer leave the body and go immediately into heaven, into the presence of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:1-8, 2 Pet.1:13-14). The spirit and soul have a form that much resembles the physical body, so that departed soul/spirits have identity and can recognize each other. Death simply means *separation*. Death is not oblivion. Death separates the body from the soul/spirit. James says that the body without the spirit is dead (Jas. 2:26). The "second death" mentioned in Revelation 2:11, 20:14 is eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. It is the fate of the unredeemed.

"The redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:23). The total redemption of Christ is not complete until our body is redeemed and resurrected. The Apostle Paul wanted his body back as soon as possible. He wanted a better resurrection. The degree of glory our body will have in the resurrection is determined by how much we allowed Christ to work within us during our lifetime here in this mortal flesh (Phil. 3:11-14, 3:20-21, Heb.11:35, I Cor.15:40-44).

For all eternity, man was created to be three entities—body, soul, and spirit. God has intended for man to have his body for all eternity. Death is only a temporary situation. Therefore, we should seek to have the best resurrection possible. Sell out to the will and plan of God for your life (Phil. 3:11).

All Three Parts of Man to be Subject to the Holy Spirit

All three parts of man were created by God and were made to be in subjection to the Holy Spirit. All three areas (body, soul, and spirit) need to be redeemed and cleansed (1 Thes. 5:23). Man is a spirit, clothed upon with a soul (emotions, personality, makeup), living in a body. The spirit is our very life. This is what God breathed into man the day He formed him. The spirit gives life to the soul and body. Whatever controls our spirit very much controls the rest of our being.

Our Spirit Needs Cleansing

Our spirit needs to be cleansed. We can have a haughty spirit (Prov. 16:18). Our spirit can resist God and be very unyielding. This is the reason we need a broken spirit (Psa. 51:17). The spirit, we could say, is our heart. What we are in our spirit is who we really are. Our spirit is the very center of our being. Our deepest motives lie here, and what we truly worship is here. Whatever dominates our spirit determines who we really are. Thus, we should ask God for a clean spirit, a pure heart. We cannot discern other spirits until our own spirit is clean, surrendered to God, and at rest.

In 1 Corinthians 2:9-14, there are three classifications of spirits:

- 1.) - The spirit of man.
- 2.) - The spirit of this world (Satan, and the demons and fallen angels)
- 3.) - The Spirit of God.

When a man's spirit rejects God's Spirit, he then becomes susceptible to the spirit of this world. Thus, our spirit is the battleground between the other two. God's Spirit and the spirit of this world both vie for possession of our spirit.

When we are born again, our spirit is quickened and comes alive to God. Before this, our spirit was dead in trespasses and sins. "Dead" does not imply oblivion, but separation (Eph. 2:1-5, 2 Cor. 4:6). At new birth our spirit comes alive. It becomes alive to God, and there is a new awareness of God and of the spiritual realm. Also, when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, our spirit is immersed in God's Spirit. However, the apex of spirituality is when God's Spirit can freely flow through a *cleansed spirit*, with the soulish emotions and body under subjection.

The ideal life is for the spirit to control the soul and body. Before the Fall, the spirit had dominion over Adam, as God had intended. Man is a spiritual being and should be governed by the spirit. With the Fall, darkness and separation came into the spirit of man. God had warned Adam concerning the forbidden fruit—"In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17, 3:3). He was referring to a spiritual death, not physical. Adam did not fall over dead the same day. He lived another 930 years. A *spiritual* death occurred, which also caused the body to begin to die. Ever since the Fall, it has been an uphill battle to be spiritual. Often the soul and body are ruling, instead of the spirit. The ideal is for God's Spirit to control man's spirit, which then controls the soul and the body.

The Problem of Souliness

Hebrews 4:12

God wants His people to be spiritual, not soulish. Often the soul (emotions, fears, moods, partiality, etc.) get in the way of the spirit, and hinders the flow of the Holy Spirit. A soulish person is dominated by the emotions which bring on depressions, discouragement, self-pity, and other “feelings.” God wants us to discern the difference between what is soulish and spiritual.

The Word of God divides soul from spirit (Heb. 4:12). The Word of God can show us what is genuinely spiritual (what is originating from the Holy Spirit through our spirit) and what is coming from the soulish emotions. The Word of God can show us what our real problems are and why we are always depressed or angry. We do not need to go the psychiatrist.

Hebrews 4:12—The Word of God divides soul from spirit. It separates souliness (feelings, emotions, and natural thinking) from what is truly spiritual. The Word of God not only shows us what is soulish or emotions, but it also reveals the deepest motives of our spirit. The Word of God locates our problems and shows us what is wrong in our soul (emotions) and in our spirit (motives). It is like a light that is turned on within. David said: “The entrance of thy Word giveth light” (Psa.119:130). Often we are unable to understand our real problems, but the Word of God is a light that discovers and remedies them. True self-knowledge can only come by divine illumination.

We must overcome souliness, for when we are dominated by our feelings, we will not be stable in character, and decisions will be made according to our emotions. Emotions are very partial. The *need* should not be what prompts one to go to the mission field. A divine call should. We should be overwhelmed with the anointing, not the need. People who are soulish are very susceptible to other spirits moving upon them and prompting them. This deflects them from God's purposes. Emotions can be good, however, if they are produced by the Holy Spirit.

Avoid Psychology

According to Hebrews 4:12, the Word of God is quick and powerful (living and active). It has the power not only to reveal but also to do the work of a skillful surgeon's knife, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. Psychology only deals with the *soul* and tries to “patch up” the old nature. The Spirit of God through the Bible can tell us why people do things. We need to rely on the anointing which comes by humility. The Spirit upon the Word will show us why men and women act the way they do. Psychology often dominates and controls the lives of others. A divine counsellor should not try to analyze others with his mind, but seek the mind of the Lord.

Depend on the Spirit of God to reveal the real needs of those to whom you minister. Once we get into psychology, we get into bondage. The spirit of humility will break the spirit of psychology. There is a mental blindness that comes with psychology. Some evangelists use psychology to get people to the altar, but it is not the true anointing of God. We can even use Bible principles but if we are not under the anointing, it only kills. We want our spirit cleansed from all influences of the soulish realm. A lot of Christianity goes under the guise of the Spirit of God when it is not the Spirit of God at all. Psychology seeks to put “me” in control, but we want to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We Cannot Help Others Until We Are Helped

Depend on God for light! There is no real light outside of God. He is Light. Unless God says, “Let there be light” no one can see anything. This is true of salvation. We could get people to the altar by psychology, but unless God says, “Let there be light,” there is no new birth. Nothing ever changes, and no one's problems are ever really solved until God sovereignly gives His light.

We can never know or help another person until we *know ourselves*. We must first be convinced of our real needs and then face our problems squarely. We have to know ourselves and of what we are made. Light shows a condition. It reveals those places where light has not penetrated before. When we see things in our hearts that are unlike the Lord, it is because God is being gracious and giving us light. Some revelations can shake us, but unless we admit our need, we cannot go on into greater light. God would like to reveal more to us if we were able to receive it. He is governed by wisdom and love and knows how much we can bear. He has an ardent desire to do new things in our lives. The hindrance is our lack of seeking Him. Let us say: “Lord, I am listening.”

Practically all of our problems are *in ourselves*. It is so important that we ask God for grace to get over those things we imagine others are thinking. Everything we think is in ourselves. If we have pleasant thoughts ourselves, we will think that about others.

We always desire to make other people what we are. If we are bitter or hateful, we will dislike those who are not. A bitter person is not satisfied if he cannot make another person around him bitter and unhappy also. We judge others on the level of ourselves. We assume that everyone is just like us. If we are honest, pure, and upright, we will expect everyone else to be the same way. Paul said; “To the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure” (Titus 1:15). Let us ask God to purify us in our soul and in our spirit of all these maladies. We will only see light as He gives light (Psa. 36:9). Remember, psychology is human light.

Importance of the Body

Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Too often we want to minimize the body but we must not do that. We are three entities and the Holy Spirit seeks to restore all three realms in which man fell. The body should be dominated by the Spirit of the Lord. All three entities are closely knit. What affects the body can affect the soul and spirit as well. And what affects the soul and spirit can affect the body. If we feel sick spiritually, it can make us physically sick.

There is nothing wrong with any of the three parts of man if they are controlled by God. The body must be properly cared for because it is closely knit with the soul and spirit and can influence them greatly. The body must be treated with care because our nerves will be frayed if it is neglected. Watch your nerves! We must not be overwhelmed by everyone's needs, but overwhelmed by the anointing. This is the only thing that will help others!

Be careful about malnutrition, and get plenty of rest. It is imperative to eat properly and live a natural life. Our body will be a hindrance to us if we do not take care of it. If the body is neglected, the nerves become frayed, and we can become susceptible to many demons and spiritual attacks. A pastor and his wife should take a rest once a week to relax and forget the problems of the church.

Get some sort of daily exercise, walking, swimming. We must be led by the Spirit in the care of our bodies. When you are led by the Spirit, the Lord gives you time off. He is a God of rest. He does not push you beyond a certain limit. He is a better master than others.

Study food and be sure to have the right vitamin balance. Since the body is the outside covering of our being, it receives the first attacks of Satan. Satan attacks through the five senses: hearing, seeing, taste, smell, and touch. Ask God to sanctify your entire being. God wants us to have a healthy body, soul, and spirit. If we do not take care of our bodies, we will be worn down and Satan will deflect us from our course.

The most important reason for keeping ourselves healthy is that we will be able to fulfill God's purposes for our lives. We will not be able to fulfill our course if we are sickly. We could even die before our appointed time. If we are overworked, tense, and not having the right nutrition, our body will be weakened with the flu and other sicknesses, and we will be open to many attacks of the Adversary. Any weakness we have is an open door for an oppression of the Devil. Therefore, taking care of our body is part of being spiritual. Of course, we can go to the other extreme too.

A sick body can make us sick mentally and spiritually. Rest is essential for a clear mind. Vigorous exercise affects our brain, stimulating the brain cells with fresh oxygen and life. Vigorous exercise also strengthens all our vital organs and cleanses our body cells of toxins. Depression, nervous breakdowns, loss of spiritual vigor, serious domestic problems, and even backsliding can be the results of not taking care of our bodies. Stress burns up certain vitamins and minerals, especially vitamin B's. Thus, it is important to study nutrition to know what is good and what is not good for us.

Some medical reports say that up to 90 percent of our physical problems are connected to problems in the soul. These are called psychosomatic - maladies in the soul that affect the body. Doctors tell us that a very high percentage of the patients who come to them for help are untreatable. Yes, they have a problem in their body but the real source of the problem is coming from the soul and spirit. They can prescribe pills that ease the condition but the *cause* is not confronted. Hatred, bitterness, fear, jealousy, and loneliness can make a person physically sick.

Emotional upsets can trigger colds. Excessive worry or fear makes certain glands and organs over-react, causing problems in the body. Absence of joy can make one physically weak. Meditating on violence or on something that hurt us can affect the health of our body. The health of our body is essential for reaching the goal and hitting the mark for our lives. Even though nutrition is important, as is regular vigorous exercise, the most important of all is *our spiritual condition*.

Summary

For Optimum Health—Three things are absolutes *in the following order*:

- 1.) Right attitude - All conflicts must be resolved because the soul and spirit affect the body.
- 2.) Regular Vigorous Exercise - gets oxygen to the brain and other organs, cleanses body of toxins.
- 3.) Right Nutrition - we must put back into our body what stress has burned up.

Make sure you have sufficient rest - live a natural life, relax, have some recreation.

Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.

II. THE DOCTRINE OF SIN

A.) INTRODUCTION

B.) THE FACT OF SIN

C.) THE ORIGIN OF SIN

D.) THE NATURE OF SIN

E.) THE DEFINITIONS OF SIN

F.) THE REMEDY FOR SIN

A.) INTRODUCTION

This is a study on the subject of sin. It is very important to understand what the Scriptures teach on the nature, origin, and penalty of sin, and its remedy, since it occupies a large portion of God's Word. We need to recognize the existence of sin before we can come to God for cleansing. This is true for believers and unbelievers alike. Only when sin is recognized, acknowledged, and forsaken, can a person have a right relationship with God and His favor (cf. Prov. 28:13, Jer. 3:13, Job 42:1-6).

Sin is both an act and a state. A man sins because he is a sinner. Man is born with a rebellious, revolting, obstinate nature. The Lord declares that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth (Gen. 8:21). A sinner is separated from God by his very nature, as well as the sins he commits.

A drunkard once asked a preacher to pray for him. As the preacher was beseeching God to have mercy on the intoxicated man, the man stopped him and said, "Oh, don't tell Him I'm drunk; tell Him I'm sick." This action is so typical of the fallen nature. Man does not want to admit his true state. Sin is called "sickness" or "disease" or a weakness, but never is it called *sin* by society.

- Adultery - is just *an affair*.
- Fornication - is having *a live-in*.
- Alcoholism - is a *sickness, a disease*.
- Abortion - is not murder, it's *a choice, or family planning*.
- Homosexuality - is *an alternate lifestyle*.
- A Pervert - is called *Gay*.
- Assisted Suicide - is *death with dignity*.
- Reviling a Leader - is *freedom of speech*.
- Hatred and Bitterness - are *"a right to be offended."*

Man substitutes mild, indirect, vague terms to modify what is perverse and offensive to God. He does this to soothe his guilty conscience and excuse himself of his actions. Everything is glossed over in our humanistic society, but God looks at such violations as offenses that merit punishment. Man is trying to blur the line between good and evil, right and wrong. Yet, the wretchedness of sin is seen by the unspeakable judgment Christ endured upon the cross for the sins of the world. Thus, we must see sin as God sees it, and as He enunciates it in His Word.

The Only Condemnation

John 3:19 - "*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*" God does not condemn man because he has problems and bondages. Man was born with them. The thing that angers God is the fact that He has provided a means for man to escape from the clutches of evil, and man either ignores or rejects that means. God has sent a bright Light into a world of darkness. That Light is his Son. He offers a door of hope to those who sit in prison houses of darkness and despair. The Lord throws out a life line to those who are perishing. He offers pardon and forgiveness to man, and makes it possible for man to be freed of all the vices and bondages of iniquity. Therefore, when man rejects the Gospel message and believes he is good enough as he is, or tries to come to God on his own terms, he has "judged himself unworthy of everlasting life" (Acts 13:46).

B.) THE FACT OF SIN

The fact that sin exists is evident in the world today. Nature itself bears witness to a fallen creation by the mournful sounds of the wind, the lonely cry of the wolf, and the tones of the whales and sea creatures. Scientists tell us that even the heavens have a groaning sound. All of nature, whether it is land, sea, or air, is in the minor key since the Fall. Romans 8:22 attests to this, saying, “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” Even as a woman longs to be delivered from her intense pain when she travails in birth, there is a longing in the whole creation for deliverance from the bondage of corruption since the Fall.

Sin is universal. Romans 3:23 tells us that “*all* have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” This means that absolutely no one is exempt from sin and iniquity. “God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that *every* imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5). Isaiah 64:6 declares, “We are *all* as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

Romans 3:9 - “Both Jews and Gentiles are *all* under sin.”

Romans 3:10 - “There is *none* righteous, no, not one.”

Romans 3:12 - “They are *all* gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable.”

Romans 3:19 - “*All* the world [is] guilty before God.”

Romans 1:20 - ..Man is “without excuse.”

1 John 5:19 - “The *whole world* lieth in wickedness” [i. e. in the Wicked One].

Galatians 3:10 - All men are in bondage to sin and unable to fulfill the righteousness of God.

1 Corinth 2:14 - All of mankind are strangers to the things of God. They are foolishness to them.

Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.

Romans 8:7-8 - The mind of man is against God and rebellious to the law of God.

The fact of sin is obvious. Unconverted men walk in obedience to the will of Satan, often unknowingly. They fulfill their *own* desires and are dead to the Spirit of God and righteousness. Ephesians 2:2-3 states: “In time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our [lifestyle] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

Before our new birth, we were blinded and controlled by the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). By the very nature with which we are born, we were the “children of wrath ... the children of disobedience.” In Psalm 51:5, King David tells us the nature he received at conception, and in actual fact, the nature with which *all* are born:

Psalm 51:5: “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*” This is the state of every infant who enters the world. Remember Genesis 8:21: “...the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.” Sin has infected *every single one* of Adam's race. Until we are born again and taken out of his kingdom, we are controlled by the god of this world who seeks to corrupt and manipulate man who was made in the image of God.

C.) THE ORIGIN OF SIN

Sin Began In Heaven

Sin did not begin on earth nor is man the greatest sinner. Sin had its origin in heaven, before the very throne of God. Sin had its beginning with unthankfulness which led to pride in the heart of Lucifer. *Unthankfulness* is one of the first steps to backsliding (cf. Rom.1:21).

Lucifer was “the anointed cherub” (Ezek. 28:14). He was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. The passages in Ezekiel 28:1-19 are referring to the spirit that was working in the King of Tyrus, and that spirit was Satan's. Therefore, some verses apply to the King of Tyrus and some to Satan. Also, some verses look ahead to the coming Man of Sin. Satan will seek to *control* commerce and the nations through the Antichrist as he did through the historic King of Tyre. We must understand what is motivating Satan and what caused his fall. Lucifer's fall is also recorded in Isaiah 14:12-19. In order to properly understand the entrance of sin into the universe, we should examine both Ezekiel and Isaiah. Lucifer's downfall helps us understand the nature and temptation of sin. It is important to always go back to *the beginning*.

As we have just mentioned, Ezekiel 28:1-19 can be referring to *three* different individuals.

1. *The Earthly King of Tyrus (Tyre)*. Probably this was Ithobal II of ancient history. Tyre was a center of commerce. Satan worked through this king to gain control of commerce. The King of Tyre is a type of another king who is coming—the Antichrist.
2. *Satan*. It was Satan's spirit *in* the King of Tyre who sought to gain power through commerce. The spirit of prophecy in these passages describes Lucifer who later became Satan.
3. *The Coming Antichrist*. The King of Tyre is a type of the Antichrist. Satan will work through this man in a similar way. In each case, Satan's objective is to have power, money, and influence in order to control nations. He is motivated by jealousy. His utmost desire since his fall is to be number one. Jealousy is always associated with being number one.

Lucifer's Downfall

The name *Lucifer* means “Morning Star.” Isaiah 14:12 calls him “son of the morning.” He was dazzling in beauty and splendor. Ezekiel 28:12 describes him as “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.” Thus, he was created perfect. He had no sin inherent in him. This is brought out in Ezekiel 28:15 when it says that he was perfect in his ways from the day he was created, until iniquity was found in him. Lucifer's name was then changed to Satan which means “Adversary, Slanderer.” This change of name implies a degeneration of character.

Ezekiel 28:13b - “The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.” Lucifer had a very high position in heaven. He was next to the Deity. He was the leader of all the worship that centered around God. He was on Mount Zion on the sides of the north, and that is where the throne is located in heaven (Isa.14:13, Psa. 48:2). Earthly Zion is symbolic of the heavenly. It seems that he had instruments created within his very being. He was a fabulous musician. Anyone with great musical abilities has power to sway people.

Lucifer Cast Out of Mount Zion

Ezekiel 28:14 - “Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; I have set thee so: thou was upon the holy mountain of God.” This *mountain* is referring to Mount Zion. In Revelation 14:1-5, we have a picture of Mount Zion in heaven. On the summit of this mountain is the Lamb, the throne, and the living creatures. This is the highest position in heaven. Isaiah 14:12-14 says that Lucifer wanted to sit upon *the mount* of the congregation in the sides of the north, and ascend above the heights of the clouds, and be like the Most High. For this self-exaltation and insurrection, God judged him.

Ezekiel 28:15-17 - “Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”

Lucifer was the talk of heaven. He possessed extraordinary beauty, power, and wisdom. Everyone marvelled at his musical abilities and charisma. Yet, he was not thankful for all that God had bestowed upon him. Instead, he wanted more. Pride and haughtiness had infiltrated his heart. Formerly Lucifer had directed all the worship of heaven to God. All had been orderly and harmonious because there was only *one will* in the universe—God's. Now Lucifer was asserting *his* will. He wanted all the worship and attention directed to *himself*. This is described in Isaiah 14:12-14.

The Five “I Will's” of Lucifer

Isaiah 14:12-14 - “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.” These are the five “I will's” of Satan. Here is the beginning of sin in the universe. Sin started when someone asserted his own will above God's, believing he could manage things better. When anyone asserts his own will above God's, he is dethroning God and making himself higher and wiser than Him. This is the chief sin of man. Man is his own boss and pushes God out of his life. These five *I will's* are actually exaltations of self and demotions of God.

1. I will *ascend* into heaven.
2. I will *exalt* my throne *above* the stars of God.
3. I will sit also upon the *mountain* of the congregation. This was the highest position.
4. I will *ascend above* the heights of the clouds.
5. I will be like the *most High*. He wanted to replace God, which is the issue of self-will.

Here is the whole reason mankind is in such chaos. Man is running the program, not God. Instead of consulting God to find God's plan for his life, man has his own plans. Man believes he knows what is best for himself. Therefore, the question of life is this: “Am I going to do God's will, or my own?” There is one thing we can be sure of in life: when we give God the steering wheel of our lives, we will safely reach our destination. All our turns, directions, and decisions will be right. On the other hand, if we are in the driver's seat and God is left out, we will have certain catastrophe.

Summary of Sin's Origin

- Sin starts with ingratitude for all God has done for us (Rom.1:21).
- Sin and pride are special temptations when one possesses great power, beauty, and abilities.
- Original sin involved the assertion of *self-will* over God's will.
- Sin started with the desire to draw attention to oneself instead of God.
- Sin began by coveting a position that God knew was not good to have.
- Self-will attempted to push God off the throne and assume His position.
- Self-will believes one's own will is better than God's. "I can do it better; I know what is best."
- Original sin wanted *control* over all others.
- Self-will and pride led to a plea for equal rights ("I will be like the most High") and insurrection.
- Satan (the Slanderer) sowed discord and convinced 1/3 of heaven to take his side and follow him.
- He is now vexed with jealousy and covets all positions of power because he wants to be at the top.
- He has special hatred for Mount Zion because this is the top position, the throne of God.
- He only served God for the benefits and accuses good brethren like Job of doing the same.
- Thus, the Serpent came to Eve. When Eve listened to him, she received his nature. When Adam and Eve submitted to the Serpent, they and their descendants received the same rebellious propensities.
- God gave Lucifer and his followers no gift of repentance because of the light they had.
- Since that time Satan has sought to turn everyone against God in his contempt for Him.
- He hates man and does not want anyone to have the blessings he lost.
- He does everything in his power to deceive man so that man will disobey and be judged also.
- Yet, God still has Satan on the loose in order to test man.

Jealousy - The Demand to be Number One

Jealousy is always associated with being number one. God alone has a right to be number one, and His name is Jealous (Ex. 34:14). The word *jealous or jealousy* is found 52 times in scripture, and 40 times it is in reference to the Lord being jealous. Jealousy is an attribute of God. It applies more to God than to man. God's jealousy to have the full affections of his people was demonstrated through men like Paul (2 Cor.11:2) and Elijah (1 Kgs.19:10,14).

When Lucifer wanted to be number one, he was cursed with *perverted* jealousy. This jealousy is a terrible spirit and it torments those with wrong motives. King Saul was vexed with the spirit of jealousy when young David was a threat to his position, a position God had already revoked from Saul (1 Sam.16:13-14). Jealousy [emulations] is one of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).

Israel was cursed with jealousy (Rom.10:19) when they despised God's acceptance of the Gentiles. They wanted to be God's chosen people and resented sharing this with the Gentile believers. In the book of Acts, they were constantly vexed with jealousy. It is important to understand that God's acceptance of others is not his rejection of us. Of course, there is also a natural jealousy when it involves the desire to be number one with a spouse or someone we love (cf. Prov. 6:34, Song 8:6).

There is godly jealousy and this is demonstrated when the motive is for God to be number one. When *we* desire to be number one and seek to promote *ourselves*, we will be troubled with jealousy.

Jealousy—the Motivating Force of Satan

Let us try to consider what is motivating Satan, the author of sin and rebellion, the Father of lies. Satan has a lust for power, position, and worship. The very gifts God had lavished upon him he later used to draw attention to himself. After he led an insurrection in heaven and tried to usurp the throne, he and all of his cohorts were judged. God gave them no repentance. There was no recourse because of the light they had. They defied God to His very face, in the very presence of the Light. This was irremissible. Repentance is a gift (Rom. 2:4). If God does not grant this grace, no one is able to change. Since God did not choose to give Satan and his angels the gift of repentance, they are doomed creatures without any hope of restoration.

Satan caused a terrible division among the inhabitants of heaven because of his lust for power. He persuaded one-third of the angels to turn against God and follow him. From the time of his rebellion in heaven, Satan has been driven and tormented with blasphemy, jealousy, and rage. He covets every position of power. Therefore, he undermines and mocks every level of authority. Jealousy is *the motivating force* behind all of his actions and words. He does not want anyone to have the blessings he forfeited. Thus, Satan has a special hatred for mankind.

Man was made to have dominion over the earth. Satan, of course, would covet that dominion since *position* is something Satan always wanted. Man was made in God's image and God had set His love upon man, and had blessed him. We can see, then, the reason Satan hates mankind. Let's summarize the reasons Satan has contempt for man and why he attacks man with all of his fury.

Reasons Satan Hates Man

1. Man was made to have dominion. Satan is jealous of that dominion. Man is a threat to him.
2. Man is made in God's image. Satan hates God, and anyone conformed to His image.
3. Man is loved by God, and Satan hates anyone who is loved by God, since he lost God's love.
4. Man is blessed by God, and Satan despises anyone who is blessed because he lost the blessing.
5. Man is also made to judge and replace the fallen creatures of heaven (1 Cor. 6:3, Rev.12:7-11).

Therefore, the Tempter wants to deceive and induce man into disobedience so that man may be judged as he was judged, and lose all of his blessings. Also, he wants to do everything in his power to hurt God and strike back at him. He does so by attacking those whom God loves. Thus, we can see what was in the heart of the slithering Serpent when he came to Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Also, he wants the worship of man. The serpent wants to poison man with his devious ways, so that man will submit to his nature and turn away from God. He will use every tactic possible to swerve man off course: Flattery, charm, rationalizations, fear-tactics, half-truths, temptations, de-coys, camouflage, terrorism, bluffs, intimidations, deceit, lies, pressure, coercion, threats, doubts, accusations, discouragements, compromise, and shortcuts. There is not one device he will not employ to try to ensnare man so that man will disobey, lose God's blessing, and then be judged.

Balaam was offered a huge sum of money to put a hex on Israel. He soon discovered that he could not because the Israelites were blessed of God. Therefore, he looked for another way to bring Israel down. He counselled the Moabite enemies to send their women among them so that Israel would commit fornication and be judged. This episode is recorded in Numbers chapters 22-25.

Sin Injected into the Human Race

Now we are going to consider the beginning of sin in man. The origin of something is a *seed*. All future seeds are in the original seed. If we are to understand sin, we must have a good grasp of how sin started *at the very beginning*. We need to discover what was in the original seed of sin.

In the Garden, man was about to be bitten by the Serpent. His venomous nature would permeate all their being. The rebellion that started in heaven was going to be injected into man. The Tempter came with a calculated agenda in mind. His object was to get Eve to place her own will above God's. Since the Adversary always wanted to be God, he suggested the same to Eve, saying, "Ye shall be as gods." The longer she listened, the more she became like the Serpent and the more she received his nature. In opening her heart to the Tempter, she was putting herself under his control. Eve was receiving the spirit of the Serpent as she submitted to his lies. Adam, not wanting to lose Eve, also took the forbidden fruit. Both had violated God's law and were infected with rebellion.

Satan was unthankful, proud, self-seeking, and independent. He believed his will was better than God's. He thought he could govern things better than God and tried to usurp the throne. The worship that was once directed to God he wanted directed to himself. Rebellion and defiance grew in his heart until he led an insurrection against God, having persuaded 1/3 of the angels to follow him. Jealousy and bitterness have motivated him ever since. These seeds of conflict and destruction were sown into Eve and Adam when they submitted to the wiles of the Devil. All these *seeds* have been passed on to Adam's race, and potentially they all lie in *our* bosom. Some are more active than others, and some are dormant. Let's consider *the seeds of iniquity* that reside in our members:

Pride	Lustfulness	Perversion	Rashness
Arrogance	Greediness	Fanaticism	Partiality
Unthankfulness	Betrayal	Men pleasers	Domineering
Defiance	Stubbornness	Fantasies	Overbearing
Hatred	Despair	Inconsistencies	Demanding
Jealousy	Suicidal	Immoderation	Unreasonable
Self-exaltation	Complexes	Compromise	Drunkenness
Deviousness	Torments	Flattery	Oversensitive
Rebellion	Murmuring	Phobias	Independent
Discord-sowing	Complaining	Self-righteous	Tyrannical
Insurrection	Evasiveness	Dogmatism	Abrasive
Deceitfulness	Criticism	Self-rejection	Passivity
Rationalizations	Reviling	Argumentative	Changeable
Half-truths	Mocking	Self-pity	Impulsive
Cynicism	Indecision	Dishonesty	Unmerciful
Sarcasm	Skepticism	Boasting	Vices/Habits
Hypocrisy	Unbelief	Infidelity	Reprobation
Wrath	Hardness	Grudgeful	Covetousness
Murder	Inflexibility	Manipulating	Fierceness
Confusion	Blaming others	Irresponsibility	Insensitivity
Disorganization	Rigidness	Extortion	<i>Many others</i>
Filthiness	Selfishness	Instability	

D.) THE NATURE OF SIN

All Are Conceived In Sin

Sin is more than an act. It is also a state, *a nature* with which all are born. Man is born with a rebellious, revolting, obstinate nature. Genesis 8:21 says that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth. David said, "In sin did my mother conceive me," referring to the inherent nature of sin with which every child is born. Thus, man is separated from God by his very nature as well as the sins he commits. Isaiah 53:6 describes the waywardness of man, saying, "All we like sheep have gone *astray*; we have turned every one to his own way."

Romans 3:9 says that both Jews and Gentiles are *all* under sin. In 3:10, there is *none* righteous, no, not one. In verse 12, we are "all gone out of the way and together become unprofitable." Then in Romans 3:19, Paul pronounces all the world guilty before God. Romans 3:23 further confirms that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Therefore, all men need a Savior.

Every single descendant of Adam and Eve is polluted with sin. This plague has been passed on to everyone of us. Paul states in Romans 5:12... "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon *all* men, for that *all have sinned*." Job 14:4 asks, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one!" and, "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" (Job 15:14, 25:4). A sinner can only bring forth a sinner. Thus, from Adam on, the nature of sin has been transmitted unto everyone.

The Deep Depravity of Sin

Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and *desperately wicked*, who can know it?" Christ sums up the condition of the heart like this: "From within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mk. 7:21-23, Mt.15:19-20). Man at his best state is altogether vanity (Psa. 39:5b).

The Struggle Against Sin

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?" (Jas. 4:1). The message of James is not addressed to unbelievers. It is written to the redeemed. James is speaking to blood-washed, Spirit-filled Christians. Truly there is a war going on within us, but it is a conflict that we can win, by grace. This will be discussed later.

The Corinthian believers, though Spirit-filled, sanctified, and possessing all the gifts of the Spirit, faced terrific battles with their flesh. Paul termed them *carnal*. They were filled with envy and strife, and some were even falling back into immorality and drunkenness. How could believers who were indwelt by Christ continue to act this way?

The fact is, Christians have two natures. This is the reason we often have more struggles in our lives *after* new birth than before. Before our new birth, the nature of sin is uncontested. After Christ comes into our lives, the life of sin and self-will is challenged and then the real battle begins.

The Two Natures of a Believer

When Christ comes into our lives, He is born in us as a seed. Christ is that “incorruptible seed” (see 1 Pet.1:23). Christ in us cannot sin. This is declared by John in 1 John 3:9: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; *for his seed remaineth in him*: and he cannot sin because he is born of God.” Christ in us cannot sin. He is that incorruptible seed within us and he cannot sin. Yet, at times *we* do indeed sin. Where, then, does this sin come from? It comes from the old Adamic nature with which we were born. Thus, we have two natures.

The Scriptures teach that we have *a sinful nature*, and that we are to confess that we have one and not deny it. “If we say that we have no sin [i.e. a sin nature] we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (1 Jn.1:8). Isaiah was a great prophet and yet he needed his lips cleansed, his iniquity taken away, and his sin purged (Isa. 6:7).

Even Paul, the interpreter of the new covenant, stated (present tense): “I find a law that, when I would do good, evil is present with me” (the old nature), and that “it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. 7:17, 20-23). Paul clarified that there is still a *nature* of sin that is resident in the members of our body. He had to keep his own body under subjection (1 Cor. 9:27), and was still subject to pride and arrogance because of his superior revelations (2 Cor.12:7).

God had to put special restraints in the life of Paul to keep him humble, even though he had already experienced Romans 6:6, being “dead to sin.” What did Paul mean when he said we were “dead to sin”? Paul never taught that the nature of sin was eradicated from our bodies, but that it was *arrested* and had to be held in check. For example, when God frees an alcoholic from the bondage of alcohol, he is not freed in order to become a moderate social drinker. By no means, for if he picks it up again he will be enslaved to it all over again. He is freed to have the power to make the choice not to drink. Before this, he was *driven* by evil and almost did not have a choice.

The Deceitfulness of Sin

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin” (Heb. 3:13). Sin is very deceptive. It looks pleasant. It can seem innocent, especially if we rationalize long enough. The awful consequences are dulled to our senses, perhaps because of infatuation or willful ignorance. But the wages of sin is always the same—death, a loss of God's presence and favor, confusion, sorrow, and regret.

Sin sears the conscience. It makes us callous and insensitive to when we are hurting God and others. What is a “conscience seared with a hot iron”? (1 Tim. 4:2). The word “seared” means to *cauterize*. It means to apply a red hot iron to flesh to deaden it and make it unresponsive. This is precisely what sin does to the conscience, especially when it is practiced repeatedly. This is especially true with the sin of adultery. The longer the clandestine affair continues, the greater the deception grows. At first the conscience is greatly inflamed. However, as time goes by without the matter being uncovered, there is a feeling that God is overlooking it, or that their case is an exception, and therefore, exempt from any serious consequences. What a tragic deception! It will come to the light, sooner or later. The hurt it inflicts to their spouses is unspeakable, besides bringing a terrible breach of trust. It damages their marriages, families, church, friends, and future effectiveness in God's service.

The participants of this sin grow incredibly blasé. They become so enveloped in their dream world and stupor that they cannot begin to fathom the damage and injury they have caused. This is the wretchedness of the deceitfulness of sin and a seared conscience.

“Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness” (Prov. 30:20). Adulterers who practice this sin for any length of time begin to believe that they have done nothing wrong whatsoever. This is the terribleness of the deception and clutches of sin (cf. Prov. 5:22). People cannot pick up sin and just put it down again. It fastens its tentacles into them and they cannot let it go.

A number of years ago, a pastor of a church of 3000 had fallen into adultery. In fact, he was involved with at least six different ladies in the church. When a visiting prophet preached on the sin of adultery, after concluding his message he leaned over and whispered to the fallen minister who was standing beside him on the platform, saying, “Thou art the man.” It did not faze him or embarrass him in the slightest way. His conscience was seared with a hot iron and his actions destroyed the church. Nearly all of his life's works were burned up in moments. This should be a warning to every one of us to beware of the deceitfulness of sin. The truth is, we are capable of every sin. We have to rely upon the grace and wisdom of God continually to preserve us from folly.

The Pleasures of Sin

Sin is enticing. It can even be *pleasurable* for a while (Prov. 7:12-27). Moses refused the easy way, choosing to go God's way rather than enjoy the *pleasures of sin* for a season (Heb.11:25). The pleasures of sin lure many into its net. Worldly pleasures glitter as an escape from boredom or depressing circumstances. Satan is always there to offer the disenchanted person *a counterfeit*. Many are looking for excitement, fun, entertainment, ease, comfort, and quick fortune. Earthly pleasures offer a temporary high but are a decoy and a trap. The end is always the same—disillusionment.

The Propensity to Sin

Everyone has an inborn tendency to sin and disobedience. It is a law of creation that everything reproduces its own kind. An apple produces an apple, an oak tree produces an oak tree, a cow produces a cow. And fallen man reproduces fallen sons and daughters. Adam and Eve produced a son named Cain. He was filled with rebellion and this led to the murder of his younger brother, Abel (Gen. 4:1-8). Sin's propensities have infected every single one of Adam's children. Family sins are passed on for many generations until they are stopped. Alcohol is a good example. Incest is another transmitted sin. It is estimated that eighty to ninety percent of child molesters were themselves molested when they were children. We are responsible for the nature we give our children.

The Wages of Sin

“The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). Sin brings separation from God—it brings death. Sin brings sorrow, disillusionment, broken homes, war, confusion, bondage, oppression, sickness, and a loss of God's presence and favor. In the final analysis, if sin is not repented of, it will bring eternal judgment and eternal separation from God. This is the second death.

E.) THE DEFINITIONS OF SIN

SIN AND OTHER RELATED TERMS

- **Sin** - to miss the mark, to wander from the right path. To come short. It involves all the following:
- **Iniquity** - crooked, perversity, lawlessness. These are bents passed on from previous generations.
- **Transgression / Trespasses** - revolt, rebellion, to break away. To step over the boundary line.
- **Unrighteousness** - not morally upright, to distort or twist out of shape, disorder, injustice.
- **Wickedness** - something causing harm or injury to others. Malice, spite, to make trouble.
- **Disobedience** - *bitterness* resulting in distorted hearing, inattention. Violation due to obstinacy.
- **Ungodliness** - without worship or reverence. No thought to things sacred. Unlike God's image.
- **Crooked** - winding, warped, perverse, devious.
- **Uncleanness** - impurity, lust, greediness, covetous (wanting what belongs to another).
- **Violence** - cruelty, damage, injurious conduct.
- **Debt** - to be under obligation, morally to fail in duty, in bondage with nothing with which to repay.
- **Evil** - labor to work mischief, be depraved in nature, lawless, contempt for law.
- **Fault** - faulty, to fall. Also a diminishing of that which should have been rendered in full measure.
- **Err / Error** - to go astray, to deviate from, to cause to wander, seduce.
- **Sins of Ignorance** - to be uninformed, to sin by not knowing the laws of God. (Still, we are guilty.)
- **Sins of Omission** - to evade, ignore, or neglect our obligations. To excuse one's self.

Sin and all the related terms and synonyms above have one thing in common. They cause a person to come short of the glory of God. The most simple definition for sin is this—to fall short of the mark (Rom. 3:23). Therefore, if we are not growing in our spiritual life we are sinning. It is sin to be satisfied and content with the level of growth we have attained to (cf. Rev. 3:15-19). The purpose of redemption is not only to forgive our debts. Forgiveness is only the first step. Redemption is to totally renew and redeem us. It is to rectify us to God's plan for our lives so that we may go on and hit the mark for our lives. If we do not fulfill God's task for our lives, we are sinning greatly.

Sin is not only an act, it is also *a nature*. God wants to get at *the source* of sin. For example, God says, “Do not kill,” but He wants to deal with *the cause* of murder which is hatred in the heart. We can kill people by ignoring or neglecting them. Words, too, can be lethal and kill! Not only are we to abstain from adultery, God does not want us filled with lustful thoughts and covetous desires. Christ came to bring the law of God into the heart. This is especially seen in the Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7 (See Mt. 5:17). Acts of sins are because of a sinful nature.

All sins are related to two things only—God and people. Christ summed up all of the 31,102 verses of Scripture in just two things: How we treat God and our attitude toward Him, and how we treat people and our attitude toward them. Upon these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets (Mt. 22:36-40). Sin is always associated with *relationships*—injury to God and injury to people. The purpose of the new covenant is to give us a soft, sensitive heart, a new spirit.

SATAN IS NOT OUR GREATEST PROBLEM

Our greatest problem is a fallen, sinful nature

Although Satan is called The Tempter, The Father of Lies, The Accuser of the Brethren, and much more, he is not our greatest problem. Our greatest battle and problem is much closer to home. In fact, it lies within ourselves, in the very center of our being. *Our greatest need is for a new heart.* For it is from within that we open or close the door to God, or to Satan and the world. The reason Satan gets into a person is because he finds a weakness, an open door, an invitation to come in. The Enemy will toy with anything in our heart that is unredeemed and unsundered to God.

How Satan Gets Into A Person

Wrong Motives - Peter asked Ananias, “Why hath Satan filled thine heart?” (Acts 5:3). Ananias was trying to appear more generous than he really was, desiring the applause of man. Satan gains a stronghold in people who are *deceptive* and have a nature compatible to his.

Uncleanness - When Christ was about to cast a Legion of demons into the abyss, they besought him not to commit them to hell before the judgment day, but rather to allow them to go into the swine. Why swine? Demons want to inhabit a body, and they seek for a place that is *unclean*. Thus, they search for men and women who are unclean in their passions and desires (Mk. 5:1-13, Mt. 8:28-34)

Love for Evil Habits - In Matthew 12:43-45, Christ explained how a man was delivered from an evil spirit. The expelled spirit found no rest, and roaming about, he wanted to return to his “home.” The home, of course, was the man himself. The evil spirit had felt very comfortable when he had taken up residence within this man. Therefore, he returned to his former *home* with seven other spirits and found the door unlocked with a welcome mat. How do we know the door was open? Because these spirits had no trouble whatsoever entering the house and making their abode there.

This is the reason it is futile to pray for deliverance for some if their heart is not changed and they continue to love their sins and evil habits. The same spirits are going to come back in (and with more) if there is no change or repentance in the heart. Thus, an evil nature that loves sin is the real problem in man, even more than the Devil himself. We must pray, “Change my heart, O Lord!”

Pride / Self-exaltation - (Acts 20:29-31). Paul had preached at Ephesus for three years, warning them daily to become rooted and grounded in God because there was coming a time when Paul would have to leave them. They would be required to stand on their own under young leadership and be tested. Paul preached over a thousand times there, but with all his pleading and exhorting, some in the congregation had other motives in their hearts. They wanted to “*draw away disciples to themselves.*” This caused division and problems. We cannot blame Satan for getting in that church and causing trouble. Those men with unpurified motives opened the gate for Satan to come in.

Unforgiveness - Unforgiveness opens the door to Satan. Satan, who himself is bitter and unforgiving, fellowships with those of like nature. When a man does not forgive an offender, he will be enslaved to that one he resents, and his thoughts will be controlled all day by the one he has not forgiven. Unforgiveness delivers a man over to the tormentors (Mt.18:21-35). Depression and stress result from holding a grudge. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, that Satan would get an advantage over us if we do not forgive.

Stubbornness - Israel “ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way” (Jud. 2:19). Self-will, defiance, rebellion, and stubbornness are the real problems in man. These are the reasons Satan gets into men and women. We cannot blame Satan for everything. The greatest problem on the mission field is the missionary himself. He is unable to get along with other missionaries and those in his own home. This is a problem of the heart, not Satan. We have an obstinate, revolting, determined nature with which to reckon. Even Paul and Barnabas split up over a difference of opinion, and neither was willing to give in (Acts 15:36-41).

According to 1 Samuel 15:23, rebellion is like witchcraft, and stubbornness is like idolatry. King Saul repeatedly rejected what God was saying to him. He was headstrong and determined to do things his way. His rebellion led to witchcraft. He ended up consulting a witch (1 Sam. 28:7-25). Rebellion opens the door to Satan. Stubbornness, too, is an entrance for Satan to gain a stronghold. Stubbornness is equated with idolatry. People can idolize or worship an idea or opinion. Some are obstinate enough even to die for their obsession or “cause.” God hates stubbornness.

Love of the World - Paul said, “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.” What an indictment against a fellow-minister! (2 Tim. 4:10). We cannot blame Satan for Demas backsliding. Certainly, Satan deflected him from the path, but that was because Demas had an insatiable love for the things of the world and the flesh. He never allowed God to cleanse his heart.

Imaginations - Notions and imaginations can also allow the enemy to have the ascendancy over us. In Genesis 37:28-35, Jacob was depressed over the imagined death of his son. Joseph was not dead. Jacob's incorrect thoughts brought a spirit of heaviness over him for 22 years. Later it was the truth that set him free. We must cast down imaginations (2 Cor.10:3-5) and put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isa. 61:3). People who expect the worst will attract just that.

Insecurities - These and other areas of weakness make man vulnerable to the oppressions of the devil. For example, in Numbers 5:14, a spirit of jealousy came upon a man because he *thought* his wife had been unfaithful to him. Suspicions and insecurities were openings where Satan could break in upon him and oppress him with this spirit. He needed a work done in his heart to give him self-esteem and confidence, more than for an evil spirit to be rebuked.

Disobedience / Undisciplined - When a believer does not rule his spirit (drinking, drugs, laziness, immodesty, disobedience), he breaks down the protective walls around him, and the enemy rushes in to take advantage and control of him (Prov. 25:28, 24:30-31, Ecc.10:8). Again, the problem is not so much Satan as it is the human heart that does not walk in wisdom and obedience.

The Problem of a Fallen Nature - Even after Satan and all evil spirits are locked up during the Millennial Age, man still has a selfish and rebellious nature. Satan will be bound for 1000 years as shown in Revelation 20. Even so, *man's nature* still resists and rebels against God (Zech.14:16-21). For this very reason, the nations will have to be ruled with a rod of iron during the Millennium. Therefore, it is evident that if Satan were removed from the earth today, all of our problems would not disappear, for there is a resistant, revolting, self-willed nature that lies deep within men. Let us pray for a new heart and a new spirit that God promised in the new covenant. This journey to a new heart of flesh is a long road, and does not come about overnight. It requires many acts of obedience, time, pressure, wisdom, truth, and many personal meetings with God on the issues in our lives. If we are willing, we can be presented faultless before the throne with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

F.) THE REMEDY FOR SIN

Christ Paid Our Debt

The gospel message is actually very simple—our debt was paid at the cross. The Lord Jesus Christ became our substitutionary sacrifice and died in our place. The word “gospel” means *good news*. A minister of the gospel is the greatest of all professions. He has the privilege of announcing glad tidings and release to all who sit in darkness and despair. Christians have *the only answer* that can save men and women. Therefore, we should never be ashamed of Christ and His message but be bold to proclaim it. Below are several verses depicting Christ as the One who paid our debt.

- “The Lord [i. e. the Father] hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6).
- “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities” (Isa. 53:5).
- “Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin” (Isa. 53:10).
- “He shall bear their iniquities” (Isa. 53:11).
- “He shall save his people from their sins” (Mt.1:21).
- “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn.1:29).
- “The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins” (Mk. 2:10).
- “The Son of Man came ... to give his life *a ransom* for many” (Mk.10:45).
- “Christ died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6).
- We are “justified by his blood” (Rom. 5:9).
- “[God] hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21).
- “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Eph.1:7).
- “Having forgiven you all trespasses” (Col. 2:13).
- “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim.1:15).
- “He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26).
- “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Heb.10:14).
- The blood of Jesus Christ “cleanses us from all sin” as we walk in the light (1 Jn.1:7).
- “Unto him that [loveth] us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev.1:5).
- “For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood” (Rev. 5:9).

But Much More Than Forgiveness

Often only *a small fraction* of the gospel message is presented to the hearers. Yet, the gospel involves far more than forgiveness. It is not just an escape from judgment in order to inherit eternal life. The purpose of redemption is to renew, redeem, and restore every part of us. It is to atone for all the wrongs we have done, as well as rectify us to God's *original* plan for our lives.

All of us have missed the mark. We have all come short of the glory of God. We are fallen creatures, and we have all been deflected from the path. The forgiveness we receive from Christ at our new birth is only *the first step* of our journey. After this, God has a lot of cleaning up to do. The Lord desires to renew us entirely. His sacrifice on the cross is able to break every bondage of sin in our lives and transform us into a lovely bride for himself (Heb.10:14, 13:20-21, Titus 2:14, Jude 1:24). He also has a special task for each of us to fulfill. The earthly task God gives us will also produce eternal qualities in our lives that will enable us to rule and reign with Him forever.

FOR COMPLETE VICTORY OVER SIN—WE MUST GO ON

When we experience new birth, *instantly* we are forgiven all our trespasses and sins. It is like a judge clearing a criminal of all charges and crimes. Our debt was paid in full by our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. In spite of this fact, we still have many struggles with temptations, thoughts, habits, attitudes, and words. This can be seen in the lives of the young Corinthian believers.

Sin Still Had Dominion Over The Corinthians

The Corinthians were born again, baptized in water, and filled with the Holy Spirit. They had excellent teaching from prominent men of God, and were exercising all the spiritual gifts. Yet Paul's appraisal of their spirituality was not very impressive. He called them "carnal" and "babes" (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1-3). As a matter of fact, they were violating all 33 precepts of the Sermon on the Mount given by Christ in Matthew chapters 5 - 7. (See 2 Corinthians 12:20-21.) In no wise were they ready to rule and reign with Christ upon the throne. The throne of authority is not for infants but fully developed saints. This privilege is reserved only for those who overcome their many obstacles (Rev. 3:21, 21:7) and the iniquities they are born with.

Only the Complete Truth Will Set Us Free From Sin

Christ promises: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (Jn. 8:32). He is making reference to freedom from sin and its clutches (v33-34). However, being set totally free from sin depends on the condition set forth in John 8:31: "If ye continue in my word." Many times a believer is offended by something and then he closes his heart. In doing so, he is not able to hear what the Lord would further say to him. He is unable to receive further light which would break the bondages of sin and resolve the issues of his life. Many bondages of sin are in the mind. Unless God gives further light, we cannot find our way to true freedom. We will only grope in the dark for the real answers to our problems, and never find them.

In John 6:52-59, Christ tested his disciples with a hard saying. They thought He was teaching cannibalism when he said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (Jn. 6:53). Verses 60-61 - "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?" Surely it did offend them!

John 6:66 - "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They were offended, their hearts closed. They stumbled over a particular truth they did not want to hear. I have found over the years that when God confronts a believer with something, if he resents and rejects what God is saying to him, he will not only come to a standstill but he will also *go back*. He will turn from other truths he knows too (cf. Mk. 4:24-25). How then can that man come to know the whole truth, and be totally set free? This is an awesome warning to all of us not to harden our hearts and fail to enter into rest and all the other purposes God has for our lives (Heb. 3:8,15, 4:1).

Hosea 6:3 - "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord." There are many things God desires to show us which will bring wholeness and perfection. The only way we will know these revelations is when we *follow on* to know Him. If we do not continue in his Word, we cannot know the whole truth and be made totally free from the bondages of sin. Sin will continue to dominate.

Victory Over Sin Requires Many Things

Many things are necessary in order to be freed totally from the power of sin. Certainly we are forgiven and cleared of all transgressions when we come to Christ. Yet many sins and bondages can continue to have dominion over us, even after our new birth. Therefore, God will deal with these areas of need in our lives, one by one. And He will take each of us at a pace that is just right. The Master Potter wants to remold our lives into His image. The processes He employs to reshape us will be many and varied. He understands each of his children perfectly and knows just exactly what we need to be made into His likeness. The path He chooses for one will not be the path He chooses for another. Each person is *uniquely different*. Thus, God's strategy for each one is diverse.

ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS FOR VICTORY OVER SIN

While each and every person has different needs, there are certain things that are *standard* for everyone if he or she would be victorious over sin. Let's consider some of them now.

The Blood of Jesus - Of course, this is the first essential. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22, Rev.12:11).

Water Baptism - This is referring to immersion. The word "baptism" means to submerge, even as a sunken ship, or as a garment that has been plunged into dye and saturated. The passing of the Israelites through the Red Sea is symbolic of water baptism. This separated them from the world (Egypt), and also destroyed the powers that were trying to draw them back. Water baptism breaks many bondages and cuts old ties. Our old life is buried with Christ and raised in newness of life, therefore we should obey the command to be baptized (Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:4).

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit - This blessing is promised to every one who obeys (Acts 5:32). It is *a separate experience* from our new birth. When Philip had a revival in Samaria, the people readily accepted Christ and were baptized in water. Later, Peter and John came and prayed for the new converts to receive the Holy Spirit because He was not yet fallen upon them (Acts 8:12-17). When they laid hands on the new converts, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. This is clear evidence that this is *a distinctly different experience* from new birth, and it should be according to Acts 2:4. (See also Acts 19:1-7.)

The baptism in the Holy Spirit gives *added strength* to our inner man (cf. Eph. 3:16). Most people cannot break the power of alcohol or drugs until they are baptized in the Holy Spirit. Far more grace and power is available to someone who is baptized in the Holy Spirit than to someone who is not. The fruit of the Spirit is much richer and sweeter. The spiritual gifts which accompany the baptism in the Holy Spirit are tremendous weapons against Satan, and against sin. Discerning of spirits and the word of knowledge reveal where our enemy is hiding, and uncovers him. The gift of prophecy gives direction and warns against pitfalls, and helps us war a good warfare (1 Tim.1:18). The fruit of temperance (self-control) helps give us the mastery over vice and temptations. Joy purifies our heart of bitterness and grudges. Meekness helps us accept our circumstances without anger and turning away from God. All of these fruits and gifts of the Spirit are tremendous instruments to help us gain the victory over sin. To reject the baptism of the Holy Spirit is to reject a major part of God's package of redemption.

Truth - It is the truth that makes us free. Many sins and bondages are in the mind. Because we do not see as God sees, many of our actions, attitudes, and responses are wrong (Isa. 55:8-9). Paul said our transformation depended upon the renewing of our mind (Rom.12:2). Our minds need to be thoroughly changed and renewed after our new birth. We are not referring to mere head knowledge and information here! We are speaking of truths that have been assimilated and absorbed into every part of us. Many believers hear good teachings, but it takes *time, obedience, experience, and pain* for these truths to be absorbed and become our very substance (cf. Job 3:20).

There is a great difference between *hearing* the Word, and *eating* the Word of God. For some, it is in one ear and out the other. But what we *imbibe* gets into the inwards, into our blood, and then into every cell of our being. The prophet Jeremiah said, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them” (Jer.15:16). Ezekiel and John were both commanded to eat the book (Ezek. 3:1-4, Rev.10:8-11). It was as sweet as honey in their mouths, but bitter in their bellies. This is the conversion process. The truths we hear from the Word must be assimilated and *converted* into life and reality in our being. They must become part of us. Otherwise, all the truths we know in our heads are only theory. It is the digested Word that purifies the inward parts of our being.

We must allow the Word of God to repeatedly wash our minds and the motives of our hearts until they are perfectly clear and pure (Eph. 5:26-27). This takes time and we must apply our hearts to study, and have a teachable spirit. Also, we must be careful who our teachers are (2 Cor. 2:17, 4:2).

Wisdom - Wisdom is absolutely essential in order to have victory over sin. Wisdom produces peace. It helps us to get along with others. Most sins involve our relationships with others. Wisdom teaches us to stay out of vulnerable situations and temptations which would cause our downfall. Wisdom shows a believer how to deal prudently in all matters. Wisdom makes us discreet in our use of money. Wrong use of money can lead to tremendous bondage and conflict, and breakdowns in a marriage. Wisdom keeps us from wrong and rash commitments, and most of all, from sinning with our lips. Unless we grow continually in wisdom, we will never escape the clutches of sin. Thus, we should pray for wisdom every day (Jas.1:5, Psa. 90:12).

Obedience - I cannot overemphasize the importance of obedience. Obedience is the key to growth and victory over Satan and sin. There can be no growth, no change, and no victory over sin unless we are listening to what God is saying to us. God has the key and knows precisely what we need to move on to the next level of blessing. He knows exactly what we need for release from a bondage or problem. Each time we obey, there is a new purification in our soul (cf. 1 Pet.1:22). As we continue to obey, it will eventually lead to unfeigned love which is Christian perfection and unity.

The Lord may say, “You must break off this friendship,” or, “You need to humble yourself and apologize to your brother or sister.” Perhaps He may ask you to leave the church you were raised in. Maybe He will show you that you need to be more pliable, or to listen to your husband or pastor. The Lord may tell you to stop working two jobs, or He may address an independent spirit. It could be any number of things. Each time we respond to what He is saying, something happens. New grace is poured into our lives. There is a change, whether we see it or not. But if we ignore what He is saying, or we are too dull of hearing, nothing will change. We will continue to go in circles and repeat the same old cycles. Sin and pride will continue to have dominion over us.

The Fear of the Lord - This is an anointing. It is one of the seven spirits of the Lord (Isa.11:2). The fear of the Lord is a treasure, a gift. It is the beginning of wisdom. It makes us afraid to sin, and puts a holy fear in our hearts of coming short of God's plan and purpose for our lives (Heb. 4:1). Holy fear keeps the believer from backsliding (Jer. 32:40). The fear of the Lord is clean, and keeps us clean. Some people have more fear than others (Neh. 7:2). Let's pray for more of this anointing. Also, when God gives us a glimpse of eternity and the rewards we could lose, it promotes holy fear. Therefore, we should also pray for *vision*. When people have no vision or defined goal, they dwell carelessly (cf. Prov. 29:18). But when people reject vision and knowledge, God rejects them and withholds from them his holy fear which would have promoted them (Hos. 4:6, Isa. 63:17).

The Gift of Repentance - Repentance is also a gift we can ask for. It is an anointing that softens obstinate hearts, and changes old mind-sets. Unless God grants this gift, no one can change. We need this anointing every day, not just at our new birth. The only way to break out of our old sinful routines and attitudes is by receiving the spirit of repentance. This anointing breaks down resistance and hardness, and helps us cooperate with God and others. For more details on these topics, please see our other three manuals: *True Christianity*; *Victory Over Self*; and *Turning the Curse*.

Suffering - He that suffers in the flesh, ceases from sin (1 Pet. 4:1). Another necessary ingredient for winning the battle over sin, is suffering. Some bents are so powerful in our nature that it requires great pain to curb, control, or purge us of them. Jacob chose a hard road. He did not learn his lessons about deceit at home; therefore, God sent him to Uncle Laban's for twenty years. Laban was even more deceitful and treated Jacob harshly. At the end, Jacob learned to hate deceit. When he died, he was named Jeshurun which means "straightened." Job learned never to criticize God or question his wisdom during his lengthy trial. He came forth as pure gold. Moses had many crushings in his 40 year wilderness, and became the meekest man on earth (Num.12:3). Sufferings are a necessary part of life in order to rise above the curse of our sinful nature. Some sufferings, however, are self-induced and could be averted if only we would listen to the voice of the Lord.

The Experience of Romans 6:6 - The Apostle Paul had a violent nature before meeting Christ on the Damascus road. He was a blasphemer and persecutor, and was even responsible for the deaths of Christians (1 Tim.1:13-15). Yet, after being born again, baptized in water, and filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul discovered the key to having the mastery over a powerful, sinful old nature. He writes about it in his epistle to the Romans.

"Knowing this, that our old man [was] crucified with him, that the body of sin might be [rendered powerless], that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:6).

Paul had an experience of having his "old man" or old Adamic nature rendered powerless, so that he did not have to spend the rest of his life being a servant of sin. He understood by divine revelation that Christ not only died to forgive our sins, but that He also had made a provision for our "old man" to be rendered inoperative. Paul said that our old man (or old sinful nature) was nailed on the cross with Christ. When he said "knowing this," he meant he had an experiential knowledge of this.

Christ was not only our trespass offering on the cross to pay for our sins, He was also our sin offering. He died also for our *nature of sin*. He provided a means for his people to be freed from the power of the old nature, the nature that produces *acts* of sin. Paul had an experience of having his old nature rendered powerless. Romans 6:6 is one of the many blessings of the cross.

The Romans 6:6 Experience

The fact is, Christ fulfilled all the Old Testament offerings and sacrifices upon the cross. He was our peace offering, burnt offering, sin offering, and trespass offering. He purchased not only our salvation, but our healing, and even our perfection. “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified” (Heb.10:14). *Potentially*, all of these blessings are ours but they must be appropriated, utilized, and laid hold of. We must go on in our walk with God in order to have them. Unless we keep pace with God, we will not possess the things that are left us for an inheritance. *Professing* that we have them is not the same as *possessing* them.

Christ died for our sins but still we are not forgiven until we accept Christ as our Savior. Healing is part of the atonement, but until we have an encounter with God, we are not healed. The same principle is true of our sin nature. Christ dealt with our old man on the cross, but until we have a meeting with God on this issue, sin will continue to have dominion over us.

A Personal Experience

When I was a young Christian, I struggled immensely with many temptations. After being baptized in the Holy Spirit I was strengthened, but still there were battles and torments in the mind that had to be reckoned with. I went into a season of fervent prayer for a whole year, and my consuming desire was to be freed from the struggles of the old life in order to live a holy life for God. Sometimes I would pray six hours a day because the battle was so severe. One night, I struggled like Jacob did when he wrestled with God to have his nature changed (Gen. 32:24-30). In the morning God met me, and I have never been the same since. It was a landmark experience I always look back to because my struggle with temptation was *immediately* broken and I was turned into another man (1 Sam.10:9). I would have to say that this was the greatest experience of my life, even far greater than the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Actually, I did not know what had happened. There was a new anointing upon my life, and even my eyes began to see things differently. It was as though scales had fallen from my eyes. The peace that filled my heart was indescribable, especially after such a long, hard battle with the flesh. But most of all, the power of sin was dealt a deathblow. At last, the heavy burden was gone, and sin no longer had dominion over me. Over the years, I have come to understand that what I had encountered that morning was the reality of Romans 6:6. The *old man* had been rendered inoperative, that henceforth I should not serve sin. A remedy for my old nature, purchased on the cross nearly 2000 years ago, had been unleashed upon my life.

From my own experience, I would have to conclude that Romans 6:6 is an experience. It is God's provision on the cross for our old nature. It is not something you take by faith, but an experience. However, it is not given to the passive. It requires an earnest, desperate seeking of God. There are tests to pass. And when God sees that our heart is set on being holy, we will cross a line where God declares, “You will be holy.”

Romans 6:6 renders our old man inoperative. This means that our old nature is *arrested*. It is brought under control so that we are able to rule over him. The experience of Romans 6:6 gives us the power to make a choice—either for holiness or for the flesh.

Romans 6:6 - Gives Us Power to Make the Choice

The Apostle Paul never taught that Romans 6:6, or any other experience, *eradicated* the nature of sin from our bodies. It simply arrests him. Our “old man” still exists but is put on the cross. Our old man is crucified with Christ. He becomes weaker and weaker as we refuse to feed him or exercise him. But our new man (Christ in us) grows stronger and stronger as he is nourished and exercised. A good analogy of this is found in 2 Samuel 3:1.

“Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: But David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker” (2 Sam. 3:1).

This is a comparison of the old and new nature. Saul represents the old nature. He came first and he was corrupt and self-willed. David represents the new nature. He was godly and came to replace the old regime. There was a great battle between the two. The old one grew weaker and weaker, and the new one stronger and stronger. It should be this way in our spiritual lives. Our new nature should grow stronger and stronger, and the old nature should wax weaker and weaker. However, it depends on which one we choose to feed and exercise. As our new nature grows stronger, old bondages will no longer fit and they will lose their power. Another analogy is found in Genesis 25:22-24.

“And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb” (Gen. 25:22-24).

Here again is a comparison of the two natures. Rebecca had a tremendous struggle within herself and wondered what to do. After enquiring of the Lord, the Lord said “there are two manner of people within you.” Of course, they were Esau and Jacob, but they represent the carnal and the spiritual natures. The oldest one was carnal and would end up being subservient to the younger Jacob. Spiritually, our new nature should become stronger, with the older one coming into subjection.

Knowing - Reckoning - Yielding

Romans 6:6 puts our old man on the cross. This is an experiential “knowing that our old man was crucified with Christ.” As we have already said, this does not *eradicate* our sin nature but *contains* him. Paul never taught eradication. In fact, he taught that he could still be tempted with pride and arrogance (2 Cor.12:7), and needed an additional thorn in the flesh. Our old man can always come back off the cross. That is why we still have to *reckon* it done, and *yield* our members to God.

Even after Romans 6:6, holiness is still a battle, a choice. Before Romans 6:6, we did not have a choice to a certain extent, and sin did indeed have dominion over us. Romans 6:6 gives us the power to make the choice for holiness. “Knowing” puts our old man on the cross so that we have the power to make the choice for holiness. Then we are able to reckon (or count) our old nature arrested, and then *yield* the members of our body to God (Rom. 6:11,13,14). In Romans 6:12-13, we see that it is still *a choice*. “Let not sin reign in your mortal body ... Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God...”

The Law of God in the Heart - The purpose of the Law is to reveal sin. The Law shows us what is wrong in our hearts. Paul said in Romans 3:20, “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The Law by itself has no power to change us. This is the reason the Old Covenant failed. It showed the people what was wrong in their hearts but offered no power to change. “No Smoking” signs do not give smokers power to quit. Yet, the law is necessary to define our problems to us. Read Romans 7:7-9:

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”

Without a law there would be no sin. Sin is not really alive until there is a commandment. We have an awful sin nature resident in our members but it is *dormant* until there is a commandment. Then this old nature comes alive. Sin is not alive without a commandment. Paul said, “when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” A child may reach his hand into the cookie jar and it is not wrong. Once you tell him not to take it (a command), then it becomes wrong. Now the little boy is having a tantrum. The command has stirred up wrath. Most laws are all right. The problem is us (cf. Rom. 7:14). The commandments reveal us. They bring out the sin nature that was always there. This is the thought of “sin revived.”

A minister should not impose a lot of unnecessary rules on his people or he will stir up all kinds of trouble. God leads us on gently. He places one set of standards before us and when we have fulfilled these, He places higher ones before us. The Holy Spirit reveals sin and leads us into holiness by a very gentle and kind manner.

In Romans 7:11-14, Paul continues his theme that the law is good but it only reveals our problems. The purpose of the law is to make sin become “exceeding sinful.” This is the reason God places us in situations where there are new laws. It is to show us our need and make sin become exceedingly sinful. But where sin abounds, grace can much more abound (Rom. 5:20). When the depths of our needs are revealed, much grace is offered to us. As the light is increased in our being and we see greater needs, it is not to depress us but to remedy those newly exposed areas in our hearts.

In Romans 7:15-24, Paul explains the struggle of two natures in a believer. New converts have more battles with sin *after* salvation than they did before. Before salvation there was no law, but now there is and therefore sin comes alive. After salvation people become aware of sin.

In Romans chapter seven, Paul is not saying there is no victory over sin. He is showing the struggle of the two natures in the life of a believer. In verse 24, he asks, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Then he answers it in verse 25: “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is the experience of Romans 6:6 that frees us from the power of sin. This is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This is what sets us free from the law of sin and death (cf. Rom. 8:1-4).

Even after the experience of Romans 6:6, being dead to sin, God will bring us into situations where there are laws which provoke dormant areas of the sin nature in our lives. He will dissect every area of our lives. We must not be taken back by something we see in our hearts, but reckon that there was and is grace for it. Where sin abounds, grace can much more abound.

The law comes into our lives so that the sin which lies passively within will come alive. The person who has more light is aware of more sin. But where sin is made alive and where sin abounds, grace can much more abound. The person who will have his problems solved is the one who has the law working in him. Thus, we should know the Word of God. The person who is going somewhere in God is the one who has the law working in him, causing sin and evil attitudes to surface. But then, where the sin abounds, grace much more abounds to meet the need of the person and deal with the problem, if he so chooses. In these days God will make known his law. God wants to make sin look exceedingly sinful. Therefore He will give new light from His Word so that the law will cause sin to become dreadfully sinful. Then we can be cleansed.

Summary of the Law in our Hearts:

- God wants His laws *written in our hearts*, not just an outward observation of them.
“We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter” (Rom. 7:6).
“Paul delighted in the law of God after the inward man” (Rom. 7:22, Psa. 40:8).
- The righteousness of the Law is to be fulfilled in us (Rom. 8:4).
- The Law is good, but we are weak. The Law offers no power to keep it. Thus, the Law by itself only brings condemnation. “The law is spiritual but I am carnal” (Rom. 7:14).
“The law is weak through the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). “No Smoking” signs do not give smokers the power to quit smoking. It only aggravates the nicotine in their system.
- The Law defines sin; it makes sin become exceeding sinful (Rom. 5:20, 7:7-14).
God will bring us into situations where there are laws which make our sinful nature come alive. Then, where sin abounds, grace can *more abound*. We need laws, but they must be in our spirit. By nature we are *lawless* and we go our own way.
- The “law of sin in my members” is a reference to the fallen nature in our bodies (Rom. 7:15-25).
- “The law of my mind” is the conscience of the new man agreeing that sin is wrong (Rom. 7:23).
- Being “dead to the law” in Romans 7:4 is a reference to being dead to the Old Testament Law which was observed by ritual. Some Jews were trying to be married to the Old Covenant and the New Covenant at the same time. This is spiritual adultery. Paul said they were dead to the law, and married to Christ and the New Covenant (Rom. 7:1-4). We are dead and raised with Christ.
- “The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus” is the power released from Christ to live a holy life. Jesus conquered sin in the flesh as a man and offers this grace to men (Rom. 8:2-4). This power is released unto us from the Romans 6:6 experience and other spiritual experiences.
- “The law of sin and death” is the power of sin that has dominion over men. The only way to have the victory over sin is by *experiencing* the power released from Christ's death and resurrection. Our ultimate victory over sin is when we receive our new, resurrected bodies. From henceforth, our bodies will be exempt from sin and all its influences. Full redemption is not complete until we receive our new bodies (Rom. 8:23).

ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS FOR VICTORY OVER SIN

Summary

- **The blood of Jesus** - His blood not only forgives but is able to make us perfect (Heb.13:20-21).
- **Water Baptism** - This severs us from the world unto God, and breaks old religious ties.
- **The Baptism in the Holy Spirit** - This experience, separate from new birth, enriches the *fruits* of the Spirit in our lives, and brings the *gifts* of the Spirit in order to war a good warfare.
- **Truth** - The truth makes us free. *We must go on to full truth* and not be offended and quit.
- **Wisdom** - This makes us prudent in matters of relationships, use of money, morals, and speech.
- **Obedience** - Each time we obey God, there is a new purifying within, and new grace imparted. This is the key to growth and victory over sin (1 Pet.1:22).
- **The Fear of the Lord** - This is an anointing that makes us afraid to come short of God's plan for our lives, and from growing rebellious and going our own ways (Isa.11:2, Jer. 32:40, Heb. 4:1).
- **The Gift of Repentance** - This is an anointing that softens our hearts and enables us to change our minds. A changed mind is imperative for having power over sin (Rom.12:2).
- **Suffering** - Strong pain makes us mellow, and destroys evil bents to sin. Suffering takes away harshness and criticism, and much more.
- **Romans 6:6** - This is the experience of being *dead to sin*. Christ not only paid our debt upon the cross, He also became our sin offering and dealt with our sin nature on the cross. Yet, we must have a personal experience of this. God brings us to this when He is satisfied that we have passed our tests. Romans 6:6 gives us the power to choose a holy life.
- **The Law of God in our Hearts** - Even after Romans 6:6, God plummets deeper into our being to dissect every area of our inner life. He will bring us into situations where there are laws that provoke a dormant sin nature, making sin become *exceedingly sinful*. When there is a discovery of new needs in our life, much grace is offered. He desires to bring His law into our hearts that we may serve him, not in oldness of the letter, but in newness of spirit. The whole purpose of the New Covenant is to bring the law into our hearts. The law is perfect. When it is worked into our hearts, we will be perfected. This is not an outward observation but an inner work of redemption.
- **Our New Resurrected Bodies** - To have complete and absolute victory over sin, we must receive a new, resurrected body. Redemption is not complete until we have our new bodies. Then, and only then, will our body be exempt from the sin nature. Each time we say no to our flesh, and yes to God, something is planted in our mortal flesh. When our bodies are quickened, all that has been planted will be quickened. Let us strive to have a better resurrection, and a place closer to Christ for all eternity (Heb.11:35b, Phil. 3:11, Rev. 20:5-6).

III. THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

A.) NECESSITY OF SALVATION

B.) WHAT CONSTITUTES SALVATION

1. JUSTIFICATION

2. REGENERATION

3. SANCTIFICATION

C.) ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF SANCTIFICATION

D.) CALVINISM / ARMINIANISM COMPARED

E.) THE COMPLETE SALVATION

A.) NECESSITY OF SALVATION

The Apostle Paul makes an argument in Romans chapters 1-4, that all men are lost and need a Savior. The Jews had the Law of Moses and violated it. The Gentiles did not have God's laws, so they came under the law of their conscience (2:11-16) which they also violated. The conclusion in Romans 3:9-20 is that both Jews and Gentiles are sinners. All the world is guilty before God. Paul says that all the human race is "without excuse" (1:19-20), and in 3:23, that *all have sinned*. Salvation is offered to both Jew and Gentile alike by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Everyone is lost without Christ. Therefore, we have the necessity of preaching (Rom.10:9-17, Mk.16:15-16).

Anyone Without Christ is Lost

Claims of Jesus:

Matt.10:33 - "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father."

Mark 16:16 - "He that believeth not shall be damned [or condemned]."

Luke 12:8-9 - "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."

John 3:18 - "He that believeth not is condemned already." (Man has refused his only hope).

John 3:36 - "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 8:24 - "For if ye believe not that I am he [the Messiah], ye shall die in your sins."

John 10:1-9 - Christ is the only door into the kingdom. Any other entrance is illegal.

John 14:6 - "I am the way ... no man cometh to the Father, but by me."

John 15:6 - Any man who does not abide in Christ the Vine is cast into the fire.

Claims of the Apostles:

Acts 4:12 - "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Rom. 8:9 - "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

(i. e. - he is not truly a child of God)

1 Cor. 3:11 - "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

2 Cor.13:5 - "Know ye not ... how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates."

Gal.1:9 - "If any preach any other gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

1 Tim. 2:5 - "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

2 Tim. 2:12 "If we deny him, he will also deny us."

1 Jn. 5:12 - "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

2 Jn.1:9 - "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."

Rev. 20:15 - "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

This book is *the Lamb's* book of life (cf. Rev.13:8).

There is salvation in no one else in heaven or earth but the Lord Jesus Christ.

* The above are *only a few* of many verses on the subject.

What About the Heathen Who Have Never Heard the Gospel?

Some Christians believe that the heathen *who have never heard the gospel* are saved and going to heaven. Their rationale is that the heathen have never had a chance; therefore, God could never judge a man who has never had an opportunity. However, there are several factors on this important subject that are often overlooked.

In the opening chapters of Romans, God concludes that all the world is guilty before Him, saying that man is “without excuse.” The problem is not that man does not know the truth. The problem is the fact that man *evades* knowing the truth and even rejects it (cf. Rom.1:18-32). Mankind knows far more than he is willing to admit. Let's read Romans 1:18-32.

Man Knows But Rejects the Truth

- 1:18 God is angry with men “who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” Many know the truth.
1:19,20 God has already revealed Himself in all creation, and man is without excuse.
1:21 Many people who know God do not glorify Him or thank Him. Darkness fills their hearts.
1:22-24 Who purposely change God's glory into something idolatrous and they worship that.
1:25 They change the truth of God into a lie. This is *willful* rejection of God and the truth.
1:25 And worship the creation (nature) more than the Creator.
1:28 These do not want to retain God in their knowledge. Thus, God gives them over to error.
1:32 Many understand God's judgments but still enjoy working evil in the sight of the Lord.

From the very beginning, man has been prone to wander from God. Cain heard the voice of God and knew the presence of God, yet he lied right to his face (Gen. 4:6-9). Later God had to destroy man with a flood. Only five generations after the flood, man openly rebelled against God, building the Tower of Babel (Gen.11:1-9). It was here that God changed the languages and races. All the fathers of the nations were here at this tower. The fathers of Russia, Turkey, Greece, Italy, and China were here. All the fathers of the African nations were here. All the fathers of the European nations were here. They all knew the truth and rejected it. Noah was still alive during this period and must have reminded them of the awesome fate of the world's population during the flood.

All the founding fathers of the nations of the world had the knowledge of God. Yet, they would not walk in the truth or teach it to their children. All the heathen nations have once known the truth but *as a whole* have rejected it. When a nation constantly spurns God's love and brings Him down, God smites them with delusion and brings them down. When men delight in their abominations, God gives them over to a reprobate mind (cf. Isa. 66:3-4, Rom.1:28, 2 Thes. 2:11-12). He judges them with a mixed up mind and gives them over to false religions, bondage, and oppression from other nations (Psa.107:10-12). He is attempting to bring them to their senses and to repentance (Psa.107:13-20, Psa. 90:3). Even when God smites a nation with delusion, He still has a few in that land who will be made into kings and priests (cf. Rev. 5:9-10).

The heathen who have never heard the gospel are *not* saved. They are lost and need to hear the gospel. This is the reason Paul says, “How can they call upon the Lord and believe unless they hear, and how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Read Romans 10:13-15). The heathen who have never heard the gospel are under the power of Satan and live in another kingdom (Acts 26:18). They are bound with immorality, murder, vanity, and the worship of Satan and other spirits. God's kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness. Nothing that is defiled and unredeemed can enter therein.

For some people it is the mercy of God *not* to hear the gospel, for upon hearing the gospel they would reject it and then their judgment would be greater (cf. 2 Pet. 2:20-22). Judgment in the lake of fire is based upon how much light a person was given. Some will have greater judgment than others because they had greater light. Backslidden ministers will have the greatest indictment.

According to Luke 12:47-48, the servant who knew his Lord's will and did not prepare himself will be beaten with *many* stripes. However, the servant who did not know the Lord's will shall be beaten with *few* stripes. He still has judgment but it is not nearly as severe. In hell there are many levels of judgment. Some levels are far worse than others, but who wants to be there at all?

Jude 1:7 says that Sodom and Gomorrah “are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Today, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah are suffering the anguish of hell fire and will continue to suffer for all eternity. Yet, Christ taught that the cities who saw his mighty works and did not repent would have greater judgment than Sodom (cf. Mt.11:20-24).

“And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be *more tolerable* for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee” (Mt.11:23-24).

It is very clear that the unrepentant inhabitants of Capernaum will have greater judgment in hell than the people of Sodom. In fact, Christ said if Sodom had seen the same miracles that were performed in Capernaum, they would have repented and remained until today. (See Mt.11:21-22.)

Summary

The Heathen Who Have Never Heard the Gospel are Not Saved.

- Anyone who does not believe in Christ is condemned already (Jn. 3:18, Mk.16:16).
- People cannot believe the gospel until they hear a preacher (Rom.10:13-15, Mt. 28:19-20).
- They are in another kingdom - the kingdom of Darkness.
- They are under the power of Satan and worshipping Satan.
- They are bound with iniquity, and unforgiven.
- Their forefathers all knew the truth but forsook it and would not teach their descendants.
- Some nations have strong delusion from God (false religions, bondages, oppression) because they rejected the truth, murdered the missionaries God sent to them, and loved evil. Yet, God has some in every nation who are ordained to become kings and priests unto God (Rev. 5:9-10).
- It is the mercy of God that some do not hear the gospel, reject it, and then have greater judgment.
- If there is anyone on earth who desires truth, God who sees the heart will provide a means for that person to hear the gospel and be saved. Sometimes He visits them supernaturally.

If the heathen who have never heard the gospel are saved, then why bother to send missionaries to them? Why not leave them in ignorance and keep them saved? Why should we bring the gospel to people who are saved (because of ignorance) so that they may hear the truth and have the possibility of rejecting it and being lost?

B. WHAT CONSTITUTES SALVATION

What constitutes salvation? When a person comes to Christ and experiences salvation, three things automatically happen to him. Although these happen instantaneously, they are also progressive.

Justification: Divine acquittal. Pardon, forgiveness

Regeneration: New birth. A quickening, an awakening in his spirit

Sanctification: A setting apart from the world unto God

1. JUSTIFICATION

Almost everything we receive from God is instantaneous as well as progressive. When we understand this truth it should help us with our doctrines on many things. Justification is an instantaneous experience of being declared righteous. It does not mean we *are* righteous, only that we are counted righteous. This could be portrayed as a person standing before a judge and being acquitted. When a criminal is acquitted, nothing happens to his nature, only his position is changed and he is declared free. This is the concept of justification. Only our standing is changed. We are freed, acquitted, but this does not change our nature. This is the reason a person can slip back into what he just came out of. Righteousness is “imputed” to him. He is declared to be righteous, whether or not he is righteous. This is an instantaneous act.

The progressive experience of justification comes as God works in our lives, convicting us of areas where we are not upright. As he straightens us out, we become in fact a righteous person. This is called “imparted” righteousness. When we are first saved, we are *counted* righteous, though there are many areas where in fact we are not righteous. As we progress in our walk with God, He causes us to *become* righteous.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This quote from Paul in Romans 5:1 is an instantaneous act, but it is also progressive and ongoing. Instantly we are justified when we come to Christ, but then Christ continues to straighten us. This could be likened to the printer who has to justify uneven right margins. In printing, this is literally called “justification.” He has to justify (or make straight) the crooked margins before he prints. Justification is an ongoing process in our spiritual life. Christ is continually straightening our crooked ways. The more we are justified, the more peace we have.

A. Imputed Righteousness - We are *counted* righteous, although we are not righteous (Rom. 4:1-8).

B. Imparted Righteousness - We have been *made* righteous (Col. 3:10, Rev.19:7-8).

The righteousness mentioned in Romans 4:1-8 is *imputed* righteousness. Simply because we believe in Christ, the One who justifies the ungodly, we are counted righteous. We are flatly forgiven and cleared of all transgressions because we put our trust in the One who paid our debt. Yet, there are numerous areas in our lives that are not straight.

The *righteousness* in Revelation 19:7-8 is a garment. It is a word that means “righteous works.” The mature bride is clothed with righteousness and righteous deeds. She has been *made* righteous. She is clear as crystal and transparent as glass. This is *imparted*, worked out righteousness.

Nature of Justification - Divine Acquittal

Divine acquittal - “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?” (Rom. 8:33-34). As we have mentioned before, justification is the thought of a judge who has acquitted (cleared, freed) the one who was charged with transgression. Therefore, because the Great Judge has declared us free, we must learn to discern the difference between condemnation and conviction. Satan is the accuser of the brethren and he will always try to bring up past mistakes and sins.

Romans 8:35-39 asks, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Then Paul lists seventeen things that cannot separate us from the love of God *if we don't allow them to*. Learn to *refuse* all condemnation. The seventeen things mentioned here try to keep us from the love of God—tribulation, distress, peril, sword, persecution, principalities, powers, and all the others.

Conviction and condemnation are very different. Conviction brings release, freedom and life. Conviction is from God. God shows us something that is not right in our life, inspiring hope that we can change and be different. He brings our attention to an area of need at a particular time because He wants to help us overcome that problem and change. Conviction is very life giving. Condemnation is quite the opposite.

Condemnation brings death, discouragement, and a loss of all our joy and peace. It depresses you and gnaws at you all the time. Condemnation makes you feel sick, discouraged, and unbelieving. Condemnation causes you to fret over a mistake or something that God has already forgiven. Learn to recognize this spirit, and *refuse* it.

Necessity of Justification - The Condemnation of Man by God

Justification is necessary. Man is condemned by God. Our sins and iniquities separated us from a holy God (Isa. 59:2). He stated that there is none righteous, that they are all gone out of the way and become unprofitable (Rom 3:10,12,23). All the world is guilty before God. Therefore, there must be a justification, a clearing of offenses committed. Man is condemned until God justifies. Everyone is guilty and needs forgiveness. This is the reason we need to send missionaries around the world (Rom.10:13-15). We must be clear on this. These are cornerstones of our faith.

1. Everyone is guilty.
2. Therefore, everyone needs justification (forgiveness).
3. Jesus Christ is the only means of pardon and forgiveness.

Every person needs the Savior. If the heathen who never heard the gospel are saved, then why go preach to them so they can reject and be lost? People who do not know Jesus are *not* forgiven. If they are not forgiven, they cannot go to heaven; they will go to hell. Hell has many “good” people in it. There is only one door to heaven. Jesus said, “I am the door.” It is a delusion from Satan that makes people think, “If I am sincere and do my best, I will go to heaven.” It is simply not true! Everybody needs forgiveness, and this only comes from Christ.

There is no second chance. Once we are dead, our fate is sealed forever! People who have held to a doctrine of *another chance after death* lose their discernment and go into error in many other areas of truth.

Source of Justification - Grace

“For by grace are ye saved” (Eph. 2:8). The only grounds for salvation is the grace of God. It is God's unlimited kindness to us. He reached down in His mercy and rescued us (Eph. 2:4-5). We did not deserve it. We are able to love Him only because He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19). We did not seek for Him, He was in search of us. We all like sheep had gone astray, we had turned every one to his own way (Isa. 53:6, Psa.14:2-3). God has not given us the judgment we deserve (Psa.103:10). In reality, we deserve much more. Therefore, God has been very gracious.

Our salvation is “Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:9). No one can say he has earned his salvation. If we could justify ourselves by works, (good deeds, will power,) then Jesus came to earth and bled and died for nothing. This was Paul's reasoning in Galatians 2:21.

God saved us for an eternal purpose (Eph. 2:7). Salvation is not just to keep us from going to hell. This would be a very narrow idea of God and salvation. We were created for Him; we are his inheritance. He wants to reveal the unsearchable riches of his grace to us throughout all eternity. We are called to be his bride, his “purchased possession.” He wants to continue to revolutionize and transform us throughout all eternity as He unfolds his grace unto us.

Grounds for Justification—Christ's Righteousness Alone

God sees us through Christ. We are justified on the grounds of Christ's righteousness alone. Isaiah declared: “Their righteousness is of me saith the Lord” (Isa. 54:17). Paul humbly acknowledged, “Not having mine own righteousness . . . but the righteousness that is from God by faith” (Phil. 3:9). By believing on Him, we are counted righteous (Rom. 4:3,5). He is our righteousness (1 Cor.1:30). His righteousness is given to us.

Israel tried to come to God on their own terms. They were attempting to “establish their own righteousness” (Rom.10:3). When Christ came to Israel, many of the Israelites wanted to continue in the old traditions of Moses and the Law. Most of the Jews would not come to Christ.

“But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone [Christ]” (Rom. 9:31-32). “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom.10:2-4).

Christ is man's *only means* of coming to God and being righteous. The Jews wanted to come to God their own way and on their own terms. They wanted to continue to *work* for their salvation and were trying to *earn* God's favor. The harder they worked, the more they could *boast* of their own righteousness, will power, sacrifice, and abstinence. The more they could glory in their flesh and in what they could do. Then they could look down on others who had not worked as hard as they did.

The Israelites had zeal for God but not according to knowledge. They were not submitting themselves to God's righteousness, and that was by accepting his Son who paid our debt. Instead, Israel sought to establish her own righteousness, a thing of pride, and God would not accept them.

Means of Justification - Faith

“By grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). Faith is a gift of God. It is not something we can work up. In order to be saved, it requires an impartation of God's faith into the heart. Every blessing we receive from God is by grace, through faith. After we receive faith, it must be nurtured by hearing from God daily and reading the Word.

We should not say to a person, “You must believe.” This is not scriptural, nor is it possible on our own to have faith. It takes an impartation of God's faith. In order to be saved, God must impart his faith to a sinner to help him to believe. Explain the truth of salvation to him. Tell him to call upon the name of the Lord. Have him ask the Lord to give him the faith to believe. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (cf. Rom.10:17). Faith is created in the hearer as the Word is preached.

Conditions of Salvation - Grace, Faith, Repentance

All the conditions for salvation are *gifts* of God. Grace, faith, and repentance are all God's gifts.

a. *Grace* - “For by grace are ye saved” (Eph. 2:8). God must sovereignly draw a person. “No man can come except the Father draw him” (Jn. 6:44). There are special seasons when God draws our hearts (Rev. 3:20). Isaiah tells us that man cannot find God just any time he wishes, but exhorts: “Seek the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near” (Isa. 55:6).

b. *Faith* - “By grace are you saved, through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). God must put faith into one's heart in order to believe. There is no *magic formula*; you cannot work it up. A person could repeat a sinner's prayer and not necessarily have a meeting with God and have a salvation experience.

c. *Repentance* - The spirit of repentance comes from God (Zech.12:10). It is the ability to change our obstinate mind. A changed mind will reverse our lifestyle. Thus, we are commanded to do *works* [fit] for repentance (Mt. 3:8). Repentance is true sorrow for sin with a sincere effort to forsake it. A spirit of repentance will help people to acknowledge the truth (the truth of who and what they are, and the need for forgiveness, cf. 2 Tim. 2:25-26). Acts 2:38 commands, “Repent and be baptized, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

For salvation, God's grace must be drawing a person. If the person is willing to say *yes* and is open, God's faith will flow into him to believe, and a spirit of repentance will come. God may be drawing, but a person can still resist the Holy Ghost and say, “No!”

The Spirit's Witness of Pardon

One must have this witness of pardon. “The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8:16). This is also stated in 1 John 5:10: “He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in himself.” It is not by repeating a formalized prayer or a lot of dogmas. One must experience genuine salvation, and then *know* in his heart that God has accepted him. If the person does not have the Spirit's witness of pardon, he must seek the Lord until he does. When you are saved, God has forgiven you and that is that! Then one must continue to walk in the witness of the Spirit. If he loses it, he must seek the Lord to find out why. Is it condemnation, or is it sin?

Atonement

The initial act of justification is the point where we are declared righteous. But how can a just God declare us to be righteous? A holy God must have some basis on which He can declare us free or just from our debt or guilt! A judge cannot free a thief who has stolen \$1000 unless someone replaces the \$1000. Someone may intercede and stand up and say, "Here, I'll pay the \$1000."

There must be an atonement or a covering for our offenses. A sacrifice is needed in God's eyes so that He can cover or overlook the question of sin. Therefore, atonement means "satisfaction." Atonement makes right or covers the wrong. God must have something so that He can be satisfied that He can declare us just. Christ paid the price so that God can be satisfied and cover our sin. Christ gave or paid the atonement. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ carried our huge debt of sin to the cross, suffering vicariously for us. He suffered and died in our place. What a wonderful Savior!

Another point is this: there has to be *an acknowledgment* that a sacrifice is needed. Some people are not willing to admit that they have a debt of sin. Many people believe they are all right as they are and do not have any debt to pay. This is spiritual blindness.

Justification covers our sins (Psa. 32:1); blots out our sins (Isa. 43:25, 44:22, Psa. 51:9); turns away deserved anger (Psa. 78:38); purges our sins (Psa. 79:9, Heb.1:3).

Other terms used in justification:

- a.) *Redemption* - to buy back by paying the price of, to loose from bondage, release (Gal. 3:13,14).
- b.) *Reconciliation* - to restore friendship which has been broken (Eph. 2:16, Col.1:20, Heb. 2:17).
- c.) *Propitiation* - an atoning victim, a sacrifice, to bring us to God (Rom. 3:25, 1 Jn. 2:2, 4:10).
- d.) *Substitution* - to put one person in place of another (2 Cor. 5:21).
- e.) *Ransom* - related to "redeem" - the price paid to set one free (1 Tim. 2:6).

Conviction

Here we are referring to conviction that leads to repentance. Conviction is brought about by the Holy Spirit. Without conviction there can be no true repentance. True conviction produces something good when we yield to it. It brings true repentance which is a change of mind and a turning to go in the opposite direction. Conviction not only shows you that you are wrong. It also shows you there is a right way and that this right way is attainable, causing a change in mind, and a change in living. This is necessary and it is produced by conviction. Not only do we need conviction and repentance at the time of salvation, we need it all the days of our life. We need ongoing conviction and ongoing repentance. Thus, we see that all of these virtues are *ever progressive*.

Acceptance

"He hath made us accepted in the Beloved" (Eph.1:6). The Father accepts us because of his Beloved Son. God the Father accepts us only because we are Christ's. Just as parents accept their son's choice of a bride because they love him and take his choice, we are loved by God the Father because Christ loves us. You are only in the family because somebody loves you. Therefore our main concern is to always seek to please Jesus, our heavenly Bridegroom.

B. REGENERATION

Regeneration is our actual new birth experience. This is a sovereign miracle of grace which Paul expresses in Ephesians 2:1: “And you hath he *quicken*ed who were dead in trespasses and sins.” (See also Eph. 2:1-5). Our spirit was dead. Death means separation. We were dead to God, and separated from his presence and favor. Then He quickened us and made us alive to Him.

God awakens and illuminates our spirit. The Apostle Paul uses Genesis 1:3 to depict our new birth. “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts” (2 Cor. 4:6). There was much darkness, confusion, and turmoil in our soul before our new birth. Just as God said, “Let there be light” to a planet that was dark and without form and void, so God speaks to our soul and says, “Let there be light.” This literally happens at new birth. Paul applies the truth of the restoration of this earth to our born again experience. There is a literal light that shines in our soul and that Light is Christ. As we grow in our Christian experience, the light gets brighter and brighter. As the light increases, we are able to see our real problems and then find the solutions.

“He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (Jn. 20:22). At our new birth, the Holy Spirit breathes upon us and we are quickened with spiritual life. Christ breathed upon His disciples after the resurrection. This was their new birth experience. They did not have the new birth experience before the cross. Later the disciples were told to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power. This was a reference to the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). Salvation and the baptism in the Holy Spirit are two separate experiences.

Paul said in Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” This “washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost” is the born again experience. At new birth, there is a washing and a renewing in our being (Col. 3:10). Paul said, “If any man be in Christ he is a new [creation]” (2 Cor. 5:17).

John 3:1-16 is regeneration, or the new birth. It is a spiritual birth. We are only babies spiritually. Our understanding of spiritual things is very infantile. The Spirit of God enters us; it is a divine act. We are born from above. After this, we must grow. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). We must grow up unto manhood, unto full stature as Paul says in Ephesians 4:13-14. Thus, we see that regeneration (or the new birth) is instantaneous but also progressive. We must grow. Life is motion. It is possible to die and go back into the world and be lost. Jude calls this being “twice dead” (Jude 1:12).

Nobody can get into heaven without being born again. The majority of Christians are not really persuaded down deep in their hearts that everyone is lost. Many think there is some other way for people to get to heaven, other than rebirth. There will be nice people in hell who did not believe they needed forgiveness.

You cannot receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit before you are born again. Some are deceived. The devil can speak in tongues and so can the flesh. Remember, being born again is a miracle of grace; it is a divine act. Just by repeating some formalized prayer or a sinner's prayer does *not necessarily* mean a person has had a meeting with God. It could be just a *form* without any life.

Review

When we receive Christ as our Savior, many things happen instantaneously to a believer, but also they are progressive. Let's consider this thought—we are saved, we are being saved, and we shall be completely saved when we finally receive our new resurrected bodies. Life is motion, and if we are alive, we must continue to grow. Everything in scripture points to movement and expansion.

Justification — We are Justified:

- Cleared of all sins, and *counted* righteous. Yet we must *become* righteous.
- Given the spirit of repentance. Yet we must continue to allow God to change our minds.
- Have faith imparted to us. Yet faith must continue to grow.
- Convicted of sin. Yet we need to have conviction and correction all our lives.
- Are given grace, but we must continue to receive new grace in order to grow.

Regeneration — We Are Regenerated:

- Born again. But as a newborn baby, we must grow unto manhood.
- Have a new father. We must grow into spiritual fatherhood ourselves.
- Are adopted into another family. We must take on the characteristics of our new family.
- Become heirs with Christ, but we are not given the full inheritance until we come of age.
- Are quickened and made alive. Yet we must continue to have new life poured into us.
- Given light. Yet the light must continue to grow brighter and brighter.
- Become a new creature, yet being changed from glory to glory into a higher creation.
- Sealed with the Holy Spirit. Yet we must continue to be faithful.
- Given a new heart, but many stones and hard places must still be taken out.

Sanctification — We Are Sanctified:

- Set apart for God instantly. Still we must become holy inside.
- Transferred into another kingdom. Still we need the old kingdom out of us.
- We are out of Egypt, but Egypt must be taken out of us.
- The Corinthians were sanctified, but not holy. This took time.

Now we would like to develop the meaning of sanctification.

3. SANCTIFICATION

What constitutes sanctification? Sanctification in its simplest form means *to be set apart*. It is a separation from the world, unto God. Upon new birth this happens at once. Yet it is an ongoing process. The new believer is plucked from the world and placed into God's Church by one act. Paul says we have been “delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son” (cf. Col.1:13). Instantly and sovereignly a new believer is sanctified by an act of God. When we are saved, God takes us and sets us apart for himself and His service. Therefore, we are declared holy, but this holiness has to be worked out in our lives.

This could be compared to the Israelites who were redeemed from Egypt by the blood of the lamb. They became God's property. Israel was declared to be a holy nation. Truly they were separated from Egypt, the house of bondage. In fact, they were set apart from all nations unto the Lord. But here is the problem—although they were redeemed from Egypt and out of Egypt, Egypt was not yet out of them. Israel was “sanctified” and *declared* holy, but in actual fact, they were most carnal. Judicially they were declared holy, but in reality they were not. Sanctification must be ongoing.

In 1 Corinthians 1:2, Paul said the Corinthian believers were “sanctified in Christ Jesus.” In 6:11, he says they were washed (regenerated), justified, and sanctified. All of these happen instantly and simultaneously when we are saved. Yet, the outworking of these takes *time*. In reality, they were far from being holy. They were carnal and infantile (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1-3).

Paul stated to the same Corinthians, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and [mind], perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). Holiness and purity require time. They must be *perfected* within each believer. True holiness is preceded by much cleansing of the flesh and mind. We were “sanctified” and separated from the world unto God judicially at new birth. Yet we have to experience *progressive sanctification* before we are truly holy.

Sanctification, Consecration, Holiness can be synonymous terms, with separate meanings too. While sanctification means “to be set apart,” there are two aspects of separation. There is a separation *from* the world and evil, and a separation *unto* God and his purposes. People can be separated from the world and still be unclean and have unresolved problems in their hearts. There can be problems of pride, stubbornness, and anger. Remember, Paul said “*perfecting holiness*” to people whom he already had said were “sanctified, justified, and washed.” It is possible to be sanctified and yet not be truly holy. Holy means “belonging wholly to God.” Thus, our thoughts, motives, and deepest desires need to be redeemed through and through. This really takes time. Technically, no one is holy in the truest sense of the word when they are first saved. The same is true for righteousness. We are “counted” righteous, but there are dark areas where we need to be *made* righteous.

Dedication

Dedication can be defined as follows: “To give our lives to God's purpose and call for our life.” Dedication involves wholeheartedness, zeal, and commitment. There is a particular calling on each of our lives and every fiber of our being must be dedicated to fulfilling God's call. However, we must be dedicated to the *right cause* and have the *right motives* as well. There are many who are dedicated to the call of God but they have wrong motives, or they are dedicated to a wrong cause. Do not be dedicated to wrong goals, or some wrong doctrine, etc. Do not have wrong motives.

Purification

We need a *continual* cleansing and purging. The people God elects to be his children have been corrupted by original sin. Therefore, God has to wash and cleanse us wholly. First, we have to be thoroughly *convinced* that we need this purification. God must show us our need. This is a work of the Spirit. After the revelation of need we pray, “Lord, please cleanse me.” (Job 42:1-6, Isa. 6:5-7).

“If we walk in the light ...we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son [continually] cleanses us from all sin” (1 Jn.1:6-7). We need continual cleansing with the blood of Jesus. This comes by walking in the truth [light] and being transparent with each other.

The Corinthians were “washed” when they came to Christ for salvation (1 Cor. 6:11), but they were *blind* to numerous problems in their lives. So are we! They needed much more washing, much deeper purification. Ephesians 5:26 and John 15:3 speak of washing by the Word of God.

Consecration

This is divine appointment for service. Consecration is to be separated or set apart for the service of God (Lev. 8:22, 30). Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood ... and sprinkled it upon Aaron and his sons' garments. They were being consecrated for service. You can be consecrated, *anointed*, and set apart for service, and still not be holy. There are people like King Saul or Jehu (1 Sam.15:17,23; 2 Kg.10:30-31) who were consecrated for service, but not holy in their hearts. Both failed miserably! At the Judgment Seat of Christ, *many* who have performed great miracles and had mighty ministries will not be acknowledged by the Lord (Mt. 7:21-23).

Holiness

Holiness is divine nature. It is much deeper than being “set apart.” It is belonging to God totally in our heart of hearts. It is when our deepest motives, thoughts, and aspirations belong totally to Him and we are pure through and through.

We can be dedicated (zealous, committed, wholehearted), but we have to be sure we are dedicated to the right thing. We can have wrong motives. It is possible to have our own causes and doctrines and think we are champions of God's cause when it is our own. We should ask God to show us our motives and whether our emphasis is from Him, or from ourselves (cf. Lk.11:23).

Also we can be consecrated (anointed, set apart for service and ministry) and still not be pure. We must be holy. Yet, we cannot make ourselves holy. Holiness can only be reached by walking in the Spirit. God will bring about everything that is necessary to perfect us. He will bring every circumstance, or trial, or blessing that we need in order to make us the whole person we ought to be.

In everything that God does there are both instantaneous and progressive actions. God can state that a person is “sanctified,” and then work it out continually in every area. The three blessings we have discussed—Justification, Regeneration, and Sanctification—flow from our union with Christ. We are the branches and must abide in the Vine to receive life. God expects fruit in our lives. Remember, the branch can be cut off and cast into the fire, regardless of how much fruit the branch has brought forth in the past. We must *stay* in the Vine for life. There is no eternal security.

C.) ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF SANCTIFICATION

Eradication

Eradication is a teaching that claims a believer no longer has a sin nature. If this were true, it would be impossible to sin or be tempted. However, 1 John 1:8 warns: “If we say that we have no [sin nature] we deceive ourselves.” Even Christ was tempted. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, but He never yielded to sin (Rom. 8:3). If His body had been exempt from the sin nature, He could not have been tempted. His body was made of Mary's substance, and she descended from Adam. On this side of heaven we will always have the old nature, regardless of our spiritual attainments. There is never a time in our earthly life that the old man cannot rise up. Romans 6:6 puts our old man on the cross, but we must keep him there because he can be revived. Also, we can never take away our humanity. Even Jesus cried in His humanity, “My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

The Apostle Paul never taught *eradication* of the sin nature. To the contrary, he acknowledged that he could be tempted with tremendous pride and arrogance (2 Cor.12:7), and required an additional “thorn in the flesh” to keep him humble. Also, if the old nature is eradicated, what was causing Paul and Barnabas to have such a ferocious argument over John Mark, in Acts 15:36-40? Why did a fellow minister named Demas forsake Paul, having loved this present world? (2 Tim. 4:10)

Legalism

Legalism is a strict, literal adherence to the law or to a particular code. It centers around man-made laws and unnecessary commandments of men (cf. Mk. 7:7-9, 13). Legalism does not bring life, only bondage. Extra laws do not bring holiness. Instead, legalism attracts other spirits. The one spirit we are trying to drive out stays with the others, and our condition is even worse. The problem is not cast out by rules and regulations; it is actually strengthened. Legalism only produces criticism, pride, self-righteousness, hardness, hypocrisy, and brings in other spirits.

The paradox of legalism is that while attempting to keep the law, one becomes the greatest violator of the law—the commandment to love our neighbor as ourself. Legalism prohibits people from loving others. Love is the fulfilling of the law. It is the bond of perfectness (Rom.13:10, Col. 3:14). Legalism produces pride and criticism. It makes one look down on others and be harsh and judgmental of them. Legalism is “what I can do in my own strength.” Therefore, I have reason to boast. I can glory in the flesh for what I have accomplished by the strength of my will power, and belittle others who have not worked as hard as me.

Legalism also produces hypocrisy because people are unable to keep man-made laws. Therefore, they have to *pretend* they are keeping them. For example, if the pastor makes it a law in the church that no one can have a TV, or has banned the eating of pork, people will pretend when the pastor is around, but indulge when he is away. The Holy Spirit only helps us to keep *God's* laws, not man's. Therefore, legalistic laws have to be kept with our strength, not God's, and we fail.

Legalism is involvement with *externals*—clothes, foods, and outward observances—but it does not change the heart. Paul, before his conversion, was “blameless” regarding the letter of the law, yet he had murder in his heart (Phil. 3:5-6). Transformation in the heart comes as we walk in union with Christ. As we walk in the Spirit and stay anointed, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. In our love relationship with Christ, He will convict and convince us of things in our lives that are not pleasing to Him. By faith we can receive His grace to cleanse us. The key is *relationship*, not ritual.

Asceticism

Asceticism is self-affliction. It is austere, rigid self-denial. This, too, attracts other spirits, and it produces evil fruit. Asceticism is the exaltation of man's will power. The strength of the will is emphasized. Yet, penances and self-punishment do not *earn* favor from God. Long fasts do *not necessarily* bring God's smile and approval, or long prayers. Motives are the most important thing.

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (Mt. 6:7). It is not *how much or how long* we pray or fast, but whether our motives are right before God, and whether we are obeying the voice of the Lord. God will not hear us if we are ignoring what he is saying to us.

Asceticism often involves *a solitary life* which renounces certain material comforts. However, a reclusive lifestyle has no power to deal with the real problems in the heart. Christian perfection is not possible without being involved with others (Jn. 17:11,21,23). We need each other for balance and growth. Actually, it is quite unscriptural to be alone and reclusive, as well as dangerous. The Adversary speaks more often to those who are off by themselves. Deception and bizarre life-styles and thought-patterns develop when people are alone too much.

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth” (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

A good example of asceticism is when marriage is forbidden or healthy marriage relationships are denied. Paul teaches that married people should not refuse marriage relations to one another, except both parties are in agreement in order to pray and fast. Then he says they should continue their normal married life (1 Cor. 7:3-5).

According to 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, a man could give all his goods to feed the poor and his body to be burned as a martyr, but still not have love as his motive. People can have very strange motives in their spiritual lives. Do you remember the story of the man who for twenty-five years sat on the top of a pillar and lived on roots and rations, all in the name of piety? What did it accomplish?—The very epitome of self-righteousness and self-consciousness. All it did was draw attention to *himself*.

Entire Sanctification / Perfection

Perfection has two grades—absolute and relative. Absolute perfection belongs to God alone and cannot be improved upon. Relative perfection is linked with time. Perfection in the Old Testament meant “sincere, upright” (Gen. 6:9, Job. 1:1). Job was “perfect and upright.” Its simplest form means upright and sincere, but a deeper meaning indicates growth. In order to understand the concept of *relative perfection*, we have to take *age* into consideration. Looking at the natural, we can understand the spiritual. A person is reckoned *perfect* if he maintains a proper rate of growth.

- a. Baby - we only expect certain things from an infant. A baby can be a perfect baby.
- b. Teenager - if an individual has kept a proper rate of growth, he can be a perfect, normal teenager.
- c. Adult - This is the person who has continued to grow and has come to full maturity.

Relative Perfection

Perfection is linked with time. A person can be a perfect baby, a perfect teenager, until he comes to maturity. If we maintain a proper rate of growth, we remain perfect. Relatively speaking, a baby is absolutely perfect when he is born, but only as a baby. However, he has to maintain a proper rate of growth to remain perfect. A five-year-old must not have the form of a day-old infant. So it is in the spiritual life; we must grow to remain perfect. Perfection is relative, based upon time. There must be progression. We cannot stand still because time marches on. A teen is perfect, but he is not mature. If we do not continue to grow, God is not pleased and he no longer reckons us perfect.

On national TV, a man gave a testimony of his fifteen-year-old son who had never grown or developed since he was born. He was still an infant at age fifteen. This brought great sorrow to the parents. One day the Lord spoke to the man and said: "Now you can understand how I feel about you. You have not grown either since your new birth." We should remember the definition of sin from our study on sin. Sin means "to come short of the mark." It is to come short of the glory of God. Therefore, if we are not growing, we are sinning. No farmer can ever be pleased if his crop never ripens. God has joy when we are coming to maturity. Otherwise, we are bringing Him no pleasure.

Philippians 3:12-15 seems like a paradox, but it is not. In one breath Paul says, "Not as though I were already perfect" and then in the next breath he says, "But as many of us as *are* perfect." Paul is saying that he was perfect in the light he had to that point, but was not yet perfected. He had not yet come to the fullness of what Christ ultimately wanted in him. He was not yet as mature as he was supposed to be before he died. But, according to his present knowledge and light, he was perfect. We must maintain a healthy rate of growth to remain perfect. Perfection is relative to age, time, and maintaining proper growth.

- a. Absolute Perfection - belongs only to God.
- b. Relative perfection - depends upon maintaining a proper rate of growth, living up to the light we have, and seeking for more.

God's testimony of Job was superb. He was "perfect and upright." Job was a man who feared God and shunned evil (Job. 1:1, 1:8). During his trial, God plummeted deeper into his being and gave him more light. Problems he was unaware of came to the surface. When he was able to see what God saw in him, Job was able to confess his faults and be purged and healed. (See Job 42).

Job was a righteous man who was placed in a fiery trial to make him even more righteous. Thus, we see that righteousness is progressive. Revelation 22:11b says: "He that is righteous, let him [continue to become] more righteous still. And he that is holy, let him [continue to become] more holy still." Righteousness leads to holiness (cf. Rom. 6:19b). Paul says, "Even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."

***We are saved, we are being saved, and we will be
totally saved when we receive our new bodies***

D.) CALVINISM / ARMINIANISM COMPARED

Free Will Versus Sovereign Grace

Let's try to analyze the two main schools of thought in theology. These are the doctrines of *free will* and *sovereign grace*. It is important to find the balance between the two. Neither Calvinism or Arminianism are entirely correct. Both have truth, but when truth is carried too far, it becomes error. Therefore, we must have the perfect balance.

Calvinism

This is the doctrine of John Calvin (1509 - 1564, French Protestant Reformer). Calvin taught that man does not have a free will due to the Fall. Because of the Fall and corruption, man has no free will, and God chooses some to be saved, and some to be lost. The Calvinists call this teaching “predestination.” According to Calvin's theology, “irresistible grace” is given to those who are elected to eternal life. Calvinism also teaches that those who are predestined to be saved can never be lost. This is better known as “eternal security.” Calvin's doctrine actually attributes sin to God, making God responsible for everything.

Arminianism

This is the doctrine of Jacobus Arminius (1560 - 1609, Dutch Theologian). Arminius *refuted* Calvin's doctrine that God had only elected some to be saved and that man had no choice in the matter. He taught that the atonement made by Christ was for all mankind, and that man had a free will to accept or reject the gospel. Also he taught that grace was not “irresistible” and could be lost, so that men could lapse from a state of grace and die in their sins.

John Calvin's doctrine went much too far. He made God responsible for everything, saying inasmuch that God was the author of sin. Arminius said that God was not responsible for everything, and that man had a choice. Arminius was correct. Man's will is involved in his own destiny. On the other hand, Calvin said that man's will had no part at all. In this he was seriously wrong.

Man Has a Will

God Himself has the power of choice. We were made in His image and likeness and we possess the same power to choose. Even the angels in heaven have the power of choice. When Lucifer fell, it was because he had the power to do right or wrong.

God knew when He created man that there would be transgression. Still, He wanted to create beings with a free will. His plan required this aspect. As soon as He gave free will to beings, naturally there would be foolish and wise decisions. God created us with the capacity to do right. Therefore, there is always the possibility to do wrong. When you allow decisions, immediately two things present themselves—to do something or not do it.

Lucifer always had the choice of fulfilling the will of God, and when he chose to go above God, immediately it became sin. When you give someone a capacity to do anything, he can always do the opposite. God knows and sees what is going to happen, but just because He sees it does not mean He is the author of it. Calvin's doctrine, therefore, is seriously wrong.

The Balance

In actuality, both Calvin and Arminius carried their views too far. This is the reason we must find the perfect balance. In order to find salvation, God's grace must draw a person, yet man's will must respond. Man even needs grace from God to say yes. Still he has the power to say no. The balance is that God and man must work together. It is not all God's grace, neither is it all man's free will. It is absolutely *both*. Man cannot come to God unless he is drawn, but man still has to say yes. He can always say no.

Revelation 22:17 says, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” But John 6:44 says no man can come except the Father draw him. Therefore, the obvious conclusion is that both God and man must work together. It is not just one without the other, but both.

Abraham said to God, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” God is a perfect and righteous Judge. He has no favorites. God will be able to look everyone in the face and know that He has dealt with us all in the same way. He has no partiality. He is unbiased toward all. Scripture repeats itself over and over again that God is no respecter of persons.

The Apostle Peter makes it clear that God is “not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). Paul repeats the same thing: “Who would have *all* men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4).

John Calvin's life reflects *intolerance of anyone who disagreed with him*. On October 27, 1553, Michael Servetus was burned at the stake. There is a statue in Geneva, Switzerland today of Servetus as an admission of the grievous error. Michael Servetus had some bizarre ideas about the Trinity. Calvin became very angry with him and refused to speak to him. He and the Calvinists had a lot to do with his execution, although Calvin himself preferred having him beheaded instead of being burned at the stake. This event was appalling to other Protestants and it drew great criticism. As far as we know, John Calvin never seemed repentant of his attitudes or actions. The account of Michael Servetus is recorded in most encyclopedias.

* * * * *

E.) THE COMPLETE SALVATION

Salvation is the salvaging of the human race in all its aspects. It is to restore back to man all that has been lost by the Fall. Man must be redeemed in his entirety—spirit, soul, and body. Salvation is *deliverance* from everything that interferes with God's highest for our lives. The root meaning of salvation is the thought of “deliverance from danger or evil.”

God sends angels to minister to those who shall be the heirs of salvation (Heb.1:14). Therefore, we have the heavenly hosts fighting for us. In Hebrews 2:3, we are warned not to *neglect* our salvation. “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” It is not enough to be born again, baptized in water, and filled with the Holy Spirit. We have to *lay hold of* everything that was purchased for us on the cross. Often, believers appropriate *so little* of redemption.

We cannot coast along and expect to win the prize or reach the mark. Ascending Mount Zion to His holy habitation is an uphill climb. It requires effort. Each day we must apply our hearts unto wisdom (Psa. 90:12). In Joshua 13:1, the Lord exhorts: “There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.” This could be said to every generation. Joshua reprimanded the people, saying, “How long are ye *slack* to go to possess the land, which the Lord God of your fathers hath given you?” (Josh.18:3). We will never win Christ or reach the goal unless we press on wholeheartedly. Christ will not choose us to be his bride if we are nonchalant about Him (cf. Rev. 3:15-17).

You and I are on a spiritual journey in our Christian life. We have been redeemed from Egypt (the world) by the blood of the lamb (symbol of Christ). We have passed through the Red Sea (water baptism), and come to Sinai (Pentecost). But still there are tests to pass and battles to be won. When God is satisfied that we have passed our tests, He will bring us across Jordan (Rom. 6:6). After that the Lord will plunge deeper into our hearts and dissect every area of our life. There are thirty-one kings to defeat, and these are the ruling lords of self. Ultimately, God wants to bring us to Zion, the fullness of His presence and glory. This is where His rest is found, and all of the blessings. Let's not wander in circles all our lives. May we pass our tests (by His grace) and go on to fulfill all that God has purposed for us. There is a wonderful land of promise awaiting us.

“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise” (Heb.10:36). This verse is not clearly understood or taught in the Church world today. We cannot receive the promises of God until the conditions are met. There are tests to pass before we qualify for the promises. Israel was promised the land of Canaan and of all its blessings, but before they received the promises, they had to pass through the wilderness.

A Perfect Sacrifice

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb.10:14). The sacrifice of Christ upon the cross is powerful enough to make us *perfect*. He is able to redeem us from *all* iniquity as Paul stated in Titus 2:14. There is wisdom in Christ for every obstacle we face (Col. 2:3). He is able to keep us from falling, and present us *faultless* before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy (Jude 1:24). Paul assures believers that Christ will “confirm us unto the end that we may be blameless” (1 Cor.1:8). Our part is to *continue to abide* in union and in communion with our Lord and keep pace with Him. He will lead us unto perfection if we refuse to give up.

*Many thanks to the following
for their input and resources:*

- Dr. Brian J. Bailey
- Reverend Eldon and Lois Kropf
- Bullinger's Companion Bible
- Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary
- Vines's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words
- Numerous other sources gathered from thirty-two years of study and teaching.