The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Books I-VII

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

The Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Copyright © 2011, 2025 James L. Melton
Up to fifty copies of this course may be printed freely for personal use, such as private studies, discipleship training, Bible classes, etc. Printings in excess of fifty copies are not permitted without written approval from Bible Baptist Church.

BOOK 1
How We Know God Exists
The Inspiration and Preservation of Scripture
Understanding God's Salvation Plan
How We Know the KJV is the Word of God

BOOK 2
Spirit, Soul and Body
What Does God Expect of Me?
Leading Others to Christ
The Doctrines of Heaven and Hell

BOOK 3
The Fundamentals of Jesus Christ
The Judgments of Saved and Lost
The Holy Trinity
Basic Bible Prophecy

BOOK 4
The Seven Dispensations
Rightly Dividing the Word
Dispensational Discernment

BOOK 5
Hard Sayings in the Bible

BOOK 6
Myths, Lies, and Vain Traditions

BOOK 7
The Word of a King
The Basics of Biblical Typology

Bible Baptist Church, P.O. Box 383, Martin, TN 38237
www.biblebaptistpublications.org
e-mail: service@biblebaptistpublications.org

Introduction

In the mid 1980's, I was absolutely sick of this world and I wanted something real. I had been a Christian for several years, but something was still missing. As I attempted to read my Bible, I began to realize what it was: *I didn't know God.* Sure, I had received Christ as my Saviour (1979), but I knew very little of God's character and plan. The Bible might as well have been written in a foreign language, because I just didn't get it.

Then I prayed and asked God to teach me the Bible, and I was very serious about it. Over the next few years, the Lord brought me in contact with some of the best Bible teachers the world has ever known, and I began to really understand the Bible for the first time. Within a few years, I was teaching it to others, and eventually the Sound Doctrine Bible Course was made available.

There is no "right" way to take this course. It has been prepared so that the student can work at his own pace, alone or with a group. The memory verses are *suggested* by us, but might be *required* by your course instructor, if you have one. Some instructors want the verses quoted, while others want them written-off, sometimes even in different colors. We ask that you cooperate with your course instructor. He is taking the time (and maybe even the expense) to provide you with this learning opportunity. Please show your appreciation and cooperate. You'll be glad you did, and God will bless you for it.

If you have no local instructor, you may send your work to our ministry after completing the lesson reviews in the separate booklets. If your work is acceptable, you will then proceed to the next booklet after receiving your graded work from us. You will simply repeat that process until all seven booklets are completed. After the entire course is completed, we will send you the standard signed and dated certificate. **Print all names and addresses very neatly**. We are not responsible for any lost mail, be it foreign or domestic.

May the Holy Spirit bless your studies and guide you into all truth (John 16:13).

JLM

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book I

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson I

How Do We Know God Exists?

One of the amazing things about the Bible is that it never attempts to prove the existence of God. His existence is just taken for granted. The first verse in the Bible simply says, **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."** In fact, His existence is so obvious that He considers anyone a fool who doesn't believe in Him. Psalm 14:1 says, **"The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God..."** This may seem like an unfair action on God's part until one considers some of the obvious proofs for God's existence. The fool said "in his heart" that there is no God. He didn't say it in his head because he hasn't really thought it through. When a man claims to be an atheist, he is simply rebelling in his heart. A thinking person can easily see that God does exist:

I. THE SCRIPTURAL PROOF

This is the fact that the Bible professes to be GOD'S revelation of Himself and that no one has ever proven otherwise. You say, "Well, I don't believe the Bible, so it isn't proof to me." You're wrong. Sooner or later, you will have to realize that you can't discard the Bible that easily. There are some stubborn facts that you must face if you're an honest person. It's only fair to allow the Bible to stand as a witness to God's existence if the Bible itself is proven to be a reliable source. So the issue is trust. Can we trust the Bible?

Well, there are millions and millions of Christians who *have* placed their trust in it and have found that it never let them down. There are millions who have found great joy and fulfillment by claiming its promises and obeying its commandments. Isn't that worth something? When you say, "I don't believe the Bible", you are saying that millions of Christians have lived a lie." Isn't it true that they found more joy and purpose in the Bible than you've found in anything else? Isn't that worth something?

A person who doesn't believe the Bible doesn't know enough about it to realize the foolishness of his unbelief.

Suppose I said, "I don't believe George Washington ever lived." Wouldn't that be rather foolish? The record of history proves that He did live, so I would be expressing my ignorance of American history. If you don't believe the Bible, please don't tell anyone, for you'll only be expressing your ignorance.

What do I mean by this? Friend, do you realize how accurate the Bible has been in the past? Take the life of Jesus Christ alone. Did you know that Genesis 3:15 prophesied the birth of Jesus Christ 4,000 years in advance? Did you know that Isaiah 7:14 prophesied His virgin birth 700 years in advance? Did you know that His nationality, His family, and the city of His birth were all foretold hundreds of years in advance? Did you know that His agony and death on Calvary was prophesied hundreds of years in advance? Did you know that Psalm 22:1 (1,000 B.C.) actually told us what Christ would say while on the cross? If you take all the prophecies about the life and death of Christ, and then figure the statistical probability of them all coming to pass, do you know what the chances are? Have you ever thought about it? One scientist stated that the chances are about 1 out of 10 to the 157th power! (10 followed by 157 zeros).

I'd say the Bible is a pretty reliable source. Wouldn't you? If the Bible proclaims the existence of God, then we should give it some serious consideration. After all, it has been right about everything else it has claimed.

II. THE PROOF OF NATURE

Romans 1:20 says, **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse".**

Psalm 19:1-6 says, **"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. *There is* no speech nor language, *where* their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which *is* as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, *and* rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth *is* from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."**

Simply stated, these verses tell us that you can know that God exists by observing His creation. Since the universe is here, someone must have put it here. If there's a creation, then there must be a Creator.

Romans 1:20 says that you can see the invisible Creator by observing the visible creation. It says even His eternal power and Godhead. The Bible speaks of God being a Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Did you know that God has given us many pictures of the Trinity in nature? Take the sun for instance. It has three rays: alpha, beta, and gamma. Those are chemical rays, heat rays, and light rays, yet they're all from one sun. Take water for example. It can be a liquid, a frozen solid, or a vapor. Consider human beings. We have a spirit, a soul, and a body (I Ths. 5:23). Our soul pictures God the Father. Our body pictures Jesus Christ, Who was here in the flesh. Our spirit pictures the Holy Spirit. Three parts. The whole universe is laid out in threes. In fact, the universe has three parts: time, space, and matter. Time has past, present, and future. Space has length, breadth, and height. Matter has energy, motion, and phenomena.

Friend, the whole universe is made in God's image! There must be a designer behind every design. If you have a car that works, then it is because someone designed that car. Someone designed the engine. Someone designed the transmission. Someone designed the body style. Someone designed the brake system. Someone designed the air conditioning system. Someone designed the tires. It would be foolish to think that no one designed it, but that all the parts just came together from nowhere and work together accidentally. If there's a design, (and there are billions of them in this universe) then there must be a designer.

III. THE PROOF OF CONSCIENCE

This is the undeniable fact that man has a moral conscience, unlike other life forms. Romans 2:15 says, **"Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"** There is a law written upon the heart of man which tells him that certain things are evil. There isn't any place on earth where people do not have a conscience about murder, theft, and rape. Anywhere you go, you

will find laws that men have established to deal with such crimes. Man knows instinctively in his heart that certain things are wrong and worthy of punishment. The law is written in his heart. Well, who wrote the law in his heart? If there's no God, who told man that it's wrong to steal, murder, rape, and commit adultery?

A good example of this can be found in Genesis 20:1-5. A heathen king named Abimelech takes Sarah, the wife of Abraham, to be his own wife. God appears to Abimelech in a dream at night and sharply rebukes him for this sin. Abemelech then tells the Lord that he didn't know she was Abraham's wife. He then repents of this sin.

Now think about that. Abimelech was a heathen who had no Bible, and no understanding of God and God's laws. Yet, he knew that adultery was evil. He didn't say, "Well, I don't understand. What's wrong with me having her for a wife?" He KNEW in his heart that he had sinned. He knew because of conscience. The law was written on his heart. Who wrote it there, if there is no God?

IV. THE LIFE FROM LIFE PROOF

Psalm 36:9 says, **"For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."** Today, there are no new life forms being formed. All life comes from previous existing life. You came from your parents, and they came from their parents. No scientist has been able to produce life without getting it from other life. It just can't be done. Apple trees come from apple seeds, which come from apples, which come from apple trees. There is no question about which came first, the chicken or the egg. The chicken came first. Life comes from life. Dogs come from dogs. Cats come from cats. Rats come from rats, and bats come from bats. Since no one today can produce life without previous life, would it not stand to reason that life originally came from one all-powerful and all-living Life Source?

V. THE PROOF OF CONGRUITY

Congruity is the relation of agreement between things. Congruity is what you have when all the pieces of your puzzle fit together and give you one complete picture. In a 1000 piece puzzle, you may have 999 pieces together, but it isn't complete

without the last piece. When you pick up the last piece, and you can see that it fits, you are glad and satisfied that your project is complete. You have congruity. It all fits together.

Well, the acceptance of God as Creator works much the same way. Without God, nothing really makes sense. Evolution has too many problems to have congruity. It's only when we accept God's existence that things start adding up and making sense. When we accept God's existence and His revelation of Himself (the written word), the picture starts becoming clear. Evolution can't explain why people suffer, but God can. Evolution can't explain why men can't have peace, but God can. Evolution can't give you inner peace and promise you eternal joy, but God can. Evolution can't "even the score" and grant fairness to all men in the end, but God can.

When you really think about it, the existence of God is the most logical thing you could imagine. He has all the answers. He can solve all the problems. He can meet every need. God is the "missing link" that brings everything together and gives meaning to life. As the wise King Solomon so rightly said, **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this *is* the whole *duty* of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil." (Ecc. 12:13-14)**

Lesson Review

1. Where in the Bible would one turn to read that the invisible God can be seen and understood through His visible creation?

2. Fill in the blank: "The fool hath said _____ _____ _____ there is no God..."

3. Men who have never even seen a Bible or a preacher still have certain knowledge of good and evil because they do have a God-given _____.

4. The proof of congruity is:

a. The fact that the Bible is the oldest book in existence
b. The fact that God's existence cannot be disproven
c. The fact that the existence of God provides the real answers in life.

5. Where does the Bible say, "For with thee *is* the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light"?

Suggested Memory Verses: Psalm 14:1, Romans 1:20

Lesson II

The Inspiration and Preservation of Scripture

In this lesson we will be dealing with the inspiration and preservation of scripture. This is an important lesson because it establishes a final authority for future studies. From where did the Bible come? How long has it been around? How do we know it's the word of God? Such questions must be answered if we are to really appreciate and understand the Bible.

The word "Bible" is from the Greek word "biblos", which means "book". When we say "the Bible", we are simply saying "the Book". That is, not just any book, but THE Book - the Book of all books - God's Book.

I. THE INSPIRED WORD

The Apostle Paul tells us the following in II Timothy 3:16-17: **"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."**

Notice in our text that Paul said all scripture is GIVEN by INSPIRATION OF GOD. The scriptures aren't the work of men, as some suppose, but are rather given by inspiration of God. The pagan writings of such people as Plato, Aristotle, Buddha, and Mohammed are not given by inspiration of God. In fact, very few of them even *profess* to be inspired.

The word inspired means "God breathed". The scriptures are given by the breath of God. This means that the Bible is a LIVING book, because the first time God *breathed* in the Bible He created a LIVING SOUL (Gen. 2:7). Jesus said, **"...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63)** You may also consider Job 33:4, Ezk. 37:9, and John 20:22.

II. THE SPOKEN WORD

Notice that Paul said the scripture is *"given"* by inspiration. He didn't say they were "written" by inspiration, but rather *"given"* by inspiration. That is, the words were inspired by God BEFORE they were reduced to writing.

II Peter 1:20-21 says, **"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."**

This is called *Verbal Inspiration*. That is, the man of God would *speak by the Spirit of God*. This makes God the real Author. He was the GIVER of the spoken words. The inspiration occurred in the speaking, not in the writing. David once said, **"The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue." (II Sam. 23:2)** God inspired the words! God only used David to pass His words on to others. God was the real Author. Notice Jeremiah's comments: **"Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. 1:9)** See that? They were GOD'S words, not Jeremiah's. God put the words into the prophet's mouth so others could hear, but they were not Jeremiah's words. Luke 1:70 says that, **"... he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:"**

You may also want to check Exodus 20:1, 25:1, Isaiah 1:2, Ezekiel 1:3, 3:4, Amos 1:1, Matthew 1:22, 2:15, and Mark 12:36.

III. THE WRITTEN WORD

These inspired words that were spoken by the prophets were actually written down by *scribes* (II Sam. 8:17; 20:25; II Kings 19:2; 22:3; I Chr. 24:6; Ezra 7:6; Jer. 36:10, 12, 32; 37:15; Mat. 18:19; 15:1; 17:10; Luke 5:30; 11:44; Acts 23:9). It was the actual inspired words themselves that were written down, not just the general message. In Matthew 5:18, Jesus said, **"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."** Quoting from Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus says in Matthew 4:4 that **"... Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."** How could we live by every word if the scribe only recorded the general message? Friend, God said that every word was inspired and recorded for you and I to read.

A fine example of this is found in Jeremiah chapter thirty-six. In this chapter the word of the Lord comes to Jeremiah, and Jeremiah speaks the words. Then Jeremiah's scribe, Baruch, writes down the words (vs. 4). Later, in verse eighteen, Baruch is questioned about the manner in which he produced this written copy of God's word. In no uncertain terms, he says, **"...He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote *them* with ink in the book."** Now that's clear! Some of the Bible may be hard to understand, but that's clear as crystal. The prophet spoke God's words, and the scribe wrote them down. That's what the Bible says about its own inspiration.

IV. OTHER PROOFS OF INSPIRATION

Christians generally believe that the Bible is inspired, but very few are capable of offering any convincing proofs. It is important to not only know what we believe, but also to know *why* we believe. The following are some of the reasons why we believe the Bible to be God's inspired word.

The Bible Is a Negative Book

Why would man write a book to condemn his own race? From cover to cover the Bible is NEGATIVE toward man. It utterly condemns man (Psa 39:5; Isa 64:6; Rom 3:10-18; John 3:18; Jer 17:9; Psa 51:5). Men everywhere speak highly of themselves, yet the Author of the Bible speaks of man as being a hopeless sinner. The Bible *HAD* to be inspired by someone other than man.

The Bible Is an Authoritative Book

Most ancient writings do not even profess inspiration, but the Bible professes not only to be inspired, but to be the ONLY inspired writing (Isa. 8:20). The central character of the Bible, the Lord Jesus Christ, professes to be the ONLY way to Heaven. Unlike the ancient philosophers, the men of the Bible are men who speak with great power, certainty, and authority. Wouldn't you expect God to speak with power and authority?

The Bible Is an Infallible Book

Although many have tried, and are still trying, no one has ever proven that there are mistakes in the Bible (KJV). All apparent errors and contradictions can be explained Scripture with Scripture and by closely studying the context.

The Bible Is a Prophetic Book

While other ancient writings do not even attempt prophecy, the Bible attempts it and fulfills it. One only has to consider a few Old Testament prophecies about the life of Christ to see this (Num. 24:17-19; Gen. 49:10; Mic. 5:2; Isa. 7:14; Dan. 9:25; Hos. 11:1; Isa. 53; Zec. 9:9; Psa. 69:21; Psa. 34:20; Psa. 16:10; Psa. 41:9; Zec 11:12; Psa. 35:11; Psa. 22). How could man write such a book?

The Bible Is a Unified Book

The sixty-six books of the Bible were written by some thirty-five or forty different authors, on three continents, over a

period of 1,900 years. These men came from all walks of life, differing greatly from one another, but their writings never contradict. These books *compliment* one another. Such an accomplishment would be impossible if the Holy Spirit were not the Divine Author.

The Bible Is an Interesting Book

Unlike other books, the Bible is read by all classes of people. A small remnant of people from all walks of life share an interest in the Bible. It is read by the educated and the uneducated. It is read by the rich and the poor, by the old and the young, by males and females, by all races, and in all places. What man-written book has such wide appeal to people?

The Bible Is a Best-Selling Book

The Bible is by far the best-selling book ever published. The King James Bible alone has been selling for the past 400 years! Only God knows how many total copies have sold during that time, but no other book in the world would come close to the number. Just think for a moment. It's probably true that most people purchase a Bible at least once in life, or at least in developed, English-speaking nations, and some people purchase several Bibles in a lifetime. Yet, do they purchase several copies of other books? No. Is any other book as common among people as the Bible? No. You could walk up to the average American home and ask if the family owns a Bible, and you would usually hear a "Yes." Yet, if you asked if they owned a copy of Darwin's *Origin of the Species* or Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, they would likely say, "Of course not!" That would be the case not only in America, but in many nations, and for hundreds of years. There's just no comparison. The Bible is the best-seller because the Bible is God's word.

The Bible Is a Blessed Book

It has changed more lives than any other book in world history. Eighty-eight percent of the colleges in America were founded for the purpose of teaching God's word and training missionaries. Many literary countries are the product of Bible-

believing Christianity. Nations and individuals always prosper when Bible principles are followed. Is this a coincidence, or is this an indication that God blesses those who obey His word? If the Bible is only *man's* words, then why do so many prosper through obeying it?

The Bible Is a Preserved Book

If the Bible is only a man-written book, then why does it still exist? Satan has fought endlessly to rid the world of the Bible, yet it still exists today. Everything that man accomplishes eventually falls apart (the wonders of the ancient world, educational systems, governments, families, organizations, etc.), but the Bible lives on (Psa. 12:6-7; Mat. 24:35). How did the Old Testamant survive the Babylonian captivity when God's people spent seventy years in a foreign land? How did the Bible survive the Dark Ages when Rome ruled the religious world with pagan tradition? The Bible must be a supernatural book, else man would have destroyed it long ago. We will consider this point further in the next section of the lesson.

V. THE PRESERVATION OF SCRIPTURE

When the dust of the battle dies down we shall hear all sixty-six books declare with the Apostle Paul, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here!" (W.H. Griffith Thomas)

God lives forever, so His Book shall live forever. In Ecclesiastes 3:14 Solomon said **"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that man should fear before him."** We've learned about the *inspiration* of Scripture. Now let's study the reasons and methods concerning the *preservation* of Scripture.

Reasons for Preservation

The first reason for the preservation of Scripture is the *logical* reason. Just as it makes no sense that you would fool around and lose your birth certificate, your high school diploma,

or your marriage license, it makes no sense that God would inspire and record His words and then lose them. This is totally against His nature. As much effort as God has put into giving man His words, it would be foolish to lose them.

From the very beginning God has delighted in preserving various people, places, and things for His own glory. God preserved man through the fall in Eden. God preserved Noah and his family through the flood. God has preserved the Jewish people until this very day, in spite of their many captivities, servitudes and persecutions. God has preserved Jerusalem, in spite of the many aggressive attacks against her. It is *logical* to assume that God would preserve the Book that He inspired.

Another argument for the preservation of Scripture is the fact that preservation is *needful.* Jesus said, **"...if a man love me, he will keep my words."** (John 14:26) How can you keep His words if God didn't preserve them for you? In II Timothy 4:2 Paul exhorts Timothy to **"Preach the word..."** How could young Timothy preach the word if the word hasn't been preserved? The Lord Jesus prayed in John 17:17 and said, "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."** Friend, you can't even be sanctified if God didn't preserve His word, because it is *the word* which sanctifies!

God's word can keep us from sinning (Psa. 119:11). God's word gives us wisdom and spiritual discernment (Pro. 22:17-21; I Cor. 2:12-14). The word brings success (Jsh. 1:8), and gives us light for the path of life (Psa. 119:105). Most of all, God's word is essential for a person to be born again! I Peter 1:23 says, **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** Friend, it has been *needful* for God to preserve His words.

Finally, the best reason for believing that God would preserve His words is *promise*. GOD *SAID* HE WOULD PRESERVE HIS WORDS. Note the following:

"The words of the LORD *are* pure words: *as* silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psa. 12:6-7)

"For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations." (Psa. 100:5)

"As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I

have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever." (Isa. 59:21)

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Mat. 24:35)

"For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (I Pet. 1:24-25)

God never said once that man would preserve His words, but that HE would preserve them. Our responsibility is to be faithful and believe what God has said and ignore what the skeptics are saying. God promised to preserve His words, so He has preserved them.

Method of Preservation

The Bible is GOD'S Book, so God can preserve it in any way He chooses. Since the very beginning, God has used MEN to carry out His work on this earth. It should surprise no one that God uses *His people* to preserve His words.

Many scholars agree that since Christians still have a sin nature (the flesh) that God cannot rely on them in matters of preserving His holy words. Well, God doesn't *rely* on anyone for anything. God, in His sovereign authority, chooses to *use* certain individuals to accomplish His will.

For example, Moses and David had a sin nature just like you and I, but Jesus Christ still considered their writings to be Scripture (Mat. 4:4; 19:4; Luke 24:44; 20:42). God wouldn't allow Moses to enter the promised land (Deut. 32:48-52; 34:4), but He still used him to write the first five books of the Bible. David committed adultery (II Sam. 11), sinned by numbering Israel (I Chr. 21), and acted like an idiot before the king of Gath (I Sam. 21), but God still used him to write over half of the the Psalms. Peter denied Christ three times and then went on to write two epistles. The one who penned the words of Romans 7:18 also penned a third of the New Testament (Paul). *If God could use only sinless people, then He would have to do everything Himself!*

The preservation of Scripture is GOD'S responsibility, and He is quite capable of overruling man's faults and sins in order to get the job done. Since most scholars worship their education rather than God, they'll never understand or accept this important truth.

God's method of preservation is to use His people. Before the time of Christ the Scriptures were given to the Jews (Acts 7:38; Rom. 3:2). It was the priestly tribe of Levi that was responsible for the actual handling and copying of the Scriptures (Deut. 17:18; 21:5; Ezra 7:11; Neh. 8:7-13; II Chr. 29:30). Today (until our Lord returns) the Levites have been replaced with Christians, a *spiritual* priesthood (I Pet. 2:4-10). So the church now has the responsibility of handling and copying the Scriptures faithfully. In fact, we are given severe warnings about handling the Scriptures *unfaithfully* (Rev. 22:18-19). God's method of preservation is to use Spirit-filled believers in the body of Christ to faithfully copy and pass His words on to future generations.

In lesson four we will see why the King James Authorized Version is the product of faithful preservation, while modern versions are the product of Satan's attempts to destroy God's word.

Lesson Review

1. What does the word *Bible* mean?

2. Where does the Bible say that all Scripture is given by inspiration?

3. What is meant by the words "inspiration of God"?
   a. godly
   b. God-breathed
   c. holy given

4. True or False? God's word was first inspired when it was spoken.

5. Which of the following is NOT a proof of inspiration?
   a. The Bible is a negative Book
   b. The Bible is a unified Book
   c. The Bible is a blessed Book

d. The Bible is a complex Book
e. The Bible is a preserved Book

6. Please list the three main reasons for preservation of Scripture:

1.
2.
3.

7. True or False? A person must be perfect before God will use them.

8. Please list two places in the Bible where God promised to preserve His words:

1.
2.

9. Where in the book of Revelation does God warn people about altering His words?

Suggested Memory Verses: II Timothy 3:16-17, Psalm 12:6-7

Lesson III

Understanding God's Salvation Plan

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) "That if thou shalt confess with thy

mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9-10 "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:13)

Only God knows how many dear souls have been led to the Lord Jesus Christ by the above verses of Scripture. These verses, commonly referred to as the "Roman's Road," are used worldwide by Christian workers in an effort to present God's Salvation Plan to the lost in a step by step fashion. The Roman's Road is wonderful for getting straight to the point and dealing with the primary issues of sin and salvation. Millions have come to know Christ after reading these verses (including myself), and it is our prayer that millions more will come to know Him in the future.

But there is a problem. Because of the habitual use of such quick and easy portions of Scripture, more and more Christians are developing a very shallow concept of New Testament salvation. Time and time again I find myself speaking with people who profess to be saved, and yet they aren't sure about their eternal destiny. Many of these people can tell of a specific time in their life when they prayed and asked the Lord to come into their heart and save them, but still today they live in a state of uncertainty. This should not be happening.

Then there are others who have never been saved and really do not understand the need to be saved. Someone says, "Well, they probably just don't care." Yes, that's often the case, but not always. I believe there are many people who would like to have a better understanding of Jesus Christ and the Salvation that He offers, and I believe that many such people willreceive Christ once they truly understand their need for Him.

Friend, if you fit into one of these categories, this lesson is for you. This lesson will help you to UNDERSTAND New Testament salvation. Whether you're saved or lost, this lesson can help you, so please aside a little time and read the following pages, prayerfully and carefully. You will not be disappointed (Lk. 11:9-10).

I. GOD'S PERSONALITY

There are many things that can be said about God in this study, but the one thing that must be said is that God is a HOLY God. So often we hear of God's love for US, and we very seldom think of God standing alone without man in the picture. Let's first consider God Himself, without even thinking of mankind. Let's take a look at the personality of God Almighty.

Exodus 15:11 says, **"Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"** The seraphims of Isaiah 6 praised God, crying **"Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."** If something is holy, then it is whole or complete. God is holy. He lacks nothing, for he is complete. God simply cannot be improved upon.

Someone has said, "God without man is God, but man without God is nothing." How true these words are. One who wishes to know God must IGNORE himself. It was God who created man. God existed first, without man in the picture. So, in order to really understand New Testament salvation, we must first focus totally upon the eternal God of Glory. We must know something of God's personality.

We must realize that God never has and never will do anything wrong for any reason. God has always been holy, and He always will be. He says in Malachi 3:6, **"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."** God never has and never will make one single adjustment within His person. His state of sinless perfection is eternal. If the entire universe were to turn against God, including all the hosts of Heaven, it would not change God. He would still be the eternal God of Glory. Consider these strong portions of Scripture from the Book of Isaiah:

"All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" Isa. 40:17-18.

"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isa. 42:8) ". . . .Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no god; I know not any." (Isa. 44:8) "I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no god beside me: I girded thee, though

thou hast not known me." (Isa. 45:5) "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:10)

So let's first understand one great truth: with or without us, GOD IS GOD. He is the unchangeable, holy, and eternal God of Glory. Regardless of what else happens, this will always be true.

II. GOD IN RELATION TO MAN

Genesis chapter one gives to us the account of the creation, including the creation of man. We read in Genesis 1:27, **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."** Man was created in the image of God. That image, as we have already seen, was a HOLY image. God did not create man in a sinful condition. God created a sinless man in HIS OWN IMAGE. Luke 3:38 tells us that this first man, Adam, was actually **"the son of God."** No other man after Adam is called a son of God. But Adam was called this, because he was made in GOD'S IMAGE.

Being absolutely sinless, Adam was now ready to carry out God's plan. God is a SPIRIT (John 4:24), but He created a PHYSICAL earth. So He needed a physical being to rule over the earth. Genesis 1:28 tells us that God gave Adam DOMINION over the earth and over all of its inhabitants. "Why?" you may ask. Couldn't God manage to run things for Himself? Sure He could, but He wanted something more. God had a very special reason for creating man. Notice how clearly the reason is given in Isaiah 43:7: **"Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him."** Why did God create man? He did it to bring GLORY to Himself! All through the Bible we find that God wants to be GLORIFIED (Psa. 22:23; 50:15; Mt. 5:16; John 12:28; Rom. 15:6; I Cor. 6:20; etc.), and the beginning was certainly no exception. God wanted to form a living being out of the ground and have that being live in close fellowship with Him. God wanted His human creation to live in RIGHTEOUSNESS. God wanted to see His children prosper! He didn't want them to fail; He wanted them to prosper. This would bring honor and glory to

His name. Just as any respectable father delights in watching his own children live right and succeed in life, God wanted the same for His children. Like any responsible father, God knew what was best, and He had a wonderful plan for His children.

So God created man and placed him in a perfect environment. Would man be obedient and fulfill God's will, or would he become disobedient? God had to put man to the test. He had to give man a choice. God could have FORCED Adam and Eve to always obey Him, but that would be against His nature. God wanted man to LOVE Him and ENJOY serving Him, so a choice was given.

Rather than populate the entire universe at once with newly created humans, God, in His infinite wisdom, placed one man and his wife in a garden and gave them a choice. You know the story. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God by eating of the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1-6). Satan's way seemed more pleasant at the moment, so man fell into sin by disobeying God.

Worst of all, *man lost the image of God*. God was still holy, but man was now UNHOLY. Man was now a transgressor against God. Man had failed the test. In his sinful condition, Adam could not carry out God's divine plan. He was no longer qualified, for he was now a sinner.

At this point, God could have chosen to destroy His creation and start with a new one, or He could REDEEM the fallen creation. He chose to redeem fallen man. He chose to set forth a master plan that would allow man to become RIGHTEOUS once again. Being the merciful God that He is, God chose to work out a wonderful redemption plan for fallen man.

But wait! This will be no easy plan, because Adam and his wife aren't the only sinners. Every child born after Genesis chapter three has been born in Adam's SINFUL image (Gen. 5:3). All men are natural sinners upon being born into the world: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psa. 51:5) "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10)**

Men are no longer made in God's image. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said **"Ye are of your father, the devil..."** in John 8:44. God is not a sinner, so sinners are not God's children. Sinners are natural-born children of the Devil. Paul writes in

Ephesians 2:2 that lost sinners are **"children of disobedience."** Why? Because we naturally receive a SIN NATURE at birth.

In addition to this, we must also realize that we cannot rid ourselves of this corrupt sin nature. We are "stuck" with a fallen image of unrighteousness. Unless God works a miracle in our lives, we are absolutely hopeless--forever doomed to the eternal fires of Hell. We cannot earn our Salvation by performing righteous works, because our righteousness is no good. Isaiah 64:6 tells us that our righteousness is like **"filthy rags!"** Instead of being clean in the eyes of God, men are FILTHY, because of the sin nature in us all. God is holy, but we are unholy. He is Godly, but we are ungodly. He is righteous, but we are unrighteous. Our sin nature stands like a brick wall between us and God, separating us from His dear fellowship.

Now try comparing a HOLY God with unholy men. Contrast the two in your mind. You see, there must be a separation. Just as you keep your clean laundry separate from your dirty laundry, God must keep Himself separate from ungodly man. God is not a sinner, so He cannot fellowship with sinners. Unless sin is somehow removed from man, there is no hope. Unless man is somehow redeemed from his fallen nature, God has no choice but to sentence him to Hell forever. The sin debt must be paid so that man can regain his original righteous image and his fellowship with God. Someone must pay the price.

III. GOD'S PLAN OF REDEMPTION

There once was a king who had a very strong reputation for enforcing the law in his kingdom. He never compromised for anyone. If someone broke the law, a penalty was always required.

Then one day this king sat upon his throne hearing case after case, when suddenly a very shocking thing happened. A young man was brought in for judgment. He had been caught red-handed in theft. The whole kingdom stood in silence to hear the king's judgment. You see, this was no ordinary case: the young man was the king's son!

Being as broken hearted as he was, the king knew that he still must give judgment. Justice must be served. One hand would have to severed. Then suddenly the king surprised everyone by

ordering HIS OWN HAND to be cut off! He chose to pay the penalty himself.

This is precisely what God did for you and I. Notice these important words from Isaiah 53:5-6: **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."**

Just as the king suffered and fulfilled the law for his son, God came to this earth and fulfilled the law for us. Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16), He came to FULFILL the law (Mt. 5:17). The law demanded a payment for sin. Either man could spend eternity in Hell, paying for his sins, or God could make the payment Himself. God, because of His love for lost man, chose to make the necessary payment Himself. He gave His only begotten Son as a payment for our sins: **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13) "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5:21)**

All men are born under **"the law of sin and death"** (Rom. 8:2). We are under a curse. But the Lord Jesus Christ came to our rescue by dying and paying for our sins. Hebrews 10:14 says, **"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."** It took only one offering to pay for our sins. Now that the payment has been made, all men can be "perfected" through Jesus Christ! Through Christ we can be set FREE from the law of sin and death! Through Christ, and Him alone, we can escape the curse! Through Christ, we can be saved!

After Jesus paid for the sins of the world and returned to Heaven, a very special gospel (good news) message is preached by the Apostles and early Christians: **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31) "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. 10:9) "For by grace are**

ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

As lost and doomed sinners, we must take God at His word and believe that Jesus Christ is our only hope for salvation. We must trust that His payment for our sins is sufficient. We must STOP trying to "do good" that we might go to Heaven. Our good works cannot save us, as the above verses reveal. Only the good work of the Lord Jesus can save us. We are hopeless without Him. As a criminal sits upon death row awaiting the electric chair, we sit upon the death row of eternity awaiting hell fire.

IV. GOD'S IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

While sitting upon the "death row" of eternity, our only hope is for God to *make* us righteous, for we cannot establish righteousness for ourselves (Rom. 10:3). We read in Romans 4:5 the following words: **"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."**

God's desire is to make us righteous by giving us *HIS* RIGHTEOUSNESS! This Scripture goes on to say: **". . . .Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Romans 4:7-8)**

God has a way of cleansing us from our sins and giving to us HIS righteousness so that we may have eternal life. Referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, Colossians 1:14 says, **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. . ."** The "blood" spoken of here is *God's* blood (Acts 20:28). The blood of the Lord Jesus was not natural human blood; it was PURE blood from the Father above. Remember, Mary was a Virgin; so the blood of Jesus Christ came from His heavenly Father. This blood was shed at Calvary to be an *ATONEMENT* for our sins. The atonement can make us "at one" with God, just as Adam was in the very beginning. Through the blood atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can have our sins washed away (Rev. 1:5), thus being placed back into God's righteous image.

All throughout the Old Testament, God required a blood sacrifice from His people. This blood was obtained from various animals such as bulls, goats, and lambs. Sacrifices were made

daily, because people would sin daily. By offering to God a sacrifice, men were showing God that they were aware of their sin nature and desired forgiveness. Upon seeing this, God would then accept their sacrifice and forgive their sins. This is called *remission*. Hebrews 9:22 says, **". . . .without shedding of blood there is no remission."** These many animal sacrifices served as a foreshadow or a *type* of the blood of the Lord Jesus that would eventually be shed at Calvary.

However, *forgiveness* of sin isn't enough. A penalty still must be paid. The law must be fulfilled. The record must be cleared. God could cleanse His people *temporarily* from their sins with animal sacrifices, but only the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ could *clear* their sin record forever. The Old Testament sacrifices were for forgiveness, but not for making a person *clear* from sin (Ex. 34:6-7). This is why Jesus had to come and clear the record forever. He came to wipe the slate clean for all eternity. When you receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, you receive a CLEAN RECORD! You receive HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS, and since you are trusting Him alone for your salvation, God will not impute sin to you.

Suppose you receive Him as your Saviour. What then? Then you become a "son of God. " John 1:12 says, **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."** You RECEIVE Christ by BELIEVING on Christ. You can be "born again" SPIRITUALLY (John 3:3) by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Once you truly turn to Christ alone, asking Him to wash away your sins, you are FORGIVEN and your sin record is CLEARED forever. Your soul has been made RIGHTEOUS through the blood of Jesus Christ. That's precisely why He came and died. Once you have been born again you will be in God's family for the first time in your life! God's human creation was lost in Genesis chapter three, but you, a part of that growing creation, can be FOUND and REDEEMED to God this very moment!

There once was a little boy who made for himself a toy sailboat. While playing in the stream one day, the boat drifted away. A few days later another boy found the boat. The first boy said, "Hey! That's my boat! I made it myself, and I want it back!" The second boy would not hand over the boat, but instead he offered to SELL it to the boy. So the original owner and maker

of the toy boat reached into his pocket and gave all his money to pay for the boat. As he walked away, he held the boat to his chest and said, "You're mine! You're mine! You're mine TWICE! I MADE you, and then I BOUGHT you: YOU'RE MINE!"

Upon receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour, you will become God's property (I Cor. 6:19-20). You will become His child, His responsibility. You will become the property of God, for he BOUGHT you with his own blood (Acts 20:28). Nothing can ever change that.

Friend, if you've never really been born again, please repent of your sins right now and place your total trust in Jesus Christ to save you. Tell Him that you're sorry for your sins and that you want to live for Him. Tell Him that you want to have a new life in Christ (II Cor. 5:17). Aren't you tired of sin? Do you not want to please God? Repent of your sins right now and ask the Lord to save you. He said that He would save you, if you will call upon Him (Rom. 10:13). Why not call upon Him right now?

V. GOD'S PROMISE OF ETERNAL SECURITY

Lord Palmerston, Queen Victoria's Prime Minister, was crossing Westminster Bridge one day when he came upon a little girl who had just dropped a jug of milk. The girl broke into tears as the glass jug shattered into pieces. Palmerston had no money with him at the time, but he was able to stop her crying by promising her that he'd return at the same time the next day and pay her for the jug and the milk. The following morning he was in the midst of a cabinet meeting when he suddenly remembered his promise to the girl. He stood up and rushed out to the bridge and paid the girl the money. You see, to him, a promise was a promise, and he had to keep it. Nothing was more important.

With or without us, God will always be God. He will carry out His wonderful plan, regardless of our actions. He never had to promise us eternal security, just as Lord Palmerston never had to make the promise to the little girl. But God CHOSE to promise us eternal security. It was a pure act of grace on His part. He chose to comfort and strengthen us by making the promise: **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10:27-28) "Being confident of the very thing,**

that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philip. 1:6) "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37)

We are told in Romans 8:38-39 that NOTHING can separate us from the love of God that is in Jesus Christ, and the Lord tells us in Hebrews 13:5 that He will NEVER leave us or forsake us. Eternal Life is a PRESENT POSSESSION for the Christian. If you've received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, then you HAVE eternal life. You will not go to Hell, for you have been saved by believing on the record that God gave of His Son (I John 5:11-13, which see.). If you have received Christ as your Saviour, then you have received eternal life, because Jesus Christ IS eternal life (John 14:6; Col. 3:4; Rom. 6:23). He placed His Spirit within you to keep you and to preserve you (John 14:16-17; II Cor. 1:22); so you should be REJOICING in Christ, not WORRYING about losing Him.

You say, "But what if I sin after I've been saved? Won't I lose my salvation?" No, because it really isn't yours to lose. You are totally God's property. You didn't earn salvation by any good work of your own, and you can't lose salvation by any bad work of your own. Your salvation is based entirely upon the FINISHED work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Your conduct can affect your FELLOWSHIP with God, but not your RELATIONSHIP with Him. You're His son, if you're saved, and that's the way it's going to stay.

VI. GOD'S TREATMENT OF DISOBEDIENT CHRISTIANS

What happens when a Christian sins? If God doesn't send us to Hell, then how does He deal with us about our sins after we've been saved? This subject becomes rather easy to understand when we fully realize that we are now God's CHILDREN. We have entered into a Father/son relationship with God. He will deal with us as a Father deals with a child, NOT as a judge deals with a criminal.

Christians need to understand that their BODIES have not been born again. Only our SOULS have been saved. Our flesh is still corrupt, and it will die one day. Paul said that in the flesh dwells no good thing (Rom. 8:18). Since the soul has been made righteous through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has found it necessary to separate the soul from the body. This is called *spiritual circumcision.* Notice these important words from Colossians 2:11: **"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."**

Instead of being physically circumcised as the Old Testament Jews were, we have been spiritually by the Holy Spirit. Our flesh has been cut loose from our righteous soul. When you received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, your soul was SET FREE! The burden of sin was LIFTED, and the Holy Spirit of God came to live within your soul (not in your flesh). A Christian's flesh is still corrupt and sinful, so we are to live in the SPIRIT, not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh (Rom. 8:1-9; Gal. 5:16). In Matthew 26:41, Jesus Himself said, **"....the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."**

Since the soul has been made righteous, God sees us as righteous individuals. He does not see our sins, because Jesus PAID for our sins. Our souls are FOREVER PERFECT (Heb. 10:14). So, if I sin, I do so in the flesh, and God will deal with me in the flesh about it. He will NOT judge my soul, for it is sinless.

Let's take an example of a Christian who sins against God. For stronger emphasis, let's take an extreme case where the sin committed is a most horrible sin. Such a case is found in I Corinthians chapter five, where a man is charged with having his father's wife. That's pretty bad, is it not? Some would think that this man should go to Hell for this sin, but that's not what happens to him. Paul tells the Corinthians to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the FLESH, so that the spirit might be saved. What happened? God dealt with this man just as a Father would deal with a child. God did not disown the man, but He DID chasten him in order to get him back in fellowship.

To "chasten" is to punish or discipline. Revelation 3:19 tells us that God rebukes and chastens his children. He does NOT forsake them, but He does correct and instruct them. Hebrews 12:4-8 explains how that all of God's children are chastened of the Lord. In fact, Hebrews 12:8 actually says that you're a "bastard" if

you're not chastened! So there are two kinds of people in God's sight: sons and bastards. He corrects His sons, but He doesn't worry so much about the bastards, because they're going to get their punishment in Hell. Notice these inspired words from I Corinthians 11:31-32: **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."**

You wouldn't send YOUR children to Hell, and God doesn't send HIS there. But He does discipline Christians in order to keep them in tune with His will. No one gets away with sin. No one has a "license to sin."

If you are a Christian, then you should always be conscious of the fact that YOU are not your body; you are INSIDE your body. Your soul has already been redeemed, but you are still waiting for the redemption of your body (Rom. 8:23). Your body is no good, for it is still under the law of sin and death. But remember, your SOUL has been made perfect by the blood of Christ.

Being a Christian, you are like a prisoner chained up in his cell. He is lonely and miserable. Then one day someone comes in and cuts his chains loose, allowing him to begin moving freely in his cell. He's no longer chained to the wall, but he is still in the cell until someone comes and frees him completely. Do you get the picture? You are no longer "chained" to your sins. You're free from them. Geographically speaking, you are still stuck in your corruptible flesh until the Lord calls you home to Heaven, but SPIRITUALLY speaking, you are IN THE BODY OF CHRIST. If you slip and fall, you'll do so IN CHRIST. You see, there is a difference between falling IN Christ and falling OUT of Christ, just as there is a difference between falling down IN an airplane and falling OUT OF an airplane. Spiritually, we are seated in Heavenly places IN CHRIST, according to Ephesians 2:6, and that's where we'll stay - FOREVER!

VII. GOD'S WILL FOR ALL NEW BELIEVERS

In a future lesson we will deal with this subject in more detail, but for starters, the following are some of the more important duties of every new believer:

Get baptized. Find a Bible-believing church and tell the Pastor that you're a new believer in Christ and you need to be baptized. Baptism doesn't save your soul, but it is an ordinance commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mat. 28:19) and observed by the early Christians (Acts 8:35-39).

Join a Bible-believing church and be a faithful member (Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25). Start looking for a fundamental church that stands on the King James Bible, supports missionaries, preaches salvation by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9), and believes in the Deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Blood Atonement, the Bodily Resurrection, and the literal Second Coming of Christ. Start having private devotions with God. Read your Bible, confess your sins, and pray on a daily basis (John 17:17; Psa. 119:11; Eph. 6:17-18; I Thes. 5:17; I John 1:9). Make a special time for your devotions, and remain faithful to them.

Be a Christian witness (Acts 1:8-9). Tell others what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for you. Ask God to direct you to those who are most needful of your witness, and then begin telling them how Christ can save them just as He saved you. Get some gospel tracts and give them to family members and friends. Work toward winning lost souls to the Lord (Prov. 11:30).

Live a holy life for God (I Pet. 1:16). You are a Christian now, which means you are supposed to be "Christ-like". You belong to God (I Cor. 6:19-20), so yield yourself to Him and serve Him by putting Him first in everything (Mat. 6:33; Rom. 12:1-3).

Expose yourself to as much sound Bible teaching and preaching as possible. Pay close attention to your pastor and teachers. At church services, sit close to the front, take notes, and mark your Bible. Saturate your home with good Christian literature and tapes. Seize every opportunity to grow in your knowledge of God's word. The more you know about God's word, the more useful you will be in His service, and *nothing* is more important in your Christian life than *GOD'S SERVICE.*

Lesson Review

1. Which New Testament book contains the traditional "road" of handy salvation verses?

a. Galatians
b. Romans
c. John

2. The fact that man was originally created in God's image comes from:

a. Gen. 5:3
b. Gen. 1:27
c. Isa. 43:7

3. True or false? Men today are not born in God's image.

4. Which Bible chapter tells us of the fall of man?

5. Where in the Bible are we told that "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"?

6. Ephesians 2:2 says that lost people are:

a. children of this world
b. children of the devil
c. children of disobedience

7. Fill in the blanks: "But he *was* _____ for our _____ , *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on _____ the _____ of us all." (Isa. 53:5-6)

8. Galatians 3:13 says that Christ was made:

a. a substitution for us
b. a curse for us
c. a blessing for us

9. Does the Bible ever say that Jesus Christ was made SIN for us?

10. Fill in the blanks: "And they said, _____ __ ____ _____ _____ _____, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16:31)

11. Where does the Bible say that salvation is "the gift of God: Not of works?"

12. Through Jesus Christ, God offers to GIVE you His righteousness, because you are an unrighteous sinner. This is called:

a. remission of sins
b. imputed righteousness
c. self-righteousness

13. ". . . without _____ ___ _____ there is no remission."

14. True or false? John 1:12 states that you can RECEIVE Jesus Christ by REPENTING of all your sins.

15. True or false? Once you've been born again, Jesus will pluck you out of His hand if you still sin.

16. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and _____ on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is _____ from death unto life." (John 5:24)

17. The Holy Spirit separates the Christian's soul from his flesh through a spiritual operation called:

a. redemption
b. circumcision
c. regeneration

18. When a Christian sins, God will:

a. take vengeance on them
b. record their sin in the book of life
c. chasten them

Suggested Memory Verses: Romans 3:23, Romans 10:13, John 1:12, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 4:5

Lesson IV

How We Know the King James Bible Is God's Word

Many preachers and teachers across our land talk about "preferring" and "using" the KJV, but not near enough of them speak about BELIEVING it. Many prefer it and use it because that's what their congregations prefer and use, but they do not BELIEVE it to be the infallible words of God. Many of them are taught in college to use, prefer, and recommend the KJV, but they are not taught to believe it. Most "Christian colleges" teach that the King James Bible is only a translation, and that NO translation is infallible. Consequently, the average minister today uses a Book which he doesn't even believe.

Now, I thank God that I don't have that problem. I don't have to play make-believe with anyone about the word of God. I believe it. I believe the King James Bible is the preserved and infallible words of God. It doesn't merely "contain" the word of God: *it IS the word of God.* This lesson has been prepared to teach you WHY we believe and use only the King James Bible.

I. GOD PROMISED TO PRESERVE HIS WORDS

Psalm 12:6-7 says, ***"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."*** We read in Psalm 100:5 that ***". . . . his***

truth endureth to all generations," and Jesus said in John 17:17 that God's WORD is truth.

These words state very clearly that God's preserved word MUST be available to us today, because God PROMISED to preserve it for us. There MUST be an infallible Book somewhere.

You say, "But ALL translations are God's word, not just one." That's impossible, because the various translations contain different readings, and God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33). Besides, if all of the versions are the word of God, then where are the "corrupt" and "perverted" versions that we are warned about in II Corinthians 2:17 and Jeremiah 23:36? If everyone is innocent, then where are those who are said to be GUILTY of subtracting from and adding to the word of God (Rev. 22:18-19)? God wouldn't have warned us about Bible perversion if it wasn't going to be a reality. According to the scriptures, there must be a single Book that is the word of God, and there must be MANY which are involved in CORRUPTING the word of God.

Now, if the Authorized Version isn't the infallible word of God, then WHAT IS? There has to be a Book somewhere in ***"all generations"*** which is God's word; so what book is it? Those who "use" the new versions believe that these are good and reliable translations, but they do not believe these to be INFALLIBLE translations. However, I know many people who believe the King James Bible to be an infallible Book. Why? Because they know that the One True God has ONE TRUE BOOK. He promised to preserve His words, and we believe that He has done just that. Jesus said, ***"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35).*** If His words didn't pass away, then where are they? I want to read them. There has to be a perfect volume somewhere. I know the King James Bible is the word of God because God promised to preserve His words.

II. TRANSLATED UNDER A KING

The main subject of the Bible is the kingdom which God intends to give to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will be crowned ***"KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS,"*** according to Revelation 19:16. Ecclesiastes 8:4 says, ***"Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"*** Unlike the modern versions, the KJV was translated under a king. In fact, the king's name was "James,"

which is the English word for "Jacob," the man whom God renamed "Israel" because he had power with God and with men (Gen. 32:28).

The new versions have been translated in America, which is not a monarchy. God's form of government is a theocratic monarchy, not a democracy. Therefore, it makes sense that His word would be translated for the English speaking people under a monarchy with an English king. I know the King James Bible is the word of God because it was translated under a king.

III. NO COPYRIGHT

The original crown copyright of 1611 does not forbid anyone today from reprinting the Authorized Version. It was only copyrighted then for the purpose of allowing the printer to finance the publication. Millions, perhaps even billions, of copies of KJV's have been published without requesting permission from anyone and without paying royalties to anyone. This cannot be said of any of the new translations.

The new "bibles" are the work of MEN, but the KJV is a divine work of the Holy Spirit. The term "Authorized" has traditionally been applied to the King James Version alone, for this is the one Book which the Holy Spirit has blessed and used for so long. The fact that it bears no copyright allows printing ministries throughout the world to print millions of copies each year for the mission field. I know the King James Bible is the word of God because it has no copyright.

IV. GOD TRANSLATES PERFECTLY

The words "translate" and "translated" occur three times in the Bible, and GOD is the Translator each time. The scholars insist that the KJV cannot be infallible, because it is "only a translation." Do you suppose that such scholars have checked II Samuel 3:10, Colossians 1:13, and Hebrews 11:5 to see what GOD has to say about translating?

In II Samuel 3:10 we are told that it was God Who translated Saul's kingdom to David. We are told in Colossians 1:13 that Christians have been translated into the kingdom of Jesus

Christ, and Hebrews 11:5 tells us that God translated Enoch that he should not see death. God was the One doing the translating each time! What's the point? The point is that a translation CAN be perfect, if God is involved in the translating.

When the New Testament writers would quote the Old Testament (Mt. 1:23; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 4:4; Jn. 15:25; Acts 1:20; 7:42; I Cor. 2:9; Gal. 3:13, etc.), they had to TRANSLATE from Hebrew to Greek, because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but THEY wrote in Greek. So, if a translation cannot be infallible, then EVEN THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE "ORIGINAL GREEK" ISN'T INFALLIBLE, because it contains translations from the Hebrew text.

Obviously God assisted them in their translating by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and He assisted the King James translators as well. The scholars will never understand this, for most of them have quenched the Holy Spirit in their own lives by looking to higher education for truth, rather than seeking the Lord's leadership (John 16:13).

The Holy Spirit Who inspired the word of God through *"holy men of God"* (II Pet. 1:21) is quite capable of guiding His servants to keep the words which Jesus told us to keep (John 14:23). In essence, the KJV translators were merely *instruments* which God used in translating and preserving His word. In fact, they said this themselves in the Dedicatory to the Authorized Version: ***". . . . because we are poor instruments to make God's holy truth to be yet more and more known to the people. . . "***

I know the King James Bible is the word of God because God is very capable of using anyone He pleases as His very own instruments of righteousness in order to preserve His word.

V. THE KJV IS FRUITFUL

The Lord Jesus said that every good tree will bring forth good fruit, and we can know them *by* their fruits (Mt. 7:17-20).

God had the KJV translated for the purpose of bringing forth fruit, and it has been very obedient to the call. The greatest preachers of the past four centuries have been King James Bible believers. Billy Sunday is said to have led over one million people to Christ, and he was a KJV believer. Spurgeon, Moody, Whitfield, and Wesley were all KJV men, and the list goes on.

God has richly blessed the ministries of such men as these because they stayed busy OBEYING His word rather than questioning its authority.

The KJV produces good fruit. I was led to Christ with a King James Bible. Nearly every Christian I know was led to Christ with a KJV. Why? Because it produces good fruit.

The new translations produce EVIL fruit. The modern perversions of scripture are producing infidels who do not even know what the word of God is, much less where to find it. The new translations produce spiritual babies who are totally incapable of discussing Bible doctrine. The new versions produce newer versions, which produce *money* for the publishers, and I Timothy 6:10 tells us that the love of money is the root of all EVIL.

The Holy Spirit doesn't bear witness to the modern translations, but He DOES bear witness to the King James. I've always believed the KJV to be God's word, even before I was saved. No one ever told me to believe this, but the Holy Spirit just bore witness to the King James--not the others. After being saved, I spent several years of my Christian life not being aware of the big debate going on these days between King James Bible believers and New Age Version believers. The whole time I believed only ONE BOOK to be God's word, and even then I was suspicious of the new versions, although no one had told me to be. When I discovered that most "Christian" schools in our nation do not believe the KJV to be the word of God, I was shocked.

How is it that one comes to believe the KJV naturally, but must be *educated out* of his belief in it? Why is it that King James believers are accused of following men when GOD is the One Who led them to believe it? Why do opponents of the KJV accuse us of following men, when THEY are the ones who allowed MEN to talk them out of believing the KJV?

The KJV produces good fruit because the Holy Spirit bears witness to it like no other book in the world. It's easier to memorize than any new version, and the beautiful old English language gives the reader the impression that he is reading a Book very different and far superior to the rest. It reads different because it *is* different, and it *is* different because it has a different Author. We shall know them ***"by their fruit"***, and I know the King James Bible is the word of God because it produces GOOD fruit.

VI. THE KJV TRANSLATORS BELIEVED THEY WERE HANDLING THE VERY WORDS OF GOD

One can see this truth by reading the Prefatory and Dedicatory remarks in the Authorized Version. These men didn't believe they were handling "God's message" or "reliable manuscripts." They believed they were handling the very words of God Himself. As the Bible says in I Thessalonians 2:13, they ***". . . . received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."***

Like the serpent of Genesis 3:1, modern translators approach the scriptures in skepticism, saying, ***"Yea, hath God said?"*** This was the first recorded sin in the Bible, and it is still prevalent in the hearts and minds of most scholars and new version promoters.

God has always allowed such people to be DECEIVED because of the IDOLS in their hearts (Ezek. 14:1-9; II Ths. 2:10-12; I Kings 22). A man who lacks faith in God's word is in no condition to translate it. This eliminates every revision committee in the past one hundred years, because these committees have consisted mostly of highly educated men who were heady, high-minded, and proud, thinking that their intelligence qualified them to tamper with the pure words of God.

The KJV translators were not like this. Their scholarship *far exceeded* that of modern translators, yet they remained humble and allowed God to use them in order to produce an infallible masterpiece. They didn't set out to "judge" and "correct" the word of God. Their purpose was to translate God's word for the English speaking people, as they were told to do by their king. I know the King James Bible is the word of God because the KJV translators believed it themselves.

VII. THE TRANSLATORS WORKED HONESTLY

The critics of the KJV enjoy making a fuss about the words in italics, which were added by the translators, but the argument is entirely unnecessary and unfair.

The italic words in the KJV actually prove that the translators were honest in their work. When translating from one language to another, the idioms change, thus making it necessary

to add certain words to help the reader grasp the full meaning of the text. When the KJV translators added such words they set them in italics so that we'd know these words were added, *unlike* we find it in so many new versions today, which do not use the italics.

Besides, no one has ever PROVEN that the italic words are not the words of God because no one has "the originals" to check them with. In fact, we know for sure that the translators were led by the Holy Spirit to add at least some of the italicized words.

One good example of this is found in II Samuel 21:19. When the translators came to this verse in the Hebrew text, they noticed that an exact translation would give Elhanan credit for slaying Goliath, but we know from I Chronicles 20:5 that he actually slew *the brother of* Goliath. So the KJV translators added the words ***"the brother of"*** to II Samuel 21:19. If the Lord had not led them to do so, then II Samuel 21:19 would contradict I Chronicles 20:5 (as it DOES in the New World Translation!).

Another fine example is I John 2:23. The last half of the verse was missing at the time, but the KJV translators inserted it anyway (in italics), feeling that it was necessary. This naturally disturbed many people, but since that time new manuscripts have been found which CONTAIN the last half of I John 2:23. The translators were right in adding the italicized words.

One last example of the Holy Spirit's guiding influence on the KJV translators is found in Psalm 16:8, which says, ***"I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."*** As you can see, the words *"he is"* are in italics. According to many scholars they should be omitted, but according to the Apostle Peter they should *not* be omitted. Peter quotes Psalm 16:8 in Acts 2:25 and he USES the italicized words! How did the translators know this if the Lord didn't lead them?

The italics in the King James Bible are the marks of an *honest* translation for no one added these words to mislead us or to change the word of God. They added the words to help us, and they set the words in italics so we'd know they were added. That's honesty. I know the KJV is the word of God, because the translators were more honest in their work than any of the modern Bible translators.

VIII. THE NEW PERVERSIONS COMPARE THEMSLEVES TO THE KJV

The new versions do not compare themselves to one another near as much as they compare themselves to one Book: the King James Bible. This fact alone proves that there is something very special and unique about the KJV.

Why does everyone line up in opposition AGAINST the King James Bible? Why not attack one another? That's easy: Satan has no desire to divide his own kingdom (Mt. 12:26). His desire is to discredit the word of GOD, not himself; so he attacks only one Book, God's Book, the KJV.

Those who oppose the KJV are unsure of themselves, for they have no Final Authority; so they despise those of us who DO have an Authority. They're unstable, insecure, dishonest, and very inconsistent. They're all terrified of One Book, the KJV, and they'll stop short of nothing in their efforts to rid the Body of Christ of that Book.

I know the KJV is the word of God, because it's the standard which all others use for comparison.

IX. THE TIME OF ITS TRANSLATION

The King James Bible was not translated during the apostate and lukewarm Laodicean church period, like the new translations. The Laodicean period is the last church period before the Second Coming of Christ. It is the last of the seven church periods in Revelation chapters two and three. One can clearly see that we are living in the Laodicean period today by simply comparing modern churches to the church of Revelation 3:14-22. This lukewarm period began toward the end of the 1800's and will continue until Christ returns. The new versions fit well into the lukewarm churches because they are lukewarm "bibles."

The Authorized Version, however, was translated long *before* the Laodicean churches appeared. It was translated during the Philadelphia church period, which is the best church period of all. In fact, it was this church that the Lord Jesus commended for *keeping His word* (Rev. 3:8-10)!

In 1611, when the King James Bible was completed, the scourge of lukewarm Laodicea had not yet swept over the world.

There was no "scientific" crowd around in 1611 to put pressure on the translators. There was no civil rights movement going on at this time to influence the work of these men. The women were not screaming for "equal rights," and the humanists and socialists had not yet taken control. The “politically correct” crowd would not appear for another four centuries. The massive army of liberal and modernistic preachers had not yet been assembled. The open public denial of God's word and the Deity of Christ was practically unheard of among ministers. It wasn't until the twentieth century that professing Christianity became flooded with lukewarm preachers who would be willing to compromise the word of God for self gain.

The greatest missionary work in church history occurred between 1700 and 1900, so it makes sense that God would have a Bible ready for this great work, and He did - the KJV. Unfortunately, the new translations appeared a bit LATE on the scene! Think about that. ALL NEW BIBLE TRANSLATIONS COMPLETELY *MISSED* THE GREAT MISSIONARY WORKS OF THE 1700’S AND 1800’S! I know the KJV is the word of God because of the time in history in which it was translated.

X. NO ONE HAS PROVED THAT THE KJV IS NOT GOD’S WORD

Has any scholar actually PROVED that there are errors in the King James Bible? No. Enemies of the KJV delight in *ignoring* the facts about the Authorized Version, while never *proving* anything. All apparent "errors" in the KJV can be explained through prayer and a careful study of the scriptures, but the opponents of the KJV aren't interested in looking for truth; they're interested attacking God's word, while never proving anything. I know the KJV is the word of God because, after four hundred years, no one has proven otherwise.

XI. THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

Only a very deceived individual could believe that the new versions are equal to the King James Bible. Ninety-five percent of all evidence *supports* the text of the King James

Authorized Version. The new versions are supported by the remaining five percent evidence.

The new "bibles" are supported by two very corrupt fourth century manuscripts, known as "Vaticanus" and "Siniaticus." These manuscripts are filled with many text alterations to meet the demands of Roman Catholic tradition. They also include the Apocrypha, which the Lord Jesus Christ *excluded* from the Old Testament in Luke 24:44. All new versions contain readings from these corrupt manuscripts, and all new versions use their tiny five percent evidence to attack the ninety-five percent majority text of the King James Bible.

The Textus Receptus (received text) from which the King James Bible came can be traced clear back to Antioch, Syria, where the disciples were first called Christians and where Paul and Barnabas taught the word of God for a whole year (Acts 11:26). The other "bibles" do not come from Antioch. They come from Alexandria, Egypt, and from Rome. We don't need an Egyptian version, for Egypt is a type of the *world* in the Bible. God called His people *out* of Egypt (Exod. 3-14), and God called His Son out of Egypt (Hos. 11:1 with Matt. 2:13-15). Why, the Bible says that ***"every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians"*** in Gen. 46:34, and the Lord Jesus Christ is called a SHEPHERD in John chapter ten. Alexandria, Egypt, is associated with *superstition* in Acts 28:11, and Aquilla and Pricilla had to set an Egyptian straight on his doctrine in Acts chapter 18. Alexandrians are also found *disputing with Stephen* in Acts 6:9. So we don't need a "bible" from Alexandria, Egypt.

Then there's the Roman text, also called the "Western Text." We can also do without a Roman "bible", because it was *Roman* soldiers who nailed our Lord to the cross. The harlot of Revelation 17 is a near perfect description of the Roman Catholic Church, which has persecuted true Christians throughout church history. Romans persecuted the Christians in Acts18:2, and in 70 A.D. the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Rome is the "dreadful and terrible" beast of Daniel chapter seven, and Christ will destroy the "Revised Roman Empire" at the Second Coming (Dan. 2; 7; Rev. 13). It has been estimated that Rome is guilty of the blood of some 200 million people who have rejected her corrupt system. A "bible" from Rome is another thing we can live without.

There's only one line of manuscripts that we can trust, and this is the line from Antioch, called the "Syrian" or "Byzantine"

type text. The word of God speaks *positively* of Antioch, and *negatively* of Rome and Egypt. We should take the best and dump the rest! I know the King James Bible is the word of God because of the manuscript evidence.

XII. THE KJV EXALTS THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Jesus said, ***"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: And they are they which testify of me."*** *(John 5:39)*

A real Bible will testify of the Lord Jesus Christ. The true word of God will always exalt Jesus Christ, and it will never attack Hid Deity, His Virgin Birth, His Blood Atonement, His Bodily Resurrection, His Glorious Second Coming, or any other doctrines concerning His Person. However, the new versions attack all of the fundamental doctrines concerning the Lord Jesus Christ at one time or another.

By perverting the many important verses of scripture which deal with the fundamental doctrines of Christ, the new "bibles" have a continuous attack launched against our beloved Saviour, and this is *not* an overstatement! His Virgin Birth is under attack in Isaiah 7:14, Luke 1:34, and Luke 2:33. His Blood Atonement is under attack in Colossians 1:14, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 1:7, and Revelation 1:5. The Bodily Resurrection is under attack in Acts 1:3, Luke chapter 24, and the last twelve verses of Mark. His Deity is under attack in Acts 10:28, John 9:35, and I Timothy 3:16. The new versions attack the Second Coming in Revelation 11:15, and Titus 2:13, and the list goes on because the new versions have an extreme bitter *hatred* toward the Authorized Version and the way it gives the Lord Jesus Christ the preeminent place.

If the reader doubts this, we challenge you to take whatever version you want and compare the above verses in it to the same verses in the King James Bible. The new "bibles" have a very consistent record of attacking the Lord Jesus Christ; so they cannot possibly be "the scriptures" that He said would testify of Him in John 5:39. They testify AGAINST him.

The King James Bible never attacks our Lord. More than any book in the world, the Authorized Version of the Protestant Reformation EXALTS the Lord Jesus Christ. If we had no other

reason for receiving the Authorized Version as the word of God, this reason alone should be enough to convince any true believer, for how could we not become suspicious of the new versions for making such changes? I know the King James Bible is the word of God because it always exalts the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesson Review

1. In which period of church history was the King James Bible translated?

a. Philadelphia
b. Laodicean
c. Sardis
d. Ephesus

2. In which period of church history were the new versions translated?

a. Philadelphia
b. Laodicean
c. Sardis
d. Ephesus

3. Whom must one contact for permission to print King James Bibles?

a. Thomas Nelson Publishers
b. Oxford University Press
c. Cambridge Press
d. No one

4. True or False? Only the Living Bible has produced more good fruit than the King James Bible.

5. What percentage of all manuscript evidence supports the readings in the King James Bible?

a. 36%
b. 82%
c. 95%
d. 66%

6. The King James Bible is supported by the majority readings found in the:

a. Vaticanus
b. Textus Receptus
c. Siniaticus

7. Which of the following is NOT a city associated with manuscripts?

a. Rome
b. Jerusalem
c. Antioch
d. Alexandria

8. From which of the above cities do the best manuscripts come?

Suggested Memory Verses: I Thessalonians 2:13, II Timothy 2:15

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book II

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson V

Your Spirit, Your Soul, and Your Body

In this lesson we will be studying a subject that modern-day psychiatrists and psychologists know nothing about, yet these very people profess to be authorities on human nature and human behavior. Imagine going to a doctor so he can help you get well and *he doesn't even know what you are!*

The Bible says that you are a SPIRIT, a SOUL, and a BODY. Before you can understand who you are and how you are supposed to get anywhere in life, you must get acquainted with the doctrine of spirit, soul, and body. This lesson is written from the standpoint that God knows more about us than we do (since He created us) and that God's word can shed more light on human behavior than any man has ever written. You won't be very popular or very recognized for believing the forthcoming pages, but you will be *right.*

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Ths. 5:23)

Now, there it is. Paul said that you have a spirit, a soul, and a body. You are a three-part being. You do not have just a body, and you do not have just a body and a soul. You have spirit, a soul, and a body. As we shall learn in a later lesson, God is a trinity consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. So, He has made man a trinity also. In fact, your soul pictures God the Father, your body pictures Jesus Christ Who was once here in the flesh, and your spirit pictures the Holy Spirit. God is a trinity, so He has made man a trinity.

Think of the sun for a moment. The sun gives off light rays, chemical rays, and heat rays, yet it is still just one sun. Three rays, but one sun. You are three parts, but one person.

A football is also a good example. It has the outward leather which you see. Then there's an inner tube which you cannot see. Then there’s the air inside the inner tube. A football is three parts, but one football. You are three parts, but one person. You are a spirit, a soul, and a body.

Notice how it all began in Genesis: **"And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his**

nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) First, God formed a BODY from dirt. Then He breathed a SPIRIT into the body, and then man became a living SOUL. That "breath of life" is the spirit. Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, **"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."** He gave it in Genesis 2:7. That word for "spirit" in the New Testament is "pneuma", which can be translated "breath", "breeze", "a current of air", "life", "mind", "ghost", or "spirit." When God breathed into Adam's lifeless body a LIFE was formed. A complete man was made, which had a spirit, a soul, and a body.

I. YOUR SPIRIT

What good is a football without air? It's no good, for it's just a dead ball. What good is man without God's Spirit? He is NO GOOD. So, God made man in his own image *with a spirit*, a soul, and a body. Notice Genesis 1:26: **"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."** He said "in our image." That's the Trinity: *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

God made man in a perfectly sinless image and placed him in a perfect paradise with a simple command: **"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." (Gen. 2:16-17)** Man was told that he would DIE for eating of the forbidden fruit, but this cannot be *physical* death, because Genesis chapter five tells us that Adam lived hundreds of years beyond the day of his sin. Man was made a "living soul" when he received God's Spirit, so man "died" spiritually when he sinned and *lost* God's Spirit. When Satan said, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:1), he was being very deceitful. Man DIDN'T die physically, but he DID die spiritually. When Adam sinned he lost God's Spirit, and he lost God's IMAGE. Adam was made in God's image, but when he had children they were born in ADAM'S image with a sin nature. Notice Genesis 5:3: **"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* in his own likeness, after his image; and**

called his name Seth:" Adam was the only man in the Old Testament to have the image of God, and he had it only for a short time. It isn't until Jesus Christ comes and pays for the sin of the world that we read again about a man having God's image. Colossians 3:10 says, **"And have put on the new *man,* which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"** Notice Hebrews 1:3: **"Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"** Jesus Christ is the image of God, and no one can be born in God's image until they are BORN AGAIN (John 3:3). Then, and only then, can a person have God's image. **"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."** (I Cor. 15:49**)**

Since life produces life, it takes life for someone to receive God's image through Christ. The new birth is a supernatural birth where the eternal life in Christ gives spiritual birth to a fallen man. First, one must hear the living word. Hebrews 4:12 says, **"For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."** The word of God is ALIVE (quick). Jesus said, **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life."** (John 6:63) The word of God is a living book with living words, which has the power to bring about a new birth. Notice I Peter 1:23: **"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."** If you've been saved, then it's because you once had a dead spirit, and then upon receiving Christ as your Saviour you received a new nature, a new image, and a new Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 says you are *sealed* with the Holy Spirit. You were DEAD spiritually, but God raised you up. Ephesians 2:1 says, **"And you *hath he quickened,* who were dead in trespasses and sins:"** Why were you dead? You lost God's image and God's Spirit in Genesis, and you had to wait for Jesus Christ to give it back to you.

Think of this. Everyone on earth is either in Adam or in Christ. **"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be**

made alive." (I Cor. 15:22) There is no third dwelling. Either you are a sinner in Adam, or you are a saint in Christ. There are no other options. If you're in Adam, then your spirit is dead because it was made in Adam's image which was also dead. If you're in Christ, then you've been born again and sealed with God's Spirit, in God's image. Everyone has a spirit, but not everyone has a *living* spirit in the eyes of God.

II. YOUR SOUL

Your soul is the real you which dwells inside your body until the moment you die. When you die, your soul *departs* from your body and goes to be with the Lord or goes to suffer in Hell. In Genesis 35:18, we read about the death of Rachel: **"And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin."** When was her soul in departing? It departed when she died. In II Timothy 4:6, Paul said, **"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."** Did his *body* depart when he died? No, his body was buried. His *soul* departed. In II Corinthians 5:8 Paul says, **"We are confident, *I say,* and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."** According to God's word, when a person dies their soul departs from their body and moves to its eternal home.

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:" (Rev. 6:9) So then a soul has a *bodily shape* which can be seen. You and I cannot see it today, but it *can* be seen, if we are to believe Revelation 6:9. John said he *saw* the souls. Now consider Luke 16:23-25: **"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."** There's a man who has died and went to Hell. His body was buried, and then he lifted up his *eyes* in Hell and asked for water to cool his tongue. This man's original eyes

were still in his dead body in the grave, as well as his tongue, but his soul, which had a bodily shape, was now in Hell. His soul had eyes, a tongue, and a brain to make them function. While his body lay dead in the grave, this man's soul suffered in Hell with all of his senses, a central nervous system, and a memory.

Some teach that Hell is the grave and that the soul only goes to the grave at death. This just won't do. In fact, there are three very good reasons why this cannot be true:

1. There is no FIRE in the grave, but the Bible declares that there is fire in Hell (Deu. 32:22; Mat. 5:22; Mark 9:43-48; Jas. 3:6)
2. Hell must be much worse than the grave because Jesus said it's better to enter the kingdom blind or crippled than to go to Hell (Mat. 18:8-9). Hell, unlike the grave, must be a place of suffering.
3. In Genesis 49:33-50:5, Jacob dies and is "gathered unto his people" (49:33). However, his body isn't buried until seventy days later (50:3-5). What was gathered unto his people? It was his *soul*. Like Rachel, Jacob's soul departed when he died. His soul went to be with his people while his body awaited burial.

When you received Jesus Christ as your Saviour, it was your *soul* that was saved. This soul is in invisible bodily shape which dwells inside of you until the day you die, or until the Lord returns. When your soul leaves your body, it will be either present with the Lord or tormented in Hell fire.

III. YOUR BODY

Paul said that if any man be in Christ he is a new creature (II Cor. 5:17), but there is certainly nothing new about your body. Your old dead spirit has been regenerated, and your soul has been washed in the blood of the Lamb, but your flesh is still just as vile as ever. You may think much of your flesh, but the Bible comment is that your flesh is one of your worst enemies: **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak." (Mat. 26:41) "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13) "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of**

grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:" (I Pet. 1:24)

Your flesh is still just as carnal and corrupt as ever. Your salvation hasn't changed your flesh. You have *two natures* now, and the one you feed will win the battle in your life. Notice Galatians 6:8: **"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."** As a Christian, you can sow grass seed and reap worthless grass, or you can sow good seed and reap a good harvest. You can pile up junk on this earth, or you can lay up treasure in Heaven.

Suppose you own two big dogs, a black one and a white one. For thirty days you feed the black dog the best possible diet, but you barely give the white dog enough food to stay alive. Then one day the two dogs engage in a fight. Which dog do you suppose will win? Naturally, the winner will be the one you've been feeding.

How much should we feed the flesh? As little as possible. Paul says in I Timothy 6:8, **"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."** Paul writes in Philippians 4:11, **"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content."** Your flesh will *never* be content. God knows this to be true. God knows that your flesh is corrupt and that it is capable of doing great damage to your testimony. For this reason He says, **"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8:13)** To "mortify" is to KILL. What does God say about your flesh? He says KILL, OR BE KILLED! If you live after the flesh ye shall die spiritually, so MORTIFY (kill) the flesh before it kills you.

No, we aren't advocating suicide, or at least not *physical* suicide. We are dealing with a *spiritual* battle in a spiritual war that must be fought with spiritual weapons. Jesus said, **"...If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23)** Your flesh isn't going to follow Christ. Your flesh wants to eat, drink, and be merry. Your flesh wants to go to the movies, go shopping for the latest styles, read dirty books and magazines, listen to worldly music, and hang out with worldly people. Your flesh wants to keep Jesus Christ in the closet about ninety-five percent of the time. Jesus Christ wants to keep your flesh mortified (dead) most of the time.

How can this be done? How can a person stay spiritual when they are trapped in a physical body? Paul gives some good advice in Ephesians 6:10-18:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places.* Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

Did you notice Paul's emphasis on the word *STAND*? We live in a weak and compromising generation when people do not have the guts to *STAND* for anything because everyone lives in the flesh, which is *weak*. God's people are supposed to be different. We have an infallible printed authority which tells us right from wrong, and God expects us to read His word, establish convictions, and *STAND* on it! Like it or not, friend, you are on the battlefield of good and evil, and there is no neutral ground.

Apart from the protective armour that Paul mentions, there are two items that we can classify as *offensive weapons:* the word of God and prayer. Through the written word God speaks to you, and you speak to God through prayer. That's communication. The more you commune with God the more like God you will become. You will grow spiritually. By contrast, the less you commune with God the less like Him you will be. You will *shrink* spiritually.

David said in Psalm 119:11, **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."** Psalm 119:9 says, **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word."** In John 15:3 the Lord Jesus Christ says, **"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."** Friend, if you plan to stay clean

for God, then you *must* feed on His word. As John Bunyan said, *"This Book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this Book."*

In Matthew 26:41, Jesus said, **"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."** Notice the contrast. The flesh is opposed to prayer. You've spent more time eating today than you have praying. Why? The flesh is weak. It is weak and it will quench your spiritual power unless you *STAND* against it with God's word and prayer. When you don't want to pray, just pray anyway, because that's when you need prayer the most.

In I Corinthians 15:33, Paul said, **"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners."** If evil communications corrupt good manners, then GOOD communications corrupt evil manners! If you want to see the Holy Spirit mortify (kill) the influence of your flesh, just stay in close communion with God. Pray and read God's word daily. The Spirit will stay "stirred up" and the flesh will be over-powered.

In your flesh dwells no good thing (Rom. 7:18). Your flesh is your enemy, and it will remain your enemy for the rest of your life. *Don't let the enemy win. STAND and FIGHT.*

Will the flesh ever be righteous? Will the flesh ever be saved like the soul? Yes, it certainly will. There is coming a day when the saints of God will be given new glorified bodies. We will be given immortal bodies that can never sin and never die. Speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul says, **"Who 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." (Philip. 3:21)** Jesus Christ is now in a glorified body (Rev. 1), and those who follow Him will receive one as well. Romans 8:23 says that we are waiting for **"the redemption of our body."** The Christian's soul has been redeemed, but his body still awaits redemption.

Notice these words of comfort from I Corinthians 15: **"So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.....In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall**

be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.....Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:42-44, 52-53, 58)

In closing, think of it this way. The subject of spirit, soul, and body has to do with the *penalty,* the *power,* and the *presence* of sin. In the PAST, my SOUL was saved from the PENALTY of sin. In the PRESENT, (day by day) my SPIRIT is saved from the POWER of sin, because I have God's Spirit to be my guide and comfort. In the FUTURE, my BODY will be saved from the PRESENCE of sin.

Lesson Review

1. Fill in the blanks: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole _____ and _____ and _____ be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. The above verse is found where?

3. True or false? Since God is the Creator of all men, everyone is created in God's image.

4. In Genesis 3, man died:

a. emotionally
b. in type
c. spiritually
d. spiritually and physically

5. Which of the following references do NOT speak of Jesus Christ as being the image of God:

a. John 6:63
b. Heb. 1:3
c. Col. 3:10

6. In Hebrews 4:12, what is meant by the word "quick"?

7. Fill in the blank: "And it came to pass, as her _____ was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin."

8. Does a person's soul have a bodily shape?

9. In Luke chapter 16, the rich man's body went to the _____, but his soul went to _____.

10. Where in the Bible does Jesus say that the flesh is weak?

11. We need to take up our cross and follow Jesus:

a. when we are saved
b. daily
c. when we serve God

12. The Christian's armour includes two offensive weapons. What are they?

13. Where does Paul speak about the "redemption of our body"?

14. In the past your soul was saved from the _____ of sin.

15. In the present your spirit is saved from the _____ of sin.

16. In the future you body is saved from the _____ of sin.

Suggested Memory Verse: I Thessalonians 5:23

Lesson VI

What Does God Expect of Me?

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23) "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. 6:19-20)

Technically, God expects *nothing* of you. Jesus said in John 15:5, **"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.** He said, *"nothing."* A branch is no good without the vine. A branch by itself will die and become useless. God expects all believers to *deny* themselves and acknowledge their need to allow Jesus Christ to work *through* them, just as a vine produces fruit through its branches. By simply obeying God's word a Christian serves God and glorifies Him. Jesus said, **"...I do always those things that please him."** (John 8:29) Every Christian is supposed to be a FULL TIME SERVANT. Our Christian duty is to follow Jesus and please our Heavenly Father. God's word gives us all the instructions we need to live a Christ-honoring life and to lay up great treasures in Heaven. This lesson presents some of the more important duties of every Christian.

I. SUBMIT TO BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,

that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:35-39)

Notice the proper order of events: (1) The eunuch heard the Gospel. (2) He was told that he must BELIEVE with all his heart before he could be baptized. (3) He confessed Jesus Christ openly. (4) Phillip baptized the man by immersion in water. (5) The eunuch then rejoiced.

Scriptural New Testament baptism is for believers only, and the only mode of baptism is total immersion. Baptism saves no one, but it does serve as a perfect opportunity to be openly identified with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. If baptism were for salvation then Jesus would not have been baptized, because He needed no salvation. Baptism pictures the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Christ. Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"** A sinner is *saved* by grace through faith in Christ (Eph. 2:8-9), but an obedient Christian will submit to our Lord's will and be baptized. God expects you to be baptized.

II. FEAR GOD

Psalm 111:10 says, **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."** Solomon said, **"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."** (Ecc. 12:13-14)

To fear God is to simply *reverence* Him--to highly respect His power and authority over you. A person who fears God is a person who always considers God's word and God's will. This is something that modern America knows very little about. As Paul wrote in Romans 3:18, **"There is no fear of God before their eyes."** A person who fears God is a person who lives a humble and obedient life before God, always being mindful of the fact that God is HOLY and He will not overlook sin. According to Proverbs 15:16, **"Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith."** No matter how educated

or wealthy a man may be, if he doesn't fear God he is FOOLISH and POOR.

In Matthew 10:28, Jesus said, **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**" A man who fears God has no one else to fear, but a man who fears not God has everyone to fear. Putting God first and fearing Him above all is the key to a happy and fulfilling life. Also see Psalm 118:6 and Proverbs 29:25.

III. READ AND STUDY GOD'S WORD

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Tim 2:15) Paul tells us here to STUDY God's word that we might be APPROVED by God. A Christian who doesn't spend adequate time in God's word is a disobedient Christian. This world is filled with sin and ungodly elements, and only through God's word can we find true spiritual refreshment to keep us clean and set apart for God's service. David said, **"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."** (Psa 119:11) God's word will keep a Christian clean! God's word is like a spiritual bar of soap which the Christian uses DAILY to be a sweet smelling savor to God. Speaking of the church in Ephesians 5:26, the Apostle Paul said, **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."** Psalm 119:9 says, **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."** Jesus said, **"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."** (John 15:3) It's all through the Bible, friend, a Christian CANNOT stay clean without God's word!

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." (Jsh. 1:8-9) That's God's promise. A DAILY habit of spending time in God's word will guarantee a prosperous and successful life. David said, **"O how love I thy**

law! it is my meditation all the day. (Psa 119:97) Is this true in your life? It should be. Every Christian should love God's word and meditate on it often.

IV. PRAY ALWAYS

Jesus said that , **"...men ought always to pray, and not to faint."** (Luke 18:1) God speaks to us through Bible reading, but we speak to Him through prayer. Every Christian needs a special time each day (perhaps more than once per day) when he gets alone with God in prayer. Mark 1:35 says, **"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."** Jesus realized the need to pull away for a while and get alone with His Father in prayer. In our fast-paced society this is sometimes hard, but it's very necessary and well worth the effort.

If you're really trusting God for your daily needs and the needs of others, then you will naturally go to Him in prayer to make your requests known. When a child is really depending on a father to do something, he won't quit talking to the father about it until it's done. In fact, that's one thing that moves the father to get it done sooner! God expects us to come to Him on a regular basis to simply "empty" ourselves by laying all our wants and needs in His hands.

Paul said, "**Pray without ceasing"** in I Thessalonians 5:17. Prayer is to be continual, because our relationship with God is continual. Many Christians wait until they've become loaded down with sins and many burdens before they pray, but this isn't God's will. God commands us to pray ALWAYS so we'll never become over-loaded with problems. He wants us to carry a LIGHT load. Jesus said, **"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."** (Mat. 11:30).

The subjects of prayer are many. *Thanksgiving* is an important part of prayer (Mark 8:6; John 6:11; I Tim. 4:4-5). We are told to pray for *forgiveness* (I John 1:9), for *personal needs* (Mat. 6:9-13; Philip. 4:6, 19), and for *wisdom* (Jas. 1:5-7). We are told to remember *others* in prayer (Rom. 1:9; Jas. 5:13-16), to remember our *government leaders* (I Tim. 2:1-2), and to pray for our *pastors, churches,* and *missionaries* (I Ths. 5:25; II Ths. 3:1; Jas. 5:16).

Everyone needs to take timeout each day for such physical needs as bathing, eating, and sleeping. Likewise, every Christian needs a special time each day for Bible reading and *prayer.*

V. PRAISE GOD

The word "praise" is found 248 times in the Bible. God desires to be praised by His people! Psalm 22:3 says, **"But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."** God INHABITS the praises of His people! Psalm 150:6 says, **"Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD."**

Hebrews 13:15 instructs us on *how* to praise our God: **"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name."** The key words here are "LIPS" and "THANKS". It is your Christian duty to use your *LIPS* to let God know and to let others know that God is a great God and that you are THANKFUL for His blessings.

This can be done in normal conversation or by singing. In Acts 16:25, Paul and Silas were in jail, yet they *sang praises unto God* in the presence of others. Romans 10:11 says, **"...Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."** God expects us to praise Him. When you love someone you speak highly of them. If you love God, you'll speak highly of Him by praising Him.

VI. BE AN INVOLVED CHURCH MEMBER

Just as a soldier belongs in the military service, a Christian belongs in a Bible-believing church. It is your Christian duty to be an active member of a local New Testament church. Hebrews 10:25 says, **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."** I Corinthians 16:2 and Acts 20:7 designate the first day of the week (Sunday) as the proper day for Christians to meet together for preaching and fellowship.

God expects Christians to assemble together on a regular basis to worship Him and to exhort one another. A true Christian will get tired of this world and its ways throughout the week, so

God has established the local church for our exhortation and edification.

Actually, the local church has three functions: (1) the *salvation* of sinners, (2) the *edification* of saints, and (3) the *glorification* of the Saviour. NEVER join a church that isn't striving for these three goals *(and plenty of them aren't!)*. The church is God's army on this earth, and God expects every Christian to be a *good soldier.* II Timothy 2:3-4 says, **"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."** Friend, a soldier is a man who has been disciplined and trained to work together with other soldiers in a fight against an enemy. The local church is not your enemy. *Satan is your enemy (I Peter 5:8)*, so God wants you on *HIS* team so you can fight the good fight against the Devil (II Tim. 4:7). Paul fought a good fight, and he did so by being *involved with* and *helping* local churches all of his Christian life.

Read your New Testament. The whole thing is about churches. Even the last book of the Bible is written to *seven churches*. The words "church" and "churches" are found over one hundred times in the New Testament. Friend, God is very interested in the work of the church. In fact, the church is the *BRIDE* of Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:23-32; Rev. 21:2, 9). How could you really be close to Jesus Christ and not care for His bride? Friend, God wants YOU involved in a *local Bible-believing church.* Television and radio evangelism may have some good to offer, but that isn't a church. A church is a *called-out group of believers* in Jesus Christ.

You say, *"Well, there are too many hypocrites down there."* That's *THEIR* problem, and God will deal with *THEM* about their sins, but YOU will give account for yourself (Rom. 14:12). God's word never gives us a good reason for not being involved in a local church ministry. Even with all their problems, Paul never advised the Corinthian Christians to get out of church. He taught them to deal with their problems and grow as Christians (Read I and II Corinthians). Our Lord loved the church and gave Himself for it (Eph. 5:25), and in Matthew 16:18 He said, **"...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** The church is God's winning team. If you want to be a

winning Christian for your Saviour, then join a good church, and support the pastor and members.

VII. GIVE TO GOD

In Luke 6:38 Jesus said, **"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."** This world is packed full of wicked and selfish people. God expects His people to be different. Anyone can be a TAKER, but it takes self discipline to be a good GIVER.

II Corinthians 9:7 says, **"...so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."** Just giving isn't enough to please God. He expects us to give *cheerfully*. There are basically three ways to give to God. You should give of your *time*, give of your *talents*, and give of your *treasures*.

Give of Your Time

Since you are bought with a price (I Cor. 6:19-20), you really have no time of your own. You have 168 hours per week, and God owns them all. You will give account for every wasted minute, and you will be rewarded for every minute that was well spent. Notice Paul's instruction from Ephesians 5: **"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." (Eph**. 5:15-17) We are told to REDEEM the time. Make the most of every minute. Someone once said, *"You cannot kill time without injuring eternity."*

Give of Your Talents

I Peter 4:11 says, **"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.**"

When I was in grammar school my teachers often conversed with my parents about my progress. I had the idea that I was doing well enough as long as I passed. My teachers would tell my parents, *"James is doing okay, but he is ABLE to do a lot better."* God isn't just monitoring our Christian service: He is also comparing our service to our ABILITY. You may very well be living a much more honorable Christian life than your neighbor, but *are you doing your BEST?* Are you using all of your God-given talents for His honor and glory? If you have a special talent, start praying that God will show you how to use it for Him. Bob Jones Sr. once said, *"It's always a sin to do less than your best."*

Give of Your Treasure

A common practice among Christians is *tithing.* To *tithe* is to give a *tenth*. The first occurrence of tithing in the Bible is in Genesis 14:20 where Abraham gives God a tenth of his possessions. Jacob also vows to tithe in Genesis 28:22. Tithing was also a requirement under the Mosaic law (Lev. 27:30-32; Num. 18:21-28; Deu. 14:22). A tenth of all income was to be given over to the Levitical priesthood for their living and for the maintenance of the Lord's service. The blessings of God were promised to those who were obedient to His laws of tithing. Malachi 3:8-10 says, **"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."**

Today, although we are no longer under the Mosaic law, Bible-believing Christians still practice tithing because God accepted tithes even *before* the law of Moses. If an Old Testament Jew, whose sins had not yet been cleansed, can give a tenth of his income to the Lord, how much more should we be willing to give, whose sins *have* been washed away in the blood of Christ?

Most Bible-believing churches consider tithing a *minimum* gift, which goes into a general fund to finance the basic expenses of the church, while special love offerings and missions are considered separate offerings altogether.

VIII. LIVE A HOLY LIFE

God is holy, so He expects His children to be holy. I Peter 1:16 says, **"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."** To be "holy" is to be *whole*, to be pure and blameless before God. It is to lack nothing in God's sight. A Christian is not just a "sinner saved by grace," as some teach. A Christian in the Bible is a *disciple*. **"...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."** (Acts 11:26) A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who has been *disciplined to FOLLOW Jesus Christ. We have been called to live HOLY LIVES, just as our Lord lived a holy life.* Notice these instructive words from II Corinthians chapter six:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (Vss. 14-17)

God demands HOLINESS. He is glorified when we live above sin and His light of holiness shines through us. We cannot be too careful. Paul said that we should **"Abstain from all appearance of evil."** (I Thes. 5:22) Even things that may LOOK evil can scar our Christian testimony, so God expects us to be watchful and live holy lives. He expects us to stay unspotted by this wicked world.

IX. ESTABLISH GOOD CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIPS

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17)

The last thing you need as a Christian is a bunch of worldly friends to hinder your spiritual growth. Amos 3:3 says, **"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"** There's no point in having close friends who aren't spiritual. Acquaintances and distant friends are fine, but your closest friends should be

God-fearing Christians. Keep praying for your old friends and witnessing to them, but make some new friends who are *God's* friends. A Christian's friends should be saved people who love God and understand His purpose and plan in life. They'll be a great encouragement and comfort to you in life.

X. LEARN TO GET ALONG WITH GOD'S PEOPLE

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:1-3)

The best way to get along with people is to *want* to get along with them. Satan delights in reaching our hearts through our old nature and causing us to look for sins and faults among God's people. Remember, it is Satan who accuses the brethren, not you (Rev. 12:10). A sensitive and touchy spirit that is easily offended by others is *not* the Holy Spirit. **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."** (Gal. 5:22-23) We need to work hard and really try to get along with the brethren. Consider these fourteen items from God's word:

1. Love one another - John 15:12, 17
2. Confess faults to one another - Jas 5:16
3. Pray for one another - Jas 5:16
4. Prefer one another - Rom 12:10
5. Receive one another - Rom 5:7
6. Admonish one another - Rom 15:14
7. Serve one another - Gal. 1:3
8. Forbear one another - Eph. 4:2
9. Forgive one another - Eph. 4:32
10. Edify one another - I Ths. 5:11
11. Consider one another - Heb. 10:24
12. Exort one another - Heb. 3;13
13. Care for one another - I Cor. 12:25
14. Comfort one another - I Ths. 4:18

As someone has said, *"You're going to live forever with God's people; so you may as well learn to get along with them!"* I

have learned that I can get along with *anyone* whom I *want* to get along with.

XI. SUBMIT TO AUTHORITIES

The Bible is filled with instruction on how Christians are to respect and obey their appointed authorities. These authorities fall into four general categories: the home, the government, the employer, and the church.

In the home, wives are told to submit to their husbands (Eph. 5:22-25), and children are told to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1-3). The "times" may have changed, but God and His words have not changed. The ideal Christian home is a home where everyone fears God under the leadership of a God-honoring Christian man.

The government is also an appointed authority of God. Romans 13:1-4 says, **"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."**

Governments were ordained of God, and He often deals with men through governments. It is our Christian duty to respect those who lead our local, state, and national governments. Sometimes we cannot honestly respect the people in office, but we can still respect the *position* that they hold and we can pray for them. Paul writes these words to Timothy: **"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."** (I Tim. 2:1-2) Christians need to behave themselves by obeying their leaders and praying for them (Tit. 3:1; Jude 1:8; II Pet. 2:10-11; I Pet. 2:13-17), because it was GOD Who made them leaders. We honor God by honoring our leaders.

God also expects us to submit to our employers and not be trouble makers. I Timothy 6:1-2 even commands servants to submit to their masters. John the Baptist preached that the Roman soldiers should be content with their wages (Luke 3:14). Unless an employer requires an employee to violate God's law, he is to be content, remain humble, and submit. If he isn't willing to submit, then he can always look for a new job.

Then there are authorities within the church. Hebrews 13:17 says, **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."** We are to honor God by showing true respect for our spiritual leaders. Your pastor, your deacons, and elders are men whom God has ordained to serve as church leaders. Remember to honor God by praying for them and respecting their authority. If you cannot honestly respect your church leaders, then find a new church. NEVER rebel against God's authorities! Don't start trouble. Just quietly behave yourself and find a new church. God always blesses those who submit to authority, because *all authority comes from God.*

XII. BE A CHRISTIAN WITNESS

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

A *witness* is a person who tells what he knows. Our job is to tell lost people what we know about the Lord Jesus Christ and His saving grace. A religion worth having is a religion worth propagating. If you are saved, it's because someone took the time to witness to you. Well, YOU should witness to others. Tell others what Jesus has done for you, and what He can do for them. Learn some good salvation verses from your Bible and tell others!

We will deal with this subject in much greater detail in our next lesson, *Leading Others to Christ.*

Lesson Review

1. Where in the Bible does Jesus say for you to take up your cross and follow Him?

2. The eunuch had to believe on Christ before he could be baptized. This is found in:

a. Acts 16
b. Acts 8
c. Acts 2

3. "The _____ of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever." (Psa 111:10)

4. How often are God's people supposed to meditate on God's word?

5. **"...men ought always to pray, and not to faint."** These words are found in:

a. Mark 1:35
b. John 6:37
c. Luke 18:1

6. True or False? Peter said we should pray without ceasing.

7. How do we praise God?

a. with our hearts
b. by obeying Him
c. with our lips
d. with true prayer

8. What verse in Hebrews says that we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together?

9. What are the three ways to give to God?

1.
2.
3.

10. Give one Scripture reference on tithing?

11. I Peter 1:16 speaks about:

a. giving to God
b. forgiving others
c. being honest
d. being holy

12. Where does the Bible say for us to abstain from all appearance of evil?

13. Where does the Bible speak of the fruit of the Spirit?

14. "the powers that be are _____ ___ _____...."

15. What are the three main authorities that God has ordained upon the earth?

16. Hebrews 13:17 says:

a. pray for them that have the rule over you...
b. obey them that have the rule over you...
c. resist them that have the rule over you...

17. True or False? A witness is a person who leads others to Christ.

Suggested Memory Verses: Luke 9:23, Psalm 119:11, I Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 6:38, I Peter 1:16, II Corinthians 5:17

Lesson VII

Leading Others to Christ

Proverbs 11:30 says, **"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise."** It is the duty of every Christian to work toward winning others to Christ. In Acts 1:8, our Lord Jesus Christ told His followers, **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."** It is our duty to witness to the lost about Jesus Christ and His saving grace. This lesson has been prepared to help you be more equipped to deal with lost people with the word of God.

Unfortunately, most of the witnessing that you do in your Christian life will not lead a person to Christ. Most witnessing will simply be a matter of you letting someone know that they are a sinner, Christ died for them, and He wants to save them. You may do this verbally, or you may simply leave someone a tract or write a letter. Either way, most people will ignore you for the most part and reject Christ. Regardless, it is still our duty to be a WITNESS. A witness is not a person who wins others, but simply a person who TELLS WHAT HE KNOWS. That's our duty--to tell the lost what we know about Jesus Christ and His saving grace. This point is well made in Ezekiel 3:17-19: **"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."** It is not our duty to win everyone, but it is our duty to WARN them. Paul said in Acts 20:26-27 that he was pure from the blood of all men because he had declared unto them the whole counsel of God. That's our job--*to tell the world about Jesus Christ.*

Jesus compared this to fishing in Matthew 4:19 when He said, **"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."** Now immediately we learn three things from this command: (1) Most

men will never "bite", (2) some will "get away," and (3) we will "catch" some.

If I choose to go fishing, I surely know that most of the fish in the lake will never bite my hook. I'd be a fool to think that every fish is out there just waiting for my hook and bait to hit the water. I just accept the fact that most won't care to "bite."

Now some will bite, and I can expect that. But I cannot expect to *catch* each fish that bites. Some, perhaps even most, will get away. They will steal my bait, and I'll have to bait my hook again and keep trying. I'd be foolish to get discouraged and quit fishing just because some fish got away.

A fisherman *will* catch some fish. A quitter may never catch any, but a person who fishes regularly *will* catch some fish. There is simply no way you can fish every day and never catch a fish. You say, "I haven't caught a fish all year." That's because you haven't been fishing every day. You've went a few times, perhaps several times, but not every day. If you fish every day you *will* catch fish.

The same is true in witnessing. If you consistently witness and pray, you *will* lead people to Christ. You may not always be the person to open the Bible and deal with them from the Scriptures, but you will see souls saved through your continual witness. Sometimes you may be the person to tell them about Christ, show them the Scriptures, and pray with them as they call upon the Lord for salvation. It is at these moments that Satan fights the hardest, so a good knowledge of God's word will do wonders. There's nothing like taking a Bible and seeing a person's eyes light up as they begin to really understand what you show them about salvation.

I. CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE WITNESSING

Take your Bible and read Acts 8:26-40. This is the story of the Ethiopian eunuch who became a Christian after Phillip witnessed to him about Christ. This story offers several good points about effective witnessing. First, we'll consider some points from the standpoint of Phillip, the Christian witness. Then we'll consider three points from the eunuch's standpoint. Thirdly, we'll examine this event from the standpoint of the Holy Spirit. When all is considered, we will have studied an ideal situation for effective witnessing.

<u>From Phillip's Standpoint</u>

He responded to the Holy Spirit's leadership

In verse 26, the Holy Spirit told Phillip to **"arise and go."** Then in verse 27 Phillip **"arose and went."** Rather than wiggle out of the opportunity, Phillip simply obeyed God's lead. He asked no questions, and he made no excuses. He "arose and went."

When God speaks to your heart about witnessing to a person, then ARISE and GO. You say, "Well, how do I know it's God speaking to me?" Well, who else would it be? Do you think *Satan* wants you to witness to someone about Christ? Follow God's lead!

He proceeded tactfully

Notice the wisdom that Phillip used in verse 30. He didn't run up to the chariot and yell "You're going to Hell if you don't repent!" This wasn't the time and place for that. Phillip used some godly wisdom by taking advantage of the moment. The eunuch was already reading his Bible, so Phillip stepped in real casual and smooth and simply said, **"Understandest thou what thou readest?"** Now a conversation had been opened.

He used the Scriptures

In verses 32 through 35 we see that the eunuch was reading Isaiah 53, so Phillip used Isaiah 53 to teach this man about Christ. He didn't go into long-winded stories about his own "religious experience." Phillip simply took God's word and gave this man the answer he was seeking. No man-made method can beat the Scriptures. Just learn the Book and use it (Heb. 4:12).

He presented the Lord Jesus Christ

Verse 35 says that Phillip **"preached unto him Jesus."** Phillip stuck to the subject at hand, Jesus Christ, and avoided discussions that weren't relevant to this man getting saved. Jesus told us to be witnesses *unto Him* (Acts 1:8). We should always stick to the subject and preach Jesus.

He followed through to completion

In verses 36 through 39 we see that Phillip stayed there until the Holy Spirit led him away. He didn't just witness and then leave. Phillip wanted RESULTS. He wanted to see this man trust Christ as Saviour, so he stayed right on through the end.

If you find yourself making some real progress with a lost person, STAY THERE and keep giving them the word! Stick with the subjects of sin and the Saviour, and watch God soften that heart and bring them to a genuine conversion.

<u>From the Eunuch's Standpoint</u>

He was open to the truth

This man had come to Jerusalem to worship (vs. 27). From this we can see that he was *looking for truth*. Why didn't he stay home and worship the gods of North Africa? He knew there was more. He knew there was a true God, and he sought to know more about Him. To really be effective with a person, that person must be seeking for the truth. Jesus said *seek* and ye shall find (Mat. 7:7).

He needed to understand the word

In verses 30 and 31, Phillip wants to make sure that this man understands the Scripture. Just reading a few verses isn't enough. We need to do our best to help the lost *understand* New Testament salvation. Too many "soul-winners" have a neat little system of selected Bible verses that they use on people without ever making sure that these verses are really understood. The "Roman's Road" is fine, but make sure the lost person *understands* it. It may be necessary to present many other portions of Scripture just to properly explain the Roman's Road.

He had to believe

Notice in verse 36 the eunuch desired to be baptized. No doubt, many preachers today would have went right ahead and baptized him without asking any questions, but not Phillip. Phillip knew that mere baptism couldn't save anyone, so in verse 37 he

made sure that this man BELIEVED. He had just preached to him from Isaiah 53 (the crucifixion), and now he wanted to know if the eunuch believed, if he accepted his message. The eunuch confessed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God.

We need to make sure that the lost believe on Christ, and *mental* belief isn't enough (James 2:19). Before a man can be saved, he must believe FROM THE HEART. Romans 6:17 says, **"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."** We need to make sure a person really means business. We need to make sure they *really believe* (Acts 16:30-31; John 1:12; Rom. 10:9-10; I Cor. 1:21).

<u>From the Holy Spirit's Standpoint</u>

He led Phillip to the right place

Notice in verse 29 that God knew exactly *where* Phillip needed to be. God didn't tell him why, but He did command Phillip to go to the chariot. Phillip had no idea that a man was about to be saved, but he still obeyed God and trusted His leadership.

He led Phillip to the right man

God made arrangements for Phillip and the eunuch to have this conversation. He knew that the eunuch needed the Gospel and that he was ready to receive it. We need to pray that God will lead us to those who are most ready. Some are already being dealt with by the Holy Spirit, and these are often the best people to speak to about Christ.

He led Phillip to the right Scripture

Certainly, it was God's plan for Isaiah 53 to be already opened right there in the chariot. Phillip didn't have to plan everything and rehearse all of his words. The Holy Spirit led the way, and Phillip followed His lead.

He led Phillip to the right result

In verse 39, we have a man saved and rejoicing. That's the work of God. Only God can give true inner joy. Romans 14:17 says, **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."** When a man is really saved, he has joy because he has peace with God.

II. AN IDEAL CONVERSION

In this section we're going to "listen in" on an ideal conversation between a lost person and an experienced Christian witness. Tim is a lost man, while Don is an experienced student of the word. Pay close attention to how Don uses God's word in piercing Tim's heart.

DON: Tim, let me give you something to read when you get a chance.

TIM: What is it?

DON: It's a Gospel tract. It tells you about Jesus Christ and how He paid for your sins on Calvary. By the way, are you a Christian?

TIM: Yeah, I guess so.

DON: Well, let me ask you this. *If you died right now, are you 100% sure that you wouldn't go to Hell?*

TIM: Well, of course not! No one can be 100% sure of that!

DON: Let me show you something from God's word. Do you believe God's word?

TIM: Sure, I believe the Bible.

DON: Ok, this is I John 5:13--already highlighted for you. Would you read it out loud?

TIM: It says, **"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."**

DON: Did it say you can KNOW that you have eternal life?

TIM: Well, I don't think anyone can KNOW.

DON: What did the verse say?

TIM: But, how can you KNOW before you die? That's impossible!

DON: I thought you *believed the Bible, Tim?*

TIM: Well, I do, but...

DON: What do you mean "BUT"? Either you believe it or you don't. Here, read II Timothy 1:12.

TIM: **"...I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."**

DON: Did Paul say that no one could know for sure?

TIM: Well...uh...no.

DON: Then why do you say that? God never told you to say it, so why do you say it?

TIM: I just don't see how....

DON: That's the trouble, Tim. You're trying to understand God without God's word. It cannot be done. God's word reveals God's will and His plan for you and I. That plan includes knowing Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour. Tim, has there ever been a time when you really received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour?

TIM: Yeah, I've been a church member for years, since I was a kid.

DON: That's not what I'm asking. Here, read this verse, John 3:3.

TIM: **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

DON: Did Jesus say anything about joining a church or being a good person?

TIM: Well, no.

DON: Tim, salvation is a NEW BIRTH. It's a SPIRITUAL birth in Jesus Christ. Just as you were once born physically, you must also be born *spiritually*.

TIM: But why? Why is that even necessary?

DON: Well, let me show you why from God's word. Here, read Romans 5:12.

TIM: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"**

DON: You see, because of Adam's sin in Eden (Gen. 3) he received a sin nature. He lost fellowship with God. In fact, since that day, every human being born into this world has been born with a sin nature (except for Jesus Christ), because everyone is a child of Adam (Genesis 5:3; I Cor. 1:22).

TIM: So, everyone is born a sinner because of Adam's sin?

DON: Exactly! What does Romans 3:10 tell you?

TIM: **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:"**

DON: That's right. Now read verse 23.

TIM: **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"**

DON: Sin has separated man from God. Because of sin we are not children of God (John 8:44; I John 3:10). Our righteousness is no good. Romans 10:3 says, **"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."** Isaiah 64:6 says that your righteousness is as **"filthy rags."** Tim, God isn't wanting you to establish *your own* righteousness! He wants you to FORSAKE your own righteousness and turn to Jesus Christ!

TIM: But what about good people like Ghandi or the Pope?

DON: What did Romans 3:23 say? Did it not say that ALL have sinned and come short of God's glory?

TIM: Yes.

DON: Then even these men must be born again. There are no exceptions. Jesus said ye MUST be born again. But here is the good news. Read Romans 5:8-9.

TIM: **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."**

DON: God knew your hopeless condition, so He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to shed His sinless blood to PAY for your sins. YOUR SIN DEBT HAS BEEN PAID! You couldn't pay it, so Christ paid it for you! All you have to do is REPENT of your sins (Luke 13:3) and trust Christ to save you.

TIM: But, still, I don't see how that can happen. I mean, you're still the same person no matter what you do.

DON: No, you're still the same PHYSICALLY, but spiritually, a Christian is a "new creature" in Christ (II Cor. 5:17). Here, read John 1:12.

TIM: **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"**

DON: See, when you really BELIEVE on Christ you RECEIVE Him. That is, in your heart, you totally trust Him alone to save you. You reject everyone else, and you reject yourself. Only Christ can save you (John 14:6). Once you believe on Christ you become a son of God, a member of God's family. Here, this is I John 3:2. Read it, please.

TIM: **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."**

DON: You see, those who have RECEIVED Jesus Christ by BELIEVING on Him have been BORN AGAIN into God's family as God's SONS.

TIM: Well, what about baptism? Don't you have to be baptized too?

DON: Jesus commanded baptism (Mat. 28:18-19), but not for salvation. Baptism is for BELIEVERS only (Acts 8:37). What does Paul say in Ephesians 2:8-9?

TIM: **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

DON: Many important things should follow one's salvation, such as baptism, church membership, Bible reading, prayer, and clean living, but none of these can SAVE you. You are saved by FAITH in the finished work of Christ.

TIM: That's it, just FAITH in what Jesus has already done?

DON: That's it! You're saved just like the dying thief was saved. He simply called upon the Lord for salvation, and Jesus saved him (Luke 23:39-43). Here, read Romans 10:9-10:

TIM: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."**

DON: Earlier in the book of Romans, in chapter 4, verse 25, Paul said that Jesus was **"...was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.** He was RAISED for our justification, so in 10:9-10 Paul speaks of BELIEVING that God raised Him. Why? Because He can JUSTIFY you if you will believe. Would you like to receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour right now?

TIM: Right now? Shouldn't I wait till Sunday and do it at church?

DON: No, II Corinthians 6:2 says, **"...now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)** The fact that God is showing you the truth TODAY is proof that He wants to save you today. Besides, you could be dead before Sunday! You could be in Hell before sundown, Tim, so RIGHT NOW is the time to turn from sin and turn TO Jesus Christ! How about it? Would you like to pray right now, and receive Christ as your Saviour?

TIM: Well, I don't want to go to Hell!

DON: Jesus doesn't want you to go to Hell either (II Peter 3:9), so why not call upon Him right now. Here, read Romans 10:13.

TIM: **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."** Well, how do I call upon Him? What do I say?

DON: You simply pray in your own words and tell God that you know you are a sinner, you know you can't save yourself, and you believe that Jesus Christ is your only hope for Salvation. Then ask him to cleanse you from all sin, and make you one of His own.

TIM: Will I be saved then?

DON: If you really mean it. You have God's promise that if your really BELIEVE in your heart you will be saved. Would you like to be saved?

TIM: Yes, for the first time in my life, this really makes sense. Yes, I want to be saved.

DON: Ok, let's pray. Father, I thank you for the opportunity to present the Gospel to Tim. We've read your word and we your promises. Lord, I thank you for opening Tim's eyes that he might understand the simplicity of true salvation, and I thank you that he realizes his lost condition and that he wants to be saved--he wants to be a child of God and live for you. Tim, while we pray, do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he shed His blood on Calvary's cross to pay for your sins?

TIM: Yes.

DON: Do you believe that He rose from the grave and that He sits in Heaven right now, and that He can save your soul?

TIM: Yes

DON: Do you believe that anyone in this world can save you other than Jesus Christ?

TIM: No.

DON: Then, in your own words, tell the Lord right now that you know you're a sinner, and ask Him to come into your heart and wash away all your sins. Ask Him to give you the new birth and make you a new creature in Christ.

TIM: Lord, I know I'm a sinner, and I know that Jesus alone can save me. Lord, come into my heart and wash away all my sin. Make me a child of God. Make me a part of your family--a new creature in Christ. Help me to be a good Christian and serve you faithfully. In Jesus name, Amen.

DON: Did you really mean that?

TIM: Yes, I really meant it.

DON: Then you are now a member of God's family. You've done what God told you to do, and God has done what He promised. He just washed your sins away. He no longer sees you as a sinner, but as His own child, in fellowship with Him.

TIM: That's amazing. I feel all different inside!

DON: That's because YOUR SINS ARE GONE, and God's Spirit has moved in to stay (Eph. 4:30). Let me ask you something. *If you died right now, are you 100% sure that you wouldn't go to Hell?*

TIM: Absolutely!

III. SOME SCRIPTURE "TOOLS"

Every Christian should be familiar with a good many verses of Scripture that deal with sin and salvation. Some of these you should be able to quote from memory to anyone at anytime, while others you should at least be able to find in the Bible to show someone.

The Roman's Road

Romans 3:10: **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:"**

Romans 3:23: **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"**

Romans 5:12: **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"**

Romans 5:8: **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

Romans 6:23: **"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."**

Romans 10:13: **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."**

Romans 10:9-10: **"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."**

Believing

John 3:16: **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."**

John 5:24: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."**

Acts 16:31: **"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."**

John 1:12: **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"**

John 11:25-26: **"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"**

John 3:36: **"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."**

John 3:18: **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."**

Works Can't Save

Romans 4:5: **"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."**

Ephesians 2:8-9: **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"**

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 Ghost;"**

Romans 11:6: **"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."**

Galatians 2:16: **"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."**

Repentance

Luke 13:3: **"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."**

Acts 17:30: **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:"**

II Peter 3:9: **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."**

Mark 6:12: **"And they went out, and preached that men should repent."**

Hell

Luke 16:23: **"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."**

Mark 9:44: **"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."**

Matthew 25:41: **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"**

Revelation 20:15: **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**

Matthew 13:42: **"And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."**

Eternal Security

Ephesians 4:30: **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption**."

John 10:28-29: **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."**

Philippians 1:6: **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"**

John 6:37: **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."**

Romans 8:38-39: **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

The Blood of Christ

Revelation 1:5: **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"**

Revelation 5:9: **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;"**

Colossians 1:14: **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"**

Romans 3:25: **"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"**

Hebrews 9:14: **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**

The Five Facts of Life

In closing, always remember that there are *five basic truths* that a sinner needs to realize, and the Scripture already presented can be used to get these truths across. No matter how you do it, make sure the following facts are well understood:

1. You are a sinner.
2. You will die a sinner.
3. You will be judged a sinner.
4. You will be condemned a sinner.
5. Your only hope is the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. Following Salvation

Once a person has received Christ as Saviour, they should be encouraged to follow God's commands. The material covered in Lesson VI should be used to show the new Christian what God expects of them. Baptism, church membership, Bible reading and prayer should be highly emphasized.

A good way to interest a new Christian in God's word is to encourage them to take a good Bible course, such as this one, with you being their instructor.

Lesson Review:

1. Where in the Bible did Jesus say that we are to be "witnesses" unto Him?

2. Who in the Bible said that he was pure from the blood of all men?

3. Where do we read about the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch?

4. What was the subject of Phillip's message to the eunuch?

5. How do we see the Holy Spirit's leading in the story of the eunuch?

6. If you witness to someone who gives a shallow Christian testimony, what is a good question to ask?

7. Does I John 3:13 tell us that we can KNOW that we are saved?

8. Where does the Bible say that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God?

9. What are the seven portions of Scripture which make up the Roman's Road?

10. Please give two New Testament references on repentance.

11. Please give two New Testament references on the Blood.

12. Please give two New Testament references on Hell.

13. Please give two New Testament references on Eternal Security.

14. Please give two New Testament references on Believing on Christ.

15. What are the five basic facts that you need to get across to any lost person?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Memory Verses: Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30, Eph. 4:30; Heb. 9:14; Rev. 20:15

Lesson VIII

The Doctrines of Heaven and Hell

In this lesson we will take up the subjects of Heaven and Hell. Due to the fact that most Christians have their roots in this world, there is a sad ignorance about both of these subjects among God's people. Both Heaven and Hell are *literal* and *physical* places, both are *eternal* places, and both are spoken of by the Lord Jesus Christ. These two words combined are found over 600 times in God's word, and such language as "a furnace of fire," "everlasting fire," and "affections on things above" is found a great many more. Heaven and Hell are very REAL in the Bible. Every Christian should be firmly grounded in these doctrines.

For a change of pace, we shall cover these two subjects in a question/answer format.

I. THE DOCTRINE OF HEAVEN

Technically speaking, there are THREE Heavens in Scripture. The first heaven is the earth's atmosphere where birds fly (Gen. 1:20). The second heaven is what we call space, where the sun, moon, and stars are located (Gen. 1:17). Then we have the third Heaven, the actual abode of God Himself, the "Most Holy Place" in all of God's creation. Paul states in II Corinthians 12:2 that he was once caught UP to the third Heaven: **"I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God**

knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (II Cor. 12:2-4) It is this place, the THIRD Heaven, that we are discussing in this lesson.

Where is Heaven?

We know Heaven is "up" for Paul said so in II Corinthians 12:2. This will make more sense as we see how God's word establishes an absolute direction for the location of Heaven. Isaiah 14:13 records the intentions of the evil Lucifer in the very beginning: **"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:" (Isa. 14:13)** He planned to take over God's kingdom, and he planned to do so by going NORTH.

Notice these interesting words in Psalm 75:6-7: **" For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."** Notice how "God" is used as a substitute for "North." The verses said East...West...South....God! Why? Because Heaven is in the NORTH. Santa Claus isn't in the North; HEAVEN is in the North!

Psalm 48:2 says, **"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."** Where's the city of the great King? On the "sides of the north." Where did Lucifer want to go? To the "sides of the north." The Bible is very clear about the direction of Heaven. It is in, or beyond, the *Northern* regions of this universe.

How Do We Know Heaven Is A Literal Place?

Simply because God's word never speaks of Heaven as being anything but literal. The notion that Heaven is a figurative expression is man's foolish philosophy. Paul said he WENT there. How could he go there if it isn't literal? Revelation chapters 21 and 22 speak of New Jerusalem being in Heaven. How could this be true if Heaven were not literal? Jesus said He was going to prepare a PLACE for us (John 14:1-3). If Heaven isn't literal,

then what is it? The Bible always speaks of Heaven as a LITERAL PLACE. We have no authority to change it.

Who and What Is in Heaven?

God the Father is in Heaven, according to the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:9: **"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."** God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is currently sitting in Heaven on the right hand of God the Father: **"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."** (Heb. 10:12; also see Mark 16:19, Acts 2:33, and Col. 3:1) God the Holy Spirit is EVERYWHERE (Psa. 139:7-10), so He too is in Heaven. In fact, I John 5:7 says, **"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."** So the Holy Trinity is in Heaven.

In addition to this, Matthew 22:30 tells us that God's angels are "in Heaven". Ezekiel chapters 1 and 10 speak of the Cheribum creatures surrounding God's throne, as does Revelation chapter 4. Then Isaiah chapter 6 speaks of the Seraphim creatures being there.

The souls of God's saints are in Heaven. II Corinthians 5:8 says, **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."**

Our "treasure" for serving God is in Heaven. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20, **"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."** Colossians 3:2 tells us to set our affections on THINGS ABOVE, not on the things of earth.

According to Revelation 21:2, New Jerusalem is in Heaven, and will one day come down to be inhabited in Eternity. Heaven is a real place prepared for a real people.

Will We Recognize One Another in Heaven?

Yes we will. Notice Paul's words from I Corinthians 13:10-12: **"But when that which is perfect is come, then that**

which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Our knowledge and wisdom will be greatly increased in Heaven. Our present knowledge is only partial, but will one day be complete.

In Matthew 17, Moses and Elijah were recognized by the disciples. David found comfort in the fact that he would one day go to be with his son (II Sam. 12:23). How could this be of any comfort if he wouldn't recognize him? We recognize one another today, so Heaven's knowledge will be far better.

Do People in Heaven Know about Present Earthly Affairs?

The words of Revelation 6:10 seem to indicate that people in Heaven do have access to some of the affairs of this world. **"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"** They knew that God's wrath had not yet been poured out on the earth, and they knew about the prayers of the saints on the earth. Verse 11 goes on to inform these souls that they must wait until more saints are killed. So they had at least SOME knowledge of earthly affairs.

Will There Be Marriages and Families in Heaven?

No. In Matthew chapter 22 the Sadducees question Jesus about this very subject. In verse 30 Jesus answers by saying, **"For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."** The angels in Heaven do not marry and have families, so we will not marry and have families. Marriage and family is a passing scene. God has much greater things in store for those who love Him (I Cor. 2:9).

What Will Our New Bodies Be Like?

There are two keys to answering this question. One is found in the above portion of Scripture: **"...but are as the angels**

of God in heaven." What are the angels like? Some have supposed that all angels are "sexless" since they do not marry, but the Scriptures declare otherwise. God the Father is MALE, and God the Son is MALE, and God the Holy Spirit is MALE. The first human being God created was MALE (Gen. 2:7), so why would angels not be male?

All through the Bible angels are spoken of in the masculine gender (Jud. 13:3, 6, 8, 15; Gen. 18:2, 16, 22; 19:1, 5, 12; Luke 24:4; Acts 1:10; Rev. 21:17). Nowhere do we read of female angels or sexless angels. The angels of the Bible always have a manly appearance.

Another little known fact is that angels do not have wings. Every angel in the Bible appears as a man. Hebrews 13:2 says that **"some have entertained angels unawares."** That is, some were in the presence of angels and did not know it. How would this be possible if angels had large stork wings as we so often see them drawn? It would be impossible. Angels in the Bible appear as normal looking men, usually in white apparel. Jesus said we will be as the angels.

The second key to understanding our resurrection body is found in I John 3:1-2: **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."** Notice that we are SONS of God, not "daughters and sons." We are SONS of God, and verse two says that we shall be like HIM. We shall be LIKE JESUS CHRIST. He is THE Son of God, and His followers are "sons" of God (John 1:12). Jesus came forth with a new glorified and incorruptible body, so we will do likewise. I Corinthians 15:52-53 says, **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."** Jesus lives forever in His resurrection body, so we shall live forever in ours.

Now, getting this all together, we can get a pretty good glimpse at our new glorified bodies:

1. Our bodies will be INCORRUPTIBLE. We will never be sick or die again (Rev. 21:4).

2. Our bodies will be MALE. No need for two sexes in Heaven since we cannot marry in Heaven (Mat. 22:30).

3. Our bodies will be young in appearance, probably 33 years old, the age of our Lord's resurrection body. How "old" do you suppose Adam looked when God first created Him? Maybe he appeared as a man of 33 years.

4. Our bodies will have NO BLOOD. Jesus' resurrection body consisted of FLESH and BONE (Luke 24:39), because all of His blood was shed at Calvary. Our blood is corruptible, so it cannot go to Heaven (I Cor. 15:50).

5. Our new bodies will evidently have the ability to fly faster than the speed of light. In His resurrection body, Jesus went all the way to the Third Heaven and back in just a few hours (John 20:17; Mat. 28:9).

6. Our new bodies will allow us to APPEAR and DISAPPEAR at will, and to move through solid objects (John 20:26; Luke 24:31).

If the Bible means what it says (and I believe it does), then the above statements are not at all far-fetched. Men today dream about such abilities, and God will grant these abilities to those who come to Him through His Son Jesus Christ.

What Will We Do in Heaven?

I believe the answer is well stated in Revelation 5:8-10: **"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."**

This passage speaks of three distinct things that we will do in Heaven. We will WORSHIP GOD, we will PRAISE GOD, and we will REIGN IN GOD'S KINGDOM.

In the very beginning, on creation's morning, we find that God was worshiped and praised by His creation. Job 38:4-7 says that **"...the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."**

Lucifer desired to take over God's kingdom, but was unsuccessful. God has always maintained His power and authority, and we who serve Him today will have the honor of being on His side and in His kingdom in eternity!

Notice Revelation 11:15-18: **"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."**

When Jesus returns we will be rewarded and then we will REIGN with Him in His kingdom. Revelation 22:5 says, **"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."** On this side of glory we must submit to the wicked powers that be. We often find ourselves troubled with the actions of our leaders and with the general condition of our country. In Heaven, everything will change. Things will be done GOD'S WAY, and we will assist Him in ruling in His kingdom. We will worship, praise, and reign forever!

II. THE DOCTRINE OF HELL

In God's word, hell is a literal and physical place which burns with a fire which shall never be quenched. It is not a "state of mind," as some teach, nor is it a "parable," as others teach. Hell is just as real as Heaven. Hell is just as literal and physical as the ground that we walk upon and the houses that we inhabit. Yet, more and more preachers are leaving hell out of their preaching and teaching. Cartoonists draw silly little comic pictures from their shallow minds about hell, never really believing that such a place exists, and certainly never realizing how their foolish

illustration doesn't even begin to accurately depict the hell of the Bible. People use "hell" as a curse word, not realizing that it is their very HOME that they are speaking of! Friend, hell is no joke. Hell is real, and we really have a duty to warn people about it while we still can. Jesus preached more about hell than about Heaven for He knew very well that such a place exists, and that billions more would end up there if not for His own sacrifice on Calvary.

Why Did God Create Hell?

Hell was not originally created for man. **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."** (Mat. 25:41) Revelation 20:10 says, **" And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."** Hell was originally created for the devil and his angels, not man. Man was sinless when God first made him, so hell was not for him. Then man chose to follow Satan and sin against God, so God had no choice but to sentence disobedient man to the fires of hell. Satan will find his eternal home in the fires of hell, as will those who follow him. God is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9), but He will allow a person to burn in hell for rejecting Christ.

Where Is Hell?

Just as Heaven is a literal and physical place, so is hell. The Bible teaches that hell is in the core of the earth. Note the following: **"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."** (Deut 32:22) Amos 9:2 says, **"Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down."** Where is hell? It is *straight down* under your feet! In Numbers chapter 16, when God wanted to judge the followers of Korah, the ground open up and they all went *down* alive in the pit. Friend, hell is not in some far away dimension of some sort. Hell is a literal and physical place under

your feet. Currently, your physical feet walk upon a physical earth, thus preventing you from gravitating downward to hell. But one day your soul, which is not physical, will leave your body, and that soul will drop straight into hell unless it has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

What Is Hell Like?

Many today are trying to "air condition" hell so it doesn't seem so bad, but the Bible paints a very clear picture for all to see. Hell is a horrible place!

"...the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (Luke 16:22-24) If you go to Hell, you will suffer. That's what Hell is for. Just as the rich man of Luke 16, you'll be TORMENTED IN FLAMES. A sinner closes his eyes in death, and the Devil has his soul to torment in Hell forever.

Many claim that the Luke 16 story of Lazarus and the rich man is only a parable, and does not speak of a literal hell. This is a very shallow argument for three reasons:

(1) Parables in the Bible do not use names, yet this one does.
(2) Jesus didn't say it was a parable. He said there was a CERTAIN rich man and a beggar named Lazarus.
(3) Even if this were a parable there are still many other portions of Scripture which speak of hell as a literal burning place. There's no way around it. Hell is real, and people suffer there all the time.

You say, "God wouldn't allow such a thing to happen." Sure He will! God allows people to suffer all the time. God allowed Hitler to murder 6,000,000 Jews, did He not? God allowed Herod to kill the children under two years old, did He not (Matthew 2)? If God will allow innocent babies to be murdered, then why wouldn't He allow a Christ rejecting sinner to burn in Hell? Did God not allow Jesus Christ, an innocent and sinless man, to be beaten and murdered? If God will allow His only begotten Son to suffer and be murdered, then why should God

save a sinner from Hell when he chooses not to trust Christ as Saviour? Listen, friend, GOD WILL ALLOW YOU TO GO TO HELL AND BURN IF YOU ARE NOT BORN AGAIN. It happens all the time. **"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."** (Mark 9:43-48)

The suffering of Hell is horrible. Not only is there physical suffering, but there is also a great deal of *mental* suffering. You'll always remember your earthly life. You'll remember your family and your friends. You'll remember your spouse and your children. Just as the rich man in Luke 16, you'll remember it all! You'll also remember the chances that you had to be saved. You'll remember reading these words, and you'll remember your thoughts and comments about these words. In Hell, you will always remember the moment that you rejected Jesus Christ as your Saviour. All sinners go to Hell, and they go there to suffer.

Isn't Hell Really the Grave?

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Hell is only the grave that everyone goes to at death. They believe that the saved ones in the graves will be given eternal life on earth after the White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20:11-15, while the unsaved in the graves will be *annihilated* once and for all in the Lake of Fire. These people refuse to believe that God will punish the wicked forever in the Lake of Fire. Of course, the Scriptures say something entirely different:

(1) There is no FIRE in the grave, but there certainly is fire in the "hell" of the Bible (Luke 16:23; Deu. 32:22; Mat. 5:22; 18:9; Jas. 3:6).

(2) No one PRAYS from the grave, but Hell has prayer (Luke 16:24; Jon. 2:2).
(3) Hell was originally made for the Devil and his angels (Mat. 25:41), but the grave was not.
(4) A Christian's SOUL does not go to the grave at death (Phi. 1:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; 1 Ths. 5:10). Only the BODY goes to the grave. An unsaved man's body also goes to the grave at death, but his SOUL goes to a place of TORMENT and FLAMES (Luke 16:22-23).
(5) The grave cannot possibly be Hell because Jesus said it would be better to enter into life (eternal life) without a hand, a foot, or an eye, than to go to Hell (Mat. 18:8-9). How could it be "better" if Hell is only the grave where there is no suffering at all? According to Jesus Christ, Hell is a lot WORSE than losing a hand, a foot, or an eye forever.
(6) Annihilation cannot be true because the Bible uses such terms as "shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2) and "torment . . . forever" (Rev. 14:11). Shame and torment are sufferings that are experienced by a LIVING BEING--*not an annihilated corpse.*

God is an ETERNAL Being, therefore, an eternal payment is required for sin (Mar. 9:44-48; Isa. 66:22-23). You can have a FAIR TRIAL at the White Throne Judgment, or you can have a FREE PARDON right now by receiving Jesus Christ as your Saviour. In a fair trial before God, you will be eternally damned to Hell because you are a sinner against a Holy God. God will have no choice but to sentence you to Hell forever. Friend, what is your choice?

Lesson Review

1. Paul was caught up to the _____ _____.

2. Give two references to prove that Heaven is north.

1.
2.

3. Where does the Bible command us to set our affection on things above?

4. Will we recognize one another in heaven?

5. Will there be marriages in heaven?

6. Give Scripture to prove above answer:

7. Which of the following will not be an attribute of our new resurrection bodies:

a. incorruptible
b. male
c. appear and disappear at will
d. wings
e. no blood

8. What three things will we do in Heaven?

1.
2.
3.

9. Why did God create hell? (Give scripture)

10. Where is Hell? (Give Scripture)

11. Explain why Luke 16 is not a parable:

12. Give at least two reasons why hell is not the grave:

Suggested Memory Verses: Mat. 6:19-20, I Cor. 15:52-53, Luke 16:23-24, Rev 20:15

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book III

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson IX

The Fundamentals of Jesus Christ

In this lesson we will be dealing with the *fundamental* doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ. No doubt, there are a great many doctrines that we could study concerning Christ, but here we are dealing primarily with the “five fundamentals” of the Christian faith. Namely, the Deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Bodily Resurrection, the Blood Atonement, and the Second Coming. We will be doing a brief study of each doctrine, looking at some of the more important portions of Scripture which cover these subjects.

I. THE DEITY OF CHRIST

As our society rapidly approaches the end-time events of the book of Revelation, Satan and his evil forces are doing everything within their power to deceive humanity and to condition men to worship an individual known as "the beast" or "the Antichrist" (Rev. 13:1-18). Satan has always had a desire to be worshipped *as God* (Isa. 14:12; Luke 4:7), and he *will* be worshipped as God in the coming Tribulation Period (II Ths. 2:3-4). In order to bring this about, Satan realizes that he must first dethrone the true God in the hearts and minds of people. That is, he must attack the Deity of Jesus Christ.

This attack on the Lord Jesus Christ is being executed in many ways by many different groups. Various cult groups, New Age groups, and even modern Bible translators have their own methods of robbing Jesus Christ of His Deity. Many young men today enter Bible colleges and seminaries believing in the Deity of Christ, and then graduate four years later with less faith than when they enrolled!

What about you, friend? What do you believe about Jesus Christ? Can you support your beliefs with God's word? That's the real issue: what saith the Scripture?

We challenge you to get your Bible (KJV) and check all the references that we are about to give. We are going to offer twelve Scriptural proofs for the Deity of Jesus Christ. That is, you are going to see twelve Bible proofs that Jesus Christ is God. Please do NOT take our word for anything. Our world is filled with deception because too many people believe what they hear

without checking the facts. We urge you to search the Scriptures for yourself, and form your own convictions with God's word.

Jesus Christ Is God Incarnate

Quoting from Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23 says, **"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."** According to both of these verses, Jesus was "God with us" when He walked upon this earth. He wasn't merely "God's chosen one with us" or "God's Son with us." As I Timothy 3:16 states, "**God** was manifest in the flesh." John 1:14 tells us that "**the Word** was made flesh, and dwelt among us..." In Zechariah 12:10, GOD said that HE (God) would be "pierced" by sinners, and Revelation 1:7 states that Jesus Christ Himself fulfilled this prophecy! Friend, the Bible presents Jesus Christ as much more than a great prophet and teacher. God's word presents Jesus Christ as *God incarnate.*

Jesus Christ Is Eternal

In John 10:28, Jesus said, **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."** If Jesus Christ isn't eternal, then how does He have the power to give "eternal life"?

Micah 5:2 states that Jesus Christ is "from everlasting", which is exactly what Psalm 93:2 and Isaiah 63:16 say about God!

In John 8:58, Jesus said to the Pharisees, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."** The term "I am" is the exact term that God used in Exodus 3:14 in reference to Himself! Jesus professed to be the eternal God of the Bible.

Jesus Christ Has Divine Names

Check these references for yourself. In Matthew 22:42-45, Jesus claims to be the "Lord" of Psalm 110:1. He allows Thomas to address Him as "My Lord and my God" in John 20:28. He is the "everlasting Father" and "The mighty God" of Isaiah 9:6. According to His own words in John 10:11-14, He is the "shepherd" of Psalm 23:1, Psalm 80:1, and Ezekiel 34:12. God is the "saviour" in Isaiah 43:3, 43:11, 45:15, 45:21, Hosea 13:4,

Luke 1:47, and I Timothy 4:10, yet this same title is given to Jesus Christ in Luke 2:11, Philippians 3:20, II Timothy 1:10, and II Peter 2:20. God is the "Rock" of Deuteronomy 32:4, 32:15, 32:18, 32:30-31, I Samuel 2:2, and Psalm 18:31, yet this title is given to the Lord Jesus Christ in I Corinthians 10:1-4, I Peter 2:7-8, and Romans 9:33. God is "light" in Psalm 27:1 and Micah 7:8, and then Jesus is "light" in John 1:4-9 and in John 8:12. In Isaiah 44:6 God says, "...I *am* the first, and I *am* the last; and beside me *there is* no God." In Revelation 1:17 Jesus Christ says, "...Fear not; I am the first and the last." The Scriptures are clear: Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament.

Jesus Claimed Equality with God

Jesus says in Matthew 28:19, **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"** If Jesus Christ isn't Deity, then why did He include Himself in the Holy Trinity?

Jesus says in John 14:9, **"...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"** Is the Father someone other than Jesus Christ? No, not according to Jesus Christ.

In John 10:30, Jesus says, **"I and my Father are one."** Isn't that clear enough?

Philippians 2:6 says that Jesus was in the "form of God", and that he thought it not robbery to be "equal with God"!

The Jesus Christ of the New Testament claimed to be "one" with God and "equal" with God.

Jesus Christ is Omnipresent

Only God has the ability to be everywhere at once, yet Jesus Christ claims this ability.

In Matthew 18:20, He says, **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."** How could this be possible if Jesus were not Deity?

The same is true in Matthew 28:20 where Jesus says, **"...lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."** How could He be with each individual Christian always and be in Heaven at the same time? He is God, for only God has such attributes!

Jesus Christ Is Omnipotent

That is, He is all powerful. He has all power. Revelation 19:6 states, **"...the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."** Then I Timothy 6:15 says that Jesus Christ Himself is **"...the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;"** If Jesus is the ONLY Potentate, then He must be the One of Revelation 19:6, God Almighty! Also see Colossians 2:9-10, Revelation 2:26, and Matthew 28:18.

Jesus Christ Is Omniscient

To be omniscient is to have *all knowledge,* unlike normal men. The Bible declares that Jesus was indeed omniscient.

Unlike normal men, Jesus Christ had knowledge of specific details about His own death. In Matthew 16:21, Jesus said that He would go to Jerusalem, suffer many things at the hands of the scribes and the elders, be killed, and then be resurrected the third day. He repeats this prophecy in Matthew 20:19. Matthew 17:27 offers the account of Jesus knowing of a certain coin in a fish's mouth before the fish is caught! He knew specific details about a woman's life whom He had never met (John 4:16-19). He also had all knowledge about Nathaniel in John 1:47-49. Friend, Jesus Christ is Deity because He is omniscient.

Jesus Christ Has Creative Powers

John 1:1-3 says, **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."** The "Word" is the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:14; I John 1:1-3; 5:7), and John 1:3 says that all things were made by Him.

Colossians 1:16 says, **"...by him were all things created..."** Consider Hebrews 1:1-3: **"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things**

by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" You see, by Jesus Christ the worlds were made, and by Jesus Christ all things are upheld. He has the power to create and sustain the universe.

Jesus Christ Has Power Over the Elements of Nature

In Matthew 14:25, Jesus literally walks upon the sea, and in Luke 8:24, He rebukes the wind and it obeys Him. How could He perform such tasks if He weren't God? It must be understood that Jesus didn't pray for God to calm the sea; He calmed the sea Himself.

Jesus Christ Received Worship

If we're wrong in teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ is God, then He must have been wrong in allowing people to worship him. Jesus Himself said, **"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."** (Mat. 4:10) Why would He say this at the beginning of His ministry and then spend His ministry allowing people to worship *HIMSELF*? Obviously, it's because Jesus is God. In Acts 10:25-26 and in Revelation 19:10, worship of anyone other than God Himself is forbidden, yet Jesus willingly received worship throughout His public ministry (John 20:28; Mat. 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 28:9; John 9:38). If He isn't Deity, then why didn't He correct those who worshipped Him?

Jesus Christ Forgave Sins

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:34) According to these words, it is GOD Who has the power and right to forgive sins. However, the New Testament says that Jesus Christ has this power.

Please notice Mark 2:5-11: **"When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting**

there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."

Jesus Christ is God, because only God can forgive sins. It's true that He took on the form of a man for thirty-three years on this earth, but He was still God. He was *God manifest in the flesh* (I Tim. 3:16).

Jesus Christ Had Power Over His Own Life and Death

How many people do you know who have the ability to lay down their own life and then take it up again? Jesus had this power. Consider John 10:17-18: **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."**

Jesus had the power over His own life and death! When He died, He willingly gave up His own spirit (Luke 23:46).

According to His own words in Revelation 1:18, Jesus Christ has "the keys of hell and of death." How could He possibly have such power if He were not God?

Friend, make no mistake about it: the Lord Jesus Christ is Deity. He came to this earth and suffered in human flesh for thirty-three years. He lived a perfectly sinless life, and then laid that life down as an eternal payment for your sins. Mohammed didn't pay for your sins because Mohammed wasn't God. Buddha didn't pay for your sins because Buddha wasn't God. You can't pay for your sins because you aren't God. Only Jesus Christ is sinless because only Jesus Christ is God. He Alone can save your soul from the eternal fires of Hell.

II. THE VIRGIN BIRTH

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is the doctrine that the Lord Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin without a man being involved. The original prophecy of the Virgin Birth was given in Isaiah 7:14, over seven hundred years before Jesus was born: **"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."** Matthew quotes this verse in stating that the birth of Jesus fulfills this prophecy: **"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."** (Mat. 1:22-23)

Luke 1:34-35 and Matthew 1:24-25 tell us that Joseph took Mary to be his wife, but that he "knew her not" until after Jesus was born.

It was needful for Jesus to be conceived of the Holy Ghost, because had He been conceived of a man, He would have had a sin nature (Psa. 51:5; Rom. 5:12), which would have disqualified Him from being the perfect Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. The Virgin Birth is absolutely essential for New Testament salvation.

Many new Bible translations deliberately change the wording of Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:25, and Luke 2:33 in an attempt to downgrade the Virgin Birth of our Lord, but thanks be to God, the King James Bible can be trusted to preserve this doctrine without compromise.

III. THE BODILY RESURRECTION

This is the doctrine that **". . . that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."** (I Cor. 15:3-4). The resurrection of Christ was foretold some one thousand years in advance (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:24-32). Our risen Saviour is currently seated at the right hand of God as our High Priest (Heb. 10:12-13). The resurrection makes Christianity different from all other religions, because our Founder is STILL ALIVE.

The resurrection of Christ is also *pictured* in the Old Testament on different occasions. The butler who was restored to his butlership after three days (Gen. 40) and Jonah spending three days in the whale's belly (Jon. 2; Mat. 12:40) are both great types of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

It is important to note that the Bible speaks of a *literal* and *physical* resurrection of Jesus, although some teach that He only rose from the grave *spiritually*.

According to the words of Jesus Christ Himself, He is NOT merely a spirit being. He is a literal and physical risen Saviour. In Luke chapter twenty-four, beginning at verse thirty-six, the disciples see the risen Christ and they suppose they had seen a spirit (vs. 37). Then Jesus cleared the matter up for everyone when He said, **". . . Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 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." (Luke 24:38-39)** He then SHOWED them His hands and feet, and they believed.

When Jesus appeared to Thomas He said, **". . . 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."** (John 20:27) The risen Christ had the crucifixion scars in His body to PROVE that He had been physically resurrected from the dead.

If Jesus didn't rise physically, then He lied in John 2:18-22 when He said that His "body" would rise in three days. He didn't say His spirit would rise. He said that His BODY would rise. When He arose His disciples actually remembered this prophecy and believed.

The bodily resurrection of Christ is a fundamental Bible doctrine. The salvation of a person's soul rests upon this doctrine, because if Jesus didn't physically rise from the dead, AS HE SAID HE WOULD, then we're all lost and going to Hell according to 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.

IV. THE BLOOD ATONEMENT

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. 17:11)

The Blood Atonement is the doctrine that the blood of Jesus Christ, the sacrificial Lamb of God, was shed to atone for the sins of lost mankind (John. 1:29; Heb. 9:22) and that this sinless blood was applied to the mercy seat of God the Father in Heaven. Hebrews 9:11-12 says, **"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."**

All of the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament foreshadowed the Blood Atonement of Christ. The innocent animal that was slain in Eden for Adam and Eve's covering (Gen. 3:21) pictured the slaying of our Lord Jesus Christ for our sins. Abel's accepted offering, the firstlings of his flock (Gen. 4:4), was also a type of the Blood Atonement of Christ. There are many pictures of the Blood Atonement in the Bible, but probably the greatest is found in Exodus chapter twelve, where God REDEEMS His people by the blood of the Passover lamb.

Today, with the completed Blood Atonement behind us, all sinners have access to God through Jesus Christ and through Him alone. Acts 20:28 says that God purchased the church *"with his own blood."* Revelation 1:5 assures us that Christ can wash us from our sins in His blood. Romans 5:8-9 says that we are justified by His blood, and we can have peace through His blood, according to Colossians 1:20. Salvation was made possible, not by the death of Christ alone, but by His Blood Atonement which takes away our sins.

V. THE SECOND COMING

Lesson XII will deal with the Second Coming in more detail, so a few essential truths will suffice for now.

"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (I Pet. 1:10-11)

This First Coming of Christ emphasized Christ as a suffering and dying Lamb, whereas the Second Coming portrays

Him as the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah" and the "KING OF KINGS" Who takes the kingdoms of this world to Himself. To rob Jesus of His Second Coming (by teaching that He isn't coming again literally) is an attempt to deny Him the glory promised to Him by His Heavenly Father. According to the Bible, Jesus is coming again LITERALLY, PHYSICALLY, and VISIBLY. Notice Acts 1:10-11: **"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."** Jesus is coming back in the same MANNER in which He left. He left LITERALLY, so He'll return literally. He left PHYSICALLY, so He'll return physically. He left VISIBLY, so He'll return visibly. The true Bible believer believes in the literal Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

We know this is true, for the Apostles themselves confirm this in their writings. Paul said we are to LOOK for the Saviour (Phil. 3:20-21; Tit. 2:13). Jude spake of Christ's return (Jude 14-15), as did Peter (II Pet. 1:16) and John (Rev. 1:7; 19:11-21). The writer of Hebrews states that Christ will APPEAR the SECOND TIME without sin unto salvation. One verse in every thirty New Testament verses speaks of Christ's Second Coming. The Bible record is clear: Jesus is coming again just as literally as He came the first time.

False Theories about the Second Coming

Those who reject the literal Second Coming have a number of "substitute" Second Comings with which we need to be familiar:

Some teach that His Second Coming was "spiritually" fulfilled at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came. This cannot be for Jesus said, **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (John 16:7)** The Holy Spirit isn't Jesus! Jesus went away so he could SEND the Holy Spirit, and He couldn't send Him until He first went away.

The conversion of the sinner is taught by some to be a "personal" Second Coming of Christ. This would mean that Jesus

comes every time a soul is saved, and it would mean that He is NOT returning in the same MANNER as he went away.

Others believe that death is the Second Coming. That is, the Lord returns every time someone dies. Since people die at the rate of several per second, this would mean that Christ must remain on the earth all the time! Furthermore, Jesus is currently fulfilling His heavenly office as our High Priest (Heb. 9-10), which would be impossible if He had to remain on earth all the time. When a saint dies, he goes to be with the Lord (II Cor. 5:6-8; II Sam. 12:23) The Lord does not come to get him. John 21:21-23 also makes a clear distinction between death and the Second Coming.

The Destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.) is also taught by some to be the Second Coming. This is a pretty far stretch, because Christ was not present at the Destruction of Jerusalem and when Jesus returns He RESTORES Jerusalem; *he doesn't destroy it!*

Comparing the First and Second Coming

One way to get a better understanding of the Second Coming of Christ is to compare it to the First Coming of Christ. Note the following:

First Coming	Second Coming
Jesus first appeared secretly to believers only (at His birth). He later appeared publicly (Mat. 2:1-11; John 1:29; Mat. 21:4-9)	Jesus first appears secretly to believers only (Rapture). He later appears publicly (I Cor. 15:51-52; I Ths. 4:13-18; Rev. 19:11-21).
Had been 400 years since God's last revelation - the close of the Old Testament. During that time the world became flooded with pagan philosophy, education, and tradition (Plato, Socrates, Aristotle)	Has been 400 years since God's last revelation - King James 1611 Bible. During this time the world became flooded with pagan philosophy, education, and tradition. (Darwin, Engles, Marx, Huxley, Freud, Westcott & Hort)
God had just spent 2000 years dealing with the Jews	God had just spent 2000 years dealing with the Gentiles (Church Age)

God's people in apostasy	God's people in apostasy
Rome in power	Rome in power (Dan. 2; Dan. 7; Rev. 13)
A universal language - Greek	A universal language - English
Jesus had a satanic opponent - Judas	Jesus has a satanic opponent - Antichrist
God's word had been corrupted (Mat. 15:1-9; Mat. 23; II Cor. 2:17; Jer. 23:36)	God's word has been corrupted with new versions, traditions - Amos 8:11-12; Col. 2:8)
Jesus fulfilled much scripture	Jesus will fulfill much scripture
Jesus had a forerunner - John	Jesus has a forerunner - Elijah (Mal. 4:5-6; Rev. 11:3-11; Mat. 17:1-13)
There was a resurrection (Mat. 27:52-53)	There will be a resurrection (I Ths. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-52).

Contrasting the First and Second Coming of Christ

Although there are many similarities between Christ's first and second coming, there are also many contrasts. Note the following:

First Coming	Second Coming
Christ comes to save sinners (John 3:17; I Tim. 1:15)	Christ comes to condemn sinners (II Ths. 1:7-9; Rev. 14:18-21)
Christ shed His blood	Christ sheds His enemies' blood (Rev. 14:18-21; Isa. 63:1-6)
Christ rides a humble donkey (Mat. 21:4-9)	Christ rides a glorious white horse (Rev. 19:11)
The devil has Jesus bound (Mat. 27:2)	Jesus has the devil bound (Rev. 20:2)
Jerusalem destroyed (70 A.D.)	Babylon destroyed (Rev. 17)

Jesus is a servant	Jesus is a king
Jesus is a lamb (John 1:29)	Jesus is a Lion (Rev. 5:5)
Jesus is rejected by the Jews, but received by the Gentiles (John 1:11-12)	Jesus is rejected by the Gentiles, but received by the Jews (Isa. 66:7-8; Rom. 11:25-28; Rev. 7)
Jesus turned down the kingdoms of this world (Luke 4:5-8)	Jesus rules the kingdoms of this world (Rev. 11:15-17)
Jesus established a spiritual kingdom (Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13)	Jesus establishes a physical kingdom (Rev. 20:1-7; Dan. 2:44)
The "king of the Jews" is crucified (Mat. 27:37)	The 'KING OF KINGS" reigns (Rev. 19:16)
Christ receives a crown of thorns (Mat. 27:29)	Christ receives many crowns (Rev. 19:12)
Jesus lies in a manger (Luke 2:7)	Jesus sits on a throne (Luke 1:32; Rev. 6:16-17)

We will study the Second Coming further when we reach Lesson XII.

Lesson Review

1. Micah 5:2 says that Jesus is "from _____."

2. True or False? Jesus said, **"And my Father giveth unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."**

3. Did Jesus ever claim to be equal with God?

4. Give Scripture, if your above answer is yes:

5. Jesus is omniscient, which means what?

6. Name one place where the New Testament speaks of Jesus Christ as the Creator:

7. Matthew 1:22-23 is a quotation of what Old Testament verse?

8. I Corinthians 15:3-4 speaks about:

a. The Second Coming
b. The Resurrection of Christ
c. The Blood Atonement
d. The Virgin Birth

9. How do we know that Jesus didn't rise *spiritually*?

10. Where does the Bible speak of God's own Blood?

11. Where does the Bible say that the blood makes atonement for the soul?

12. True or false? Innocent blood was shed in Eden for the sins of man.

13. Could Jesus have had sinless blood without the Virgin Birth?

14. Where does the Bible say that Jesus will return in the same manner in which He left?

15. The First Coming deals with Christ's sufferings, but the Second Coming deals with His _____.

Suggested Memory Verses: Isa 7:14, Rev 1:5, Heb 9:22, I Cor. 15:3-4, Tit 2:13

Lesson X

The Judgments of the Saved and the Lost

When the average person thinks of God's judgment of man, he automatically thinks of a particular DAY in the future when God will settle his accounts with man. The fact that the Bible doesn't teach this doesn't seem to matter. This *general*

judgment thinking is rooted in the assumption that "all men are equal" so God will have to judge all men at the same time. As we will see in this lesson, nothing could be further from the truth. **"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour . . ."** (Pro. 12:26), so the righteous have a more excellent judgment than the wicked.

Obviously, any future judgment must be preceded by a resurrection, for a man can't be judged if he's still dead and buried. Is there ONE future resurrection, or are there two? The Bible says there are two. Notice Revelation 20:4-6: **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."** Now, read it carefully. SOME people are BEHEADED for the witness of Jesus Christ. That is, they are killed. They are dead. Then these same people REIGN with Christ for 1,000 years. Well, a man can't reign if he's dead, so there must be a resurrection. The passage goes on to say that these people have part in the FIRST RESURRECTION. The term "first resurrection" itself implies that there is also a future resurrection, does it not? If the general resurrection myth was true, then the Bible would say, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in THE resurrection." But that isn't the case because there is no such event as THE resurrection. The saints of God have part in the FIRST resurrection, and then the wicked live not until the thousand years are finished (20:5). For example, compare Revelation 20:5 with Revelation 20:14:

20:5 - This is the first resurrection. (saved)
20:14 - This is the second death. (lost)

The same is well illustrated in the story of Lazarus in John chapter eleven. Here Lazarus is dead, and Jesus is going to raise him, but Martha believes that Lazarus won't rise again until "the

last day." That is, she is a *general judgment* believer. But Jesus is about to inform her that HIS CHILDREN don't have to wait till the "last day" to come up. Note the text: **"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?** (John 11:23-26). Jesus then goes and RAISES Lazarus from the dead in verses 43-44. He didn't raise everyone. He didn't say, "Everyone, come forth." He specifically commanded LAZARUS to come forth, while everyone else lay dead in their graves. Well, one day Jesus will call all his saints out of their graves in the FIRST RESURRECTION (Rev. 20:4-5; I Ths. 4:13-18; I Cor. 15:51-52), but the REST OF THE DEAD will remain in their graves until the SECOND DEATH (Rev. 20:14). The second death is not called the second resurrection because there is no eternal life imparted to anyone, only eternal damnation.

Now, having established the fact that saved people and lost people are raised at two separate times, let's consider the judgments which follow each event.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." (Rom. 14:10)

" For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Cor. 5:10)

These are the two places in the Bible where we read the term "judgment seat of Christ." As you can see, neither passage speaks of hell or destruction. The later plainly states that the Judgment Seat of Christ is for receiving the things done in our *body*. Our body belongs to God (I Cor. 6:19-20), and we are to glorify Him in our bodies. We are to *yield* our bodies to Him (Rom. 12:1-2). We are to *deny ourselves* and be *His* disciples (Luke 9:23). So the Judgment Seat of Christ will *try* us and determine whether or not we have done our duty.

A fine companion passage for this is I Corinthians 3:11-15: **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."**

A Christian's foundation is his salvation in Jesus Christ (Mat. 7:24). Then after being saved, the Christian is expected to yield himself to the leadership of the Holy Spirit so he can be useful to Christ. If he does this, he will bear the *fruit* of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and please his Saviour. This fruit, or good work, is likened unto gold, silver, and precious stones, things of great value. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20, **"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."** Godly Christian service produces *treasure* in Heaven for the Christian. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, we (Christians) will receive our rewards. II John 8 says, **"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."** Most people are only concerned with going to Heaven or Hell, if even that, but the Bible instructs us to be concerned about our *rewards*. My eternal RESIDENCE was settled when I trusted Jesus Christ as my Saviour, but my eternal REWARDS are only settled when I deny myself and serve God in the Spirit.

Notice that no one goes to Hell at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Some people lose rewards, but they are still saved (I Cor 3:15). This is like Lot, the righteous man who lost all he had, yet he himself was saved from the fiery destruction. (Gen. 20; II Pet. 2:6-8). Jesus said there would be two kinds of saints in the last days. Those like Noah (faithful) and those like Lot (slothful) (Luke 17:26, 28). Just as **"one star differeth from another star in glory"** (I Cor. 15:41), one Christian will differ from another in Heaven, at least in regards to earned rewards.

In Revelation 3:11, the Lord Jesus says, **"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."** Revelation 4:10 has the elders casting their crowns at the Saviour's feet. Most Christians will have no crown to cast at the Lord's feet in that day, for they forfeited their heavenly rewards in order to live comfortable and convenient lives in this present evil world. Also see I Corinthians 9:25, I Thessalonians 2:19, II Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, and I Peter 5:4.

The believer's judgment is threefold. At Calvary I was judged as a SINNER, with Jesus taking my place and bearing my punishment. Today I am judged as a SON, being chastened by my heavenly Father when I am disobedient (Heb. 12:4-8; I Cor. 11:30-31). At the Judgment Seat of Christ I will be judged as a SERVANT, giving full account to my Master for my Christian service. II John 8 says, **"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."**

The White Throne Judgment

This is the final judgment of the wicked. Christians are judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ BEFORE the 1000-year reign of Christ, but the unsaved are judged AFTER the 1000-year reign. This final judgment is called the "White Throne Judgment" because of the following passage: **"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:11-15)**

This judgment evidently occurs in open space, since **"the earth and the heaven fled away."** This is likely the same event spoken of by Peter in II Peter 3:10: **"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass**

away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Man will have no place to hide. The human race began hiding from God in Genesis 3:8, but all hiding places will vanish and man will be forced to face his Maker in judgment.

The **"books"** will be opened and the **"book of life"** will be opened. Men will be shown that their good works could not save them, and they will see that all of their evil words, thoughts, and actions have been recorded. Every secret thing will be brought to light: **"For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."** (Ecc. 12:14) Lost men will see that their condition is hopeless, and then they will see that their name is not in the **"book of life."** Their deeds will be in the record book, but their names will not be in the *redemption* book, the book of life.

It is important to notice that John never says that anyone at this judgment goes to Heaven. In fact, he earlier wrote in Revelation 20:6, **"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."** Those who have part in the FIRST RESURRECTION are not subject unto the SECOND DEATH. This is not a general judgment day for everyone, but rather **"the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."** (II Peter 3:7) This is the judgment where the wicked dead will be judged for their "works" since they chose to not place their FAITH in Jesus Christ for their salvation. They chose to "work" their way into eternity, so this will be their big "pay day." Literally billions are going to be shocked to see that their good intentions and good deeds cannot save them.

Lest someone think that the White Throne Judgment is for everyone, not just lost people, let us notice that John said, "And I saw the **dead**, small and great, stand before God" (20:12) The verse doesn't say "the dead **in Christ**" (I Thss. 4:16), only "the dead." Jesus said, **"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."** (Mat. 22:23) So, those standing before the Great White Throne do not belong to God. They are the ones to whom God will pronounce the dreadful words, **"I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."** (Mat. 7:23)

Paul even writes that we (Christians) will judge the world (I Cor. 6:2). Christians are not being judged at the Great White Throne, because they've already been judged, yet they will be assisting the Lord in the judgment of others.

This will undoubtedly be a very sad day, because millions of Christians will see their lost loved ones cast alive into a burning lake of fire, never to see them again. Now is the time to do our best in bringing the lost to Christ. It will be too late at the White Throne Judgment.

Lesson Review

1. Where does the Bible mention the "judgment seat of Christ?" Two places:

2. Revelation 20 contrasts the "first resurrection" with the _____ _____?

3. True or False? There is a 1000 period between the first resurrection and the second death?

4. Does the Second Death have any power over those who come up from the dead in the First Resurrection?

5. Where does Paul liken Christian rewards to gold, silver, and precious stones?

6. At the Judgment Seat of Christ we will give account for the things done in our _____.

7. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Christian is judged as

A. a Sinner B. a Son C. a Servant

8 Those judged at the White Throne Judgment are judged according to their _____.

Suggested Memory Verses: II Cor. 5:10, Rom. 14:10, Ecc. 12:14

Lesson XI

The Holy Trinity

According the Bible, God is a Triune Being. As all humans are a trinity (soul, body, and spirit--1 Ths. 5:23), God is also a Trinity. In Genesis 1:26, God said, *"Let us make man in our image. . ."* In Genesis 11:7, God said, *". . . .let us go down, and there confound their language. . ."* The terms *"us"* and *"our"* obviously refer to the Holy Trinity. So the Trinity is found in the very early chapters of the Bible.

The Trinity is present at the incarnation of Jesus in Luke 1:35, and we can see all three members of the Trinity at the Baptism of Jesus in Matthew chapter three. God the Father is speaking from Heaven, God the Son is being baptized, and God the Holy Ghost is descending like a dove. When Jesus gave the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, He said in verse 19, *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."* 1 John 5:7 tells us that there are THREE that bear record in Heaven: *". . . the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* (The "Word" is Christ according to John 1:1-3, 14, and 1 John 1:1-3.)

God is a Trinity. He isn't three Gods, like the some accuse Christians of believing, but He is ONE Triune God. The pagans who worshiped three gods did so because they knew from observing the creation that God must be in some way associated with the number three. They never fully understood the Holy Trinity, but they came much closer than people like the Jehovah's Witnesses who deny the Trinity altogether.

As a man is a soul, a body, and a spirit, God the Father is the Soul of the Trinity, God the Son is the Body, and God the Holy Ghost is the Spirit.

According to Psalm 19:1 and Romans 1:20, God's creation actually declares the Trinity doctrine. One can see proof of the Trinity everywhere in the universe. The universe consists of three parts: time, space, and matter. Time consists of three parts: past, present, and future. Space consists of three parts: length, width, and height. Matter consists of three parts: energy, motion, and phenomena. There are three heavens in 2 Corinthians 12:2, and on earth there are three forms of life: man, plant, and animal. These

forms of life are found in three places: land, sea, and air. God is continually showing us through His creation that He is a Trinity.

A perfect example of this is the sun. The sun has three kinds of rays: chemical rays, light rays, and heat rays. Chemical rays cannot be seen or felt, but they can be very powerful. When one receives a sun burn, it is from the sun's chemical rays. This is a type of God the Father. Light rays are sometimes visible to the human eye. This is a type of Jesus Christ, the "light of the world" (John 8:12) and the "Sun of righteousness" (Mal.4:2). Heat rays are a type of the Holy Ghost for they bring comfort to us by warming our bodies, just as the Holy Ghost, the Comforter (John 16:7) brings comfort to us.

The term "godhead" is found THREE times in the Bible (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9), because God is a Trinity.

So one can clearly see that God's word and God's creation both testify to the fact that He is a Trinity.

Paul writes in II Corinthians 13:14, *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."* There's all three, *a Trinity*. Hebrews 9:14 says, *"How much more shall the blood of Christ,* (there's God the Son) *who through the eternal Spirit* (there's God the Holy Spirit) *offered himself without spot to God* (there's God the Father) *purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"*

In Exodus you will find that there are three items in the tabernacle which are topped with a gold crown, picturing the Trinity. The Ark pictures God the Father (Exodus 25:10-11); the table pictures God the Son (Exodus 25:23-24); and the altar of incense pictures God the Holy Spirit (Exodus 30:1-3). The Bible certainly testifies that God is a Trinity.

Those who do not understand the Trinity usually condemn the Trinity doctrine. They fail to realize that it is not our job to tell God WHAT HE IS or to even FULLY UNDERSTAND how He can exist. Our responsibility is to BELIEVE WHAT HE SAYS, AS HE SAYS IT, WHERE HE SAYS IT, WITHOUT CHANGING A SINGLE WORD! The Scriptures already presented in this study clearly show that God is a Trinity. Many believe that Jehovah is God the Father, and that Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are not God. They're wrong. The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are both Deity.

Jesus Christ Is Deity

As the Second Member of the Trinity, Jesus Christ stands co-existent in Eternity with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. There are many proofs in the scriptures for the Deity of Christ. We shall now list several of them:

(1) In Zechariah 12:10, Jehovah speaks of the future return of Christ and says, *". . . They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourne for him, as one mourneth for his only son . . . ."* This is spoken again in Revelation 1:7, which is clearly a reference to Christ Himself, but in Zechariah 12:10 **GOD** said, *". . . They shall look upon **me** whom they have pierced . . . ."* The One that they pierced was Jesus Christ! So, in Zechariah 12:10, God is saying that He is Jesus Christ.

(2) In John 1:1, John 1:14, 1 John 1:1, and in 1 John 5:7, Jesus is called *"the Word,"* and John 1:1 says that *"the Word was God."*

(3) Thomas referred to Jesus as *"My Lord and my God"* in John 20:28, and Jesus did not see the need to correct him.

(4) Isaiah 7:14 gives us the prophecy of the Virgin Birth of Christ and states that His name would be *"Immanuel."* Matthew 1:23 tells us that this word means *"God with us."*

(5) In Isaiah 9:6, Jesus is called *"Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* The Bible certainly would not say this about anyone less than God.

(6) In John 10:30, Jesus says, *"I and my Father are one."* Jesus is not a lesser god; He is ONE with the Father.

(7) Micah 5:2 tells us that Jesus is *"from everlasting."*

(8) In John 8:58, Jesus tells the Pharisees, *"Before Abraham was, I am."* He claimed to be the *"I AM"* of Exodus 3:14, which is God Almighty.

(9) Jesus allowed others to worship Him (John 9:38; Matt. 14:33; and Luke 24:52), which was forbidden, unless He was God (Rev. 22:9).

(10) Jesus forgave sins (Mark 2:5), which only God can do (Mark 2:7).

(11) The Lord Jesus Christ is omnipresent (Matt. 18:20; 28:20; II Cor. 13:14; I John 5:7). We know He is God because He is capable of being everywhere at once.

(12) Jesus is omniscient (Mark 11:2-6; Matt. 12:40). He is God because He knows all things.

(13) The Lord Jesus is also omnipotent (Rev. 19:6; Matt. 28:18). He has all power.

(14) According to John 1, 1 John 1, Colossians 1, and Hebrews 1, Jesus Christ is the Creator of Genesis 1!

(15) Jesus never sinned! Romans 3:23 says that ALL HAVE SINNED and come short of the glory of God, but Jesus did not sin (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 3:18). So Jesus had to be God.

The Holy Ghost Is Deity

Some teach that the Holy Spirit of the Bible is only a "force," and not a person. Please notice that the Holy Ghost has attributes that only a PERSON can have. For example:

(1) Only a person could SPEAK, which the Holy Spirit does (Acts 2:11; 13:2; Rev. 2:7).

(2) Only a person could TEACH and COMFORT (Jhn. 16:7, 13).

(3) Only a person could have a MIND (Rom. 8:27).

(4) Only a person could possess the POWER that the Holy Spirit possesses (Rom. 15:19).

(5) Only a person could be INSULTED and GRIEVED (Heb. 10:29; Eph. 4:30).

So the Holy Ghost certainly IS a Person, but more than that, He is GOD, the Third Member of the Holy Trinity. There are several scriptural proofs for the Deity of the Holy Ghost:

(1) In Acts 15:3 Peter accuses Ananias of lying to the Holy Ghost, and then in verse four Peter tells him that he had lied unto GOD. The Holy Ghost is God.

(2) The Holy Ghost says in Acts 13:2, *"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."* GOD is the one who calls men to do His work (Rom. 8:28; Gal. 1:6; 1 Ths. 2:12; 4:7; 2 Ths. 2:13-14); so, the Holy Ghost is God.

(3) Only God could perform all the great wonders that the Holy Ghost performs (Psa. 104:30; Jhn. 14:16, 26; 16:8-14; Job 33:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 1:13; 4:30).

(4) The Holy Ghost is God because blasphemy against Him shall not be forgiven (Mat. 12:31).

(5) The Holy Ghost is God because He is ETERNAL (Heb. 9:14).

(6) The Holy Ghost is God because He is OMNIPRESENT (Psa. 139:7-8).

(7) The Holy Ghost is God because He has the power to give life (John 3:6; 6:63).

(9) The Scriptures are God's word, and 2 Peter 1:21 says that the Holy Ghost INSPIRED the Scriptures. Therefore the Holy Ghost is God.

The Bible clearly reveals to us that the Holy Ghost is a Member of the Holy Trinity. To deny this truth is to openly deny God's word. The Trinity doctrine is a BIBLE doctrine. It is true that Satan has counterfeited the Trinity doctrine for many centuries in many pagan religions, but that doesn't change the truth. God's word declares that He is a Trinity, and it is our responsibility to believe it.

Lesson Review

1. Human beings consist of three parts. What are they?

_____, _____, _____

2. Apart from the written word of God, name one other way that God has chosen to reveal the fact that He is a Trinity. _____

3. Name the "three" which bear record in Heaven:

_____, _____, _____

4. The term "godhead" is found how many times in the Bible?

5. What three furnishings in the tabernacle picture the Trinity?

_____, _____, _____

6. Name two ways the trinity is revealed in the universe:

Suggested Memory Verses: I John 5:7, Matthew 28:19, Hebrews 9:14

Lesson XII

Basic Bible Prophecy

One only has to read a newspaper or listen to a newscast in order to see Bible prophecy being fulfilled. There have been more prophecies fulfilled in the twentieth century than in any other time in church history. We believe there is a great reason for this. We believe that the time is rapidly approaching for the Lord Jesus Christ to return to this earth and establish His kingdom.

In this lesson, we will attempt to show you from God's word the chronological order of future prophetic events. That is, we will attempt to teach you some basic Bible doctrine about the Second Coming. It is our prayer that you will read carefully through these pages, asking the Holy Spirit of God to lead and guide you through the truths in His word (John. 16:13). May God richly bless your study.

I. The Coming Righteous Kingdom

One of the main subjects of the Bible is the Kingdom that God the Father has promised to Jesus Christ. There are many Bible prophecies that speak of this coming King and Kingdom. Some are as follows:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Gen. 49:10)

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. 2:1-8)

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isa. 11:1-6)

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." (Jer. 23:5)

Such Old Testament verses as these state very clearly that God intends to set the Lord Jesus Christ up as King over the earth. There have been many kings to rise and fall throughout history, but God has in mind a *perfect* King for His promised Kingdom.

Coming to the New Testament, we find that God still has this Kingdom very much in mind. In Luke chapter one, verses thirty-one through thirty-three, the angel says to Mary: **"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."** John the Baptist came preaching that this Kingdom was at hand in Matthew 3:2, and Jesus also preached this message when He began to preach (Mat. 4:17).

During the actual ministry of Christ, He preached mostly to His people, the Jews (Mat. 10:5-6; 15:24), because Israel is the one nation that God chose long ago to be a shining light to this lost and dying world. In Isaiah 62:1 God says**, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the**

salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." God will not rest until His chosen nation is established in the earth as a burning lamp (Gen. 15:17) to this lost and dying world. Starting with Abraham in Genesis chapter twelve, God begins to focus on *one chosen people* to bring forth His King for the coming Kingdom. All of the promises that God made to Abraham and his descendants are still in effect today, and they will soon reach their fulfillment. The Kingdom WILL come.

Many teach that the Kingdom promises are no longer valid, because the Jews rejected Christ, but this is a false teaching. In Acts 1:6-7, before Jesus ascended into Heaven, the apostles asked Him about this Kingdom, saying, **" . . . Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"** If the Kingdom promises were no longer valid, then Jesus would have told them so, but instead He said, **"...It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."** So Israel's rejection of Christ doesn't make void the promises of God. God will chastise the Jews for their sin, and then He will restore the Kingdom to Israel (Psa. 89:29-36).

Someone says, *"If the Jews won't receive their King, then how can God restore the Kingdom? Doesn't this put God in some sort of a jam?"* No, God has a master plan. He knows exactly what He will do. In Hebrews 8:8-10, we read some interesting words quoted from Jeremiah chapter 31: **"For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"**

The words "after those days" clearly refer to a future time when Israel will be converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul tells us in Romans 11:25-27 that Israel has been *blinded* for this present age, but that "all Israel shall be saved" because God will "take away their sins." God promised Israel a Kingdom, so there WILL be a Kingdom.

Since this Kingdom wasn't established at the First Coming of Christ, it must be established at the Second Coming. God knew that the Jews would reject His Son, so He predetermined that Christ's shed Blood on Calvary would serve as an atonement for the sin of the world. This was God's plan all along--to come into the world and pay for the sins of all men (John. 1:29; Rev. 13:8). So, the First Coming was one of suffering and shame, but the Second Coming will be one of glory, honor, and praise (1 Pet. 1:10-12). The first time Jesus received a crown of thorns, but when He comes again He will have *many* crowns (Rev. 19:12). He was the *"lamb of God*" when He came the first time, but He will be the *"lion of the tribe of Judah"* the second time (Rev. 5:5). The First Coming gave Jesus Christ to the world, but the Second Coming will give the world to Jesus Christ! Just as David was chosen to be the king of Israel many years before he actually received the kingdom (1 Sam. 16), the Lord Jesus Christ has been chosen to take over the kingdoms of this world and rule as God's "KING OF KINGS" (Rev. 11:15; 19:16).

Christianity without a Second Coming is a very selfish religion, for it robs Jesus Christ of all God's precious promises to Him. The teaching and preaching of the Second Coming is very essential, because it speaks of God's righteous King returning to this earth and taking what rightfully belongs to Him. Christians should be rejoicing! The Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of your Salvation (if you're saved), will soon return to this earth and set things in order and YOU can be on the winning side!

II. The Pre-Millennial View

The first few verses of Revelation chapter twenty speak of this coming Kingdom being one thousand years long. Verse six says that the saints will reign with Christ for a thousand years. That is, we will reign with Him for a thousand literal years in a literal, physical, and visible earthly Kingdom, and then we will reign forever in the New Heavens and the New Earth (Rev. 5:10; 22:5; 11:15; chapters 21 and 22).

Many these days are teaching false doctrines about the Millennium (the one thousand-year reign). Some teach the "Post-Millennial" view, believing that mankind will become good enough to usher in this righteous Kingdom *without* Jesus Christ. Post-Millennialism teaches that the Church's influence on the

world will become stronger and stronger, and the world will become better and better until we all enter a happy golden age of peace and prosperity. At the end of this coming utopian age, the Lord Jesus Christ will supposedly return and reward the Church for a job well done.

A more popular view is the "A-millennial" view. This is the false teaching that there will be no Millennium, only a "general judgment" someday and that's all.

Both of the above views are incorrect for the Bible teaches that there WILL be a Millennium, and it teaches that it will not begin until the Lord Jesus Christ returns and establishes it and rules over it Himself. This means that only the *pre-millennial* view is correct. This is the doctrine that Christ will return *before* the Millennium to destroy the wicked, take over the kingdoms of this world, and set up the Kingdom that His Father has promised Him. Pre-Millennialism correctly says that there will be no world peace until the Prince of Peace returns (Isa. 9:6). Pre-Millennialism has a very NEGATIVE outlook toward this present world system, as does the Bible, but a very POSITIVE outlook toward the soon appearing of the King of Kings. A Christian who holds the Pre-Millennial view is a Christian who believes exactly what God says about giving His beloved Son the kingdoms of this world.

Now, before the Millennium can begin, there are many prophecies that must be fulfilled. These prophecies must be rightly divided (2 Tim. 2:15) or confusion and heresy will prevail. We must study Bible prophecy Scripture with Scripture, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth (John 16:13). Now let's look at some more significant events in Bible prophecy.

III. The Restoration of Israel

God cannot establish His Son in Israel as King of the Jews unless the Jews are living in Palestine, their promised homeland, so it is God's plan to restore the Jews to Palestine before the Second Coming of Christ:

"But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." (Jer. 16:15)

"And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." (Amos 9:14-15)

Since Israel rejected Christ, God allowed the Romans to destroy Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and the Jews were dispersed among the Gentile nations of the world. Since then they have wondered from nation to nation suffering bitter persecution. However, in the late 1800's a remarkable thing started happening. In large numbers, the Jews began returning to Palestine, and in 1887 they made formal statements that they intended to REPOSSESS THEIR HOMELAND!

When World War I began in 1914, there were 80,000 Jews living in Palestine. England's Balfour Declaration of 1917 gave strong approval for the Jews to establish a national homeland, but England reneged due to Arab pressure. Nevertheless, 400,000 Jews had settled in the homeland by 1939.

Satan saw what was happening. He knew that the Lord was regathering the Jews for a reason, and he knew the reason: *the Second Coming of Christ.* So Satan raised up Adolph Hitler to murder six million of God's chosen people as an outright act of hate and revenge. This massive slaughter created enough sympathy for the Jews that the United Nations granted 5000 square miles of Palestinian land to them after World War II. Then in 1948 Israel became an independent and free nation for the first time in over 2,500 years! The Arabs have fought viciously to destroy Israel, but with no success. God wants His people IN PALESTINE (Amos 9:14-15), because the Lord Jesus Christ is coming very soon. During the Six Day War of 1967, Israel even gained possession of the ancient temple sight, and plans are currently underway to rebuild the temple.

Jesus likens Israel unto a "fig tree" in Matthew 24:32-34, and He likens the *restoration* of Israel unto a fig tree putting forth leaves. He said that He would return during the same generation which witnesses Israel putting forth leaves as a nation. We are living in that generation! There are some four million Jews living in Palestine today. We have seen the Jews return to Palestine, and

we have seen the nation of Israel prosper. Friend, there's a reason for all of this: *the Lord Jesus Christ is coming soon!*

IV. The Rapture of the Church

Up until now, we've said very little about the Church, because Bible prophecy deals mainly with Israel, but the Church is also very important. In fact, the Church has a very special relationship with Christ: she is His BRIDE (Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7-9).

Before God can swing His full attention back to Israel, He must fulfill certain promises that He has made to the Church. While He has spent the last two thousand years chastising Israel for her disobedience, He has also been calling out a Gentile bride for the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as Joseph found a Gentile bride while he was separated from his brethren (Gen. 41:45), Jesus finds a Gentile bride while He is separated from the Jews. It is true that many Jews have been saved by receiving Christ, but most have not. The Church consists mostly of converted Gentiles. God is taking out from among the Gentiles a people for His name, and then He will once again take up His dealings with Israel as a nation. Notice what the Bible says in Acts 15:14-16: **"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:"**

In the near future God will put Israel through a very troublesome period of time known as the "great tribulation" (Mat. 24:21), but Christians will not have to endure the Tribulation. Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 that the Church is waiting for the Lord from Heaven, not for the Great Tribulation, because He has delivered us from the wrath to come. 1 Thessalonians 5:9 says that God has not appointed us (Christians) to wrath, but to obtain salvation through Christ. Those who have been "born again" (John 3:3) will soon be "caught up" to Heaven without dying. Notice what the word of God says: **"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised**

incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:51-52) **"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."** (1 Ths. 4:16-18)

It is a "comfort" for Christians to have this blessed promise. It would *not* be a comfort if Christians had to endure the Great Tribulation. Our merciful Lord will call the Church out of this world *before* the Tribulation starts. After all, the Church was never really a part of this evil world system anyway (Jas. 4:4; Rom. 12:2; Col. 3:2). We're just passing through this world to a much better place (Gal. 4:26), and we will be leaving very soon. What about you?

This great departure of the saints is pictured on various occasions in the Bible. Just as God took Enoch out of the world *before the flood* (Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5), He will take His Church out of the world before the Tribulation. Just as God delivered Lot and his family from the violent judgment upon Sodom (Gen. 19:22-24), He will deliver His saints from the coming judgment of the Great Tribulation. Like any responsible Father, God will take proper care of His children. He will destroy the Devil's children (John 8:44; 1 John 3:10), but His own children are safe and secure. As Psalm 145:20 assures us, **"The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy."**

This calling-out of the Church is commonly referred to as the "Rapture" because of the quick and surprising nature in which it occurs. The world will stand in shock when millions of Christians suddenly vanish from the face of the earth! The freeways, the subways, the airports and streets will be in a total shambles as thousands and thousands of drivers suddenly vanish from their seats. No doubt, millions of people will be killed immediately.

Those remaining alive will be in shock as they search for their loved ones among all the demolished cars and buildings. Communications will also be greatly disrupted, because many key communications people will be caught up in the Rapture.

Opportunists will add to the confusion by looting and killing. They'll feel that during such an emergency they can get away with anything. There will be worldwide chaos.

Authorities may attempt to explain the millions of missing people, but make no mistake about it: GOD TOOK THEM! He promised that He would call out His people, so He will call them out. That's all there is to it.

Many people laugh and make jokes about this Bible doctrine, but there's coming a day when the laughing will end. Noah was a preacher of righteousness who probably received a great deal of mocking and ridicule from the world as he built the ark upon dry ground, but the mocking stopped when the flood waters began to rise. God was true to His word then, and God will be true to His word today. Jesus is coming soon, and you will either be caught up to meet Him, or you will be left behind to enter the Great Tribulation. The choice is yours.

V. The Judgment Seat of Christ

Once Christians have been caught up to Heaven, we will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ to be judged by the Lord for our Christian service. We've covered this already in a previous lesson, but we'll touch on it again since it is a part of God's prophetic program. Paul wrote about this judgment to the Romans and to the Corinthians: **"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."** (Rom. 14:10) **"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."** (1 Cor. 3:11-15) **"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."** (2 Cor. 5:10)

As these verses reveal, a Christian isn't judged to determine his eternal destiny. A Christian's eternal destiny is established the moment he receives Jesus Christ as Saviour. The Judgment Seat of Christ is for judging the Christian's SERVICE while on this earth. Rewards will be given to some, while others will lose rewards (2 John 8), but no one goes to Hell at this judgment.

After the Judgment Seat of Christ, we (Christians) will wait with the Lord in Heaven until the Great Tribulation is over on earth. We will then take part in the Marriage of the Lamb and in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9). This is when the Lord Jesus Christ and His Bride, the Church, are officially united.

We will then return with the Lord to the earth, and He will destroy the wicked and establish the Millennial Kingdom, and His saints will reign with Him on earth for one thousand years (Rev. 20:1-7).

VI. The Great Tribulation

Jesus said in Matthew 24:21, **"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."**

It will be during this short time period that the wicked Antichrist will rise to power and dictate the world. He will have nearly everyone deceived into believing that he is the answer to their many troubles (Rev. 13:3). Those who reject the truth today will fall for his lies in the Tribulation, because God will send them "strong delusion," causing them to believe a lie (2 Ths. 2:11-12). The Antichrist will have supernatural powers and great charisma. People will gladly follow after him (Rev. 13:5, 13-14; 2 Ths. 2:7-10).

All of the horrible events in Revelation chapters six through nineteen will occur during the Tribulation. In fact, most of these events will occur during a forty-two month time period, which is the last half of the Tribulation (Rev. 11:2; 13:5). There will be war, famine, and death (Rev. 6:2-8). Satan will have power to kill one fourth of the earth's population (Rev. 6:8), and many who choose to follow Christ at this time will be killed (Rev. 6:9; 20:4). There will be great earthquakes (Rev. 6:12), awesome changes in the skies (Rev. 6:13-14; 8:8, 12), and men will be tormented five months by the horrible locust creatures of

Revelation chapter nine. In addition to all of this, Satan and his angels will be cast out into the earth (Rev. 12:9)!

Once Satan has been cast down to the earth, he will incarnate himself into a man and become the Antichrist. Just as Jesus was "God manifest in the flesh," Antichrist will be Satan manifest in the flesh. According to Revelation 13:16-18, this "beast" (Antichrist) will cause everyone to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead. This mark will allow people to buy and sell, and no one will be permitted to buy and sell without it. The number "666" will be connected with the mark, and cash, credit cards, checks, and debit cards will become useless, while computerized scanning devices in the stores will likely keep track of bank account debits and credits. Everyone MUST take the Mark of the Beast or be killed, and Hell awaits those who take it (Rev. 14:11).

United States sovereignty will continue to be eroded by our globally-minded leaders, and the eastern powers like China will continue to grow as world powers (Rev. 16:12). The European nations will eventually form their own “united states” of Europe (Rev. 17:12-13), at least for a short time, and the Islamic states will form their confederacy with Russia (Ezk. 38-39). The world will think that its global government has finally established universal peace. The Antichrist will head up the "New World Order" that so many are talking about today. He will even confirm a seven year peace treaty with the nation of Israel (Dan. 9:27). Everyone will think that peace and safety has arrived at last, but the Bible says, **"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."** (1 Ths. 5:3) Satan, the "god of this world" is leading this world into a trap that will damn billions to Hell forever (Rev. 12:9).

In the middle of the Tribulation the Antichrist will turn against Israel (Dan. 9:27). He will enter the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and sit down in the Holy Place and demand to be worshipped as God (2 Ths. 2:3-4). Satan desired to have Jesus worship him in Matthew 4:9, and he WILL have the world worshipping him in the Tribulation. Those who refuse will be killed (Rev. 6:9; 20:4).

However, God will preserve a faithful remnant of Jews throughout this period (Rev. 12:6; Hos. 2:14-17) because He still plans to send Jesus back to establish the promised Kingdom. The

Antichrist will think that he has taken full control and that nothing can stop him. The humanists, communists and socialists will think that they've finally won and conquered the world. While Satan is laughing in the face of God, thinking that he has won and that the kingdoms of this world will never belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, all the hosts of Heaven will be *rejoicing*, because *THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH IS JUST BEGINNING!*

VII. Christ's Second Advent

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." (Rev. 19:11-21)

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Mat. 24:29-30)

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2:2-4)

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev 11:15)

These are just a few of the many prophecies to be fulfilled when Jesus returns to this earth to take over the kingdoms of this world. This will be a time of JUSTICE and JUDGMENT on the earth. The Antichrist and the False Prophet will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20), and Satan himself will be chained in the "bottomless pit" for the duration of the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:1-7). The nations of the earth will be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ, and some will be admitted into the Kingdom, while others will not (Mat. 25:31-46; Joel. 3:1-2).

Once all wickedness has been defeated, the Lord Jesus Christ will rule over the earth in righteousness from the Throne of His Glory in Jerusalem. He will be the King of all kings, and all nations will be subject unto Him. Friend, the Kingdom will come and the King of kings will reign.

VIII. The Millennial Reign of Christ

This will be the great "golden age" which the ancient philosophers only dreamed about. This will be GOD'S New World Order, rather than man's. This will be a time of world peace, for the Prince of Peace will be ruling the world in righteousness (Isa. 9:6; Luk. 1:32; Isa. 2:2-4).

There will be only ONE RELIGION during the Millennium. Those who refuse to worship Christ will be punished (Zch. 14:16-19).

People will be happy during this time, because Satan will no longer be around to tempt them. The curse of Genesis chapter three will be lifted, and men will once again live long lives as they did in the days of Adam, Noah, and Methuselah (Isa. 33:24; 65:20).

There will be better farming and weather conditions (Isa. 30:23-26; Amos 9:13-15; Joel 2:19-24; Ezk. 36:29-30), and wild animals will become tame (Isa. 11:6-9; Rom. 8:20-21).

The so-called "lost tribes" of Israel will be fully restored to their proper land divisions (Ezk. 36-48). Jerusalem will be the capital city of the world (Jer. 3:17; Mic. 4:8), and the violent acts of Arab terrorism will not be tolerated. Justice will be executed in the earth like never before. Good will overcome evil. Things will be done on earth as they are in Heaven (Mat. 6:10). Christ and His saints will reign over the earth for one thousand years!

Lesson Review

1. True or False? The Old Testament Kingdom promises are no longer in effect because Israel rejected Jesus Christ, her messiah.

2. “The sceptre shall not depart from _____ . . .”

3. Please write “F” or “S” beside the following items to designate the “First” or “Second” Coming of Christ:

____ Many crowns ____ Lamb of God ____ Suffering
____ Glory _____ Crown of Thorns _____ Lion of Judah

4. Where does the Bible say that the Kingdom of Christ will last 1000 years? _____

5. Our view that Jesus will return BEFORE the 1000 year reign is known as the _____ view.

6. Before Jesus returns to establish His kingdom, Israel and the lost world will go through: (pick one)

a. The Rapture b. The Great Tribulation C. The Millennium

7. Please give two New Testament references on the Rapture:

8. Christians will be judged at which of the following judgments:

a. The White Throne Judgment
b. The General Judgment
c. The Judgment Seat of Christ
d. The Judgment of Nations

9. Please place the following events in the proper scriptural order:

The Tribulation
The Millennial Kingdom
The Judgment Seat of Christ
The Rapture
The Church Age

10. True or False. The Antichrist is not a man, but rather a system.

11. Where does the Bible speak about the "Mark of the Beast?"

Suggested Memory Verses: I Corinthians 15:51-52, I Thessalonians 4:16-18, Genesis 49:10

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book IV

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson XIII

The Seven Dispensations

A dispensation in the Bible is a period of time in which God *dispenses* to men and nations their responsibility to Him concerning obedience and disobedience. Since these laws differ throughout the Bible, it becomes necessary to respect certain divisions. For example, God didn't command Christians today to offer a lamb for sacrifice, so this places us in a different dispensation than the Old Testament Jews who did offer sacrifice. Likewise, God didn't command the Jews under the law of Moses to not eat of the Tree of Life, as He did Adam and Eve, so Adam and Eve were in yet another dispensation. So the study of dispensations is simply a study to better understand how God has dealt with man differently through the ages.

The word itself is found four times in the Bible: I Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 3:2, and Colossians 1:25. Each time the word has to do with either a period of time or a responsibility which has been given to someone.

One good reason for dispensations is to reveal or emphasize an attribute of God. For example, under the law His *holiness* was emphasized. Today, during the church age, we see that His *grace* is the highlighted attribute. This doesn't mean that God is no longer holy. He is just as holy as ever, but He has chosen to emphasize His *grace* for this present age. For instance, a preacher doesn't preach a message to fathers on Father's Day because he doesn't appreciate mothers. He does so because the day places an emphasis on fathers. The mothers had their day a month earlier.

Another reason for dispensations is for God to give man every possible opportunity to be reconciled to Himself. At the final White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), man will have no excuse because God will have tried him under seven distinct dispensations and man failed under each one. For example, no one will be able to say, *"Well, if I hadn't been born a sinner I could have stayed clean and holy."* There was a time when two clean and holy people lived in a perfect paradise, yet they chose to sin against God. For example, no one can say, *"Well, if I could have just seen Jesus for myself I would have believed."* In the Millennium people will see Him on the throne in Jerusalem, yet

there is a massive rebellion by Gog and Magog at the close of the 1000-year reign (Rev. 20:8-10). The seven dispensations prove that (1) God is holy and just and (2) that man is utterly hopeless.

A third reason for dispensations is to reveal the approved and the heretics. II Timothy 2:15 says, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** A heretic does not rightly divide God's word, so he is not "approved." Notice the words of I Corinthians 11:19: **"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."** Those who refuse to rightly divide the truth will eventually teach heresy. This casts a "blacklight" upon them while the approved teachers of truth shine even brighter in the light of God's word. So, each dispensation allows for a very definite contrast to be made between the approved and the heretics.

The following chart shows the seven main dispensations with their beginning and their end:

DISPENSATION	BEGINNING	END
INNOCENCE	MAN'S CREATION	MAN'S FIRST SIN
CONSCIENCE	MAN'S FIRST SIN	FLOOD
HUMAN GOVERNMENT	AFTER FLOOD	TOWER OF BABEL
PROMISE (FAMILY)	CALL OF ABRAHAM	EGYPTIAN BONDAGE
LAW	MOSES AT MT. SINAI	CALVARY
GRACE	CALVARY	SECOND COMING
KINGDOM	SECOND COMING	WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

We will now study through each dispensation individually, considering five different factors for each dispensation: its beginning, man's responsibility, God's attribute, man's test and failure, and, finally, the closing judgment.

I. THE DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE

Beginning

This dispensation began in Genesis 1:26 when man was created in God's image and placed under God's authority in a perfect setting.

Man's Responsibility

Man was given "dominion" over God's creation as God's very own "son" (Luke 3:38). He was given perfect weather, perfect health, a perfect paradise to live in, and even a perfect wife! His primary responsibility is given in Genesis 2:8-15: **"And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. . . . And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."** Adam's duty was to simply "dress" and "keep" the garden of God. There was no curse yet placed upon the earth, so thorns and thistles were not a factor. Adam's job was apparently an easy one and also a pleasant one.

He was also permitted to eat from the trees of this garden, as we see from 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."**

God's Attribute

The attribute of God which is most manifest in this dispensation is God's goodness. This is quite evident from what we read just before God creates man and places him in the garden. We are reminded several times in chapter one that what God created was "good" (see 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). God is a good God, and He provided man with a good environment and a good opportunity to live and prosper for God's glory.

Man's Test and Failure

God Himself didn't tempt man with sin, but He did *test* man by allowing the devil to tempt him. Man was forbidden to eat of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2:17), yet he had liberty to sin and do so if he chose. It was God's will that man love Him enough to be obedient and remain holy, yet man failed his first test. We read in Genesis 3:1-6, **"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."**

Notice the elements of the first temptation:

(1) Satan questions God's word (verse 2)
(2) The woman changes God's word by omitting the word "freely." (verse 2. See God's statement in 2:16).
(3) Satan's outright lie (verse 4)
(4) Satan's suggestion that God was withholding certain knowledge from Eve (verse 5)
(5) The woman's reasoning that the tree was good for food" (verse 6). That is, "after all, I do have to eat! I must have food to live, and here is good food!) She justified her sin.
(6) The woman's reasoning that the tree *looked* good (verse 6). The tree was good for food and it even looked good, so she figured it just couldn't hurt her.
(7) The woman's reasoning that the tree could make her wise (verse 6). Eve was a secondary creation (made from Adam's rib, not from the ground itself) so she was a weaker vessel. She wasn't equal to Adam, but was rather a help meet for him. The devil's temptation appealed to this

"weakness" in Eve and caused her to want to "better" herself. Instead of ERA, this was EVE, the original "liberated woman." She liberated the human race from the kingdom of God to a fallen state called sin, all because she ignored God's simple order. Adam then ate of the tree himself, although he was not deceived as was Eve (I Tim. 2:14).

The Closing Judgment

The dispensation of innocence ends with a curse placed upon the serpent, the woman, the ground, the man, and even an innocent lamb (Gen. 3:15-19).

First the serpent is cursed. We can't be certain of what the serpent looked like at first, but he was forced to crawl upon his belly from this day forth, in full contact with the cursed ground. He is also told that a promised seed (Christ) will defeat him one day.

Then the woman is cursed by having to suffer in childbearing.

The ground is then cursed and the man is told that he will have to till the cursed ground rather than work in a perfect paradise as he had been doing in the garden. Thorns, thistles and sweat would be his lot in life.

Almost unnoticed is the innocent lamb which has to be slain to provide a skin for their covering (3:21). Adam and Eve tried covering themselves with fig leaves (verse 7), but God required that BLOOD be shed to cover sin (Heb. 9:22; Lev. 17:11). So, an innocent lamb had to shed its blood and die that they might have a covering. We know this from a couple places in Scripture: **". . . the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Rev. 13:8) and **"The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field."** (Prov. 27:26)

So, the first dispensation closed with man being expelled from Eden to enter a life of hard work and suffering. Yet he left Eden with the promise of a coming seed (Christ) Who would redeem fallen man from the bondage of the devil (3:15).

II. THE DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE

Beginning

The dispensation of conscience begins when man is expelled from the garden of Eden in Genesis 3:23. He was now a fallen creature, and he was conscious of it (Gen. 3:7, 10-11). He now had an awareness of good and evil. He also knew that God expected a blood sacrifice from man since the lamb skin was required in Eden instead of the fig leaves.

Man's Responsibility

Man's responsibility at this point was to be faithful to the three witnesses which he now had:

(1) An internal witness (Rom. 2:14-15; Jer. 17:1). His conscience was his internal witness concerning good and evil.
(2) An external witness (Rom. 1:19-20). God's creation itself stood as an outward witness that God is the sovereign Creator, and all are accountable to Him.
(3) History (Gen. 3). Man knew from the events in Genesis chapter three that God was holy and would not overlook sin. He also finds confirmation in Genesis chapter four (Cain and Abel) that God rejects anything short of a blood atonement for sin.

In this dispensation, man has no written authority, no Bible, so he is judged in regards to his faithfulness to these three witnesses.

God's Attribute

The attribute which God seems to display the most during this time is His *longsuffering*. This dispensation is 1,700 years in length, and man's life span was eight and nine hundred years (Gen. 5). This allowed man ample time to become very good *or* very evil. He chose to become very evil, yet God's grace abounded even more and His spirit "strove" with man on through the days of Noah (Gen. 6:3). We read in I Peter 3:20 that ". . . **the LONGSUFFERING of God waited in the days of Noah, while**

the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." (emphasis added) God was longsuffering with man in spite of the prevailing wickedness upon the earth.

Man's Test and Failure

A redemptive seed had been promised in Genesis 3:15, so man's great test was to keep his generations clean and undefiled. We know this from God's comments about Noah, the one man who found grace in God's eyes: **"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."** (Gen. 6:8-9) Noah had kept himself and his family unspotted from the wicked world. The gross sexual perversion of that day had not affected him, yet it did affect the rest of the world. Many had even given themselves over to sexual relations with fallen angels (Gen. 6:2-4; Jude 6-7; II Pet. 2:4). Even the animals were perverse, for they too ended up drowning in the flood. "All flesh" had corrupted his way upon the earth (Gen. 6:12). If God had not intervened when He did, the entire plan would have eventually been corrupted and His redemption plan would have been destroyed. Man failed his test miserably.

The Closing Judgment

The judgment which ended this dispensation was the universal flood (Gen. 7:15-24). All flesh died except for eight souls (I Pet. 3:20).

III. THE DISPENSATION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

Beginning

This dispensation begins in Genesis 8:20 with Noah and his family coming out of the Ark and making a new beginning. He offers sacrifice in 8:20, and God accepts it, so the new dispensation is under way.

Notice how conscience is still a factor. With no written revelation, Noah still knows to offer sacrifice.

Noah and his family are the first people to be "blessed" since the fall of man in Genesis 3.

Up to this point, God has not shown man how to govern *nations*, for He has only dealt with man on an individual basis. Now, after men have populated and corrupted the earth so much that God had to destroy them all, He chooses to reveal to man certain national duties.

Man's Responsibility

In this dispensation God demands that men properly govern society. They are to still follow their conscience, since there is no written revelation, but they do have the lessons of their ancestors.

Man can eat animals now (9:3), whereas before he only ate vegetation. This factor coupled with the fact that man's sins caused the animal population to be drowned puts a fear of man in the animals (9:2).

Notice that the blood of animals is not to be eaten (9:4). This also hold true throughout future dispensations (Lev. 17:11; Acts 15:29).

The highest responsibility of any government is that of protecting and taking human life. Innocent people are to be protected, and those worthy of death are to be executed. Therefore, we find God commanding man to carry out the death penalty (Gen. 9:5-6). This wasn't the case in the previous dispensation when Cain murdered Able (Gen. 4), but with human governments forming God saw the need to install the death penalty. He will hold nations accountable for not obeying this law (I Kgs. 20:42).

God's Attribute

God's most prominent attribute during this dispensation is justice. God is a just God, and He expects society to be governed His way. Righteous people are to be appreciated and blessed, while wicked people are to be punished. This is explained quite well in Ecclesiastes 8:11: **"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."**

Man's Test and Failure

The dispensation of human government offered man a perfect opportunity to make a fresh new start and fulfill God's will by governing himself responsibility, but he failed.

Three distinct races with three distinct characteristics (Gen. 9:24-27) had no business integrating and pretending that they were all equal, but they did. This led to the breakdown in society which promoted unity and humanism while downgrading God.

Notice how no one prayed about building the tower of Babel (Gen. 11). They all got together with one speech in one place (Shinar-Babylon), and they used man-made materials to build a tower in honor of man and progress. God isn't mentioned in Genesis 11:1-4, but man says plenty about himself ("one another . . .us . .us . . .we . . .etc. - 11:3-4).

The Closing Judgment

God, in His wisdom, ends this dispensation simply by confounding man's language so he can't communicate (Gen. 11:5-9). So this turns out to be a curse, causing national differences in regards to speech, geography, environment and culture (see Acts 17:24-27). After this event, God is practically finished with *nations* (plural), and He picks out ONE nation to be His own, but even then it must begin with one *family*.

IV. THE DISPENSATION OF PROMISE (Family or Patriarchal)

Beginning

Our next dispensation begins in Genesis chapter 12 with God calling Abraham (Abram) to begin a chosen people for Himself, the Jews: **"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3)** In

this text and in later texts, God makes several promises to Abraham:

(1) He promises to make him a great nation (12:1-3). Israel became a great nation.
(2) God promised to make his name great (12:2). He did, for Abraham is a highly regarded name among Jews, Christians, and even Moslems.
(3) God promised that Abraham would be a blessing and that nations would be blessed in him (12:2-3). Reading the next few chapters in Genesis clearly reveals that Abraham was a blessing as an individual (especially to Lot), and the record of history reveals that nations have been blessed in him as well—through Israel and through Jesus Christ (see Gal. 3:8-14).
(4) God promise him a physical seed in Isaac (Gen. 12:7), and a spiritual seed in Christ (Gen. 22:17-18).
(5) God promised Abraham a land grant (Gen. 15:18-21).
(6) God promised that kings would come from Abraham and many nations (Gen. 17:4-6).
(7) God promised that Abraham's circumcision and that of his descendants would serve as a token of the Abramic covenant (Gen. 17:9-14). Those not circumcised were excluded from the covenant.

Man's Responsibility

By "man" we mean "men under the covenant, Abraham's descendants." The Gentiles are still judged as in previous dispensations, primarily according to their conscience (Romans chapter 1), but now we have a peculiar people whom God has chosen for His own. They have special duties like no one else:

(1) They must continue to offer sacrifice (Gen. 12:7-8; 13:4; 13:18; 22:13, etc.)
(2) They must remain in the land of promise. When they leave the land the blessings cease (example - Gen. 12:6-20).
(3) They must be circumcised (Gen. 17:9-14).

God's Attribute

The attribute of God which is most manifest in this dispensation is His faithfulness. God is faithful in keeping His promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve tribes of Israel.

Man's Test and Failure

The real test was whether or not man would remain in the promised land and trust God by continually offering sacrifice and obeying God's law of circumcision. Man does not pass the test for he ends up going down to Egypt. He also ceases to offer sacrifice and practice circumcision (Exo. 3:18; 4:26).

The Closing Judgment

The dispensation of promise ends up with the entire nation of Israel under Egyptian bondage for 400 years. In God's wisdom, this would be a time of building up a strong nation of over 2,000,000 people who would bring honor and glory to the true God, unlike all the other nations.

V. THE DISPENSATION OF LAW

Beginning

The law dispensation begins in Exodus chapter twenty when God gave the written law to Moses at Mt. Sinai.

The law consisted of three basic divisions: commandments, judgments, and ordinances. The commandments (Exo. 20:1-26) are moral, the judgments (Exo. 21:1-24:11) are civil, and the ordinances (Exo. 24:12-31:18 & Lev. 1-8) are religious.

The law was not to save man, but rather to show man his lost condition and his need for Christ (Rom. 3:19-21; Gal. 3:24-25). In fact it is called a curse (Gal. 3:13). Yet, the Jews were so zealous about their new law(s) that they committed themselves to keep it before the religious (redemptive) section of the law was given. That is, they made the bold commitment of Exodus 19:8 and 24:3-8 before God had given them the redemption section of Exodus 24:12-31:18. Only a few weeks later, in Exodus chapter 32, they are worshiping a golden calf! By Exodus 40 they have the tabernacle, the offerings by Leviticus 6, and the priests by Leviticus 8, so they now have a redemption plan which allows them to be reconciled to God if they violate the law.

Man's Responsibility

Under the law man was to keep God's commandments in a right spirit without becoming conceited and self-righteous. He was expected to keep all of God's law without adding to or diminishing from it (Deu. 4:2). Outside influences such as the Babylonian Talmud and various traditions were strictly forbidden. God wanted man to clearly see the wide gap that existed between Himself and man.

God's Attribute

God's most manifest attribute under the law is His holiness, which is obvious with the word "holy" occurring over sixty times in Exodus alone, the first mention being Exodus 3:5 when God calls Moses to launch the new dispensation.

Man's Test and Failure

Would man live by God's word alone? Would he live by "every word" (Deu. 8:3) or would he give place to the deceitfulness of sin and fail in yet another dispensation?

As we know, Israel rejected the written law and went after false gods and was eventually carried away into foreign captivity. Later they rejected the incarnate law, Jesus Christ. So, those who had been entrusted to keep and honor the law actually killed the Lawgiver!

The Closing Judgment

The closing judgment is twofold:

(1) Christ is judged on Calvary as a payment for sin. His statement "It is finished" (John 19:30) brings the law dispensation to an end.
(2) Israel is judged for the next 2,000 years for murdering her Messiah. The temple is destroyed, along with Jerusalem, and Israel is dispersed among the nations. This is Israel's present condition, although God will soon resume His dealings with his chosen people in the coming tribulation period (Rev. 6-19).

VI. THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

Unlike with previous dispensations, there is a definite period of transition between law and grace. The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist (Luke 16:16), yet it isn't correct to say that the dispensation of grace began immediately after John's death. John dies in Matthew 14:10, yet five chapters later Jesus is still speaking of keeping the law in order to have eternal life (Matthew 19:17-18), although He is clearly speaking of the *moral* law, not all the law. Others are saved by faith with no mention of the commandments (Luke 7:48-50). Conversions differ as one reads through the ministry of Christ and through the book of Acts, so it's not possible to select a definite starting place where the law stops and grace begins. God uses this transition period to slowly usher in the day of grace. Remember, the promised kingdom is being offered to Israel clear through Acts chapter 7, so we are in Acts chapter 8 before we see a clear-cut faith conversion to Christ based on His redemptive work at Calvary.

The reason for the gospel of John emphasizing grace more than the other three gospels is that John was written around 85 A.D., which was *after Paul's revelation*. The others were written earlier.

Beginning

It is my personal belief that the dispensation of grace began at Calvary, *but no one knew it* (John 1:17). God used about the first fifteen chapters of Acts to reveal this to man. Hebrews 9:15-17 tells us that the new covenant was in effect after Jesus died, but who knew it? Peter didn't know it in Acts 2, because it is in Acts 10 that God gives him this special revelation (Acts 10:9-28). This is why so many cults like the book of Acts: it's a *transitional book of progressive revelation*. If one establishes his doctrine in Acts 2, then he errs greatly, because God reveals more to man in later chapters. The dispensation of grace began at Calvary, but it takes until about Acts 15 to get everyone to understand this (Acts 15:11). This dispensation is especially given to Paul (Eph. 3:2).

Man's Responsibility

In Ephesians 2:8-10, Paul sums up man's responsibility in the age of grace: **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."**

Today, men are expected to receive Christ by faith and walk in good works to glorify Christ. We are to be SAVED and SERVING. Our service includes glorifying the Saviour, evangelizing the sinners, and edifying the saints.

God's Attribute

God's main attribute in this dispensation is grace. The word "grace" is found 170 times in the Bible, about half of which are found in Paul's writings alone. God is gracious to those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ, because Christ is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). God's grace in this age accomplishes three great things:

(1) Saves sinners (Eph. 2:8-9)
(2) Places Jews and Gentiles into one body (Eph. 2:11-14)
(3) Establishes glory for God in ages to come (Eph. 2:7)

Man's Test and Failure

Rather than stick to the primary duties of the church, God's people have given way to gross apostasy, and the church age will end in apostasy like all other dispensations. Paul said in II Timothy 3:1-7: **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge**

of the truth." He tells the Thessaloians that there will be a "falling away" in the last days. The church has left the three simple duties which we've just mentioned, and she has gone lusting after worldliness and selfish gain. Everything has been modernized, and the old-time gospel is seldom heard. Preachers have quit preaching against sin and have resorted to "counseling" and tickling ears. False Bible translations have been invited into our churches, and genuine revival is a thing of the past. Performance has replaced praise, and worldliness has replaced godliness. God's people have grown to fear men, and they've forgotten to fear God.

The Closing Judgment

Most of professing Christianity is FAKE, so such people will not be taken to Heaven in the Rapture. Instead, professing Christians will enter into the Great Tribulation period with the world to suffer the wrath of God (Revelation chapters 6 through 19). The world will worship the Antichrist (Rev. 13), and they will end up in Hell. Many will be saved in the Tribulation (Rev. 7:14), but most will not (II Ths. 2:3-12).

VII. THE DISPENSATION OF THE KINGDOM

After the Tribulation Christ will return from heaven with His saints to establish the 1000-year kingdom, commonly referred to as "the Millennium." This is a literal and physical kingdom with Jesus Christ Himself sitting in Jerusalem as the King, a subject which we've covered in a previous lesson.

Beginning

The Millennium begins in Revelation 20:4-6 after Jesus has destroyed the wicked, the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and after Satan has been "bound" in the bottomless pit for 1000 years.

Man's Responsibility

The duty of man in the coming kingdom will be to obey and worship Christ. Zechariah 14:8-21 says, **"And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague. And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE**

LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."

The saints from the Tribulation and the Church Age will reign with Christ in the Kingdom (II Tim. 2:11-13; Luke 19:11-27; Rev. 20:4), but the rest of the world will be in subjection to Christ's authority, with Israel as the head of all nations (Acts 15:13-17).

Apparently, immediate judgment awaits those who disobey the Lord during the millennium, for Christ rules with a "rod of iron" (Rev. 2:27, 12:5, 19:15). A good example of this is found in Matthew 5:22 where Jesus speaks of a person being in danger of "hell fire" for calling his brother a fool. Paul wasn't worried about this (I Cor. 15:36), but a person in the kingdom needs to be. The millennial kingdom will be a moral and righteous dictatorship.

God's Attribute

Since this will be a righteous kingdom, God's primary attribute will be righteousness. Hebrews 1:8 says, **" 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."** (Also see Isaiah 11:1-9) Man will be shown the RIGHT way to live and the RIGHT way to govern himself. This will produce 1000 years of world peace, something man has never known.

Man's Test and Failure

Surely men could honor God if they SEE him sitting on the throne in Jerusalem! Surely no one would rebel against the Lord after He has destroyed the wicked and established himself as King of Kings! However, we read in Revelation 20:7-9: **"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and**

compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Man, after 1000 years of peace and prosperity, chooses to rebel against the Lord, proving beyond any shadow of a doubt that Psalm 39:5 is absolutely correct: **" . . . verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah. "** Rather than obey and worship Christ, men ATTACK Him! But this time He doesn't turn the other cheek.

The Closing Judgment:

First, the fire falls from Heaven and devours those who rebel against the Lord, then the world stands before the Lord at the White Throne Judgment to be judged and condemned (I Cor. 11:32; Rev. 20:11-15). This will be the final judgment on all of the wicked from all ages. Those not recorded in the Lamb's Book of Life will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Like all other dispensations, the Millennium ends in apostasy. Man had his seventh chance to prove himself, and he failed. He is a hopeless creature without Christ, so he ends up in a hopeless place forever.

Lesson Review

1. Please name the seven dispensations in their proper order:

2. Does the word "dispensation" actually occur in the Bible?

3. Should God's word be divided?

4. When was the first lamb slain upon the earth?

5. How do we know that Adam and Eve had a conscience after they sinned?

6. Under the dispensation of conscience, what three witnesses did man have to guide him?

7. When did the dispensation of conscience end?

8. Capital punishment was first instituted under:

a. conscience
b. human government
c. law

9. True or false? Men were permitted to eat animals before Noah's day.

10. How did the dispensation of human government end?

11. Who is the main character in the dispensation of promise?

12. True or false? God's promises to Abraham were all conditional.

13. True or false? The Israelites continued their sacrifices in Egypt.

14. When did the dispensation of law begin?

15. What are the three sections of the law?

16. Which three words best describe these three sections of the law?

instructive	civil
moral	mandatory
good	religious

17. Paul told the Galatians that the law was our _____.

18. When did the law dispensation end?

19. The dispensation of grace begins where?

20. True or false? Each disciple understood salvation by grace through faith in the blood atonement of Christ from the very beginning of Acts.

21. What are the three basic functions of the church?

22. The church age will end in:

a. revival
b. apostasy

23. Where does the Bible say that people will have to travel to Jerusalem in the Millennial kingdom to worship the King?

24. Where in the Bible do we learn that the Kingdom of Christ will last for 1000 years?

Suggested Memory Verse: II Tim. 2:15

Lesson XIV

Rightly Dividing the Word

II Timothy 2:15 tells us, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** There are proper divisions to be made when reading and studying the Bible. When these divisions are ignored, a serious and well intended Bible study can result in heresy. In lesson thirteen, we saw a good example of this when studying the dispensations. The same holds true in all Bible study. One must learn to rightly divide.

The Bible presents different resurrections, different judgments, different baptisms, different places to spend eternity, different gospels, different spirits, different spiritual fathers, different kinds of people (just to mention a few examples), yet many people fail to make the necessary distinctions and divisions.

Some Questions to Ask

When reading or studying your Bible, there are some good wise questions to always ask. We will present some of these questions in this final lesson. Hopefully, this will keep you within the boundaries of good and healthy Bible study.

I. WHO IS SPEAKING?

Speech comes from three sources in the Bible. God often speaks and He is *always right.* Man also speaks, and is *sometimes misleading*. Satan sometimes speaks and is *often misleading*. Read the first five verses of Genesis chapter three to see this truth illustrated on all three counts.

The point here is that just because the Bible says something, this doesn't mean GOD said it. It was Satan who said, "Ye shall not surely die." God wanted this information recorded for you to know about, but it wasn't God Himself who said it.

II. TO WHOM IS THIS SCRIPTURE DIRECTED?

There are three classes of people in the Bible (I Corinthians 10:32), so scripture may be directed to either or all of these classes. Scripture may be directed toward Jews, Gentiles, the Church, or even all three. It is wrong to apply something to yourself which God directed to someone else. For example, a Christian could easily start a "no hair" cult with Jeremiah 48:37 if he just ignored the fact that this verse deals with God's judgment on *a Gentile nation.*

III. DOES THIS CONCERN INDIVIDUALS OR NATIONS?

God says things to nations in the Bible that He never says to individuals, and visa versa. For example, God promises to save any *individual* who calls upon his name for salvation in Romans 10:9-13, but this is not a promise to save any nation. If the U.S President and Congress passed a resolution to have an official day of salvation prayer for our nation on the basis of Romans 10:9-13 it wouldn't mean anything. Many things in our nation will have to change before God can shower His blessings upon us as in years past. However, any individual American can call upon the Lord

for personal salvation in spite of the sad condition of the country at large.

By contrast, Romans 11:17-25 deals with the salvation of the *nation* of Israel in the coming Tribulation. This will happen in spite of the fact that many *individual* Jews are lost and will not be saved. One must rightly divide between nations and individuals.

IV. WHAT IS THE CONTEXT?

Sometimes it will be necessary to rightly divide God's word from your own opinion or tradition. Many false teachings have been derived from the Bible by people who pull texts from their context. I grew up thinking it was a sin to *sell a dog* because of a family member who used Deuteronomy 23:18 out of its proper context. Many people think they are saved today because their blind leaders have stolen Acts 2:38 from its context and have failed to properly expound this verse to their followers.

Remember, always ask, *"What is the context?"* Read verses, not just phrases, and read chapters, not just verses.

V. DOES THIS CONCERN SPIRITUAL OR PHYSICAL MATTERS?

The Bible speaks of spiritual matters and of physical matters. Much confusion can erupt when one fails to distinguish between the two.

Many people, for example, like to read God's many Old Testament promises to the nation of Israel and then spiritualize them for the church. The idea here is that God did not physically mean what He said to Israel about a future kingdom and the promised land, so He must have been making spiritual references to the church. The promised "land" would actually be a "place of blessing" for the Christian. This leaves the *physical* nation of Israel out in the cold, robbed of her precious promises. There is no reason to assume that God didn't mean exactly what He said about Israel and her glorious days ahead. Many err in spiritualizing God's physical promises. The same is done with the doctrines of the Second Coming, the First Resurrection, the Millennium, etc.

Then again, some things in the Bible are spiritual. The chariots and horses of fire in II Kings 2:11 are obviously not

physical horses and chariots because the fire would consume them. These are spiritual (supernatural) horses and chariots, just like the ones in II Kings 6:17.

Always ask, "*Does this concern spiritual or physical matters?*"

VI. IS THIS SCRIPTURE LITERAL OR FIGURATIVE?

Please do not confuse this question with the previous one. When something is *literal* it is *real.* When something is *figurative*, it only *represents* something that is real and isn't real itself.

For example, Genesis tells us that God made man from the dust of the earth. That's literal. The dirt doesn't represent anything, and the man doesn't represent anything. God took literal dirt and made a literal man.

So what is figurative? In John 10:9 Jesus said, **"I am the door."** Obviously, Jesus isn't a literal door with hinges, so He was speaking figuratively. The same is true of His claims of being a shepherd, the lily of the valleys, the rose of Sharon, the bright and morning star, and the lion of the tribe of Judah. These are figurative terms used to describe His person, not literal terms.

VII. DOES THIS DEAL WITH ETERNAL OR TEMPORAL MATTERS?

Don't make the assumption that a word or group of words are always used the same way in the Bible. Sometimes the Bible speaks of eternal things while at other times it speaks of temporal things.

For example, the word "damnation" is used in boths ways. John 5:29 speaks of eternal damnation for the unsaved, yet I Corinthians 11:29-32 speaks of temporal damnation for those who are saved so that they will *not* be condemned with the world. These are two different kinds of damnation for two different kinds of people. Always bear in mind that some things in the Bible are eternal while others are temporal.

VIII. IS THIS CONDITIONAL OR UNCONDITIONAL?

Some statements in the Bible have conditions attached to them, while others do not. II Timothy 2:11-12 place a condition upon our reigning with Christ in his kingdom: we must "suffer" for him today. That's the condition. No suffering means no reigning. No cross means no crown. That's a conditional promise which disqualifies many people.

The next chapter, however, presents an unconditional promise about the apostasy of the last days (II Tim. 3:1-7). There is no condition placed upon this promise. God didn't say, *"If my people don't do such and such, then perilous times shall come."* He plainly declared that perilous times "shall" come. It's a definite and unconditional promise.

IX. DOES THIS AGREE WITH PAUL'S WRITINGS?

As we've already seen, the Bible is written to different classes of people. Well, to be more specific at this point, Paul himself had a special calling of God which other New Testament writers did not have. Paul was called of God to minister to the Gentiles (non Jews). This is evident from reading Acts 28:25-31, Romans 15:8, 15:16, and Galatians 2:7-8. We should never use another portion of scripture to overrule what God has given us through Paul. Some reason that "it's better to obey Jesus than Paul," but the fact is that Jesus handpicked Paul to minister to you.

A good example of this is the issue of whether or not the church has to endure the Great Tribulation Period which is coming upon the earth. Paul's writings state clearly that Christians are:

1. Not waiting for the Tribulation - I Thes 1:10
2. Delivered from the wrath to come - I Ths 5:9
3. Going to be caught up - I Ths 4
4. Not condemned with the world - I Cor 11

It would be foolish to ignore Paul's instruction by going to some other place in the Bible, like Matthew or Hebrews, and using passages out of context to teach that Christians must go through the Tribulation. Paul's writings to the church do not teach this, so the other passages cannot mean what many are using them to teach. There will be people in the Tribulation, but not Christians who are presently in the body of Christ.

X. DOES THIS CONCERN MY STANDING OR MY STATE?

A Christian's *standing* has to do with his *position* in Christ, but his state has to do with his practice or his circumstance. Ephesians 2:1-6 says that we are seated in heavenly places in Christ. That's our standing. I am a son of God, sealed and kept by the power of God until Jesus returns.

My state is different and subject to change (Philip. 4:11; Col. 4:7) because I am still in this world in the flesh. My flesh isn't born again, so it does not have a perfect standing and it is not "seated in heavenly places." When Jesus returns, Christians will receive incorruptible bodies (I Cor. 15:51-52), and these new bodies will enjoy the same standing as our spirits, but until then we have to discern between standing and state. Our standing concerns our *relationship to* God, but our state concerns our *fellowship with* God.

XI. DOES THIS CONCERN CHRIST'S FIRST OR SECOND COMING?

I Peter 1:11 divides the First and Second Coming by using two words: suffering and glory. The First Coming is largely associated with the sufferings of Christ, while the Second Coming emphasizes his glory. Notice a few simple comparisons:

First Coming:	**Second Coming:**
Suffering	Glory
Lamb	Lion
Prophet	King
Rides Donkey	Rides White Horse
Killed by enemies	Kills Enemies
Rejected by Israel	Received by Israel

A good example of the kind of mistakes which one can make with this issue is found in Isaiah 2:4: **". . . and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."** This passage is used by many (including the United Nations) to promote world peace, but it will not be fulfilled until the Second Coming of Christ, which is

evident to anyone who takes the time to read the entire verse and the preceding verses.

XII. WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE?

Paul asked this question in Romans 4:3. *What does the rest of the Bible say about this subject?* It is seldom that God addresses an issue in only one place, so learn to look carefully through the Bible to see *all* that God says, not just one or two places.

A concordance will prove very helpful in this. Find the key words or phrases in a passage and then search out those words and phrases in the rest of the Bible. For example, if you read about the "image of God" in Genesis, you would be very limited in your understanding of the phrase until you studied the phrase in the New Testament. Then you would complete your understanding by learning that the image of God is Jesus Christ. Don't privately interpret the scripture. Allow the scripture to interpret itself.

Lesson Review

1. What are the three sources of speech in the Bible?

2. What are the three classes of people to whom the Bible is written?

3. Some parts of the Bible are addressed to individuals, while other parts are addressed to _____.

4. True or False? Reading entire chapters of the Bible can be confusing, so it's best to read just a few verses at a time.

5. True or False? Since God is a Spirit, it is always best to make spiritual applications when reading the Bible?

6. Please explain the difference between literal and figurative.

7. Who was the Apostle to the Gentiles?

8. The First Coming of Christ deals with the _____ of Jesus, while the Second Coming deals with His _____.

9. Please describe the difference between standing and state.

10. True or False? It takes much spiritual growth and wisdom to be able to interpret the Bible.

LESSON XV

Dispensational Discernment - I

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15)

While this verse is certainly well known in our Bible-believing circles, the word "rightly" is far too often under-appreciated or ignored altogether. In fact, while proudly flying the banner of II Timothy 2:15, many of the brethren spend more time *wrongly* dividing the word of truth than with rightly dividing it. Though they might make technically right divisions, they often do so with a wrong emphasis or a wrong spirit, and many make wrong divisions altogether. This usually happens due to an under-appreciation and an under-application of two portions of scripture: James 1:5-8 and Hebrews 5:11-14:

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any

thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways." (James 1:5-8)

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:11-14)

There are other verses that we could consider, but those two passages pretty much make the case. A third witness might be Luke 9:55: **"But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."**

After having spent the better part of four decades around preachers and teachers of the word of God, this preacher can state very emphatically that most men who teach the Bible are somewhat flawed with either their understanding of Bible doctrine, their ability to wisely communicate it to others, their motive for communicating it, or all three.

Some lack the spiritual maturity to rightly divide because they lack the wisdom and spiritual discernment that come with humble prayer, age and experience. One might pray for wisdom, as James 1:5 says, but then not meet the qualifications for obtaining it. One might also have age and experience, as required by Hebrews 5:11-14, but then not be humble enough to balance it by seeking the heavenly wisdom of James 1:5. In such cases, rather than getting sound dispensational teaching, one is often treated to an awkward "Sibboleth," instead of a sound "Shibboleth" (Jgs. 12:6), and sometimes all he gets is a parable in the mouth of a fool (Pro. 26:7, 9). Sound dispensational teaching doesn't come easy, and the able men who truly fulfil this calling are few and far between. Thank God for them.

As a preacher and teacher of God's word, I should always want to help people to be able to read anything and everything in the Bible and not be troubled or confused. I should want people to feel "at home" in the Bible. If I can accomplish that goal, then believers will be stronger and will not need a preacher for as many little detailed things as they otherwise would. Sure, they should

obey God and still be an active part of a good church with a good preacher, but they should also grow and learn to stand their own ground and fight their own battles.

Correct dispensational teaching plays a vital role in reaching the above goal, whereas incorrect teaching frustrates the purpose and often leaves believers worse than it finds them. The purpose of this booklet is to encourage a responsible approach to rightly dividing the word of truth by helping brethren to see the need to slow down, pray for wisdom, think for themselves, and to prove all things with scripture. I have chosen a question/answer format as this seems the best way to keep the information simple, progressive, and the most digestible.

For the sake of clarity, I should add the fact that this booklet is being written for the purpose of helping hungry believers, not for the purpose of impressing anyone or debating anyone. I care about helping people to open and read their Bibles *today* without being confused or deceived by irresponsible or false teachers.

WHAT IS A DISPENSATION?

A dispensation in the Bible is the manner in which God DISPENSES, or reveals, to men their responsibilities to Him and certain truths about Himself and His will. Since these truths progress and differ throughout the Bible, it becomes necessary to respect certain divisions and time periods. For example, God didn't command Christians today to offer a lamb for sacrifice, so this places us in a different dispensation than the Old Testament Jews who did offer sacrifice. Likewise, God didn't command the Jews under the law of Moses to not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, as He did Adam and Eve, so Adam and Eve were in yet another dispensation. So, the study of dispensations is simply a study to better understand how God has dealt with man differently and progressively through the ages.

The word itself is found four times in the Bible: I Corinthians 9:17, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 3:2, and Colossians 1:25. Each time the word has to do with either a period of time or a responsibility which has been given to someone at a particular time. Ephesians 2:7 uses the phrase "ages to come," while Ephesians 3:5 speaks of "other ages" when the mystery of Gentiles

being saved in one body with Jews was “not made known.” Clearly, God’s revelation has progressed through different “ages.”

IS A DISPENSATION A TIME PERIOD?

Some of the brethren delight in pointing out that a dispensation is "not a period of time." That can be misleading. While it's true that a dispensation is a "dispensing," it DOES happen in time, and to some degree, in time periods. The dispensation of law, for instance, had a beginning. It began when God gave Moses and the Israelites the written law at Sinai, and it ended when Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances at Calvary (Col. 2:14). Sure, the moral law of God is still in effect today, but the numerous "ordinances," such as feasts days and animal sacrifices, did come to an end. In fact, this is called "the fullness of the time" (Gal. 4:4). What some of the brethren are trying to accomplish by removing the time factor from dispensational teaching I do not know, but the ones I have read or heard have only muddied the waters.

Should we be so technical that we feel the need to chop and slice God's word to pieces with numerous hyper-dispensational time periods? Of course not, but we shouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water either. Understanding that dispensations *do* generally concern periods of time is very helpful to new students of the word. Adam and Eve were innocent until a certain time when they knew that they were naked. That's a fact, and it's a very helpful fact when explaining basic dispensational truth. The Millennial Kingdom is "a thousand years" in length (Rev. 20:1-7). That's *time*, and it *is* a dispensation, because the law of the land that is *dispensed* by God at that *time* differs from any other *time* before or after. The time factor is certainly not the main point and purpose of any dispensation, but it is a factor, and I fail to see how downplaying it helps anyone. We should all do a better job when explaining dispensational truth, but this isn't done by eliminating the time factor.

WHY DOES GOD USE DISPENSATIONS?

One good reason for dispensations is to reveal or emphasize an attribute of God. For example, under the law, God’s holiness was emphasized. Today, during the church age, we see

that His grace is the highlighted attribute. This doesn't mean that God is no longer holy. He is just as holy as ever, but He has chosen to emphasize His grace for this present age. For instance, a preacher doesn't preach a message to fathers on Father's Day just because he doesn't appreciate mothers. He does so because the day places an emphasis on fathers. The mothers had their day a month earlier. By emphasizing his various attributes at different times, God progressively reveals his character to man over thousands of years. In the end, after thousands of years of divine revelation through various dispensations, any serious student of scripture can learn a great deal about God and His will for man.

Another reason for dispensations is for God to give man every possible opportunity to be reconciled to Himself. At the final White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), man will have no excuse because God will have tried him under seven distinct dispensations and man will have failed under each one. For example, no one will be able to say, *"Well, if I hadn't been born a sinner, I could have stayed clean and holy."* There was a time when two clean and holy people lived in a perfect paradise, yet they chose to sin against God. For example, no one can say*, "Well, if I could have just seen Jesus for myself, I would have believed."* In the Millennium, people will see Him on the throne in Jerusalem, yet there is a massive rebellion by Gog and Magog at the close of the 1000-year reign (Rev. 20:8-10). The seven dispensations prove that (1) God is holy and just and (2) that man is utterly hopeless.

A third reason for dispensations is to reveal the approved and the heretics. II Timothy 2:15 says, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** A heretic does not rightly divide God's word, so he is not "approved." Notice the words of I Corinthians 11:19: **"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."** Those who refuse to rightly divide the truth will usually end up teaching heresy. This casts a "blacklight" upon them while the approved teachers of truth shine even brighter in the light of God's word. So, each dispensation allows for a very definite contrast to be made between the approved and the heretics.

WHY NOT JUST IGNORE DISPENSATIONS AND LET THE BIBLE SPEAK FOR ITSELF?

First of all, that's impossible, and no one does it. Even people who claim to not believe in dispensations make it a regular habit to respect dispensational divisions in the Bible. No Christian reads Genesis 2:25 and then concludes that it's acceptable to walk around naked. No Christian reads Exodus chapter twelve and then concludes that he must offer a Passover lamb. No Christian reads Zechariah 14:16-19 and then concludes that he must travel to Jerusalem every October to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. It is commonly understood that certain parts of the Bible do not apply to us doctrinally. This is basic dispensational truth, whether one acknowledges it or not. To completely ignore dispensational divisions and "let the Bible speak for itself" would be disastrous because the Holy Spirit would be quenched while people misapply scripture and resort to gross, private interpretations. EVERYONE is a dispensationalist, whether they know it or not.

Secondly, the Bible commands us to "rightly divide" the word of truth in II Timothy 2:15, and, as already pointed out, “dispensation” is a Bible word with a meaning and a purpose. Everything has its proper place in the Bible. To ignore this is to invite problems. No responsible driver ignores the road signs and then drives by his own rules. There are Speed Limit signs, One Way signs, Stop signs, Yield signs, Wrong Way signs, and many other signs. A man who ignores the rules of the road is a dangerous man. So it is with the man who ignores the rules of sound Bible study, especially the rule of “rightly dividing” as commanded in II Timothy 2:15.

DIDN’T GOD DISPENSE HIS GRACE BEFORE THE CHURCH AGE?

To some degree, yes, but not in same manner as today in the church age. Man has not always been in the dispensation of grace, which is why the term “dispensation of the grace of God” isn’t used anywhere in the Old Testament or anywhere in the four gospels. This isn’t to say that God wasn’t gracious in the Old Testament, for He certainly was at times (Gen. 6:8; Exo. 34:6), but grace was not His most pronounced attribute at that time. The

word “grace” is found only 39 times in the Old Testament, which averages only one occurrence per book. Yet, it is found 131 times in the New Testament, averaging nearly five occurrences per book, and since the New Testament books are much shorter, this makes the grace emphasis per book even stronger. God has always been gracious, but never more than today. A few verses of scripture will make this abundantly clear:

“For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17)

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:” (Rom. 5:20)

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” (Rom. 6:14)

“And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.” (Rom. 11:6)

HOW MANY DISPENSATIONS ARE THERE AND WHAT ARE THEY?

Most sound teachers teach that there are seven basic dispensations that cover man's history from Genesis 1 through Revelation 20. Some go beyond the basic seven dispensations by calling the gospel ministry of Jesus and the tribulation period dispensations, but this preacher has always viewed these times as *transitions between dispensations* rather than dispensations themselves. Others sometimes include the "ages to come" of Ephesians 2:7 along with Revelation 21-22 to suggest additional dispensations, which could be, but for our present existence and experience on earth, there are seven general dispensations through which God dispenses to man His attributes and will. They are as follows:

1. Innocence - from the creation till the first sin
2. Conscience - from the first sin till the flood
3. Human Government - from the flood till the judgment at Babel

4. Patriarch or Family - from Abraham till Moses received the commandments at Mt. Sinai
5. Law - from Mt. Sinai to the crucifixion of Jesus
6. Grace - from the crucifixion till the Second Coming
7. Kingdom – from the Second Coming till the final Judgment of Revelation 20:11-15

There is a greater dispensing of the various attributes of God in each respective dispensation, so the names differ. The church age is called the "dispensation of the grace of God" by Paul in Ephesians 3:2, not because there was no grace in other dispensations, but simply because there's *more* of it in the church age. The word "grace" is found 170 times in the Bible, yet 91 times in just the small church age books of Romans through Philemon. The major prophets (Isaiah through Daniel) mention the word only once, and the minor prophets mention it only three times. That's only four occurrences from Isaiah 1 through Malachi 4, yet Paul uses the word 24 times in the book of Romans alone. Clearly, God dispenses a heavier dosage of grace in the church age than in other dispensations, so it's called the dispensation of grace.

The word "holy," on the other hand, enjoys a heavier emphasis in the Old Testament, especially in the detailed law books of Exodus and Leviticus (149 occurrences in those two books alone, with only 611 in the entire Bible). This is because God used the law to reveal His holiness while revealing man's UNholiness.

Each dispensation has its own emphasis and purpose, so each dispensation has a name to help identify that emphasis and purpose. But this has never meant that such attributes as grace, holiness, longsuffering and justice aren't present to some degree in ALL dispensations, for they certainly are.

WHAT IF WE'RE WRONG ABOUT DISPENSATIONS?

Personally, I question the intelligence of anyone who rejects dispensational teaching. The reality of some level of Biblical dispensationalism is so obvious that one must have a few theological screws loose in order to deny it. Any child can see that Adam and Eve lived differently than we live today. Any sound-minded adult, saved or lost, can see that Christians living today do

not offer animal sacrifices at a temple or a tabernacle, and most any Christian living today knows perfectly well that Noah and Abraham didn't preach, **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."** (Acts 16:31) We can ague all day about *how many* dispensations there are and just *how sharp* the divisions need to be, but to categorically deny dispensations altogether just isn't very bright.

I have believed in basic dispensational truth since the early 1980's, and I believe it more today than I did then, as do most of my brethren who continually study the matter seriously. But what if we're wrong? What if somehow we've all just gone too far with this thing and there is no dispensation of conscience, no dispensation of human government, no patriarchal dispensation and no kingdom dispensation. What if the lightweights are correct in saying that it's all the dispensation of grace? I think that's insane, but for sake of argument, what if that's true?

Well, if that's true, then we have still managed to get a whole lot of people interested in the Book, and we've helped a great many people to make some sense out of apparent errors and contradictions in the word of God. How can that be a bad thing? We've given more people faith in more Scripture than the dispensational doubters could ever hope to give. The passages that they skim over or ignore completely are expounded on by us, and many have an increased faith in the word of God because of it. By teaching a sensible and balanced dispensational approach to the Scriptures, we have awakened thousands who had been put to sleep by the limited revelations of people like Matthew Henry and Adam Clarke. If not for the dispensational teaching of Larkin, Scofield and Ruckman, this preacher and writer may very well have remained in spiritual darkness believing that naïve and childish "soul winning" was all that really mattered in Christianity since that's about the only thing that I was taught for the first few years of my new life in Christ.

I thank God for steering me in the right direction. When I prayed the second most important prayer of my life by asking God to teach me the Bible, I'm sure glad that He didn't send me to Bob Jones University, Tennessee Temple or Hyles-Anderson. God answered my prayer by bringing me in touch with *one man*, a rock-solid KJV dispensationalist who was a real man, unlike the sissies I had been hearing, and he could teach more Bible in an hour than most could teach in a week. If my connection to Dr.

Ruckman had never been made, I'd likely have lost interest in spiritual things and became a Sunday morning Christian at best. Dispensational teaching and rightly dividing hasn't hurt me one bit. To the contrary, it has made *all* the Bible user-friendly to me and allowed me to feel at home in any of its 1,189 chapters, and there are thousands of other believers who will echo the same sentiment. If we are wrong, it has been largely for the better, and we have no regrets.

But if our anti-dispensational critics are wrong, then they will one day give account to God for keeping millions of people in spiritual darkness, often believing the entire Old Testament to be a "dead Book" that isn't worth reading, believing that the book of Revelation is too complex for common people to understand, and then spiritualizing everything else in the Bible that they can't comprehend.

If we're wrong, then at least we played it safe and erred on the side of caution. If they're wrong, then they have blundered terribly and have caused tremendous damage to the cause of Christ and to the souls of men.

DID ANYONE BELIEVE IN DISPENSATIONS BEFORE JOHN DARBY?

John Nelson Darby was a nineteenth century Irish Bible teacher who is considered the "father of modern dispensationalism." But this can be misleading, since "modern" dispensationalism can be defined in different ways. As already shown, the word "dispensation" originates with the Bible itself, not with John Darby or any other man, so Darby certainly cannot be the father of dispensationalism in general. To Darby's credit, he did rekindle an interest in "rightly dividing" the word of God after many centuries of Roman Catholic "Dark Age" rule and the Protestant Reformation, so perhaps it is proper to call him the father of "modern" dispensationalism, but in reality, "the father of *rescued* dispensationalism" is probably more fitting, since others taught basic dispensational truth, to some degree, centuries before John Darby was born.

Both Justin Martyr and Ireneaus taught dispensations in the second century, and Clement of Alexandria taught several separate ages in the third century. Even during the Dark Ages, a

twelfth century monk named Joachim of Flore taught three dispensations with the latter being the coming kingdom of God on earth. Then during the years of the Protestant Reformation, “dispensations” were often spoken of by the likes of Isaac Watts, John Gill, Increase Mather, John Smith, Thomas Brightman, William Penn and others. As William Watson documents in his “Dispensationalism Before Darby,” some teachers even published charts showing their dispensational views, two being Joseph Mede and Henry More. The notion that dispensational teaching was the brainchild of John Darby just is not true. Dispensations were clearly taught in the Bible, as we’ve already seen, and they were often taught in church history when Rome had little to say about it. Darby was not the first dispensational teacher. Like Scofield and Larkin who came later, he simply helped to revive an ancient truth that the devil had largely hidden.

ARE ALL DISPENSATIONALISTS GOOD TEACHERS?

No. Many dispensationalists are not good teachers at all. Learning that a man is a "dispensationalist" does not guarantee good Bible teaching, and some teachers are hyper-dispensationalists who teach outright heresy.

As for those who do not teach hyper-dispensationalism, very few teach Biblical dispensationalism responsibly. Far too many preachers are mere "copycat" preachers who know only how to repeat the talking/teaching points that have been given to them by their choice school or preacher. This franchised theology is often sprinkled with error and causes much damage as it spreads like a cancer into churches and homes.

But even when the basic doctrine is correct, one's inability to communicate it wisely can still result in a compromised or exaggerated doctrine. This is why heavenly wisdom, spiritual discernment and moderation are so crucial (James 1:5; Heb. 5:14; Philip. 4:5). Yet, the carnal pride that often comes with knowledge (I Cor. 8:1) has a tendency to quench the Holy Spirit in one's teaching, thus making him an awkward Bible teacher at best, and sometimes even proud, arrogant, rude and mean-spirited. Every man should teach as he would want to be taught (Mat. 7:12), yet this rule is often neglected and we find ourselves subjected to weak and flawed Bible teaching instead of sound Bible teaching.

IS IT TRUE THAT SOME PARTS OF THE BIBLE ARE NOT FOR US?

No, that's incorrect and it's a very irresponsible thing for anyone to say. For instance, claiming that James and Hebrews are "not for us" because these books are written to Jews is on par with claiming that most of the Old Testament is not for us since it was also written to Jews. That, of course, is absurd. ALL Scripture is "for" us, even though much of it is not written "to" us. Consider the following (block CAPS added for emphasis):

"ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God, and IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (II Tim. 3:16)

"For WHATSOEVER THINGS were written aforetime were written for OUR learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4)

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are WRITTEN FOR OUR ADMONITION, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (I Cor. 10:11)

We will always benefit more from the scriptures by asking *how* a text applies rather than claiming that it *doesn't* apply. Beware of anyone who disregards the book of James just because it is written "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1). Pointing out this fact in order to help someone understand the Jewish emphasis and possibly some tribulation content is one thing, but using James 1:1 as an excuse to ignore challenging verses is quite another. James is just as much for us as any other book of the Bible, as long as it is applied scripturally.

After all, no one says that Acts should be disregarded since it was written to "Theophilus" (Acts 1:1) and not to anyone living today. No one says that Romans is not for us, since we aren't Romans. No one says that we need to disregard Genesis through Deuteronomy, since these books were given to Jews under the law of Moses. The "not for us" excuse has caused untold damage to the cause of Christ as it has been carelessly used by Bible novices who only *think* they know the word. ALL scripture is FOR us as long as we apply it correctly, which is why the word

"for" is used several times in the three above quotations. There isn't a single verse in all the Bible that isn't "for" us.

DOESN'T DISPENSATIONALISM AMOUNT TO CHOPPING THE WORD OF GOD TO PIECES?

No, we must remember that dispensations were mentioned, respected and taught in the word of God. It makes no sense that the word of God would advocate "chopping" itself to pieces. Those who make this absurd claim have either been exposed to bad dispensational teaching or they have just been misled about its qualities.

II Timothy 2:15 says to "rightly" divide the word of truth, which, if obeyed, will ensure that no one makes unnecessary divisions and that the divisions that are made will make good sense and promote Biblical understanding.

For example, no intelligent observer would accuse a chef of carelessly chopping his food to pieces. It is generally understood that the clever is a cooking tool with a distinct purpose and the chef is a trained professional who uses it wisely and safely with much experience and discernment. For various reasons, the food must be divided. Only an ignorant spectator would conclude that the chef is being careless, wild or wasteful. To the contrary, most observers would be impressed with the chef's skill and with the speed and smoothness in which he performs his work. So should it be with anyone who observes a good Bible teacher rightly dividing the word of truth.

Explaining the difference between Jew, Gentile and Church is a matter of rightly dividing (I Cor. 10:32), not careless chopping. Explaining the difference between law and grace is a matter of rightly dividing (Rom. 6:14), not careless chopping. Explaining the difference between the church age and the great tribulation is a matter of rightly dividing (Mat. 24:21), not careless chopping. Serious students of scripture always come to a point where they understand the need for making right divisions in scripture. It is the lazy and lukewarm Laodiceans and the outright heretics who never come to this realization. People who approach the word of God with a preconceived agenda will always find their agenda challenged by serious, honest study, so such people are natural enemies of dispensational truth. It's no more complicated

than that. The "spirit of error" is always at war with the "spirit of truth" (I John 4:6), so non-dispensationalists often misrepresent and mischaracterize those who teach dispensational truth.

Lesson Review

1. A dispensation is the manner in which God _____, or reveals, to men their responsibilities to Him and certain truths about Himself and His will.

2. Is "dispensation" an actual Bible word?

3. True or False? Dispensations involve time periods.

4. Do dispensations reveal God's attributes?

5. What verse in II Timothy 2 serves as a good basis for making dispensational divisions?

6. God was also gracious in the Old Testament, so why wasn't that also a dispensation of grace?

7. True or False? No one taught dispensations before John Darby?

8. Explain how a dispensationalist can still be a bad teacher?

9. Give a scripture reference to show that all scripture is for us:

10. Give an example of the difference between rightly dividing and careless chopping:

Lesson XVI

Dispensational Discernment - II

WHAT IS A TRIBULATION EPISTLE?

The General Epistles are the seven books that immediately follow the book of Hebrews. They are James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John, and Jude. Some teachers like to label the General Epistles and the book of Hebrews "Tribulation Epistles," suggesting that these books are written to Jews in the coming Tribulation Period and are not for the church. This is a mistake.

The word "tribulation" is not found in any of these books, yet the word "church" occurs seven times, so claiming that these books are not for the church is just too much. Sound church doctrine is emphasized throughout Hebrews and the General Epistles, as the following sampling shows:

Deity of Christ, Hebrews 1:1-3
Virgin Birth, Hebrews 1:5-6
Salvation preached, Hebrews 2:3
Singing in church, Hebrews 2:12
Priesthood of Christ, Hebrews 3:1
Word of God alive, powerful, Hebrews 4:12
Access to throne of grace, Hebrews 4:16
Spiritual growth through the word, Hebrews 5:12-14
Baptism, Hebrews 6:2
Righteousness and Peace through Christ, Hebrews 7:2
Sins forgotten, Hebrews 8:12
Blood atonement, Hebrews 9:14
Second Coming of Christ, Hebrews 9:28
Perfect standing in Christ, Hebrews 10:14
Church assembly, Hebrews 10:25
Living by faith, Hebrews 11:6
Chastening of wayward sons, Hebrews 12:4-12
Heirs of eternal kingdom, Hebrews 12:28
Brotherly love, Hebrews 13:1
Eternal security, Hebrews 13:5
Pastoral authority, Hebrews 13:7, 17

Cross bearing, Hebrews 13:13-14
Faith tried, James 1:3
Heavenly wisdom offered, James 1:5
Enduring temptation, James 1:12
Word of God applied, James 1:22-24
Religious hypocrisy exposed, James 1:26-27
Righteous judgment encouraged, James 2:1-4
Works as evidence of faith, James 2:14-26
Warnings regarding sins of the tongue, James 3
Worldliness discouraged, James 4:4
Power of humility, James 4:10
Brevity of life, James 4:14
Sins of omission, James 4:17
Vanity in trusting riches, James 5:3
Praying in faith and fervency, James 5:16-17
Conversion of sinners, James 5:20
Eternal security, I Peter 1:5
Faith tried, I Peter 1:7
Holy living, I Peter 1:16
Blood atonement, I Peter 1:19
New birth, I Peter 1:23
Spiritual priesthood, I Peter 2:5
Civil submission, I Peter 2:13
Female submission and modesty, I Peter 3:1-5
Armed with truth, I Peter 3:15
Patient and joyful in suffering, I Peter 4:12-16
Pastoral leadership, I Peter 5:1-4
Christian humility, I Peter 5:6
Vigilant walk, I Peter 5:8
Elements of divine nature, II Peter 1:4-8
Beware of false teachers, II Peter 2:1-22
Beware of last day skeptics, II Peter 3:3-4
Blood atonement, I John 1:7
Confession of sins, I John 1:9
Brotherly love, I John 2:7-11
Warning against worldliness, I John 2:15-17
Indwelling Holy Spirit, I John 2:27
Sonship of believers, I John 3:2
Resurrection body, I John 3:2
Deity and Incarnation of Christ, I John 4:2-3
New birth, I John 4:7

Holy Trinity, I John 5:7
Assurance of salvation, I John 5:13
Christian rewards, II John 8
Walking in truth, III John 4
Warnings against false teachers, Jude 4-19
Praying in the Holy Ghost, Jude 20
Eternal security, Jude 24

That's a lot of church doctrine there, yet, by contrast, in those eight books, not one time do we read anything about the mark of the beast, the abomination of desolation, the great tribulation, the tribulation vials, seals or plagues, the destruction of Babylon, Armageddon, the false prophet, or any details about the forty-two month reign of the antichrist. So, the notion that these are "tribulation epistles" is false and harmful. It's harmful because it often encourages believers to make light of the words found in these writings, and some believers disregard them altogether. While it's true that some of the content of these books can have application to the tribulation ("the end" of Hebews 3:6 and 3:14, the "three years and six months" of James 5:17, or the "last days" of James 5:3, for instance), that does not necessarily classify the books as "tribulation epistles." In fact, the warning of the COMING antichrist in I John 2:18 is a clear indication that the book is a church age epistle that PRECEDES the tribulation.

It is not uncommon to hear brethren say, *"You can find church doctrine in the general epistles."* That's an incredible understatement, much like saying, *"You can find pizza at Pizza Hut."* The truth is that most of the general epistles and Hebrews ARE church doctrine! What you can also "find" is SOME tribulation content in these church age epistles. To dismiss books like James and Hebrews just because they are addressed to Jews is very foolish, since the content of these books clearly deals with church age truth and the need for Jews to embrace it. Understanding how a book's content can have multiple applications is always good, but it's not good to over-emphasize that which God hardly emphasizes at all. Rightly dividing requires a right balance, else it becomes WRONGLY dividing and a FALSE balance (Prov. 11:1). Much of the Bible contains tribulation content, but there are no "tribulation epistles," except maybe the book of Revelation itself.

DOES DISPENSATIONALISM TEACH DIFFERENT PLANS OF SALVATION?

No, not really. It is very common throughout fundamentalism to hear people say that so-and-so teaches different plans of salvation without taking the time to explain or even discuss the subject. This is typical of the average Bible college graduate who didn't learn enough Bible in school to properly teach even a youth group, much less a church. But words come cheap and easy, so the silly accusations will continue.

God's salvation plan is centered around a man, Jesus Christ, who wasn't born until 4,000 years of human history had transpired. So, no one in the Old Testament knowingly believed on Jesus Christ for salvation, nor did anyone tell them to do so. The hall of faith in Hebrews chapter eleven is very clear in emphasizing what was required of the Old Testament saints throughout three different dispensations: FAITH. They were expected to believe and obey the words that God gave to them, and they received a "good report" in doing so (Heb. 11:2, 39). They did NOT receive a new birth since it was not available until after Christ's death, burial and resurrection. So, before one asks the question of HOW the Old Testament saints were saved, he should probably ask IF they were saved at all, because they weren't, at least not as we are today. The Old Testament saints bore witness to, inquired of, searched for and prophesied of Christ's salvation (Acts 10:43; I Pet. 1:10), but they did not experience it, nor did they understand it. By their faithfulness to God's revealed words and will, they obtained a "good report," but not a new birth after God's image that would make them sons of God. That came AFTER Calvary.

So, that makes Christ's atoning work on the cross the focal point of ALL salvation, from Genesis to Revelation, regardless of who understood it or who didn't. Speaking of salvation apart from Calvary is unscriptural and foolish since no one will enjoy the blessings of eternity without being covered by the blood of Christ. Blood redemption is thematic from Genesis 3:21 clear through Revelation 22:3, and Calvary is the doctrinal anchor that secures everyone's salvation. The fact that the Old Testament saints didn't "see" or know about the anchor is irrelevant. Anchors are for securing, not seeing.

Did Abel consciously believe on Christ? Of course not, but according to Jesus, he was still “righteous Abel” (Mat. 23:35) because he offered an acceptable blood sacrifice that foreshadowed Christ’s atoning work on the cross (Gen. 4:4; Heb. 11:4). He was “anchored” to Calvary by virtue of his righteous act of faith. The same is true with ALL Old Testament saints, regardless of the various ways in which they fulfilled the revealed will of God in their separate lives. So, rather than saying that they were “saved in different ways,” it is better to say that they became anchored to Calvary in different ways, yet each way required faith in God’s word. No one is saved apart from Christ’s work on the cross (Gal. 2:16; John 1:29; Rev. 5:9; 7:14, etc.), so it is unscriptural and foolish to speak of “different plans of salvation.” It has always been God’s “plan” for Jesus to be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), and that’s what He did at Calvary. ALL the prophets bear witness to this (Acts 10:43), so there is no salvation plan that doesn’t anchor to the cross.

WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE REVELATION?

Our entry on Hyper-Dispensationalism should be consulted for a more thorough explanation, but progressive revelation is the common sense understanding that God works in time and reveals truth to men gradually, rather than all at once. The law of Moses, for instance, was a "schoolmaster" to bring men to Christ (Gal. 3:24), but it took over fourteen centuries to do it. Before the written law, man went through over twenty-four centuries of gradually learning of God's ways through four dispensations: Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, and Patriarch. God sanctified the Sabbath in Genesis 2, yet He didn't reveal it to man until centuries later in Exodus 20 (Neh. 9:14). Christ ended the law at Calvary, but it took years for many to understand this, which is why we have instances in the New Testament of converted Jews having to be schooled in the doctrine of grace (Acts 15; Gal. 5:2). Again, see the entry on Hyper-Dispensationalism for further explanation, but Progressive Revelation is a good, common sense approach to understanding how truth is revealed gradually and gracefully, allowing men time to learn and grow.

HOW IS ONE SAVED IN THE TRIBULATION PERIOD?

Since the tribulation is the final seven years of Daniel's Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27), it would be foolish to assume that this period is a mere continuation of the day of grace. No Christian today is told to "endure unto the end" (Mat. 24:13), and no Christian today is trying to avoid the mark of the beast (Rev. 13:15-18). Revelation is quite clear in stating that tribulation salvation consists of two central components: Obeying God and believing on Christ:

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (Rev. 12:17)

"Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Rev. 14:12)

At this point in time, the Jewish temple has been rebuilt at Jerusalem (Rev. 11:1-2; II Ths. 2:3-4) and the sacrifices have been restored. It is here that the antichrist commits the Abomination of Desolation (Mat. 24:15) and begins his reign of terror for forty-two months, the time in which many Jews will flee Jerusalem and come to know Christ in the wilderness (Hos. 2:14-16; Rev. 12:14-16; Lam. 5:9; Mic. 7:14; Psa. 27:2; Mat. 24:16, etc.). Obviously, in context, the commandments of God are the commandments to follow Christ and endure unto the end (Mat. 24:13) instead of following the Antichrist by taking the mark of the beast (Rev. 14:7, 9-11). Investing faith in Christ is still required, and the keeping of God's commandments is a natural evidence or fruit of one having done so. So, simply "not taking the mark" is not the salvation plan. One doesn't take the mark because it is the mark of "a man" (Rev. 13:18), and that man is not Jesus Christ. One's faith in Christ is still the means of salvation, even in the Great Tribulation.

As for enduring unto the end (Mat. 24:13), the "shall be saved" is not specifically a reference to eternal "new birth" salvation anyway, but rather a reference to tribulation overcomers being granted entrance into the kingdom when Christ returns. That is, the "shall be saved" of Matthew 24:13 has more to do with

NOT BEING DECEIVED and NOT BEING KILLED than anything else (Mat. 24:10-25:46). I'm not suggesting that the overcomers are lost, just that the statement in Matthew 24:13 deals with people enduring a very trying period of time, not with people having to wait till "the end" to receive Christ. The tribulation martyrs of Revelation 7:14 do NOT endure unto the end, since they are beheaded, yet their souls are saved, as are the ones in Revelation 6:9-11, even though the Great Tribulation isn't over until chapter 19.

So, people DO believe on Christ in the tribulation. It's just that the time factor in regards to "the end" involves people also having to literally "endure" until the Lord's Second Coming when their greatest enemy, the Antichrist, is destroyed (Rev. 19).

The question of one LOSING his salvation is often asked, since taking the mark of the beast is an option throughout the forty-two month period, but, in light of I John 2:19, it is probably more correct to say that such people were never true believers at all than to say that they were saved and then lost their salvation: **"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."**

WERE THE OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS SAVED BY WORKS?

Old Testament salvation was not complete until Calvary, so speaking of Old Testament saints being "saved" AT ALL is not wise. By obeying God in their respective dispensations, the Old Testament saints proved their faith and obtained a "good report" (Heb. 11:3, 39), but they did not obtain a new birth or eternal security as we know it today. Their faithful obedience, IN TYPE, pointed to Calvary (Noah's Ark, the Passover Lamb, water from the Rock, etc.), but, as far as we know, they didn't know this, so they "looked forward to the cross" IN TYPE without consciously knowing it (II Cor. 3:15-16; I Pet. 1:11-12), just as Abraham looked for a city without knowing it (Heb. 11:8-10) and saw Christ's day without knowing it (John 8:56). Although they weren't saved by being born again as we are, they were at least SAFE with a "good report," which is why they went to Paradise in the

underworld when they died (Luke 23:42-43; 16:22-23), awaiting the final price of redemption to be paid by Christ on Calvary. That price was paid and their sins were cleared (Rom. 10:3-4), sins which could not be cleared by the law of Moses (Gal. 2:16). Old Testament saints were saved on credit, so to speak, and the credit card was paid off at Calvary.

The earning of this "good report" did require works, since faith without works is dead (James 2:26), but it cannot be rightly said that these works "saved" anyone in the sense of a new birth. All salvation from Genesis through Revelation is anchored in the work of Christ on the cross, and no one will enjoy the blessings of eternity without being covered by His blood. No Old Testament saint was saved by works (Gal. 2:16), since it is the work of Christ alone which completes salvation. Their work earned them a good report card, if you will, one that would eventually be signed in the blood of Christ.

ARE NON-DISPENSATIONALISTS HERETICS?

Not necessarily, but they are immature in their understanding of the scriptures, and that makes them prime candidates for possibly *becoming* heretics. When a Christian lacks dispensational understanding, he will not know how to apply numerous portions of scripture when called upon to do so.

If a charismatic, for instance, uses I Corinthians 14 and Mark 16 to claim that that speaking in unknown tongues is the initial evidence of being baptized in the Holy Ghost, then the non-dispensationalist might not know how to scripturally refute this heresy, so he could be deceived by it.

Suppose someone tells a non-dispensationalist that the Sabbath has been God's sanctified day since Genesis chapter 2 and that all true worshipers of God observe the Sabbath. Due to his inability to rightly divide God's word, the non-dispensationalist will likely think that the argument makes sense and that he should keep the Sabbath, thus he becomes easy prey for false teachers like the Seventh Day Adventists and the Armstrong cultists.

But probably the greatest disadvantage to not believing in dispensational teaching is the elementary understanding of the scriptures that one never seems to outgrow. Our churches are filled people who have been saved for decades, yet their

comprehension of God's word is little more than that of Sunday school children.

I recall a certain couple once listening to this preacher's audio studies on the book of Romans when they heard it stated that the scriptures speak of more than one gospel. They were very stunned by this and did not continue the study much longer. The fact that this truth was proved and explained with scripture didn't matter to them. It was a new truth that they had never heard before, so they rejected it. Not long afterwards, they became involved with a church that taught false doctrine. They had their chance to strengthen and protect themselves by learning the basic principles of rightly dividing, yet it was a new challenge that crossed the grain of their Laodicean minds, so they rejected the truth and embraced false teaching instead.

Dispensational teaching, when properly done, is not radical or sensational in any way. It is common sense Bible doctrine that can build up and safeguard the believer. Those who reject sound dispensational teaching are only hurting themselves by remaining weak and defenseless against false teachers. They're like naïve little children playing in the wild: it's only a matter of time before someone gets injured, sick or bit.

WHAT IS COVENANT OR REPLACEMENT THEOLOGY?

Generally speaking, covenant theology is the belief that the church is the fulfillment of God's Old Testament covenant promises to Israel. Covenant theology is often called "replacement" theology, because it promotes the belief that God's national promises to Israel are no longer valid since the gentiles have been graffed in with the Jews into the one body of the church (Rom. 11:17-36; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-22). The problem with this is a simple failure to distinguish between what is national, what is spiritual, what is individual, and what is corporate. Jews, as individuals, may receive Christ and be born again today and become members of Christ's body, the church. Paul is a good example. But Israel is also still a NATION corporately and will experience the new birth upon receiving Christ in the Great Tribulation (Isa. 66:7-8; Rom. 11:26). Isaiah 66:8 specifically says that a NATION will be BORN at once. Ezekiel 37:1-14 says this will happen after a time of apparent death, yet before the

Gog/Magog invasion of Ezekiel 38. In other words, God's promise to Abraham does have a spiritual fulfillment in the church (Gal. 3:28-29), but it also has a fulfillment with Israel as a NATION, since God promised to make Abraham "a great nation" (Gen. 12:2).

Sound dispensational teaching acknowledges the spiritual application of Jews being blessed individually today by receiving Christ, but it also respects God's literal promises to Israel as a nation. That is, not all of God's Jewish promises have been fulfilled in the church. Some are national promises that concern Israel reforming as a nation in 1948 and then growing and prospering as a nation over the past several decades and then eventually being reconciled to God in the great tribulation (Hos. 2:14-16; Rev. 12:6, 14-16). Finally, Israel becomes "the head" of all nations in Christ's coming kingdom (Deu. 28:13; Isa. 2:1-4; Mat. 19:28). Covenant theology adherents generally replace Israel with the church by spiritualizing these national promises. They argue that their views are more "fulfillment" theology than replacement theology, but in the end, Israel is robbed of many of her literal, national promises, so the "replacement" label is largely correct.

SHOULD WE STILL KEEP THE LAW?

Christians often say things like, *"We're under grace, so we don't have to keep the law."* While we are certainly under grace, it's not entirely true that we don't have to keep the law.

First, the entire Old Testament does not fall under the written law of Moses. The fifty chapters of Genesis, the forty-two chapters of Job and the first nineteen chapters of Exodus are BEFORE the law of Moses. So some of the established laws from these scriptures stand true even today, since they were true even before the law of Moses. The death penalty for murder and the forbidding of blood drinking, for instance, were established laws clear back in Genesis 9, and they are still divine laws today (Acts 25:11; 15:29). They are not limited to the written law of Moses.

Secondly, even within the written law of Moses itself, it is the ceremonial and ritualistic ordinances that were abolished at Calvary (Col. 2:14), not the moral law. We no longer offer animal sacrifices and keep the various feast days, but we still believe in

Thou Shalt Not Steal, Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery, Thou Shalt Not Covet, etc. It is for this reason that Paul said, "the law is good" in I Timothy 1:8, and this is why he recommends half of the Ten Commandments in Romans 13:9.

So, claiming that "we don't keep the law" is not wise and is very misleading. We don't keep the law in the strict dispensational sense that the Jews were told to keep it for over fourteen centuries, but we do keep the *moral* law of God, just as saints of God have done from the very beginning. We must rightly divide between the moral law of God, which is binding on everyone from Genesis through Revelation, and the ceremonial law which was in effect only during the Mosaic law dispensation that ran from Exodus 20 till John 19:30.

WHAT IS HYPER-DISPENSATIONALISM?

Hyper-Dispensationalism is basically an extreme form of dispensationalism where some teachers go "too far" with their rightly dividing and end up wrongly dividing. As with anything else, there are varying degrees of this, so not all HD people are the same. If on a dispensational scale of 1 to 10, we would consider the #5 spot to be a well-balanced position, the HD people would land at about positions 8, 9 or 10. That is, they make unnecessary divisions that cause doctrinal problems.

One HD position is that water baptism is not required after Acts 28, which is why HD's are sometimes nicknamed "dry cleaners." Other HD views sometimes include the belief that the church didn't exist before Paul, the Lord's Supper is not for today, only Paul's prison epistles are for today's church, the four gospels are only for Israel, and so on. The gist of the whole HD movement is that Paul is the apostle to the gentiles, so the church receives her instruction only from Paul. The only question is where to draw the dividing line: Mid Acts, Acts 28, prison epistles only, etc.

It is this preacher's view that progressive revelation is a wiser approach to the New Testament scriptures than hyper-dispensationalism. That is, God gradually reveals his truth as time progresses through the New Testament. Things change because of the gradual revelation of truth more than because of sharp dividing lines. There are some obvious dividing lines, but not quite to the degree that the HD people would have us believe.

Unlike with previous dispensations, there is a definite period of transition between law and grace. The law and the prophets were until John the Baptist (Luke 16:16), yet it isn't correct to say that the dispensation of grace began immediately after John's death. John dies in Matthew 14:10, yet five chapters later Jesus is still speaking of keeping the law in order to have eternal life (Matthew 19:17-18), although He is clearly speaking of the moral law, not all the law. Others are saved by faith with no mention of the commandments (Luke 7:48-50). Conversions differ as one reads through the ministry of Christ and through the book of Acts, so it's not possible to select a definite starting place where the law stops and grace begins, at least not in practice and understanding. God uses this transition period to slowly usher in the day of grace. Remember, the promised kingdom is being offered to Israel clear through Acts chapter 7, so we are in Acts chapter 8 before we see a clear-cut faith conversion to Christ based on His redemptive work at Calvary.

John's gospel emphasizes grace more than the other three gospels because John was written around 85 A.D., which was after Paul's revelation. The others were written earlier.

It is this preacher's personal belief that the dispensation of grace began at Calvary, but no one knew it (John 1:17). God used about the first fifteen chapters of Acts to reveal this to man. Hebrews 9:15-17 tells us that the new covenant was in effect after Jesus died, but who knew it? Peter didn't know it in Acts 2, because it is in Acts 10 that God gives him this special revelation (Acts 10:9-28). This is why so many cults like the book of Acts: it's a transitional book of progressive revelation. If one establishes his doctrine in Acts 2, then he errs greatly, because God reveals more to man in later chapters. The dispensation of grace began at Calvary, but it takes until about Acts 15 to get everyone to understand this (Acts 15:11). The key to understanding all of this is progressive revelation, not hyper-dispensationalism.

Lesson Review

1. Does the Bible contain tribulation epistles?

2. True or False? The word "church" does not occur after Paul's epistles.

3. Do the general epistles say anything about the mark of the beast or the abomination of desolation?

4. Do the dispensations teach different plans of salvation?

5. True or False? All the prophets bear witness to Christ.

6. What is progressive revelation?

7. Does progressive revelation happen throughout the dispensations?

8. True or False? Sinners do not have to believe on Jesus in the Great Tribulation.

9. True or False? Enduring to the end of the Great Tribulation is the same as the new birth today.

10. The Old Testament saints did not gain salvation. According to Hebrews 11, they obtained a "good _____."

11. True or False? If a man is not a dispensationalist, he is a heretic.

12. Replacement theology is the belief that the church has replaced _____.

13. Will Israel as a nation ever be born again?

14. Do Christians today keep the law of Moses in any way?

15. True or False? Hyper-Dispensationalism is the same as dispensationalism.

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book V

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson XVII

Hard Sayings - I

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:56-60)

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (II Pet. 3:14-16)

The word of God acknowledges that there are some hard sayings in the Bible, and Peter said that some of these scriptures become even harder when unlearned and unstable people start wrestling with them. In this study, we'll be taking a look at some of the more common passages, some of the ones that folks have the hardest time understanding and ask questions about the most. CAPITALIZATION will frequently be used for emphasis, but not because this author is "yelling" or attempting to add to the word of God.

The purpose of this study is not to answer all complicated passages in scripture, but to address the ones that people struggle with spiritually. In other words, we won't bother ourselves with the age of Jehoiachin when he began to reign or the number of Solomon's chariots, but we will address the issue of whether or not a Christian can commit the "unpardonable sin" or whether or not he can "fall from grace." Satan uses various portions of Scripture to confuse and trouble believers, so it is our desire in this

study to put to rest some of the concerns that believers have when facing such portions of Scripture. Let's get started.

GALATIANS 5:4

We'll start with Galatians 5:4, the verse that people use to teach that a Christian can "fall from grace" and lose his God-given salvation: **"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."**

This is one of the most misused verses in the New Testament. We are constantly told by Charismatics that one can "fall from grace," yet very few of them can state where the verse is found or what's the true context of the statement. The notion of falling from grace was never presented by Paul as something that a blood-bought child of God could do. The statement was given to the Galatians who were still thinking that the law had something to do with salvation. The statement was given to those who were trying to be "justified by the law," as the verse says.

A person who seeks to be justified by the law clearly does not understand and appreciate the finished work of Christ on Calvary, so he is fallen from grace. That is, he is the victim of a compromised gospel message that has diminished the power of God's grace. Individually speaking, he is not fallen OUT of grace, since he never entered grace and received Christ to start with; he is fallen FROM grace in the sense that he believed a false gospel and fell a good distance FROM grace before even arriving. Like Romans 3:23, he fell short of the glory of God. As an individual, a man who is "fallen from grace" is a man who was never truly saved.

But, the context of the passage isn't focused as much on individual salvation as it is on the general message being preached by the group, by the Galatian churches at large. Paul's point here is that the Galatians HAD been preaching and believing the right way ("ye did run well," Gal. 5:7), but now SOME of them were confusing the gospel message with keeping the law, meaning that THOSE Galatians were preaching a false gospel and that anyone believing that gospel would not be justified by grace. It would only be true to say that they fell OUT OF grace in the sense that the message they were preaching had fallen from the good and honorable status that it had previously enjoyed. No individual

believer is being told that he was once saved but is now lost. It is being stated that the Galatians once preached salvation by grace through faith, but now some of them had fallen from that. The only way to apply the words to an individual is to say that he fell from grace in the sense of never fully understanding it and benefitting from it, he fell short of it, as in Romans 3:23.

It's like the passage in Romans 11:22 where it is said that the gentiles (as a people group) will be "cut off" (from God's continual focus on them during the "time of the gentiles," if they fail to "continue in his goodness." No individual believer is being told that he will be cut off by God in Romans 11:22, and no individual believer is being told that he can fall from grace in Galatians 5:4. If a man falls from grace, then he never really had it, at least not in his heart.

MATTHEW 24:13

"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Some reason that a man cannot know for certain that he is presently saved since Jesus said one must endure "unto the end" to be saved, yet they overlook other scriptures that are very clear about salvation being a present possession:

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which ARE SAVED it is the power of God." (I Cor. 1:18)

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that YE HAVE eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (I John 5:13)

"He that hath the Son HATH LIFE; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I John 5:12

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 4:24)

These verses are just as inspired as Matthew 24:13, so it makes no sense to pretend that Matthew 24:13 somehow nullifies the other passages. No, what makes sense is to study the proper context and meaning of the Matthew passage. We presently

HAVE eternal life because of what Jesus ENDURED FOR US on the cross, so we aren't waiting to endure to the end of anything.

So what about enduring unto the end? Well, the context of that statement is the future Great Tribulation. Jesus said in Matthew 24:21, **"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."** The "end" that some have to endure unto is the end of the Great Tribulation, not the end of their lives. Everyone endures unto the end of his life, yet not everyone is saved! The "end" in the verse is the same as "the end" of Matthew 24:3, which began the chapter: **". . . what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"**

Not everyone endures unto the end of the world, since they die before Jesus comes, so the statement cannot be for anyone other than those who will be living in the Great Tribulation just before Jesus returns. This is made clear in the very same chapter: **"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then (not now) shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."** (Mat. 24:30) None of this has happened yet, so no one today is enduring unto the end, nor are they commanded to do so. The "end" of Matthew 24:13 concerns a period of time that hasn't yet come.

Furthermore, the "shall be saved" is not specifically a reference to eternal "new birth" salvation anyway, but rather a reference to tribulation overcomers being granted entrance into the kingdom when Christ returns. That is, the "shall be saved" has more to do with NOT BEING DECEIVED and NOT BEING KILLED than anything else (Mat. 24:10-25:46). I'm not suggesting that the overcomers are lost, just that the statement in Matthew 24:13 deals with people enduring a very trying period of time, not with people having to wait till "the end" to receive Christ. The tribulation martyrs of Revelation 7:14 do NOT endure unto the end, since they are beheaded, yet their souls are saved, as are the ones in Revelation 6:9-11, even though the Great Tribulation isn't over until chapter 19.

The term "the end" is used four times in Matthew 24, and the last three uses refer to the first use, the one pointed out above (Mat. 24:3) where the disciples asked Jesus about "the end of the world." The next three uses of the term (24:6, 13, 14) are found in his answer to their question, and the context is clearly the end of a

period of time known as the Great Tribulation, not the end of anyone's life.

So, YES, you can be saved right now and you can KNOW that you're saved right now, without enduring to the end of anything.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12

Alright, our next problem passage is Philippians 2:12: **"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."**

People often use this verse out of context to teach that salvation is based on works: "work out your own salvation." This is done by applying our idiomatic expression "work it out" to the word of God itself and then privately interpreting a verse while ignoring the given context. In other words, it is reasoned that Paul must be saying, "work out your own salvation" just as we might tell someone "work out your differences" or "work out your schedule." That's not the case at all. God's word is not to be interpreted by our idioms, but rather by itself, comparing scripture with scripture. Paul is not telling the Philippians to work so they will be saved. That would contract a truckload of scripture, including what he had already told the Philippians.

The next verse makes that very clear: **"For it is God which worketh IN you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."** (Philip 2:13; emphasis added) He is simply saying that it is our responsibility to let our INNER salvation work in our OUTWARD members, to let our light shine so the world will see our good works and glorify God (Mat. 5:14-16). If you doubt that, just read verse 15: **"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, AMONG WHOM YE SHINE AS LIGHTS IN THE WORLD."** (emphasis added)

No one is working to be saved. That was made clear in the previous chapter: **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work IN YOU will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** (Philip. 1:6; emphasis added)

THAT is going to happen whether YOU "work out your own salvation" or not, but, if you want a meaningful and fruitful life, then let the light of Christ WORK in your OUTWARD members so the world will see Christ in you. Work OUT what God has already worked IN. That's the spirit of the text, and anyone who uses it to teach works-based salvation is teaching heresy.

I CORINTHIANS 15:1-2

Our next passage is I Corinthians 15:1-2: **"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."**

It is reasoned that the believer risks losing his salvation, IF he fails to keep in memory the clear simplicity of the gospel. In fact, some new translations reword verse two to read that the believer is presently BEING saved. For instance, the Southern Baptist Christian Standard Bible reads, "and by which **you are being saved**, if you hold to the message I preached to you—unless you believed in vain." That, of course, is NOT what the text said.

But it did say, "**By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain."** So much emphasis is placed on the "if" clause that people overlook the "unless" clause which establishes the context and the spirit of the passage. The closing words "**unless ye have believed in vain"** are further explained in verses 10, 14, 17 and 58. With key words CAPITALIZED for emphasis, please note:

Verse 10: **"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was NOT IN VAIN; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."**

Verse 14: **"And if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching VAIN, and your faith *is* also VAIN."**

Verse 17: **"And if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* VAIN; ye are yet in your sins."**

Verse 58: **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the**

Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is NOT IN VAIN in the Lord."

The "vain" in the passages is a hypothetical "vain" that would only be true **"if Christ be not risen"** (vs. 14) and **"if Christ be not raised"** (vs. 17). So, the **"believed in vain"** from verse 2 is a matter of Paul making a hypothetical statement and telling the Corinthians how vain the whole idea of Christianity is **"if the dead rise not"** (vs. 16). So, in the context, anyone believing **"in vain"** (vs. 2) would be people who never accepted the complete gospel in the first place, people who maybe accepted the death and burial of Christ, but not the resurrection. Such people would be lost, not saved, so they would have **"believed in vain."**

Furthermore, the resurrection doubters in the Corinthian church could easily cause the gospel message to be compromised and no longer be able to save sinners. Hence: **"By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you . . ."** As a group, if they failed to keep the pure and complete gospel in memory, then they, as a church group, would no longer be preaching a saving gospel and people would believe "in vain." No one would have LOST their salvation, since they were never really saved in the first place.

ROMANS 11:22

"For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and sev erity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."

Alright, there you have it: God will cut you off, if you don't continue in His goodness, and you'll lose your salvation. That's what many teach, and, as you might expect, it's not true.

Romans chapter eleven is addressing the subject of God's taking the gospel to the gentiles during this present age of Israel's blindness. The gentiles are told to "boast not against the branches" (vs. 18), lest they ALSO be cut off (vs. 22), as were the Jews (in part) for this present age. The verses are not saying that any born-again believer will be cut off, but rather that the gentiles as a people run the risk of being cut off from continually hearing

the gospel, if they become proud and boastful towards Israel. A simple reading of SEVERAL verses, rather than just one or two, makes this very clear. Please read verses 11 through 28 and see for yourself that the full context and spirit of the passage is Israel versus the gentiles in regards to gospel privileges:

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving *of them be*, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be graffed in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be graffed into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning

the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes." (Rom. 11:11-28)

The passage says nothing at all about anyone's personal salvation, only that the gospel is presently being offered to the "wild branch" gentiles and that the gentiles need to respond properly rather than proudly, lest they be "cut off" from continually hearing the blessed gospel and being given opportunity to believe. Just as God led Paul to turn to the gentiles in Acts 28:25-28, He could just as easily lead him, or anyone else, to turn FROM the gentiles and back to the Jews or to other gentiles. No believer is being told that he personally runs the risk of being cut off and losing his salvation.

PSALMS 51:11

"Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

Even though it's found in the Old Testament, this verse is used by some to oppose the doctrine of eternal security by teaching that God can take His Holy Spirit from the believer, thus leaving him an unregenerate, unborn and unsaved man.

What such people fail to realize is that no Old Testament saint was born again and SEALED with God's Spirit as we are today. Ephesians 4:30 says, **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."**

The verse does NOT say that the believer is sealed just until God takes His Spirit away; it says UNTIL THE DAY OF REDEMPTION. II Corinthians 1:22 further explains this by saying that this sealing of the Holy Spirit is an "earnest," or a down payment: **"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."**

Because of the price that Jesus paid at Calvary, the salvation of the New Testament believer is a PURCHASED POSSESSION (Eph. 1:13-14). As such, God's makes a spiritual down payment when we believe on Christ by sealing us with His Spirit, and then full redemption is complete when Christ returns and raises us up in new glorified bodies. Romans 8:23 explains this well: **"And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within**

ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body."

If God were to take His Holy Spirit from a New Testament believer, then He would be breaking a covenant, the NEW covenant, the New TESTAMENT that was established at Calvary by the blood of Jesus Christ. To run clear back to a verse from one thousand years before Christ (Psa. 51:11) and apply it to believers living today amounts to IGNORING THE PRICE THAT JESUS PAID ON THE CROSS. That's absurd! CALVARY CHANGED EVERYTHING! No one was born again in the Old Testament, yet millions are born again today. After the fall of man, no one was called a "son of God," yet millions are called that today. No one after the fall of man had God's image; yet believers today have His image through Jesus Christ. Furthermore, no one went to heaven when they died in the Old Testament, yet every believer goes to heaven today. Calvary changed everything.

It's true that in the Old Testament God's Spirit could leave a man. His Spirit left Saul, and, as far as we know, never returned (I Sam. 16:14). Yet, God's Spirit apparently left Samson and then returned later (Jud. 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14; 16:20-31) and reserved a spot for him in the Hall of Faith (Heb. 11:32)! But none of that lines up doctrinally with the New Testament reality of believers being SEALED with God's Spirit until Christ returns. Things are very different now, thanks to Christ's work at Calvary, and people who use Old Testament Scripture to disannul New Testament truth are not the kind of people that you need to be studying. As a New Testament Christian, you can quench the Spirit (I Ths. 5:19), you can be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), and you even stir up the Spirit (II Tim. 1:6; Acts 17:16), but you cannot LOSE the Spirit that God has sealed in you until the day of redemption: **"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."** (John 14:16) No Christian needs to pray "take not thy holy spirit from me" (Psa. 51:11), because no Christian is living a thousand years before Christ under the old covenant.

MATTHEW 5:22

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:

and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

So, it is reasoned by some that a believer who calls his Christian brother a "fool" could lose his salvation and be damned to hell. I can hear them now: *"That's what it says! Either you believe it, or you don't!"* Lol . . . and either you believe the REST of the Bible, or you don't. No sound Bible student or teacher ever charges through the Bible grabbing and quoting verses indiscriminately without giving due consideration and respect to other portions of scripture that are just as inspired. Doing so leads to confusion at best, and it often leads to downright heresy.

"But isn't Matthew 5:22 true?" you might ask. Of course it's true, but so is the rest of God's word. To claim that a Christian must go to hell just because he calls another believer a "fool" violates the sound doctrine of eternal security, a doctrine that is well established and supported by many portions of scripture. Furthermore, it puts both the apostle Paul and Jesus Himself at risk of hell fire! In I Corinthians 15:36, addressing any skeptical believer who might doubt the reality of a literal resurrection, Paul said, **"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die."**

Then, in Luke 24:25, Jesus called His own disciples "fools" for their own lack of faith in His resurrection: **"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."**

No one believes that Jesus and Paul are in danger of hell fire, so why claim that any Christian living today is in danger of hell fire for using the word "fool" toward another believer? I am not suggesting that we start using the word loosely or carelessly, only that we gain a better understanding of what Jesus was saying in Matthew 5:22. Neither Paul nor Jesus made their statements out of an angry heart, and that was the context of Matthew 5:22: "**But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause . . .**" The issue of Matthew 5, 6, and 7 is the unrighteous human heart and how unfit it is for the holy kingdom of God.

Matthew chapter five is the first chapter of the sermon on the mount where Jesus sets forth the basic law of the land for the coming millennial kingdom. The Jews of His day, especially the

Jewish leaders, believed that they were ready for the kingdom to come, so Jesus "lays down the law," if you will, and illustrates the fact that the moral code of His righteous kingdom will be much higher and holier than anyone expects. That's why the phrase "but I say unto you" is found six times in Matthew chapter 5, and that's why only two verses BEFORE Matthew 5:22, Jesus said, **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."** (Mat. 5:20)

In fact, Jesus only spoke the words of Matthew 5:22 because of what He said in Matthew 5:21: **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment."**

Now get both verses together: **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."**

Clearly, the point is that judgment awaits ALL law breakers, not just the worst ones, such as killers.

The Jewish law of Moses held to certain strict standards of holiness, but Jesus "raised the bar" by addressing the very spirit of the law, rather than just the letter of the law. For instance, the Jews believed in the seventh commandment, **"Thou shalt not commit adultery"** (Exo. 20:14), but Jesus knew that merely not committing adultery did not necessary mean that a man was pure and spiritual in his heart, so He issued the higher standard of the coming kingdom of God by saying,

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Mat. 5:27-28)

In other words, Jesus wanted it to be understood that true righteousness flows from a righteous heart, not from having the willpower to observe strict religious codes as did the self-righteous Pharisees. So the whole spirit of the sermon on the mount is "you people aren't as ready for the kingdom of God as you think." A

truly holy and righteous people would not desire to hate their own brethren and belittle them with mean-spirited name-calling, so Matthew 5:22 is given for the purpose of showing the high and holy standard of the kingdom and how unfit we are for it without regenerated hearts that do not harbor bitterness and anger toward others.

C. I. Scofield offers a very good note on the sermon on the mount in his 1909 Scofield Reference Bible. His note on Matthew 5:2 reads as follows:

> "Having announced the kingdom of heaven as "at hand," the King, in Mt 5.-7., declares the principles of the kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount has a twofold application:
>
> (1) literally to the kingdom. In this sense it gives the divine constitution for the righteous government of the earth. Whenever the kingdom of heaven is established on earth it will be according to that constitution, which may be regarded as an explanation of the word "righteousness" as used by the prophets in describing the kingdom (e.g.) Isa 11:4; 32:1; Da 9:24 In this sense the Sermon on the Mount is pure law, and transfers the offence from the overt act to the motive. Mt 5:21-22,27-28. Here lies the deeper reason why the Jews rejected the kingdom. They had reduced "righteousness" to mere ceremonialism, and the Old Testament idea of the kingdom to a mere affair of outward splendour and power. They were never rebuked for expecting a visible and powerful kingdom, but the words of the prophets should have prepared them to expect also that only the poor in spirit and the meek could share in it (e.g.) Isa 11:4. The seventy-second Psalm, which was universally received by them as a description of the kingdom, was full of this. For these reasons, the Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the Church. These are found in the Epistles. Under the law of the kingdom, for example, no one may hope for forgiveness who has not first forgiven. Mt 6:12,14-15. Under grace the Christian is exhorted to forgive because he is already forgiven. Eph 4:30-32.

> (2) But there is a beautiful moral application to the Christian. It always remains true that the poor in spirit, rather than the proud, are blessed, and those who mourn because of their sins, and who are meek in the consciousness of them, will hunger and thirst after righteousness, and hungering, will be filled. The merciful are "blessed," the pure in heart do "see God." These principles fundamentally reappear in the teaching of the Epistles."

Scofield's comment that the sermon on the mount is the "divine constitution for the righteous government of the earth" is good. Spiritually and morally, we obey the sermon on the mount principles today as well, since Christians are spiritually in the kingdom of God (Rom. 14:17), but as a literal enforceable law, the "constitution" of Matthew 5-7 is not fully applicable until Christ rules from Jerusalem with a "rod of iron" in the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 2:27; 12:5; 19:15). So, no Christian has to worry about losing his salvation, if he happens to call someone a fool. Salvation is not earned by good deeds, so salvation is not lost by bad deeds. Anyone who believes that a Christian today can go to hell for merely calling someone a fool clearly lacks an understanding of basic dispensational truth and of the doctrine of salvation itself.

JAMES 2:24

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

This is one of the most misunderstood verses in all the Bible. Taken out of context regularly by Campbellites and Charismatics, the verse is used to teach that a man cannot be saved by grace through faith alone, although Ephesians 2:8-9 states that he can. According to such false teachers, it is faith plus works that justifies a man before God, and not faith only. The trouble with this private interpretation is that the context is NOT referring to a man's position BEFORE GOD, but rather his position before his fellow man. A careful reading of the whole chapter, especially beginning at verse fourteen, makes this clear. The point of the passage is that genuine faith will produce some genuine works, and that one's FELLOW MAN will see these works and know that

it's real. If he sees no works, then he knows he's dealing with a hypocrite.

The whole passage deals with our testimony and fruit before men. That's why verse twenty-four says **"Ye see then HOW that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."** It's not a general statement that men are justified by works, but rather a SPECIFIC statement on HOW a Christian is justified before his fellow man by having works that prove his faith. HOW is a man justified before God? Obviously, by being washed in the blood of Christ. HOW is a man justified before his fellow man? **"by WORKS a man is justified, and not by faith only."** No lost person will ever see the works of a Christian and say, *"That man is really washed in the blood of Christ!"* However, he might very well say, *"That man really lives it. He's no hypocrite."* That's the context of James 2.

"Ye see then HOW that by works a man is justified (before MAN) **. . . and not by faith only."** (before GOD)

It's not a doctrinal statement about salvation; it's a practical statement about the testimony of the believer in this world. That's HOW a man is justified by works. The example of Abraham is actually given. Please note the wording:

"**Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."** (James 2:21-24)

This refers to the actions of Abraham in Genesis chapter 22, yet we know that Abraham was justified BEFORE GOD seven chapters earlier in Genesis chapter 15. In Genesis 15, Abraham believed God's promise about multiplying his seed as the stars of heaven and was given God's righteousness:

"And, behold, the word of the LORD *came* unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Gen. 15:4-6)

THAT (Gen. 15) was Abraham's justification BEFORE GOD, but his faith in Genesis 15 was not confirmed by any outward works, so his outward works in Genesis 22 SHOW that he really did believe what God promised in Genesis 15. Romans 4:2-3 makes this clear:

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Clearly, Romans 4 is saying that Abraham was justified by BELIEVING, but James says that he was justified by works, yet this is not a contradiction. Please read both passages carefully with key words emphasized:

"For **IF** Abraham were justified by works (so, he wasn't), **HE** hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God (HE would get the credit). For what saith the scripture? Abraham **BELIEVED** God, and **IT** (the belief, the faith, not any works) was counted unto him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:2-3)

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, **WHEN HE HAD OFFERED ISAAC** his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and **BY WORKS WAS FAITH MADE PERFECT**? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then **HOW** that by works a man is justified (before his fellow man) and not by faith only (before God)" (James 2:21-24)

Instead of James contradicting Romans, it simply shows how that true faith produces outward works, or fruit, which is what Abraham's faith did when he offered Isaac. Had Abraham refused to offer Isaac, then he would have proved that he did NOT believe what God had promised, but Hebrews 11:19 says that his actions proved that he even believed **"that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead"** after he had sacrificed him. So, James' point is that true faith, when tested, always produces works. If it doesn't, it's dead. Abraham was justified by faith in Genesis 15, and he proved it in Genesis 22, which is also called justification, since inward faith naturally produces outward works. It's a classic case of Philippians 2:12-13: **". . . work OUT your own salvation with fear and tremb-ling. For it is God which worketh IN you . . ."**

So, not only are the heretics wrong for using James 2:24 to teach a works-based salvation; many of the brethren are wrong for applying the entire book of James to the tribulation as though it applies to nothing going on today. James 2 applies to everything going on today in the lives of every believer on the planet. But understanding and explaining that takes time and work, so it's easier to just say that the book of James is for the tribulation Jews and then pretend that that's a "deeper" position to take that most wouldn't understand. No, Genesis 15, Genesis 22 and Abraham have nothing to do with the tribulation, yet Paul and James seem to contradict one another with their statements regarding Abraham's justification. This apparent discrepancy is resolved, not by applying anything to the tribulation, but by reaching an understanding of the scriptural relationship between faith and works, as we've just attempted to do. Righteous faith produces works, and righteous works prove faith. That's why faith without works is dead (James 2:26).

Now, once that is understood, there's nothing wrong with exploring ways in which some of James' words might play out in the tribulation, since the book is addressed "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" (James 1:1), but relegating the whole book of James to the tribulation instead of explaining James 2:24 with scripture is only a cheap cop-out and is unworthy of any serious consideration, much less paper and ink. God gave us the book of James to stress the truth that righteous faith naturally produces righteous works, a theme that holds true throughout the Bible, and "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" had a special need to realize this, so the book is addressed to them, but the truth is for ALL believers. We diminish the power of this truth in our lives when we make the foolish claim that James is a tribulation epistle and not for us. ALL of God's word is "for" us (II Tim. 3:16-17), and we should make the most of all of it, instead of seeking to discard every passage that challenges us beyond our comfort level.

Lesson Review

1. Does anyone in the Bible ever claim that Jesus used a "hard saying"?

2. Which Bible writer said that some of Paul's writings were "hard to be understood"?

3. True or False? To be "fallen from grace" means to be in grace and then fall out of it.

4. The term "the end" in Matthew 24:13 means the end of what?

5. Where in the Bible do we read of the s-called unpardonable sin?

6. Can a Christian commit the unpardonable sin?

7. What does it mean to work out your own salvation?

8. Does I Corinthians 15:1-2 teach that one can lose his salvation?

9. Does Romans 11:22 refer to the personal salvation of individuals?

10. True or False? God will take his Spirit from a disobedient Christian.

11. Explain why Matthew 5:22 does not contradict I Corinthians 15:36.

12. A man is justified before God by faith in Christ, but he is justified before his fellow man by outward _____, which prove his faith.

13. What Bible chapter teaches the above?

Suggested Memory Verses: James 2:24, John 4:24

Lesson XVII

Hard Sayings - II

HEBREWS 3:6, 14

"But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Hebrews 3:6)

"For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." (Hebrews 3:14)

First, it should be noted that the term "the end" occurs five times in the book of Hebrews, and it likely has some application to Israel in the tribulation period when "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26) during a time when believers must "endure unto the end" (Mat. 24:13). This does not mean that the passage in Hebrews has no application for the church age, only that it likely includes a tribulation application as well.

As for the church age, it must be understood that these words were written to Hebrews. This doesn't mean that the Jews have a different salvation plan than us, but it is important to realize that the Jews being addressed in Hebrews were often more professors than possessors, which could be why three of the Bible's four uses of the word "profession" are found in Hebrews (3:1; 4:14; 10:23). As Scofield points out in his note on Hebrews 6:4, these were Jewish professed believers who halted short of full faith in Christ. This is why the book of Hebrews spends so much time contrasting the things of Christ to the Old Testament set-up. The writer is showing Jewish professed believers that the Lord Jesus Christ is BETTER than the old covenant and is the replacement and fulfilment of the old covenant. Many of them had merely "added" Jesus to their religious system without a full faith commitment to Him as their Lord and Saviour, their only hope for salvation. A slow and careful reading of the book of Hebrews as a whole clearly indicates that the writer does not believe that these Jewish "believers" fully understood what it means to have true saving faith in Christ. For instance, there's no need to tell a true believer that the Old Testament priesthood cannot save him, yet the Hebrews WERE told this in Hebrews

chapter 10. This shows that the Hebrews being addressed were not the same caliber of believers as blood-washed Christians are today, saints who trust Christ fully and place no confidence in the old Mosaic covenant.

In fact, the language used in the immediate context shows that the writer did not believe that many of these professed believers were saved. Notice some of the wording between verses 6 and 14. Block caps used for emphasis:

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day IF YE WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do ALWAY ERR in *their* heart; and they have NOT KNOWN MY WAYS. So I sware in my wrath, They shall NOT ENTER INTO MY REST.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be HARDENED THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN." (Heb. 3:7-13)

Paul never spoke this way to born again believers in Christ. These are PROFESSED believers who have not come all the way to "the end" of themselves and their law of Moses and fully realized their need for Christ.

The statements **"if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end"** (vs. 6) and **"if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end"** (vs. 14) are admonitions to the Hebrews to become POSSESSORS and not mere professors. That is, a full faith commitment to Christ, fully receiving Him as Saviour unconditionally would amount to the final step that would place them INTO Christ as born-again believers where HE does all of the holding and keeping (John 10:28-29; I Pet. 1:5; Philip. 1:6). But failing to fully receive Christ would amount to them holding back and never coming to "the end" of their law and fully finding Christ. Please read Romans 10:3-4 very carefully: **"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."** (emphasis added)

Granted, for a Jew to endure unto "the end" in the Great Tribulation is for him to endure till the end of "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), but today "the end" is when he sees himself and his system of self-righteousness through the law of Moses as mere "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6) and he takes one giant step of faith into Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. So, "the end" is where the law was to take him: to Christ, Who FULFILLED the law (Mat. 5:17) and brought it to an END. The Jews had to come to the realization that the law was a mere schoolmaster that took them to Christ (Gal. 3:24). The road ended at Calvary, and that's where the Jews should have realized that their journey was complete and that the time had come to be justified by faith in Christ. But, most Jews rejected this truth outright, and others were very slow to come around and fully commit to it. It is to these people that Hebrews is written, people who did not fully believe that Christ was "the end" and that full salvation was to be found in Him alone. The writer of Hebrews is telling these half-hearted Jews to let their road come to an end and receive Christ, since Christ IS "the end" (Rom. 10:4; I Pet. 1:9). Keeping the law AND claiming to trust Christ was not the answer. They had to come all the way and receive Christ as the end of the law for righteousness (Rom. 10:3-4), and many of them had not done this, which is why the chapter ends with telling us that they couldn't enter in because of UNBELIEF (vs. 19).

HEBREWS 6:4-6

"For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put *him* to an open shame."

It is argued that the passage is saying that a backslidden Christian cannot repent and restore his fellowship with God once he has fallen away. Obviously, this cannot be the point of the text, else we would have more contradictions in the Bible than we could count. Repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation are very common throughout God's word, so there's no reason for God

saying that such isn't possible here in Hebrews. Something else is being said.

Notice how the passage does not speak of these people being born again and sealed with the Holy Spirit as we are (Eph. 4:30). It only speaks of them being "once enlightened," "have tasted" and "made partakers" of the Holy Ghost. Then it says that if THEY (not US) shall fall away that THEY (not US) will crucify to THEMSELVES (not US) the Son of God afresh. The usage of the word "they" clearly points to someone other than you and I today who are born again and are sealed with God's Spirit unto the day of redemption.

This "they" refers to the Jewish professed believers that we mentioned when commenting on Hebrews 3:6 and 3:14. They had seen the apostolic signs and wonders, obvious works of the Holy Ghost, so they had "tasted" and "partook" in the things of God, in a limited sense, but they had not come all the way and received Christ. They had been partakers as eye witnesses to Holy Ghost power, both in the ministry of Jesus and the apostles, and some became professors, but they had not become POSSESSORS by believing on Christ.

If this seems stretched, please remember that this same book of Hebrews has already warned the Hebrews that they had been eye witnesses to the "gifts of the Holy Ghost" (Heb. 2:4) and has warned them to not neglect the great salvation that was to be found in Christ: **"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Heb. 2:3-4)**

So, these hard passages in Hebrews are not dealing with someone who is saved and might lose their salvation; they are dealing with Jews who ran the risk of NEGLECTING salvation after having been eye witnesses to the powerful workings of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost CAME UPON Mary (Luke 1:35), but she wasn't born again at that time as a new creature in Christ. The Holy Ghost FILLED Elisabeth and Zacharias (Luke 1:41, 67, but they were not born-again believers with the Holy Spirit sealed within. The Holy Ghost was UPON Simeon (Luke 2:25), but He wasn't SEALED IN him. There was much Holy Ghost activity throughout the gospel period, yet John 7:39 tells us that **"the Holy**

Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" People had "tasted" and had been "partakers" of the Holy Ghost in a limited sense, but they had not been BORN OF THE SPIRIT (John 3:8) and SEALED WITH the Holy Ghost until the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30; II Cor. 1:22).

Again, Scofield offers a good note:

> "Heb 6:4-8 presents the case of Jewish professed believers who halt short of faith in Christ after advancing to the very threshold of salvation, even "going along with" the Holy Spirit in His work of enlightenment and conviction. Joh 16:8-10. It is not said that they had faith. This supposed person is like the spies at Kadesh-barnea De 1:19-26 who saw the land and had the very fruit of it in their hands, and yet turned back."

To see such Holy Ghost power first-hand and then still reject Christ would basically amount to the very blasphemy that was committed by the Pharisees in Matthew chapter twelve, which Jesus said would never be forgiven (Mat. 12:32) The old-timers called this "sinning away your day of grace." Others just call it "crossing the line" or "crossing the point of no return," but whatever one calls it, it concerns LOST people, not born-again believers in Christ.

HEBREWS 10:26

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins."

Like most problem verses, the verse is almost always extracted from its context and applied to the individual believer who "sins wilfully" after he has been saved, even thou he doesn't have a priest offering sacrifices with the blood of bulls and goats (vss. 1-11). The context is not born again believers in Christ today who fully understand and have benefitted from Christ's work on the cross, but rather first century Jews who felt the need to still trust in the "blood of bulls and of goats" (vs. 4) by "every priest" offering sacrifices that "can never take away sins" (vs. 11). For Jews still believing in the old Mosaic system, Calvary was of none effect. The whole point of verse 26 was that anyone really coming

to the FULL "knowledge of the truth" would understand that continual sacrifices were useless, even blasphemous.

Paul was basically saying, "You Christian-Jews just don't get it, even if you think you do, and the proof is in the fact that you still trust in your animal sacrifices, sacrifices that are no longer effective in dealing with sin. Sin was dealt with 100% at Calvary, so leave it there and stop trying to deal with it elsewhere."

As for believers like us who DO get it, verse 39 applies: **"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."**

No doubt, the passage also has tribulation reference concerning Jews who turn to Christ at that time, but the above is how to handle the passage for concerned believers today.

MARK 16:16

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16 has always been a choice verse for those who believe in baptismal regeneration, because they think it presents water baptism as a requirement for salvation. One Campbellite publication in my files quotes the verse and then says, *"Belief plus baptism equals salvation."* No, it most certainly does not equal salvation. The second half of the verse is just as inspired as the first half, and it only says, **"but he that BELIEVETH not shall be damned."** No one is damned for not being baptized. It is BELIEF that saves a man, and it is UNBELIEF that damns a man. Period.

But why does Jesus word it that way? Why does He say, **"He that believeth AND is baptized?"** If He wasn't establishing baptism as a requirement for salvation, what was He doing? Why such seemingly careless wording? If I printed that in one of my tracts, I'd be labeled a heretic by the brethren! Yet, there it is, a most definite stumbling stone just waiting for its next victim. Why such wording?

The wording of that verse and many others like it is the very reason that I don't worry about the precise wording when a man is presenting salvation, not if he has been clear in stating that

salvation is by faith in Christ alone. He might say, "Be willing to turn from sin" (Chick), "turn from your sins by turning to Jesus Christ" (Melton), "Let the wicked forsake his way" (Ruckman), and maybe even, "turn from these vanities unto the living God" (Barnabas and Paul, Acts 14:15). None of these brethren are mingling works with faith for salvation, and that's clear when the entire context is read. It's also clear that Jesus is not requiring baptism for salvation in Mark 16:16.

The baptism in the verse is incidental to the belief. That is, baptism should naturally follow belief as a fruit or outward evidence of inner faith, but the main issue is the inner faith, not the baptism. Many believers in Jesus' day were not very serious about their so-called "belief" (Mat. 7:21-23; John 9:22; 12:42), so baptism was provided as a very public way of identifying with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Private identification takes place the moment the sinner receives Christ, but baptism allows the new convert to make a *public* identification. The believer has already been privately baptized and sealed by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30), but Jesus wants us to be publicly baptized as well as an outward showing of our faith in Christ. Our water baptism doesn't save us any more than Jesus' water baptism saved Him, but it does full righteousness, as He said (Mat. 3:15).

ACTS 2:38

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The above verse of scripture is a favorite among many religious groups. One can hear it several times on Sunday morning radio programs, as well as from the pulpits of numerous groups, and it can be found in much religious literature. The verse is a favorite because, on the surface, it seemingly states that one must be baptized in order to be saved, and without baptism one is not saved. So, those who believe that water baptism is essential for salvation make it a regular habit of using Acts 2:38 as scriptural support.

The problem is that Acts 2:38 isn't the only verse in the Bible which deals with salvation. While many claim to "speak where the scriptures speak and remain silent where the scriptures

are silent," they practically ignore most of the New Testament teaching on salvation. The only verses that such false teachers quote and reference are the ones they feel they can use to promote their "water gospel." The fact is that most of what the New Testament says about salvation doesn't include baptism at all: John 5:24, John 11:25-26, John 14:6, Romans 4:5, Romans 10:9-13, Eph. 2:8-9, etc. The few places that do mention water baptism do not include it as part of one's salvation. Water baptism should follow salvation as one of the first steps of obedience for the new believer, an outward evidence and symbol of salvation, but not salvation itself.

First, please notice that verse 38 isn't the only verse in Acts 2. In Peter's message, a great deal was said before verse 38 came out of his mouth. In fact, he even told his listeners how to be saved BEFORE verse 38. In Acts 2:21, Peter quotes from Joel 2 and says, **"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."** His words preceding verse 38 were so convicting that his listeners were **"pricked in their heart"** in verse 37. So, to use verse 38 out of its context causes a misrepresentation of God's word. The verse does not stand alone, and, in fact, a totally different meaning is conveyed when one makes it stand alone. Peter's listeners had already been told about the death, burial and resurrection of Christ in the verses preceding verse 38. This led to the Holy Ghost conviction of verse 37 when they were pricked in their heart and then asked, **"Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?"** That is, in light of BELIEVING what Peter had just told them about Christ (verses 14-36), they were asking what to do now. In essence, Peter's verse 38 reply was, *"If you really believe on Christ, then get baptized in His name."* Their salvation was in their belief, not in their baptism, which was made clear in the words **"call on the name of the Lord"** in verse 21! Separating verse 38 from its context is a huge mistake.

Another error that many make with Acts 2:38 is the error of assumption. It is assumed that the word "for" must mean "in order to get." That is, being baptized "for" the remission of sins supposedly means to be baptized "in order to get" remission of sins. However, a closer look at the scriptures will reveal that this isn't the case at all.

Notice Luke 5:12-14: **"And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing**

Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Jesus made this man clean in verse 13, yet in the next verse, verse 14, Jesus tells him to go offer a sacrifice "for thy cleansing" as a "testimony." Here the word "for" cannot mean "in order to get" because he had already gotten his cleansing in verse 13. It obviously meant "because of" his cleansing. If a man goes to jail "for stealing," then he goes there "because of" the stealing that he's already done, not "in order to get" a chance to steal again.

Some like to argue that the Greek word "eis" means "in order to," but this isn't always the case. Jesus said in Matthew 12:41, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at (eis) the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." The Greek word for "at" is "eis." Does this mean that the men of Nineveh repented "in order to get" the preaching of Jonah? No, they repented "because of" the preaching of Jonah. So, even "the Greek" doesn't demand the alternative interpretation of Acts 2:38. The word "for" can be used different ways, not just one, so it is wrong to assume that it must mean "in order to get" in Acts 2:38.

Another factor which is commonly ignored is the JEWISH factor. Every person in Acts 2 is a Mosaic, law-observing, Old Testament Jew. In fact, they are all gathered together to observe a JEWISH FEAST called Pentecost (verse 1). A fair reading of the whole chapter (especially verses 4, 14, and 36) will clearly reveal that no Gentiles (non Jews) are present. Since this involves Jews, it involves a NATION (verse 36!!), not individuals. No one asked, "What must I do to be saved?" The question asked concerned the NATION of Israel: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (verse 37)

No one asked, "What shall I do," but rather, "What shall WE do?" Acts 2 presents a GROUP of people who come to realize that they had murdered their Messiah and they're asking what THEY must do. It's a question concerning NATIONAL salvation. Isaiah 66:8 says, **". . . shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children."** The "nation" is Israel. Romans 11:26 says, **"And so all Israel shall be**

saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." Acts 2:38 is dealing with NATIONAL salvation. The Messianic Kingdom is still available to the Jews (until Acts 7:60 when they kill Stephen), so national salvation remains an issue until then.

This is clear from what follows Acts 7. In Acts 8, an individual from Africa is saved (before baptism). In Acts 9, an individual from Asia is saved (before baptism). In Acts 10, an individual from Europe is saved (before baptism). Why didn't these individual conversions occur before Acts 7? Because the first seven chapters of Acts deal with Israel (1:6-8; 2:36; 3:12; 4:8-10; 5:31; 6:7-14; 7:1-60). The question of INDIVIDUAL salvation is asked and answered in Acts 16:30-31: **". . . Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."**

The Bible says the gospel is to go to the Jew FIRST (Rom. 1:16), so they are the FIRST to receive the gospel in the book of Acts (chapter 2), but they are not the last to receive it. Acts doesn't end with chapter 2, so we should be cautious of anyone who develops their doctrine in Acts 2 while practically ignoring the next 26 chapters. If God didn't stop in Acts 2, then why does anyone else? Could it be that the later chapters in Acts contain information which the cultists want hidden from us? Could it be that there are other scriptures in Acts which do not agree with the wording of Acts 2:38? Could it be that Peter himself, the one preaching in Acts 2:38, says something different when speaking to individual Gentiles like you and I? One only has to read Acts chapter 10 to get the answer. Peter is preaching again in Acts 10, except only to individual Gentiles, and something very interesting occurs. In Acts 2:38, the Holy Ghost was promised to be given to the converts AFTER they were baptized, yet in Acts 10:44 the Holy Ghost falls upon the Gentiles BEFORE they are baptized! Now, Paul tells us in Romans 8:9, **" . . .if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."** Having God's Spirit is synonymous with belonging to God or being saved (John 3:6-8), so the Gentiles in Acts 10 were saved BEFORE they were baptized in water. Why don't the Acts 2:38 cultists ever point this out? Answer: It destroys their perverted doctrine that water baptism is essential for salvation.

The fact is that Acts 2:38 is NOT the "model" plan of salvation, nor are any of the other "water verses" which the cultists

use. Only by taking such verses out of their context can one teach such heresy. All of the Bible is true, not just the favorite "proof texts" of the cults. Baptism saves no one. It only serves as a testimonial picture of the death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ AFTER one has believed on Christ (Acts 8:36-38). Paul said in I Corinthians 1:17 that **". . . Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."** This "gospel" is defined by Paul in I Corinthians 15:1-4, and it does NOT include water baptism. The dying thief was not baptized, yet Jesus saved him (Luke 23:42-43), and John wrote that we are washed in the BLOOD of Christ (Rev. 1:5), not in the water. In fact, the saints in Heaven claim to have gotten there by the blood of Jesus (Rev. 5:9), not by water. By faith in the blood of Jesus Christ one is saved (Rom. 3:25). Water baptism only follows this faith as an outward step of obedience, and that's really all that happened in Acts 2:38.

I PETER 3:21

"The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"

As the reader can see, the verse begins with the words "The like figure," which makes water baptism a figure (a type or symbol), not the actual saving agency itself. The "like" in the verse refers to the waters of Noah's flood that were mentioned in the preceding verse: **". . . the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."**

By Peter saying, "The like figure," he is saying that baptism is a figure "like" the saving waters of Noah's flood were a figure. In other words, Peter is saying that THIS is a figure "like" THAT was a figure. Like WHAT was a figure? Verse 20: **"eight souls were saved by water."** That's only a figure, since we all know that those eight souls were saved by building an ark and getting inside: **"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, PREPARED AN ARK TO THE SAVING OF HIS HOUSE; by the which he condemned**

the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." (Heb. 11:7; emphasis added)

The waters of Noah's flood saved only in the sense that they bore up the ark, the real means of salvation. By submitting to believer's baptism, the new believer is publicly displaying a good conscience by bearing-up, exalting, or lifting-up Jesus Christ and identifying with the saving power of His death, burial and resurrection. In fact, that exact connection is made in John 3 and Genesis 7: **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be LIFTED UP"** (John 3:14; emphasis added) **"And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was LIFT UP above the earth."** (Gen. 7:17; emphasis added)

Noah's family was saved by having the faith to build the ark and to get inside, but God used the waters to lift the ark up above the world that was to perish and to save those inside. The waters were only an incidental counterpart, not the means of salvation itself. After all, those same waters damned far more people than they saved. No one was told to trust in the water.

Baptism is a "figure," and it's a figure "like" the waters of Noah's flood which lifted up the ark just as we lift up Christ when we submit to believer's baptism. This is called **"the answer of a good conscience toward God,"** and it points to the actual **"resurrection of Jesus Christ"** where the real saving power lies.

The dying thief had HIS "answer of a good conscience toward God" WITHOUT being baptized, because it came when he publicly rebuked the unrepentant thief and when he publicly called upon Jesus for salvation (Luke 23:40-43). Baptism wasn't even mentioned, much less performed, but the thing that baptism pictures WAS being performed in real time, so salvation came to the man that very day WITHOUT baptism.

Just as no one in the Bible made a habit of stressing the saving power of the waters of Noah (since it was clearly THE ARK that saved, while the waters actually DAMNED most people), no one today should stress baptism as a saving agent, since baptism is only a "figure" "like" the waters that lifted-up the ark. Baptism is "the answer of a good conscience toward God," but salvation itself comes "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," of which baptism is a "figure."

Peter is not saying that baptism is a perfect and complete figure, as that would credit salvation to everyone who was immersed (drowned) in the water of Noah's flood, and modern baptism would drown all believers! He is saying that baptism is a limited figure where the water saved, not by immersion or getting anyone wet, but by LIFTING UP THE ARK, which just happened to be a great type of Christ. Christ is lifted up and exalted among men every time a believer is publicly baptized, and this is the answer of a good conscience before God. Failure to appreciate the symbolism ("like figure") renders one incapable of understanding the passage.

John Adams said that, *"Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."* Likewise, the Bible was written for a spiritually-minded people who understand God's use of symbols, types and figures. It is "wholly inadequate" in the hands of any other.

ACTS 22:16

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)

Revelation 1:5 plainly tells us that it is the *BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST* that washes away sin, not water baptism, so there is obviously more to Acts 22:16 than some folks want to believe.

Why did Ananias say this to Paul? Well, who was Ananias? According to Acts 22:12, he was a *Jewish proselyte* who still followed the Old Testament law. He still followed the law because he did not yet have full understanding of salvation by grace. Obviously he didn't, or he wouldn't have been following the law. Being a "devout man according to the law," Ananias associated water baptism with the Old Testament laws of *purification* (John 11:55, 2:6, Num. 19:7-22, Acts 21:24-25), which were for washing the flesh, not the soul. So there's a strong possibility that Ananias wrongly associated water baptism with Jewish purification laws. But even if this is not the case, he still followed the words "wash away thy sins" with "calling on the name of the Lord," which has nothing to do with baptism. The

dying thief called on the name of the Lord and was saved WITHOUT baptism, and Romans 10:9 says that one can be saved by calling on the name of the Lord without mentioning baptism. As we've already seen, water baptism is merely incidental, serving as a first step of public identity with Christ, an outward symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ with which the new believer is identified. After all, we must remember that the New Testament's first mention of baptism was John's baptism of REPENTANCE where sinners confessed their sins upon being baptized and where John warned about the need for FRUITS (Mat. 3:6-12) meet for repentance. Spiritual fruit FOLLOWS salvation, but never produces salvation, so baptism was not and is not essential for salvation. It is a mere symbol or outward evidence of salvation. The symbol of water baptism is important for fulfilling righteousness, as it did with Jesus' baptism, but it is the blood of Jesus Christ, not water, that washes away sin: **". . . Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."** (Rev. 1:5)

I JOHN 3:4-10

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 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. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

The passage is used by some to teach that a Christian cannot sin and that the presence of sin in one's life is proof that he isn't saved. Some charismatic groups even have bumper stickers on their vehicles that read, *"If you sin, you aren't saved,"* and I John 3:9 is given as a reference.

Nothing short of the rapture itself will fix the misbehavior of Christians and professing Christians when it comes to hermeneutics. Every believer should know that no portion of scripture is intended to be privately interpreted. No portion of scripture was GIVEN by private interpretation, but rather "holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:20-21), so no portion of scripture should be RECEIVED by private interpretation. The writings of "holy men of God" are to be consulted always, and especially when dealing with complicated or controversial passages. Paul said that the Holy Ghost teaches by "comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:13), and Isaiah said "precept upon precept" and "line upon line" (Isa. 28:10. Grabbing a verse out of context and insisting on a particular meaning without regard for the rest of God's word is most definitely NOT the practice of an approved workman (II Tim. 2:15). There are plenty of verses in the New Testament that say that a Christian CAN sin (I John 1:8-10; 2:1-2; I Tim. 5:20; I Cor. 5:1-5; 8:11-12; Rom. 7:18-25; James 5:15; Heb. 12:1), so I John 3 is obviously saying something different.

The standard explanation offered by many brethren is to make a highly technical point by saying that the NEW man, the born-again man, can't sin, since it is in our FLESH that no good thing dwells (Rom. 7:18). This would mean that John is being very technical in I John 3 and saying that even though your flesh sins, your inner man does not sin, since he is a new creature in Christ with a new birth. When reading the full context of I John 3, that view makes no sense at all. That is, I John 3 (please read the whole chapter) is making a very practical point about holy living for God's people, so it makes no sense that John would abandon his own point just for the sake of being technical about a standing vs. state issue.

This preacher does not believe that John is saying that a Christian cannot ever commit a single sin, especially since he just stated in the previous chapter that a Christian CAN sin: **". . . if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins . . ."** (I John 2:1-2) No, that just won't do. John is simply making the practical point that a true believer is born of the HOLY Spirit and will not consistently embrace a sinful way of life. God has begun a work IN us, and He will keep performing it (Philip. 1:6) and seeing to it that Christ, not sin, rules in our lives. When this does NOT

happen, but sin is continually embraced without conviction or repentance, it is evidence that the person was never truly saved (Mat. 7:20; II Cor. 5:17). I understand the standing vs. state issue very well, but that's not what John is addressing in I John 3.

I John chapter three uses two word choices in addressing the issue of committing sin. Verses 4 and 8 say, "committeth sin," and verse 9 says, "commit sin." As you can see, neither usage contains the definite article "the" (as in "committeth THE sin") or the indefinite article "a" (as in "committeth A sin"). John simply addressed the issue of committing sin in general, as a way of life, without any emphasis on particular instances of sin. The previous chapter (2:1-2) addressed the matter of particular instances, but chapter three is simply addressing sin as a general way of life and how the Holy Spirit in the believer will not allow this to continue without conviction and correction. That is, whosoever is born of God does commit sin as a normal way of life the way that lost people do.

We know that John is not addressing the standing vs. state issue, because our standing concerns us being kept BY GOD, yet John says in I John 5:18, **"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God KEEPETH HIMSELF, and that wicked one toucheth him not."** (emphasis added) The wicked one touches us not, because we choose to live holy lives and not give place to the devil (Eph. 4:27). This whole thing concerns a very practical Christianity where, because we are born of God (our standing, the root), we make the spiritual choice to resist temptation and walk in the Spirit (our state, the fruit). If we do sin, we have an advocate in the Lord Jesus Christ (I John 2:1-2; 1:9), but sin is not a normal way of life, since we are born of God.

One only has to consult Jesus' words to the Pharisees in John 8:34 to see this: **". . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."** The Pharisees were LOST souls. They were not merely believers who occasionally yielded to the sinful flesh. This was said to them before the new birth was even possible, since it was before Calvary, so the committing of sin and the servants of sin comment dealt with a lost and sinful way of life, not with isolated instances of believers occasionally committing a sin (I John 2:1-2). In other words, they were not sheep that occasionally got dirty; they were goats and swine that stayed dirty as way of life, at least in their

hearts, so much so that Jesus called them servants of sin. This is not the case with true, born-again believers, and that's all that John is saying. The passage is not saying that you, as a child of God will never sin again; it's saying that you, being born of God, will not sin as a normal way of life, like you once did.

II PETER 2:20-22

"For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

The passage is considered a hard saying because it appears to suggest that a Christian can lose his salvation. The so-called believers in the text had escaped the world's pollutions, had knowledge of Jesus the Saviour, had come to know the way of righteousness, and were washed, yet they turned back and ended-up worse than they started. It seems to be a pretty open and shut case: they got saved and lost it.

But not so fast. The full context here is not limited to a mere three verses. Peter begins his comments on these people clear back in verse one when he introduced the subject of "false prophets," "false teachers," "damnable heresies" and "denying the Lord." Does that sound like a group of true believers? Yes, it says that the Lord "bought them," but it doesn't say that He REDEEMED them. That is, Jesus paid ("bought") the price for their redemption, but they never truly forsook their own ways and received His gift of salvation, so they were never really born again. We know this because of how Peter describes them throughout the chapter. Please note:

false prophets, vs. 1
false teachers, vs. 1
damnable heresies, vs. 1

denying the Lord that bought them, vs. 1
swift destruction, vs. 2
pernicious ways, vs. 2
truth shall be evil spoken of, vs. 2
covetousness, vs. 3
feigned words, vs. 3
their damnation slumbereth not, vs. 3
unjust, vs. 9
walk after the flesh, vs. 10
lust of uncleanness, vs. 10
despise government, vs. 10
presumptuous, vs. 10
selfwilled, vs. 10
not afraid to speak evil of dignities, vs. 10
brute beasts, vs. 12
made to be taken and destroyed, vs. 12
perish in their own corruption, vs. 12
unrighteousness, vs. 13
riot in the day time, vs. 13
blemishes, vs. 13
deceivings, vs. 13
eyes full of adultery, vs. 14
cannot cease from sin, vs. 14
beguiling unstable souls, vs. 14
covetous practices, vs. 14
cursed children, vs. 14
forsaken the right way, vs. 15
gone astray, vs. 15
following the way of Balaam, vs. 15
loved the wages of unrighteousness, vs. 15
wells without water, vs. 17
clouds that are carried with a tempest, vs. 17
darkness is reserved for ever, vs. 17
great swelling *words* of vanity, vs. 18
lusts of the flesh, vs. 18
much wantonness, vs. 18
live in error, vs. 18
servants of corruption, vs. 19
bondage, vs. 19
latter end is worse, vs. 20
better for them not to have known, vs. 21
dog eating vomit, vs. 22
sow wallowing in mire, vs. 22

Now, does anyone seriously believe that Peter is describing saved people? Are you going to throw out over forty descriptions of LOST people just so you can emphasize wording in three verses that seem to indicate they were saved? Their "knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (vs. 20) was obviously only a head knowledge, not a true belief of the heart, otherwise Peter would have provided a list of spiritual fruit that they had once produced. Yet, the only fruit mentioned is their EVIL fruit from their evil and corrupt tree of unbelief. The fact that they had "known the way of righteousness" (vs. 21) obviously doesn't mean that they practiced it, only that they knew about it mentally without ever embracing it as a holy way of life. They turned from the holy commandment that had been "delivered unto them" (vs. 21), not from the holy commandment that they had been obeying as new believers in Christ. As for being like the "washed" sow and the reformed dog (vs. 22), they were washed and reformed in much the same manner as the whitewashed Pharisees (Mat. 23:27) who were washed only in outward appearances by their own self-righteous, religious traditions. Pigs and dogs are pigs and dogs, not sheep, and this is evidenced by their returning to their old ways. Peter knows how to write about Christians as sheep (I Pet. 2:25; 5:2-4), but here he is writing about pigs and dogs, because he's referring to LOST people, not true Christians.

I CORINTHIANS 9:22

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some."

The verse is considered a hard saying by some, because it appears to open the door for compromise. Actually, it DOES open the door for compromise, but not UNSCRIPTURAL compromise. Nowhere in the context does Paul say that he violated the word of God in order to reach people, so his statement that he is "made all things to all men" obviously means "all" without distinction, not "all" without exception. Paul did not pray to "THE UNKNOWN GOD" at Mars Hill in order to reach the heathen at Athens. He preached AGAINST their idolatry and told them to repent and receive Christ (Acts 17:16-31).

Paul's manner of becoming "all things to all men" was mentioned here in an effort to help the immature Corinthian believers to think of others more than themselves. The spirit of his comment is summed up in his words to these same believers in the very next chapter: **"Even as I please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved."** (I Cor. 10:33) He's only saying that he is always willing to inconvenience himself for the sake of reaching others. A good example is Paul's habit of visiting Jewish synagogues for the sake of having opportunity to witness for Christ (Acts 13:14; 17:1-2). He wasn't required to visit synagogues, but doing so respectfully allowed him to reach more people. Another good example would be I Corinthians 8 where Paul agreed to change his eating habits so as not to offend weaker brethren.

The bottom line is that compromise can be good and productive as it shows a spirit of grace and courtesy towards others. It's only UNSCRIPTURAL compromise that we need to avoid, and Paul never encouraged unscriptural compromise.

I CORINTHIANS 11:27-29

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

Some believe that the "damnation" in the passage refers to eternal damnation in hell, so such people would emphasize a far greater importance in Lord's Supper observances and regulations. While our observance of the Lord's Supper should never be taken lightly or overly casual, all believers should know and understand that communion services are in no way connected to one's salvation or eternal damnation. In fact, this is stressed in the immediate context: **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should NOT BE CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD."** (I Cor. 11:31-32; emphasis added) The "damnation" is clearly not ETERNAL damnation.

This presents the case of eternal damnation vs. temporal damnation. Eternal damnation is when a man ends up in eternal torments for having rejected Christ. *Temporal* damnation happens when one receives the consequences for their unwise or unlawful actions. A good example of this is Romans 13:2, which says, **"Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."** The damnation here is simply the lawful penalty for transgressing the ordinance, the most severe penalty being a death penalty for the most severe transgressions: **"he beareth not the sword in vain"** (vs. 4).

Granted, we aren't in the habit of using the word "damnation" in the temporal sense today (unless one is implying this when swearing with the phrase "I'll be damned"), but it was not as uncommon in years past. In fact, while Webster first defines the word as eternal punishment, his second definition for "damnation" is simply "condemnation," as one would condemn a building or as a jury might condemn a criminal, neither of which would involve eternal punishment, only a proportional judgment to fit the transgression. One might even be condemned by his own conscience (Rom. 14:22-23), or heart (I John 3:20-21), but this does not always concern eternal damnation. And we know the passage in I Corinthians 11 does not concern eternal damnation, because verse 32 says that, **"we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."**

Lesson Review

1. The use of the term "the end" in Hebrews likely has some reference to what?

2. True or False? The people in Hebrews 3:6 and 3:14 were Jewish professed believers who had not come to a full new birth faith in Christ.

3. True or False? To taste of the heavenly gift and to partake of the Holy Ghost means to be saved.

4. Hebrews 10:26 refers to:

a. Christians
b. Unsaved Jews
c. Religious Gentiles

5. What does it mean to be born of water?

6. True or False? He that isn't baptized shall be damned.

7. Were any Gentiles present when Peter preached Acts 2:38?

8. Why is the above fact significant?

9. Explain how baptism is a figure "like" the waters of Noah's flood.

10. The point of I John 3:9-10 is that a true Christian

a. will never sin
b. will not commit to a sinful way of life

11. Which term is correct?

a. a sin unto death
b. the sin unto death

12. Are the people of II Peter 2:20-21 saved or lost?

13. Can one compromise in a good way?

14. True or False? "Damnation" in the Bible always refers to hell.

15. Give a scripture reference for your above answer.

Suggested Memory Verses: I John 2:1-2, I Cor. 11:31-32

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book VI

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson XVIII

Myths, Lies, and Vain Traditions - I

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." (Rev. 12:9)

If there's one thing that the word of God makes abundantly clear about the devil, it is the fact that he is a deceiver. Our text deals with the Great Tribulation when Satan is cast out into the earth to become the Antichrist, which happens in the next chapter. When it does, the deception continues:

"And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." (Rev. 13:14)

Speaking of Satan in John 8:44, Jesus said, **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."**

Satan is a liar, and the world at large is deceived by believing his lies, which is why we read many warnings in the scriptures about not allowing ourselves to be deceived:

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8)

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." (II Tim. 3:13)

"Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." (I Cor. 15:33)

"Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous." (I John 3:7)

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Eph. 5:6)

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." (Mat. 24:4)

"For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Rom. 16:18)

Satan is so subtle in his deceptive work that Paul even says in I Corinthians 3:18, **"Let no man deceive himself . . ."**

Clearly, the record of scripture is that Satan is a LIAR who has the entire world system living lies and believing lies. As seventeenth century French philosopher Blaise Pascal said, *"Earth is not the home of truth. Unrecognized, she wanders lost among men."*

But the day is coming when God will put an end to all lying. In fact, the last two chapters of the Bible remind us of this, by saying, **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life"** (Rev. 21:27), and then Revelation 22:15 says, **"For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."** Lies will have no place in our new eternal home.

But for now, the lies and myths just increase with time as Satan keeps setting his stage for the Great Tribulation and the Son of Perdition. That being the case, I've decided that I would like to do a series on some of the lies, myths and vain traditions that are peddled by Satan and believed by millions. In a few months, we'll probably make this information available in booklet form as well, Lord willing. After all, since there are no lies in heaven, God's people are going to have to get straightened out on their bad beliefs at some point, so why not now? Why not just go ahead and deal with the fallacies head-on, one at a time, so that we can be walking in truth when our journey ends?

These are fallacies that Satan spreads about God and God's word, things that either hinder or destroy one's walk with the Lord. These are falsehoods that help to hinder God's kingdom while helping, in one way or another, to advance Satan's kingdom.

I'm just going to start with some of the more common fallacies and then progress to some of the others in the weeks ahead. Our *Handbook of Heresies* deals with heresies and heretics, but this effort will deal with the lesser things, little fragmented fallacies that get sown at the devil’s will throughout the body of

Christ. This will be the subject matter of most of my Sunday morning preaching for a while, except when we might occasionally take a time-out to do something different. There's really not going to be any particular order to these entries, just random fallacies that need to be cleared up with the word of God. So, let's get started . . .

WE'RE ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

The old belief in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is very ancient, but very wrong. The first man Adam was called "the son of God" in Luke 3:38, so there was at that time (Genesis 1-2) a Father and son relationship, but then Adam sinned and lost his position as a son of God. Not until Jesus paid for sin on the cross and rose again the third day was it possible for anyone to be a son of God. That's why John 1:12 says, **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."** A "son of God" is something that one BECOMES, according to the verse, not something that one is from birth. The way one becomes a son of God is to BELIEVE on THE Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I John 3:10 is even more blunt about the matter by saying that there are two kinds of people in this world: **"children of God"** and **"children of the devil."** Jesus even said to the Pharisees in John 8:44, **"Ye are of your father the devil . . ."**

No one is a child of God naturally from birth. Galatians 3:26 says, **"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."** Faith in THE Son of God makes a man A son of God. The new birth turns a sinner into a saint and a son, thus placing him into God's family. Only then can the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man be a reality. It would make no sense for Jesus to say, **"Ye must be born again"** (John 3:7), if we are already God's children. It is the new birth that MAKES us God's children by removing our sins and imputing to us the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 4:5-8; II Cor. 5:21). We are not all God's children. In fact, of the eight billion people who populate the earth, probably a very small percentage are truly born again and members of God's eternal family. That's why Jesus said, **". . . strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto**

life, and few there be that find it." (Mat. 7:14)

WE'RE ALL CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

This ties in with the previous point, but it does need to be addressed separately since the cross references on God's image differ from those dealing with his sons.

Notice Genesis 5:3: **"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth."** Adam was the only man in the Old Testament to have the original image of God, and he had it only for a short time. It isn't until Jesus Christ comes and pays for the sin of the world that we read again about a man having God's image. Colossians 3:10 says, **"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."** Notice Hebrews 1:3: **"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."** Jesus Christ is the image of God, and no one can be born in God's image until they are BORN AGAIN (John 3:3). Then and only then can a person have God's image. Also remember II Corinthians 4:4 where Jesus is said to be **". . Christ, who is the image of God . . ."** It would be foolish to speak about the need for man to receive the image of God through Christ, if he had already had God's image all along. No man had God's image between Adam and Jesus, which is why Jesus is called the "last Adam" in I Corinthians 15:45. No man had lived with God's image since the sinless first Adam in Genesis. Through his death, burial and resurrection, Jesus restored that image to all who believe. So, the only people who are created in God's image are those who have received Jesus Christ, THE image of God.

GOD LOVES EVERYONE

This lie is almost universally believed, because it is assumed to be sinful to NOT love everyone. We've had it ingrained into our souls from childhood that we should love and not hate, and rightly so; therefore, it is assumed that it would be wrong for God to hate anyone and to not love everyone. That's a huge mistake. Like it or not, God is not one of us. He is in a class

all his own, and his holiness will not allow him to love everyone unconditionally. By virtue of his holiness, God must love certain people, and as harsh as it may sound, he must hate others.

This is where one must move his emotions aside and allow the infallible scriptures to enlighten his mind and direct his thinking. Our feelings and traditions can have no say in the matter. What others tell us to believe is irrelevant. Knowing and respecting what God's word says and understanding the doctrinal logic in what it says is absolutely essential. Most fall short of this requirement, so most spend their lives believing one of Satan's biggest lies without ever realizing the damage being done.

Someone says, *"But John 3:16 says that God loves the WHOLE WORLD."* No it doesn't. John 3:16 says that God so LOVED the world (past tense) that He gave His only begotten Son. When the New Testament speaks of God's love, it either speaks of His love for sinners in the PAST TENSE at Calvary or His love for Christians in the PRESENT TENSE. The New Testament does not say that God loves Christ-rejecting sinners today. According to Hebrews 12:6, God loves his SONS, not everyone: **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."** Proverbs 3:12 tells us, **"For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."** God's love is for his SONS in particular, not everyone in general.

The number one reason for lost people not receiving Christ is the fact that all urgency has been removed by Satan's lies, especially the lie that God loves everyone. If a sinner believes that God LOVES him as he is in his sins, then he reasons that God ACCEPTS him as he is, so he sees no need to repent and receive Christ. But that thought never enters the mind of the average Christian today who has been taught to take God's love for granted and to throw it around like cheap candy. God's love for the lost world was manifest on an old rugged cross when his Son suffered, bled and died at the hands of evil sinners, and no one can be a recipient of that love without meeting Jesus Christ at Calvary and having all sins washed away. That is, God's love is something that God OFFERS to everyone through Jesus Christ, not something that God bestows on everyone unconditionally.

Notice carefully where the Bible places God's love: **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to**

come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-39) The love of God is not carelessly floating around for anyone and everyone to enjoy. To the contrary, the love of God is found only IN JESUS CHRIST. If a man has Jesus Christ, then he has the love of God. If a man rejects Jesus Christ, then that man rejects the love of God and receives the WRATH of God instead.

Everyone likes John 3:16, but not much is ever said about another verse in the same chapter, the last verse in fact. John 3:36 says**, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."** The love of God does not abide on the unbeliever, and it's unscriptural to tell him that it does. Instead of telling a lost man, *"Just remember, Jesus loves you,"* we should be telling him, *"Just remember, God's wrath abides on you until you repent and receive Christ."* But you can't make friends that way and "grow your church," so the love gospel is preached instead.

Some like to say that *"God loves the sinner, but he hates the sin."* There's no scripture that says this, so we should not say it. We should preach the gospel truth regarding sin and salvation and allow God's abiding wrath to do its work.

A LOVING GOD WOULDN'T SEND ANYONE TO HELL

That's not exactly what happens when a sinner goes to hell, which we will explain in the next section, but it is true that a loving God ALLOWS sinners to go to hell, so we'll explain why.

The statement that "God is love," from I John 4:8, is a true statement, but it is also true that the rest of the Bible is true. God has many attributes, not just love, and He never intended for us to define Him as love only. God is just as much a God of *justice* as He is a God of love. In fact, the Bible's greatest love verse, John 3:16, wouldn't even be in the Bible if God were not a God of justice. Deuteronomy 32:4 says, **"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."** It was God's attribute of justice that required a sin payment to be made at Calvary. God is love, yes, but God is not *only* love.

A good parent is a loving parent, but a good parent is not *only* a loving parent. No good parent enjoys punishing a child, but punishment must be rendered at times, else the love proves to be only a cheap and shallow love. God's love is directed to those who meet His conditions; His wrath goes to those who do not. There isn't space enough in this study to deal at length with the conditions of God's love, but we will offer three very definite ways we can know that God will allow sinners to go to hell, even though He is a God of love.

One reason, and the most important reason, is the fact that *His word declares it*. God isn't what men *think* He is; God is what He *says* He is, and He will do what He says He will do. Over and over again the Scriptures state that God will damn the wicked to Hell, if they refuse to repent. The same apostle who wrote "God is love" also wrote **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."** (Rev. 20:15) David, "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam. 23:1), also wrote **"The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup."** (Psa. 11:5-6) Moses knew the God of love "face to face" (Deu. 34:10), yet that didn't stop him from writing Deuteronomy 32:22: **"For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."** Peter walked side by side with Jesus for over three years, but that didn't keep him from sounding the warning of II Peter 3:7: **"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."** There are other examples that could be presented, but one more will suffice. Jesus Himself, the One who gave us that great love verse, John 3:16, later said, **"And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the**

kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark 9:43-48) Yes, God is love. He loved the world so much that He paid the ultimate price by sending His Son to pay the sin debt of all men. But that love is only accessible to those who receive it. Those who refuse it will receive God's wrath. We know this because the Bible declares it.

We also know this because *justice demands it*. Psalm 89:14 says, **"Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face."** Notice in the verse how God's mercy is coupled and balanced with his *justice.* Just as any good human judge knows he must show mercy at times, God too knows this, but His mercy doesn't come at the expense of His justice. He maintains a perfect balance at all times. Job 8:3 says, **"Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?"** The implied answer is obviously "No." In Revelation 16:1-21, the seven last plagues are poured out upon a wicked and rebellious earth, yet before God does this, the saints of heaven sing the words **". . . Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."** Knowing that the terrible plagues of God's judgment are coming, the saints still justify God's actions. Wise people today do likewise. Rather than accuse God of being unfair or unloving for sending the wicked to hell, they will confess that God is holy, His ways are just, and that His justice cannot allow the wicked to escape the fires of hell.

The third reason is that *nature displays it.* Nature clearly displays the fact that God allows suffering. In fact, the Scriptures make this point very well in Romans 8:18-22: **"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."**

Friend, suffering is continuing all around us daily, and anyone can observe this, if only they'll open their eyes. If you had

meat for dinner over the past few days, it is only because an animal suffered and died first. If you wear leather shoes or have a leather wallet or purse, it is only because an innocent animal suffered and died. The animal did nothing to deserve such treatment, yet God allowed it to be killed.

Of course, suffering is also very real among men. Some people are born with various diseases, while others are often born blind, crippled, or with some other handicap. Others suffer in great natural disasters, in war, in accidents, and in other unfortunate events. God allowed 6,000,000 of His own covenant people to suffer in Hitler's death camps, and only God knows how many true Christians were murdered by the Roman Catholic Church throughout Europe during the Dark Ages. Haralan Popov was a devoted preacher whom God allowed to suffer terrible persecution in communist Bulgaria, and Richard Wurmbrand suffered similarly in Romania. The "God of love" allowed all of this, and He allows suffering to this very day. The whole creation groans in pain, the Bible says, and God allows it all. To think that He will not allow people to suffer in hell is really to not think at all. Nature testifies that He does and will allow suffering.

God's JUSTICE is manifest in the reality of hell; God's LOVE is manifest in offering you an escape.

LOST PEOPLE WILL BE CONDEMNED

The notion that a sinner must wait until judgment day to learn whether or not he is condemned is false. Satan spreads this lie so that people will remain in their sins in hopes that God might extend to them a bit of mercy in the end. Yet, God's word says that this is not the case. Those who do not receive Christ as Saviour are CONDEMNED ALREADY, according to John 3:18:

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is CONDEMNED ALREADY, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Romans 5:18 says, **"Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life."** Because of Adam's sin, all men are born sinners and have ALREADY been judged as condemned. The

final white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11-15) is only for the official sentencing, much like criminals today are often sentenced sometime after a guilty verdict has been reached by a trial.

No sinner has to wait till the day of judgment to learn where he will spend eternity. He is ALREADY on his way to hell and will arrive there unless he grabs the lifeline that God has thrown to him, that being Jesus Christ himself. A man doesn't go to hell merely because he's a sinner; he goes to hell because he's a dying sinner who REFUSES TO TAKE THE CURE that God has provided him.

If a sick man suffers and dies because no one cared and no one tried to help him, then that is very sad, very unjust, and many are to blame. But if he suffers and dies after refusing medical help, then it's his own fault and no one else is to blame. That's where sinners are today. They've been diagnosed with eternal sickness and death, and they've been told that only Jesus Christ can save them. If they refuse his help, then they CHOOSE to remain condemned sinners and suffer the consequences. They are like a convicted murderer on death row who REFUSES the governor's pardon. Being a sinner, the lost man is condemned already. It's just a matter of time until the sentence is executed, unless he accepts the pardon that God is offering him through Jesus Christ.

NO ONE CAN KNOW THEY ARE SAVED

This ties in with the last point, the notion that one must wait till the White Throne Judgment to learn of his eternal destiny. This just isn't true, and God has given us plenty of scripture to assure us of it. Far too many people rely on their own logic and understanding rather than on the word of God itself, Christians included. God gave us his words, not so we could have a place to keep recipes and receipts, but so that we can have answers for the questions of life. The question of one being sure of his salvation is well established by the word of God. Block capitalization used for emphasis:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (I John 5:13)

Eternal life is not something that we receive at some point

in the future. It is a PRESENT POSSESSION for the believer in Christ. Please note:

"And this is the record, that God HATH given to us eternal life, and this life IS in his Son. He that hath the Son HATH life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I John 5:11-12)

Look at verse 19: **"And we KNOW that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."** That's a very careless thing to say, if it's not possible to know.

Here's I John 3:14: **"We KNOW that we HAVE PASSED from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."** Why would God's word use such language, if it's not possible for us to KNOW that we're saved?

Look at I John 4:13: **"Hereby KNOW we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."** People who claim that no one can KNOW they are saved are only confessing that they are likely lost, having not God's Spirit and having not received the new birth of John 3:1-8.

Peter said we can KNOW in I Peter 1:18-19: **"Forasmuch as ye KNOW that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."**

Paul said we can KNOW in II Timothy 1:12: **"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I KNOW whom I have believed, and am PERSUADED that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."**

Thanks be to God, salvation is not something that we THINK we have; it is something that we KNOW we have. Even old Job said, **"For I KNOW *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth."** (Job 19:25)

Eternal life is not something that we receive at some point in the future. It is a PRESENT POSSESSION for the believer in Christ**.** Please note Jesus' choice wording from John 5:24: **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and shall NOT come into condemnation; but IS PASSED from death unto life."**

Notice how Jesus spoke of eternal life as something that

has already been given and is now a present possession among believers: **"And I GIVE unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which GAVE *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand."** (John 10:28-29)

Here's another one from Jesus' prayer with the Father in John 17:3: **"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."** He did not say that we might THINK or FEEL LIKE or HOPE we are saved. He said that we can KNOW God and have eternal life!

"Do ye not KNOW that the saints SHALL judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by YOU, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" (I Cor. 6:2) Paul told the Corinthians believers that they should KNOW that the saints would judge the world and that THEY were the saints. Look at the next verse: **"KNOW ye not that WE SHALL judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?"** (vs. 3) Why use such language, if it's not possible to know for sure?

Look at II Corinthians 5:1: **"For we KNOW that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we HAVE a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."** Sounds pretty certain, does it not?

The sad truth is that many people reject the fact that one can know that he's saved simply because they're lost and have never experienced the supernatural indwelling of God. They're trying to save themselves, so they feel that they can't know if they've done enough until they meet God. What they fail to realize is that truly saved people have ALREADY met God and are BORN of God. With this new birth, comes the indwelling of God's Spirit in all believers which gives assurance of salvation: **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we ARE the children of God."** (Rom. 8:16) So, a person who says, *"No one can know for sure that they are saved"* is likely a person who has never been saved and does not understand the supernatural nature of salvation.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL LEAD YOU

This one is a bit tricky because it is conditional. While

Jesus did say that the Spirit of truth would guide the disciples into all truth (John 16:13) and John did say that believers could be taught by their spiritual anointing (I John 2:27), it remains true that a believer can also "grieve" and even "quench" the Holy Spirit's influence in his life (Eph. 4:30; I Ths. 5:19). That's why God gave us the scriptures, which were inspired by the Holy Ghost (II Pet. 1:21). The notion that the Christian can ignore the word of God and rely on some special leading of the Spirit instead is just not true. Most Christians who believe this way are being led by nothing more than their own emotions, not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never leads against his words. Isaiah 8:20 says, **"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."** If there's no light in them, then the Spirit's leading is absent.

To say that the Holy Spirit will lead someone is like telling a driver that his GPS will guide him. Not if he doesn't have a GPS, not if he has one but he doesn't know how to use it, and not if his GPS is defective! Nothing is automatic, and nothing is easy.

Every believer should remember three very important words: fact, faith, and feeling. The facts are the words of God, and those facts take priority over everything else. Then faith comes by hearing the words of God (Rom. 10:17). Once we have exercised faith in God's facts, we can then enjoy a good feeling, also called joy and assurance (I Ths. 1:5-6), but the word of God comes first and regulates the faith and the feeling. Facts, faith, then feeling. Beware of anyone who refuses to respect and follow this scriptural order.

FOLLOW YOUR HEART

While it is true that God often impresses upon ones heart a certain leading, it must be remembered that the heart can be very deceitful and one's conscience can be seared and defiled. Please note the following:

"The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9)

"For 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." (Mark 7:21-23)

"And 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)

"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." (I Tim. 4:2)

"Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." (Tit. 1:15)

The heart of man can only be a dependable guide when it's a GOOD heart that is kept good by the word of God, prayer, and the wise counsel and fellowship of godly people. A man or woman who simply "feels" that they should do such and such when the word of God and wise people say otherwise is usually a person who is seeking their own will instead of God's will. Isaiah 8:20 says, **"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."** If there's no light, then there's no leading. Then Proverbs 11:14 says, **"Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellers *there is* safety."** There is no safer place on this earth than in the regular fellowship of a sound, Bible-believing church where the word of God is faithfully preached, taught, respected and followed. It is there that one receives both the word of God and wise counsel from godly, experienced saints. The believer ultimately must make his own decisions, but the godly influences found in a good church can help to keep his heart and conscience in tune so that he will not be deceived. "Rambo" believers who see themselves as too good for church usually have complicated and sinful lives as a result of largely ignoring God's word and leaning to their own understanding (Pro. 3:5). When they "follow their hearts," they seldom end up closer to God.

DO GOOD TO GO TO HEAVEN

The belief that good people go to heaven is correct, but the means by which one BECOMES good is almost universally flawed. In eternity, good people are saved and with the Lord and bad people are lost and in the lake of fire. That's common sense and scriptural, but people will argue forever about it, because they

confuse BEING good with DOING good. I am going to heaven because I am good, but I am good only because Jesus Christ MADE me good by imputing to me his righteousness.

The number of Christians who fail to understand this is quite disturbing. Many honestly believe that salvation through Christ means that God allows sinners into heaven because of what Jesus did at Calvary. That's 100% false. God allows no sinner into heaven. Through faith in Christ, a sinner becomes a saint, a new creature in Christ (II Cor. 5:17) through the divine act of imputation. This is where God IMPUTES to the repentant sinner the righteousness of Jesus Christ in exchange for the sinner RECEIVING Christ through faith. Romans 4:5 is very clear about the matter:

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

This means the man is no longer a sinner in the eyes of God. He is now righteous, and he is now good. His FLESH is not good (Rom. 7:18), but the new believer himself is as good as Jesus Christ, because the righteousness of Christ has been imputed to him. When he dies, he goes to heaven because he has been perfected in Christ (Heb. 10:14), not because God is nice enough to let sinners into heaven. Saints go to heaven, but sinners do not. Sinners go to hell because they rejected the opportunity to be made righteous saints through Jesus Christ. So, although you can't DO enough good to be saved, you can certainly BECOME good by faith in Christ. In that context, good people go to heaven. Out of that context, all are condemned sinners.

NO ONE KNOWS WHEN JESUS IS COMING

This lie is commonly uttered by critics when a Christian says something about the Lord's return being near. It is supposedly useless to speculate about Bible prophecy since *"the Bible says that no one knows when Jesus is coming."*

The Bible never says once that we can't know when Jesus is coming. People read that into the text because that's what they want it to say. The text in question is Matthew 24:36, where Jesus

said, **"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."**

Technically, the verse deals with the Second Advent, not the rapture of the church. But even then, the verse plainly states that it is the "day and hour" that no one knows, not the general time of our Lord's return. A good analogy is that of a woman about to give birth (Rev. 12:2; Isa. 66:7-9). No one can predict the exact day and hour that a child will be born, but after a woman has carried a child nearly nine months, anyone knows that a birth will come soon.

Besides, even the most casual reading of Matthew chapter 24 reveals the folly in suggesting that verse 36 somehow discourages prophetic studies; the whole chapter deals with the SIGNS of the end-time (see verse 3)!

ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL

This lie is so frequently told that many actually believe that it's from the Bible. Not quite. The phrase is from the Declaration of Independence, and even then the context is human RIGHTS, not possessions or abilities. All men are NOT created equal. Some are healthy; some are not. Some are born into third-world poverty and idolatry; some are born into American Christianity. Some are born with a 200 IQ; some are lifelong Democrats. The list goes on. All men are created with equal RIGHTS, in regards to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but that's where it ends. All men are not created equal in the way that the statement is normally used, and the Bible never says that they are. God's word allows men equality in regards to free will in decision making (II Pet. 3:9; Exo. 35:5, 21, 22, 29; Rom. 10:13), but all decisions come with consequences (Gal. 6:7-8), and that's where the equality ends.

This lie is commonly used to push the Marxist philosophy of *"from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."* This puts the state in the final authority position as it is the state which has the final say as to who is able and who is needful. This is where such slogans as "spread the wealth around" (Obama, 2008) are used to garner political votes. The whole philosophy is a lie from hell, and no Christian should embrace it. A man's lot in life is never equal to anyone else's, and, as Dr.

Thomas Sowell has said, he's "not equal to himself on different days." Far too many make the mistake of confusing equal rights with equal things.

CHRISTIANS ARE JUST SINNERS SAVED BY GRACE

One of the most unpopular publications that we offer is a little booklet titled "Identity Crisis." The booklet is unpopular because it shows from scripture that Christians are not sinners. One would think that believers would rejoice in this great truth, but not so. The average Christian today wants to believe and take comfort in the idea that he sins because he's a sinner and that it's natural for him to sin. He does not want to face the fact that his sin is UNNATURAL because he is NOT a sinner. The truth is that he is now a born again saint of God, sealed with the Holy Spirit, so righteousness is natural and sin is unnatural. Righteousness is the natural fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), while sin is the carnal and unnatural work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). He might see himself as a sinner, but God sees him as a sinless saint of God. Sinners in the New Testament are LOST people, which is why the words "saint" and "saints" are used forty-one times in reference to believers only.

Paul uses the terms "sinners" and "sinner" nine times in his epistles, and only once does he call HIMSELF a sinner:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1:15)

He only labeled himself as a sinner in the context of pointing out WHO benefits from Christ's atoning work, not in the context of his present doctrinal standing as a Christian. The preceding verses make this clear by placing the context in the PAST TENSE:

"And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who HATH ENABLED me, for that he COUNTED me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who WAS before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I OBTAINED mercy, because I DID *it* ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord WAS

exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (I Tim. 1:12-14; CAPITALIZATION used for emphasis)

Paul was not emphasizing his present standing as a sinner, but rather his transition from sinner to saint because of the redeeming mercy of Jesus Christ. His words in his other epistles make it very clear that he knew that a sinner is indeed a lost person:

Romans 5:8: **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while WE WERE yet sinners, Christ died for us."**

Romans 5:19: **"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."**

Galatians 2:17: **"But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid."**

1 Timothy 1:9: **"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers."**

Other New Testament writers agree as well:

James 5:20: **"Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."**

1 Peter 4:18: **"And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"**

Jude 1:15: **"To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."**

Clearly, it is LOST people who are classified as sinners, not born-again believers in Christ.

By contrast, the words "saints" and "saint" are found forty-one times in Paul's epistles, and EVERY occurrence refers to Christians only. The Bible record is clear: unsaved people are

sinners, and saved people are saints. This doesn't mean that a lost person can't perform a good deed, nor does it mean that a saved person can't perform an evil one, but the doctrinal terminology is very clear in the Book: sinners are lost people and saints are saved people.

Perhaps if we'd stick to this understanding, we'd find ourselves being called to a higher and holier way of life rather than excusing ourselves from such by being "only a sinner saved by grace."

Doctrinally speaking, I'm NOT a sinner. I'm a new creature in Christ, my name is in the Lamb's book of life, I have abundant life in Christ, and it is my responsibility to LIVE like it. I can start by calling myself what God calls me: a SAINT. To classify myself as anything less would amount to diminishing the redemptive work of Christ in my life and identifying more with the lost than with the saved. No, thanks.

A Christian is a NEW CREATURE in Christ, and that new creature most certainly is NOT a sinner! He is trapped in a sinful BODY, but HE IS NOT HIS BODY. His new identity is IN CHRIST, not in the flesh.

The trouble is that people keep thinking that they ARE what they DO. If this is true, then the work of Christ on the cross was useless, because a saint can be a sinner and a sinner can be a saint simply by DOING things. If I am a sinner when I sin, then a lost man is a saint when he does something good, like attending church services, reading the Bible or helping out a neighbor in need. That’s consistency. You can’t allow for Christians to be sinners and then not allow for lost people to be saints. If a Christian is a sinner when he sins, then a lost man is a saint when he does right. NEITHER is the case, because our standing is not determined by what we DO, but rather by what we BELIEVE in regards to what CHRIST has done.

There is no such person as a “sinner saved by grace.” Either you WERE a sinner until the Lord saved you by grace or you are still a sinner who hasn’t been saved at all. Any Christian who classifies himself as a sinner clearly does not have a grip on rightly dividing the word and standing versus state. He's like a pardoned criminal who keeps thinking of himself as a limited prisoner instead of a free man with great potential. Sinners are losers. Saints are winners. That's sound Bible doctrine 101. Anything less is vain Laodicean tradition and is unworthy of your

Christian testimony and calling.

GOD ACCEPTS THOSE WHO ARE SINCERE

This belief is very common. It's usually found in the words of the statement, *"I believe God accepts you as long as you're sincere in your belief and you are not a hypocrite."*

This erroneous belief survives through the ages only because the people who subscribe to it refuse to think it through and put it to the test. Adolf Hitler was more sincere and consistent in his beliefs than most anyone of our time, yet he was dead wrong and God did not accept him, if he died without receiving Christ. The devil himself is sincere in his belief, but he's sincerely wrong, as are all who follow him. The notion that NOT being a hypocrite somehow merits salvation is foreign to the word of God.

Jesus said in Matthew 23:14 that the Pharisee hypocrites would receive the GREATER damnation, which means that standard damnation is for unbelievers in general who are NOT hypocrites. Nowhere does the word of God say that sincerity saves anyone or that only hypocrites go to hell.

God accepts those who are IN JESUS CHRIST, according to scripture: **"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."** (Eph. 1:5-7) We are accepted IN CHRIST, not in anything or anyone else. There would be no point at all in Jesus saying, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6), if mere sincerity were all that God required. God didn't give us thirty-nine Old Testament books and twenty-seven New Testament books only so we could ignore them and "be sincere" in our own flawed beliefs. God told us to **"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding"** (Pro. 3:5). God told us that **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death."** (Pro. 14:12) Sincerity is often useless, because one can be sincerely wrong.

If a man leaves Nashville headed eastward on I-40, then he will NOT arrive in Memphis unless he turns around and heads westward. He can be sincere and cry *"Don't judge me"* until the

moon turns to blood, but he is WRONG and will never reach his desired destination. In fact, his sincerity does far more to damn him than to save him! JESUS saves; sincerity does not.

Lesson Review

1. Where does the Bible warn against being deceived by philosophy and tradition of men?

2. Why are we not all God's children?

3. What abides on the sinner who doesn't believe on Christ, God's wrath or God's love?

4. List three reasons why a loving God will send people to hell:

5. List three references where the word "know" is used in regards to being saved:

6. Is the Holy Spirit's guidance in the believer's life conditional or unconditional?

7. Where does the Bible say that one's conscience can be seared?

8. True or False? Good people do go to heaven, but not because they have *done* good.

9. True or False? Christians are just sinners saved by grace.

Suggested Memory Verses: John 3:36, Jer. 17:9, Rom. 4:5

Lesson XIX

Myths, Lies, and Vain Traditions - II

ONLY THE ORIGINALS WERE INSPIRED

This is a very common belief throughout Christianity, and Satan spreads much confusion over the issue. Written scripture inspiration is only dealt with once in the Bible, and the "originals" are NOT the context. II Timothy 3:16 says, **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."** The scripture that was profitable for Timothy at that time was not any original copies, but rather whatever copies that he had, yet it was still said to be "scripture" and "given by inspiration." In the previous verse, Paul told Timothy, **"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."** So, the COPY or COPIES that Timothy had known from childhood were said to be "holy scriptures" that were "given by inspiration." Nothing was said about any original autographs, but rather about the very copies to which Timothy had access. So, the very notion that "only the originals were inspired" is unscriptural.

It is often said that the scriptures are "preserved without error," which is true, but if that's true, then they are also inspired since they were given by inspiration. That is, what was inspired was also preserved, thus making the product of preservation, or the copy, also inspired. Otherwise, it couldn't be said that it was preserved.

It was assumed by Paul that God had honored his promise to PRESERVE his words, and he promised it many times. With Satan's first appearance in the scriptures, he questions and attacks the very words of God (Gen. 3:1-5), so God knew more than anyone the importance of preserving scripture. If scripture can only be inspired and holy in the originals, then the possibility of anyone having a "Holy Bible" would have died out thousands of years ago due to the decay of the original scrolls and the attacks of Satan on any subsequent copies. Yet, as the following scripture shows, God promised to preserve his words regardless:

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver

tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." (Psa, 12:6-7)

Some like to argue that this passage is not speaking of God's preservation of his words, but rather his people. This writer disagrees, but even if that were true, there are many other promises of preservation in the scriptures. The idea that we are left without a leg on which to stand without Psalms 12:6-7 is just not true. Scripture preservation is promised all through the Bible:

"Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God." (Deu. 12:28) How can it go well with the children "for ever" if God's words aren't preserved for them to "observe and hear"?

"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deu. 29:29) How can anyone do the words of the law "for ever" if God fails to preserve the words?

"For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." (Psa. 100:5) God's truth is his word (John 17:17), and he promised to preserve it to "all generations." In fact, the text says that his word "endureth" to all generations, implying that it will overcome adversity. Satan will attack, but God's word will ENDURE. Well, it has NOT endured in the form of original manuscripts, so the reference is obviously to the millions of subsequent copies that would be produced over the millenniums from God-honored, uncorrupted texts.

"For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD." (Psa. 117:2) Same thing again: God's truth endures forever. That's preservation.

"Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." (Psa. 119:160) The word "judgments" in Psalma 119 is one of the synonyms of God's "words" (vss. 30, 43, etc.), so Psalms 119:160 is saying that God's words will endure from the beginning until "for ever," from the beginning until the end. This is why the last chapter of our Bible gives a sharp warning to anyone who would alter God's words (Rev. 22:18-19). God's words are in the process of

"enduring," and God will judge anyone who opposes that effort.

"Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keepeth truth for ever." (Psa. 146:6). Again, God keeps his truth "for ever." That means you can get a copy for yourself.

"As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever." (Isa. 59:21) The words of God are to be preached "for ever," which would not be possible, if they were not preserved in print so that we might read and know them.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Mat. 24:35) That's why we still have them today; God preserved them as he promised.

Look at this one, John 14:23: **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."** Do you realize what he just said? He said that you can keep God's words. How can you keep them, if God didn't first keep them for you? If only the originals are inspired, then you don't have God's words and Jesus' words, so you can't keep them! But he said that you CAN keep them. That's because HE kept them first; he preserved them. You can keep God's words because God kept them for you!

"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (I Pet. 1:24-25) There it is again, the word of God (1) ENDURES (2) FOREVER. That's from Isaiah 40:8, by the way. God sees to it that the word of God never has an expiration date. You can write that on your Bible: "EXPIRATION DATE: NEVER."

The age-old claim that only the originals were inspired might seem logical at first, but it runs contrary to scripture, as we've just seen. God made a promise to preserve his words, and that's what he has done. If you do not have a King James Bible, God has made them so widely available that you can likely own one within an hour. This is the Book that God has honored for the past four hundred years and Satan has fought continuously. All

modern translations are Satan's attempts to dethrone the king of books and replace it with deceptive counterfeits. If you are unsettled on this issue, get our booklet “The Word of a King" and get your questions answered. God has preserved his pure words. You don't have to settle for anything less.

NOBODY’S PERFECT

You've heard sins and faults justified many times by someone making the lame excuse that "nobody's perfect." If that's true, then we have an imperfect Bible as well, because it says that we can be perfect, and it introduces us to people whom it says are perfect. Let’s consider some of God’s commands for perfection.

The first is Matthew 5:48, straight from the mouth of Jesus himself: **“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”** Would Jesus command you to do the impossible? No, He would not. Therefore, it must be possible for you to be perfect. *“But, I thought Christians weren’t perfect, only forgiven.”* That’s because you’ve been reading too many bumper stickers and not enough Bible. The Bible says that you can be perfect, and that you should be perfect, and it says it numerous times.

In Genesis 17:1, God told Abram, **“. . . I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.”** I don’t like that any more than you do, but there it is. God does command His people to be perfect.

Look what God commanded His people in Deuteronomy 18:13: **“Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God.”** Why would God command the impossible? Friend, it’s all through the Bible. God commands His people to be perfect.

Okay, look at I Kings 8:61: **“Let your heart therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.”** Now, don't miss that. Perfection has to do with the heart.

Psalm 101:2 offers a strong admonition for us to be perfect: **“I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.”** That will clean up the television time, won’t it? You won’t be squabbling and fighting all the time with your brothers and sisters, if you walk within your house with a perfect

heart. You see, instead of going around saying, *"Well, nobody's perfect,"* we ought to be saying, *"How can I become perfect? What heart adjustments do I need to make?"*

Okay, let's come over to the New Testament. In Matthew 19:21, Jesus said, **"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."** Why would Jesus say that a man can be perfect if (1) it isn't possible, and (2) He doesn't desire it? It is possible for us to be perfect, and our Lord expects us to strive for that goal. He said so in Matthew 5:48, and He said it here. And don't try to "rightly divide" your way out of it, because it's found in the Pauline epistles as well.

In II Corinthians 13:9, Paul tells the Corinthians, **"For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection."** He repeats it in verse 11: **"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."** You see, the perfection that God wants for us has to do with our hearts, our attitudes toward God and toward others. The attitude naturally affects the actions, but the attitude comes first, so that's what God is watching, not just the actions.

Ephesians 4:13 speaks on this same subject: **"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."** He didn't say "if we could;" he said "Till we all come," which is a more definite thing, a goal that can be reached.

Paul brings this goal up again in Philippians 3. Verse 12 says, **"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."** Paul said that he hadn't yet reached his goal of perfection, but he was striving for it. He had not thrown out the possibility that he could be a perfect man. He believed it was possible, and he was working toward that end. In verse 15, he went on to say, **"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."** So, some folks there had reached the goal of perfection, and they were expected to remain there.

Colossians 4:12 is very clear with what Christian perfection is all about: **"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant**

of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." He said you may stand perfect, which means it is possible, and it has to do with being complete, or, as we have already pointed out, wholehearted.

Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:17 that the word of God is given **"That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."** If you want to be perfect, get in the Book. It's a perfect book, and it can make you perfect.

Hebrews 6:1 says, **"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection . . ."** That's the goal for the Christian, but you'll never reach that goal, if you throw out the idea altogether, thinking it's impossible.

Okay, one more verse, then we'll move onward. James 1:4 says, **"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."** You see, perfection has to do with what you are ("that ye may be"). It concerns the inner you, the heart, the real you that produces the thoughts, the words, and the actions. Is the real you a perfect being, or is he or she less than perfect? That's the issue.

Alright, let's consider a few people who are said to be perfect. First on our list comes Noah. Genesis 6:9: **"These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."** At a time when others were corrupting the earth with wickedness, Noah kept his heart perfect and found grace in the eyes of the Lord as he kept his family right with God and separated from the world.

I like David as an example of perfection. Speaking of Solomon, I Kings 15:3 tells us that David had a perfect heart: **"And he walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father."** We know that David sinned, yet God says that his heart was perfect. Some folks will never understand that because they are too focused on the outward man. They are so focused on the results that they overlook the motives. The Pharisees had that problem.

Another good example of perfection is Asa, mentioned in I Kings 15:14: **"But the high places were not removed: nevertheless Asa's heart was perfect with the LORD all his days."** He didn't do everything that he should have done, but his heart was always right. That is, he might have broken the spiritual

speed limit a little, but not with a rebellious and evil heart attitude.

In Isaiah 38:3, we see that Hezekiah also had a perfect heart: **". . . Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight . . ."** Perfection concerns the heart, not the deeds. You'll never understand these passages without understanding that.

Okay, let's look at Job. We read in Job 1:1 that **"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil."** According to the Holy Spirit, Job was a perfect man, and his perfection had to do with his attitude toward God and toward evil. He feared God, and he eschewed evil. That's the general rule of his life, and that's what made him a perfect man.

But, there is a catch. Being perfect should be your goal, but you probably won't know it, if you ever reach that goal. Read Job's words carefully from Job 9:20-21: **"If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life."** That's the trick. Part of being perfect is never thinking that you are and always looking to improve yourself! That's what a perfect heart does: it strives for continual perfection. It never says, *"Hey, look at me! I have arrived! I have reached the goal!"* That's what a Pharisee would say, not a devout believer.

So, what should we do? We should strive for perfection, keeping our hearts in tune at all times. The outer results will usually be right, but maybe not always. But we can keep the heart right. You can have a perfect heart, and God will take notice: **"For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him . . ."** (II Chron. 16:9) God took note of Noah, David, Asa, and Job, and He will take note of you and I, if we believe His words and strive for perfect hearts.

The "nobody's perfect" excuse is of the devil, and it will stop you from ever reaching that goal. It is nothing but an excuse to do less than your best and feel good about it. It belongs on the lips of unregenerate sinners, not on the lips of born-again believers.

WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO JUDGE

Of all the misapplied and misunderstood principles in the word of God, probably none have been more abused in these closing days of Laodicea than those seven little words from Matthew 7:1: **"Judge not, that ye be not judged."** The fact that almost no one ever quotes other verses about judging makes it pretty clear that scriptural obedience is not their driving motive. Make no mistake about it, Laodicea's driving motive is to misquote and misapply as much scripture as possible so as to help the devil cover, tolerate, rationalize, condone and promote sin while feeling good about it. Emotions can be very powerful, and when society has knighted today's professing Christian with a moral superiority for "not casting judgment on others," it becomes somewhat of a self-righteous spell that seems nearly impossible to break. Thankfully, it *can* be broken, but not without giving due consideration and respect to what the rest of God's word says about judging.

As for Matthew 7:1, the context (verses 1-5) allows judging after you have first judged *yourself*. Jesus did not make a blanket statement against judgment. He simply pointed out a *rule* for judging.

The word "judge" in its various forms (judgeth, judging, judgment, judges, etc) is found over 700 times in God's word. One whole book of the Bible is titled "Judges" because it was written at a time when God raised up judges to lead His people. God expects people to judge. In fact, you are sinning against God if you refuse to judge.

"The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment." (Psa. 37:30) A righteous person will talk of judgment. He will not refuse to judge. He will talk of judgment.

"Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph." (Amos 5:14-15) How can you hate the evil and love the good, if you refuse to judge between the two? You can't.

Our generation is well described in Isaiah 59:8: **"The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their**

goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace." People have refused to judge, so there is no peace.

Paul said in I Corinthians 1:10 to **". . . be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."** Why would Paul make such a statement if judging is wrong?

In I Corinthians 2:15 Paul says, **"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."** Judging is not a sin; judging is a characteristic of being a spiritual person. Satan has been lying to us, hoping that we will not judge, because he knows that the right kind of judgment pleases God and betters our lives and Christian service.

Paul actually rebukes the Corinthians for not judging: **"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"** (I Cor. 6:1-5) If judging is wrong, then Paul needs to confess and repent for misleading these Christians! He clearly told them to judge people.

If judging people is wrong, how can we obey Romans 16:17-18? II Corinthians 6:17? II Timothy 3:5-6? I John 4:1? Friend, if judging is wrong, then God has contradicted Himself and His words cannot be trusted.

Notice Malachi 3:18: **"Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."** It's not wrong to judge.

What about Revelation 2:2? **"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:"** Why would the Lord be pleased with these Christians, if judging were wrong?

The truth is that God's word commands us to judge, but we must judge *righteous* judgment. Jesus said in John 7:24, **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous**

judgment." This is not done by refusing to judge altogether, but by following the principles of God's word regarding judgment. We should judge scripturally (Isa. 8:20). We should judge prayerfully (I Kgs. 3:9). We should judge truthfully (Jer. 5:1) and mercifully (Mat. 7:2), and we should, first and foremost, *judge ourselves* (I Cor. 11:30-31). The belief that Christians should not judge at all is an evil belief, and it has always served the devil far better than it has contributed to the cause of Christ.

PACKED ALTARS PROVE REVIVAL

God has taught me a few things along the way, and I've written about most of those things for many years. Yet, one subject that I've said very little about is the IFB notion that packed altars should be accepted as proof of spirituality. The truth is that packed altars are proof of only one thing: packed altars. Why people are at the altar and what will happen as a result are separate issues altogether. That's why I, as a pastor, have always placed more confidence in changed lives than in altar calls. After all, I can show you a great deal from the New Testament about changed lives. I don't recall reading anything about altar calls.

That doesn't mean that I condemn them or never have them; it just means that I don't *trust* them. I trust the Book, the Book that emphasizes changed lives instead of altar calls. Jesus didn't say that we'd know people by altar calls; He said **"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."** (Mat. 7:20) Paul didn't say that if any man be in Christ, you'll see him at the altar; he said, **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."** (II Cor. 5:17)

Due to our lack of faith in the inner-transforming power of God's word, we've placed far too much confidence in visible things, such as altar calls and testimonies. I'm fine with having such things when I believe they can be helpful, but you will not find me saying things like, *"What a great service last night! God really showed up and the altars were packed!"* I am far more interested in how those lives are changed next week, next month and next year. I know that in the IFB world that makes me a very strange preacher, but I'm of the opinion that God's word will make *anyone* strange, if only they will submit to it. Unfortunately,

tradition carries more weight with most Christians than the word of God.

Altar calls and testimonies can sometimes be helpful, but they prove nothing and should not be overly trusted or emphasized. In fact, looking back over the years, I must say that most of the drama that I've witnessed at altar calls never amounted to much of anything in the long term, and, personally speaking, the two most important prayers of my own life were not prayed at an altar, but rather in the privacy of my home. Come to think of it, seems that I recall Jesus saying something about a prayer *closet.* Of course, it's kind of hard to get noticed in a closet, and the numbers don't add-up much, and a closet can't be displayed as a religious show in front of a church. The flesh will turn God's house into a faithless, eye-pleasing, worldly spectacle, if we allow it. *Lasting fruit* is the spiritual standard that our Lord prescribed (Mat. 7:20; John 15:16; Gal. 5:22-23), not emotional displays that might or might not be the work of the Holy Spirit.

EMOTIONALISM IS SPIRITUAL

Every time that I've heard someone say *"God showed up tonight,"* I heard it said in the context of an emotional worship service and invitation. No one ever says it in the context of a good sermon or an edifying Bible study. This is because fundamentalism has placed far too much emphasis on drama and visible results. If there is drama and visible results, then "God showed up." If not, then God didn't show up, even though He said He did (Mat. 18:20). That's Baptist fundamentalism 101, even though few will ever admit it. *Feeling* spiritual is a lot easier than *being* spiritual (and more fun), so emotionalism is pretty much the IFB standard while the word of God is merely used for sake of conscience. If that seems harsh, keep reading.

After decapitating hundreds of her false prophets (I Kgs. 18), Elijah received word from the wicked Jezebel that she would have him killed within twenty-four hours (I Kgs. 19:2). This scared the daylights out of the man, so he fled for his life into the wilderness, sat down under a juniper tree, and then he asked God to take his life. An angel fed and strengthened him, so he went another forty days and came to the mount of God. It was there that the word of the Lord would come to Elijah, but not in the manner

that one might expect. We are told in I Kings 19:11-12: **"And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice."** The Lord wasn't in the earth, wind, and fire. He was in the still small voice. God showed up, but not at all in the manner that IFB tradition teaches.

My, what a contrast to all the noise and activity of the previous chapter! God doesn't have to prove anything to anyone. Most everyone knows that God can thunder and shake the earth at will, so why should He do it? Is it not more needful for us to know that He can also reveal Himself to us in the quietest and calmest ways? Is He not God of all, a God of the valleys as well as a God of the hills? After all, we are reminded of this in the very next chapter**: "And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD."** (I Kgs. 20:28)

Too many Christians have the false notion that God doesn't show up unless He shows out, and this often blinds them from the greatest blessings *and the best churches.* Friend, don't make the mistake of many by missing out on God's still small voice while looking for religious drama and emotionalism. Jesus said, **"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."** (Mat. 18:20) God can show up without showing out, and He usually does. Don't miss Him while expecting something bigger and more dramatic. A preacher isn't spiritual just because he yells and jumps around, and his listeners aren't spiritual just because they flood the prayer altar when he's finished. I've observed this practice for nearly fifty years, and I can safely say that the most sound and fruitful believers are usually not the ones crowding the church prayer altar, but rather the ones who lead disciplined lives with daily prayer and Bible reading in their own privacy. Having lively church services is good, but we must keep our guards up and not

allow Satan to replace true and fruitful spirituality with empty, fruitless emotionalism.

Lesson Review

1. List three references where God promised to preserve his words:

2. Is anyone in the Bible said to be perfect?

3. Where are we commanded to be perfect?

4. Where does the Bible tell us to judge righteous judgment?

5. True or False? He that is spiritual judges all things.

6. True or False? When people gather at a church prayer altar, we know that the Holy Spirit is moving.

7. According to Jesus, we can know people by which of the following?

a. Their profession of faith
b. Their fruit
c. Their vocal testimony
d. Their prayers

8. Give scripture for your above answer.

9. Give an example of emotional, visible religion at work in a church instead of spiritual religion.

10. Sometimes God doesn't appear in the earth, wind or fire, but in what?

Suggested Memory Verses: Psa 12:6-7, Mat. 5:48, John 7:24, Mat. 7:20, II Cor. 5:17

The

Sound Doctrine Bible Course

Book VII

Bible-Believing Studies

James L. Melton

Lesson XX

The Word of a King

The King James Bible debate has become such an emotionally driven battle that the core issue of the debate is often overlooked and sometimes completely lost. Hidden behind all the pride, arrogancy, apostasy and name-calling lies the real issue that Satan hopes to keep hidden: the issue of final authority.

Stripped down to its core, the whole Bible translation debate comes down to the question of WHO will be the final authority in your life? Will it be God, or will it be Satan? That might not seem like the real issue at first glance, but when analyzed to its fullest and most scriptural conclusion, that's where the road ends.

If one settles on an authority for his life, and that authority is God's word, then he can rest assured that God is the final authority for his life. But what if a man does *not* settle on a final authority? What if he decides that no single volume is the preserved word of God, but that numerous translations and texts must be consulted regularly before determining what the word of God is? Does this not make the one doing the determining his own final authority since he gets to choose which reading to believe at any given time? If a man says, "I read several translations and then decide what I think is right," then he reserves the right to choose preferred readings for himself, and he does this as a continual way of life. The longer he does this the more convenient he finds it, and the less desire he has for settling on a single final authority. He has become his own final authority.

But not really. Ultimately, his final authority is Satan. Having rejected the King James Bible as his final authority, the man who plays the "decide for myself" translation game is leaning to his own understanding (Prov. 3:5), and that's exactly what Satan wants, because no one totally leans to *their own* understanding. They merely *think* it's their own understanding when it's really the devil himself waging spiritual warfare in their unbelieving hearts and minds: **" . . . according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."** (Eph. 2:2)

Satan is alive and well, working in the hearts of men, and

a great many men give place to him (Eph. 4:27). He was working in Peter's heart when Jesus turned to Peter and said, **"Get thee behind me, Satan"** (Mat. 16:23). He works in religious circles regularly, leading people to worship **"ye know not what"** (John 4:22), **"THE UNKNOWN GOD"** (Acts 17:23), and actual **"devils"** as well (I Cor. 10:20). No one fully leans to his own understanding. People lean as God directs or *as Satan directs*, and Satan directs most people away from God's word. What they call it or how they feel about it is irrelevant. In reality, Satan has millions of people turned away from God's truth and worshiping at his own throne instead (Isa. 14:13). Being the deceiver that he is (Rev. 12:9), he keeps all this subtly hidden behind the smokescreen of "Biblical scholarship" while leading millions astray who "decide for themselves" what to believe.

If you are wise, you will reject all self-reliance and settle on a tried and proven final authority for your life. The next 9,000 words are written to help you see why that authority should be the King James *Authorized* Version. May God light your path.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MODERN TRANSLATIONS?

Entire books have been written on this very subject, but the bottom line is that the modern translations are based on corrupt manuscripts, and this leads to corrupt readings in the translations.

The modern translations are based on the work of two nineteenth century Greek scholars from England, B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort. Westcott and Hort were deeply involved in the occult and hated the received text from which the King James Bible was translated. So they conjured up their own Greek text, one that was based primarily on two very corrupt manuscripts: Codex Vaticanus (discovered in the Pope's library in 1481) and Sinaiticus (discovered in 1859 in a trash can on the traditional Mt. Sinai). These are usually the "older" and "better" manuscripts that we keep hearing so much about, and these manuscripts support most of the attacks in the new versions.

Vaticanus is considered to be the most authoritative, although it is responsible for over thirty-six thousand changes that appear today in the new translations. This perverted manuscript contains the books of the pagan Apocrypha, which are not scripture, and it also omits the pastoral epistles (I Timothy through

Titus), the Book of Revelation, and it cuts off the Book of Hebrews at Hebrews 9:14 (a very convenient stopping point for the Catholic Church, since God forbids their priesthood in Hebrews 10).

The attacks on the word of God found in these manuscripts originated in Alexandria, Egypt with the deceitful work of such pagan Greek "scholars" as Origen and Clement of Alexandria. Then in 313 A.D. the Roman emperor Constantine ordered fifty copies of scripture from Eusebius, the Bishop of Caesaria. Eusebius, being a devout student of Origen's work, chose to send him manuscripts filled with Alexandrian corruption, rather than sending him the true word of God in the Syrian text from Antioch, Syria. So the corrupt Alexandrian text (also called the "Egyptian" or "Hesychian" type text) found its way into the Vatican manuscript, then eventually into the Westcott and Hort Greek Text, and finally into the new translations in your local Christian bookstore. Therefore, when you hear or read of someone "correcting" the King James Bible with "older" or "more authoritative" manuscripts, you are simply hearing someone trying to use a corrupt Roman Catholic text to overthrow the God-honored text of the Protestant Reformation and the great revivals. God has never honored this text, and it isn't likely that He ever will.

After all, why would God honor a text that throws "God" out of I Timothy 3:16?

Why would God honor a text that changes "the Son of God" to "a son of the gods" in Daniel 3:25?

Why would God honor a text that changes "Lucifer" into the "morning star" in Isaiah 14:12, a title that belongs to Jesus Christ alone, according to Revelation 22:16?

Why would God honor a text that omits the word "study" from II Timothy 2:15, one of the greatest Bible study admonitions in all of God’s word?

Why would God honor a text that says that Mary was only a "young woman" in Isaiah 7:14 and not a "virgin"?

Why would God honor a text that implies that Jesus Christ is not "from everlasting" in Micah 5:2?

Why would God honor a text that robs Him of His own "kingdom," "power" and "glory" in Matthew 6:13?

Why would God honor a text that causes readers to question the last twelve verses of the gospel of Mark, verses which include the resurrection of Christ?

Why would God honor a text that says Joseph is Christ's "father" in Luke 2:33?

Why would God honor a text that removes the word "Lord" from the lips of the repentant thief in Luke 23:42?

Why would God honor a text that omits the word "infallible" from Acts 1:3 and helps to raise doubt about the resurrection of Christ?

Why would God honor a text that completely erases Acts 8:37 from the Bible and helps to promote the damnable doctrine of baptismal regeneration?

Why would God honor a text that removes the "blood" of Christ from Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Revelation 1:5 and Revelation 5:9?

Why would God honor a text that destroys the Holy Spirit's warning against "science" falsely so called in I Timothy 6:20?

Why would God honor a text that attacks the Holy Trinity by suggesting that I John 5:7 be removed from the Bible?

There are many other cases that could be presented, but surely you see the real damage that is being done in the various new translations. No single translation does all the damage, but a certain degree of damage is found in each new version so that Satan's broad attack plan is fulfilled. This is the result of relying on corrupt manuscripts rather than relying on the God-honored text of our spiritual forefathers. While claiming to help readers understand God's word, the devil is using the new translations to attack, weaken, and corrupt the holy scriptures.

AREN'T MODERN TRANSLATIONS AN EFFORT TO BE TRUE TO THE ORIGINALS?

Sometimes, yes, and sometimes, no, but an "effort" is not always a *successful* effort, even when fueled by the very best of motives.

Over the past several decades, publishers have learned that the Bible translation business can be quite lucrative, so it would be naive to assume that all Bible translation efforts are driven by the

pure motive of being true to the originals. There are over one hundred Bible translations in English alone, most of which have surfaced in the past fifty years, yet there has not been a proportional amount of new manuscript discoveries. So, manuscript evidence clearly is not the only motivation. Since I Timothy 6:10 says that "the love of money is the root of all evil", we should not be surprised at the suggestion that some Bible publishers might be more interested in dollars than in doctrine.

Also, we must remember that the devil is not dead. In fact, was it not the devil himself who first questioned the word of God in Genesis 3:1 ("Yea, hath God said . . .?) and then flatly denied the word of God in Genesis 3:4 ("Ye shall not surely die.")? Are we to believe that he is not still at work when we are told over and over in the word of God that Satan attacks and perverts scripture (Gen. 3:1-4; Deu. 4:2; Prov. 30:5-6; Jer. 23:36; Mat. 15:6; Mark 4:15; II Cor. 2:17; Rev. 22:18-19)? So even when the revisionists and the publishers do have pure motives, the devil does not, and he will seize every opportunity to fulfill his will at their hands.

But regardless of the motives involved, be they good or bad, there is no way that any publisher can know that their translation is true to the originals. The original autographs have not existed for many centuries, and some of them not for thousands of years, so being "true to the originals" is more of a sales pitch than reality. No person living today has ever seen the original manuscripts, so no one knows for sure that their translation is true to the originals. It just isn't possible.

SHOULD WE IMPROVE ON THE ARCHAIC WORDS IN THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

While it is true that the King James Bible contains some archaic words, the issue is terribly exaggerated by the proponents and publishers of the new translations.

An archaic word is a word that is outdated and no longer used in common speech. This doesn't mean that it can't be understood. It only means that a little extra effort might be required. Making this extra effort can be very educational, and, in the long run, it can add greatly to our understanding of not only the Bible, but the English language itself. We are robbed of this opportunity in the new translations.

Most archaic words do not hinder the reader from understanding the message of the text in which it is found, so there is usually no immediate need to define an archaic word. For example, the verse below contains an archaic word, yet the meaning of the verse is not confused at all:

> **I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts. (Isa. 14:23)**

You might not know what a "besom" is, but the context clearly shows that it is something with which one *sweeps*, so you still get the point of the text: God is going to destroy with a sweeping motion. Then if you desire to know the exact meaning of the word, dictionaries are more accessible today than at any other time in history, including online dictionaries. A quick Google search with a smart phone will reveal that a "besom" is simply a "broom." Now you've learned something, something that the readers of the new translations will not learn. Now you won't be in the dark if you hear someone singing about “the besom maker” or if you happen to read a bit of Shakespeare: "I am the Beesome that must sweepe the Court cleane of such filth." (Henry VI, Part II). Come to think of it, we could use a few besoms in our nation’s capital, and in some of our churches.

There are great advantages to having to do a little research along the way, and you can do it just as well as anyone else. The notion that you cannot cope with the archaic words in the Bible is false, and it's also an insult to your intelligence and your heart motivation. If you read "the messenger of Satan to buffet me" in II Corinthians 12:7, you have the common sense to know that Paul was not making reference to an all-you-can-eat chow-down at Golden Coral. Then a thirty second word search will reveal that "buffet" means to "blow," to "afflict," or to "knock over or off course." Pretty simple, and you didn't need a new translation.

Most archaic Bible words are not as archaic as people think, and of the ones that are, the context usually helps with the meaning. When a more precise definition is needed, dictionaries and thesauruses are readily accessible. Archaic words should be viewed as an *advantage* as they afford us the opportunity to slow down and spend more time with God's word and even learn a thing

or two in the process.

AREN'T THE OLDER MANUSCRIPTS BEST?

Not necessarily. Scholars, revisionists, commentators, Bible college professors, and even preachers often "correct" the King James Bible on the basis of readings found in what they believe to be "older and better" manuscripts. It hasn't been proven that Vaticanus and Sinaiticus are older, but even if they were older, this reasoning is flawed.

Suppose you find a very old coin and you believe that it must be very valuable since it's so old. Then you have it inspected by a coin dealer and learn that the coin is worthless, even illegal, since it is a counterfeit. Would you keep buying into the notion that your coin is valuable just because it's old?

As already pointed out, the modern translations are based on counterfeit and corrupt manuscripts. Appealing to their supposed age for authority is a very weak and often deceptive argument. After all, *the devil* is old, but does that make him better and more reliable?

SHOULDN'T THE ITALICIZED WORDS BE OMITTED FROM THE KING JAMES BIBLE?

No, they should not be omitted. The italicized words in the King James Bible are words that the translators added for clarity. The fact that they italicized the words shows that they were honest and were not trying to mislead anyone. As for removing the italics, that would not be wise, as the following examples will show. The words printed in ***bold underlined italic*** are from selected Old Testament verses that contain an italicized word or words, while the scripture that follows is the New Testament quote of that passage without the word or words being italicized:

> I have set the LORD always before me: because ***he is*** at my right hand, I shall not be moved. (Psa. 16:8)
>
> . . . I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for

he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: (Acts 2:25)

Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out ***the corn***. (Deu. 25:4)

. . . Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out **the corn**. Doth God take care for oxen? (I Cor. 9:9)

. . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every ***word*** that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. (Deu. 8:3)

But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every **word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Mat. 4:4)

I have said, Ye ***are*** gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High. (Psa. 82:6)

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye **are** gods? (John 10:34)

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner ***stone***, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. (Isa. 28:16)

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner **stone**, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. (I Pet. 2:6)

Please understand what you just read: The New Testament writers quoted the words that were in italics! This means that they counted them to be scripture. So why should we want to remove them? When Jesus said, "It is written..." (Mat. 4:4), He was saying that the word "word" was also written, even if the King James translators didn't have it in the Hebrew Old Testament text that

they were using. The Holy Spirit led them to use the word anyway. If He didn't, then why did Jesus quote it? It is said that the italic words are words that were not in the originals, but who knows this for certain since no one has the originals, and why did Jesus and the New Testament writers quote them, if they weren't scripture?

Also, we have the case of who killed Goliath? II Samuel 21:19 in the KJV says: **"And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philistines, where Elhanan the son of Jaareoregim, a Bethlehemite, slew *the brother of* Goliath the Gittite, the staff of whose spear was like a weaver's beam."** The words *"the brother of"* are in italics. If these words were omitted, then the Bible would say that Elhanan slew Goliath, which would contradict the fact that David killed Goliath. If you'll check I Chronicles 20:5, you'll see that the italics of II Samuel 21:19 are well justified. Removing the italics would only cause confusion.

The italics in the King James Bible are not causing any harm or confusion, and they often promote clarity. They are the marks of an honest translation, and there is no good reason to remove them or even doubt them.

WHERE WAS THE WORD OF GOD BEFORE THE KJV WAS PUBLISHED IN 1611?

The word of God has always been preserved and attacked, so there have always been pure manuscripts and corrupt manuscripts. As we saw earlier, the new translations are based on corrupt manuscripts that have connections to Rome and Alexandria, Egypt. The pure manuscripts have connections to Antioch, Syria, the actual headquarters of the early church and the home of much spiritual activity among true believers (Acts 11:20-30; 13:1-3; 14:19-26; 15:19-23, 35). So, before the year 1611, the word of God was preserved in the pure manuscript line stemming from Antioch, Syria, as opposed to the corrupt manuscripts from Rome and Alexandria. The King James Bible, completed in 1611, is God's grand masterpiece that came at the end of a long line of preserved scripture that had been used and copied by believers for many centuries. Where was the word of God before 1611? It was everywhere, being used and preserved at the hands of Bible-believing Christians who were often persecuted or martyred for their scriptural convictions.

CAN A TRANSLATION BE INSPIRED?

This really isn't a good question since inspiration has more to do with what is spoken rather than what is written or translated (II Pet. 1:21; II Tim. 3:16). The question is usually asked with the implied answer being "No." It is reasoned that the King James Bible is only a translation, and since a translation cannot be inspired, the King James Bible cannot be inspired. If this is true, then no other translations are inspired either, so we are left with the unfortunate reality of not having access to God's inspired words. How does this help anyone or solve anything?

The much better question is, "Can a translation be providentially directed by God?" The answer to that question is a most definite "Yes."

The words "translate" and "translated" occur three times in the Bible, and GOD is the Translator each time. The scholars insist that the KJV cannot be infallible or inspired because it is "only a translation," but do you suppose that such scholars have checked II Samuel 3:10, Colossians 1:13, and Hebrews 11:5 to see what GOD has to say about translating?

In II Samuel 3:10 we are told that it was God who translated Saul's kingdom to David. We are told in Colossians 1:13 that Christians have been translated into the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and Hebrews 11:5 tells us that God translated Enoch that he should not see death. God was the one doing the translating each time. So, a translation CAN be infallible, if God is directing the translating and seeing to it that His will is accomplished.

When the New Testament writers would quote the Old Testament (Mt. 1:23; Mk. 1:2; Lk. 4:4; Jn. 15:25; Acts 1:20; 7:42; I Cor. 2:9; Gal. 3:13, etc.), they had to translate from Hebrew to Greek, because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but they wrote in Greek. So, if a translation cannot be infallible, then even the New Testament in the original Greek manuscripts is not infallible since much of it was translated from the Hebrew text.

Obviously, God assisted them in their translating by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, and He assisted the King James translators as well. The issue is not the possible or impossible "inspiration" of the King James Bible, but rather the *preservation* that God promised concerning His words that had already been inspired:

The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (Psa. 12:6-7)

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. (Mat. 24:35)

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (Isa. 40:8)

If God's word was inspired and then God preserved those inspired words, then, yes, we can still have an inspired copy, not because it was "inspired" in 1611, but rather because it was originally inspired and then divinely preserved as God promised.

The Holy Spirit Who inspired the word of God through "holy men of God" (II Pet. 1:21) is quite capable of guiding His servants to keep the words which Jesus told us to keep (John 14:23). In essence, the KJV translators were merely "instruments" which God used in translating and preserving His words. In fact, they said this themselves in the Dedicatory to the Authorized Version: ". . . because we are poor instruments to make God's holy truth to be yet more and more known to the people. . . "

If they were only "instruments," then who was the actual translator? Would it not be God Himself, the perfect Translator of II Samuel 3:10, Colossians 1:13, and Hebrews 11:5? God can inspire, translate, and preserve His words as He chooses, and if He can't, then we have no final authority to believe in at all.

CAN A TRANSLATION OR A COPY BE SUPERIOR TO THE ORIGINALS?

The very notion of this might seem absurd at first, but what saith the scripture? We are given such a case in the word of God itself. Please note these verses from Jeremiah chapter 36:

And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the

penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth . . . Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after that the king had burned the roll, and the words which Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take thee again another roll, and write in it all the former words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the king of Judah hath burned…Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were added besides unto them many like words. (Jer. 36:23, 27-28, 32)

Notice that "all the words" were preserved. The second writing was just as inspired as the original. In fact, in light of the added words in verse thirty, one could even make the argument that it was better. There is simply no Biblical precedent for claiming that the “original autographs” are superior to the King James Bible. In fact, Jeremiah 36 gives us reason to believe just the opposite. It’s true that our human reasoning tells us otherwise, but we are commanded in the scriptures to live by faith and to not lean to our own understanding (Prov. 3:5).

When Paul stated that Timothy had known the "holy scriptures" since his childhood (II Tim. 3:15), he was not referring to the original manuscripts which no longer existed. He was referring to the copies that Timothy had seen and been taught from, trusting that God had preserved His words in those copies. When Phillip preached to the eunuch from "scripture" (Acts 8:32, 35), he was preaching from a *copy* of the scripture, not the original manuscripts, yet God still chooses to call it scripture, not merely a copy or a translation. When Jesus told us to "search the scriptures" in John 5:39, He was not referring to original manuscripts which no longer existed. He was referring to accurate copies that existed, as a result of God preserving His words as He had promised. So, this modern reasoning that a translation or a copy must be inferior to the original is flawed since we are told otherwise in God's word.

God is still very much alive and on His throne, so His promise of preservation is still very much in place.

Lesson Review

1. The bottom line is that modern Bible translations are based on _____ _____.

2. Westcott and Hort were:

a. First century champions for preserving scripture
b. Corrupt scholars from the 1800's
c. The owners and publishers of the Scofield Bible

3. What important word do modern translations omit from I Timothy 3:16?

4. What word do modern translations change in Isaiah 14:12?

5. Apostate scholars sometimes question the authority of the last twelve verses of which gospel?

6. What verse in Acts 8 is completely erased in some new translations?

7. What great verse on the Trinity is questioned by some scholars?

8. Where in the Bible does someone first question the word of God?

9. Why are the archaic words in the KJV an advantage?

10-11. List two places where the New Testament validates the Old Testament italics:

10.
11.

12. Where was the word of God before 1611?

13. Who is the only translator in the Bible?

14. What Bible chapter says that a translation or copy can be superior to its original?

Suggested Memory Verses: II Pet. 1:21, II Tim. 3:16, Isa. 40:8, Jer. 6:16

Lesson XXI

The Word of a King - II

DON'T THE MODERN TRANSLATIONS STILL CONTAIN THE GENEERAL TRUTHS AND MESSAGES FROM GOD'S WORD?

Yes, they often do, but we are commanded to keep and obey "every word," not just the fundamental truths and messages. Jesus rebuked Satan in Matthew 4:4 by saying, **"It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."** He said *every word*, not merely the general message. It should be up to God to determine how much scripture we need, not up to us to determine how much is enough. The Father knows best, and He knows that there is much more for us to glean from His words than general truths and messages.

For instance, in I Corinthians 12:3, the New International Version has Paul writing to the Corinthians and saying, " . . . no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit." Yet, the King James weighs in with the stronger reading by saying that no man can say that Jesus is "the" Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. The erroneous Charismatics regularly claim that "Jesus is Lord", but is it not better to say and believe that Jesus is "the" Lord? God wants us to feed on every word, not just general truths. If someone omitted select words from something that YOU said, would that not trouble you? If "every" word of God is pure (Prov. 30:5), what right have we to remove ANY of them?

WHY DID THE ORIGINAL KJV INCLUDE THE APOCTYPHA?

It's true that the original King James Bible included the Apocrypha, but it was not included as scripture, only as a historical document.

The Apocrypha is a collection of several pagan writings which the Roman Catholic Church accepts as inspired scripture. In fact, the Council of Trent (1546) pronounced a curse upon anyone who denies that these books were inspired. The King James translators did not consider the books to be inspired scripture, nor did they include them in the canon as such. They merely placed the Apocryphal books *between* the Old and New Testaments as a historical document, not as scripture. Their reasons for not accepting the Apocrypha as scripture are listed on page 185-186 of the book Translators Revived, by Alexander McClure. The seven reasons are basically as follows:

> (1) Not one of them is in the Hebrew language like the rest of the Old Testament books.
>
> (2) Not one of the writers lays any claim to inspiration.
>
> (3) These books were never acknowledged as sacred Scriptures by the Jewish church, and therefore were never sanctioned by our Lord.
>
> (4) They were not allowed a place among the sacred books, during the first four centuries of the Christian church.
>
> (5) They contain fabulous statements, and statements which contradict not only the canonical Scriptures, but themselves. For example, in the Books of Maccabees alone, Antiochus Epiphanes dies three times in three places.
>
> (6) It inculcates doctrines at variance with the Bible, such as prayers for the dead and sinless perfection.
>
> (7) It teaches immoral practices, such as lying, suicide, assassination and magical incantation.

The KJV translators placed the Apocrypha after Malachi and before Matthew, not blending it in with the other Old Testament books. They called its whole section "Apocrypha," not respecting each of its individual books as scripture, as was done with each of the Old Testament books. Furthermore, after the end of Malachi, the KJV translators printed the words, "The end of the prophets," a clear indication that the Apocrypha which followed is something very different than the inspired prophets.

But it really doesn't matter. God, in His providence, has seen to it that the corrupt Apocrypha no longer has a home between the covers of the King James Bible, nor has it had one in well over a century.

CAN'T A SINNER STILL BE SAVED FROM READING SCRIPTURE FROM THE NEW TRANSLATIONS?

Yes, but doesn't the question suggest that the only thing that really matters is personal salvation? Far too many Christians view salvation as their "finish line" when the Bible presents salvation as the starting line for the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1-2; I Cor. 9:24-27). Sure, a sinner can be saved with the words of a new translation, so long as the true gospel of Christ is presented, but can he also grow from feeding on every word of God? Salvation is only the beginning of the believer's life, and the word of God is given to accomplish far more in our lives than just salvation.

ISN'T THE KJV HARDER TO UNDERSTAND THAN THE NEW TRANSLATIONS?

I'm "supposed" to give you the data from the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Indicator and say that it has been proved that the King James Bible is on a sixth grade reading level and it's easier to understand than the new translations, but I'm not going to do that.

The truth is that, on average, the King James Bible is probably easier to understand than some translations and harder than others. Due to its Old English language, Satan has been able to use the "hard to understand" talking point convincingly and

discourage people from even giving the King James a serious try. The reality is that anyone can understand the language of the King James Bible, if they want to understand it. It might be true that some translations are easier to understand than the King James Bible, but is that really the point? Even in the King James Bible, the book of Jonah is easier to understand than the book of Zechariah, but this only means that Zechariah requires more prayer and study. Winter is more challenging than fall, December is more expensive than May, and college is harder than high school, but these are realities that we face and adjust to rather than looking for easier ways. Jesus commanded us to take up our cross and follow Him (Luke 9:23). Sticking with the King James Bible is part of that cross. Sometimes the King James Bible is harder, but like many other fine things in life, it's worth it.

It's very hypocritical to speak of "no pain, no gain" in so many other aspects of life only to look for the easy way when it comes to the word of God. The word of God is more important than your athletic endeavors, your education, or your career, so looking for an "easier" translation should be considered cheating and dishonorable by any serious Christian, especially when we add the fact that modern translations are based on corrupted manuscripts. The issue isn't "is the KJV easier or harder?" but rather is it the preserved word of God?

The issue is should Daniel 3:25 read "the Son of God" or only "a son of the gods," as in the new versions? The issue is should Isaiah 7:14 say that Mary was a "virgin," or just a "young woman," as in the New Life Version? The issue is should II Timothy 2:15 command Christians to "study," or should they just "concentrate on winning," as stated in the Phillips translation? Should we endure sound "doctrine" (mentioned fifty times in the KJV), or should we ignore doctrine, since it's not mentioned at all in the New Life Version? The issue is should I Timothy 3:16 say that "God" was manifest in the flesh, or should it just say that "he" was manifest in the flesh, like most new translations?

The real issue is not what is easier or harder, but *what is true?* The King James might not always be the easiest, but it's easy enough, it gets easier with use, and it's *always true*.

WHAT ABOUT THE ERRORS IN THE KJV?

The so-called "errors" in the King James Bible have been explained many times by many authors. It's a shame that this is even an issue today, but until the devil is finally sentenced to his eternal home, the earth will continue to suffer a truth shortage. There isn't enough space in a booklet of this size to deal at length with this issue; however, for the sake of showing the reader the nature of the so-called "errors" in the KJV, we will take the time to briefly deal with just a few.

According to the critics, the word "Easter" in Acts 12:4 is a mistranslation, because the Greek word is "pascha," and it is translated "passover" twenty-eight times in the New Testament, and it should be translated likewise in Acts 12:4.

The word should NOT be translated "passover" because the Passover had already passed. The "days of unleavened bread" had already begun (vs. 3), which means the Passover was over (Num. 28:16-18; Exo. 12:13-18). The Passover was always the fourteenth day of the first month, while the days of unleavened bread ran from the fifteenth through the twenty-first. Herod could not have been waiting for the Passover. Besides, why would a Gentile king like Herod be concerned about a Jewish feast day? "Easter" is from the pagan "Ishtar", the goddess that the pagans worshipped, Rome included. Herod probably wanted to wait until his pagan Ishtar holiday was over before bringing Peter out to the people.

I John 5:7 is also the subject of much debate. It is argued that the verse lacks manuscript evidence and does not belong in the Bible. Being one of the greatest verses in the Bible on the Trinity, we should be suspicious of any oppositions to it. The verse should not be omitted from the Bible. It is found in Greek manuscript 61, which probably forced Erasmus to include it in his third edition Greek text of 1522. I John 5:7 is also found in Codex Ravianus, and in the margins of 88 and 629. It is also found in Old Latin manuscripts r and Speculum. It was quoted by Cyprian around A.D. 250, and two Spanish Bishops quoted it in the fourth century (Priscillkian and Idacius Clarus). Several African writers quote it in the fifth century, and Cassiodorus quotes it in the sixth century in Italy. The fact that Siniaticus and Vaticanus do not include the verse means nothing to a true Bible believer, since we know the truth about these corrupt manuscripts. Vaticanus even omits the

entire book of Revelation while keeping the Apocrypha, so are we to trust its judgment on I John 5:7?

Many argue that the KJV is in error with its use of the word "devils" instead of "demons". Again, this is due to an over emphasis on "the Greek" as well as a lack of faith in God's ability to preserve His words in English. While protesting that "daimon" should be translated "demon", many have overlooked a great truth which the Holy Spirit has preserved in the King's English. There is one true "Son of God", but many "sons of God". There is one true "church", the bride of Christ, but many local "churches". Likewise, there is one "devil", but many "devils" under his control. Using the word "demons" would destroy this match and lose the cross references.

Besides, the word "demon" itself does not necessarily imply an evil spirit, at least not by some definitions. Even Webster's 1828 dictionary states that "the ancients believed that there were good and evil demons...", and New Agers of today believe likewise. Therefore, God led the KJV translators to translate "devils" instead of "demons" because every "daimon" in the Bible IS an evil spirit. The word "devil" makes that clear. Every "devil" in the Bible is under the authority of their father "the devil".

Then we have "contradictions" like Exodus 24:10 and John 1:18. Exodus says the Israelites saw God, while Jesus said in John that "no man hath seen God at any time". This is no contradiction, just a matter of rightly dividing the word of truth. God is a trinity, just like you. You have a spirit, a soul, and a body (I Ths. 5:23). The Israelites saw a physical manifestation of God, but not the soul of God, just as people have seen you, but not your soul.

For a final sampling, Numbers 25:9 says that 24,000 people died in a plague, but I Corinthians 10:8 says that only 23,000 died. Read I Corinthians 10:8 again and notice that 23,000 fell "in one day". The 24,000 died altogether in a few days. There is no contradiction.

These are the kinds of "errors" that skeptics find in the King James Bible. These are the reasons given for you to throw away your Bible and buy a new one *from them*. Don't fall for it. Always give God the benefit of a doubt and always be suspicious of anyone pointing out "errors" in the King James Bible.

WHY SHOULD WE MAKE AN ISSUE OF BIBLE TRANSLATIONS?

Actually, we aren't "making" an issue of it. The issue has already been made by the devil. We are simply enlisting as soldiers of truth and fighting for the word of God that is being attacked.

We must never forget that when Satan first appeared in the Bible, he questioned and then denied the word of God (Gen. 3:1, 4). Then throughout the Bible Satan opposes and attacks God's word. Jeremiah 23:36 even says that "ye have perverted the words of the living God," and II Corinthians 2:17 says that "we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God." Satan declared war on the word of God in the very beginning, and that war rages until this very hour. King James Bible believers didn't start the war. We are just Christians who love the word of God and hate to see it attacked. We are soldiers of truth who refuse to sit idle while the father of lies wages war and gains ground against the word of God. We aren't making an issue; we are *responding* to a very critical issue that far too many are ignoring. It is not our fault that most Christians today are blind to the issue and unconcerned with the damage being done by the devil, but it will most definitely be our fault if we ignore the issue and refuse to fight back. It isn't your fault that a thief breaks into your home and threatens the well-being of your family, but it *is* your fault if you do nothing about it. You didn't create the issue, but you will definitely respond to it.

SHOULDN'T WE TRUST THE OPINIONS OF HIGHLY EDUCATED SCHOLARS AND LEADERS?

Not unless they *earn* our trust and prove to be right. The Jews of Jesus' day blindly trusted the highly educated Pharisees and Sadducees, yet these were the very people who opposed Jesus and eventually had Him crucified. Credentials have their place, and they might even prepare a man for greatness, but they do not *guarantee* that he will be great or that he will remain great. We are commanded to "prove all things" (I Ths. 5:21), not to merely trust what others tell us.

Most scholars today have bought into the reliability of flawed manuscripts, so their judgment is also flawed. Their educations and reputations are irrelevant where truth is concerned.

If the weatherman says the sky is green, he is wrong. His reputation and credentials do not matter. He might be a reputable meteorologist, but he's also color blind or deceitful. The sky is blue, not green. Truth rules; credentials do not.

SHOULDN'T WE TRUST TRANSLATIONS THAT ARE RECOMMENDED BY GOOD MEN OF GOD?

No, not necessarily. We must always "prove all things," as we've been commanded. A preacher can be very spiritual and still err where truth is concerned. He can have the best of intentions, yet still be misled. It can happen to any of us. This is why the Bible says "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine" (II Tim. 4:3). A man doesn't automatically stay sound in the faith. He must *endure*, being forever vigilant, knowing always that Satan is on the prowl (I Pet. 5:8). Even the great Micaiah acknowledged that it was possible for him to err and speak falsely (I Kgs. 22:28). Peter was a fine man of God, but Paul still had to set him straight on circumcision (Gal. 2:11). Moses was a man of God, but he erred greatly in hitting the rock (Num. 20:11-12). Satan hates the word of God, and he will use anyone and anything in his efforts to attack it. The issue is truth, not what people think and say about it.

For instance, Clarence Larkin (1850-1924) was one of the best Bible teachers of all time. His "Dispensational Truth" is probably the single most important doctrinal book ever written, apart from the Bible itself, yet Larkin was wrong when he occasionally "corrected" the KJV with readings from the Revised Version. Clarence Larkin lived at a time when very little was known about manuscript evidence, so he simply erred in ignorance. He was still a great teacher, and his books are still the best, but he was wrong on that particular point. It would be a huge mistake for one to never read Larkin because of this, but it would also be a huge mistake for one to say, "I trust Larkin, and I'll believe anything he says." If God wanted us to place our trust in men, then He would have never told us to study for ourselves and prove all things. Psalms 118:8 says, **"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man."** Thank God for good men, but the word of God is our final authority, not good men.

KING JAMES AND HIS TRANSLATORS HAD THEIR FAULTS, SO HOW CAN WE TRUST THEM?

It is often argued that the King James Bible cannot be trusted because some of the translators were Calvinists and baby sprinklers, and King James himself even allowed Baptists to be burned at the stake, including anabaptist Edward Wightman during the year following the publication of the King James Bible. While such claims are often exaggerated and filled with mis-representations, it stands true that King James and his selected translators were not flawless. But does it really matter?

The "holy men of God" (II Pet. 1:21) who were moved by the Holy Ghost to give us the scriptures were not flawless, yet God used them as instruments of inspiration and preservation. If being sinless were a requirement for handling the word of God, then there would be no scripture at all, since no one is sinless. God used Moses to give man the first five books of the Bible, including the Ten Commandments, yet Moses had killed an Egyptian and hid him in the sand (Exo. 2:12). David committed adultery and murder (II Sam. 11), yet God still used his prayers to make up half the book of Psalms. Peter denied the Lord three times in one night, yet our Bible still includes Peter's epistles. The argument that God only uses flawless people is just false. The very genealogy of Jesus is far less than flawless as it includes a fornicator, an adulterer, a murderer, a harlot, a polygamist and a few idolators (Mat. 1). Samson made it into God's hall of faith (Heb. 11:32), yet one would never guess that based on his reckless conduct in the book of Judges. The heathen king Nebuchadnezzar is even called God's "servant" in Jeremiah ("Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant" - Jer. 25:9; 27:6). So, God does not need or require sinless people to get His work done. He uses whom He chooses.

This does not mean that we shouldn't live holy lives and be led by the Holy Spirit, for we certainly should, but we err greatly when we think that God can't use certain people. God can use anyone He chooses, including the devil (I Kgs. 22:22).

The issue is more the product than the producers. In 1611, God got the product that He wanted, in spite of any flaws with the producers. He has done this for thousands of years, and He will continue to do it because He is God, and God does as He pleases. **"Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?" (Ecc. 8:4)**

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REVISION AND AN EDITION?

If someone decides to produce a new Bible translation, then they must also convince Christians that there is a need and a justifiable cause for the new version. One of the deceitful excuses being used today for producing new versions is that the King James Bible has been revised several times since 1611 and that a new revision is needed once again. This is not true.

The many *revisions* that have occurred since 1881, based on flawed manuscripts, bear no resemblance to the various *editions* of the KJV prior to 1881. Satan hopes to confuse you about revisions and editions. Don't fall for it.

There were only four actual *editions* (not "revisions" or "translations") of the King James Bible produced after 1611: 1629, 1638, 1762, and 1769. These were not translations (like the new versions since 1881), and they really weren't even "revisions".

The 1629 edition was simply an effort to correct printing errors, and two of the original King James translators assisted in the work.

The 1638 edition of the KJV also dealt with printing errors, especially words and clauses overlooked by the printers. About 72% of the textual corrections in the KJV were done by 1638, only 27 years after the first printing.

Please bear in mind the fact that printing was a very laborious task prior to 1800. Publishing a flawless work was almost impossible. Even today, with computers and advanced word processors, printing errors are still frequently made. Imagine what it was like in the 1600's!

Then, in 1762 and 1769, two final editions of the KJV were published. Both of these involved spelling changes, which became necessary as the English language became more stabilized and spelling rules were established.

There were no new translations, and there were really no new revisions published in 1629, 1638, 1762, or 1769. These were simply *editions* of the 1611 KJV, which corrected printing errors and spelling. Those who try to equate these editions with the modern translations (since 1881) are just being deceitful or ignorant, or both. The many other so-called "revisions" of the KJV that occurred in 1613, 1616, 1617, and 1743 are nothing more than running changes and touch-up work at the printers. The real

revisions and corrupt translations did not start appearing until 1881 (RV) and 1901 (ASV).

So, in most cases, if you purchase a King James Bible, you will be purchasing a 1769 *edition* of the King James 1611 Authorized Version.

WHAT SHOULD I DO SINCE I PERSONALLY HAVE TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING THE KJV?

Keep reading and studying, and you will find yourself becoming more comfortable with the King's English. Millions of people have read and understood the King James Bible for over four hundred years. The notion that *you* are somehow inferior to them is just a lie from Satan. If you are saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and you want to live for God, then you have already met two of the most important requirements for understanding God's word. The past four centuries are filled with people from all walks of life who grew to understand and love the King James Bible, and many of them had very little education. Like anything else, practice makes perfect. If you will read the King James Bible every day with an honest and seeking heart, you will grow to love it and understand it. You will eventually reach the point to where you will not want to read other translations at all, because you will have grown to love the uniqueness and beauty of the King James Bible. The term "the King's English" will take on a whole new meaning as you become grounded in the fundamental fact that God's word *should* read differently than the words of men, and that's one of the reasons for God giving us the King James Bible.

Friend, despite the countless evils of this present world, imagine, if you will, a world that never saw a King James Bible, a world that was never graced with a Livingstone, a William Carey, a Hudson Taylor, an Amy Carmichael or a Mary Slessor. Imagine a world that never knew George Whitfield, the Wesley brothers, John Newton, Isaac Watts, John Bunyan, Matthew Henry, William Booth or Charles Spurgeon. Imagine a world that never enjoyed the sixty-four year reign of the Bible-believing queen Victoria. Imagine a world with an idolatrous, Roman Catholic America with no Great Awakenings, no First Amendment rights, no Bible belt, and no preachers like Moody, Sunday, Edwards, Norris, Talmadge, Ham, Fuller, Ruckman or Bob Jones, Sr. If not for the King James

Bible, we might very well have inherited such a world.

The King James Bible is king, and it will *not* be dethroned. It is here to stay, and it is here to *rule*. If you are wise, you will trust God and allow the King of books to do the work in you that it has done in the hearts and lives of millions of people.

Lesson Review

1. Did the original 1611 KJV contain the Apocrypha?

    a. Yes, but King James rejected it.
    b. Yes, but not as scripture.
    c. No, it was not included.

2. Where does the Bible say it is better to trust God than to put confidence in man?

3. True or False? God uses only flawless people.

4. True or False? An edition and a revision are the same.

Suggested Memory Verses: I Ths. 2:13, Ecc. 8:4, Mat. 4:4

Lesson XXII

Biblical Typology – I

Over the past three and a half decades of writing and publishing the truths of God's word, it has often been suggested that we publish a book on typology. My chief reason for not doing so has been the fact that the subject is so massive in scope that a single book would only scratch the surface. Besides, few people read books anymore, much less encyclopedias, and that's really what would be necessary to thoroughly cover the subject.

So that leaves me with what I do best: booklets. We will start with this volume and maybe follow-up with another one

someday, or maybe not. Maybe one booklet is all that's needed. After all, it is this writer's view that typology is not something that one learns, but rather something that one learns HOW to learn. It's like the old adage that says that giving a man a fish feeds him for a day, whereas TEACHING a man to fish feeds him for a lifetime. Reading to a child is good but teaching him HOW to read is far better. Once a believer understands the basics of Biblical typology, he is then all set to teach himself. In fact, he will find this far more interesting and enjoyable as a spirit of discovery and creativity is unleashed in his own heart and mind. He will experience I John 2:27 personally ("ye need not that any man teach you").

This has to be the best approach for studying typology, because there is so much to study. Just as the Atlantic is a huge ocean with many fish, the Bible is a huge book with many types. It would be absurd for one to claim that he has learned or has taught all the types in the Bible. Bible study is a lifelong endeavor, and typology is a major part of that endeavor. A man who has learned the Bible without learning typology has not really learned the Bible. To claim such would be on par with professing to be a patriotic American without any knowledge of the First Amendment, George Washington, voting or Independence Day.

So, where do we start? I suppose that developing a fair understanding of types and antitypes is in order. Webster defines a "type" as

> "The mark of something; an emblem; that which represents something else." His second definition says, "A sign; a symbol; a figure of something to come; as, Abraham's sacrifice and the paschal lamb, were types of Christ. To this word is opposed antitype. Christ, in this case, is the antitype."

So a type is a symbol or emblem that represents something else. Just as a parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning, a type is sort of a mirrored image of a future reality, a past or present allegory or word picture of a coming person, place or thing. Noah's ark with only one door is a type of Christ "the door" through which "if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9). The ark is the type, and Christ is the antitype. The ark is the emblem, and Christ is the fulfilled reality. The ark is the reflection, and Christ is the true image. Having that basic understanding, one can now study Noah's ark and find a wealth of information. My

message on Noah's ark, for instance, used to be about a forty minute message. It now takes about two hours. And that's just one type. Multiply that by hundreds of types and you begin to realize how a single volume can only cover the basics of this fascinating subject.

The three chief teaching methods have always been repetition, contrast and association. Association is where a teacher will use comparisons of things that a student knows in order to teach him about things that he does not know. A child might not know what a kiwi is but seeing a picture of one alongside pictures of an apple, an orange and a banana will give him a pretty good idea. The principle of teaching by association is what Jesus utilized when He taught by parables, and no serious Christian discounts or makes light of the parables of Jesus. To the contrary, the parables are absolutely essential to one's understanding of the Person of Jesus Christ and His work of redemption. Likewise, the Bible types are absolutely essential to one's understanding of God's purpose and plan through the ages. A Bible student without a fair knowledge of typology is like a mechanic without wrenches or a teacher without a chalk board.

TYPES AND OBJECTS (ANTITYPES)

I've never liked the word "antitype," so I'll use the word "object" instead. An object is simply the person, place or thing that a type is a type OF. For instance, Noah's ark is a type of Christ the object. The object is the reality, the end, or the goal. The object is the reality to which the type points. The greatest object in the Bible (grammatically speaking, of course) is obviously the Lord Jesus Christ, and there are many types that point to him. This is always the case with types and objects: there are many types that point to one object, just as many people might all point to the same rainbow in the sky. The people are the witnesses who all see and point to the same thing, or object. In the Bible, God places a very heavy emphasis on the strength of witnesses for confirming and promoting truth. Christians are said to be witnesses unto Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8), and even the Old Testament prophets are said to be witnesses unto Christ. Please note the words of Acts 10:43:

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

So, in your mind, visualize the Old Testament prophets speaking their prophecies while POINTING into the future directly at Jesus Christ. Then realize that some of the prophecies regarding Christ pointed to Him, yet they were direct prophecies, not types. For instance, Isaiah 53:11 says,

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

There's no typology in the verse. It's simply a direct prophecy of Christ's work on the cross. Then there are other portions of scripture that deal with people, places and things that point to Christ, even though no direct prophecies are found in the context. For instance, Jesus said that He was to be lifted up "as" Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. That makes the brazen serpent that Moses lifted up on a pole a TYPE of Christ. The two portions of scripture that establish this type are John 3:14-15 and Numbers 21:8-9:

"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." (John 3:14-15)

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." (Num. 21:8-9)

Now, please consider three obvious similarities:

(1) The serpent was a BRAZEN serpent, symbolizing judgment. It had been fired and beaten, pointing to the sufferings of Jesus on the cross.

(2) Like Jesus, the serpent was LIFTED UP for all to see and believe.

(3) Healing came as a result of people LOOKING at the serpent in simple faith, and nothing more. This means that all self effort for healing was forsaken as they trusted God to heal them by their simple obedience to the words that He gave to Moses regarding the serpent. Likewise, God heals sinners today through their simple faith in Christ's work on Calvary.

Some commentators are hesitant to call the serpent a type of Christ, for the obvious reason that it also has connections to Satan, as we know from Genesis chapter 3, but they are in error. THERE ARE NO PERFECT TYPES. God never said that a type in the Bible has to be a perfect type. A type only has to match in a few ways, supplying a few basic truths that God wants us to learn. If we go by the "two or three witnesses" rule (Deu. 19:15; Mat. 18:16; II Cor. 13:1), then a type can be established with only two or three similarities. Jesus clearly established Moses' brazen serpent as a type of His own work on the cross, so we simply appreciate the matchups and forget the rest. After all, it was Jesus who said to be "wise as serpents" in Matthew 10:16 while in the same verse telling us to be "harmless as doves." In other words, follow the wisdom of the serpent, but not his harmful ways. In typology, use what matches and drop the rest. Never press a type too far, but never discard one either just because it isn't perfect. Joseph, for instance, is the greatest type of Christ in all the Bible, yet he wasn't from the tribe of Judah and Jesus was never derogatorily nicknamed "this dreamer" due to dreaming about Himself (Gen. 37:19).

I recall once purchasing a commentary on Song of Solomon by a certain man. When it arrived in the mail, I opened the package and began reading the book immediately. But I soon put it down and never picked it up again. The author emphatically stated that people err in believing that the bride in Song of Solomon is a type of the church, since the Bible never SAYS that she is a type of the church. That was his thinking: a type can only be a type, if the Bible SAYS that it's a type.

While this might seem reasonable at first, please realize what such a hard rule does: it destroys the spirit of liberty and

creativity in Bible study! What is the point in the Holy Spirit teaching us anything (John 14:26; I John 2:27), if He has already taught us everything in the simple words and rules of scripture with no meditation and learning left to our own imaginations? How is the Bible a living Book at all, if its words do not quicken our minds and imaginations and open new doors of discovery? Friend, this is absolutely crucial. You MUST understand this, else your understanding of the scriptures will always be handicapped. God's word is not bound (II Tim. 2:9). His words are ALIVE, and they will transform your mind, IF you keep yourself out of the way. Most people do not grasp Biblical typology for the simple reason that THEY KEEP GETTING IN THE WAY! They keep treating God's Book like any other book, considering only the dry words and facts on the page that they are reading, never reading BETWEEN the lines, as they say, while pausing and allowing the Holy Spirit to take the inspired words that they are reading and then lead them into a whole new world of discovery as they meditate upon them. Frankly, this is why most Christians never read the Bible through even once. They read it without DISCOVERING it, without ever walking through a single door or finding a single nugget. The Bible is no more alive to them than their local newspaper.

Please don't misunderstand me. I am not suggesting that we forsake the words of God when we read them and lean to our own thinking and understanding. No, I'm saying that we should obey God's command to MEDITATE on His words, rather than just dryly read them (Jsh. 1:8; Psa. 1:2; Psa. 119:97).

I remember reading J. Vernon McGee's notes on the Psalms one time when he made a very enlightening statement. He acknowledged that sixteen of the Psalms are commonly considered to be Messianic Psalms, due to their special emphasis on Christ, but then he said that in a sense, ALL of the Psalms might be messianic, since far more than sixteen of them say things about Jesus. I then thought, "Well, WHY NOT?" Who says that only sixteen of the Psalms have reference to Jesus? God never said that, so why must we limit ourselves?

About that same time, I heard Bro. James Knox make an interesting statement. He said that if you read a Bible chapter and don't see Jesus, read it again, because you missed Him. On my next trip through the Bible, I looked for Jesus in every chapter,

and, yes, I found Him. In fact, I spent four years teaching my findings to my church on Wednesday nights.

OPENING DOORS

When one sees how smoothly and how often the New Testament opens doors for Old Testament typology, he soon realizes that the subject is so vast in scope that no one man can ever master it. When a passage uses words such as "like" or "as," that's a possible door for studying typology, and those two words alone are found over 3,300 times in scripture. Anytime a parable is given or a comparison is made, anywhere in the Bible, that's a possible door for studying types. Sometimes word matches, such as the way Aaron's rod "swallowed up" the rods of Pharaoh's magicians (Exo. 7:12) and the way in which our death will be "swallowed up" in victory (I Cor. 15:54) can serve as an open door for typology study. That's why consistent Bible reading and word familiarity are so important. Every Christian's mind should be a growing concordance, and he'll never advance far in typology, if it isn't. Typology is all about learning through association, comparing this to that and noting the similarities, and God's word is literally overflowing with ways in which this is done.

Take the little word "as," for instance. When Jesus spoke of his death, burial and resurrection being "as" Jonah's experience in the whale's belly (Mat. 12:40), He was showing us a door for typical study. We can then put on our thinking caps and start asking questions:

(1) What does the name "Jonah" mean and is that significant?

(2) Where was Jonah from and is that significant?

(3) What key words or phrases are found in the story of Jonah that might connect him to Christ?

Answering only those three questions adequately, especially the last one, can supply enough information to preach a fine sermon on Jonah as a type of Christ. In fact, one could write an entire book on the subject.

THE GREAT GATEWAY

While there are many scriptural doors that open up to good studies in typology, there is one great gate that opens up to the entire world of typology. Since most typology (though not all) concerns Old Testament types of New Testament realities, any New Testament scripture that recommends Old Testament study for our own benefit, or as an "ensample," is the Holy Spirit's way of directing us to a world of discovery in the study of types. Two verses readily come to mind:

> **"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4)**
>
> **"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." (I Cor. 10:11)**

The vastness of this field of study is immediately realized when we consider Paul's use of the words "WHATSOEVER things were written" and "ALL these things happened." That's a lot of material. In fact, it's over 900 chapters covering some 4,000 years of human experiences, and ALL of it is for our learning. Welcome to the world of typology.

The second verse quoted above is I Corinthians 10:11. In the context of that verse, Paul mentions several types almost as casually as breathing:

(1) The Red Sea crossing typifies New Testament baptism (vs. 2).

(2) The meat eaten by the Israelites typifies our spiritual feeding on Christ (vs. 3).

(3) The water that they drank typifies our water of life that comes from Christ (vs. 4).

(4) The Rock from which the water came typifies Christ the Rock of our salvation (vs. 4).

(5) Their overthrow in the wilderness typifies our chastening judgment and overthrow in this world, if we live lives that are displeasing to God (vs. 5-10).

Any one of the above points could be developed into a sermon all its own.

It is often said that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and that the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. The statement is certainly true, but not fully appreciated. Far too many believers still think of the Old Testament as a dead book, even if they never say it. Yet, the two gate leaves of Romans 15:4 and I Corinthians 10:11 swing wide open and proclaim clearly that the Old Testament is very much alive and is overflowing with truths to be discovered, many of which lie in the field of typology.

As stated earlier, to teach ALL of the types in the Bible would be an impossibility. Claiming to teach all the types would be on par with what I heard a preacher claim many years ago. He said that he was going to spend Wednesday nights teaching in A to Z format "ALL twenty-six doctrines of the Bible." I somehow managed to refrain my lips, but it didn't come easily. Thinking back, I would have to say that those were some of the dumbest words I have ever heard in a church service. Then again, maybe with HIS Bible, the statement held true. Whatever the case, God's word is a universe of truth, and all any of us can ever hope to do is dig in enough to uncover enough truth to establish ourselves in the basics, begin our adventure, and then conduct as much exploration and discovery as our time on earth will allow. But there is no question that when we leave this world, there will remain more truth to uncover than we ever knew existed and far more than we ever discovered ourselves.

Knowing this, I hesitate to start naming types, for the same reason that many of our nation's founders were hesitant to add a Bill of Rights to the Constitution. They feared that doing so would send the message that our rights are limited, rather than innumerable. That is, they feared sending the message that America's only rights are those specifically named in the Bill of Rights. Named rights could run the risk of excluding numerous unnamed rights. It's sort of like a speaker being hesitant to start thanking people by name because he might leave someone out. In naming types in the Bible, you WILL leave some out, because it's

impossible not to. So I won't even claim to be naming them all. I will offer up some obvious types as examples, offer comments on some of them, and then leave the rest for the student's own adventures.

THE FIRST TYPES

One of the first types in the Bible, if not THE first, is the type of salvation found in the first few verses of Genesis. Realizing that one's personal salvation is a creation of God (Eph. 2:10), we find that the original creation serves as a type of our own salvation in Christ:

> **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1)**

First, you were born.

> **"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep . . ." (Gen. 1:2)**

But you were a sinner by nature and were in spiritual darkness.

> **". . . And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1:2)**

So the Spirit of God moved and convicted your heart.

> **"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (Gen. 1:3)**

Then you believed on Jesus Christ, the Light of the World (John 8:12).

> **"And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." (Gen. 1:4)**

Now you live a good and separated life for the glory of God, no longer walking in the darkness of sin.

The Genesis 1 narrative shows how God gradually brought things into existence, from the simple and unformed to the complex and complete. The earth was created, but not yet fully "formed," just as the sinner is naturally born, but not yet born again. You were created, but not in the sense of being fully "formed." Paul wrote in Galatians 4:19, **"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be FORMED in you."** You were without FORM until Jesus Christ moved in and started conFORMing you after His image (Rom. 8:29) and also told you to not be conFORMED to this world (Rom. 12:2). So, the first five verses of the Bible tell us that typology is going to play a vital role in our understanding of the scriptures.

There are many types in Genesis 1, making it clear that typology will be a major part of God's word. The earth bringing forth its first life on the "third day" (vss. 11-13) obviously points to Christ's third day resurrection. Then the seventh day, being a day of rest and being placed in a separate chapter, points perfectly to God's seventh millennium being a separate time period from the first six thousand years of human history. In fact, it's God's Sabbath rest for the earth (Isa. 14:7) and the earth's inhabitants, a one thousand year "day" (II Pet. 3:8) answering to the first Sabbath of Genesis 2:4.

Another good one is found in verses 14-16:

> **"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."**

We find the scriptures often using the sun, moon and stars in typical symbolism. The sun alone can serve as a strong type of God as a Trinity, with its three types of rays picturing each Trinity member. The chemical rays cannot be seen or felt, yet they can

have very real effects, typifying God the Father. The light rays can be seen, but not felt, a type of God the Son, the "light of the world" (John 8:12). Then the heat rays can be felt, but not seen, picturing the Holy Spirit.

Then the typology can be broken down even further. Considering the term "great lights" from Genesis 1:14, the sun pictures Christ, the moon pictures the church, and the stars picture righteous saints who bring others to Christ. Malachi 4:2 says, **"But unto you that fear my name shall the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."** Christ in His Second Coming is like the sun arising in the morning, beginning a whole new day. So Jesus is the "greater" light to rule the "day" - the millennial day running 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-7; II Pet. 3:8).

Then the church is typified by the moon: **"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Song. 6:10)** Also see Psalms 89:37 where the moon is compared to a "faithful witness." The moon is a "dead" planet with no light of its own. It merely reflects the sunlight to the earth just as the church reflects Christ to the world. The moon also has a dark side, picturing the old carnal nature that the believer still has, even though he has been born again. In the Great Tribulation, the moon turns blood red (Rev. 6:12), picturing the fact that the church has been called up to heaven where she sings about being washed in the BLOOD of Christ (Rev. 5:8-10).

Even the "stars also" are not without significance. Speaking of the resurrection, Paul said that one star differs from another star in glory (I Cor. 15:41), and Daniel 12:2-3 speaks of the resurrection and says, **" And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE FIRMAMENT; and they that turn many to righteousness AS THE STARS for ever and ever."** So, Hollywood has her stars, and God has His stars, namely believers who win sinners to Christ.

Adam also serves as a good type, actually a type of Christ, but the comparisons are limited due to Adam becoming a sinner:

(1) Both are called "the son of God" (except for the capitalization when referring to Jesus; Luke 3:38; 1:35)

(2) Both have God's image (Gen. 1:27; Col. 3:10).

(3) Both have dominion over all creation (Gen. 1:28; Dan. 7:14; Psa. 72:8).

(4) Both are progenitors of billions of souls (I Cor. 15:22).

(5) Both have a book of generations named after them (Gen. 5:1; Mat. 1:1).

(6) Both made great sacrifices for their bride (Gen. 2:21-22; Eph. 5:25).

(7) Both have a bride with their namesake (Gen. 5:2; Acts 11:26).

(8) Both have a bride who is of their own body, flesh and bone (Gen. 2:23; Eph. 5:30).

After Adam's sin, he serves as more of a contrast to Christ than a type: Adam sinned in a garden, whereas Jesus was victorious in a garden; Adam lost God's image, whereas Jesus restored God's image; Adam brought death, whereas Jesus brought life, etc.

We could focus on more types, even from Genesis 1, but it's best to deal with fundamentals rather than continuing with this and that type without showing how the fundamentals apply. The few types already covered just from Genesis 1 should serve as more than enough evidence to convince the reader that God's word is rich and overflowing with typology.

Lesson Review

1. Give a word that serves as a good synonym of a type.

2. What is an antitype or object of a type?

3. True or False? A thing must be a perfect type or no type at all.

4. Where does the Bible say that all the prophets give witness to Jesus Christ?

Suggested Memory Verses: Rom. 15:4, I Cor. 10:11

Lesson XXIII

Biblical Typology – II

NO LIMIT

As I have stressed already, the field of typology has no boundaries. It is practically impossible to teach fully, because there just isn't enough time and space. It is far better for one to learn HOW to study and appreciate typology on his own. No one goes fishing a few times and expects to catch all the fish in the lake. No, fishermen fish for the joy of fishing, and they do it for a lifetime. My father spent some sixty years fishing in west Tennessee's Obion River and the Mississippi River, yet he never caught all the fish or felt the need for a new fishing hole. Neither thought ever occurred to him. Both rivers are so plenteous with all kinds of fish that any man would be a fool to ever think that he can fully fish them out and have to look for a new hobby or a new fishing spot. So it is with the Bible and typology. If you have the time and the desire, God has more "fish" in His Biblical sea than you could even count, much less catch. So you simply learn and grow in your studies, and it gets better with time and experience.

This is best done by learning the basics and establishing some guiding principles that you never forsake, principles that become as much a part of you as knowing the purpose of a stop sign, the meaning of double yellow lines in the middle of a highway, or what to do when you see flashing blue lights behind you. I would like offer up three helpful questions to ask that can guide one a long way in his studies of typology. We will get around to listing numerous types and their references later, but these fundamentals are far more important as they equip the believer to find his own way and do his own exploring. A football player is not ready for a game before he has learned the basics of offense, defense, plays, scoring, blocking, tackling, stances, running, catching, and holding on to the ball. Likewise, a Bible student will be far more equipped to study typology once he has learned to always ask questions rather than waiting for someone's list or outline. Here are three simple questions that make up the very heart and soul of typology studies:

(1) Does the Bible specifically SAY that this is connected to something else?

(2) HOW does this connect to some other Bible truth or truths?

(3) Are there any key WORDS or PHRASES that connect this to other Bible truths?

As we mentioned earlier, typology is all about ASSOCIATION, or connecting the dots, if you will. Learn to connect God's dots and you'll learn God's word. Ignore this fundamental requirement and you'll be largely ignorant of the scriptures. We'll deal with the questions one at a time.

DOES THE BIBLE SPECIFICALLY SAY THIS IS CONNECTED TO SOMETHING ELSE?

Some typology leads are no-brainers. You just take the obvious lead that the Holy Spirit provides and run with it. I Corinthians 10:4 is a splendid example. This is where Paul uses the example of Moses and the Israelites getting water from the rock (Exo. 17) to teach the Corinthian believers to have a closer walk with Christ. Please note the specific wording:

> **"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ"**

For context, let's also consider the wording in the original account from Exodus 17:

> **"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." (Exo. 17:5-6)**

As you can see, there's nothing in the account specifically about Christ or believers today, so the passage might appear to be irrelevant to the New Testament Christian. That is, UNTIL we ask our all- important question: *"Does the Bible specifically SAY that this is connected to something else?"*

Yes it does. As we just read in I Corinthians 10:4, the Bible says that the rock that Moses hit with the rod "was Christ." The rock from which they received the water "was Christ," according to God's word. Obviously, the rock wasn't Christ literally, so Paul is speaking in terms of typology. He's saying that the rock was a TYPE of Christ. Now the Corinthian believers, as well as you and me, have a lesson to learn: Just as the Israelites lived by continually drinking the water received from the rock, we are to live spiritually by continually drinking of the water of life which comes through Christ alone. Understanding the type, we could now study different truths about rocks in the scriptures as well as different truths about water and its essentiality to human existence. Two entire sermons or Bible studies could easily be prepared on the basis of these two simple subjects. All of this learning and edification comes as a result of realizing that the Bible specifically compares Moses' rock to Jesus Christ. But we might not have known that had we not asked the question.

Let's take a couple more. Matthew 12:40 is a good one. This is where Jesus said,

> **"For as Jonas 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."**

Jesus Himself made the comparison, so there's no question that Jonah is a type of Christ. With this knowledge, we can now look at the specifics of Jonah's story in Jonah 2:1-10 and glean further truth. I'll give the ten verses with capitalization for emphasis where needed:

> **"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the BELLY OF HELL**

cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me INTO THE DEEP, in the midst of the seas; and THE FLOODS COMPASSED ME about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I AM CAST OUT OF THY SIGHT; yet I WILL LOOK AGAIN toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the WEEDS WERE WRAPPED ABOUT MY HEAD. I WENT DOWN to the bottoms of the mountains; the EARTH WITH HER BARS *was* about me for ever: yet hast THOU HAS BROUGHT UP MY LIFE FROM CORRUPTION, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple. They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the LORD. And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it VOMITED OUT JONAH upon the dry *land*."

Some obvious similarities connect Jonah to Jesus. A few are as follows:

(1) Jonah spoke of being in "hell," going "down" and being trapped by "bars," which connects him to what other scriptures say about Jesus: **"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell . . ."** (Psa. 16:10) **"(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?"** (Eph. 4:9) **"By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison."** (I Pet. 3:19)

(2) Jonah being cast "into the deep" and being "compassed" and overflowed with "billows" and "waves" actually has a twofold application. First, it speaks of Jesus being given as a sacrifice. Jonah's being cast into the sea was for the purpose of appeasing God's wrath, as we learn from Jonah 1:11-12. In fact, it was Jonah himself who made the suggestion in Jonah 1:12: **"Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be**

calm unto you . . .” This is clearly a type of Christ being willing to give Himself that we might live. Then this also speaks of the “baptism” or “cup” of wrath that Jesus said He must endure (Luke 12:50; Mat. 20:23), and this connects to “dots” found in places like Psalms 18:4-5, Psalms 69:1-4, Psalms 88:3-7, 14-17, Psalms 75:8, Lamentations 3:52-56, Micah 7:19, Matthew 3:11, I Corinthians 12:13 and Romans 6:3.

(3) Jonah praying and saying that he had been cast out of God’s sight connects him to Matthew 27:46 where Jesus cries out on the cross and says, **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”**

(4) His claim that he would “look again” towards God’s temple speaks of Jesus looking beyond the grave to His resurrection.

(5) The weeds being wrapped about Jonah’s head are somewhat reminiscent of the crown of thorns worn by Jesus.

(6) Then, of course, “thou hast brought up my life from corruption” points to Christ’s resurrection.

(7) After being vomited onto the ground, Jonah spent FORTY days appearing to people in his “resurrected” body and preaching (Jon. 3:4). Sound familiar? If it doesn’t, please check Acts 1:3.

There are other comparisons to be made, but all should be clear. Jesus’ words from Matthew 12:40 specifically say that Jonah was “as” Jesus, which makes Jonah a type. That’s an open door for further study, and there are hundreds of them in the word of God.

Let’s grab one more. Speaking of His second coming in Luke 17:26-27, Jesus said,

> **“And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.”**

The lead-in “as it was in the days of Noe” is a clear opening for studying the days of Noah (Genesis 4-8) as a type of the last days before Jesus returns. I once preached a twelve hour

series on this very subject, and our ministry has shipped out thousands of copies of our booklet on the subject. The main points are as follows:

(1) Eating and drinking
(2) Marrying and giving in marriage
(3) Only evil continually
(4) Satan's attack on the conscience
(5) The worldly Cainites
(6) The Godly-minded Sethites
(7) Marching to judgment
(8) Rejection of the covenant God
(9) A reliance on human inventions
(10) A gross perversion of marriage and sex
(11) A population boom
(12) Righteous preaching rejected
(13) A gross defilement of the human conscience
(14) The exaltation and reverence of "heroes"
(15) A tremendous increase in spiritism
(16) The "church" conquered by the world

We might also add "(17) A rapture preceding God's judgment," with Enoch's translation (Gen. 5:24) being a type of the church leaving the world. All of the above comes by asking the simple question, *"Does the Bible specifically SAY that this is connected to something else?"* Let's move on to our next question.

HOW DOES THIS CONNECT TO SOME OTHER BIBLE TRUTH OR TRUTHS?

The Bible never says that it is wrong for us to ask such questions and explore the possibilities. It is wrong for us to *violate Scripture* in doing so, but it is not wrong to meditate and ponder typical possibilities. Let's consider three examples of this question in action, examples where a door is open and a path of truth is lighted and traveled, yet no Scripture is violated, and no contradictions or problems are created.

We read of a very evil system and city in Revelation 17:5 called "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER

OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." So this evil system and city is likened unto a harlot, an evil woman. Since there is no new thing under the sun and all things have happened before (Ecc. 1:9-10), it is not unreasonable or unscriptural to assume that Revelation's Babylon the Great is typified by evil women and evil cities in the preceding sixty-five Bible books. So, by studying such women and cities, one can begin to connect the typical dots and see how that God has been showing His people for thousands of years where this sinful world is headed:

(1) The first kingdom in the Bible is Babel (Gen. 10:8-10), and it is headed up by Nimrod from Ham, an early type of the Antichrist. History records that Nimrod had an evil wife named Semiramis, who founded an evil religious system that polluted the entire the world down through the centuries and is the basis for the present day Roman Catholic Church. Semiramis is basically the demonic female deity of most all pagan religions, only with a name change to keep her cover. She has been known by such names as Ishtar (Easter), Astarte, Aphrodite, Venus, Diana, Isis, and, of course, the "Virgin Mary." She's the "queen of heaven" in Jeremiah 44, and when Revelation needs a beauty for the "beast," she makes her appearance as "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Rev. 17:5) She started in Genesis, and she ends in Revelation. Finding a few glimpses and shadows in between should not be too hard. After all, we don't get through three Bible chapters before a *woman,* the "weaker vessel" (I Pet. 3:7), is handpicked by the devil to lead man into sin. She won't be the last one he picks.

(2) Jezebel, the demonic wife of Ahab, is a type of Babylon the Great in that she is an evil queen married to a type of the Antichrist and she has her own damnable religion and false prophets while opposing and/or killing God's prophets. Her name is also mentioned in connection with heresy and fornication in the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:20. She appears in I Kings chapters sixteen through twenty-one and again in II Kings 9 where her gruesome death is recorded: **"And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and *some* of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot."** (II Kgs. 9:33). Prophetic indeed of the words **"Babylon is fallen,**

is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." (Rev. 14:8)

(3) Athaliah was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel. She is called "that wicked woman" in II Chronicles 24:7. She was an evil and murderous queen who promoted idolatry and furthered the godless traditions of her mother. Like her mother, and like Babylon the Great, she too suffers a violent death (II Chron. 23:13-21).

(4) One might also glean a few points by studying Delilah, Herodias, evil women in Proverbs and the "outlandish women" that caused Solomon to sin.

(5) Evil cities also picture Babylon the Great, since Babylon is said to be a city (Rev. 17:18). So, for further gleaning, the student might consider cites that God destroys or speaks heavily against, such as Jericho, Sodom and Nineveh. Nineveh is especially interesting when we consider the prophecy of Nahum: **" . . . the bloody city . . . whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms . . . I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. (Nah. 3:1, 4-5)**

So, although the Bible might not specifically say that someone or something is a type of Babylon the Great, we can surely see some connections as well as the possibilities for further studies. When we remember that there is no new thing under the sun (Ecc. 1:9-10; in essence, history repeats itself), we can remember the importance of keeping one eye on the past while trying to make sense out of the present and the future with the other.

Let's consider another example of how we can see great results by asking the question, "HOW does this connect to some other Bible truth or truths?" In Genesis chapter twenty-four, Abraham sends his eldest servant Eliezer to find a bride for his son Isaac. Although the New Testament doesn't specifically say that this story pictures anything or that it offers any types, the truth seeker can easily see connections to New Testament truth. A few are as follows:

(1) Abraham was already established as a type of God the Father when he went to offer up his "only son Isaac" (Gen. 22:2) as a burnt offering. With Hebrews 11:17 changing the terminology to "only BEGOTTEN son," this is obviously a Holy Spirit-led

connection to John 3:16, which further establishes Isaac as a type of Christ, a truth not at all foreign to the New Testament.

(2) With Abraham picturing God the Father and Isaac picturing God the Son, it's only natural to assume that the servant Eliezer might picture God the Holy Spirit, especially since Eliezer's job is not to satisfy or glorify himself, but rather to seek out and return with a bride for Isaac the son. We are told in John 16:14 that the Holy Spirit's job is to glorify Jesus Christ, and we are told earlier in John 16 that the Holy Spirit, like Eliezer, is SENT to do a job, namely to reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment so that conviction can happen and sinners can be saved and make up the BRIDE of Christ. So, both Eliezer and the Holy Spirit are in the business of seeking out a bride for a son.

(3) The bride-to-be must be WILLING (Gen. 24:5, 8, 58), agreeing with God's doctrine of free will salvation.

(4) Prayer was an important factor (vs. 12). In fact, even the camels knelt down (vs. 11)!

(5) Eliezer impressed Rebekah with his master's wealth (vss. 22, 35) just as the Holy Spirit impresses sinners with the "true riches" (Luke 16:11) found only in Jesus Christ.

(6) Eliezer's words "hinder me not" (vs. 56) seem to be of the same spirit as Paul's "quench not the Spirit" in I Thessalonians 5:19.

(7) Rebekah's blessing is that she is to be fruitful and have many children (vs. 60), agreeing to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 and the souls that the church wins to Christ.

(8) Isaac meets Rebekah in the field just as Christ meets the church in the air (Gen. 24:63-64; I Ths. 4:17).

(9) In preparation to meeting Isaac, Rebekah "covered herself" (vs. 65), which is what Jesus told the end-time church to do in Revelation 3:18.

More comparisons await the reader's own gleaning. The story of a bride being found for Isaac is a beautiful picture of God sending the Holy Spirit to find a bride for Jesus Christ. The New Testament never specifically tells us to make this connection, yet it is undeniable to anyone possessing spiritual discernment.

For a third example, please consider the three items in the tabernacle that had a crown design upon them. The Bible never says that this is for typifying the three Members of the Trinity, yet there it is for all to see and appreciate:

(1) Exodus 25:10-11 tells us that the ark of the covenant, picturing God the Father, had a "crown of gold round about."

(2) Then we learn that the table that held the shewbread had a crown of gold (Exo. 25:23-24, 30), picturing Jesus Christ the Bread of Life (John 6:35).

(3) Finally, the altar of incense, picturing the Holy Spirit, also had a crown of gold (Exo. 30:1-3).

There are three that bear record in heaven (I John 5:7), so there were three gold crowns that bore witness in the tabernacle. Yet, how many Bible readers have never seen that because they've never been taught to seek and appreciate the beauty of typology in God's word?

ARE THERE ANY KEY WORDS OR PHRASES THAT CONNECT THIS TO OTHER BIBLE TRUTHS?

One of the strongest reasons for never forsaking the King James Bible is the cross reference system. ALL modern translations hurt the cross reference system, and some practically destroy it. No one really needs a new translation; they just need better familiarity with the old one.

Our third question deals with the fact that certain words and phrases are often very key in opening up doors of typology. Let's consider three examples of this principle in action.

In Genesis 37:9-10, Joseph tells of a dream that he had:

> **"And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?"**

His father interpreted the sun in the dream to represent himself, the moon represented his wife, and the eleven stars

represented Joseph's eleven brothers, meaning Joseph was a twelfth star. Now, let's apply our question: "Are there any key WORDS or PHRASES that connect this to other Bible truths?" Indeed, there are! The dream was about the SUN, the MOON, and the STARS. With that in mind, please consider Revelation 12:1:

> **"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the SUN, and the MOON under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve STARS."**

While the Roman Catholics blunder terribly in thinking this woman to be Mary, and some even say she's the church, the words of God are crystal clear: THE WOMAN IS ISRAEL. Anyone familiar with Genesis 15 and Abraham knows that stars picture Abraham's seed, and this is reiterated throughout the Scriptures. So the typology of twelve stars in particular points to none other than the twelve tribes of Israel.

Another good example of how key words and phrases can open doors is the case of Aaron's rod that became a serpent which swallowed up Pharaoh's serpents:

> **"For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod SWALLOWED UP their rods." (Exo. 7:12)**

Now, for the faithful Bible reader, two words stand out in the verse and make a direct connection to another portion of Scripture. The words are "swallowed up." Notice the wording of I Corinthians 15:54:

> **"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is SWALLOW-ED UP in victory."**

Pharaoh's serpents were supposed to have KILLED Aaron's serpent, yet God reversed the whole thing and gave victory to His people, picturing the victory over death that all saints will enjoy through Christ. To strengthen the type, please

remember that Aaron's rod that enjoyed this victory is also the rod that budded with LIFE in Numbers 17:8, while the other rods did not. Moral: If you want to be free from the bondage of sin and walk out on death one day, put your trust in a LIVING SAVIOUR instead of a dead sinner like Ghandi, Buddha, the Popes, the Catholic "Queen of Heaven," or Martin Lucifer King, Jr.

A good third example of words and phrases bringing out typology is found in II Samuel 18:3 where David's people refuse to allow him to risk his life in a heated battle with Absalom's men. The key words are capitalized:

> **"But the people answered, Thou shalt not go forth: for if we flee away, they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us: but now *thou art* worth TEN THOUSAND of us: therefore now *it is* better that thou succour us out of the city."**

If one did not already know that David is a strong type of Christ, a very good hint would be discovered when comparing the above verse with Song of Solomon 5:10:

> **"My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among TEN THOUSAND."**

Upon seeing such a connection, one might begin to meditate on other possible connections between David and Jesus, and it wouldn't take long to compile quite a list. For instance:

(1) Both men are shepherds (I Sam. 16:11; John 10:11).

(2) Both men are kings in waiting (I Sam. 24:20; I Tim. 6:15).

(3) Both men are preceded by evil rulers (I Sam. 15:28; Rev. 19:19-20:7).

(4) Both men endured suffering and persecution wrongfully (Psa. 69:4; I Pet. 2:21-23).

(5) Both men enjoy victory over their enemies (II Sam. 22:41; I Cor. 15:25).

(6) Both men are Jewish kings (II Sam. 5:12; Mat. 27:37).

(7) Both men have brides who were once married to an evil husband (I Sam. 25:39; Rom. 7:1-4).

(8) Both men are known for showing grace to others (II Sam. 9:1; 16:10; II Sam. 10:2; Eph. 2:7).

(9) Both men are greatly blessed and empowered by God (II Sam. 22:33-36).

(10) Both men were very near to the heart of God (I Sam. 13:14; Luke 3:22; John 8:29).

(11) Both men have a covenant (I Sam. 18:3; Heb. 13:20).

(12) Both men are said to have "innocent blood" (I Sam. 19:15; Mat. 27:4).

(13) Both men enjoy the distinction of being a "captain" (I Sam. 22:2; Heb. 2:10).

(14) Both men are kings from the tribe of Judah (II Sam. 2:4; Mat. 2:6).

(15) Both men are said to have no evil (I Sam. 29:6; Luke 23:22).

(16) Both men have great names (II Sam. 7:9; Acts 4:12).

(17) Both men are "flesh" and "bone" with their followers (II Sam. 5:1; Eph. 5:30).

(18) Both men have such superior knowledge that nothing can be hid from them (II Sam. 18:13; Luke 8:17).

(19) Both men are said to be coming back (II Sam. 19:10; Acts 1:11).

(20) Both men are said to be "light" (II Sam. 21:17; John 8:12).

(21) Both men are said to be God's "Holy One" who anticipates a resurrection (Psa. 16:10; Acts 2:25-31).

(22) Both men said "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Psa. 22:1; Mat. 27:46)

(23) Both men are from Bethlehem (I Sam. 20:6; John 7:42).

And the list could continue. Sometimes all it takes is a key word or phrase, and the lid to God's treasure chest swings wide open and begs our attention.

So, as the past several pages reveal, asking questions can open many doors, especially when we are willing to be taught of God and not only by men. God's Book is a treasure chest, and you have just as much access

to it as anyone else. Don't allow religious Pharisees to steal your key of knowledge (Luke 11:52) and then have you crawling to them for theological crumbs. That's the devil's doing, not the Lord's. God wants all of His children to know, love and enjoy His Book.

JOSEPH, THE KING OF BIBLE TYPES

Any work on typology would be sadly wanting without something being said about Joseph, probably the greatest type of Christ in the Bible. For a more detailed study of this subject, we recommend Arthur Pink's *Gleanings in Genesis,* but for now please notice how much Bible truth can be discovered by simply asking the three questions that we covered in the preceding pages. We will point out the stronger points only:

(1) Like Jesus, Joseph was a shepherd (Gen. 37:2). See John 10:11, 14.

(2) **"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children . . ."** (Gen. 37:3) Obviously a type of the Father's love for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

(3) **"And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him . . . he told it his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. and could not speak peaceably unto him."** (Gen. 37:4-5) The Jews were "the brethren" of Jesus, yet the more he spoke the more they hated Him.

(4) **". . . Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan."** (Gen. 37:17) This fore-shadows Christ seeking out and finding his "sheep" (Ezk. 34:11, Luke 19:10).

(5) **"And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it."** (Gen. 37:24) So Jesus was placed in a tomb. Yet, like Joseph, he didn't remain there (vs. 28). The fact that there was "no water" in the pit points us Christ's suffering in such passages as John 19:28 and Psalm 16:10.

(6) **"They…sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites."** (Gen. 37:28) So Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver (Mat. 26:15, Zch. 11:12-13).

(7) **"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt . . . in the house of his master . . . the Egyptian"** (Gen. 39:1-2) Joseph

goes to Egypt as a servant. With Egypt being a type of the world, this foreshadows Christ humbling himself and coming down to the world as a servant and "took upon him the form of a servant" (Philip. 2:7).

(8) **"And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand."** (Gen. 39:4) So it is with Jesus; the Father has placed all in his hands.

(9) **"And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me . . . But he refused . . ."** (Gen. 39:7-12) Like Christ, Joseph was tempted, and he overcame the temptation.

(10) **"And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me . . . And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison."** (Gen. 39:17-20) Like Christ, Joseph was falsely accused and arrested. Also, like Christ, he was "numbered among the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12)

(11) **"But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison."** (Gen. 39:21) This reminds us of the Roman centurian who oversaw our Lord's crucifixion. Though in the enemy's camp, he expressed favorable words concerning Jesus: **"Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man."** (Luke 23:47)

(12) Genesis 40:1-23: Just as Jesus was number-ed among the transgressors and crucified among *two* thieves, Joseph was imprisoned among *two* offenders of Pharoah. Also, like Jesus, he made predictions in their presence that came true: good news for one and bad news for the other, picturing the ends of those who believe on Christ and those who don't.

(13) **"But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house."** (Gen. 40:14) So the Christian should keep his mind on Christ and witness for him (Col. 3:2, Acts 1:8).

(14) **". . . they brought him hastily out of the dungeon . . ."** (Gen. 41:14) So Christ came out of the tomb.

(15) Genesis 41:25-32: Joseph interprets Pharoah's dream and prophesies about the coming famine in Egypt.. Christ

prophesied about numerous hardships coming on the earth, including famine (Mat. 24).

(16) Joseph pictures Christ as the "Counsellor" (Isa. 9:6) by giving good counsel to Pharoah (Gen. 41:33-36).

(17) **"Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?"** (Gen. 41:38) Here Joseph stands as a picture of Christ in that Pharoah acknowledges him as a man unlike any other man and a man in whom the "Spirit of God" dwells.

(18) **"Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou."** (Gen. 41:40) Christ the King of Kings is here pictured as the ruler over the Father's house. Also, Pharoah's words about his throne point to Christ's coming Lordship over the world while maintaining the right relationship with the Heavenly Father (Rev. 3:21, 12:15).

(19) "**And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt."** (Gen. 41:43) Joseph riding in the *second* chariot reminds us of Christ being the second member of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Also, as with Christ, men had to "bow the knee" before him. Philippians 2:10 says, **"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."**

(20) In addition to having *Joseph* as a name, which means "adding," (Gen. 30:24) this greatest type of Christ also has an Egyptian name, *Zaphnath-paaneah (Gen. 41:45),* which some interpret as meaning "saviour of the world."

(21) The fact that Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharoah (Gen. 41:46) reminds us of the age of Christ when he began his public ministry: **"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age . . ."** (Luke 3:23)

(22) "**. . . Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do."** (Gen. 41:55) The wording is very similar to the words of Mary in John 2:5 when she directed the servants to Jesus: **"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."** There is only one access to God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as the Egyptians had to go to *a Jew* for their bread, men today must go to the King of the Jews for the bread of life.

(23) The phrase "Joseph opened all the storehouses" (Gen. 41:56) is instructive since it is Christ who opens the storehouse of heaven and pours out manifold blessings to his own (Mal. 3:10, Mat. 6:20).

(24) **"Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die." (Gen. 42:1-2)** Just as a sinner today must *hear* the Gospel of Christ (Rom. 10:17, Jacob "heard" that there was corn in Egypt. But hearing wasn't enough. It would be necessary to go *down* to Egypt to get the corn. This speaks of the humility, the broken spirit, that the sinner must experience before receiving Christ, the "corn" that fell to the ground and then brought forth much fruit (John 12:24).

(25) **". . . Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him with their faces to the earth."** (Gen. 42:6) In addition to being a fulfillment of the prophetic dream of Genesis 37:9-10, this event also foreshadows the day when our Lord's brethren, the Jews, will turn to him and bow before him.

(26) **"And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them . . ."** (Gen. 42:7) Christ has made himself "strange" to the Jews, as a nation, during the church age: **"And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."** (Deu. 32:20) But he will not remain a stranger to them forever: **"Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD."** (Ezk. 39:29)

(27) **"And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."** (Gen. 42:21) The Jews will feel guilty for their treatment of Christ. Revelation 1:7 says, **"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."**

(28) **"Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provision for the way: and thus did he unto them."**

(Gen. 42:25) Joseph's refusal to accept money from his brethren pictures Christ's refusal to accept Israel in her self-righteousness. Salvation is a free gift.

(29) **". . . Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you."** (Gen. 43:3) As we saw in 42:7, Christ is presently hiding his face from the Jews as a nation.

(30) **". . . And they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance."** (Gen. 43:28) As pointed out in 42:6, the Jews will one day bow before Christ.

(31) **". . . And they drank, and were merry with him."** (Gen. 43:34) This points to the day when Israel will be merry with Christ as her King.

(32) **"And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence."** (Gen. 45:3) So men will be troubled at the presence of Jesus Christ when they meet him in judgment (Rev. 20:11-15)

(33) **". . . God did send me before you to preserve life."** (Gen. 45:5) As mentioned earlier, this pictures Christ, the one who gives eternal life and preserves those who receive it.

(34) **"And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants."** (Gen. 45:16) Just as Pharoah and his servants rejoiced over the reuniting of Joseph and his brethren, the millennial world will rejoice over the reuniting of Christ and his brethren the Jews. After all, this will be a time of righteousness and peace. Psalm 97:1 is a good verse on the subject: **"The LORD reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."** Also see I Chronicles 16:31.

(35) **". . . every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians."** (Gen. 46:34) So, the "good shepherd" is an abomination to the world.

(36) **"And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land . . ."** (Gen. 47:11) Christ will one day give the Jews a permanent possession in the Holy Land that he promised them (Amos 9:13-15).

(37) **"And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth."** (Gen. 47:15) All of Egypt knew that Joseph was the only one who could help them, so they

finally came to him for their livelihood, their bread. Today the world needs to know that Christ, and only Christ, is the Bread of Life. During the coming kingdom age, they will know this (Isa. 11:1-9)

(38) **"And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field . . ."** (Gen. 47:20) The more famished the people became the more they came and sold to Joseph. This is precisely the case with the sinner who comes to Christ. It is the one who hungers and thirsts for righteousness that truly comes to Jesus and finds life (Mat. 5:6). Once he does so, he yields all to Christ (I Cor. 6:20).

(39) **"And they said, Thou hast saved our lives . . ."** (Gen. 47:25) Christ saves lives today.

(40) **"And Joseph said unto his father, They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them."** (Gen. 48:9) Here Joseph typifies Christ in that God gives him sons during the time of his brethren's rejection . Christ begets many sons during the church age (Heb. 2:10, John 1:12).

(41) **"And Joseph wept when they spake unto him . . . his brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants. And Joseph said unto them, Fear not . . . ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."** (Gen. 50:17-20) All of this matches Christ and the Jews almost perfectly. Like Joseph, Jesus wept because of the unbelief of his brethren (John 11:35). Eventually, they do fully trust him and become his servants. On a number of occasions Jesus uttered the words "fear not," and he was used of God to "save much people alive."

SUBJECTS OF TYPOLOGY

The following pages consist of some sample listings of types and objects, all of which can be further developed at the reader's pleasure. We've covered the basic principles for studying and understanding typology, and, as the reader has doubtless discovered for himself, Biblical typology is endless. These pages should serve as starter seeds for one's own studies, not all in any one or two settings, but for many hours of rich discoveries in

God's word. The following lists are not intended to be complete, but rather foundational. We have purposely omitted many types, and there are a great many yet to be discovered.

The "Type" column shows the person, place or thing that serves as a type. The "Reference" column gives one key reference (though there are sometimes many) for starting a study. Please don't forget the principles that we've covered. Any ONE of the types listed in the following pages might easily be used to preach an entire sermon or teach a fine Bible study, and some could yield enough meat for an entire book. May the Holy Spirit be your guide as you enjoy your own adventures and make your own discoveries.

TYPES OF CHRIST

Type	Reference
Adam	Luke 3:38
Light	John 8:12
Sun	Malachi 4:2
Abel	Matthew 23:35
Lamb	John 1:29
Offerings	Hebrews 10:10-12
Noah's Ark	Hebrews 11:7
Melchizedek	Hebrews 6:20
Isaac	Galatians 4:28
Joseph	Genesis 45:5
Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15
Sabbath	Matthew 11:28
Aaron	Hebrews 5:4-5
Aaron's Rod	Exodus 7:12
Rock	I Corinthians 10:4
Manna	John 6:48-52
Brazen Serpent	John 3:14-15
Tabernacle	Revelation 21:3
Showbread	Matthew 26:26
Lampstand	II Samuel 22:29
Passover Lamb	I Peter 1:18-19
Joshua	Hebrews 4:8
Cities of Refuge	Hebrews 6:18-20

Scarlet Thread	Joshua 2:18
Samson	Judges 16:20
Boaz	Ruth 4:10
David	Acts 2:25-31
Lion	Revelation 5:5
Eagle	Deuteronomy 32:11-12
Solomon	Luke 11:31
Temple	John 2:19-21
Bridegroom	Luke 5:35
Jonah	Matthew 12:40
Plumbline	Amos 7:7-8
Nail	Isaiah 22:23
Anchor	Hebrews 6:19-20
Physician	Matthew 9:12-13
Judge	John 5:22
Door	John 10:9
Shepherd	John 10:11
Bread	John 6:35
Vine	John 15:1
Branch	Jeremiah 23:5
Builder	Matthew 16:18
Gardener	John 20:15
Husbandman	James 5:7

TYPES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Type	**Reference**
Oil	I Samuel 16:13
Incense Altar	Exodus 30:3
Eliezer	Genesis 24:1-4
Wind	Acts 2:1-4
Daniel	Daniel 5:16
Ziba	II Samuel 9:1-13
Dove	Matthew 3:16
Teacher	John 14:26
Guide	John 16:13
Water	John 7:38-39
River	Isaiah 66:12

TYPES OF GOD THE FATHER

Type	Reference
Abraham	Hebrews 11:17-19
Ark of the Covenant	Exodus 25:10-22
Father of the Prodigal	Luke 15:11-32
Pharaoh over Joseph	Genesis 39-50
The Human Soul	I Ths. 5:23

TYPES OF THE WORD OF GOD

Type	Reference
Water	Ephesians 5:26
Bread	Matthew 4:4
Milk	I Peter 2:2
Honey	Psalms 119:103
Meat	Hebrews 5:12-14
Apples	Proverbs 25:11
Rain	Isaiah 55:10-11
Snow	Isaiah 55:10-11
Dew	Deuteronomy 32:2
Light	Psalms 119:105
Seed	I Peter 1:23
Sword	Hebrews 4:12
Mirror	James 1:23-25
Fire	Jeremiah 23:29
Hammer	Jeremiah 23:29
Gold	Psalms 19:10
Great Spoil	Psalms 119:162

TYPES OF THE CHURCH

Type	Reference
Moon	Song 6:10
Bride	John 3:29

Eve	Genesis 3:20
Rebekah	Genesis 24
Ruth	Ruth 1-4
Asenath	Genesis 41:45
Abigail	I Samuel 25
Enoch	Hebrews 11:5
Aaron's Sons	I Peter 2:5

TYPES OF THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

Type	**Reference**
Egyptian Plagues	Exodus 3:20
Ahab's Drought	James 5:17
Egypt's Seven Years Famine	Genesis 41:30
Nebuchadnezzar's Seven Times	Daniel 4:25
Jeremiah's Lamentations	Lamentations 1-5

TYPES OF THE SECOND COMING

Type	**Reference**
Temple	II Samuel 7:12-13
Fall Feasts	Leviticus 23
Fall of Jericho	Joshua 6
Judgment on Egypt	Exodus 7-14
Noah's Flood	Matthew 24:37
David's Victory over Goliath	I Samuel 17
Israel's Victory over Midian	Judges 4-5
Tower of Babel Judgment	Genesis 11:1-9
Destruction of Sodom	Luke 17:28-29
Revealing of Josiah	II Kings 11:12
Mount of Transfiguration	Matthew 17:1-5

TYPES OF THE RAPTURE

Type	Reference
Enoch's Translation	Genesis 5:24
Elijah's Translation	II Kings 2:11
John's Translation	Revelation 4:1
Lot's Deliverance	Genesis 19:16-17
Bridegroom's Voice	Song 2:8-10
Sheep Led Out	John 10:3
Lazarus' Resurrection	John 11:43-44
Rebekah Meets Isaac in Field	Genesis 24:63-67

TYPES OF THE ANTICHRIST

Type	Reference
Cain	I John 3:12
Nimrod	Genesis 10:8-10
Pharoah	Exodus 5:2
Nebuchadnezzar	Daniel 4:30-33
Goliath	I Samuel 17
Saul	I Samuel 16:14
Jeroboam	I Kings 12:26-33
Herod	Acts 12:21-23
Judas	John 17:12
Balak	Numbers 23:7
Sennecherib	II Kings 19:16
Haman	Esther 7:6
Ahab	I Kings 21:25
Nabal	I Samuel 25:25
Absolom	II Samuel 15:6
Sisera	Judges 4
Abimelech	Judges 9
Adonikam	Ezra 2:13
King of Tyrus	Ezekiel 28:13-19
King of Babylon	Isaiah 14:12-20

TYPES OF SATAN

Type	Reference
Lion	I Peter 5:8
Serpent	Revelation 12:9
Dragon	Revelation 12:9
Leviathan	Job 41
Lightning	Luke 10:18
Angel of Light	II Corinthians 11:14

TYPES OF BABYLON THE GREAT

Type	Reference
Jezebel	II Kings 9:30-37
Jericho	Joshua 6:20
Athaliah	II Kings 11:1-20
Tower of Babel	Genesis 11:1-9
Sodom and Gomorrah	Genesis 19:24-25
Fall of Philistine House	Judges 16:29-30
Fall of Ancient Babylon	Jeremiah 51:8
Nineveh	Nahum 3:4

TYPES OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

Type	Reference
Joshua Dividing the Land	Joshua 13-21
Solomon's Reign	Matthew 12:42
Dinah ("Justice") – 7th Child	Genesis 30:20-21
The Jubilee	Leviticus 25
The Sabbath	Genesis 2:1-3
Seventh Year of Land Rest	Leviticus 25:1-7
Mountain	Isaiah 2:2-3
Ark Rest in 7th Month	Genesis 8:4

TYPES OF ISRAEL

Type	Reference
Fig Tree	Jeremiah 24:8
Vine Tree	Ezekiel 15:6
Vineyard	Isaiah 5:7
Olive Tree	Hosea 14:6
Burning Bush	Malachi 3:6
Jacob	Genesis 32:28
Stars	Deuteronomy 10:22
Harlot	Hosea 4:15
Flock	Jeremiah 23:2
Paul	I Corinthians 15:8

TYPES OF PREACHERS

Type	Reference
Planter	I Corinthians 3:6
Warrior	I Corinthians 9:7
Husbandman	I Corinthians 9:7
Shepherd	I Corinthians 9:7
Ox	I Corinthians 9:9-11
Plower	Luke 9:62
Watchman	Ezekiel 3:17
Trumpet	Isaiah 58:1
Fire	John 5:35
Light	John 5:35
Messenger	Romans 10:15

TYPES OF CHRISTIAN WITNESSES

Type	Reference
Pharaoh's Butler	Genesis 40:13-14
Naaman's Little Maid	II Kings 5:2-3
Naaman's servants	II Kings 5:13
Moon	Psalms 89:37

Stars	Daniel 12:3
Stone	Joshua 24:27
Light	Matthew 5:16
Salt	Matthew 5:13

As the reader can see, the possibilities are endless. One can study types of Heaven and types of Hell. Many types of personal salvation can be studied by giving close attention to the numerous Bible accounts of deliverance and healing. Types of the believer's spiritual walk can be studied by giving attention to the various emblems of the flesh and the spirit in the scriptures. The original creation week of Genesis 1 and 2 is a type of God's 7,000 year plan, each day representing 1,000 years. The Levitical feasts each serve as types of specific events in God's prophetic program. Types of the virgin birth of Christ can be studied by considering the various Bible women who had unusual pregnancies and/or child births. The book of Isaiah is even a type of the Bible itself with its 66 chapters providentially divided into two major sections of 39 and 27. Typology has no end, and as stated earlier, an entire encyclopedia would have to be written in order to do justice to this most important and interesting subject. I do hope and pray that this humble attempt has been edifying, and, more importantly, I hope and pray that it has planted some goods seeds in YOUR heart, seeds that will, in due time, bear much fruit in your own spiritual journey and in your understanding of God's word. Thanks for reading.

Lesson Review

1-3. What three questions make up the heart and soul of typology studies?

1.

2.

3

4. Who is the king of Bible types?

5-9: List five types of Christ along with the appropriate scripture reference and explain why it appears to be a type:

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Suggested Memory Verse: John 5:39

OBTAINING YOUR CERTIFICATE

If you have studied through the previous six course booklets and have had us review and approve them, please send this final booklet with its review questions answered to the address in the front (pg 2) for review. Once your work has been approved, we will mail your course certificate. May the knowledge that you have gained serve you well as you humbly serve our Lord Jesus Christ.

Bro. James Melton
& Bible Baptist Church