

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Basic Studies in Bible Doctrine and Christian Living

PART I: BIBLICAL DOCTRINES FOR THE BELIEVER

This is a systematic study of Bible doctrine and Christian living. The areas discussed in this book have been chosen because of their importance to a well-grounded faith. We trust that as you read this book you will appreciate the book's information and answers to the many aspects of the Christian walk.

If we can be of any help to you after reading this book, you may get in touch with us by filling out our "CONTACT PAGE" at www.bbnet.org.

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Chapter 1 THE BIBLE

I. INTRODUCTION

Someone has called the Holy Bible "the divine library," and this is a true statement. Although we think of the Bible as one book, yet it is made up of sixty-six separate books. These books, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation, are divided into two main sections. The first section is called the Old Testament and contains thirty-nine books. The second section is the New Testament, and it has twenty-seven books. At the beginning of most Bibles there is an index which lists the names of the books, and tells the page number on which each book begins.

II. WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

From the human standpoint the Bible is history-His-story- and was written by not less than thirty-six authors over a period of about sixteen hundred years. But the important thing to remember is that these men wrote under the direct control of God. That makes this a God-inspired book. God guided them in writing the very words. This is what we mean by inspiration. The following Scriptures clearly teach that the Bible is inspired by God.

“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.” 2 Peter 1:21. “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.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Thus the Bible is the Word of God. Some would say that the Bible might contain the Word of God. This would imply that parts of it are inspired and parts are not. Who would know what is and what is not inspired? After many years of research and study, we are convinced that there is no human explanation for this book. This decision is not left to earthly opinions but rather as Psalm 119:89 says, “For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in Heaven.”

Another important point to remember is that the Bible is the only written revelation, which God has given to man. In the Bible, God warns us three times against adding to the Bible or taking away from it, the last time being Revelation 22:18-19.

III. WHAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE BIBLE?

Although the Bible is made up of sixty-six books, it has one main subject. Christ is the grand theme of Scripture. The Old Testament contains many predictions, or prophecies, concerning Christ. The New Testament tells of His coming as a redeemer. Christ is concealed in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament. It also tells of His death, burial, resurrection and ascension back to heaven. It concludes by revealing the next events to take place on planet earth. Jesus Christ will reign on earth for 1000 years. Then, there will be a final judgement called “The Great White Throne Judgement.” Lastly, a “new heaven and a new earth” will be established. The Bible gives us the plan of the ages from creation to a new creation. Revelation 21 and 22.

IV. HOW IS THE BIBLE DIVIDED?

The Bible is the record of the world from the beginning of time (creation) until the future end. Genesis tells of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the flood, and the beginning of the nation of Israel. From Exodus to Esther we have the history of Israel up to about 400 years before the birth of Christ. The books from Job to the Song of Solomon contain wonderful poetry and wisdom. The rest of the Old Testament, from Isaiah to Malachi, is prophetic; that is, these books contain messages from God to Israel concerning its present condition and its future destiny.

The New Testament opens with four Gospels, which present the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts tells the story of Christianity in its infancy. It reveals the beginning of the Church and gives personal testimonies of encounters with the Gospel of Jesus Christ including the great apostle Paul’s conversion. From Romans to Jude, we find letters to churches and individuals, concerning the great truths of the Christian faith, and practical instruction concerning the Christian life. Revelation gives us a glimpse into the future, to events that will yet take place in heaven, on earth, and in hell.

V. CONCLUSION

This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct

you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It will reward the greatest labor, and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. It is the Book of Books-God's Book-the revelation of God to man." Selected.

Chapter 2 GOD

No greater subject can occupy the mind than the study of God and of man's relationship to Him.

I. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

A. There are many systems that have false teachings or deny the existence of God.

Deism: This system acknowledges that there is a god but denies that a god sustains creation.

Atheism: Without explanation of an effect without a cause, they just say that there is no god.

Skepticism: They can only say they doubt or disbelieve that there is a god, especially a god of revelation.

Agnosticism: This school does not deny God but denies that God can be known.

Pantheism: Everything is god, and god is everything.

Tritheism: They teach that there are 3 separate gods.

Dualism: They believe in two gods, a god that is good and a god that is evil, both being equal.

Monotheism: This is the doctrine of one God. Christians believe this and so does the devil. James 2:19.

B. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. The fact that there is a God is assumed throughout the Scriptures. Before anything came into being, He was "In the beginning God." The first verse of the Bible begins with the assumption of His pre-existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the

earth." God's existence is presented as a statement of fact that needs no proof. The man who says that there is no God is called a fool in Psalm 14:1. We also need to connect this verse with John 1:1-5 which clearly states that Jesus was also there at the beginning of creation with God, therefore validating His eternal Sonship. The Holy Spirit also took part in creation. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Genesis 1:2. The triune God created the heaven and the earth.

C. However, even apart from the Bible, there are certain evidences for the existence of God.

- (1) Mankind has always believed in a universal being.
- (2) Creation must have a creator. The universe could not originate without a cause.
- (3) The wonderful design, which we see in creation, demands an infinite designer.
- (4) Because good and evil exist throughout the world, we must assume there is a moral law that divides good and evil. Since there is a moral law, there must be a lawgiver.
- (5) Since man is an intelligent, moral being, his creator must have been of a much higher order in order to create him.

II. THE NATURE OF GOD

A. God is a spirit. John 4:24. This means that God does not have a body. He is invisible, however, He can reveal Himself to man in visible form. In the person of Jesus Christ, God came into the world in a body of flesh. John 1:14-18; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3.

B. God is Light. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." I John 1:5.

C. God is Love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love." I John 4:8.

D. God is a consuming fire. "For our God is a consuming fire." Hebrews 12:29.

E. God hates. "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination to Him." Proverbs 6:16.

F. God hears. The eyes of the Lord are open unto us, and His ears are open

unto our prayers.

G. God is a person. Personal names are used in reference to Him. Exodus 3:14; Matthew 11:25. Personal characteristics are ascribed to Him, such as: (1) knowledge, Isaiah 55:9-10; (2) emotions, Genesis 6:6; (3) will, Joshua 3: 10.

H. God is a Unity. Scripture clearly teaches that there is one God. I Timothy 2:5 (Read this verse.) The false teaching that there are many gods is contrary to reason. There can be only one Supreme Being.

I. God is a Trinity. The Bible teaches not only that there is one God, but also that there are three persons in the Godhead, - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is a mystery to the human mind, but although it cannot be understood, it can be believed because God's Word says it is so. The word "trinity" is not found in the Bible, but the truth is found in the following passages: (1) Baptism of Jesus, Matthew 3:16-17. The great commission, Matthew 28:19. (3)The benediction of II Corinthians 13:14. The Father is called God in Romans 1:7. The Son is called God in Hebrews 1:8. The Holy Spirit is called God in Acts 5:3-4.

III. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

It is difficult to define God. One of the best ways is to describe certain of His qualities or characteristics. When we try to describe a person to someone that they have never met, we refer to their hair, eyes, size and other characteristics. This is also how the Bible tells us about God. These are known as His attributes.

A. God is omnipresent. This means that God is present everywhere at the same time. Jeremiah 23:24.

B. God is omniscient. In other words, He knows all things. He knows every thought and deed of man. Proverbs 15:3. He knows everything that takes place in nature, including even the death of a sparrow. Matthew 10:29. Though the universe is limitless and gloriously grand, He knows the eternal story of every grain of sand.

C. God is omnipotent. He has all power. He created the universe and now controls it by His power. There is nothing that He cannot do. Matthew 19:26.

D. God is eternal. He never had a beginning, and He will never cease to be. When Moses asked, "Who shall I say has sent me?" God replied, "I AM THAT I

AM.” He didn’t reply that he was or that he shall be. He is the eternal “I AM.” Exodus 3:13-14.

E. God is unchangeable. "I am the Lord, I change not." Malachi 3:6.

F. God is holy. He is absolutely pure and sinless. He hates sin and loves goodness. Proverbs 15:9-26. He must separate Himself from sinners, and must punish sin. Isaiah 59:1-2.

G. God is just. Everything He does is right and fair. He fulfills all His promises. Psalm 119:137.

H. God is love. Although God hates sin, He loves sinners. John 3:16.

Note: In speaking to God in prayer, we use words of respect to show reverence for God. It is not proper to address Him in the same way that we would speak to our fellowmen. If we walked into the office of a president or king, how would we address him? Let’s remember that we are coming into the presence of the King of Kings every time we pray.

Chapter 3 LORD JESUS CHRIST

The Lord Jesus Christ is the central theme of Holy Scripture. We shall consider His deity, His incarnation, His work and His offices.

I. HIS DEITY

In the Old Testament God said to Moses, “I AM THAT I AM.” This name was used frequently by Jesus to validate His deity. When he frequently used the name “I AM,” He was saying, “I am God.”

A. “I AM the bread which came down from heaven.” John 6:41.

B. “I AM the light of the world.” John 8:12.

C. “I AM the door.” John 10:7.

D. “I AM the good shepherd.” John 10:11.

E. “I AM the resurrection and the life.” John 11:25.

F. “I AM the way, the truth and the life.” John 14:6.

G. “I AM the true vine.” John 15:1.

The deity of Christ means that Christ is God. Scripture clearly teaches this important fact in the following ways.

A. The attributes of God are used in the Bible speaking of Christ.

- (1) His pre-existence. Christ has no beginning. John 1:1-3; 17:5.
- (2) His omnipresence. He is with His servants everywhere. Matthew 28:20.
- (3) His omnipotence. He has unlimited power. Revelation 1:18.
- (4) His omniscience. He has unlimited knowledge. John 21:17.
- (5) His unchangeableness. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Hebrews 13:8.

B. The works of God were performed by Christ.

- (1) He created all things. John 1:3.
- (2) He upholds the universe. Colossians 1:17.
- (3) He raised Himself from the dead. John 2:19.

C. The titles of God are given to Christ.

- (1) God the Father addresses the Son as God. Hebrews 1:8.
- (2) Men called Him God, and He did not refuse their worship. John 20:28.
- (3) Demons recognized Him as God. Mark 1:24.
- (4) He declared Himself to be God. John 10:30.

II. HIS INCARNATION

By the incarnation of Christ is meant His coming into the world as a man.

A. The coming of Christ was predicted in the Old Testament. Isaiah 7:14.

B. History records the birth of our Lord. His birth was different from all other births.

- (1) He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Luke 1: 35.
- (2) He was born of a virgin. Matthew 1:23.
- (3) He was truly man, possessing a body (Hebrews 10:5), soul (Matthew 26:38) and spirit (Luke 23:46).

C. Christ came in human form in order to:

- (1) Reveal the Father. John 14:9.
- (2) Put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Hebrews 9:26.
- (3) Destroy the works of the devil. I John 3:8.

Note well: One of the foundational truths of the Christian faith is that Jesus Christ is truly God and that He came into the world as a man by the miracle of virgin birth. Because of this birth he did not receive the Adamic or sin nature. Romans 5:12. As a man, He was absolutely sinless. His sinless life and His bodily resurrection from the dead confirm these truths.

III. HIS WORK

Under this heading, we shall discuss the Lord's death, resurrection and ascension. The Cross is the fundamental truth of the revealed Word of God. By the cross we do not mean the tree, but the Sacrifice upon that tree. From the Tabernacle in the wilderness through the Old Testament, The Word of God is filled with symbols of Christ and His crucifixion. He is the Passover Lamb of Exodus 12 and the Brazen Serpent of Numbers 21 and John 3:14-15. He is the Shepherd of Psalm 23 and the Smitten Shepherd of Zechariah 13:6-7. He is the Suffering Savior of Isaiah 53 and the King of Glory of Psalm 24:9-10.

A. His death.

- (1) No one is saved by the life of Christ but through the death of Christ. John 3:14-18.
- (2) It was part of God's eternal purpose. Hebrews 10:7.
- (3) It was necessary to fulfill Old Testament prophecies. Isaiah 53:5.
- (4) It was necessary to provide salvation for man. Ephesians 1:7.
- (5) The death of Christ was for others. He died as a substitute. I Corinthians 15:3.
- (6) The death of Christ was sufficient. It completely meets God's claims because Christ endured and exhausted the judgment of God against sin. It completely meets man's need because it was the death of an Infinite Person and therefore its value is infinite.

B. His Resurrection

- (1) The bodily resurrection of Christ was necessary to fulfill prophecy, to

complete the work of the Cross, Romans 4:25, and to enable Christ to undertake His present work in heaven.

- (2) Christ's resurrected body was real. It was not a spirit. Luke 24:39. It was the same body, which was crucified, because it had the print of the nails and the spear wound. John 20:27. Yet it was a changed body, with power to overcome physical limitations.
- (3) After His resurrection, Christ appeared to certain of His followers at least ten times. More than five hundred reliable witnesses saw Him after He arose and testified that Jesus was in fact risen from the dead. I Corinthians 15:6-8.
- (4) The resurrection of Christ is an important truth. If there had been no resurrection, there would be no Christian faith. This one event separates Christianity from all other religions. All religions point to the grave of their leader and "savior." We do not have a dead God. We have a living Savior who triumphed over death and the grave and is alive for ever more. In the courts of the world, the testimony of eyewitnesses validate the evidence of the case. Personal opinions are of little value. With over 500 eyewitnesses testifying to having personally seen the resurrected Christ from the dead, it leaves no doubt to the validity of the event.

C. His ascension.

- (1) At the end of His ministry on earth, Christ was carried up into heaven. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-11. His body was visible to those who were eyewitnesses as He ascended into heaven to fulfill His promise of John 14:2-3. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." John 14:2-3.
- (2) He ascended so that He might enter into His reward, John 17: 5, and continue His ministry for His people. The first chapter of Revelation is John's testimonial of the enthroned Christ.

IV. HIS OFFICES

Christ is presented in Scripture as a Prophet, a Priest and a King.

A. As Prophet, He tells men what God has to say to them, and He reveals God to men. John 1:18.

B. As Priest, He represents believers before God. Hebrews 4:14-16.

C. As King, He reigns today in the hearts of those who are loyal to Him. In the coming day, He will reign upon the earth for one thousand years. Revelation 20:2-3. Psalm 72 describes His reign on earth. Then throughout eternity the Lord Jesus will continue to be our King of Kings and Lord of Lords - forever.

Chapter 4 THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Christian religion is the only religion that has the Holy Spirit. As you think of this doctrine of the Holy Spirit, remember that Jesus Christ is the central theme of this Bible. We do not know the Holy Spirit's name. We are only told what He is, who He is and what He does. The silence of the Scriptures concerning His personal name is significant. He withholds His own name that the name and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ may be exalted. John 15:26.

A. His Person:

Do not call the Holy Spirit "it." He is a real person that indwells every believer. Sometimes we think that the only real person is a visible person. In reality we are a person and personality which is not part of the body. This human body is only the vehicle God gave us to live in while on planet earth. You are not an "it." When you die, there remains a body that we put in the grave, but you have departed. That real person has never been seen visibly just like the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's responses to mankind reveal that he is a person.

- (1) He may be grieved. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30.
- (2) He may be tested. "Then Peter said unto her, How is that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?" Acts 5:9.
- (3) He may be resisted. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts 7:51.
- (4) He may be blasphemed. "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." Mark 3:29-30.

- (5) He may be lied to. “Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?” Acts 5:3.

The Holy Spirit is also called “God” several places in the Bible. He has divine attributes as revealed in the following passages of Scripture.

- (1) Omnipotence - Luke 1:35. In the birth of Christ, He was the protector of Mary and Jesus. He is our protector as well.
- (2) Omniscience - I Corinthians 2:10. In our life, He knows everything about everything.
- (3) Omnipresent - Psalms 139:7-17. In our life, “He will never leave you or forsake you.” He is ever present.
- (4) Eternal Spirit - Hebrews 9:14. In our life from the new birth to Heaven, He is at work helping us “serve the living God.”

The Holy Spirit is also identified in the Bible by several symbols and examples, which are pictures of His Divine work.

- (1) Dove - John 1:32. The dove is a symbol of love and sorrow as He ministers to Jesus.
- (2) Water - Isaiah 44:3; John 7:38-39. Once you are saved only the Holy Spirit can quench your spiritual thirst.
- (3) Oil - I Samuel 16:13. The ear of a priest was anointed first so that he might hear God. Secondly, a priest’s thumb was anointed so that he might act for God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- (4) Wind - John 3:6-8. Quietly and unidentifiably the Holy Spirit moves both in salvation and in our daily lives.
- (5) Fire - Acts 2:3-4. Fire is symbolic of purification, testing or judgement. This is a work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- (6) Clothing - Judges 6:34 Amplified Version. The Spirit of Jehovah clothed himself with Gideon. Clothing speaks of protection. He is also our protector.

B. His Purpose:

He is active in many areas throughout Scripture. Here is a list of some of the things He is involved in.

- (1) He speaks. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I

have called them.” Acts 13:2.

- (2) He intercedes. “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26.
- (3) He testified. “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” John 15:26.
- (4) He oversees. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:28.
- (5) He guides. “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will Guide you into all truth.” John 16:13.
- (6) He teaches. “The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26.
- (7) He created. “In the beginning...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:1-2.
- (8) He regenerates in salvation. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I say unto you, Ye must be born again...so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John 3:3, 5-8.
- (9) He raised Jesus from the dead. “If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” Romans 8:11.
- (10) He completes salvation. “Ye are washed...ye are sanctified...ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” I Corinthians 6:11.
- (11) He seals us in salvation. “In whom having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Ephesians 1:13.
- (12) He leads believers. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18.

As we walk through this Christian life, we must be conscience of the fact that it is the person of the Holy Spirit who ministers to us each day. The Bible tells us that we are filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit. He cannot work in our lives if we live in sin. You may sin in thought or deed, but when you quench the Holy

Spirit, you must practice I John 1:9 immediately so that you do not lose your fellowship with God. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” This is how we stay in fellowship with Him. The greatest danger a Christian faces in this world is to allow sin in his life. It is not bankruptcy, sickness, loneliness, verbal offenses, persecution or numerous other things that are our greatest enemy. Sin is what will break our fellowship with God, quench the Holy Spirit, and allow the devil to divert our path to a path of destruction. Galatians 5:19-21 gives us a list of things that we should be sensitive to. We must clearly realize that Satan is the enemy of our souls. This is the daily warfare we fight. Ephesians 6:11-18. The victory comes “When we walk in the light as He (God) is in the light we have fellowship one with another (God and you) and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” I John 1:7. Keeping short accounts with God each hour of the day keeps us in fellowship with the Father. Instant confession of our sins is our only defense against the enemy of our soul. Read over several times and memorize chapter one of First John. It is the secret of walking a victorious Christian life.

C. His Practice:

Every Christian can produce two kinds of fruit in their life, but only one kind of fruit will be evident at any given time. Remember, as a Christian, you can produce either of these fruits depending on your desires. This can be the fruit of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit will depend on who is in control of your life. “Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.” Galatians 5:16-17. Daily you are bearing fruit as you live in this world, but which fruit is it? The pressure of the world entices you to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Temptation is presented in advertising, media, magazines and a thousand other places. Satan is the god of this world. I John 5:19. Again these works of the flesh are listed in Galatians 5:19-21. The person who is not a Christian has no choice but to produce the fruit of the flesh. From a human perspective, he may do good works and even religious and social works that the world applauds, however, in God’s sight they have no eternal merit.

The work of the Holy Spirit is to produce the fruit of the Spirit in your life. Only a person who is a born again Christian can have this fruit. Note that it is singular in the Scriptures. You cannot pick your fruit. It is His fruit, so He produces all or none in your life depending on your spiritual relationship with God. When sin enters the fruit changes from the fruit of the Spirit to the fruit of the flesh. The desire of every Christian must be to see the right fruit in their life. The

Holy Spirit works in our life and produces His fruit as we yield to His control. If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all. Galatians 5:22-24.

We do not work to obtain a position of victory in order to produce the fruit of the Spirit. We work from a position we already possess in Christ. There will be a battle every day of your life to produce this fruit, but here is our victory. “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Galatians 5:24. We must realize our victory is not of ourselves but of Christ. The crucifixion of the flesh is not by what we do but because of who lives in us and in whom we live. “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. As I yield to the control of the Holy Spirit, I can have daily victory. You may grieve the Holy Spirit, but He will never leave you because “you are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30. His indwelling with you is permanent until we arrive on Heaven’s shore.

D. His Provisions:

As a Christian, did you ever say to yourself, “What can I do?” If I gave you a gift of a new automobile what would I expect you to do with it? Would I expect you to just look at it, put it in a show room so people could come by and see it, talk about it, tell friends about it, take pictures of it, or would I expect you to get into it and drive it? Obviously, the purpose of the automobile is to drive it. It may be for the purpose of driving to work or giving friends a ride. It may be just for you to enjoy driving in the countryside. God has given you the gift of eternal life, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts for you to use for Him. “Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I do not want you to be unaware... Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries and the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” I Corinthians 12:1,4-7 NASB translation.

The next verses in this chapter and other chapters of Scripture give a list of gifts that the Holy Spirit gives believers. We know every believer has at least one gift to be used for the Lord. Romans 12:4-8. Now, what do you think the Lord expects us to do with these gifts that He has given us? As you move through the world and through the Scriptures you are not to look at other people’s gifts and become jealous. Realize that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are unique for you as one of His special children. “God has placed the

members each one of them in the body, just as He desired.” I Corinthians 12:18 NASB translation. You may ask, “What is my gift?” We do not know. Ask Him. Find your gift and put it to work.

There are some gifts that are no longer for believers today. Let’s remember that the book of Acts was a transitional period for the beginning of the Church. Acts is a transitional book; therefore, we do not build doctrine on this book unless the rest of the New Testament confirms it. Because believers did not have the New Testament, God demonstrated His power and approval by miracles, revelations and speaking in tongues (languages) at Pentecost. This was to rapidly spread the news of a new dispensation of the Savior who had come to redeem mankind. This was a miracle at Pentecost not to be repeated. There is only one Pentecost like there is only one Calvary, one bodily resurrection and one ascension. On the day of Pentecost people from all over the known world heard the Gospel in their language so that they could return and tell their people that the Savior of the world was alive from the dead. Acts 2:4, 22-24. Today, the gift of tongues is no longer active. We have the Bible in most languages of the world. We just need to fulfil this commission by using the tongue that we have. “Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15.

The gift of Knowledge is also no longer active for today because we have the full revelation of God in the written form of the New Testament. The gift of Prophecy has also ceased for the same reason. They were for that special time when the New Testament was not available in writing as we have it today. God communicated to His people through the Old Testament and in direct ways until the completion of the New Testament. As I Corinthians 13:10 says in reference to the coming New Testament, “When that which is (Greek “the”) perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.” This is confirmed in James 1:25 “But whoso looketh into (Greek “the”) perfect law of liberty,” which is the New Testament. God’s word, now in written form, eliminates the need for the above gifts. In fact to have any further revelations or prophecies or additions to God’s word will bring judgement as recorded in Revelation 22:18-19. “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man shall add unto these things God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.”

E. The Sealing of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is Himself the seal.

- (1) This is a seal of ownership. II Timothy 2:19.
- (2) This is a seal of identification. Ephesians 1:13-14.
- (3) This is a seal of security. Ephesians 1:13-14.
- (4) This is a seal of a finished transaction. A seal confirms a legal transaction. Jeremiah 32:10.
- (5) This is a seal of righteousness. Romans 4:11.
- (6) This is a seal of impression. The signet seal always left the impression in wax. When we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, His impression is on us. II Corinthians 1:22. This is a seal of “earnest.” Earnest money is a down payment to be paid in full at a later date. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is God’s “earnest” payment. “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30. His indwelling you is permanent until we arrive on Heaven’s shore.

F. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The word baptism means to “dip, to place into or identify with.” The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the operation whereby the Holy Spirit places us into the body of Christ when we are saved. The “body of Christ” is synonymous with the “Church” which is inclusive of all born again believers. “By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and have all been made to drink of one spirit.”

I Corinthians 12:13. This was the promise of Pentecost and the beginning of the Church.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not an endowment of power or an experience but rather an act of the Holy Spirit, Himself, as the agent to place you into the body of Christ. Acts 1:5. “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.” This speaks of Pentecost, the beginning of the Church, which was soon to come. Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon people, He was “with you,” but after Pentecost, He is always “in you.” He takes up permanent residence in all who are saved. Whenever the words “baptism of the Spirit” are used, it is always applied collectively to a group and never to an individual. When you see in Scripture the “Baptism of the Spirit and of fire,” this is a contrasting picture of salvation and judgement. You have one or the other, depending on your relationship to Jesus Christ. Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17.

Some may claim to have an experience of the “Baptism of the Spirit” and speak in tongues. Some may claim to have received power to heal, do miracles, and cast out demons, but they are false prophets and false teachers. Read II Peter chapter 2. They are interpreting the Bible by their own experience rather than interpreting their experience by the Bible. The devil can counterfeit supposed miraculous experiences that are not of God. There is a spirit of Truth, and there is a spirit of error. I John 4:1-6.

The key to the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit for believers today must be motivated by a more excellent way. I Corinthians 13:2. “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not charity (Love) I am nothing.” Love is the driving force that must motivate us to exercise our gifts as Christians. We must surrender everything to the Lord Jesus Christ to be available at any time, for any place, for any work, for any witness as the Master calls us. Much more could be shared about the person and work of the Holy Spirit, and as we mature in Christ, we will understand more of His presence and work in our lives.

Chapter 5 MAN

If we want to know the truth about man, we must turn to the Bible. "Truth is what God says about something." The Bible tells us about man's creation, nature, and relation to other beings. Man is the focal point of creation. All the earth is subject to him. Genesis 1:26. However, to really know man we must obtain God's perspective, not man's ideas.

I. MAN'S ORIGIN

It is only natural that man should be curious about his origin. He always has been. Various theories have been put forward at different times by philosophers. The most modern is the theory of evolution, which asserts that man's ancestors are the lower animals. There is no evidence that primitive man is any different from modern man. The fact that Human blood is one blood throughout the world proves that it is not a process of evolution. Acts 17:26. Animal blood will not sustain life for man. We cannot mix our blood with animal blood. From fish to fowls to animals to man, God created each one after their own kind. Genesis 1:24-25.

Man is distinctively different in that he was created in the image of God. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Genesis 1:26-27.

God created the first man from the dust of the ground. Genesis 2:7. However, throughout history God created human beings in one of the following ways: (A) By conception with man and woman. (B) Without the aid of a woman, as Eve. (C) Without a man or woman, as Adam. (D) Without the aid of a man, by a woman, as Christ. This is another evidence of God's power over life.

God says concerning His creature man, "I have created him for my glory, I have formed him: yea, I have made him." Isaiah 43:7. So the question is "What is the chief end of man?" Properly answered, "The chief end of man is to glorify God."

II. MAN'S NATURE

Anyone who has witnessed a person dying understands vividly that man has a physical body and also a soul or spirit. At one moment the person is alive ... the next he is gone. Yet his body is still there. But the life principle has departed; a dead body remains.

The Bible teaches us that man is a threefold being: body, soul and spirit. I Thessalonians 5:23. While it is hard for us to distinguish between soul and spirit, since both are in contrast with the physical body, the Bible shows that there is a difference. A plant is a body without soul or spirit. An animal has a body and soul but no spirit. Man is body, soul and spirit. The soul distinguishes a living being from a dead one, but the spirit distinguishes a man from an animal. The spirit of man makes it possible for him to have communion or fellowship with God.

Man is the only created being that prays. Prayer is a universal practice. From the most pagan people to the most enlightened people - we pray. Why? Have you ever seen a monkey thank God for his bananas? Also, man is the only created being with a conscience. Have you ever seen a monkey that felt guilty for stealing another monkey's coconuts or for committing adultery? The writings of history are filled with the testimonies of human beings who were struck with conviction that they had done wrong. Romans 1:18-32. Animals make decisions through instinct. Only man can make decisions by reasoning.

When fallen man becomes a Christian, he receives the indwelling Holy Spirit. We received the old nature through the fall of Satan, which he brought into the human race through the fall of Adam. If we will come to Him in faith, receiving Him as our personal Savior, He literally, in the person of the Holy Spirit, takes up residence in our lives. At that point we receive a new nature, which is “Christ in you the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27.

The soul is the seat of the emotions and passions. The term spirit includes our ability to know and reason. Man is responsible to God and it is his greatest duty to find out what God wants him to do, then do it. These two natures, the flesh and the Spirit, are an internal warfare that we as Christian battle throughout life. (More about this under “Salvation”)

III. MAN'S FREE WILL

There are other beings in the universe, which God has created. These are angels or spirits. They do not have human bodies or souls. They are mightier than we are. They were also created to serve God, but like man, they have a free will. Some of them fell into the sin of disobedience. Isaiah 14:12-15.

God could have made a number of machines to do His will mechanically. Instead He chose to create beings who could, if they wished, serve Him voluntarily and love Him freely. We cannot quite understand why He would desire to have it so, but the evidence clearly abounds throughout history. Man makes his choices, and God delivers the consequences.

IV. MAN'S SIN

When God created free beings, able to do His will or refuse to do so, He must have known that some would choose the wrong way. And so it turned out. A great angel called Lucifer, now known as Satan, decided to set his will in opposition to God's. The first sin was not committed on earth but rather in heaven. He was immediately cast out of heaven. Many other angels joined Satan and were cast out with him. From that time on, Satan has sought to hinder the plans of God in every possible way. When man was created with a free will, Satan immediately planned to tempt him from the path of obedience. God had warned man, but Satan succeeded only too well in drawing him into sin as well. The well-known story is found in Genesis 3.

Now God, as the moral Governor of the universe, cannot tolerate in His presence any being who deliberately disobeys His commands. This is why Satan was cast out of heaven when he defied God's will. The same treatment was necessary for man, and so Adam was driven from the physical presence of God. Genesis 3:23-24.

Sin had entered the human race, and Adam's nature has been passed on to every member of the human race. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12. We are all born with a tendency to sin. This nature responds to temptation from without and so we yield and grievously sin against a holy God.

V. MAN'S FUTURE

Just as the Bible tells us of man's origin, as coming from the hand of God; and of man's shameful fall and the consequent separation from God; so it faithfully tells us that every man, woman and child will some day stand before God as his Judge. "So then every one of us shall give an account to God." Romans 14:12. The fact of death is so common that everyone understands the inevitable end of every man. But the Bible adds, "It is appointed unto man once to die but after this the judgment." Hebrews 9:27. God has created man and revealed to him His will through His Word. God will absolutely hold every person responsible for everything he has done. This life is primarily a preparation for the next one. Man does not die like the animal. Man's spirit must go to God, his Creator and Judge.

Chapter 6 SIN

I. WHAT IS SIN?

No one can read the Bible much without realizing that a great deal of attention is given to the subject of sin, its cause and cure. We often think of sin in connection with crime and murder. But sin in the Bible refers to anything short of God's perfection. In Romans 3:23, we read, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." The "glory of God" includes the thought of absolute perfection. Sin is therefore falling short of the mark. All men are guilty of this. Sin is also spoken of in the Bible in the following ways.

A. Breaking the law of God. Romans 5:13.

- B. Rebellion against God, or lawlessness. I John 3:4 (Revised Version).
- C. Moral impurity. Psalm 32:5.
- D. Evil thoughts are sinful, as well as evil deeds. Matthew 5:28.

II. THE ORIGIN OF SIN

The first recorded instance of sin took place in heaven. The angel Lucifer became ambitious to be equal with God. Isaiah 14:12-14. For this sin of pride, he was cast out of heaven, and became the one whom the Bible elsewhere describes as the devil or Satan.

The first instance of sin on earth is described in the Third Chapter of Genesis. It took place in the Garden of Eden. God forbid Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They disobeyed God, ate the forbidden fruit and thus became sinners.

III. THE RESULTS OF SIN

A. As soon as the parents of the human race sinned, they became conscious of the fact that they were naked, and they tried to hide from God. Genesis 3:7-8.

B. The penalty of sin is death. Adam became spiritually dead the moment he sinned. By this we mean that he became separated from God, and was banished from God's presence. He also became subject to physical death. Although he did not die immediately, his body was eventually doomed to die. Romans 5:12.

C. Adam's sinful nature was passed on to the entire human race. Every child born of sinful parents is a sinner by birth by choice and by practice. Thus Adam's oldest son, Cain, was a murderer, and sin began to take its toll on the human race. Because all men are born sinners, they are all dead spiritually, and are all doomed to die physically some day. Read Romans 5:12-18 carefully at this point.

D. Man's sin brought God's curse upon all creation. Adam's oldest son became a murderer. Thorns and thistles, for instance, are evidence of this curse. Other evidences are mentioned in Genesis 3:14-19. Modern man tries to explain that our depravity is just human failure and mistakes. Some of our psychologists would try to make us believe man is getting better and better because of our advancements in knowledge and technology. However, we do not

need proof of sin as long as we have cemeteries, prisons, hospitals, and funeral parlors. We may call it what we want, but tears, sickness, sorrow, pain and death are clear evidences of the result of sin. Why does man sin? Read John 8:44. It began in heaven and will end in hell. Revelations 20:10.

IV. THE PENALTY OF SIN

"The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. God has pronounced the penalty of sin as being death. There is no way that a man can perfect himself to be acceptable to God. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3: 23. We have already seen that this means spiritual death and physical death. This penalty must be paid. God must punish sin or provide a way to cleanse us and forgive us of our sins.

As long as a man lives in his sins, he is dead spiritually and is facing physical death. If he is still in his sins when he dies, he is subject to eternal death. This means that he will be forever banished from God and will suffer for his sins in the lake of fire. This is the second death spoken of in Revelation 20:14.

V. THE REMEDY FOR SIN

God has provided a remedy so that men do not need to suffer everlasting punishment for their sins. He sent His Son into the world to provide a way of escape for man. The Lord Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. The virgin birth was absolutely necessary in order for Him to be born without sin. Because of this, he did not inherit Adam's sinful nature. He is the only sinless man who ever lived. On the cross he willingly suffered the penalty of sin, and satisfied all God's holy demands. Since the penalty of sin has been met, God can now give eternal life to every sinner who confesses the fact that he is a sinner and receives the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. II Corinthians 5:21. (This will be more fully explained under Salvation.)

When a person trusts in Christ, he is saved from the penalty and power of sin. This does not mean that he no longer commits sin. But it does mean that all his sins, past, present and future have been forgiven and that he will never be judged for them. Remember all your sins were future when Christ died. In Christ he has the power to live for God with victory over sin instead of living for the pleasures and power of sin and Satan.

This is why Jesus Christ died on the cross. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live unto righteousness.” I Peter 2:24.

Chapter 7 SALVATION

Let us look at some things in connection with salvation. The need for salvation is clearly taught in the Bible. God spiritually views the world as two families. One family consists of the children of the devil. “Know ye not that 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.” John 8:44. The other family consists of the children of God. “But as many as received Him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” John 1:12.

You are, at this moment, in one family or the other. If you were to die today, the family you are in would determine your eternal destiny. Right now, are you in God’s family or the devil’s family? This is a question only you can answer.

Here is the key. The reason God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world was to die for the sins of the world and defeat Satan, thereby making a way that we can be “born again.” “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3. This new spiritual birth moves us into God’s family. This is what salvation is all about.

ELEVEN THINGS SALVATION AND THE NEW BIRTH ARE NOT

1. Not of natural generation or descent - "not of blood." Though one may be born in a Christian home and of Christian parents, this does not make him a Christian.
2. Not of self determination - "will of the flesh." Just as a child cannot will itself to be born physically, so no one can produce the new birth by his own efforts.
3. Not of human mediation - "nor of the will of man, but of God." No human being whether priest, prophet, preacher, bishop, or other supposed spiritual leader, however eminent his ecclesiastical position, can impart the new birth or spiritual life to anyone. All the rites, rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, penance, confessions or repetitious prayers of any or of all organized religions can ever produce the new birth.
4. Not a physical change. Christ corrected Nicodemus' misunderstanding

- concerning this and showed him it was a spiritual change. John 3:6.
5. Not a social and geographical change. The born again person is not suddenly translated to heaven, but he continues to live on earth, now to please his Lord and Savior. I Corinthians 7:20-24; Colossians 3:22-24.
 6. Not an intellectual apprehension of what it is. A person can be religiously educated, ordained to the ministry, and become a preacher without being born again. There are many such. Theoretically they may know its necessity, yet know nothing of it by experience. II Peter 2:1, 20-21.
 7. Not an evolutionary process. It is not a gradual development of some germ of spiritual life that is within. Ephesians 2:1-2. Sinners are described as being spiritually dead. It is not a process. Birth brings life instantaneously. Life cannot be developed where birth does not exist!
 8. Not a reformation or self-improvement by which outwardly bad habits are relinquished. It is not a change of the manners or habits of the person. Ephesians 2:8-9. It imparts a new life. "I give unto them eternal life." John 10:2.
 9. Not of water baptism. All the water in the ocean cannot save or cleanse you. There is no saving power water no matter what man may tell us. Baptism is an ordinance showing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and nothing more. When we are baptized, it is a public testimony of what God has done in our life. I Peter 3:21b. We are not saved by water but by the blood of Jesus Christ that was shed on the cross.
 10. Not a confirmation. Some churches administer certain rituals that claim participants, usually children 12-13 years of age, as saved. Sometimes this is an anointing with oil, which supposedly signified the receiving of the Holy Spirit. This is false doctrine. You do not receive the Holy Spirit by an act of man but by receiving Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. John 3:6.
 11. It is not a religious belief or church membership. It is possible to be sincere in one's religious convictions, be baptized, confirmed, join the church, take communion, teach a Sunday School class, occupy a church office, be a preacher or priest or do supposed miracles of healing and prophecy without being born again. Acts 8:22-23. The necessity for the new birth was revealed to one of the most religious, sincere and moral men of his day. John 3:1-16.

The new birth is a spiritual transformation, John 3:8, and can only be brought about by God. John 1:13.

SEVEN THINGS THAT SALVATION IS

I. ITS DEFINITION

The word Salvation simply means deliverance. It is commonly used to describe the act by which a person is delivered from a danger that threatens him. We speak of a person being "saved" from drowning, or from a burning building, or from a sinking ship. In each case, three things are taken for granted. (1) The person to be saved was in danger of death. (2) Someone saw his peril and went to his rescue. (3) The rescuer was successful in his mission and delivered the person from his perilous plight, and thus "saved" him. The words: "save," "saved," "Savior," and "salvation" occur many times in the Bible and have exactly the same meaning in a spiritual sense.

II. ITS NECESSITY

The necessity for God's salvation is due to two facts, which each person must face.

A. The fact of man's sin. Romans 3:23.

We have already discussed in our previous lesson the spiritual condition of all men. By nature, all human beings are children of the devil. We pointed out that each human being comes into the world possessed of a sinful nature that constitutes him a sinner by birth. This sinful nature, in time, is evidenced by sinful thoughts, words, deeds and an attitude of enmity to God. The Bible makes this abundantly clear. Read Romans 5:12, 18, 19; 6:16; 8:5-8; Genesis 6:5; Ephesians 2:1-3; II Corinthians 4:3-4; Isaiah 53:6; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 1:21-32; 3:19-23. It will be evident to all from these Scriptures that man is:

- (1) A sinner, needing forgiveness.
 - (2) Lost, needing to be found.
 - (3) A child of Satan that must move to a new relationship with God.
 - (4) Guilty, needing pardon that only God can give him.
 - (5) Spiritually dead, needing life that only God can impart.
 - (6) Blind, needing illumination that can only come from God's Word.
 - (7) A slave, needing liberation from Satan and sin that only God can do.
- Man is thus utterly helpless to save himself.

B. The fact of God's righteousness.

God is holy, and must punish sin. He will "by no means clear the guilty." Exodus 34:6-7. He has revealed His hatred of sin, and His sentence against all who die in their sins. This is eternal banishment from His presence. See John 8:21-24; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:22-31; Jude 11-13; Revelation 20:11-15. The obvious conclusion is; since man is a sinner, and God is righteous; the sinner needs to be delivered or saved from the penalty of his sins. His cry must be: "What must I do to be saved?" The answer is: "Believe (place your trust) on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16:30-31. No man can save himself.

III. ITS PROVISION

The Gospel is the good news that God in wondrous grace has abundantly provided this salvation through the Person and the work of His beloved Son. Two things are clearly taught.

A. Christ came to be the Savior of sinners.

"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." Luke 19:10. The Son of God, equal and eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, became incarnate in order to provide salvation. John 3:16-17; Mark 10:45; Matthew 9:12-13; John 10:11; 15-18.

B. Through Christ's death and resurrection, this salvation has been provided, to God's complete satisfaction.

As Christ willingly hung upon the cross, He assumed the full liability of our guilt and sin, bore our sins in His own body, and died as a substitutionary sacrifice on behalf of all sinners. All God's judgment against sin fell on Him, and all God's righteous claims against the sinner were fully satisfied by Christ's death on our behalf. God indicated His complete acceptance of this sacrifice of Christ by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His own right hand. Read I Corinthians 15:1-4; II Corinthians 5:21; I Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5; Romans 5:6-9; Acts 4:10-12; 5:31; 17:31.

IV. ITS CONDITION

Since Christ has accomplished, by the sacrifice of Himself, all the work needed for the sinner's salvation, what must the sinner do in order to experience this salvation?

A. He must repent.

Repentance consists simply of a change of mind, which results in a change of attitude toward sin, self, the Savior and salvation; which, in turn, is evidenced by a change of action. Read Luke 13:3; Acts 17:31; 20:21. The sinner's conviction will give place to an earnest desire for salvation; his pride to humility; his self-satisfaction to a frank confession of his helpless, hopeless and hell-deserving condition.

B. He must believe the gospel, or the testimony of God concerning the Person and work of Christ. I John 5:9-10.

As a lost and guilty sinner he must believe that Christ died for him, individually; that Christ bore his sins, took his place and, by His death, accomplished all the work needed for his salvation. Romans 4:5.

C. He must accept the Lord Jesus Christ, by a definite act of his will as his own personal Savior, henceforth to own Him as the supreme Lord of his life. John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10; John 3:16; 5: 24; 6:47; Ephesians 1:13.

This is the crucial act. Will you, right from your heart, say: "Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am a guilty, lost sinner. I believe that you bore my sins on the cross of Calvary and died in my place. I now ask you to come into my heart and save me. I trust the finished work on the cross and receive you as my own Savior, henceforth I want you to be the Lord and Master of my life." This is what it means to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 16: 31. If you have never done this, why don't you right now take this step of faith and ask Him to save you.

V. ITS ASSURANCE

How may one know, for certain, that he is saved? We answer without any hesitation: by the Word of God. God declares plainly and in black and white, that every soul trusting in His Son is forgiven, saved, and the possessor of eternal life and secure forever. Read Acts 13:38; I John 2:12; Ephesians 2:8; I Corinthians 6:11; I John 5:13; Romans 5:1; 8:1; John 10:27-30.

There will also be evidence such as: a new internal peace, a desire to know the Bible, a desire to pray and a desire to separate from a sinful lifestyle. "If any man

be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.” II Corinthians 5:17.

VI. ITS SCOPE

Salvation has a three-fold aspect: past, present and future.

A. Past - Salvation from sin's penalty or consequences.

Since Christ has endured the full penalty, which was due for our sins, the believer is delivered from its consequences. John 5:24; Romans 8:1.

B. Present - Salvation from sin's power, or control.

Because of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence, plus the impartation of a Divine nature, the believer is now enabled to enjoy deliverance from the dominion of sin in his life. I Corinthians 6:19; II Peter 1:3-4; Romans 6:1-14. This does not mean that the believer is incapable of sin; far from it, for he still possesses the evil nature called "the flesh." It does mean that you will not sin, but that you “will” not to sin. In the measure that he avails himself of the means that God has provided, sin shall not be the dominating factor in his life. This present victory will depend on:

- (1) The reading and study of and obedience to the Word of God. II Timothy 2:15.
- (2) The keeping constantly in touch with God by prayer. Hebrews 4:14-16.
- (3) The yielding of one's body to God for both a righteous and useful life. Romans 6:13; 12:1-2.
- (4) The prompt confession to God and the forsaking of all known sin. I John 1:8-9; Titus 2:11-15.

C. Future - Salvation from sin's presence.

This will take place at the coming of Christ, when He will raise the dead and change the living, so that they will have bodies incapable of sin, decay and death. This is the final aspect of salvation that we look for. Hebrews 9:28; I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

VII. ITS RESULTS

These are numerous. Ephesians 1:3-14. We shall select a few.

- A. Peace with God. Romans 5:1. No longer at enmity.
 - B. Acceptance before God in Christ. Ephesians 1:6.
 - C. Joy in God as His children, joining a new family. Romans 5:10-11; 8:14-17, Galatians 3:26-4:7.
 - D. Living for God. II Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 2:20; I Peter 4:2-5.
 - E. Service to God in the way of good works and testimony for Him. Ephesians 2:10; Matthew 5:16; Mark 16:15-16.
 - F. Worship, praise and prayer unto God. John 4:23-24; Hebrews 10:19-22; Hebrews 13:15; 4:14-16.
 - G. An eternal home in heaven with God. John 14:1-3; Revelation 22:1-5.
- We trust that you will have no rest until you know, on the authority of the Word of God that you are eternally saved!

Chapter 8

A BIBLICAL EXPLANATION AND ILLUSTRATION OF SALVATION

Christ defines a three-fold means by which the Salvation takes place.

- A. It is revealed in the Bible by a "New Birth." John 3:3-8.

It is revealed by believing the Word of God. John 3:5. The "water" here is the well-known symbol for the Word of God. Ephesians 5:26; John 15:3; Psalm 119:9. It has no reference to baptism. Other Scriptures make it abundantly clear that the new birth comes through the Word of God. I Peter 1:23-25; James 1:18. Just as water when applied cleanses from our eyes the dirt that would otherwise obscure our vision, so the Word of God, when read and believed, washes from the mind of the sinner his wrong ideas of God and His salvation. The entrance of God's word brings light on man's lost condition, Romans 3:10-19; God's love as seen in His provision for man's salvation, John 3:16; and the way by which a sinner may be saved, Romans 10:1-17.

- B. It is revealed by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. John 3:5.

The Holy Spirit, the third Person in the Trinity, was sent by Christ, on His ascension, to use the Word of God to convince men of their sin; to lead them to put their trust in Christ; to indwell each person on believing; to communicate to the believer a Divine nature or capacity for spiritual things, and to guide each born-

again person into all truth. John 16:7-15; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; II Peter 1:3-4; Galatians 5:22-26.

As the Word of God is read or heard, the Holy Spirit applies the truth to the heart in convicting force, showing the sinner his lost, guilty, helpless and hopeless condition. He then reveals through the Word the way of salvation through faith in Christ and His finished work. The moment the sinner trusts in Christ He seals him as His purchased possession. This is not a question of feeling, but of fact. We do not feel the new birth.

C. It is revealed by the testimonies of those who looked and lived.

Throughout the New Testament and history, millions have looked and lived. By faith, they believed in the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. John 3:14-16. In these words Christ made crystal clear how this new life can come to a sinner. In answer to Nicodemus' question "How can these things be?" Christ used an incident recorded in the Old Testament to illustrate how the new birth could be experienced. Now stop and read Numbers 21:4-9.

Seven words seem to sum up the incident. Let us give it our closest and most careful attention, for it is Christ's own illustration of how the sinner can be born again.

- (1) Sin - Numbers 21:5. Just as Israel sinned, so all humanity has sinned against God in thought, word and deed. Romans 3:23.
- (2) Judgment - Numbers 21: 6. As their sin brought God's judgment upon them, so God has revealed His wrath against all sin. Romans 1:18; Job 36:18; Romans 6:23.
- (3) Repentance - Numbers 21:7. Israel realized, confessed, and sought pardon for their sin. This is repentance, which consists of a change of mind, resulting in a change of attitude, which is expressed by a change of action. God demands the repentance of the sinner. Luke 13:3; Acts 17:31; 20:21; Mark 1:15.
- (4) Revelation - Numbers 21:8. "And the Lord said." As God revealed to Moses the way of salvation for these snake-bitten Israelites, so God has revealed in the Bible His way of salvation for us. II Timothy 3:15-17; Romans 10:8-9.
- (5) Provision - Numbers 21:8-9. A serpent of brass was made and lifted up on a pole in full view of the camp of Israel. Now compare John 3:14. Just as Moses lifted up the brazen serpent, so Christ must be lifted up on a cross to

provide salvation for sin-bitten humanity. On the cross He bore our sins, took our place, endured all the judgment due to our sins, and by His death, satisfied all God's demands against the sinner. God has indicated His acceptance of the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son by raising Him from the dead. Isaiah 53:5-6; I

Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 5:7-8.

- (6) Condition - Numbers 21:8. "When he looketh." The fact that the brazen serpent was lifted up on the cross did not, of itself, save them. Looking was not enough. There was a step of faith required for each Israelite. They had to believe that looking at the snake would really save them. They could have looked away in unbelief. They could have said that it was foolish to believe that a snake, even though God had said it, could really save them. They could have mocked and laughed with others that it was foolish. However, in order for each bitten Israelite to live, he had to look. The fact that Jesus Christ died for our sins on the cross and accomplished all the work needed for salvation does not save us. As a lost sinner, each must personally look, by faith, believing and trusting that what God has said is true. "Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved." Romans 10:13. Just as the bitten Israelite was not asked to pray, confess or do good works in order to merit salvation, so unsaved sinners are urged to trust completely in Jesus Christ and receive Him by faith as their own personal Savior. John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9.
- (7) Result - Numbers 21:9. "He lived." The moment a bitten Israelite (who was as good as dead) looked, he received new life. He was, as it were born again! So the moment a guilty, lost sinner believes the gospel that Christ died for his sins, and definitely accepts Him as his own personal Savior, he receives spiritual or eternal life. He is then indwelt by the Holy Spirit, becomes a partaker of a Divine nature, and is thus born from above, or regenerated. This is the new birth, which Christ declared was absolutely essential to seeing and entering the Kingdom of God. John 3:3,5.

Chapter 9 REPENTANCE FOR SALVATION

A. It is not reformation.

Repentance is wholly an inward act of the mind. To many people it means to turn away from their sins, but this would only be reformation. Repentance is not doing something. A man can turn away from his sins and still not be a Christian.

B. It is not Penance.

Penance is an act of sorrow to pay for sin. Many people in different religions do many things they call penance. They offer sacrifices, personally torture themselves, pay money to have religious leaders pray for them, personally pray for long periods of time, repeat prayers with prayer beads, go to confessionals and confess their sins to religious people and go through certain religious rituals, all hoping to get rid of their sins.

C. It is not contrition.

By this we mean that repentance is not feeling sorry for our sins and receiving forgiveness. Many people in prison feel sorry for what they did, but this does not erase the crime. Real repentance does include sorrow for sin, but just being sorry for sin is not repentance but can lead to repentance. “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” II Corinthians 7:10.

D. It is a change of mind, not a change of opinion.

True repentance is a change of mind that will lead to a change of action, but remember, you can have a change of action without a change of mind. Matthew 21:28-29 is a good example. Before anyone can be saved there must be a change of mind about many things including, sin, self, God and Jesus Christ. In reality, repentance is really taking a stand against our “old self” and placing ourselves on the side of God.

E. It is a work of God.

Repentance is God convicting us of our need for a savior because of our burden of sin. God begins to work on our conscience through conviction, and we decide that a choice must be made. We either make a decision to follow Him, or we continue the way that we are going. To change direction we must repent and call upon Him to save us. That decision will result in a change of mind concerning our relationship with God. Four things will be evidenced in true repentance. There will be a change of intellect, a change of feelings, a change of will and a change of action.

A person, who is walking down the road of life lost and confused, looking for directions best illustrates real repentance. Suddenly something gets his attention.

As he hears God's Word, he stops and realizes he is going the wrong way. The choice is now his – keep going or turn around. Repentance is when he turns around and goes the other way. You make a decision to go God's way.

Chapter 10 GRACE PROVIDES SALVATION

I. INTRODUCTION

All God's dealings with mankind at the present time are based upon grace, mercy and peace. Grace means "God's unmerited favor." This means that He shows us favor, which we do not deserve. This is evidenced in the salvation we freely receive. The word grace is found over 160 times in the Bible. Of these occurrences, 128 are in the New Testament. God is spoken of as "the God of all grace." I Peter 5:10. Christ is described as being "full of grace." John 1:14. The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of grace." Hebrews 10:29. Thus the three persons of the Godhead are closely linked with grace.

II. DEFINITION

The word grace used in the Old Testament carries the meaning "to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior." The New Testament word means "favor, goodwill, loving-kindness."

The following definitions have proved helpful in explaining what grace is.

- A. Grace is love displayed to unworthy objects. God is love; but when bestows that love on guilty, unclean, rebellious sinners, then it is grace.
- B. Love that looks up is adoration. Love on its own level is affection. Love that descends is grace.
- C. Grace is God showing nothing but love and mercy when we deserved nothing but wrath and judgment. It is God bending toward us in infinite love.
- D. Grace is seen in God giving heaven's Best to save earth's worst.

III. CONTRAST

Grace is not to be confused with works. If man could obtain salvation by doing good works, then salvation would simply be his wages. Romans 4:4-5; Romans 11:6. God does not owe anything to man. Salvation is a free gift.

Grace is not to be confused with law. Men are not saved by keeping the law. They are saved by grace. The following will help to make this clear.

- A. Law brings a work to do.
Grace tells of a work that is done.
- B. Law says, "This do and thou shalt live."
Grace says, "Live, and thou shalt do."
- C. Law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God."
Grace says, "God so loved the world," John 3:16, and "We love Him because He first loved us." I John 4:19.
- D. Law condemns the best. Romans 3:19.
Grace saves the worst. Romans 3:24; 4:5.
- E. Law reveals sin. Romans 3:20.
Grace reveals salvation. Titus 2:11-13.

IV. THE NEED FOR GRACE

Man is sinful and rebels against God's holy law. Romans 3:23; Colossians 1:21. Therefore, he deserves nothing but God's judgment.

Man stands guilty before the bar of God, having broken God's holy law. Romans 3:19; Galatians 3:10; James 2:10. As such, he is subject to the curse of God.

Because he rejected and murdered God's Son, man has no claim on God at all. John 12:31-33; 3:18.

V. SALVATION BY GRACE

If man is to be saved, it must be by God's grace alone. None of us deserve salvation. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Ephesians 1:7. But God is holy and He cannot overlook sin. Sin must be punished. That is what the Cross is all about. The Gospel tells us how God can save sinners by grace and still be holy in doing so.

The key is that Christ suffered the wrath and judgment of God against sin. On the basis of the work of Christ and not the works of man, God can forgive the sins of those who trust the Lord Jesus. Christ, the Lamb slain, has finished the work of redemption. Grace only demands faith on the part of the sinner who seeks salvation. Ephesians 2:8-9

IV. BLESSINGS THROUGH GRACE

Blessings through Grace bring many wonderful results to the sinner. Three of the greatest of these results are the following:

A. Salvation - Titus 2:11-13. This means that a born again Christian has eternal life. "And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." John 10:28.

B. Justification – Romans 5:1. This means that God reckons a sinner who has believed on Christ as being blameless. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

C. Standing before God - Romans 5:2. This means that a true believer can enter into God's presence by prayer. He is no longer separated from God by his sins. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:14-16.

Chapter 11 FAITH APPLIES TRUTH FOR SALVATION

You cannot study the Bible very long before you understand the importance of faith. A sinner cannot be saved apart from faith. Ephesians 2:8-9. "The gospel of Christ...is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth...for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written the just shall live by faith." Romans 1:16-17. Therefore, it is important that we should find out what this word means.

I. WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith comprises three things: knowledge, belief and trust. Faith is personal confidence. We use the word in everyday conversation, as follows, "I have

complete faith in my doctor." We mean that we trust him with our case. So, in the Bible, faith is personal confidence in God. It means that we believe what He says, and trust Him to save us and to keep us.

II. WHERE DO WE FIND FAITH?

As we look around us in the world, we realize that some men do not have faith in God, and thus they are not saved. This leads us to inquire as to the source of faith. In a very real sense, this faith is a gift of God. John 3:27. God gives men the power to believe on Him.

But how does a man receive faith? The answer to this is found in Romans 10:17. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Therefore, if a man does not have faith in God, he should read the Bible. As he reads, he should pray somewhat as follows: "God, if this Book is Your Word, if Jesus Christ is Your Son, and if He died for me, then show me these things as I read the Bible." God has promised that any man who wishes to do His will will come to a knowledge of the truth. John 7:17.

III. WHAT IS THE TRUE OBJECT OF FAITH?

Faith must have an object. This object may either be a person, such as a relative, a friend or an inanimate thing, such as an airplane, or an elevator. It is not enough to have faith. Faith must be placed in a trustworthy object. You may believe that an airplane can get you from one city to another. You may believe that the plane will fly. You may believe that the pilots know how to fly the plane and that they will get you where you want to go. You may even believe it would be enjoyable to make the trip. The only thing that is left for you to do is take your seat on the plane. Only then have you exercised faith. Up to that point you have talked about it; you have told others about it; you have claimed that you believe it. But not until you are on board have you exercised faith. Real faith demands action. The Bible says, "Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." James 2:17-18.

The Bible sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ as the true object of faith. Acts 20:21. The important thing is not how much faith a man has, or what kind of faith he has, but that the object of his faith must be Jesus Christ if he wants to be saved. If their faith is in a saint, the Virgin Mary, an idol, a church, a religion, good works or baptism the Bible makes it clear that they do not have Bible salvation. However, a man may believe all that the Bible says about Christ and yet not have

faith in Him. You may believe that a certain train will leave the railroad station at 11 A.M. and that it will arrive at a distant city at 5 P.M. You may believe all the facts about the train; yet you have not really put your faith in the train until you get on board and trust the train to take you to your destination.

So you may believe that Christ was born in Bethlehem, born of a virgin, died on Calvary, rose again and ascended into heaven. You may even believe the Bible is God's Word. But you have not really put your faith in Him until you trust Him to save you from your sins and take you to heaven.

IV. EXAMPLES OF FAITH

The Scriptures are filled with examples of faith. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews has been called the "Honor Roll of Faith" because it lists some outstanding men and women who had faith.

Two other instances might be cited. The first is the faith of the centurion in Matthew 8:5-10. The centurion believed that Christ could heal his servant by merely saying the word. The other is the faith of the woman of Canaan, Matthew 15:22-28. She pleaded that the bread reserved for the chosen Jews should be given to her, a Gentile. Her faith was humble and persistent.

V. THE REWARD OF FAITH

True faith never goes unrewarded. No one has ever trusted God in vain. Remember, faith must have three things: knowledge, belief and trust. Every seeking sinner who has repented of his sins and who has put his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ has been saved. The Savior said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6:37.

Chapter 12 THE CHURCH

The Church must be viewed from two perspectives. The church is not a physical body but a spiritual body. There is the local church, which is a physical expression of the Body of Christ where a group of Christians meet in a physical location. It may be a house, a particular building designated for meeting, a cave or whatever. The people are the church, not the physical structure. This is a local assembly of believers who have received His Word, been born again and are

baptized. They come together for studying doctrine, prayer, breaking of bread and fellowship. Acts 2:41-42.

Then there is the “Church” which is universal of all born again believers living on planet earth today. If you are saved today, you are a member of this Church. Some have called it the “Invisible Church.”

There are two ordinances given to the church, baptism and The Lord’s Supper. These are not sacraments. They have no redeeming value. Jesus said, “This do in remembrance of me.” Luke 22:19. Some religions offer the bread and declare it to become the actual presence and body of Christ. However, we do not remember someone who is present but someone who is absent. The bread is only a symbol of His body that was broken for us on the cross. The cup is symbolic of His blood that He shed for our sin. Both are to be taken to remember what He did for us until He comes again for us. I Corinthians 11:24-29.

Baptism is to show that you have become a Christian, and the Lord’s Supper is to remember the Lord Jesus and what He has done for us until He comes again. These are to be exercised by believers only.

There were several gifts given to people for the purpose of ministering to the early local church that are listed in Ephesians. 4:7-8, 11. Since we have received the completed revelation of God’s Word in the Bible, the gifts of Apostles and prophets have ceased. Revelations and prophecies are no longer needed. Though some may declare to have a revelation or prophecy, it is a lie. In fact, any additional or contrary revelations are condemned. Revelation 22:18-19.

Every church is a local autonomy, and there is an organized structure within the local church, which includes deacons and bishops or elders (pastors) who are to lead, teach and shepherd the sheep. I Timothy 3:1-15. There is also authority given to the church to exercise discipline and dismiss people who choose to live in sin. I Corinthians 5:11-12

Chapter 13 DEATH

People have always had a sincere interest in the future. There is a universal and historical belief in life after death. Evidence (rituals) around the world reveals that people do not believe death ends all. These questions are frequently asked: Where

are the dead? Is there a place of paradise? Is there a place of suffering? What is it like?

Let's understand that man is a tripartite being, that is, he is composed of three parts - body, soul and spirit. I Thessalonians 5:23. The first part is material being, the other two are non-material. With a spirit man is capable of God-consciousness; with a soul he is capable of self-consciousness; with a body he is capable of world-consciousness. Only God's Word can divide between the soul and the spirit. Hebrews 4:12.

Now, at the time of death, the soul and spirit leave the body. The body is put into the grave. In the case of believers, the body is described as sleeping, Acts 7:59, 60; 8:2, while the unsaved person's body is spoken of as dead. The soul and spirit never sleep. If the person who died was saved, the soul and the spirit go to a place of joy and happiness – heaven. II Corinthians 5:8; Phil. 1:21- 23. If the person was unsaved, the spirit and soul go to a place of sorrow and punishment - hell. In Luke 16:19-31, our Lord clearly teaches that those who have died are conscious.

Death is not soul sleep. The word in Scripture, concerning the death in Christ, means, “rest.” It does not mean “unconsciousness.” The body may die, but the soul and spirit are fully awake and will never die. Death in the Bible always means separation. Physical death is separation of the soul and spirit from the body. Spiritual death is eternal separation from God.

Understand we are not a body, having a soul and spirit, but we are a soul and spirit possessing a body. Death simply means, “I have left my body.”

Chapter 14 RESURRECTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN

The Bible speaks much about bodily resurrection. On different occasions some in the Bible were raised from the dead. These were miraculous demonstrations of the power of God over death. But because they eventually died again, they were not bodily resurrected, but rather, they were “resuscitated” back to life. Lazarus is a good example. John 11:39-44.

The first example of death and bodily resurrection is Jesus Christ. Christ is the first-fruit from the dead. “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and becomes the

first-fruits of them that slept.” I Corinthians 15:20. The Bible always speaks of the death of a believer as “sleeping” not dying. The first fruits in raising Christ from the dead was God’s pledge that the entire harvest will come later.

The Body of Christ, the true Church, will have a bodily resurrection of its own. “The dead in Christ shall rise first.” I Thessalonians 4:16. This is the resurrection of the bodies of all who have died in Christ. They are united with their soul and spirit and will ascend into heaven to be the bride of Jesus Christ. This is called the “Rapture” of the Church. We will share more about this.

Over 500 people witnessed the appearances of Christ after His bodily resurrection. Their eyewitness accounts defy denials by those who will not believe. In most courts the most eyewitnesses that have been required are seven. The New Testament has records of documented testimonies from those who personally saw Him. Over 500 saw Him in his resurrected body. Others who saw him testified that He was alive. They spoke with Him, ate with Him, and had a time of fellowship as He was with them several times after bodily coming forth from a brutal crucifixion and three days in a guarded stone tomb. There is much clear evidence that Jesus Christ did, in fact, rise bodily from the dead.

The 27 books of the New Testament and the Church are the effects caused by the risen Christ. The Church began immediately, as the Apostles began preaching in Jerusalem where He had been crucified and buried. Three thousand were saved in one day. They went everywhere telling that Jesus was alive from the dead. Believe me, if it were not true the enemy would have produced the body because it would have silenced all the claims of the early Church. The fact is that three days after His crucifixion He bodily rose from the grave. He is alive, and because He lives, we shall live also.

Chapter 15 WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT HELL?

As we have already noted, the spirit and soul of an unbeliever wing their flight to hell at the time of death. Hell is a place of conscious punishment. The soul in hell is spoken of as a person, having eyes, ears, fingers, a tongue and memory. There is full knowledge of the conditions there. Luke 16:23-25. This is not a parable because parables do not include personal names of people. This is an actual event.

The Bible speaks about another place of torment at the final judgement of all mankind. It is called "The Lake of Fire." At the Judgment of the Great White Throne, the souls in hell will be united with their bodies, which are to be raised from the graves. Christ will then pronounce the final sentence of judgment upon the wicked dead, and they will be cast into the Lake of Fire, the eternal abode of the lost. Revelation 20:11-15. Hell may thus be likened to the local jail where the prisoner temporarily awaits his sentence. They are taken from the jail to appear before the judge for final sentencing. Revelation 20:9-15 is the record of this Great White Throne Judgement of Satan and all who have rejected Christ and followed him. The Lake of Fire may be likened to a prison to which are committed those under sentence for the duration of their eternal existence. In describing hell, our Lord speaks about the undying worm and the unquenchable fire. Mark 9:43-48. It is a place of conscious punishment. It is a place of literal fire. It is punishment for sin eternally.

In the book of Revelation, the phrase "forever and ever" is used to describe the misery of the lost. Revelation 14:11. Can a God of love allow men to go to hell? A. God does not want men to perish. Heaven and Hell are both personal choices that each individual makes while here on planet earth. God provided for man's salvation through the work of His Son on Calvary's cross. Romans 5:6-8. If men reject the Savior, they go to hell by their own choice. Someone said that God loves the sinners so much that if they choose to go to hell rather than heaven He will let them go. Remember that they all go by their own choice.

B. God is a God of love, I John 4:8, but He is also holy, I Peter 1:16. He must punish sin. If He allowed sin to enter heaven, it would destroy all that God has done in redeeming mankind. Satan made his choice in the Garden of Eden. Man makes his choice during his lifetime. At death man's eternal destiny has been determined. There is no purgatory or in-between place. The Bible clearly teaches that there are only two places. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matthew 25:46.

C. Men do not hesitate to put sick people in hospitals, criminals in jail, or corpses in the cemetery. This does not indicate a lack of love on their part. What about the heathen who has never heard the Gospel? Like the rest of mankind, heathens are lost sinners, and only Christ can save them. They can tell that there is a God through the works of creation, Romans 1:20 and Psalm 19:1; and through their own consciences, Romans 2:15. If they live up to the light, which they have, God will give them more light - see Cornelius, Acts 10 and 11.

Chapter 16

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HEAVEN?

The Scriptures clearly teach that there is a place called Heaven for all who know and love our Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven is a place. The word is used in the Bible in three different ways. First of all, the region of the clouds is called heaven. Genesis 1:8. Then the area where the stars are located is known as heaven. Genesis 1:17. Finally, the word is used to describe God's dwelling place. Paul calls this the "third heaven" and "Paradise." II Corinthians 12:2-4.

Heaven is always mentioned as being "up." Satan said, in Isaiah 14:13-14, "I will ascend into heaven." We know that our Lord is in heaven today. After He was raised from the dead, He ascended in a body of flesh and bones. He carried glorified humanity into heaven. Luke 24:38- 39, 51; I Peter 3:22; Hebrews 1:3.

There is a great host of believers in heaven, for when the true Christian dies, he is "absent from the body-present with the Lord." II Corinthians 5:8. These believers are enjoying the presence of Christ, which is far better. Philippians 1:23.

What is heaven like? It is a place that God has prepared for all who come to Him. If the Creator of the Universe prepared it, it must be something wonderful. The writers of the Scriptures could not find language that would describe it. In Revelation 21:10-27, John tries to describe the foundations, wall, gates and street of the heavenly city. We know that there will be no sickness, sorrow, tears, pain or death in that fair place. Revelation 21:4. What we do know is that after the sorrow and suffering from the pains of life on this sin cursed earth, we will be "finally home." But best of all, the Lord Jesus Christ will be there, and He will be the supreme delight of every believer's heart.

Chapter 17

FUTURE EVENTS

Every Bible student is thrilled to be able to read about events that are still future. Only in the Bible is the future unfolded. Let's consider some of these events in the order in which they will happen.

I. CHRIST'S COMING FOR HIS SAINTS

The next event to occur on God's calendar is the coming of Christ to take His people home to heaven. I Thessalonians 4:13-18. This is known as the "Rapture" of the Church. Christ will descend from heaven, the trumpet will sound and the bodies of believers who have died will be raised. Then Living believers will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

It will happen in the "blinking" of your eye. This passage of Scripture is the play by play account of this event. Read it slowly and carefully, because it is about you if you know Jesus Christ as your Savior today. I Corinthians 15:51-58. Maybe today!

Note the following facts about the coming of Christ.

- A. It may happen at any moment. Revelation 22:7
- B. Only those who are truly saved will participate. I Corinthians 15:23.
- C. Not all believers will die but all will be changed. I Corinthians 15:51.
- D. They shall be like Christ. I John 3:2; Romans 8:16-25.

II. THE GREAT TRIBULATION

Matthew 24:5-31 and much of the book of Revelation covers this period of time on earth. After the Rapture, the earth will experience a period of great suffering and sorrow known as the Great Tribulation. During this period, the Jewish people will return to the land of Palestine in unbelief. A great evil ruler will arise known as "Antichrist" (meaning against Christ). He will demand worship from the people. He will deceive Israel. It will be a time of such great suffering that and unless the days are shortened, no life will survive. However, God will preserve those Jewish people who have been faithful to Him.

III. CHRIST'S COMING TO REIGN

In the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, the Anti-Christ will convince the Jews that he is their friend and will seemingly work for their protection. In the middle of the seven years, he will turn on the Jews and reveal who he really is. Then great persecution and battles such as have never been known in history will take place, ending with the battle of Armageddon.

Malachi 4:1-3. At the end of the Tribulation period, the Lord Jesus Christ, along with those who were raptured, will come back with Him to the earth in great power and glory, and we will reign with Him. He will destroy His enemies,

including Antichrist, and judge those nations, which persecuted faithful Jews. Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit for 1000 years. Revelation 20:1-3.

IV. THE MILLENNIUM

Isaiah 32:1; 35:1-7; 65:17-25. When His work of judgment has been completed, Christ will set up His kingdom on the earth. Jerusalem will be His capital. He will reign upon the earth for a thousand years. This period is known as the millennium. It will be an era of peace and happiness. We read that nature will be entirely different, for the lion will lie down with the lamb. The desert will blossom like the rose. Men will live to very old ages. It will be a time of great prosperity. There will be no wars. Although sin will not be entirely absent, it will be punished immediately whenever it occurs.

V. THE JUDGEMENT OF THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

Revelation 20:11-15. At the end of Christ's 1000-year reign, the Judgment of the Great White Throne will take place. This is the judgment of the wicked dead. No saved persons will be involved. The graves will give up the bodies of unbelievers, and Hades or hell will give up their souls. They will then stand before Christ to be judged. The books will be opened. Rev. 20:11-15. All of their works will be judged. Finally, because their names are not found in the Lamb's book of life, they will be found guilty and sentenced to the Lake of Fire to suffer conscious and eternal punishment.

VI. ETERNITY

Revelation 21:1-8. The final picture of the future is the eternal state. The earth as we know it will have been destroyed by fire. Time, as we know it, will have ceased. All true believers will be enjoying endless happiness in heaven. All who have rejected the Savior will be suffering in the blackness of darkness forever. The ultimate question that faces each one of us and must be answered by each one of us as we draw to the end of Part I of *What the Bible Teaches* is "Where will I spend eternity?"

PART II: BIBLICAL PRINCIPALS AND PRATICE FOR THE BELIVER

Chapter 18 TRIUMPH OVER TEMPTATION

How can a Christian resist sinful temptations? Whenever a person is saved, a great struggle begins. He still has the old nature; the sinful nature of Adam, which will try to drag him into sin all the time. But he also has the new nature, the life of God, which hates sin and wants to do what is right. The two natures fight against each other continually. The question is which will win. **The answer is, “the one you feed.”** Galatians 5:16-17; Romans 8:5-8.

The old nature is incurably bad. It cannot be improved, and it will not be removed until the Christian goes home to heaven. God condemned it when Christ died on the Cross, and He wants Christians to treat it as if it were dead. Don't encourage it! Don't feed it! Don't give it a chance! Romans 13:14.

The new nature inspires the Christian to do good. It should be encouraged and fed. This, then, is how the Christian resists temptation - by saying "No" to the world, the flesh and the devil. At the same time he must nourish the new life that is within. The following are practical suggestions as to how this may be done:

A. Read the Bible! Study it! Memorize it! Meditate on it! Obey it! Psalm 119:9, 11.

There we learn that the Word of God helps to keep us from sinning. Be sure, therefore, that you set aside a definite time each day for the reading of God's Word. Colossians 3:16.

B. Pray without ceasing!

Whenever you are faced with temptation, ask God for help. Hebrews 4:16. He will give you the strength to overcome. I Corinthians 10: 13. If you try to resist by your own strength, you will surely fail.

C. Seek the companionship of fellow-believers and not of the ungodly! Proverbs 1:10-16; Hebrews 10:24-25.

It is often necessary to work and live with unbelievers, and in such cases we should witness to them both with our lips and by our lives. But we should not join with them in their worldly pleasures and amusements. Ephesians 5:10.

D. Confess your sins immediately! I John 1:9.

As soon as you are conscious that you have grieved your Father by a sinful thought, word or deed, ask His forgiveness immediately. Do not wait until evening or until the end of the week. Proverbs 28:13.

E. Keep busy for the Lord!

Someone has said that idle hands are the devil's workshop. Give your body to the Lord to use it as He desires! Romans 6:19. There is plenty of work to be done, and you will be serving the best of masters.

F. Engage in some physical exercise!

Bodily exercise is profitable. I Timothy 4:8. Because the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, he should use reasonable means in maintaining his body in good health and strength. However, he should not allow sports to assume such an important place that spiritual things are crowded out. I Corinthians 6:19-20.

G. Starve the old nature!

Be careful what you read, what you watch, where you go, and what you listen to. Colossians 3:5-9.

H. Feed the new nature!

Be occupied with Christ! When you are thinking about Him, you cannot be thinking about sin. Colossians 3:10-14. This is really the secret of holy living - occupation with Christ. It is a fixed rule in life that we become like the object of our worship. II Corinthians 3:18 teaches us that we become like the Lord Jesus as we behold Him in the mirror (glass) of His Word. The Holy Spirit who dwells within us changes us into His image and likeness. Occupation with others brings distraction. Occupation with self brings distress. Occupation with Christ brings delight.

I. One final word! You will notice from the foregoing that deliverance from

temptation is not a once for all experience, but a continual process of depending on God. No matter how old we get, or how much we may learn about the Bible, we are still in danger of yielding to temptation if we take our eyes off the Lord. A very godly man used to pray that God would keep him from dying as a wicked old man. We all need to pray the same prayer. Colossians 3:1-4.

Chapter 19 CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

How can a Christian know what he may or may not do? Is it all right for a believer to go to dances or to the theatre, to play cards, to smoke, to drink, to listen to rock music or to participate in other worldly pleasures and amusements? "Love not the world." I John 2:15.

Many young converts are troubled by questions similar to the above. They find that certain practices are clearly condemned in the Bible, but that there are many others, which are not mentioned. It is the purpose of this lesson to provide the student with a series of standards that may help him to decide whether or not he should engage in a questionable activity. One question you should ask yourself is "Would Jesus do it?"

A. First of all, is it distinctly forbidden by the Lord for believers today?

If it is, avoid it as you would a deadly plague. If you do not know, don't do it until you have had a chance to find out. I Thessalonians 5:22.

B. Then, is there any glory for God in it?

In I Corinthians 10:31, we read this plain statement: "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Before you engage in the activity in question, can you honestly ask for God's blessing upon it, believing that He will be honored through your participation?

C. Is it "of the world"? If it is, then it is not "of Christ."

He said concerning His disciples, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." John 17:16. He was not "of the world" at all. He was in it, but not of it. I John 2:15-17.

D. Would the Lord have done it? He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. I Peter 2:21.

E. Would you like to be found doing it when the Lord returns?

Someone has wisely remarked, "Don't do anything, say anything, or go anywhere that would cause you shame if the Lord should come!" I John 2:28.

F. Can you feel free to do it when you remember that God the Holy Spirit dwells within you?

"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?" I Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 4:30.

G. Is it fitting conduct for a child of God?

When a king's son acts in an unworthy manner, he brings disgrace on his father's name. So does the Christian who behaves in an unbecoming way. Romans 2:24; Colossians 1:10.

H. What effect will your conduct have on others?

Will it be a good testimony to the unsaved, or will they decide that there is really no difference between a Christian and an unbeliever? II Corinthians 5:17. Also, will it cause someone who is young in the faith to stumble? The Apostle Paul warned us that no man should put "a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Romans 14:13.

I. Finally, is there the least bit of doubt in your mind about it?

If so, then don't do it, for "he that doubteth is damned (condemned) . . . for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 14:23.

In connection with this subject of what a Christian may or may not do, it is well to remember that "we are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 6:14-15. This does not mean that we may do as we like, but rather it means we want to do what God likes because He has done so much for us. We do not avoid worldly pleasures and amusements because we have to, but because we want to. The

reason we want to is because Christ died for us, and now our ambitions are to live in a manner that will please Him. II Corinthians 5:14-15. God does not say, "If you keep away from sinful pleasures, you will be a Christian." But He does say, in effect, to the believer, "You are a Christian! Now live in a way that is consistent with your high calling." Ephesians 4:1. It is possible that a Christian may forget his dignified position and go in for the things of the world. In such a case, God will bring him back by loving correction, just as a shepherd brings back a wandering sheep by placing his crook around its neck. Thus, if God's grace is forgotten by the believer, he will be restored by God's government.

Chapter 20 BURIED IN BAPTISM

What is Baptism, and who should be baptized? Before the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven, He gave the Great Commission to His disciples: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:19-20.

It was thus the Lord's desire that, as His servants went throughout the world with the Gospel, they should baptize those who received the message. Baptism is an ordinance instituted by the Lord Himself. This raises two questions. First, how is the ordinance of baptism carried out? Secondly, what is the meaning of baptism?

In order to find a true answer to the first, we shall turn to Acts 8:26-39. There we find a servant of the Queen of Ethiopia riding along in his chariot, and reading the book of Isaiah, chapter 53, in the Old Testament. This man was a sincere seeker for the truth, and so God instructed His servant, Philip, to speak with him. Philip told him how the Lord Jesus had died on Calvary so that sinners might be saved. The traveler believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and then asked Philip if he could be baptized. Inasmuch as the man had truly believed on Christ, Philip agreed to baptize him. The chariot was therefore halted near a body of water. Now notice verses 38 and 39 carefully. "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." Now what is the true significance of this ceremony, which was carried out so simply along that eastern highway many years ago, and which continues to be performed to this very day?

A. First of all, it is an act of obedience to the expressed will of the Lord Jesus. Matthew 28:19.

Its purpose is not to put away the filth of the flesh, but rather to give the Christian a good conscience toward God, knowing that he has obeyed the Lord's will. I Peter 3:2. Only those who have heard and believed should be baptized. Acts 18:8.

B. Secondly, Romans 6:3-5 teaches that it is a symbol or picture of a spiritual truth.

- (1) The water is a picture of judgment and death.
- (2) When Christ died, He went under the waters of judgment and death to put away our sins. Psalm 42:7.
- (3) Since Christ died as a substitute for the believer, it is equally true that the believer died with the Lord Jesus. In other words, when Christ died, I died. When He was buried, I was buried. When He arose, I arose.
- (4) The Christian has died to sin, to the world and to self. He has died to all that he was by nature, and from now on God no longer sees him in his sins, but sees him in Christ, risen from the dead, and possessing the resurrection life of Christ. Galatians 2:20.
- (5) Thus, when a Christian is baptized, he is making a public confession that he has taken his place with Christ in death and burial, and he shall seek to show to all that he has a new life in Christ. Colossians 2:12; 3:1-2.

C. The baptized person is the one who has not only been baptized in literal water, but whose life shows that the flesh, or old nature, has been put in the place of death. Baptism must be a matter of the heart, as well as an outward profession.

In the early days of the Church, when a believer was baptized, he was often persecuted and murdered in a short time. Yet whenever others were saved, they too stepped forward to fill up the ranks of the martyrs by being baptized. I Corinthians 15:29. Even today in heathen lands, baptism may be the signal for the beginning of terrible persecution. In many countries a believer will be tolerated as long as he confesses Christ only with his lips. But whenever he publicly confesses Christ in baptism, the enemies of the Cross take up their battle against him.

Yet whatever the cost may be, each one who is baptized enjoys the same experience that the Ethiopian eunuch did. It is written of him: "He went on his way rejoicing." Acts 8:39.

Chapter 21 CHOOSING A CHURCH

How can a Christian know which church to join? By way of introduction to this subject, it should be stated that a person is joined to the true church at the very moment of his conversion. This church is made up of every true believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, regardless of race, color or culture. Members of the church are found throughout the world, though the entire church has never yet been assembled in one place.

However, it is possible for Christians in many localities to gather together as members of a local church and perform the functions that are set forth in Scripture. This local church is an expression of the universal church of all believers around the world. This meeting is to be on the first day of the week (Sunday) and not on the Sabbath which is a Jewish Old Testament command. In the early days, the saints met in their own homes. Romans 16:5; Philemon 2. We read that "they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:42. Now it is very obviously the Lord's will that Christians should meet together regularly as members of the church. Hebrews 10:25 contains a warning against forsaking "the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." Moreover, great portions of the New Testament are devoted to teaching believers their privileges and responsibilities as members of the local body of Christ. I Corinthians 12.

Yet it is somewhat of a problem for a new convert today to know where he should unite in fellowship. There are so many different groups of Christians, and such a wide difference in some of their teachings.

The following list is therefore designed to help the young believer in finding the right path. At the same time, it should be emphasized that the entire question should be made a matter of earnest prayer that God's will might be clearly known. Our understanding of what the church is must come from God's Word alone. Traditions and customs of men must be tested by its teachings on this subject. Isaiah 8:20. Remember that a counterfeit is designed to be as close to real as possible, yet by knowing the real you will be able to discern the counterfeit. God

will guide you as you test the real by the Word of God and thereby test all churches by His qualifications.

A. Be sure that the group with whom you identify yourself acknowledges the Holy Bible as the inspired and infallible Word of God, and bows to the Scriptures as the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. It is not enough to say that the Bible contains the Word of God. It is the Word of God. Therefore it is absolutely true, and we must believe it and obey it. II Timothy 3:16-17.

B. Be sure that those with whom you meet are unmistakably clear as to the Person of Christ. Many are willing to admit that Christ was a great leader, a great teacher, and maybe the greatest man who ever lived, or they even use the word "divine" in describing Him. But the great truth concerning our blessed Savior is that He is God, and nothing less than this will do. Colossians 2:9.

C. A third important thing to watch for is sound teaching concerning the work of Christ. Scripture teaches that the Lord Jesus lived a sinless life, that He voluntarily died for our sins on the Cross of Calvary, that He was buried, that He rose again and ascended into heaven, where He is now seated at the right hand of God. I Corinthians 15:1-4. Salvation is obtained solely by faith in Him and apart from any works or human merit. Galatians 1:6-9).

Be sure to find out what is taught concerning His precious blood. Apart from that blood there can be no remission of sins. In addition to meeting the above three primary tests, one should be sure that the local church does not contradict, by word or by practice, the following important truths concerning the body of Christ.

ORDER OF THE CHURCH

A. Christ is the Head of the church. Colossians 1:18-19; Ephesians 1:22- 23. No man may claim this position. Where Christ is acknowledged as Head, the church will look to Him and to Him alone for dictation and guidance.

B. All believers are members of the body of Christ. I Corinthians 12:12-13. All true children of God should therefore be welcomed into the fellowship of the church. (There are, however, two exceptions to this rule. Those who are unsound in doctrine, II John 10, or those who are living in sin, I Corinthians 5:13, should be excluded until they have been restored to the Lord.) No unbeliever should knowingly be received into church fellowship.

C. All believers are priests. I Peter 2:5-9. In the New Testament, there is no distinction as to priests and people. **In the Old Testament a priest was one who stood between God and man to offer a sacrifice on his behalf. However, at Christ's death, the veil was rent thereby showing that now every Christian has direct access to God at any time. Mark 15:27-38. We have all become priests before Him. Revelation 1:5-6.** All Christians may now enter by faith into the presence of God, bringing sacrifices of praise and worship and service. In the early church all the members were students of the Word, all were soul-winners, all were busy for God. That should characterize the church today.

D. The authority of the Holy Spirit should be recognized. Whether in worship or in service, ministry or discipline, there should be liberty for the Holy Spirit to direct. His guidance and authority ought not to be limited by man-made ceremonies or human organization. II Corinthians 3:17; Ephesians 4:3. To summarize, then, a young believer should fellowship with those who acknowledge the Bible as their only guide, who are sound as to the Person and work of Christ, and who seek to carry out the teachings of the New Testament with regard to the church and its functions.

Chapter 22 WANTING GOD'S WILL

How can a Christian know God's will in his life? Every Christian should be keenly interested in knowing God's will for his life. Unless the Lord's plan is known and obeyed, then our lives are wasted, and we will miss the Master's "Well done." The Scriptures are emphatic in teaching that God does reveal His will to those who desire to know it. John 7:17. It is a privilege that should be the normal experience of every believer. Romans 12:2.

Whether one is seeking guidance as to a momentary problem or as to a life career, there are five steps to be followed. These may be summarized as follows: YIELD; CONFESS; PRAY; STUDY; WAIT.

A. YIELD. To yield is to present oneself to the Lord. It means to lay aside personal hopes, ambitions and desires. It means to want His way supremely. Paul yielded when he asked, "What wilt thou have me to do?" Isaiah yielded when he said, "Here am I; send me." Amasiah yielded for we read that "he willingly offered himself unto the Lord." II Chronicles 17:16.

B. CONFESS. If we want to be in the center of His will, we must confess and forsake any secret Sins, which we cherish. Remember the words of the Psalmist, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Psalm 66:18. We should also confess our own helplessness and inability, and depend on His power. Psalm 139:23-24. We should also confess Christ before men. Acts 1:8.

C. PRAY. This simply means that we must come before the Lord regularly, asking for His direction. We should claim His promise for guidance, asking Him to do as He has said. Our prayers should have His glory as their chief aim. Colossians 1:9; 4:12.

D. STUDY. Spend much time in the Word of God. Read it while you are on your knees, asking God to speak to you through it. Read it slowly. Read it thoughtfully. Read it expectantly. II Timothy 2:15.

E. WAIT. If God does not answer immediately, wait. Psalm 62:6. If you have prayed for direction and no answer comes, then God's guidance is for you to stay where you are. If you are really trusting in the Lord, you will not be in a hurry. "He that believeth shall not make haste." Isaiah 28:16. God reveals His will to us in several different ways. He may use one, or a combination, of the following methods:

- (1) Guidance through the Bible. The Scriptures give direction in two ways. First of all, they definitely prohibit certain courses of action. For instance, if a Christian were praying for guidance as to whether he should marry an unsaved girl, he could get God's answer in II Corinthians 6:14. On the other hand, God often uses other verses of Scripture to guide us to take a certain definite course of action. A verse that you had never noticed before may take on new meaning because it tells you what to do at the very time when you were praying for direction. Psalm 119:105.
- (2) Guidance through Christians. It is sometimes helpful to seek the advice of mature, spiritual Christians. Their experience and counsel can often save a younger person from serious pitfalls. Hebrews 13:7-17.
- (3) Guidance through circumstances. Since God controls the entire universe, He can and often does plan the circumstances of our lives to reveal His will. A letter, an email, a message heard on the radio or

Internet may arrive at just the right time with just the information needed to point the way.

- (4) Guidance through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God can influence our convictions, our desires or our inclinations in such a way as to make God's will clear. In such cases, the guidance is so obvious that to refuse it would be the same as disobedience. Acts 11:12; 16:6-7.
- (5) One further word. When God gives light, walk in it. Acts 26:19. Guidance must be obeyed to be continued. Obedience is the basis of a life of true happiness and lasting value.

Chapter 23 PRACTICE OF PRAYER

What does the Bible teach about prayer? There can be no progress in any part of the Christian life without prayer. It is therefore important for the young believer to know what the Bible teaches about this subject. The following outline is intended to answer some basic questions:

A. Why pray?

Because the Bible commands us to do so. I Timothy 2:8. The Lord Jesus was a man of prayer. If He felt the need of it, how much more should we! I Thessalonians 5:17-18; Ephesians 6:18.

B. How often?

We should pray at set times each day, and then, in between those times. It is a good plan to pray upon arising in the morning and upon retiring at night. Then during the day, we should look to the Lord when problems arise, when help **or wisdom** is needed or when we want to thank Him for something. Nehemiah often sent up to heaven "sentence prayers" as he was in the battle of building the walls. Certainly every Christian should bow his head and give thanks before eating his meals, whether in public or at home.

C. In what position?

Daniel knelt when he prayed. Daniel 6:10. So did the Lord Jesus. Luke 22:41. Nehemiah, on the other hand, prayed while he was standing before the king. Nehemiah 2:4. In general, Christians kneel when at home, but it is still their

privilege to speak to God while walking along the street or engaging in their daily activities.

D. For what?

Among the Scriptures which answer this question are Philippians 4:6; I Timothy 2:1-3; and Matthew 9:38. There is nothing too small and nothing too great for prayer. Many believers find it helpful to keep a prayer list on which they record such items as: (1) names of unsaved relatives and friends. (2) names of those who are sick or in need. (3) names of those who are serving the Lord, such as missionaries, evangelists, and teachers.

Don't forget to also include praise to the Lord in your prayers and make sure our focus is for "God's Glory." Where your requests are specific, you will see specific answers; whereas, if you pray for people in general, without naming them, you will have no way of knowing whether your prayers are answered.

E. Conditions for answered prayer.

If we abide in Christ, our requests will be answered. John 15:7. Abiding in Christ means keeping His commandments. I John 3:22. (1) Our prayers should be according to His will. I John 5:14. Since the general outline of God's will is found in the Bible, our requests should be Scriptural. Therefore, pray in the language of the Bible. (2) Our requests should be offered in the Name of Christ. John 14:13; 16:23. When we truly ask in His Name, it is the same as if He were making the request of God. (3) Our motives must be pure. James 4:3. If our motives are selfish and sinful, we cannot expect an answer.

F. Language of prayer?

We should address God reverently. Christians commonly use the words "Thou" and "Thee" instead of the more familiar "You" in speaking to their Father.

G. Dangers of prayer.

(1) Don't pray to be seen. Matthew 6:5-6.

(2) Don't ask God to do something you can do yourself. No sane Christian would step into the path of an oncoming auto and then ask God to take him back to the sidewalk. God gave him legs to take himself back.

(3) Don't ask for something that you know you shouldn't have! God sometimes grants such requests but sends leanness to the soul. Psalm 106:15.

(4) Avoid meaningless repetitions. Matthew 6:7; Ecclesiastes 5:2.

H. Other suggestions.

- (1) If you find that your mind wanders when you are on your knees, try praying out loud. This will greatly help you to concentrate.
- (2) Don't be discouraged if your answer does not come immediately. God's answers are never too early lest we miss the blessedness of waiting upon Him, and never too late lest we think that we have trusted Him in vain.
- (3) If God's answer is not exactly what you asked for, remember this: God reserves the right to give us something better than we ask for. We do not know what is best for us, but He does, and so He gives us than we could ever ask or think. II Corinthians 12:8-9.

Chapter 24 WITNESSING AND WINNING

How can a Christian lead others to Christ? Winning souls to Jesus Christ is one of the greatest occupations in the world today. Proverbs 11:30. Although there are no hard and fast rules to insure success in this work, there are some general principles that will prove extremely valuable. **When you witness, it is spiritual warfare. Before you go into battle put on the whole armor of God one piece at a time from Ephesians 6:11-18.**

A. It is of first importance that the soul winner himself be spiritually healthy. He must be constantly feeding on the Word. He must spend much time in prayer. He must be yielded to God. He must confess and abandon any cherished sins. By thus walking in the Spirit, the Christian will find that the Lord will provide opportunities for effectual witness. This is undoubtedly the Golden Rule of soul winning "Live close to God." Matthew 4:19. Remember your life is a continual witness - Good, bad or indifferent.

B. It is a good thing to start each day by asking God to lead us to those whom He wants us to contact. It is obvious that we cannot speak to everyone we see. It is also clear that we have no way of knowing by ourselves which souls are "ripe" for salvation. But if we let the Lord lead us, we will work more efficiently and reap more fruit for Him.

C. Then during the day we should seize the opportunities to speak for

Christ. When fellow workers use the Name of the Lord in profanity, for instance, there is often opportunity for a tactful, loving word of testimony. Religious subjects often come up in conversation; we should make the most of them. Then again we do not always have to wait for opportunities: we can make them for ourselves. Worldly men talk freely about politics, the weather and sports. Why should our lips be sealed about Christ, our Redeemer?

D. Quote the Word of God as much as possible. Better yet, let them read it.

It is a living Word! It is the Sword of the Spirit. Hebrews 4:12. It has power to reach souls far beyond any words we could ever say. Every good soldier of Jesus Christ should use this greatest weapon of all. Unsaved men will do everything in their power to stop you from reciting Scripture verses, but don't stop. If they say that they don't believe the Bible, quote more of it. The Bible teaches sowing and reaping. There is a time to sow and a time to reap. It is God that gives the harvest. If you do not sow there can be no reaping. His Word is the seed, so spread it far and wide. **Matthew 13:4-8.**

E. Follow up each contact. Not many persons are saved the first time they hear the Gospel. Usually they have to be spoken to again and again. Show a little kindness to them. Hand them good Gospel literature. Invite them to attend Gospel meetings with you. Above all, be much in prayer for them. Do not be discouraged if some are hostile to you. Opposition is often a sign that they are being convicted by the Holy Spirit, whereas indifference is almost impossible to deal with.

F. Don't press for quick decisions. A false profession is not only worthless, but it may deceive the individual himself, and may do untold harm to the cause of Christ. You be faithful in sowing the seed, and God will be faithful in giving the increase. **John 4:35-38.**

G. If you find it difficult to speak to others about the Lord, tell the Lord about it and ask Him to give you strength and courage to witness for Him. If you really want it, He will give it. **Matthew 10:32.**

H. Always carry a good supply of Gospel literature with you. You can not only pass tracts to those you meet, but can leave them on street cars or busses, in restaurants, or almost any public place.

The rewards of soul winning are tremendous. (1) The present joys of leading a person to Christ are indescribable! Luke 15:10. (2) How much greater will be the

joy in heaven when someone greets you with these words, "It was you who invited me here!" (3) Finally, how incomparable will be the thrill when the Lord Jesus Christ openly confesses you before the assembled hosts of heaven. Matthew 10:32.

In view of this, let our constant prayer be:

Let me look on the crowd as my Savior did,
Till my eyes with tears grow dim.
Let me view with pity the wandering sheep,
And love them for love of Him. Matthew 9:36.

Chapter 25 SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

What should a Christian know about the Bible? Bible study must be carried on in full dependence on the Holy Spirit. He is our teacher, and we should constantly seek His guidance. John 14:26; 16:13. There is no quick, easy way to learn the Bible. It involves hard work for everyone. **However, never forget that the author of the book is always present, and who knows more about what He wrote than the author. If you do not understand, pray** and ask Him to teach you what it says. John 14:26.

A. The first thing to do is set aside a definite time each day for reading the Bible.

It is a good plan to start at Matthew and go through the New Testament. Then begin at Genesis and read through the entire Bible. Don't read so that you can say you've been through the Bible, but read so you will know what the Bible says.

B. When you come to an unfamiliar word, look it up in the dictionary.

If you come to a passage you cannot understand, first try to get the meaning by studying it carefully. If this fails, make a note of the problem, and look it up in a commentary when you get a chance.

C. Compare Scripture with Scripture.

Don't try to build a doctrine on a single verse. Find out what is the consistent teaching in the entire Bible on the subject. "Truth does not contradict truth."

D. You will be well rewarded if you write down an outline of each chapter, answering the following questions:

- (1) What have I learned about Christ? (Even in the Old Testament you will find the Savior in types and shadows.)
- (2) What is the principal message of this chapter?
- (3) What precious promise may I claim?
- (4) Which is the outstanding verse?
- (5) What sin am I taught to avoid?
- (6) What example is there for me to follow?
- (7) What are the difficult verses?

E. During the day you should try to discuss what you have read with someone else.

This will serve two purposes: it will help to fix the lesson in your own mind; it will enable someone else to share the blessing that you received from your Bible study. Malachi 3:16.

F. Try to memorize two or three verses of Scripture each week.

Begin with familiar Gospel verses such as: John 1:12; John 3:16; John 3:36; John 5:24; Romans 10:9, etc. Review all memory verses constantly until you really **have them set in your mind and heart. Write them on little cards like a business card and carry them with you to review through out the day.** You will find your own life enriched, and you will be better able to speak to others.

G. The great goal of Bible study, of course, is to put into practice what you have learned.

We should allow the Word to rebuke us, to correct us, and to make us more like the Lord Jesus. Jeremiah 15:16. Remember when you study the Bible you are studying an eternal book. Everything you learn about it here is an investment for eternity. So give it your very best.

Chapter 26

THE LIFE THAT COUNTS

How can a Christian make his life count? Although a believer cannot lose his salvation, it is certainly true that he can waste his life so that it will not count for eternity. It has been rightly said, "A fool is a man all of whose plans end in time." To avoid the tragedy of a wasted life, the Bible counsels every Christian as follows:

A. Count the cost of being a disciple of Christ. All believers are children of God, but not all are disciples. The terms of discipleship are given in Matthew 10:16-42 and Luke 14:25-35. To be a disciple means giving up comforts and earthly security. It means a life of self-denial. It means the enmity and ridicule of the world. It means forsaking all to follow the Lord Jesus.

B. Make a deliberate commitment of your life to Him. Romans 12:1. Come to that point of decision where you yield your body a living sacrifice to God. This is the only reasonable thing to do in view of all that He has done. **The great missionary** C. T. Studd once said, "If Jesus Christ is God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him."

C. Abandon your life for Christ. The Savior said, "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." Matthew 16:25. In other words, if you want to know the full joy and happiness of life, you should live to please the Lord Jesus Christ and not yourself. The one who lives selfishly is a miserable, unhappy person.

D. Burn your bridges behind you. "Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar." Psalm 118:27. Make it as difficult as possible for yourself to turn back by severing all connections that would keep you from a life of wholehearted obedience and devotion to your Lord. Luke 9:23.

E. Don't be sidetracked. So many start off well but then they lose the vision and slip back into the old routine. Good paying jobs, materialism, interesting careers, and many moral temptations will lure you away. Unwise marriages have been the downfall of many would-be disciples. **The devil will use anyone or anything to divert you from God's path for you.** The Lord Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Luke 9:62.

F. Live to serve. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to

minister." Matthew 20:28. True greatness lies in serving others. Don't try to be on the receiving line. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35.

G. Crown Him Lord of all. If Christ rules in your life, **each day** will really count for eternity. Christianity is "not a pleasant pastime but a passionate quest." It is not an easy life but a struggle. It costs nothing to become a Christian, but it costs everything to be one. It is not popularity but persecution; not comfort but a cross. But it is the best life. You serve the best of Masters. Your wages are **the best**, and you **will** like your work even better than your wages. Your rewards are wonderful, both now and in eternity.

We urge you, therefore, to give your life to Christ. Give Him your very best. Hold nothing back. May it be your supreme joy to hear Him say to you at last, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Matthew 25:21.

This book has been specially prepared for you by the Bible Broadcasting Network, Charlotte, North Carolina, USA and is made available to you to download at "www.bbnet.org" to help you do two things. First, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." II Timothy 2: 15. Second "...endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him be a soldier and if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." II Timothy 2:3-5.