

# *Your Growth In Christ*

**A Summary of Biblical Doctrine  
and  
Self-Study Lessons for Christian Growth**

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# Introduction

## What Is This Book About?

What you hold in your hand is a wonderful introduction to the Christian life. I have seen many such introductions in my almost 30 years of ministry, but this is the best I've come across. While it will be especially useful to the new convert to Christ, it will also be a blessing to the established believer.

This book is actually two books in one. Parts I and II are a reprint of a book entitled *What Christians Believe* (now in public domain). These studies were prepared by the following staff members of the Emmaus Bible School of Chicago back in 1959:

Alfred P. Gibbs	Harold Shaw
R. Edward Harlow	Dudley A. Sherwood
Harold M. Harper	John Smart
George M. Landis	C. Ernest Tatha.
Harold G. Mackay	Ben Tuininga
William McDonald	

I have also made a few minor contributions, but I could do little to improve this great summary. Any such additions appear in [brackets].

Part III is a reproduction of a booklet entitled *Growing in Christ*. These self-study lessons were prepared by Pastor-Teacher Gary E. Gilley of Southern View Chapel in Springfield, Illinois. They will build on Parts I and II by encouraging you to look up Scripture and find the answers to practical questions. As indicated above, any minor additions appear in [brackets]. (Anyone is free to use these lessons to God's glory, provided they are not used for profit and credit is given to the author.)

## How Do I Use This Book?

I would encourage you to read Parts I and II first. As you read, look up any Bible verses that are mentioned and read them in the light of the author's point. Read each chapter prayerfully, asking God to teach you as you read and trust Him that He will do just that as you submit yourself to the authority of His Word. After finishing Parts I and II, move on to Part III. Do each lesson at your own pace—perhaps one per day, for example—and allow the Lord to work in your life.

## What Version of the Bible Should I Use?

This is a great debate among many Christians today, and we at *Grace Bible Church* and *Sola Scriptura Ministries* have published what we believe are several helpful resources on this subject. To be brief, however, after many years of study on this issue, we are convinced that the modern translations—especially the *New International Version* (NIV), but most others as well—are weak in their translation methods and their resulting Bible doctrine. We believe for *many*

reasons that the *Authorized Version (King James Version)* is the most accurate, reliable, and doctrinally sound translation ever produced in the English language. We highly recommend that this is what you use.

### **What If I Have More Questions?**

If you have more questions on the Bible or Christian living, we would suggest three courses of action. *First*, and foremost, we encourage you to be under the preaching and teaching of God's Word by a called and qualified pastor in a local church. You are invited to worship with us, but if that is not possible, you should find an evangelical church where the preaching and teach of God's Word is the number one emphasis. This book says more about this later. *Second*, we have more printed literature (as well as computer resources) to aid your Christian growth. Write to us and/or visit our Internet web site. *Third*, write, call, or e-mail me, and I will do whatever I can to answer your questions.

We sincerely pray that this book will be a blessing, challenge, and encouragement to you. May God richly bless you as you grow in Christ and serve Him.

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# PART I – BASIC BIBLE DOCTRINE

## 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 each Bible 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 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. 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. It is not enough to say that the Bible “contains” the Word of God. This might imply that parts of it are inspired and parts are not. Every part of the Bible is inspired. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”

Another important point to remember is that the Bible is the only written revelation that God has given to man. In the last chapter of the Bible God warns men against adding to the Bible or taking away from it. [Revelation 22:18-19](#).

[Because it was God who wrote the Bible, It is therefore what is called “authoritative” and “sufficient.” One of the greatest statements of Biblical doctrine ever written is *The Westminster Confession of Faith* of 1646. It defines the authority and sufficiency of Scripture in this way:

“The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.”

All religions of the world embrace either their own traditions and teachings exclusively or add them to the Bible. But God says that only the Bible is authoritative and sufficient. (For deeper study of this, read the editor’s book, *Sola Scriptura: A New Call To Biblical Authority* as well as other resources on this subject from *Sola Scriptura Ministries*.)

### **III. WHAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THE BIBLE?**

Although the Bible is made up of sixty-six books, yet 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, [His work of saving us, and how to live for Him].

### **IV. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CONTAIN?**

The Bible is the record of the world from the beginning of time until the future when there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

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, each of which presents the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts tells the story of the Christian movement in its infancy and the life of the great apostle Paul. 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**

[As someone has rightly said,]

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)

[And as Charles Spurgeon preached:

First, my friends, stand over this volume, and admire its authority. This is no common book. It is not the sayings of the sages of Greece; here are not the utterances of philosophers of past ages. If these words were written by a man, we might reject them; but O let me think the solemn thought, that this book is God's handwriting-that these words are God's! Let me look at its date; it is dated from the hills of heaven. Let me look at its letters; they flash glory on my eye. Let me read the chapters; they are big with meaning and mysteries unknown. Let me turn over the prophecies; they are pregnant with unthought-of wonders. Oh, book of books! And wast thou written by my God? Then will I bow before thee. Thou book of vast authority! thou art a proclamation from the Emperor of Heaven; far be it from me to exercise my reason in contradicting thee. Reason, thy place is to stand and find out what this volume means, not to tell what this book ought to say. Come thou, my reason, my intellect, sit thou down and listen, for these words are the words of God. I do not know how to enlarge on this thought. Oh! if you could ever remember that this Bible was actually and really written by God. Oh! if ye had been let into the secret chambers of heaven, if ye had beheld God grasping his pen and writing down these letters-then surely ye would respect them; but they are just as much God's handwriting as if you had seen God write them. This Bible is a book of authority; it is an authorized book, for God has written it. Oh! tremble, lest any of you despise it; mark its authority, for it is the Word of God.]

# 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

1. The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. The fact that there is a God is assumed throughout the Scriptures. The first verse of the Bible is an example. "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](#).

2. 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) 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

1. 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](#).

2. 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](#); and (3) will, [Joshua 3:10](#).

3. The Unity of God. 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.

4. The 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](#).
- (2) 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 5:34](#).

## 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. These are known as His attributes.

1. God is **Omnipresent**. This means that God is present everywhere at the same time. [Jeremiah 23:24](#).
2. 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 limitless the universe,  
and gloriously grand,  
He knows the eternal story  
of every grain of sand.

3. 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](#).
4. God is **Eternal**. He never had a beginning and He will never cease to exist. [Psalm 90:2](#).
5. God is **Unchangeable**. “I am the Lord, I change not.” [Malachi 3:6](#).
6. God is **Holy**. He is absolutely pure and sinless. He hates sin and loves goodness. [Proverb 15:9](#), [26](#). He must separate Himself from sinners and must punish sin. [Isaiah 59:1](#), [2](#).
7. God is **Just**. Everything He does is right and fair. He fulfills all His promises. [Psalm 119:13](#).
8. God is **Love**. Although God hates sin, yet He loves sinners. [John 3:16](#) (Read this verse.)

Note: In speaking to God in prayer, we use the words “Thou” and “Thee.” The purpose of this is to show reverence for God. It is not proper to address Him in the same way that we would speak to our fellow-men.

# Chapter 3 - Man

If we want to know the truth about man, we must turn to the Bible. [We have all heard the question: “What is truth?”] *Truth is what God says about a thing.* The Bible tells us about man’s creation, nature, relation to other beings, his fall and destiny.

## 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.

But the Bible tells us: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth ... God created man. [Gen. 1:1, 27](#).

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 old question, “What is the chief end of man?” is properly answered, “The chief end of man is to glorify God [and enjoy Him forever].”

## II. MAN’S NATURE

Anyone who has witnessed a deathbed 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. Man is not merely a body, but also is or has a soul and spirit.

The Bible teaches us that man exists as 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. Animals have a body and soul, but no spirit. A man has 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. The soul is the seat of the emotions and passions, while 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.

## 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 body or soul. They are mightier than we are. They, were also created to serve God, but since they have a free will, some of them fell into the sin of disobedience.

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 can quite understand why He would desire to have it so. A man could get protection for his house by means of a burglar alarm system. But there is something about a dog which draws out our affections in a way no machine ever could.

#### **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. He was immediately cast out of heaven, and many other angels 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 presence of God.

Adam's nature has been passed on to every member of the, human race. We are all born with a tendency to [and bent toward] sin. This nature responds to temptation from without and so we yield and grievously sin.

[So, as a result of sin, man's will is now in bondage. He no longer has a will that is "free" in the same sense that Adam's will was free before the fall. Man now leans toward sin. He has a bent toward sinning. His need now is the drawing of God to bring him to Christ. (For deeper study on this subject, see the editor's book, *Salvation Is of the Lord*.)]

#### **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. The fact of death is so common that everyone understands the inevitable end of every man. But the Bible adds, "After this the judgment." God has created man and revealed to him His will. 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. His spirit must go to God, his Creator and Judge.

# Chapter 4 - Sin

## I. WHAT IS SIN?

No one can read the Bible very 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.

1. Breaking the law of God. [Romans 5:13](#).
2. Rebellion against God, or lawlessness. [I John 3:4](#)
3. Moral impurity. [Psalm 32:5](#).

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 it's 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 forbade Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They disobeyed God and ate the forbidden fruit. They thus became sinners.

## III. THE RESULTS OF SIN

1. 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 3:10](#).
2. 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 banished from God's presence. He also became subject to physical death. Although he did not die immediately, his body was doomed to die eventually.
3. Adams' sinful nature was passed on to all the human race. Every child born of sinful parents is a sinner by birth. Thus Adam's oldest son, Cain, was a murderer. 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.) Other evidences are mentioned in [Genesis 3:14-19](#).
4. Man's sin brought God's curse upon all creation. Thorns and thistles, for instance, are an evidence of this. Sin needs no proof as long as we have prisons, hospitals, and funeral parlors. Tears, sickness, sorrow, pain and death are some of the results of sin.

#### **IV. THE PENALTY OF SIN**

“The wages of sin is death.” [Romans 6:23](#). God has pronounced the penalty of sin as being death. We have already seen that this means spiritual death and physical death. This penalty must be paid. God must punish sin.

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. He did not inherit Adam’s sinful nature. He was the only sinless man who ever lived. On the Cross of Calvary 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. (This will be more fully explained in the lessons on the New Birth and 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, that he will never be judged for them, and that he has power to live for God instead of for the pleasures of sin.

# Chapter 5 - Christ

This Lesson concerns the Lord Jesus Christ--the central theme of Holy Scripture. We shall consider His deity, His incarnation, His work and His offices.

## I. HIS DEITY

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

1. The attributes of God are used in speaking of Christ.
  - a. His preexistence. Christ has no beginning. [John 17:5](#).
  - b. His omnipresence. He is with His servants everywhere. [Matthew 28:20](#).
  - c. His omnipotence. He has unlimited power. [Revelation 1:18](#).
  - d. His omniscience. He has unlimited knowledge. [John 21:17](#).
  - e. His unchangeableness. He is “the same, yesterday, today and forever.” [Hebrews 13:8](#).
2. The works of God were performed by Christ.
  - a. He created all things. [John 1:3](#).
  - b. He upholds the universe. [Colossians 1:16](#).
  - c. He raised Himself from the dead. [John 2:19](#).
3. The titles of God are given to Christ.
  - a. God the Father addresses the Son as God. [Hebrews 1:8](#).
  - b. Men called Him God, and He did not refuse their worship. [John 20:28](#).
  - c. Demons recognized Him as God. [Mark 1:24](#).
  - d. 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.

1. The coming of Christ was predicted in the Old Testament. [Isaiah 7:14](#),
2. History records the birth of our Lord. His birth was different from all other births.
  - a. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. [Luke 1:35](#).
  - b. He was born of a virgin. [Matthew 1:23](#).
  - c. Yet He was truly man, possessing a body [Hebrews 10:5](#), soul ([Matthew 26:38](#)) and spirit ([Luke 23:46](#)).
3. Christ came in human form in order to:

- a. Reveal the Father. [John 14:9](#).
- b. Put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. [Hebrews 9:26](#).
- c. Destroy the works of the devil. [I John 3:8](#).

NOTE WELL: One of the foundation 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. As a man, He was absolutely sinless.

### III. HIS WORK

Under this heading, we shall discuss the Lord's death, resurrection and ascension.

#### 1. His death.

- a. The death of Christ was necessary. [John 3:14](#). It was part of God's eternal purpose. [Hebrews 10:7](#). It was necessary to fulfill Old Testament prophecies. [Isaiah 53:5](#). It was necessary to provide salvation for man. [Ephesians 1:7](#).
- b. The death of Christ was for others. He died as a substitute. [I Corinthians 15:3](#).
- c. 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.

#### 2. His resurrection.

- a. The 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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. [I Corinthians 15:6](#).
- d. The resurrection of Christ is an important truth. If there had been no resurrection there would be no Christian faith.

#### 3. His ascension.

- a. At the end of His ministry on earth Christ was carried up into heaven. [Mark 16:19](#); [Acts 1:9](#).
- b. He ascended so that He might enter into His reward, [John 17:5](#), and continue His ministry for His people.

### IV. HIS OFFICES

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

1. As Prophet, He tells men what God has to say to them, and He thus reveals God to men. [John 1:18](#).
2. As Priest, He represents believers before God. [Hebrews 4:14-16](#).
3. As King, He reigns today in the hearts of those who are loyal to Him. In a coming day, He will reign upon the earth for one thousand years. [Psalm 72](#) describes His reign on earth. Then throughout eternity the Lord Jesus will continue to serve His blood-bought people.

# Chapter 6 - The New Birth

Read [John 3:1-21](#)

## INTRODUCTION

The reader must be struck by the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, solemnly impressed upon a most religious and moral person named Nicodemus the absolute necessity for him to be born again, if he would see or enter the Kingdom of God ([vs. 3, 5](#)). The new birth is one of the three great “musts” of all humanity. 1. The “must” of death ([II Samuel 14:14](#); [Hebrews 9:27](#)). 2. The “must” of the judgment ([Romans 14:12](#); [Revelation 20:11-15](#)). 3. The “must” of regeneration, or the new birth.

In view of much ignorance and misunderstanding concerning this vital matter, let us first view it negatively.

### I. WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS NOT.

(See [John 1:12,13](#))

1. It is not of natural generation or descent--“not of blood.” Though one may be born of Christian parents this does not constitute 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, however eminent his ecclesiastical position, can impart the new birth to another. All the rites and ceremonies of any or of all organized religions can never produce the new birth.
4. Not a physical change. Christ corrected Nicodemus’ misunderstanding as to this, and showed him it was a spiritual change ([John 3:4-6](#)).
5. Not a social and geographical change. The born again person is not suddenly translated to heaven, but continues to live on earth, but now to please his Lord and Saviour. ([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.
7. Not an evolutionary process. It is not a gradual development of some germ of spiritual life that is within ([Ephesians 2:2](#)). Sinners are described as being spiritually dead. Life cannot be developed where it does not exist!
8. Not a reformation or self-improvement by which outwardly bad habits are relinquished. It is not a change of manners, but of the man.

9. Not a religious belief. 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, and even be a preacher, without being born again. The necessity for the new birth was stated to one of the most religious, sincere and moral men of his day. ([John 3:1](#).)

## II. WHAT THE NEW BIRTH IS

*The new birth is a spiritual change ([v. 8](#)). This can be brought about only by God ([John 1:13](#)).*

Now let us ask three questions regarding the new birth. WHY? HOW? WHEN? The first one is discussed below. The other two will be taken up in the next lesson.

## III. WHY MUST A PERSON BE BORN AGAIN?

Note [John 3:7](#), "Marvel not." The necessity for the new birth is perfectly logical and reasonable, and should not awaken incredulity.

1. Because of a spiritual nature that man naturally lacks ([John 3:6](#)). Here the word "flesh" refers to that sinful nature which a person receives at his physical birth. Leave off the letter "H," and spell it backwards and its meaning will be seen, i.e. "self." Through his sin, Adam acquired a sinful nature, and this nature has been transmitted, by birth, to each of his descendants. (See [Romans 5:12, 18, 19](#); [Psalm 51:5](#).) The character of this sinful nature, called "the flesh," is described in [Romans 8:5,8](#). It is "enmity against God, not subject (or obedient) to the law of God," and consequently is incapable of pleasing God. In other words, man does not naturally possess a spiritual capacity which would enable him to either desire understand or enjoy the things of God. (See [I Corinthians 2:14](#).)

Just as a musical, artistic or poetic capacity can be communicated to a person only by a physical birth, so a spiritual capacity, by which the things of God can be appreciated, must be communicated to a person by a spiritual birth. The flesh can be educated, cultivated, and religionized; but its nature remains unchanged and unchangeable in its enmity to God, and is incapable of pleasing God. The new birth is the impartation of a spiritual or Divine nature, by which alone man can possess this spiritual capacity to understand and enjoy the things of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Like can produce only like!

2. Because of a spiritual kingdom that man cannot naturally see or enter. (See [John 3:3, 5](#).) What is meant here by "the Kingdom of God?" It is described as a spiritual experience. We read, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink [or physical], but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." ([Romans 14:17](#).) Let us think of two kingdoms or spheres; one called "the kingdom of men," and the other "the Kingdom of God"; or one called "the flesh," and the other "the spirit." All humanity enters the kingdom of men by a physical birth, which communicates to him a, physical nature, which fits him for a physical sphere, peopled by men. In this sphere he lives, moves, and has his being. Now how is man to be enabled to see the value of and enter this other sphere called the Kingdom of God? The answer is surely quite obvious. He must be born again, or have a spiritual birth, which will introduce him into this new realm. Through this new birth he will become possessed of a spiritual nature which will fit him to enjoy the spiritual realities that characterize the Kingdom of God.

[The Greek word translated] "born again" [can also be translated] "born from above." This serves to indicate the source of the birth. Physical birth is of man and the earth; spiritual birth has its origin in God and is from heaven. Now read [Romans 8:9](#). Here Paul speaks to a people who were no longer "in the flesh" as to their position before God; but were "in the Spirit." How were they translated from one kingdom to the other? By the Spirit of God, upon their acceptance of Christ as their Savior.

3. Because of a spiritual life man does not naturally possess. Man, by nature, is described as being “dead in his trespasses and sins”; “alienated from the life of God”; as “having not life.” (See [Ephesians 2:1](#); [4:18](#); [1 John 5:11-12](#).) Just as a body without physical life is declared to be physically dead, so any person without spiritual life is described in the Bible as being spiritually dead. (See [I Timothy 5:6](#); [Luke 15:24](#).) Death therefore means separation. For a person to be separated from Christ, in Whom is life, is to be dead spiritually. [John 1:4](#).) How can this spiritual life be imparted to the spiritually dead? Let Christ Himself answer it. Turn to [John 5:25](#) and the problem is solved. All who hear the Son of God, receive His Word and trust Him as their Savior receive spiritual life, or are thus born again. See also [John 3:16](#); [5:22-24](#); [6:47](#); [10:26-28](#); [1 John 5:13](#).

# Chapter 7 - The New Birth (continued)

## I. HOW CAN A PERSON BE BORN AGAIN?

Christ indicates a three-fold means by which the new birth is produced.

1. By believing the Word of God. [John 3:5](#). The “water” here is the well-known symbol for the Word of God. (See [Ephesians 5:26](#); [John 15:3](#); [Psalm 119:9](#).) It has no reference to baptism. Other Scriptures make abundantly clear that the new birth comes through the Word of God. (See [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](#)).

2. 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. See [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, by His in, dwelling presence, as Christ’s purchased possession. This is not a question of feeling, but of fact. We do not feel the new birth.

3. By faith in the Substitutionary Sacrifice of Christ. See [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 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.

a. **Sin** - [Numbers 21:5](#). just as Israel sinned, so all humanity has sinned against God in thought, word, and deed. [Romans 3:23](#).

b. **Judgment** - [Numbers 21:6](#). As their sin brought God’s merited judgment upon them, so God has revealed His wrath against all sin. See [Romans 1:18](#); [Job 36:18](#); [Romans 6:23](#).

c. **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. See [Luke 13:3](#); [Acts 17:31](#); [20:21](#); [Mark 1:15](#).

d. **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](#).

e. **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. See [Isaiah 53:5,6](#); [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#); [Romans 5:7-8](#).

f. **Condition** - [Numbers 21:8](#) - "when he looketh." The fact that the brazen serpent was lifted up did not, of itself, save them. Each bitten Israelite must look to live! The fact that Christ has died for our sins and accomplished all the work needed for our salvation, will not save any sinner unless he personally believes on Christ, trusts Him as his own Savior, and owns Him as the Lord of his life. This is what our Savior meant when He said: "that whosoever believeth in him ... should have ever, lasting life." [John 3:16](#). just as the bitten Israelites were not asked to pray, resolve, pay or do good works to merit salvation, so sinners are urged to own their need and trust wholly in the work of Christ, and receive Him by faith as their own personal Savior. See [John 1:12](#); [Acts 13:38-39](#); [Ephesians 2:8-9](#).

g. **Result** - [Numbers 21:9](#). "he lived." The moment a bit, ten 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 Savior, he receives spiritual or eternal life, is 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.

## II. WHEN CAN A PERSON BE BORN AGAIN?

The answer to this can be obtained by consulting your watch! The new birth takes place the moment a guilty sinner looks to Christ and trusts Him as his Lord and Savior. Why not, just where you are, and as you are, cease from your own efforts to save yourself, and trust in the Person and rest in the work of the Son of God, who did it all for you. (See [II Corinthians 6:1, 2](#); [Hebrews 4:7](#)).

Come as a sinner, and trust now in Christ,  
Who bore thy sins and shame;  
Then, by the Spirit of God through the Word,  
Thou shalt be born again!

# Chapter 8 - Salvation

Closely linked with the subject of the new birth is that of salvation. The former concerns itself principally with the necessity, source and nature of the spiritual life all men need from God; the latter emphasizes the delivering effects and scope of God's provision in Christ. We shall think of seven things in connection with salvation.

## I. ITS DEFINITION

The word simply means deliverance. It is commonly used to describe the act by which a person is delivered from a danger which 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 very 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.

1. The fact of man's sin. We have already discussed in our previous lesson, the spiritual condition of all men by nature, and 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 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) Doomed, needing deliverance. (4) Guilty, needing pardon. (5) Spiritually dead, needing life. (6) Blind, needing illumination. (7) A slave, needing liberation. Man is thus utterly helpless to save himself.

2. 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 should be: "What must I do to be saved?" ([Acts 16:30, 31](#)).

## 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.

1. Christ came to be the Savior of sinners. [Matthew 1:21](#). 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](#).

2. 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 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](#); [1 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?

1. 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 indifference 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.
2. He must believe the gospel, or the testimony of God concerning the Person and work of Christ. See [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](#)).
3. 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 not, right from your heart, say: "Lord Jesus Christ; owning myself to be a guilty, lost sinner; but believing that Thou didst bear my sins and die in my place on Calvary; I now definitely rest in Thy finished work and receive Thee as my own Savior, henceforth to own Thee as the Lord and Master of my life." This is what it means to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" ([Acts 16-31](#)).

#### **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, the possessor of eternal life and secure forever. Read [Acts 13:38](#); [1 John 2:12](#); [Ephesians 2:8](#); [1 Corinthians 6:11](#); [1 John 5:13](#); [Romans 5:1](#); [8:1](#); [John 10:27-30](#).

#### **VI. ITS SCOPE**

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

1. Past. Salvation from sin's penalty, or consequences. Since Christ has endured the full penalty which was due to our sins, the believer is delivered from its dread consequences. See [John 5:24](#); [Romans 8:1](#).

2. 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, however, that, in the measure that he avails himself of the means God has provided, sin shall not be the dominating factor in his life. This present deliverance 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](#)).

3. Future. Salvation from sin's presence, or committal. 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](#); [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#)).

## VII. ITS RESULTS

These are multitudinous ([Ephesians 1:3,14](#)) We shall select a few.

1. Peace with God. [Romans 5:1](#). No longer at enmity.
2. Acceptance before God in Christ. [Ephesians 1:6](#).
3. Joy in God as His children. [Romans 5:10-11](#); [8:14-17](#); [Galatians 3:26-4:7](#).
4. Living for God. [II Corinthians 5:14, 15](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [1 Peter 4:2-5](#).
5. Service to God in the way of good works and testimony for Him. [Ephesians 2:10](#); [Matthew 5:16](#); [Mark 16:15, 16](#).
6. Worship, praise and prayer unto God. [John 4:23, 24](#); [Hebrews 10:19-22](#); [Hebrews -13:15](#); [4:14-16](#).
7. An eternal home in heaven. [John 14:1-3](#); [Revelation 22:1-5](#).

May each reader give himself no rest until he knows, on the authority of the Word of God, that he is eternally saved!

# Chapter 9 - Grace

## I. INTRODUCTION

All God's dealings with mankind at the present time are on the basis of grace. This means that He shows men favor which they do not deserve.

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

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

"Grace is love displayed to unworthy objects. God is love; but when He bestows that love on guilty, unclean, rebellious sinners, then it is grace."

"Love that looks up is adoration. Love on its own level is affection. Love that descends is grace."

"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."

"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." [1 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 a sinful rebel 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. But God is holy and He cannot overlook sin. Sin must be punished.

The Gospel tells us how God can save sinners by grace, and still be holy in doing so. Christ suffered the wrath and judgment of God against sin. On the basis of the work of Christ, God can forgive the sins of those who trust the Lord Jesus.

Christ has finished the work. Grace only demands faith on the part of the sinner who seeks salvation. [Ephesians 2:8, 9](#).

#### **VI. BLESSINGS THROUGH GRACE**

Grace brings 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 Christian has eternal life.

(b) Justification. [Romans 3:24-26](#). This means that God reckons [or, considers] a sinner who has believed on Christ as being blameless.

(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.

# Chapter 10 - Faith

One does not study the Bible very long before becoming conscious of the importance of faith. A sinner cannot be saved apart from faith. [Ephesians 2:8, 9](#). Therefore it is important that we should find out what this word means.

## I. WHAT IS FAITH?

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 DOES FAITH COME FROM?

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 Thy Word, if Jesus Christ is Thy 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, or a friend, or it may be 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. A man may have faith in his automobile to take him to a certain place, but if the automobile is badly in need of repairs, he will soon find that his faith has been misplaced.

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 whether his faith is in Christ. If it is, then the man is saved.

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 do not really believe 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, that He died on Calvary, that He rose again and ascended into heaven. 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. 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 11 - Heaven And Hell I

Men have always had a sincere interest in the future. This interest has aroused questions such as the following: Does death end all? Where are the dead? What can we know about heaven and hell? First, we shall consider the question:

## 1. WHAT HAPPENS TO A MAN AT THE TIME OF DEATH?

At the outset, we need to remember 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 Cor 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. Be sure to read this important passage.

## II. WHAT DO WE KNOW 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 ([Luke 16:23-25](#)). The soul in hell is spoken of as a person, having eyes, tongue, ears, fingers and memory. There is full knowledge of the conditions there.

The Bible speaks about another place of torment in addition to hell. That other place is the Lake of Fire. At the Judgment of the Great White Throne, which will be discussed in the next chapter, the souls in hell will be united with the 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 ([Rev. 20:11,15](#)). Hell may thus be likened to the local jail where the prisoner temporarily awaits his sentence. The Lake of Fire may be likened to a prison to which are committed those under sentence for the duration of their earthly 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.

Is punishment for sin eternal? 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? (1) God does not want men to perish. He 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. (2) God is a God of love, [I John 4:8](#), but He is also holy, [I Peter 1:16](#). He must punish sin. (3) 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](#)).

### III. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HEAVEN?

The Scriptures clearly teach that there is a place of bliss 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](#); [1 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 very far better." [Philippians 1:23](#).

What is heaven like? The writers of the Scriptures could not find language that would describe it. In [Revelation 21:10-27](#), John describes the foundations, wall, gates, and street of the heavenly city. Our hearts are attracted by its beauty. We know that there will be no sickness, sorrow, tears, pain, or death in that fair place. [Revelation 21:4](#). But best of all, the Lord Jesus Christ will be there, and He will be the supreme delight of every believer's heart.

# Chapter 12 - 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. In this lesson, we shall consider some of these events in the order in which they will happen.

## I. CHRIST'S COMING FOR HIS SAINTS

([I Thessalonians 4:13-18](#))

The next event to occur is the coming of Christ to take His people home to heaven. This is known as the Rapture. Christ will descend from heaven. The bodies of believers who have died will be raised. Living believers will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. Note the following facts about the coming of Christ.

1. It may happen at any moment. [Revelation 22:7](#).
2. Only those who are truly saved will participate. [I Corinthians 15:23](#); [[Revelation 4:1](#)]
3. It takes place instantly—"in the twinkling of an eye." [I Corinthians 15:52](#).
4. Not all believers will die but all will be changed. [I Corinthians 15:51](#). They shall be like Christ. [I John 3:2](#); [Romans 8:16-25](#).

## II. THE TRIBULATION

([Matthew 24:5-31](#); [[Revelation 4-19](#)])

After the Rapture, the earth will experience a period of great suffering and sorrow known as the 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. It will be a time of such great suffering that unless the days were shortened, no fife would survive. However, God will preserve those Jewish people who have been faithful to Him.

## III. CHRIST'S COMING TO REIGN

([Malachi 4:1-3](#); [[Revelation 20:4-5](#)])

Toward the end of the Tribulation period, the Lord Jesus Christ will come back to the earth in great power and glory. 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.

## IV. THE MILLENNIUM

([Isaiah 32:1](#); [35:1,7](#); [65:17-25](#); [[Revelation 20:4-5](#)])

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 JUDGMENT 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 hell will give up their souls. They will then stand before Christ to be judged. 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 question that faces each one of us as we draw to the end of these Bible studies is this, "Where will I spend eternity?"

## PART II. – THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

This part of the study presents some practical aspects of the Christian life and its growth.

### Chapter 13 - Results Of Regeneration

What actually happens when a person is born again? Here is what takes place when a soul is born again. First, the person realizes that he is a lost sinner and that he deserves to spend eternity in hell. (Only the Holy Spirit can make anyone realize this.) He then repents of his sins, that is, he acknowledges to God that he is a sinner and that he needs a Savior. He accepts Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, and at that moment he is born again. His sins are forgiven. He receives eternal life from God.

But that is only a small part of the story. It is just the beginning. We learn from the Bible that many other wonderful things occur when God saves a man. Here are ten other amazing occurrences:

1. For one thing, the believer is accepted in the Beloved ([Ephesians 1:6](#)). This means that he stands before God in all the acceptability of His Beloved Son. God sees him in Christ ([II Corinthians 5:17](#)). It also means that the Christian is welcome in God's presence as long as Christ is welcome, and that is clearly forever ([Ephesians 2:6, 7](#)).
2. Also, he becomes a child of God ([John 1:12](#)). You can imagine how honored you would feel if you were the child of some world-famous ruler. How much greater honor it is to be the child of the mighty Maker of the universe, before whom angels bow! ([Galatians 3:26](#)).
3. He is justified by God ([Romans 5:1](#); [8:30,33](#)). God, the judge, declares the believing sinner to be "NOT GUILTY" and looks upon him as if he had never sinned. He can do this because Christ has died as a substitute and has borne all the punishment which the Christian should have borne. Thus the Christian stands without guilt in God's sight, and he will never be punished for his sins ([Romans 8:1](#)).
4. He becomes indwelt by the Holy Spirit ([I Corinthians 6:19](#)). The Bible plainly teaches that God, the Holy Spirit, actually dwells within each believer ([I John 4:13](#)). The body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this sacred privilege, the child of God should be careful what he says, what he does, and where he goes.
5. He becomes a member of the true church ([I Corinthians 12:13](#)). The church is described as "the body of Christ" ([Colossians 1:18, 24](#)). It is composed of all true believers in the Lord Jesus ([Acts 2:47](#)). There is no greater honor on earth than to be a member of the true church.

6. He becomes an heir of God ([Romans 8:17](#)). God is the Creator of the universe and He owns all things. God's children are promised that they will one day reign with Christ over all the earth, and they will then possess all things.
7. He becomes a saint ([Romans 1:7](#)). Those who are saved are spoken of in the Bible as "saints." A saint is one who has been set apart for God by the Holy Spirit ([Psalm 4:3](#)). In God's sight every saint is holy, because God sees him in Christ, and Christ is absolutely holy ([I Corinthians 1:2](#)).
8. He is complete in Christ ([Colossians 2:10](#)). The Christian has a perfect standing before God. He is as near and as dear to God as Christ is. When a person has Christ, he has all that he needs for a happy life and a happy eternity.
9. He receives the divine nature ([II Peter 1:4](#)). He will soon notice that he has new desires, new ambitions, a new hatred of sin, and a new love for his fellow Christians. When the divine nature is encouraged by the believer himself, he will become more and more like the Lord Jesus ([Colossians 3:10](#); [II Corinthians 3:18](#)). This is God's purpose for every one of His children.
10. He immediately begins to enjoy the constant protection of God ([Romans 8:28](#)). Nothing can happen to a Christian without God's permission. In other words, there are no accidents in a believer's life. Everything that does happen to a child of God is for his own good. Even trials, tests and disciplines work for his spiritual benefit ([Romans 5:3-5](#)). Thus a Christian truly leads a "charmed" life.

In view of these marvelous provisions which God has made, every Christian should show his appreciation in at least two ways.

1. He should never cease to worship God for salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. He should give his life in willing service to the One who gave His life on Calvary 's Cross ([Romans 12:1](#)).

# Chapter 14 - Sure Salvation

How can a person know for certain that he is saved? Read the following facts over and over until you fully understand them.

1. The Bible is God's Word. It is absolutely true. You can trust it.
2. The Bible says that if you repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are saved.
3. Now the question is "Have you ever come to Christ as a lost sinner, and asked Him to save you? Have you ever accepted Him as the Substitute who bore the penalty of your sins?"
4. If you have, then God tells you in the Bible that you are saved. In other words--and this is very important to understand--assurance of salvation comes through the Scriptures. This truth is clearly taught in [1 John 5:13](#). Every Christian should memorize this verse:

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Notice the capitalized word. John wrote to those who had believed on Christ so that they might know that they had eternal life. If you have believed on Christ, you are saved. The Bible says so.

The trouble with so many is that they depend on feelings rather than on the Bible. They say, "I do not feel saved." They expect some mysterious emotional experience, and when they do not receive it, they doubt that they were ever saved. The person who bases his assurance of salvation on his feelings is certain to have difficulty because feelings change from moment to moment. God's Word, however, never changes. Trust the Bible and not your feelings.

But perhaps someone will ask, "Shouldn't a person feel happy when he is saved?" The answer is definitely, "Yes." However, one must know he is saved before he can feel happy. Assurance comes first, then feelings follow. We know we are saved because the Bible says so. We feel happy because we know we are saved.

In addition to the Scriptures themselves, there are other means of assurance for the believer. Here are three marks of a saved person:

1. The person who is saved loves his fellow Christians ([1 John 3:14](#)).
2. The person who is saved has the witness of the Holy Spirit within him ([1 John 5:10](#); [Romans 8:16](#)). The witness of the Spirit is the inner joy and peace which is given to those who believe the Word of God when it says that all who believe on Christ are saved. The Spirit witnesses to Christians through the Bible.
3. The person who is saved hates sin and loves what is right. Although a Christian can and does sin, sin no longer controls his life ([Romans 6:14](#)). He no longer lives in the continual practice of sin.

As a believer grows in the Christian life, his assurance will become stronger and stronger. There are at least three definite steps which he may take to help in this direction.

1. Read the Bible regularly and believe it with all your heart.
2. Pray to the Lord to strengthen your faith as you read His Holy Word.
3. Tell others about the One who has saved you from sin.

Finally, there is a helpful bit of advice for those who are not sure if they were ever saved, but who really want to be. Perhaps you think you might have trusted the Savior sometime in the past, but you are not absolutely certain. You long to know without any doubt that you are a child of God.

Here is what you should do. Tell the Lord that you are not sure if you were ever saved before, but you want to be saved right now. Tell Him that you know you are a lost sinner and that if you die in your present condition, you will go to hell. Then receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, believing that He died on Calvary's Cross to pay the penalty of your sins, and that He is able and willing to save you.

Now turn to [Acts 16:31](#). What does it say will happen if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? It says, "Thou shalt be saved." It is the Word of God. Believe it. When Satan comes to you and tries to make you doubt your salvation, turn to [Acts 16:31](#), or [John 1:12](#), or [John 3:36](#), or [John 5:24](#), or [Romans 10:9](#). Show him that God says you are saved because you have believed on Christ. He will not trouble you with doubts if you show him the Scriptures.

# Chapter 15 - Permanent Preservation

Can a saved person ever perish? If a person has been truly born again, he can never perish. The believer is safe and secure forever. Seven passages of Scripture are listed below as evidence of this glorious truth, though many more could be given. (The student should study each quotation carefully.)

1. [John 10:27,29](#). Notice these words of Christ, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.” Plant your feet on that. This is the promise of Christ without any conditions attached. No sheep of His will ever perish! Notice, too, that both Christ and the Father hold you securely.
2. [John 5:24](#). Here again the Lord Jesus Christ is speaking. He promises that the person who hears His Word and believes on the One who sent Him has everlasting life, and will never come into condemnation, or judgment. If one believer were ever lost, then the Son of God would have failed to keep His promise.
3. [John 3:36](#). “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” Notice that it does not say, “he will have everlasting life.” He has it at the present time. Now, how long is “everlasting”? Clearly it is forever.
4. [Romans 8:38, 39](#). The Apostle Paul announces that neither death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height nor depth can separate the Christian from the love of God. And lest any child of God might worry that he might separate himself from the love of God, Paul adds, “nor any other creature.” The believer is as safe as God can make him.
5. [II Timothy 1:12](#). Paul here expresses his confidence that Christ is able to keep what Paul had committed to Him, that is, his soul. In [John 6:39](#), we learn that God has entrusted Christ with the preservation of all believers. Is it possible that Christ could be unfaithful to His trust?
6. [Jude 24](#). The Lord Jesus is the One who is able to keep Christians from falling, and to take them safely home to heaven. Christians are no more able to keep themselves saved than they were to save themselves in the first place, but Christ is able ([I Peter 1:5](#)).
7. [Romans 8:30](#). “Whom He justified, them He also glorified.” Every saved person is glorified. Although Christians do not yet have their glorified bodies, yet it is so certain that God speaks of it as an accomplished fact. If you are justified, then, as far as God is concerned, you are glorified too. In other words, the Christian is just as sure of heaven as if he were already there.

In connection with the subject of the Christian’s security, the following facts should be remembered.

1. A Christian does not lose his salvation when he sins. Christ has already paid the penalty for all his sins--past, present and future. God will not demand payment twice. Since Christ has died for my sins, I will never have to die for them. God the righteous Judge, forgives the sinner who believes on Christ.
2. But when a Christian does sin, he displeases his heavenly Father, and the happy family spirit that should exist between the child and his Father remains broken until that sin is confessed ([I John 1:9](#)). Notice clearly that there is a big difference between God, the judge, dealing with a sinner, and God the Father dealing with an erring child. In the former case, the penalty for sin is death and hell. In the latter case, the result of sin is broken fellowship ([I John 2:1, 2](#)).

3. Even the Christian cannot sin cheaply. If a child of God wanders away from his Father, he can expect to be corrected ([Hebrews 12:6, 7](#)). The Father might use sorrow or suffering to bring him back. In some cases, God even takes the believer home to heaven: his body dies, but his soul is saved ([I Corinthians 5:5](#)).
4. While a Christian can and does, unfortunately, commit acts of sin, no true child of God lives a life of continual sin. “A Christian is not sinless, but he does sin less.” If a person can keep on sinning without being brought back to fellowship with God through chastenings, it is a sure sign that he was never born again. Our security must not be an excuse to sin, but rather an incentive not to sin.
5. There are several verses in the Bible which might seem to indicate that Christians can be lost again. However, if you examine them carefully, you will find that they refer to those who merely pretend to be Christians, or to those who have known the way of salvation and have rejected it. Nowhere do the Scriptures say that a truly born, again person can perish. It is only such persons who are secure.

# Chapter 16 - Triumph Over Temptation

How can a Christian resist sinful temptations? Whenever a person is saved, a great struggle begins. He still has the flesh, the sinful tendency 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 ([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 flesh and by nourishing the new life that is within. The following are practical suggestions as to how this may be done:

1. Read the Bible! Study it! Memorize it! Meditate on it! Obey it! Notice [Psalm 119:9](#) and [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](#)).
2. 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.
3. 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 5:11](#)).
4. Confess your sins immediately! 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](#)).
5. 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.
6. 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](#)).
7. Starve the flesh! Be careful what you read, what you watch, where you go, and what you listen to ([Colossians 3:5-9](#)).
8. 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. We are changed into His image and likeness by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

Occupation with others brings *distraction*.

Occupation with self brings *distress*.

Occupation with Christ brings *delight*.

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 petition ([Colossians 3:14](#)).

# Chapter 17 - 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 or to participate in other worldly pleasures and amusements?

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 which may help him to decide whether or not he should engage in a questionable activity.

1. 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](#)).
2. 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?
3. 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](#)).
4. Would the Lord have done it? He has left us an example that we should follow His steps ([I Peter 2:21](#)).
5. 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](#)).
6. 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](#)). See also [Ephesians 4:30](#).
7. 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](#)).
8. 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 that no man should put "a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" ([Romans 14:13](#)).
9. 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 18 - 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 alway, 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? Second, 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 year’s ago, and which continues to be performed to this very day?

1. 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 3:21](#)). Only those who have heard and believed should be baptized ([Acts 18:8](#)).
2. Secondly, [Romans 6:3-5](#) teaches that it is a symbol or picture of a spiritual truth.
  - (a) The water is a picture of judgment and death.
  - (b) When Christ died, He went under the waters of judgment and death to put away our sins ([Psalm 42:7](#)).
  - (c) 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.
  - (d) 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](#)).

(e) 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 that henceforth he shall seek to show to all that he possesses the life of Christ ([Colossians 2:12](#); [3:1, 2](#)).

3. The truly 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 is 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 19 - 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 any locality to gather together as members of the church, and perform the functions which are set forth in Scripture. In the early days, the saints met in their own homes ([Romans 16:5](#); [Philemon 2](#)); and 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 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 the 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](#)).

1. 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 [and sufficient] 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](#)). [*As we’ll detail later in this book, a true believer should not stay in a church that does embrace this view of the Bible.*]
2. Flowing from the first point, the second is that the preaching and teaching of the Scriptures is the number one priority of that church. No matter what other “ministries” the church might have, this must be the main emphasis. This is the only thing that will bring real growth in Christians and answer their questions about Christian living.
3. 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, 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](#)).
4. A fourth 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 1,5:1-4](#)). Salvation is obtained solely by faith in Him and quite 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 four 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.

1. 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.
2. 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 (1) unsound in doctrine, [II John 10](#), or (2) 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.
3. All believers are priests ([I Peter 2:5, 9](#)). In the New Testament, there is no distinction as to priests and people. 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.
4. 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 20 - 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.

1. 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." Amaziah yielded for we read that "he willingly offered himself unto the Lord" ([II Chronicles 17:16](#)).
2. 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](#)).
3. 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](#)).
4. 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. ([Psalm 143:8, 10](#)).
5. 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, for instance, 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](#)).

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 21 - Prayer And Praise

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:

## 1. Why pray?

[a.] Because the Bible commands us to do so ([1 Timothy 2:8](#)). The Lord Jesus was a man of prayer. If He felt the need of it, how much more should we! ([1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18](#); [Ephesians 6:18](#)).

[b. Because we are powerless without prayer. [Ephesians 6:18](#)]

[c. Because we are to give God thanks. [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)]

[d. Because we are to confess our sin. [1 John 1:9](#).]

[e. Because we are powerless without it. [Romans 8:26](#)]

2. 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 is needed, or when we want to thank Him for something. Certainly every Christian should bow his head and give thanks before eating his meals, whether in public or at home.

3. 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.

4. For what? Among the Scriptures which answer this question are [Philippians 4:6](#); [1 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:

- (a) names of unsaved relatives and friends.
- (b) names of those who are sick or in need.
- (c) names of those who are serving the Lord, such as missionaries, evangelists, teachers, etc.

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.

## 5. Conditions for answered prayer?

- (a) If we abide in Christ, our requests will be answered ([John 15:7](#)). Abiding in Christ means keeping His commandments ([I John 3:22](#)).
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Our motives must be pure ([James 4:3](#)). If our motives are selfish and sinful, we cannot expect an answer.

6. 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.

7. Dangers of prayer.

- (a) Don't pray to be seen ([Matthew 6:5,6](#)).
- (b) 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.
- (c) Don't ask for something you know you shouldn't have! God sometimes grants such requests but sends leanness to the soul ([Psalm 106:15](#)).
- (d) Avoid meaningless repetitions ([Matthew 6:7](#); [Ecclesiastes 5:2](#)).

8. Other suggestions.

- (a) If you find that your mind wanders when you are on your knees, try praying out loud. This will greatly help you to concentrate.
- (b) 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.
- (c) 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 more than we could ever ask or think ([II Corinthians 12:8,9](#)).

## Chapter 22 - Witnessing

How can a Christian lead others to Christ? Witnessing for 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, yet there are some general principles which will prove extremely valuable.

1. It is of first importance that the witness for Christ is 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 witnessing: “Live close to God” ([Matthew 4:19](#)).
2. 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.
3. 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?
4. Quote the Word of God as much as possible. It is a living Word! ([Hebrews 4:12](#)). It has power to reach souls far beyond any words we could ever utter. It is the Sword of the Spirit, and every good soldier of Jesus Christ should use this greatest of all weapons. 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.
5. 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 little kindnesses 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
- [9. Be careful not to get sidetracked with witnessing. Questions such as “Where did Cain get his wife” will get you off track. Give a quick answer, if possible, and then get right back to the issue—salvation.]

[10. Always give a clear presentation of the true Gospel, not easy believeism (“Just believe in Jesus”) or other such false Gospel. Sin, repentance, Lordship, and commitment of life must be emphasized. Sola Scriptura Ministries publishes a Gospel tract—“Salvation is of the Lord”—that you might want to use.]

The rewards of witnessing for Christ 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 23 - Searching The Scriptures

What should a Christian know about Bible study? 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. Yet it is also true that the more knowledge of it we gain, the easier it is to gain additional knowledge.

Personal Bible study should never replace the attendance of the local church where the Scriptures are taught. The pastor who is doing his job studies far more than the layman can so that he is able to teach the Word of God.

The Bible student should first of all have tools to work with:

- [1. A good study Bible. The “The Defender’s Study Bible” is excellent. The text is the regular King James or Authorized version, but helpful numerous notes are added to explain difficult passages.]
2. A good concordance. This enables you to find a verse when you can remember only a word or two in it. The three best concordances are Strong’s, Young’s, and Cruden’s. The first two are more complete, but the last is less costly and gives the English words only. (The former give the Greek and Hebrew.)
3. A good Bible dictionary. This contains a wealth of information on Bible subjects. Easton’s, Smith’s, or Peloubet’s is satisfactory for the beginner.

Having provided himself with the necessary equipment, the believer is ready to embark on a serious study of the Scriptures.

1. The first thing to do is set aside a definite time each day, and begin 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.
2. When you come to an unfamiliar word, look it up in the Bible dictionary or in a regular 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 Bible commentary when you get a chance. Among the helpful commentaries are those by Matthew Henry [this is must have, preferable the unabridged edition] and Jamieson, Faussett and Brown.
3. Compare Scripture with Scripture. [Never] try to build a doctrine on a single verse. Find out what is the consistent teaching in all the Bible on the subject. “Truth does not contradict truth.”
4. You will be well rewarded if you write down an outline of each chapter, answering the following questions:
  - (a) What have I learned about Christ? (Even in the Old Testament you will find the Savior in types and shadows.)
  - (b) What is the principal message of this chapter?

(c) What precious promise may I claim?

(d) Which is the outstanding verse?

(e) What sin am I taught to avoid?

(f) What example is there for me to follow?

(g) What are the difficult verses?

5. 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](#)).

6. 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. You will find your own life enriched, and you will be better able to speak to others.

7. 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 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 24 - 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:

1. Count the cost of being a disciple of Christ. To be a true disciple, that is a true Christian, means that you are willing to give all the Christ. 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.
2. 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. 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.”
3. 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.
4. 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](#)).
5. 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 divert many. Interesting careers lure others away. Unwise marriages have been the downfall of many a would-be disciple. 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](#)).
6. 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](#)).
7. Recognize Him as Lord of all. If Christ rules in your life, your days will really count for eternity.

At the close of this Bible course, we should like to impress on the student that 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 good, but you 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](#)).

# PART III – GROWING IN CHRIST

Self-Study Lessons Prepared by Pastor-Teacher Gary E. Gilley  
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[As noted in the Introduction, do each lesson at your own pace—perhaps one per day, for example—and allow the Lord to work in your life. Read each verse that is mentioned not just to answer the question the author poses, but for what it means and what it demands in your life.]

## Lesson 1 - Assurance Of Salvation

*Welcome, friend, into the family of Jesus Christ!*

Your decision to confess Christ as your Savior and Lord has brought you into a wonderful new life and relationship to God. Many things happened when you trusted Jesus Christ and told Him that as a sinner you needed Him for eternal salvation. We will first examine what happened to you at the moment of conversion then, we will see what the Bible has to say about assurance of salvation.

### I. YOUR ETERNAL SALVATION

At the moment of salvation you were:

1. **Justified.** This is a legal term meaning, “declare righteous” ([Rom 3:24](#); [5:1](#)). On the account books of heaven, where all your sins were recorded, God “imputed” (an accounting term meaning “to put”) to your account the righteousness of Christ ([Rom 4:20-25](#)).
2. **Given peace with God** ([Rom 5:1](#)). The result of justification is peace with God. Your conscience is cleared and the guilt is lifted because you know you have been reconciled to God (that is, you were once separated from God but the differences are settled -- [II Cor 5:18-21](#)).
3. **Redeemed** ([I Pet 1:18-19](#)). This is the act of God whereby He paid the price of our sins: He purchased sinners through the death of Christ.
4. **Given an inheritance.**
  - a. You are now complete in Christ, nothing more needs to be added to give you eternal life ([Col 2:9-10](#)).

b. You possess every spiritual blessing ([Eph 1:3](#)). Every gift the Holy Spirit gives, you have been given.

c. Assurance of eternal life ([I Pet 1:4](#)).

**5. Given a new position.** You are now a member of a holy and royal priesthood ([I Pet 2:5,9](#)); a citizen of heaven ([Phil 3:20](#)); a member in the family of God by birth ([John 3:5](#)) and by adoption ([Gal 4:5](#)). Since you are now in the family of God many wonderful things are possible for you.

a. You can begin to understand God's Word ([I Cor 2:12,14](#)).

b. You can obtain strength to apply the Word to change selfish habit patterns ([I Cor 10:13](#); [Phil 4:13](#)).

c. You can experience joy in trials ([James 1:2-4](#); [Rom 8:28,29](#)).

d. You can have fellowship with other believers in the church of Christ ([I Jn 1:7-9](#))

## II. YOUR ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL SALVATION

But how do you know that you really have eternal life? Let us see what the Scriptures say.

1. Read [I John 5:11,12](#). God says, "The witness is this, that God has given us \_\_\_\_\_, and this life is in \_\_\_\_\_."

NOTE: The witness is not your feelings! Not a human's statement! God's Word is the witness!

2. According to [I John 5:12](#), when a person receives Jesus Christ as Savior, what does he have? \_\_\_\_\_.

How long is this life? \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Circle the correct word: "These things have I written to you...that you may (think) (feel) (wish) (know) (suppose) (hope) that you have eternal life.

4. Read [I Peter 1:3-5](#)

a. What are three descriptions of your inheritance that is reserved in Heaven?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

b. Who protects this inheritance? (v5) \_\_\_\_\_.

5. How confident in His keeping power may you be ([II Tim 1:12](#))?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

According to [Philippians 1:6](#) why can we have this confidence? \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Our assurance of eternal life is beneficial in many ways, but its main purpose is to enable us to live and grow in the likeness of Christ ([Rom 8:28-29a](#)).

6. What characterizes those who possess eternal life? ([John 10:27,28](#))

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7. Your eternal salvation is guaranteed by:

- a. The Savior's **Word** ([John 5:24](#)).
- b. The Savior's **Perseverance** ([Phil 1:6](#)).
- c. The Savior's **Hand** ([John 10:28-30](#)).
- d. The Savior's **Prayer** ([John 17:15,24](#)).
- e. The Savior's **Love** ([Romans 8:35, 37-39](#)).
- f. The Savior's **Seal** ([Ephesians 1:13; 4:30](#)).
- g. The Savior's **Power** ([II Tim 1:12; Jude 1:24; Rom 5:1-11; 8:31-39; 11:20; Matt 7:23 Heb 13:5](#)). It is God's power that keeps us saved.

*If you are not in Christ, you have eternal **death** ([Rev 20:14-15](#)). If you have received Christ you have eternal **life**.*

8. Note *four* great truths from [John 5:24](#).

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The Believer has *already* passed from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

9. What are some evidences of eternal life?

- a. [I John 5:13](#) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. [I John 3:14](#) \_\_\_\_\_
- c. [I John 2:5](#) \_\_\_\_\_

Through a person, or your own thoughts, Satan may ask you, "Surely you don't believe you are going to Heaven simply because you believe a passage of Scripture like [Rom 10:9](#) and confess to take the Lord Jesus Christ, do you?" "You don't feel saved do you?"

God wants you to avoid the tragic mistake of basing your life on your feelings. He wants you to begin basing your life on that which can never fail—the eternal Word of God! Remember: *Faith is not based on the five senses, but faith is always acting on God's promises* ([Heb 11:1-6](#) and [Rom 4:20-21](#)).



# Lesson 2 - Growth In Christ

A group of tourists visiting a picturesque village walked by an old man sitting beside a fence. In a rather patronizing way, one tourist asked, “Were any great men born in this village?” The old man replied, “Nope, only babies.”

A frothy question brought a profound answer. There are no instant heroes whether in this world or in the kingdom of God. No great Christians have ever been born. Maturity takes time, effort, and the power of God in our lives. The question we must address is “*How do Believers grow in righteousness?*”

In *Godliness Through Discipline* Jay Adams states: “There are only two kinds of life: the feeling motivated life of sin oriented toward self, and the commandment motivated life of holiness oriented toward godliness.”

There are several basic things that you need to understand in order to grow toward godliness.

## I. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND YOUR NEW POSITION IN CHRIST.

1. According to [Eph 2:1-3](#), what are 5 descriptions of your *life before* you became a Christian?

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2. According to [Eph 2:4-6](#) what are 3 descriptions of your *life now* as a Believer?

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3. How should we view ourselves as Christians?

[II Cor 5:17](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Rom 6:11](#) \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Romans chapter 6 teaches that we are no longer under the power [and domination] of sin, [that is, we don't *have* to sin, but] nevertheless sinless perfection cannot be obtained in this life. The reason for this being that **we still live in the “flesh” or “body” that houses the principle of sin** ([Rom 6:12-7:25](#)). While our inward nature has been changed and is dead to sin, our body is still alive to sin until it is changed at the resurrection ([I Cor 15:42-44](#)). *Since the believer still battles with sin, it is important that we understand the nature of temptation.*

## II. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION.

1. Read the following passages and note the three sources of temptation.

[James 1:13,14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I John 2:15-16](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Pet 5:8; II Cor 11:13,14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

2. How did Jesus overcome temptation? ([Matt 4:2-11](#))

\_\_\_\_\_

Do we have this same resource for overcoming temptation? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Note 4 ways in which God's Word is useful for overcoming sinful habits ([II Tim 3:16,17](#)).

a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_ d. \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is God's promise in [I Cor 10:13](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **III. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND GOD'S PURPOSES FOR THE BELIEVER IN THIS LIFE**

*\*\* While there are many purposes for the Believer, there are 3 primary ones—and even these overlap. \*\**

1. What is God's purpose for the Believer in [Rom 8:28,29](#)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is God's purpose for the Believer in [II Cor 5:9](#)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is God's purpose for the Believer in [I Cor 10:31](#)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*It is important that we understand what God’s purposes are for us otherwise our priorities in life will be wrong; we will misinterpret what God is attempting to accomplish in our lives. When we understand these things, what will our goal be according to [Matt 6:33](#)? \*\*

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#### IV. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THAT GOD EXPECTS OBEDIENCE.

1. What does God desire of us in [Rom 12:1,2](#)?

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2. According to [Rom 6:12, 13](#) what must we do if we are to be obedient to God?\_\_\_\_\_

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3. In order to grow in Christ, what 3 things does [Eph 4:22-24](#) tell us to do?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* The “put-off, put-on” dynamic is found consistently throughout the Bible. Growth will not take place by simply putting off something. For example, if you decide to stop a bad habit but do nothing to replace that habit -growth will not take place and you will soon return to your former way of living. You must replace sinful ways of living with godly ways of living. \*\*

4. List side-by-side several sinful habits and what those habits should be replaced with in ([Ephesians 4:25-32](#)).

**Put Off**

**Put On**

5. How can we obtain the power and the desire to obey God's Word?

a. [Gal 5:16](#) \_\_\_\_\_

b. [John 15:7,8](#) \_\_\_\_\_

c. [Heb 11:6](#) \_\_\_\_\_

d. [Phil 4:13](#) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What will be the result of living such a life? ([Gal 5:22,23](#)) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## CONCLUSION:

God does not expect us to be perfect—He expects us to be *growing*.

This lesson has given some of the biblical principles that you must understand if you are to grow in godliness, but growth also requires discipline. There will be no growth in your Christian life unless you discipline yourself to study the Scriptures, spend time in prayer, make time for quality fellowship, learn to worship God, and learn how to become dependent upon the Holy Spirit. In future lessons we will study these basic disciplines.

# Lesson 3 - Provision Through God's Word

When a person becomes a child of God he now has the Holy Spirit living within him -- the Holy Spirit will enable that person to have the power to live the Christian life. Nevertheless God's Spirit does not act independent of God's Word. In order to overcome sinful habits, grow in godliness, and obtain guidance for everyday living, we must read and act upon God's Word in faith. Whenever God requires anything of His children, He always provides instruction and power to meet those requirements through His Holy Word.

## I. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S WORD

1. We must understand what the Bible is and what it can do in our lives.

a. Approximately thirty-nine men of God wrote the Scriptures under special inspiration over a period of 1500 years. Who specifically inspired these men ([II Tim 3:16](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

b. The word "inspired" means "God-breathed". Although God used men as His instruments who is the author of the Scriptures ([II Pet 1:19, 20, 21](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Read [II Tim 3:15-17](#).

What is the most important thing the Scriptures teach us (v15)? \_\_\_\_\_

Because the Scriptures are God-breathed they are profitable for \_\_\_\_\_  
for \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ and for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (v16).

What does God's Word enable us to do (v17)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. From the following verses, note the attitudes we should have toward the Word of God.

[Psalm 119:35](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalm 119:42](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalm 119:62](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalm 119:117](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalm 119:164](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalm 119:167](#) \_\_\_\_\_

2. We must understand the importance of obeying God's Word.

a. What will prove our love for Christ ([John 14:15, 21, 23](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Read [John 15:4-10](#) and list 3 requirements that are necessary for bringing forth fruit.

#1 \_\_\_\_\_

#2 \_\_\_\_\_

#3 \_\_\_\_\_

c. According to [Gal 5:22,23](#) what is the "fruit" of the Spirit?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. What is commanded in [James 1:22](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e. When we show a willful desire for obedience, God enables us to obey. Read examples of this in [Mark 3:1-5](#) and [Luke 17:12-14](#).

## II. HOW TO USE GOD'S WORD

There are several ways in which we can develop a deeper understanding of God's Word and through the application of Scripture develop lives that glorify and please God:

1. Listen to the Word of God as it is being taught.

a. Read [Eph 4:11-16](#). What obligation does God give to pastor-teachers and evangelists today?

\_\_\_\_\_

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b. Timothy was a pastor in the early church. What instructions does Paul give to him? ([II Tim 4:1,2](#))

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## 2. Reading the studying God's Word.

a. By reading God's Word we can obtain an over-all knowledge of the Bible. A few minutes each day reading and underlining can greatly aid in our knowledge of the Scriptures. You might want to make it your goal to read through the Bible in a year. To do so you would have to read 3 chapters a day and 5 on Sunday. [Alternately, refer to the Bible Reading Schedule at the end of this book.]

b. After we have an understanding of the overview of the Bible we need to begin a more detailed study of God's Word. Note the content of the following verses:

[Heb 5:12-14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Pet 2:2,3](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[II Tim 2:15](#) \_\_\_\_\_

c. We must study in order to "handle accurately" the Word of God. As a study we should apply some basic principles of interpretation:

1) **We must interpret the Bible as we would any other literature.** This is known as "normal" interpretation. We do not try to read into, allegorize, spiritualize, or explain away what we read. Rather we take the words of Scripture at face value trusting that God is communicating what He wants to communicate.

2) **Keep Scripture in its context.** The words surrounding a passage will almost always throw much light upon its meaning.

3) **Scripture interprets Scripture.** The Bible does not contradict itself; therefore, an interpretation of a passage must agree with the teachings of the rest of the Word of God. When a passage is difficult to understand a basic rule is that obscure passages must give way to clear passages.

4) **The Bible has only one meaning in one passage.** A passage does not mean one thing to one person and another thing to someone else. The question is not, "What does this passage mean to me?" but "What did God intend for it to mean?" It is the purpose of Bible study to discern this meaning.

## 3. Meditating on and applying God's Word.

We can meditate on the Scriptures by memorizing ([Psalm 119:9, 11](#)), by praying over what we have read, or carefully and quietly considering its impact. Whatever method we use the ultimate purpose is to apply God's truth to our lives.

a. What does God promise if we delight in His commandments? ([Psalm 1:1-3](#))

---

b. What four actions are mentioned in [Psalm 119:15, 16](#) ?

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \_\_\_\_\_

c. What is the commandment in [Colossians 3:16](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

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d. What are some principles in [James 1:22-25](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

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**\*\*Meditation:** Transforming God's Word from head knowledge to concrete applications by enumerating and initiating steps for putting off old habits and putting on Biblical patterns toward conformity to Jesus Christ.

Use the following chart as a guide for Bible study, meditation, and application of the Word.

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**Passage being Studied:** [James 1:22-25](#)

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**Observation**

**Interpretation**

**Application**

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\*\*As we study God's Word we should do so in order to discover and apply truth to our lives for God's glory. We should not go looking for an emotional lift, or some great experience that will immediately change our lives. The Word of God *is not* a magic wand that when read will erase all of our problems—*rather it is* God's instructions given to us to teach us how to live life. If we go to God's Word for an “upper” or “zap” we will grow weary of reading the Scriptures when these things don't happen consistently. But when *we go to the Word to learn how to live life God's way we are coming to a well that never runs dry.*

# Lesson 4 - Prayer

When it comes to prayer many of us can identify with Thomas Edison's statement when he said, "We don't know the millionth part of one percent about anything. We don't know what water is. We don't know what light is. We don't know what heat is. We have a lot of hypotheses about these things, but that is all. But we do not let our ignorance about these things deprive us of their use."

There is much about prayer that we do not understand and will not understand in this life, however, we must not allow this to rob us of the blessing and privilege of prayer. It is true that to some extent prayer will remain a mystery to us; yet at the same time, Scripture gives us much information on this subject.

## I. PARTS OF PRAYER

God speaks to us through His Word; we speak to Him in prayer. While prayer is simply conversation with God; nevertheless, even the disciples felt so inadequate in this area that they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray ([Matt 11:1](#)). There are several parts to prayer:

### 1. Praise

- a. Jesus taught His disciples to begin prayers with "Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name" ([Matt 6:9](#)). As we come to God in prayer we need to recognize and praise Him for His divine attributes.
- b. The best way to learn how to praise God is by reading the Psalms. The church has long recognized that the Psalms were given to us not so much for instruction on how to live but in order to teach us how to pray.
- c. The following Psalms are especially helpful in this way: [Psalm 8](#), [19](#), [24](#), [29](#), [33](#), [47](#), [65](#), [77](#), [93](#), [95](#), [96](#), [97](#), [99](#), [104](#), [111](#), [113](#), [114](#), [115](#), [139](#), [147](#), and [150](#). As you begin your prayer time you may want to pray one of these Psalms to God.
- d. Another helpful thing to do is read books on the attributes of God. For example: *The Knowledge of the Holy* by A.W. Tozer; *The God You Can Know* by Dan DeHaan; *The Attributes of God* by A.W. Pink; and for the hardy reader, the best of all is *The Existence and Attributes of God* by Stephen Charnock.

### 2. Thanksgiving

- a. Read [I Thess 5:18](#). What should we be thankful for? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. According to [Eph 5:20](#), how often should we give thanks to God? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Confession

a. What are we to confess? \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Confession means to agree with God that our actions or attitudes are sin and to ask His forgiveness for them. ([I John 1:9](#))

b. Describe David's attitude in [Psalm 139:23, 24](#) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Requests

a. What does [Ephesians 6:18](#) emphasize? \_\_\_\_\_

b. What does [Philippians 4:6,7](#) tell us to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## [III. CONDITIONS OF PRAYER]

What conditions do the following verses give us to proper prayer?

[John 15:7](#) and [I John 3:22](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I John 5:14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[John 14:13](#); [16:23](#) \_\_\_\_\_

## IV. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

### 1. Sin

a. When will the Lord not hear us ([Ps 66:18](#)) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What can hinder our prayers according to [I Peter 3:7](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Wrong motives

a. What is one wrong motive as described in [James 4:3](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. We need to look to Christ for an example. Read [Matthew 26:39, 42](#) and describe the attitude we should have as we pray.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. What does God promise to supply in [Philippians 4:19](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Lack of faith

a. What is Christ's promise to us in [Matthew 7:7,8](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. According to [James 1:6,7](#) what is necessary as we pray? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Wrong priorities

a. What should be our attitude toward prayer ([I Thess 5:17](#)) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. How does [Matthew 6:33](#) help us here? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Sleepiness:** Walk or sit in such a way that sleep is not easy.

6. **Interruptions:** Have a special time and place for prayer everyday. Try to choose a place where you will encounter as few people as possible, when phone calls will be a minimum, where the noise level will be low. Ask your family to help you in your desire to meet with God.

7. **Wandering thoughts:** Pray out loud—this will aid in your concentration. Keep paper and pen handy to jot down things that come to your mind that may cause you to lose your train of thought (e.g. phone call that you will need to make or things you must do today).

## V. PUBLIC PRAYER

1. Do not pray to impress others ([Matthew 6:5-8](#)).
2. Public prayers in the Bible are usually short and of general concern to the group. Be considerate of others.
3. Men are to be leaders in public prayers ([I Tim 2:8](#)).

## **CONCLUSION**

“The world seeks better methods while God is seeking better men and women of prayer.” —E.M. Bounds

“If we begin with God the enemy will dwindle, but if we begin with the enemy we will never reach God.”  
—Scroggie

“I have lived to thank God that all my prayers have not been answered.” —Jean Ingelow

“When God grants our prayers, it is because He loves us. When He does not, it is also because He loves us.”  
—O. Hallesby

“Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory...” —  
[Ephesians 3:20-21](#)

# Lesson 5 - Dealing With Sin In The Believer's Life

God expects the Believer to grow in the likeness of Christ. Growth, not perfection, is His expectation. As long as we are in these bodies we will have to deal with sinful thought patterns, actions and habits; therefore, it is essential to our growth in Christ that we learn the way God has provided for us: to clear our conscience, to stay in proper fellowship with God, and to continue to grow.

Our old way of handling sin must change. As unsaved people we handled sin the way Adam and Eve did: we hide, we run, we blameshift, we cover over sin so that God and others cannot see it. We must put off this old pattern and put on God's way of dealing with sin.

## I. THE SERIOUSNESS OF SIN

1. List the results of sin as found in the following passages:

[Psalms 32:3,4](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Psalms 38:2-10](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I John 2:11](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[James 4:1-3](#) (note what we become when sin controls us) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What did David expect to happen after his sin was dealt with properly? [Ps 51:12,13](#)

\_\_\_\_\_

## II. DEALING WITH SIN GOD'S WAY

When we sin we can handle it the way Adam and Eve handled theirs or we can handle it as the Scriptures teach. There are several elements involved in dealing with sin God's way:

### 1. Confession:

- a. According to [I Jn 1:9](#), what is the Believer to do when the light of God's Word shows him that he has sinned

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. The word "confess" means "to say the same thing" or "to agree with God about my sin." What did David call it in [Psalm 51:1-4](#)?

\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Repentance:

a. Not all sorrow over sin accomplishes God's purposes. What does [II Cor 7:10](#) have to say about this?

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b. Why would a person be sorry about their sins but not genuinely repentant? \_\_\_\_\_

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c. The word "repent" simply means "to change direction" or to "turn around and go the opposite way." So repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of action concerning sin, self and God.

## 3. Change:

a. What relationship does repentance have to our actions in the following passages?

[Matthew 3:8](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Acts 26:20](#) \_\_\_\_\_

b. According to [Eph 4:22-24](#) what has to happen for this change to take place?

---

## III. DEALING WITH SIN AGAINST PEOPLE

How are we to handle it when we have not only sinned against God but against another person as well.

Scripture teaches that not only are we to confess and repent of our sin to God but we must also do the following with the one we sinned against:

### 1. Repent

a. If we are to receive forgiveness from another what must we do? [Luke 17:3](#) \_\_\_\_\_

---

b. When should we do this? [Matt 5:22,23](#) \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Restitution

a. This should be a natural reaction on the part of any truly repentant Believer.

Note Zaccheus' attitude in [Luke 19:8](#) \_\_\_\_\_

b. What does [Philemon 18](#) and [19](#) say? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Lesson 6 - Baptism And The Church

## I. BAPTISM

Our Lord commanded His church to make disciples and baptize them. It is quite clear that the early church understood His teaching and obeyed it. Since baptism is our Savior's imperative, and was faithfully practiced by the New Testament church, it behooves every believer to carefully study and heed Christ's teaching on baptism.

### 1. Who should be baptized?

a. According to [Matthew 28:19,20](#) who is to be baptized?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Who did the Apostles baptize? [Acts 8:35-38](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Acts 16:30-34](#) \_\_\_\_\_

c. Were infants ever baptized in the New Testament? \_\_\_\_\_

If so jot down the Scriptural reference \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Why should a Believer be baptized?

a. Obedience to God's Word. Christ commanded baptism ([Matt 28:18,19](#)) and it was practiced in the New Testament church.

b. Identification with Jesus Christ.

\*\*In the clothing industry of that day, a piece of cloth would be immersed or dipped or "baptized" into a vat of dye thus "identifying with" the color of that dye. When we are baptized, we are identifying with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. It is a testimony to the world and before God that we have died to sin and have risen with Christ to newness of life. (read [Rom 6:13-16](#)).

### 3. How should a Believer be baptized?

a. The Greek word for "baptize" means to "dip or immerse." The word was never translated into English in our Bibles but rather transliterated because of fear of the established church. When the KJV was written the church was already practicing unbiblical modes of baptism; therefore, the translators feared if they used the word "immerse" their translation would be rejected. Of course, our modern versions have done the same thing for the same reason.

b. Which mode of baptism fits the thought of the following passages: sprinkling, pouring, or immersion? [John 3:23](#); [Acts 8:36-39](#); [Col 2:12](#)

\_\_\_\_\_

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c. The mode of baptism is to be immersion as proven by the meaning of the word, the symbolism behind the act, and the practice of the early church.

## II. THE CHURCH

God's care for you does not stop after you are saved. Part of His plan for your growth and conformity to Christ's image is accomplished through the functions of the local church. A scriptural, local New Testament church is God's plan for every believer, and we are admonished to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together for reasons of indifference ([Heb 10:25](#)).

Nowhere in the New Testament is there a believer who does not become involved in a local assembly. According to the pastoral epistles of Timothy and Titus, these assemblies were to be organized well. We need to understand the importance of what God says regarding New Testament churches.

The term "church" is derived from the Greek word "ecclesia", which means "called-out ones" ([Acts 15:14](#)).

### 1. The universal church

a. The church in this sense consists of the entire body of believers from the day of Pentecost ([Acts 2](#)) until the Rapture ([I Thess 4:16,17](#)). Every person who is saved is a part of this body.

b. As believers, each of us are members of what ([I Cor 12:12, 13](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

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### 2. The local church

a. The primary usage of the term "church" in the NT refers to local churches. Ninety out of 111 times the word is used in this way. It is a true church if it is established according to the Word of God.

b. The local church is a body of baptized Believers convening together to carry out the commission given by its Head, Jesus Christ.

c. The Bible never refers to a local church as being part of any larger earthly organization. Although men may refer to "the church that is in America," speaking of many churches, the Bible does not. Instead, we read "to the seven churches which are in Asia..." ([Rev 1:4, 11, 20](#)). God's plan for this age involves His work being carried on through local, self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches.

### 3. Scriptural characteristics of the local church

a. Jesus Christ is its Foundation ([I Cor 3:11](#)).

b. Jesus Christ is its head. What do we learn about Christ's headship over the church in [Ephesians 5:23](#)?

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c. The purpose of the local church. The Scriptures teach several purposes:

1) to glorify God. In what ways can we glorify God? ([I Pet 2:9-12](#)) \_\_\_\_\_

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2) to evangelize ([Matt 28:19-20](#))

3) to edify and equip ([Eph 4:11-16](#))

[v.11, 12](#) --What are the purposes of the church as found here

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[v.14](#) What will this prevent? \_\_\_\_\_

[vv.15,16](#) -- What is our goal? \_\_\_\_\_

[II Tim 3:15-17](#) -- What is needed to accomplish this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

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[Heb 10:24-25](#) -- What should we be trying to do when we come together? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Additional characteristics of the church

a. Trains men for ministry ([II Tim. 2:1-2](#))

b. Selects Deacons for temporal matters ([Acts 6](#)).

c. Sends Missionaries ([Acts 11:22](#); [13:1-4](#)).

d. Practices discipline with the goal of restoring Believers ([II Cor 5](#)). In this process members can be

excluded or restored ([II Cor 2:6-8](#)).

e. It is given commissions, ordinances, and pastoral epistles for order (the next lesson will cover

these).



# Lesson 7 - Church Organization And Membership

## I. ORGANIZATION

### 1. Head

- a. The Head of the Church (local and universal) is Jesus Christ ([Eph 5:22-24](#))
- b. In [John 16:12-14](#) we learn that our Lord, as Head of the church, is currently directing the church's activities through the leadership of the \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Read [Eph 6:17](#). The Holy Spirit uses the sword of the Spirit, which is the \_\_\_\_\_, to guide His church.

### 2. Officers

- a. Elders. Throughout the NT we find several terms used for the same office. These include: shepherd, overseer, bishop, and pastor. These are not separate offices but different terms or titles that help describe the same office.

\* Elder means: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Overseer means: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Bishop means: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Shepherd means: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Pastor-Teacher means: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) What are the qualifications for an elder ([1 Tim 3:1-7](#))?

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- 2) What are the responsibilities of an elder?

[Acts 20:28, 31](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Pet 5:1-3](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Heb 13:17](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Eph 4:11-16](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Tim 5:17](#) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Deacons – “Deacon” means “servant”. In [Acts 6:1-7](#) we have the appointing of what many believe to be the first deacons of the church. What was their responsibility?

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c. Other officers – There were no other offices found in the NT with the possible exception of deaconness. But most Bible students do not believe that this was an official office in the NT. [The most likely meaning is “the wife of deacons.”]

## II. MEMBERSHIP

1. What occurred after people were saved ([Acts 2:41](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Note the events that preceded membership in the local church:

Conviction – Repentance and Faith – Baptism – Membership

3. In [Acts 2:41](#) we find that immediately after their salvation and baptism, Believers were “added to” or became members of the local church in Jerusalem. In the NT we never find a Believer that was not a member of a church, committed to a local body, and under the authority of the elders of that church. It is God’s will that every Christian be under the preaching, teaching, care and warmth of a local church body in order to grow spiritually.

4. The difference between attending and joining a local church include the following:

*Commitment* – When you join a church you are making a statement of commitment. You are declaring that you will be loyal to a local body, that you are dedicated to the needs and ministries of that congregation. This could be comparable to the commitment of marriage versus just dating.

*Authority* – When you join a church you come under the authority of the leadership of that church. You are in essence, allowing the shepherds of the church to watch over you for your spiritual good ([Heb 13:17](#)). Until you have joined a church you have given no elders the authority to shepherd you.

*Ministry* – [I Cor 12](#) speaks not to the universal church but to the local church at Corinth. A body cannot function if it is uncertain who its members are. The concept of the “body” implies the need for membership.

*Discipline* – [Matt 18:15-20](#) says that an unrepentant sinner who is a Believer must be disciplined by the church. Which church? Obviously, the one of which the person is a member. Some may not join a church just for this reason, after all, who wants to be disciplined. However, we must remember that this is one of God’s tools to keep His children living for Him. Also, without this tool many problems between Believers cannot be resolved.

Care -- In [I Tim 5:3-10](#) Paul instructs Timothy on the care of widows in the local church at Ephesus. Here we find the widows who met certain qualifications were to be added to a list (v9) for apparent financial aid. The widows on the list obviously were members of the church at Ephesus not of neighboring churches. The local church has a special obligation to care for its members but it must know who its members are.

# Lesson 8 - The Holy Spirit

## I. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. The Holy Spirit is a Person as proven by the fact that He possesses the attributes of personality.

**Intellect** ([I Cor 2:10,11](#)) – **Emotion** ([Eph 4:30](#)) – **Will** ([I Cor 12:11](#))

2. The Holy Spirit is God as proven by:

a. His titles: What is He called in the following passages?

[Matt 1:20](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Matt 3:16](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Luke 1:35](#) \_\_\_\_\_

b. His attributes: What does He possess that proves He is God?

[I Cor 2:11,12](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Ps 139:7](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Job 33:4](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I John 5:7](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Lk 11:13](#) \_\_\_\_\_

c. His actions: What does He do that only God can do?

[Gen 1:2](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[II Pet 1:21](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Jn 3:6](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Rom 8:26](#) \_\_\_\_\_

## II. THE CHANGING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The ministry of the Holy Spirit today is not as it was in the OT nor during the transition period between the Old and New Testaments.

1. In the OT all Believers were not indwelt and sealed by the Holy Spirit. He (the Holy Spirit) moved upon certain ones for special tasks. Read the following passages and note how God gave them power in order to accomplish His will.

[Judges 14:5, 6, 19](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Sam 16:12-14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[II Chron 24:18-20](#) \_\_\_\_\_

2. The transition period encompassed the time between the OT and the NT. (This period of time is recorded mostly in the book of Acts.)

a. What did Jesus promise in [Acts 1:4,5](#) ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What was Jesus saying in [John 14:16, 17](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. God delayed sending the Holy Spirit until the Day of Pentecost. According to [Acts 2:4-9](#), what happened at this time among the Jews?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. In [Acts 8:14-17](#) the Samaritans receive the gospel but not the Holy Spirit until the Apostles come.

e. In [Acts 10:44,45](#) the Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit.

f. In [Acts 19:1-6](#) a group of OT saints receive the Holy Spirit.

3. Today all Believers receive the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion.

What does [Rom 8:9](#) say? \_\_\_\_\_

### III. THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. What is the Holy Spirit's relationship to the Scriptures? [II Tim 3:16-17](#) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the Holy Spirit's relationship to man according to [John 14:16-17](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What ministries does the Holy Spirit perform in relationship to our salvation?

[Titus 3:5](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Cor 6:19](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Cor 12:13](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Eph 1:13,14](#) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Other ministries of the Holy Spirit.

[Eph 5:8](#) \_\_\_\_\_ To be “filled by” means to be “controlled by”.

[John 16:12-15](#) \_\_\_\_\_

What does the Holy Spirit use to illumine and guide us ([I Cor 2:9-14](#)) \_\_\_\_\_

[Rom 8:26](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Gal 5:22-24](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Acts 1:8](#) \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

1. The Holy Spirit gives the Believers gifts. These are defined as a “God-given ability for service.”

2. When does a Believer receive His gifts ([I Cor 12:7, 18](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who decides what gifts a Believer receives ([I Cor 12:11, 18](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Why has God given different gifts ([I Cor 12:24, 25](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Lists of the various spiritual gifts are found in [I Cor 12](#); [Rom 12:6-8](#); [Eph 4:11](#); [I Pet 4:10,11](#). The supernatural gifts listed in [I Cor 12](#) are passed; they were temporary and are no longer needed [one the Word of God was completed ([I Cor. 13:10](#))].

6. How to find your spiritual gifts

[These principles are not meant to be a “secret formula” but simple guidelines that wait on the Holy Spirit to work in our lives.]

\* Know the Biblical gifts.

\* Serve where you can and wait on the Holy Spirit to show you. In this way you will begin to discover where you are useful.

\* Get council of wise, mature Christians.

\* Develop your gifts.

# Lesson 9 - Getting Along With God's People

Christ told His disciples: "By this (your love for one another) shall all men know that you are my disciples" ([John 13:34,35](#)). In [Eph 4:16](#) Paul describes a healthy church as one in which every member is meeting needs and, as a result, the body is not only healthy, but also increasing. [Heb 10:24](#) commands Believers to stimulate one another to love and good works. There are numerous passages in the New Testament exhorting Believers to love and care for "one another".

This love and care for one another is not to cease when a Believer does wrong. In [Gal 6:1](#) Paul tells the Believer living for God to "restore" a Believer who is "overtaken in a fault". Scripture has much to say about this process.

## I. PERSONAL PREPARATION

1. As we examine ourselves, we may recognize that we have offended someone. We are talking here about a genuine offense or sin. It is possible that someone is angry at us or even hates us yet we have not wronged them. Such a case is not being discussed in [Matt 5:23,24](#). If before we worship God everyone has to be pleased with us then neither Jesus nor the Apostles would have ever worshipped.
2. But when we have wronged another, what are we commanded to do in [Matt 5:23-24](#)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How long should you wait before you deal with the one you offended? \_\_\_\_\_  
What if you "know" that they will reject you? \_\_\_\_\_  
What if you don't think that this is the right time? \_\_\_\_\_

## II. HOW TO DEAL WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS SINNED AGAINST US

Note the steps taken in [Matthew 18:15-17](#)

1. First **determine if this is sin** (read [Gal 6:1](#)). The passages are not talking about personal preferences, differences of opinion or conviction but of definite sin.
2. **"Go"**. We do not wait for them to come to us; rather we are to go to them. It is much easier sometimes just to ignore the person or "write them off" but love says "go" (notice the context in [Matt 18:12-14](#)).
3. **"Convince"**. To tell or show him his fault is a strong word meaning to "convict or convince". Why is it so important that we convince people of their sin rather than simply letting them go their way? \_\_\_\_\_

If [Gen 3:8-13](#) is any indication of possible response, *what reactions must we be prepared to deal with when we confront people with their sins?*  
\_\_\_\_\_

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According to [Matt 18:15](#) should this person be approached in front of others? If not, then how is he to be approached?

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What is the goal of the following verses?

[Matt 18:15](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Gal 6:1](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[James 5:20](#) \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Small group confrontation** ([Matt 18:16](#)).

If the previous step fails, then we do not simply walk away. We must approach the person this time with a small group of two or three. Why is this step necessary? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. **Confrontation from the church** ([Matt 18:17a](#)).

6. **Church discipline** ([Mat 18:17b](#)).

What is *always* the *goal* of church discipline ([I Cor 5:5](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

This final step is a last resort and no time-table is given to us as to when it must take place. If progress is being made or if the person is not going into deeper sin or influencing others in a negative way then there is no need to rush to step 6, but it should not be ignored either.

In [Matt 18:18, 19](#) we are being told that when this final step has been taken by the church it has already been taken in Heaven. In other words, we are to be in agreement with God. God has recognized their unrepentant sin and so should we.

Such a person is to be treated as a “pagan”. The goal is still to restore. We are to continue to be friendly and kind. However, he is not to be recognized as a brother in Christ. If for instance, he is a family member you may eat with him as a family member, but not as a fellow believer. See [I Cor 5:11](#). The goal is restoration which demands that we take God’s side and do things God’s way. God calls Believers who are in sin to repent -- so should we.

### III. THE SUBJECT OF FORGIVENESS

1. Forgiveness is not a feeling it is a promise.

When we forgive we have promised to no longer hold a wrong against someone. We are in essence promising never to bring up the offense to the offender, to others, or to ourselves again.

2. According to [Lk 17:3-4](#) who are we to forgive? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is it not possible to forgive an unrepentant person? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How do we know if the person is sincere in his repentance? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does Jesus say about the person who refuses to forgive in [Matt 18:21-35](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How are we to treat a person who will not repent of wrongs done to us? (see [Rom 12:14, 17-21](#))

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## CONCLUSION

1. Who taught this method of dealing with offenses against one another?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you agree with Him? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you practice what He taught? \_\_\_\_\_

2. When a person comes to share a problem with you about someone else, how should you tell them to handle it according to [Matt 18:15](#)?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Be sure to inform him that you will check with him soon to inquire if he has handled the problem Biblically. If he went to the offender and did not get the problem resolved, encourage him to take at least two godly people with him and go back to the offender.

# Lesson 10 - Biblical Love

The frustrated wife tells the counselor that she is divorcing her husband because she does not love him anymore. The young couple fights constantly and has nothing in common, but the two are going to get married because they are in love. There is much fuzziness about love in our culture today and since it plays such an important role in our world as well as our Christian lives and churches it is vital that we know what Scripture has to say on the subject.

## I. THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE

1. What commandment did Christ give to His disciples the night before He went to the cross ([John 13:34, 35](#))?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Obedience to this command would produce what results? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How is the love that demonstrates Christ-likeness produced in our lives ([Gal 5:22](#))? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. In relation to all other virtues and actions, how highly does God rate love? See [I Cor 13:1-3,13](#)

\_\_\_\_\_

## II. WHAT IS BIBLICAL LOVE?

1. Note the characteristics of love as found in [I Cor 13:4-8a](#).

Do these characteristics put more emphasis on actions or feelings? \_\_\_\_\_

2. If one word could be used to describe love, what would it be according to [Jn 3:16](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the emphasis here on actions or feelings? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where is the emphasis in [I Jn 3:17-18](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Can love be taught? (See [I Thess 4:9](#) and [Titus 2:4](#)) \_\_\_\_\_

Biblically, what should we tell the wife in the opening illustration? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. To love is a command from God ([Matt 22:36-40](#)).

Can we command our emotions? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the emphasis here on actions or emotions? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Who is the supreme example of love? (See [Eph 5:25](#)) \_\_\_\_\_

7. The Greek word “Agape” which is translated love in these passages speaks of a self-sacrificing love. It does not have reference to emotions or feelings.

*Love is a command to be obeyed – not an option, not an accident, not a feeling to be generated first.*

### III. WHO ARE WE TO LOVE

1. [Matt 22:36, 37](#) \_\_\_\_\_

2. [Luke 10:29-37](#) \_\_\_\_\_

3. [John 13:34-35](#) \_\_\_\_\_

4. [Titus 2:4](#) \_\_\_\_\_

5. [Eph 5:25](#) \_\_\_\_\_

6. [Matt 5:44](#) \_\_\_\_\_

(see [Rom 12:14](#), [17-21](#))

### IV. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “WALK IN LOVE”?

1. Love God and His Word ([Jn 14:21](#); [15:10](#); and [I Jn 5:3](#)).

2. Put others ahead of yourself ([Philippians 2:3-4](#); [Rom 12:20-21](#)).

3. Perform loving deeds and actions as well as speak kind words ( [I Jn 3:18](#)).

4. Be a giver ([Acts 20:35](#); [Jn 3:16](#)).

5. Be a forgiver and one who asks forgiveness ([Eph 4:32](#)).

6. Appreciate the love given to you by Christ ([Rom 8:35-39](#)).
7. Overcome selfishness and its emptiness ([Gal 5:19-23](#)).
8. Etc.

## V. WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES IF WE DO NOT WALK IN LOVE?

1. Problems with others.

What one word sums up the deeds of the flesh in [Gal 5:19-21](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Problems with God. What does [I Jn 4:7-11](#) teach? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Problems with self.

Fear ([I Jn 4:18](#))

Wrong values ([I Jn 2:15-17](#)).

## VI. WHAT ARE SOME HINDRANCES TO WALKING IN LOVE

### 1. Separation from God.

Since God is the source of love, one must be united to Him thru salvation ([I Jn 4:7-10](#)).

### 2. Adherence to false views of love.

Fads concerning love will come and go. Only God's definition and description of love is correct.

### 3. Selfishness.

True love will demand much of us and may give little in return. True love means we must risk being taken advantage of and hurt. True love means living for others. All of these things run contrary to our fleshly desire to live for self.

### 4. Dependency upon self.

What does [John 15:5](#) tell us? \_\_\_\_\_

If love is a fruit of the Spirit ([Gal 5:22](#)), how does one get it? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Lesson 11 - Biblical Separation

Both the Old and New Testaments are full of warnings and instructions concerning those who claim to be Believers but have fallen away from the faith and now seek to drag others with them. Today the attitude even within the church is “live and let live,” “tolerance,” and “unity at any price.” It seems to bother us very little that many denominations, organizations, and individuals that claim to be followers of Christ, deny vital truths such as:

- \* Inspiration and authority of Scripture
- \* The virgin birth
- \* The substitutionary death of Christ
- \* The return of Christ
- \* Salvation by faith alone
- \* The deity of Christ
- \* The literal, bodily resurrection of Christ and other key doctrines.

As long as someone claims to be a Christian we accept them with open arms, no questions asked. But to do so implies that much of the Bible was written for nothing— that somehow God is not “really” concerned about apostates. So it is extremely important that we understand what the Bible says about apostasy.

## I. DEFINITION OF APOSTASY

1. Apostasy consists of an unbelieving and self-willed movement away from God ([Heb 3:12](#)). It speaks of the serious situation of becoming separated from the living God after a previous turning towards Him, by falling away from the faith (“Dictionary of New Testament Theology,” Vol 1).
2. Of course few apostates, either today or in Biblical times, would admit that they have turned from God. Therefore, it is imperative that we never separate God from His Word. This was Satan’s great lie in the Garden of Eden. He never denied the existence of God -- rather he convinced Eve that God did not mean what He said.
3. When a person or organization falls away from the clear teachings of the Word of God, they have fallen away from God no matter how loudly they protest. Therefore, apostasy is the act of a professed Christian who rejects the fundamental truths taught in God’s Word. Especially in mind are doctrines concerning the Godhead, deity of Christ, death and resurrection of Christ, salvation by faith, inspiration of Scripture, the return of Christ, eternal life and other doctrines that are the very backbone of our faith. Good and godly people may differ on some secondary issues but to deny the fundamentals is apostasy.

## II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF APOSTATES

1. According to [II Tim 3:5](#), how will apostates appear? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (See [II Cor 11:12-15](#))
2. Who motivates the apostate? (See [I Tim 4:1](#)) \_\_\_\_\_
3. How are apostates described in [I Tim 4:2](#)? \_\_\_\_\_

4. The ultimate and final apostasy on earth will occur during the Tribulation. Read [II Thess 2:2-12](#). What reasons are given as to why the world will believe the Antichrist's lies?

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5. What are 5 characteristics of apostates found in [II Pet 2:10](#)?

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6. What do they promise in [II Pet 2:19](#)? \_\_\_\_\_  
But then what do they deliver? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Note the word-pictures found in [Jude 12](#). Briefly summarize the description given.

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8. Read [II Tim 4:1-5](#). Unsaved people, who have no spiritual discernment, will hail Satan's teachers ([I Cor 11:13-15](#)) as great religious leaders while the preachers of truth, God's ministers, will be despised and viewed as being uncooperative, divisive and unloving. Satan's preachers accommodate themselves to the tastes of unregenerated hearers and are thus much more popular.

### III. WHEN DOES A CHURCH BODY BECOME APOSTATE?

1. A body does NOT become apostate at the time:

\* They remove the gospel from their official creed or confession. It has occurred long before this.

\* They continue to preach a so-called "gospel." It must be remembered that apostates are liars ([II Pet 2:3](#)). They can become masters at twisting the meaning of words so that it sounds like the gospel but is not. A good example is Robert Schuller's book, "The New Reformation."

2. A body IS apostate at the time:

\* Its' leaders deny the basic tenants of the Christian faith.

\* Official periodicals and media presentations promote views contrary to the clear teachings of Scripture.

\* Official schools of the body employ faculty members and/or utilize visiting speakers who teach views that are at variance with essential doctrines.

\* No effort is being made by the leadership or the majority of its constituency to remove the apostates within the body.

#### IV. HOW SHOULD THE BELIEVER HANDLE APOSTASY?

1. Briefly summarize the commands given in the following verses:

[Rom 16:17](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[II Cor 6:14-18](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Gal 1:8,9](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[II Jn 10, 11](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Acts 19:8,9](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Acts 20:28-32](#) \_\_\_\_\_

Based upon these passages should a Believer stay in an apostate body and fight the apostasy?

\_\_\_\_\_

What should they do? \_\_\_\_\_

2. To keep from being deceived by apostates what are we to do?

[II Tim 3:13-4:2](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[I Tim 4:1-6](#) \_\_\_\_\_

[Eph 4:11-16](#) \_\_\_\_\_

#### CONCLUSION

Pickering writes: "Separation, both personal and ecclesiastical, is grounded in the nature of God. God is the great separatist. He is absolutely separated from all evil and error. Do His people error in emulating Him?"

Yet as David Hunt warns in *The Seduction of Christianity* (page 3): "There is a new push for 'unity' based not upon sound doctrine but upon the pledge not to question the Biblical accuracy of one another's teachings." It is 'in' nowadays to not challenge one another's teachings on the basis of Scripture, but God commands us to discern everything.

May we never fall into this trap.

# APPENDIX – Bible Reading Schedule

Christian believers need to be in God’s Word daily. We need its feeding and its comfort. One way to accomplish this is simply to read the Scriptures straight through. This simple schedule will keep you on track daily so you can read God’s Word through each year.

A word of caution is in order. May our reading never be mechanical or motivated by just needing to “get my reading done for today.” Rather may we always meditate on what we read and allow the Holy Spirit to illumine our minds and bless our hearts. Also, if this daily schedule is just too much for you, then just commit yourself to a single chapter a day. As in many things, *quality* is much more important than *quantity*.

## JANUARY

Date	Morning	Evening	Date	Morning	Evening
1	GEN.1,2	MATT. 1	17	41	13:1-32
2	3,4,5	2	18	42,43	13:33-58
3	6,7,8	3	19	44,45	14:1-21
4	9,10,11	4	20	46,47,48	14:22-36
5	12,13,14	5:1-26	21	49,50	15:1-20
6	15,16,17	5:27-48	22	EX. 1,2,3	15:21-39
7	18,19	6	23	4,5,6	16
8	20,21,22	7	24	7,8	17
9	23,24	8	25	9,10	18:1-20
10	25,26	9:1-17	26	11,12	18:21-35
11	27,28	9:18-38	27	13,14,15	19:1-15
12	29,30	10:1-23	28	16,17,18	19:16-30

<b>13</b>	31,32	10:24-42	<b>29</b>	19,20,21	20:1-16
<b>14</b>	33,34,35	11	<b>30</b>	22,23,24	20:17-34
<b>15</b>	36,37	12:1-21	<b>31</b>	25,26	21:1-22
<b>16</b>	38,39,40	12:22-50			

# ***FEBRUARY***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	EX.27,28	<b>MATT.21:23-46</b>	<b>16</b>	22,23	<b>MK.1:1-22</b>
<b>2</b>	29,30	22:1-22	<b>17</b>	24,25	1:23-45
<b>3</b>	31,32,33	22:23-46	<b>18</b>	26,27	2
<b>4</b>	34,35,36	23:1-22	<b>19</b>	<b>NUM.1,2</b>	3:1-21
<b>5</b>	37,38	23:23-39	<b>20</b>	3,4	3:22-35
<b>6</b>	39,40	24:1-22	<b>21</b>	5,6	4:1-20
<b>7</b>	<b>LEV.1,2,3</b>	24:23-51	<b>22</b>	7	4:21-41
<b>8</b>	4,5,6	25:1-30	<b>23</b>	8,9,10	5:1-20
<b>9</b>	7,8,9	25:31-46	<b>24</b>	11,12,13	5:21-43
<b>10</b>	10,11,12	26:1-19	<b>25</b>	14,15	6:1-32
<b>11</b>	13	26:20-54	<b>26</b>	16,17	6:33-56
<b>12</b>	14	26:55-75	<b>27</b>	18,19,20	7:1-13
<b>13</b>	15,16,17	27:1-31	<b>28</b>	21,22	7:14-37
<b>14</b>	18,19	27:32-66	<b>29</b>	23,24,25	8:1-21
<b>15</b>	20,21	28:1-20			

*Note: When February has only 28 days, divide the chapters for the 29th and read them on the 28th.*

# **MARCH**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>NUM.26,27</b>	<b>MK.8:22-38</b>	<b>17</b>	29,30	16
<b>2</b>	28,29	9:1-29	<b>18</b>	31,32	LK.1:1-23
<b>3</b>	30,31	9:30-50	<b>19</b>	33,34	1:24-56
<b>4</b>	32,33	10:1-30	<b>20</b>	<b>JOSH.1,2,3</b>	1:57-80
<b>5</b>	34,35,36	10:32-52	<b>21</b>	4,5,6	2:1-24
<b>6</b>	<b>DEUT.1,2</b>	11:1-19	<b>22</b>	7,8	2:25-52
<b>7</b>	3,4	11:20-33	<b>23</b>	9,10	3
<b>8</b>	5,6,7	12:1-27	<b>24</b>	11,12,13	4:1-32
<b>9</b>	8,9,10	12:28-44	<b>25</b>	14,15	4:33-44
<b>10</b>	11,12,13	13:1-13	<b>26</b>	16,17,18	5:1-16
<b>11</b>	14,15,16	13:14-37	<b>27</b>	19,20	5:17-39
<b>12</b>	17,18,19	14:1-25	<b>28</b>	21,22	6:1-26
<b>13</b>	20,21,22	14:26-50	<b>29</b>	23,24	6:27-49
<b>14</b>	23,24,25	14:51-72	<b>30</b>	<b>JUDG.1,2</b>	7:1-30
<b>15</b>	26,27	15:1-26	<b>31</b>	3,4,5	7:31-50
<b>16</b>	28	15:27-47			

# ***APRIL***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>JUDG.6,7</b>	<b>LK.8:1-21</b>	<b>16</b>	19,20,21	15:11-32
<b>2</b>	8,9	8:22-56	<b>17</b>	22,23,24	16:1-18
<b>3</b>	10,11	9:1-36	<b>18</b>	25,26	16:19-31
<b>4</b>	12,13,14	9:37-62	<b>19</b>	27,28,29	17:1-19
<b>5</b>	15,16,17	10:1-24	<b>20</b>	30,31	17:20-37
<b>6</b>	18,19	10:25-42	<b>21</b>	<b>2SAM.1,2,3</b>	18:1-17
<b>7</b>	20,21	11:1-28	<b>22</b>	4,5,6	18:18-43
<b>8</b>	<b>RUTH 1,2,3,4</b>	11:29-54	<b>23</b>	7,8,9	19:1-28
<b>9</b>	<b>1SAM.1,2,3</b>	12:1-34	<b>24</b>	10,11,12	19:29-48
<b>10</b>	4,5,6	12:35-59	<b>25</b>	13,14	20:1-26
<b>11</b>	7,8,9	13:1-21	<b>26</b>	15,16	20:27-47
<b>12</b>	10,11,12	13:22-35	<b>27</b>	17,18	21:1-19
<b>13</b>	13,14	14:1-24	<b>28</b>	19,20	21:20-38
<b>14</b>	15,16	14:25-35	<b>29</b>	21,22	22:1-30
<b>15</b>	17,18	15:1-10	<b>30</b>	23,24	22:31-53

# MAY

Date	Morning	Evening	Date	Morning	Evening
<b>1</b>	<b>1KNG.1,2</b>	<b>LK. 22:54-71</b>	<b>17</b>	18,19	6:22-44
<b>2</b>	3,4,5	23:1-26	<b>18</b>	20,21,22	6:45-71
<b>3</b>	6,7	23:27-38	<b>19</b>	23,24,25	7:1-31
<b>4</b>	8,9	23:39-56	<b>20</b>	<b>1CHR.1,2</b>	7:32-53
<b>5</b>	10,11	24:1-35	<b>21</b>	3,4,5	8:1-20
<b>6</b>	12,13	24:36-53	<b>22</b>	6,7	8:21-36
<b>7</b>	14,15	<b>JN.1:1-28</b>	<b>23</b>	8,9,10	8:37-59
<b>8</b>	16,17,18	1:29-51	<b>24</b>	11,12,13	9:1-23
<b>9</b>	19,20	2	<b>25</b>	14,15,16	9:24-41
<b>10</b>	21,22	3:1-21	<b>26</b>	17,18,19	10:1-21
<b>11</b>	<b>2KNG.1,2,3</b>	3:22-36	<b>27</b>	20,21,22	10:22-42
<b>12</b>	4,5	4:1-30	<b>28</b>	23,24,25	11:1-17
<b>13</b>	6,7,8	4:31-54	<b>29</b>	26,27	11:18-46
<b>14</b>	9,10,11	5:1-24	<b>30</b>	28,29	11:27-57
<b>15</b>	12,13,14	5:25-47	<b>31</b>	<b>2CHR.1,2,3</b>	12:1-19
<b>16</b>	15,16,17	6:1-21			

# JUNE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2CHR.4,5,6</b>	<b>JN.12:20-51</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>NEH.1,2,3</b>	2:1-13
<b>2</b>	7,8,9	13:1-17	<b>17</b>	4,5,6	2:15-47
<b>3</b>	10,11,12	13:18-38	<b>18</b>	7,8	3
<b>4</b>	13-16	14	<b>19</b>	9,10,11	4:1-22
<b>5</b>	17,18,19	15	<b>20</b>	12,13	4:23-37
<b>6</b>	20,21,22	16:1-15	<b>21</b>	<b>ESTH.1,2,3</b>	5:1-16
<b>7</b>	23,24,25	16:16-33	<b>22</b>	4,5,6	5:17-42
<b>8</b>	26,27,28	17	<b>23</b>	7-10	6
<b>9</b>	29,30,31	18:1-23	<b>24</b>	<b>JOB 1,2,3</b>	7:1-19
<b>10</b>	32,33	18:24-40	<b>25</b>	4,5,6	7:20-43
<b>11</b>	34,35,36	19:1-22	<b>26</b>	7,8,9	7:44-60
<b>12</b>	<b>EZRA 1,2</b>	19:23-42	<b>27</b>	10,11,12	8:1-25
<b>13</b>	3,4,5	20	<b>28</b>	13,14,15	8:26-40
<b>14</b>	6,7,8	21	<b>29</b>	16,17,18	9:1-22
<b>15</b>	9,10	<b>ACTS 1</b>	<b>30</b>	19,20	9:23-43

***JULY***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>JOB</b> 21,22	<b>ACTS</b> 10:1-23	<b>17</b>	22,23,24	20:1-16
<b>2</b>	23,24,25	10:24-48	<b>18</b>	25,26,27	20:17-38
<b>3</b>	26,27,28	11	<b>19</b>	28,29,30	21:1-14
<b>4</b>	29,30	12	<b>20</b>	31,32,33	21:15-40
<b>5</b>	31,32	13:1-23	<b>21</b>	34,35	22
<b>6</b>	33,34	13:24-52	<b>22</b>	36,37	23:1-11
<b>7</b>	35,36,37	14	<b>23</b>	38,39,40	23:12-35
<b>8</b>	38,39	15:1-21	<b>24</b>	41,42,43	24
<b>9</b>	40,41,42	15:22-41	<b>25</b>	44,45,46	25
<b>10</b>	<b>PS.</b> 1,2,3	16:1-15	<b>26</b>	47,48,49	26
<b>11</b>	4,5,6	16:16-40	<b>27</b>	50,51,52	27:1-25
<b>12</b>	7,8,9	17:1-15	<b>28</b>	53,54,55	27:26-44
<b>13</b>	10,11,12	17:16-34	<b>29</b>	56,57,58	28:1-15
<b>14</b>	13-16	18	<b>30</b>	59,60,61	28:16-31
<b>15</b>	17,18	19:1-20	<b>31</b>	62-64	<b>ROM.</b> 1
<b>16</b>	19,20,21	19:21-41			

***AUGUST***

Date	Morning	Evening	Date	Morning	Evening
<b>1</b>	<b>PS.65-67</b>	<b>ROM.2</b>	<b>17</b>	107,108	15:21-33
<b>2</b>	68,69	3	<b>18</b>	109-111	16
<b>3</b>	70,71,72	4	<b>19</b>	112-115	<b>1COR.1</b>
<b>4</b>	73,74	5	<b>20</b>	116-118	2
<b>5</b>	75,76,77	6	<b>21</b>	119:1-48	3
<b>6</b>	78	7	<b>22</b>	119:49-104	4
<b>7</b>	79,80,81	8:1-18	<b>23</b>	119:105-176	5
<b>8</b>	82,83,84	8:19-39	<b>24</b>	120-123	6
<b>9</b>	85,86,87	9	<b>25</b>	124-127	7:1-24
<b>10</b>	88,89	10	<b>26</b>	128-131	7:25-40
<b>11</b>	90,91,92	11:1-22	<b>27</b>	132-135	8
<b>12</b>	93,94,95	11:23-36	<b>28</b>	136-138	9
<b>13</b>	96,97,98	12	<b>29</b>	139-141	10:1-13
<b>14</b>	99-102	13	<b>30</b>	142-144	10:14-33
<b>15</b>	103-104	14	<b>31</b>	145-147	11:1-15
<b>16</b>	105-106	15:1-20			

## ***SEPTEMBER***

Date	Morning	Evening	Date	Morning	Evening
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<b>1</b>	<b>PS.148-150</b>	<b>1COR.11:16-34</b>	<b>16</b>	30,31	8
<b>2</b>	<b>PROV.1,2</b>	12	<b>17</b>	<b>ECC.1,2,3</b>	9
<b>3</b>	3,4	13	<b>18</b>	4,5,6	10
<b>4</b>	5,6	14:1-20	<b>19</b>	7,8,9	11:1-15
<b>5</b>	7,8	14:21-40	<b>20</b>	10,11,12	11:16-33
<b>6</b>	9,10	15:1-32	<b>21</b>	<b>SOS 1,2,3</b>	12
<b>7</b>	11,12	15:33-58	<b>22</b>	4,5	13
<b>8</b>	13,14	16	<b>23</b>	6,7,8	<b>GAL.1</b>
<b>9</b>	15,16	<b>2COR.1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>IS.1,2,3</b>	2
<b>10</b>	17,18	2	<b>25</b>	4,5,6	3
<b>11</b>	19,20	3	<b>26</b>	7,8,9	4
<b>12</b>	21,22	4	<b>27</b>	10,11,12	5
<b>13</b>	23,24	5	<b>28</b>	13,14,15	6
<b>14</b>	25,26,27	6	<b>29</b>	16-18	<b>EPH.1</b>
<b>15</b>	28,29	7	<b>30</b>	19,20,21	2

## ***OCTOBER***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>IS.22,23</b>	<b>EPH.3</b>	<b>17</b>	62,63,64	5

<b>2</b>	24,25,26	4	<b>18</b>	65,66	<b>2THES.1</b>
<b>3</b>	27,28	5	<b>19</b>	<b>JER.1,2</b>	2
<b>4</b>	29,30	6	<b>20</b>	3,4	3
<b>5</b>	31-33	<b>PHIL.1</b>	<b>21</b>	5,6	<b>1TIM.1</b>
<b>6</b>	34,35,36	2	<b>22</b>	7,8	2
<b>7</b>	37,38	3	<b>23</b>	9,10	3
<b>8</b>	39,40	4	<b>24</b>	11,12,13	4
<b>9</b>	41,42	<b>COL.1</b>	<b>25</b>	14,15,16	5
<b>10</b>	43,44	2	<b>26</b>	17,18,19	6
<b>11</b>	45,46,47	3	<b>27</b>	20-22	<b>2TIM.1</b>
<b>12</b>	48,49	4	<b>28</b>	23,24	2
<b>13</b>	50-52	<b>1THES.1</b>	<b>29</b>	25,26	3
<b>14</b>	53,54,55	2	<b>30</b>	27,28	4
<b>15</b>	56,57,58	3	<b>31</b>	29,30	<b>TITUS 1</b>
<b>16</b>	59,60,61	4			

## ***NOVEMBER***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Evening</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>JER.31,32</b>	<b>TITUS 2</b>	<b>16</b>	13,14,15	11:20-40

2	33,34,35	3	17	16	12
3	36,37	<b>PHILE.</b>	18	17,18,19	13
4	38,39	<b>HEB. 1</b>	19	20,21	<b>JAS. 1</b>
5	40,42,42	2	20	22,23	2
6	43,44,45	3	21	24,25,26	3
7	46,47,48	4	22	27,28	4
8	49,50	5	23	29,30,31	5
9	51,52	6	24	32,33	<b>1PET. 1</b>
10	LAM.1,2	7	25	34,35	2
11	3,4,5	8	26	36,37	3
12	<b>EZEK.1,2,3</b>	9	27	38,39	4
13	4,5,6	10:1-23	28	40	5
14	7,8,9	10:24-39	29	41,42	<b>2PET. 1</b>
15	10,11,12	11:1-19	30	43,44	2

## ***DECEMBER***

Date	Morning	Evening	Date	Morning	Evening
1	<b>EZEK.45,46</b>	<b>2PET. 3</b>	17	<b>OBAD.</b>	8

<b>2</b>	47,48	<b>1JN. 1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>JONAH 1-4</b>	9
<b>3</b>	<b>DAN.1,2</b>	2	<b>19</b>	<b>MICAH 1,2,3</b>	10
<b>4</b>	3,4	3	<b>20</b>	4,5	11
<b>5</b>	5,6	4	<b>21</b>	6,7	12
<b>6</b>	7,8	5	<b>22</b>	<b>NAHUM 1,2,3</b>	13
<b>7</b>	9,10	<b>2JN.</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>HAB.1,2,3</b>	14
<b>8</b>	11,12	<b>3JN.</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>ZEPH.1,2,3</b>	15
<b>9</b>	<b>HOS.1-4</b>	<b>JUDE</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>HAG.1,2</b>	16
<b>10</b>	5-8	<b>REV. 1</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>ZECH.1,2,3</b>	17
<b>11</b>	9,10,11	2	<b>27</b>	4,5,6	18
<b>12</b>	12,13,14	3	<b>28</b>	7,8,9	19
<b>13</b>	<b>JOEL 1,2,3</b>	4	<b>29</b>	10,11,12	20
<b>14</b>	<b>AMOS 1,2,3</b>	5	<b>30</b>	13,14	21
<b>15</b>	4,5,6	6	<b>31</b>	<b>MAL.1-4</b>	22
<b>16</b>	7,8,9	7			