

FINDING THE PRICELESS PEARL

**An Adventure With John To Discover
The Gospel Way Into Eternal Life**





Jesus said, *“The Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it”* (Matthew 13:44,45).

Pearls are the result of years of pain and struggle. A pearl begins when a small foreign particle becomes lodged in the muscle of an oyster shell. Over many years, the oyster seeks to relieve the pain by coating the foreign particle with nacre, the substance out of which the oyster shell is made. After years of coating, a beautiful pearl is formed. Once the awesome pearl is formed, it takes great struggle on the part of those who search for pearls to discover those oysters that actually have pearls.

After the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, God labored with the seedline of woman, and then the seedline of Abraham, in order to relieve mankind of the pain of sin. God’s patience and struggle with mankind over millennia eventually gave birth of the pearl of the gospel that came with the struggle and sacrificial offering of the Son of God on a cross outside Jerusalem over two thousand years ago. Finding this gospel pearl of great price will relieve one of all the pain of sin that we bring on ourselves. This book will aid you in finding the pearl of great price that is offered freely by the grace of God.

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Jesus calls us to the discovery of eternal life.

*Come to Me all you who
labor and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Take My yoke upon you
and learn from Me,
for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.
For My yoke is easy
and My burden is light.*

Matthew 11:28-30

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel,
for it is the power of God unto salvation
to every one who believes,
to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
For it is the righteousness of God
revealed from faith to faith,
as it is written,
“The just will live by faith.”*

Romans 1:16,17

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Welcome to the Gospel Adventure

In every culture of the world we find people who are religious. The reason for this is that we are religious beings. And because we are religious, we conclude that this world is not all there is. We also have a conscience that moves us to do what is good to our fellow man. Because we seek good, we conclude that there is an eternal Good. Most people are assured that there is a God, and that this God has prepared us for something that is far better and beyond this world.

All of us have come to one common conclusion. We know that we do not have the ability to determine a final authority of what is moral and right. Societies have tried their best for thousands of years to make moral laws that will keep us on the right path. But the general lesson we have learned from our efforts to determine our own way, is that we lead ourselves away from our Creator. We hinder our relationships with others because we often refuse to allow God to direct our behavior with one another.

Those who realize that it is not within us to determine our own behavior have come to the conclusion that there must be a God beyond this world who is the origin of all of us. The ancient Greek philosophers came to this conclusion. They concluded that man has the mental ability to create a god after his own imagination. And the ancient Greeks had a great imagination. They created many gods. However, one day in their history about two thousand years ago, someone who had en-

countered on a Damascus road in Syria the Son of the one true and living God, came through Athens, Greece. He stood up on the platform of philosophical debate in Athens and said, "*The One whom you worship in ignorance, Him I declare to you*" (At 17:22-31)

The Greeks were knowledgeable enough to conclude that there was a God out there they could not define by the words of their dictionary. The best they could do was to build an altar "To the Unknown God." This is the God who is beyond the definition of our dictionaries, but the One we would conclude has revealed Himself to us. If He is truly God, then we conclude that He would reveal Himself to us. And He has. He has not only spoken through words of revelation, but also in the revelation of His Son. When people first encountered the Son, they concluded that if one has seen the Son, then he has seen the Father also.

Satan has deceived so many who have forgotten to seek the "Unknown God" who has made Himself known through His Son. But we know better. We know that in our busy lives we must slow down and discover the Son of this eternal God who seeks to bless us with eternal existence. This is our quest. We want to know the heart of the God who would give His Son as an eternal sacrifice in order that we live in His presence forever. We pray that this book will be your road map on this quest. So sit back, and enjoy this wonderful journey of discovery of the heart of God, and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome To John's Gospel Record Of God's Revelation Of The Gospel Through His Eternal Son, The Word

Chapter 1

The Word Became Flesh

1 ¶ In the beginning ^awas the ^bWord, and the Word was ^cwith God, and the Word was ^dGod.

2 ^eHe was in the beginning with God.

3 ^fAll things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

4 ^gIn Him was life, and ^hthe life was the light of men.

5 And ⁱthe light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not understand it.

6 ¶ There was a ^jman sent from God whose name *was* John.

7 He came for a ^kwitness, to bear witness of the Light so that all through him might ^lbelieve.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that ^mLight.

9 ⁿThat was the true Light that enlightens every man who comes into the world.

10 ¶ He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and ^othe world did not know Him.

11 ^pHe came to His own and His own did not receive Him.

12 But ^qas many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,

13 ^rwho were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will

of man, but of God.

14 ^sAnd the Word ^twas made ^uflesh and dwelt among us. And ^vwe beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, ^wfull of grace and truth.

15 ¶ ^xJohn bore witness of Him, and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I spoke, ^yHe who comes after me is preferred before me, ^zfor He was before me.”

16 For from His ^afullness we all have received, and grace upon grace.

17 For ^bthe law was given through Moses, *but* ^cgrace and ^dtruth came through Jesus Christ.

18 ^eNo man has seen God at any time. ^fThe only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*.

John and the Christ

19 ¶ This is ^athe testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

20 And ^bhe confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

21 And they asked him, “Who then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.” “Are you ⁱthe Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

22 Then they said to him, “Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say

Chapter 1: a 1 Jn 1:1 b Rv 19:13 c Jn 17:5 d 1 Jn 5:20 e Gn 1:1 f Cl 1:16,17 g 1 Jn 5:11 h Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46 i Jn 3:19 j Mt 3:1-17 k Jn 3:25-36; 5:33-35 l Jn 3:16 m Is 9:2; 49:6 n Is 49:6 o Hb 1:2 p Is 53:3; Lk 19:14 q Gl 3:26 r 1 Pt 1:23 s Rv 19:13 t Gl 4:4 u Hb 2:11 v Is 40:5 w Jn 8:32; 14:6; 18:37 x Jn 3:32 y Mt 3:11 z Cl 1:17 a Cl 1:19; 2:9 b Ex 20:1 c Rm 5:21; 6:14 d Jn 8:32; 14:6; 18:37 e Ex 33:20 f 1 Jn 4:9 g Jn 5:33 h Lk 3:15 i Dt 18:15,18

• Before He came into the world, the Son of God eternally existed in the form of God as one with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He was the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us.

•• Incarnation took place when the Son of God came into this world in the flesh of man.

about yourself?”

23 He said, ^j“I am ^k*the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’* as the prophet Isaiah said.”

24 ¶ Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said to him, “Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

26 John answered them, saying, ^l“I baptize in water, ^mbut there stands One among you whom you do not know.

27 ⁿ“*It is He who comes after me and is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.*”

28 These things were done ^oin Bethany beyond Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Lamb of God

29 ¶ The next day John saw Jesus coming to him. And He said, ^p“Behold, the Lamb of God ^qwho takes away the sin of the world!”

30 “This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’

31 “And I did not know Him. But that He might be made manifest to Israel, ^r‘therefore, I came baptizing in water.’”

32 ¶ ^sAnd John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained upon Him.

33 “And I did not know Him. But He who sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, ^tthe same is He who baptizes in

the Holy Spirit.’

34 “And I have seen and have testified that this is the ^u“Son of God.”

The First Disciples

35 ¶ Again the next day John stood with two of his disciples.

36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ^v“Behold the Lamb of God!”

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they ^wfollowed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned and saw them following. And He said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi,” (which is to say when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?”

39 He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He dwelt, and remained with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

40 ¶ One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was ^xAndrew, Simon Peter’s brother.

41 He first found his own brother Simon. And he said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ.)

42 Then he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of John. ^yYou will be called Cephas” (which is translated, Peter).

Calling of Philip and Nathanael

43 ¶ The following day Jesus wanted to go into Galilee. And He found ^zPhilip and said to him, “Follow Me.”

44 Now ^aPhilip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip found ^bNathanael and said

j Mt 3:3 k Is 40:3 l Mt 3:11 m Mt 3:1 n At 19:4 o Jg 7:24 p Rv 5:6-14 q 1 Pt 2:24 r Mt 3:6 s Mk 1:10 t Is 42:1; 61:1; Mt 3:11 u Jn 11:27 v Jn 1:29 w Mt 4:20,22 x Mt 4:18 y Mt 16:18 z Jn 6:5; 12:21,22; 14:8,9 a Jn 12:21 b Jn 21:2

• The Son of God came into the world for the purpose of offering Himself as a sacrificial lamb for our sins.

to him, “We have found Him of whom [◊]Moses in the law, and the ^dProphets, wrote, Jesus [◊]of Nazareth, the ^fson of Joseph.”

46 Then Nathanael said to him, ^g“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him. And He said of him, “Behold ^han Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!”

48 Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, ⁱYou are the Son of God! You are the ^jKing of Israel!”

50 Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”

51 Then He said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^kyou will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Chapter 2

Turning Water to Wine

1 ¶ Now the third day there was a ^amarriage in ^bCana of Galilee and the [◊]mother of Jesus was there.

2 Both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the marriage.

3 Now when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

4 Jesus said to her, ^d“Woman, [◊]what have I to do with you? ^fMy hour has not yet come.”

5 His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do *it*.”

6 Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, ^gaccording to the custom of the purification of the Jews, containing two or three firkins each.

7 Jesus said to them, “Fill the waterpots with water.” And they filled them up to the brim.

8 Then He said to them, “Now draw *some* out and take it to the master of the feast.” And they took *it to him*.

9 When the master of the feast had tasted ^hthe water that was made wine, and did not know from where it came—but the servants who drew the water knew—the master of the feast called the bridegroom.

10 And he said to him, “Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine. And when the *people* have drunk freely, then *he serves* that which is inferior. *But* you have kept the good wine until now.”

11 This ⁱbeginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, ^jand manifested His glory. And His disciples believed in Him.

12 ¶ After this He went down to ^kCapernaum, He and His mother and ^lHis brothers and His disciples. And they did not stay there many days.

13 ¶ ^mNow the Jews’ Passover was at hand and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 And ⁿHe found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated *at their tables*.

15 Now when He had made a whip of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen. And He poured out the changers’

c Lk 24:27 d Zc 6:12 e Mt 2:23 f Lk 3:23 g Jn 7:41,42,52 h Ps 32:2; 73:1 i Mt 14:33 j Mt 21:5 k Gn 28:12 **Chapter 2:** a Hb 13:4 b Jn 4:46 c Jn 19:25 d Jn 19:26 e 2 Sm 16:10 f Jn 7:6,8,30; 8:20 g Mk 7:3 h Jn 4:46 i Jn 4:54 j Jn 1:14 k Mt 4:13 l Mt 12:46; 13:35 m Dt 16:1-6 n Mt 3:1; Mk 11:15,17

• As the incarnate Son of God in the flesh, this was the first miracle that Jesus worked on earth among men.

money and overthrew the tables.

16 Then He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make ^oMy Father's house a house of merchandise!"

17 And His disciples remembered that it was written, ^p"*The zeal for Your house will eat Me up.*"

18 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"

19 Jesus answered and said to them, ^r"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."

20 Then the Jews said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and You will raise it up in three days?"

21 But He spoke ^sof the temple of His body.

22 Therefore, when He was risen from the dead, ^tHis disciples remembered that He had said this. And they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had said.

23 ¶ Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast *day*, many believed in His name when they saw the ^usigns that He did.

24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them because He ^vknew all *men*.

25 And He did not need that anyone should testify concerning man, for ^wHe knew what was in man.

Chapter 3

Nicodemus

1 ¶ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 ^aThe same man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for ^bno one can do these signs that You do unless ^cGod is with him."

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, ^dunless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, ^eunless one is born of water and *of* the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 "That which is born of the flesh is ^fflesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

8 ^g"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it. But you do not know from where it comes and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, ^h"How can these things be?"

10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you a teacher of Israel and do not know these things?

11 ⁱ"Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak what we know and testify what we have seen, and ^jyou do not receive our witness.

12 "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if

^o Lk 2:49 ^p Ps 69:9 ^q Mt 12:38 ^r Mt 26:61; 27:40 ^s 1 Co 3:16; 6:19 ^t Lk 24:8 ^u At 2:22 ^v Rv 2:23 ^w Mt 9:4 **Chapter 3:** ^a Jn 7:50; 19:39 ^b Jn 9:16,33 ^c At 10:38 ^d 1 Pt 1:23 ^e At 2:38 ^f 1 Co 15:50 ^g Ec 11:5 ^h Jn 6:52,60 ⁱ Mt 11:27 ^j Jn 3:32; 8:14

• This was the first prophecy that Jesus made that He would be resurrected from the dead.

•• John wrote in order that we come to the same conclusion as Nicodemus, that Jesus was sent from God.

••• One is born again through obedience to the gospel in baptism, whereupon all sins are washed away.

I tell you of heavenly things?

13 ^k“And no one has ascended to heaven except He who came down from heaven, *even* the Son of Man.

14 ^l“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *even so* ^mmust the Son of Man be lifted up,

15 “so that whoever ⁿbelieves in Him will ^ohave eternal life.

16 ^p“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten ^qSon, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 ^r“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

18 ^s“He who believes in Him is not condemned. But he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 “And this is the condemnation, ^tthat light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

20 “For ^ueveryone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light lest his deeds should be exposed.

21 “But he who does the truth comes to the light so that his deeds may be made manifest, that they have been ^vdone in God.”

Testimony of John

22 ¶ After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea. And He stayed there with them ^wand baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to ^xSalim because there was much water there. ^yAnd they came and were baptized—

24 ^zfor John was not yet cast into prison.

25 ¶ Then there arose a dispute between *some* of John’s disciples and the Jews about purification.

26 So they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, ^ato whom you have testified, behold, the same is baptizing and all ^bare coming to Him.”

27 John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.

28 “You yourselves bear me witness that I said, ^c‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ^d‘I have been sent before Him.’

29 ^e“He who has the bride is the bridegroom. But ^fthe friend of the bridegroom who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice. So this joy of mine is fulfilled.

30 ^g“He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 ^h“He who comes from above ⁱis above all. ^jHe who is of the earth is earthly and speaks from the earth. ^kHe who comes from heaven is above all.

32 “And ^lwhat He has seen and heard, that He testifies. And no one receives His testimony.

33 “He who has received His testimony ^mhas certified that God is truthful.

34 ⁿ“For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit ^oby measure.

k Ep 4:9 l Nm 21:9 m Jn 8:28; 12:34; 19:18 n Jn 6:47 o Jn 3:36 p Rm 5:8 q Is 9:6 r Lk 9:56 s Jn 5:24; 6:40,47; 20:31 t Jn 1:4,9-11 u Ep 5:11,13 v 1 Co 15:10 w Jn 4:1,2 x 1 Sm 9:4 y Mt 3:5,6 z Mt 4:12; 14:3 a Jn 1:7,15,27,34 b Mk 2:2; 3:10; 5:24 c 1 Co 3:5,6; 4:7 d Jn 1:19-27 e Mt 3:1 f 2 Co 11:2 g Ss 5:1 h Is 9:7 i Jn 3:13; 8:23 j Mt 28:18 k 1 Co 15:47 l Jn 6:33 m Jn 3:11; 15:15 n 1 Jn 5:10 o Dt 18:18; Jn 7:16 p Jn 1:16

35 ^q“The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.

36 ^r“He who believes in the Son has everlasting life. And He who does not believe the Son will not see life, but the ^swrath of God abides on him.”

Chapter 4

The Samaritan Woman

1 ¶ Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and^a baptized more disciples than John—

2 though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples—

3 He left Judea and departed again into Galilee.

4 Now He needed to go through Samaria.

5 ¶ So He came to a city of Samaria that is called Sychar, near to the parcel of land that ^bJacob ^cgave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob’s well was there. Therefore, Jesus, being wearied from *His* journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

7 ¶ There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”

8 For His disciples were gone away to the city to buy food.

9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink, since I am a woman of Samaria?” (For ^dJews have no dealings with the ^eSamaritans.)

10 Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the ^fgift of God and who it is who said to you, ‘Give Me to drink,’

you would have asked of Him and He would have given you ^gliving water.”

11 The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. From where then do You get that living water?”

12 “Are You greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?”

13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again.

14 “But ^hwhoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water that I will give him ⁱwill be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

15 ^jThe woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water so that I may not thirst, or come here to draw.”

16 Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.”

17 The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have said well, ‘I have no husband,’

18 “for you have had five husbands. And he whom you now have is not your husband. This you have truthfully said.”

19 The woman said to him, “Sir, ^kI perceive that You are a prophet.

20 “Our fathers worshiped on ^lthis mountain, and You say that in ^mJerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming ⁿwhen you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father.

22 “You worship ^owhat you do not

q Hb 2:8 r Jn 3:16,17; 6:47 s Rm 1:18 **Chapter 4:** a Jn 3:22,26 b Gn 33:19 c Gn 48:22 d At 10:28 e 2 Kg 17:24 f Rm 5:15 g Is 12:3; 44:3 h Jn 6:35,58 i Jn 7:37,38 j Jn 6:34,35; 17:2,3 k Lk 7:16,39; 24:19 l Jg 9:7 m Dt 12:5,11 n 1 Tm 2:8 o 2 Kg 17:28-41

• When one believes in the Son of God, he is motivated to obey all that God says one must do to have eternal life.

know. We know what we worship, for ^psalvation is from the Jews.

23 “But the hour is coming and now is when the true worshipers will ^qworship the Father in ^rspirit ^sand in truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him.

24 “God *is* spirit, and those who worship Him must worship *Him* in spirit and in truth.”

25 The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah ^u“is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, ^vHe will tell us all things.”

26 Jesus said to her, ^w“I who speak to You am *He*.”

27 ¶ And at this *time* His disciples came. And they marveled that He talked with a woman. However, no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You talk with her?”

28 ¶ The woman then left her waterpot and went her way into the city. And she said to the men,

29 “Come, see a Man ^xwho told me all things I have ever done. Could this be the Christ?”

30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

31 ¶ In the meantime His disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat about which you do not know.”

33 Therefore, the disciples said one to another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?”

34 Jesus said to them, ^y“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to ^zfinish His work.”

35 “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months and *then* comes ^athe harvest’?”

Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, ^bfor they are white already for harvest!

36 ““And he who reaps receives wages and gathers fruit for eternal life, so that ^dboth he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

37 “And herein is the saying true, ^e“One sows and another reaps.”

38 “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored. ^fOther men labored and you have entered into their labors.”

Samaritans Believe

39 ¶ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him ^gbecause of the saying of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I *have* done.”

40 So when the Samaritans came to Him, they urged Him that He would stay with them. And He stayed there two days.

41 And many more believed because of His ^hword.

42 Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of your saying, for ⁱwe have heard *Him* ourselves and know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”

Healing a Nobleman's Son

43 ¶ Now after two days He departed from there and went into Galilee.

44 For ^jJesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

45 ¶ Then when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, ^khaving seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast, ^lfor they also went to

p Rm 3:1; 9:4,5 q Hb 13:10-14 r Ph 3:3 s Jn 1:17 t 2 Co 3:17 u Dt 18:15 v Jn 4:29,39 w Mt 26:63,64 x Jn 4:25 y Ps 40:7,8 z Jn 6:38; 17:4; 19:30 a Gn 8:2 b Mt 9:37 c Dn 12:3 d 1 Th 2:19 e 1 Co 3:5-9 f 1 Pt 1:12 g Jn 4:29 h Lk 4:32 i 1 Jn 4:14 j Mt 13:57 k Jn 2:13,23; 3:2 l Dt 16:16

• The conditions upon which we are to worship God are determined by what God seeks from His worshipers.

the feast.

46 ¶ So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee ^mwhere He made the water *into* wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When He heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him that He come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

48 Then Jesus said to him, ⁿ“Except you see signs and wonders you will not believe.”

49 The nobleman said to him, ⁿ“Sir, come down before my child dies.”

50 Jesus said to him, ⁿ“Go your way. Your son lives.” And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken to him and he went his way.

51 And as he was going down, his servants met him and told *him*, saying, ⁿ“Your son lives!”

52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. And they said to him, ⁿ“Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, ⁿ“Your son lives.” And he himself believed, and his whole house.

54 ¶ This *is* again a second sign *that* Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

Chapter 5

Healing at Bethesda

1 ¶ After ^athis there was a feast of the Jews and Jesus ^bwent up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem ^cby the sheep *gate* a pool that is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.

3 On these *porches* lay a great multi-

tude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For *it was supposed* an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred the water, then whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well of whatever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.

6 When Jesus saw him lying *there*, and knowing that he had already been a long time *in that condition*, He said to him, ⁿ“Do you want to be made whole?”

7 The sick man answered Him, ⁿ“Sir, when the water is troubled, I have no man to put me into the pool. But while I am coming, another steps down before me.”

8 Jesus said to him, ^d“Rise, take up your bed and walk.”

9 And immediately the man was made whole. And he took up his bed and walked. Now ^ethat day was the Sabbath.

10 Therefore, the Jews said to him who was healed, ^f“It is the Sabbath. ^fIt is not lawful for you to carry *your* bed.”

11 He answered them, ⁿ“He who made me whole said to me, ‘Take up your bed and walk.’”

12 Then they asked him, ⁿ“Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk’?”

13 Now he who was ^ghealed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into a multitude that was in *that* place.

14 ¶ Afterward, Jesus found him in the temple. And He said to him, ⁿ“Behold, you are made whole. ^hSin no more, lest a worse thing come on you.”

15 The man departed and told the Jews

that it was Jesus who had made him whole.

Life in the Son

16 ¶ For this reason the Jews ⁱpersecuted Jesus because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

17 But Jesus answered them, ^j“My Father is working until now, and I am working.”

18 ¶ Therefore, the Jews ^ksought all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, ^lmaking Himself equal with God.

19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^mthe Son can do nothing by Himself, but what He sees the Father doing. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

20 “For ⁿthe Father loves the Son and ^oshows Him all things that He Himself does. And He will show Him greater works than these so that you may marvel.

21 “For as the Father raises up the dead and gives them life, ^peven so the Son gives life to whom He wishes.

22 “For the Father judges no one, but He ^qhas committed all judgment to the Son,

23 so that all *men* should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. ^rHe who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who has sent Him.

24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^she who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me, has everlasting life. And he will not come into condemnation,

^tbut has passed from death into life.

25 “Truly, truly, I say to you, the hour is coming and now is, when ^uthe dead will hear the voice of the Son of God. And those who hear will live.

26 “For ^vas the Father has life in Himself, so He has given to the Son to have ^wlife in Himself.

27 “And He ^xhas given Him authority to execute judgment also, ^ybecause He is the Son of Man.

28 “Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will ^zhear His voice **29** ^a“and will come forth, ^bthose who have done good to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil to the resurrection of condemnation.

30 ^c“I can of My own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge. And My judgment is just because ^dI do not seek My own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me.

Witness of Jesus

31 ¶ ^e“If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.

32 ^f“There is another who bears witness of Me. And I know that the witness that He witnesses of Me is true.

33 “You sent to John ^gand He has borne witness to the truth.

34 “But I do not receive testimony from man. But I say these things so that you may be saved.

35 “He was the burning and ^hshining light. And ⁱyou were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

36 “But ^jI have greater witness than *that* of John. For ^kthe works that the

i Jn 8:37; 10:39 j Jn 9:4; 17:4 k Jn 7:1,19 l Jn 10:30 m Jn 5:30; 6:38; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10 n Mt 3:17 o Mt 11:27 p Jn 11:25 q At 17:31 r 1 Jn 2:23 s Jn 3:16,18; 6:47 t 1 Jn 3:14 u Cl 2:13 v Ps 36:9 w 1 Co 15:45 x At 10:42; 17:31 y Dn 7:13 z 1 Th 4:15-17 a Is 26:19 b Dn 12:2 c Jn 5:19 d Mt 26:39 e Jn 8:14 f Mt 3:17 g Jn 1:15,19,27,32 h 2 Pt 1:19 i Mk 6:20 j 1 Jn 5:9 k Jn 3:2; 10:25; 17:4

• When Jesus comes again, there will be a resurrection of all those who died before His final coming.

Father has given Me to accomplish—the very ^hworks that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37 “And the Father Himself who has sent Me ^mhas borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time ⁿnor seen His form.

38 “And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

39 ^o“You search the Scriptures because in them you think you have eternal life. It is ^pthese that testify of Me.

40 ^q“And you will not come to Me so that you may have life.

41 ^r“I do not receive honor from men.

42 “But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you.

43 “I have come in My Father’s name and you do not receive Me. If another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

44 ^s“How can you believe when you receive honor from one another, and do not seek ^tthe honor that *comes* from only God?

45 “Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father. ^uThere is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses in whom you trust.

46 “For if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me, ^vfor he wrote about Me.

47 “But if you ^wdid not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Chapter 6

Feeding of the Five Thousand

1 ¶ After ^athese things Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee, which is *the Sea of* ^bTiberias.

2 And a great crowd followed Him because they saw His signs that He did on those who were ^csick.

3 Then Jesus went up on a mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

4 ¶ Now ^dthe Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.

5 ^eTherefore Jesus, lifting up *His* eyes and seeing a great crowd coming to Him, He said to ^fPhilip, “Where will we buy bread so that these may eat?”

6 This He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

7 Philip answered Him, ^g“Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them so that every one of them may take a little.”

8 One of His disciples, ^hAndrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him,

9 “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish. ⁱBut what are they among so many?”

10 Then Jesus said, “Make the men sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 Then Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 When they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the fragments that remain so that nothing is lost.”

13 Therefore, they gathered *them* together and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves that remained over by those who had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen

I Jn 9:16; 10:38 m Mt 3:17 n 1 Jn 4:12 o Is 8:20; 34:16 p Lk 24:27 q Jn 1:11; 3:19 r 1 Th 2:6 s Jn 12:43 t Rm 2:29 u Rm 2:12 v Dt 18:15,18 w Lk 16:29,31 **Chapter 6:** a Mk 6:32 b Jn 6:23; 21:1 c Mt 4:23; 8:16; 9:35; 14:36; 15:30; 19:2 d Dt 16:1 e Mt 14:14 f Jn 1:43 g Nm 11:21,22 h Jn 1:40 i 2 Kg 4:43

• The Old Testament Scriptures are primarily about Jesus and the gospel that was revealed through Him.

•• This was a miracle of creation. Only God can create, and thus Jesus was God in the flesh.

the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly ^jthe Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Walking on Water

15 ¶ Therefore, when Jesus perceived that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him a ^kking, He departed again onto a mountain by Himself alone.

16 ¶ And ^lwhen evening came, His disciples went down to the sea.

17 And entering into a boat, they *started to cross the sea toward Capernaum*. It was already dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.

18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.

19 So when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat. And they were ^mafraid.

20 But He said to them, ⁿ“It is I. Do not be afraid.”

21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat. And immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

22 ¶ The following day the people who stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but *that His disciples had gone away alone*.

23 There came other boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks.

24 Therefore, when the people saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples,

they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, ^oseeking Jesus.

The Bread of Life

25 ¶ And when they had found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”

26 Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

27 ^p“Do not labor for the food that perishes, but ^qfor the food that endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give to you, ^rfor on Him God the Father has set His seal.”

28 Then they said to Him, “What should we do so that we might work the works of God?”

29 Jesus answered and said to them, ^s“This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”

30 Therefore, they said to Him, ^t“What sign then do You show so that we may see and believe You? What work will You do?”

31 ^u“Our fathers ate manna in the desert, as it is written, ^v*‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’*”

32 Then Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses did not give you that bread from heaven, but ^wMy Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

33 “For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

34 ^xThen they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”

j Gn 49:10 k Jn 18:36 l Mt 14:23 m Mt 17:6 n Is 43:1,2 o Lk 4:42 p Mt 6:19 q Jn 4:14 r At 2:22 s 1 Jn 3:23 t Mt 12:38; 16:1 u Ex 16:15 v Ex 16:4,15; Ne 9:15; Ps 78:24 w Jn 3:13,16 x Jn 4:15

• This miracle proved that Jesus had power over the natural laws of this world. He was the creator of these laws.

35 And Jesus said to them, ^y“I am the bread of life. ^zHe who comes to Me will never hunger. And He who believes in Me will never ^athirst.

36 ^b“But I said to you that you also have seen Me and still ^cdo not believe.

37 ^d“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and ^ethe one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

38 “For I came down from heaven, ^fnot to do My own will, ^gbut the will of Him who sent Me.

39 “And this is the Father’s will who sent Me, ^hthat of all that He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up in the last day.

40 “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, ⁱthat everyone who sees the Son and believes on Him may have everlasting life. And I will raise him up in the last day.”

41 The Jews then murmured at Him because He said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”

42 Then they said, ^j“Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He said, ‘I came down from heaven’?”

43 Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.

44 ^k“No one can come to Me, except the Father who has sent Me ^ldraws him. And I will raise him up in the last day.

45 “It is written in the prophets, ^m‘*And they will all be taught of God.*’” Therefore, everyone who has heard and has learned from the Father comes to Me.

46 ⁿ“Not that anyone has seen the Fa-

ther, ^pexcept He who is from God. He has seen the Father.

47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^qhe who believes has everlasting life.

48 ^r“I am that bread of life.

49 ^s“Your fathers ate manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 “This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.

51 “I am the living bread ^tthat came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, He will live forever. And ^uthe bread that I will give is My flesh that I will give for the life of the world.”

52 ¶ The Jews therefore ^vargued among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?”

53 Then Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, except ^xyou eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

54 ^y“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood, has eternal life. And I will raise Him up in the last day.

55 “For My flesh is true food and My blood is true drink.

56 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood ^zdwells in Me and I in him.

57 “As the living Father has sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, even he will live because of Me.

58 ^a“This is the bread that came down from heaven, not ^bas your fathers ate manna and are dead. He who eats of this bread will live forever.”

y Jn 6:48,58 z Jn 4:14; 7:37 a Is 55:1,2 b Jn 6:26,64; 15:24 c Jn 10:26 d Jn 6:45 e 2 Tm 2:19 f Mt 26:39 g Jn 4:34 h Jn 10:28; 17:12; 18:9 i Jn 3:15,16; 4:14; 6:27,47,54 j Mt 13:55 k Ss 1:4 l Ph 1:29; 2:12,13 m Is 54:13 n Jn 6:37 o Jn 1:18 p Mt 11:27 q Jn 3:16,18 r Jn 6:33,35 s Jn 6:31; 58 t Jn 6:51,58 u Jn 3:13 v Hb 10:5 w Jn 7:43; 9:16; 10:19 x Mt 26:26 y Jn 4:14; 6:27,40 z 1 Jn 3:24; 4:15,16 a Jn 6:49-51 b Ex 16:14-35

• Jesus speaks of those who will obey the gospel, and in the Lord’s Supper eat of His body and drink of His blood.

Many Disciples Turn Away

59 ¶ These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

60 ^cTherefore, many of His disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, “This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?”

61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples grumbled at this, He said to them, “Does this offend you?”

62 ^d“*What* then if you will see the Son of Man ascending up where He was before?”

63 ^e“It is the Spirit who gives life. The ^fflesh profits nothing. The ^gwords that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life.

64 “But ^hthere are some of you who do not believe.” For ⁱJesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe and who would betray Him.

65 Then He said, “Therefore ^jI said to you, that no one can come to Me except it has been given to him by My Father.”

66 ¶ ^kFrom that *time* many of His disciples went back and no longer walked with Him.

67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Will you also go away?”

68 Then Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom will we go? You have ^lthe words of eternal life.

69 ^m“And we believe and are sure that You are the Holy One of God.”

70 Jesus answered them, ⁿ“Have I not chosen you twelve, ^oand *yet* one of you is a devil?”

71 He spoke of ^pJudas Iscariot *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would ^qbetray Him, being one of the twelve.

Chapter 7*Feast of the Tabernacles*

1 ¶ After these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea ^abecause the Jews sought to kill Him.

2 ^bNow the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

3 Therefore, ^cHis brothers said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea so that Your disciples may also see the works that You are doing.

4 “For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be *known* openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.”

5 For ^deven His ^ebrothers did not believe in Him.

6 Then Jesus said to them, ^f“My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

7 ^g“The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me ^hbecause I testify of it, that its works are evil.

8 “You go up to this feast. I am not going up to this feast at this time, ⁱfor My time has not yet fully come.”

9 When He had said these words to them, He stayed in Galilee.

10 ¶ But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He also went up, not openly, but as if in secret.

11 Then ^jthe Jews sought Him at the feast and said, “Where is He?”

12 Now ^kthere was much whispering among the people concerning Him, for ^lsome said, “He is a good man.” Others said, “No, He deceives the people.”

13 However, no one spoke openly of Him ^mfor fear of the Jews.

Teaching at the Feast

14 ¶ Now about the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and ^ataught.

15 And ^othe Jews marveled, saying, “How has this Man become learned, having never been educated?”

16 So Jesus answered them and said, ^o“My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

17 ^a“If anyone wills to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is from God or *whether* I speak from Myself.

18 ^r“He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory. But He who ^sseeks the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and ^tno unrighteousness is in Him.

19 ^w“Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keeps the law? ^vWhy do you seek to kill Me?”

20 The people answered and said, ^w“You have a demon. Who seeks to kill You?”

21 Jesus answered and said to them, “I have done one work and you all marvel.

22 ^x“Moses therefore gave to you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, ^ybut from the fathers), and you on the Sabbath circumcise a man.

23 “If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because ^zI have made a man completely whole on the Sabbath?

24 ^a“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment.”

Questions About Messiahship

25 ¶ Then some of them of Jerusalem

said, “Is this not He whom they seek to ^bkill?”

26 “But behold, He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. ^cDo the rulers really know that this is the Christ?

27 ^d“However, we know where this Man is from. But when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.”

28 Then Jesus cried out in the temple as He taught, saying, ^e“You both know Me and you know where I am from. And ^fI have not come on My own, but He who sent Me ^gis true, ^hwhom you do not know.

29 ⁱ“I know Him, for I am from Him and He has sent Me.”

30 ¶ Then ^jthey sought to take Him. But ^kno one laid hands on Him because His hour had not yet come.

31 And ^lmany of the people believed in Him. And they said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these that this *One* has done?”

32 The Pharisees heard the people whispering such things concerning Him, so the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to seize Him.

33 Then Jesus said, ^m“For a little while longer I am with you, and *then* I ⁿgo to Him who sent Me.

34 “You ^owill seek Me and will not find Me. And where I am, you ^pcannot come.”

35 Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He go that we will not find Him? Will He go to ^qthe Dispersion among the Gentiles and teach the Greeks?

36 “What is this statement that He said, ‘You will seek Me and will not find Me,

and where I am you cannot come'?"

37 ¶ ¹In the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, "from within him will flow rivers of living water."

39 ^vBut this He spoke of the Spirit whom they who believed in Him would receive, for the Spirit had not yet *come* because Jesus was not yet ^wglorified.

40 Some of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, "This is certainly ^xthe Prophet."

41 Others said, ^y"This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee?"

42 ^z"Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and out of the village of Bethlehem ^awhere David was?"

43 So ^bthere was a division among the people because of Him.

44 ^cSome of them would have taken Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Unbelief of Religious Leaders

45 ¶ Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees and they said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"

46 The officers answered, ^d"Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks."

47 Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived?"

48 "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?"

49 "But this people who do not know the law are cursed."

50 Nicodemus—^ehe who came to Jesus

earlier, being one of them—said to them, **51** "Does our law judge anyone before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

52 They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and see, for out of Galilee ^gno prophet is to rise."

53 ¶ Then every man went to his own house.

Chapter 8

Woman Caught in Adultery

1 Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him. And He sat down and ^ataught them.

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst *of the crowd*,

4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in ^badultery, in the very act.

5 ^c"Now in the law, Moses commanded us that such *a person* should be stoned. But what do You say?"

6 This they said, testing Him, that they ^dmight have *grounds* to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and with *His* finger wrote on the ground.

7 So when they continued asking Him, He lifted Himself up and said to them, ^e"He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to cast a stone at her."

8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 And those who heard *it* ^fwent out one by one, beginning at the oldest. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman

r Lv 23:36 s Is 55:1 t Dt 18:15 u Is 12:3; 43:20; 44:3; 55:1 v Is 44:3 w Jn 12:16; 13:31; 17:5 x Dt 18:15, 18 y Jn 4:42; 6:69 z Mc 5:2 a 1 Sm 16:1, 4 b Jn 7:12 c Jn 7:30 d Lk 4:22 e Jn 3:1, 2; 19:39 f Dt 1:16, 17; 19:15 g Is 9:1, 2
Chapter 8: a Jn 8:20; 18:20 b Ex 20:14 c Lv 20:10 d Mt 22:15 e Dt 17:7 f Rm 2:22

• Jesus was both the Prophet and the Christ (Messiah) whom God sent into the world with the gospel message.

standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted Himself up, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers? Has no one condemned you?”

11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, ^g“Neither do I condemn you. Go. From now on ^hsin no more.”

Jesus Testifies of Himself

12 ¶ Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who ^jfollows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, ^k“You bear witness of Yourself. Your witness is not true.”

14 Jesus answered and said to them, “Though I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true. For I know from where I came and where I am going. But ^lyou cannot tell from where I come and where I am going.

15 ^m“You judge after the flesh. ⁿI judge no one.

16 “And yet *even* if I do judge, My judgment is true, for ^oI am not alone. But I *am* with the Father who sent Me.

17 ^p“It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

18 “I am one who bears witness of Myself. And ^qthe Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

19 Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, ^r“You neither know Me, nor My Father. ^sIf you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”

20 ¶ These words Jesus spoke in ^tthe treasury as He taught in the temple *courtyard*. And ^uno one laid hands on Him, for ^vHis hour had not yet come.

21 Then Jesus said again to them, “I go My way and ^wyou will seek Me. And you ^xwill die in your sins. Where I go, you cannot come.”

22 Then the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself because He said, ‘Where I go you cannot come’?”

23 And He said to them, ^y“You are from below. I am from above. ^zYou are of this world. I am not of this world.

24 ^a“Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. ^bFor if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins.”

25 Then they said to Him, “Who are You?” And Jesus said to them, “What I ^chave been saying to you from the beginning.

26 “I have many things to say and to judge concerning you. But ^dHe who sent Me is true, and ^eI speak to the world those things that I have heard from Him.”

27 (They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.)

28 Then Jesus said to them, “When you have ^flifted up the Son of Man, ^gthen you will know that I am *He*, and ^hthat I do nothing of Myself. But ⁱas My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.

29 “And ^jHe who sent Me is with Me. ^kThe Father has not left Me alone, ^lfor I always do those things that please Him.”

g Jn 3:17 h Jn 5:14 i Jn 1:4; 9:5; 12:35 j 1 Th 5:5 k Jn 5:31 l Jn 7:28; 9:29 m Jn 7:24 n Jn 3:17; 12:47; 18:36 o Jn 16:32 p Dt 17:6; 19:15 q Jn 5:37 r Jn 16:3 s Jn 14:7 t Mk 12:41,43 u Jn 2:4; 7:30 v Jn 7:8 w Jn 7:34; 13:33 x Jn 8:24 y Jn 3:31 z 1 Jn 4:5 a Jn 8:21 b Mk 16:16 c Jn 4:26 d Jn 7:28 e Jn 3:32; 15:15 f Jn 3:14; 12:32; 19:18 g Rm 1:4 h Jn 5:19,30 i Jn 3:11 j Jn 14:10 k Jn 8:16; 16:32 l Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38

• Because Jesus came into the world with the gospel, He led people out of the darkness of sin with the gospel.

••• One obeys the gospel in baptism to wash away his sins, and thus, he will not die in his sins.

••• Jesus knew that He would be crucified in order to offer Himself as our atoning sacrifice for our sins.

30 As He spoke these words, ^mmany believed in Him.

Sons of Abraham

31 ¶ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, “If you ⁿcontinue in My word, *then* you are truly My disciples.

32 “And you will know the ^otruth, and ^pthe truth will make you free.”

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s seed and were never in bondage to anyone. How is it that You say, ‘You will be made free?’”

34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^rwhoever commits sin is the bondservant of sin.

35 “And ^sthe bondservant does not abide in the house forever. The Son abides forever.

36 “Therefore, if the Son will make you free, you will be free indeed.

37 “I know that you are Abraham’s seed. But ^tyou seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you.

38 “I speak what I have seen with the Father. And you do what you have heard from your father.”

39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham.

40 ^y“But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth ^zthat I have heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

41 “You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication. ^aWe have one Father, God *Himself*.”

Sons of the Devil

42 ¶ Jesus said to them, ^b“If God were your Father, you would love Me, for ^cI proceeded forth and have come from God. For ^dI have not come on My own, but He sent Me.

43 “Why do you not understand My speech? *It is* because you cannot hear My word.

44 “You are of *your* father the devil, and the ^edesires of your father you want to ^hdo. He was a murderer from the beginning, and ⁱdoes not abide in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*; for he is a liar, and its father.

45 “And because I tell *you* the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 “Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I speak the truth, why do you not believe Me?”

47 ^j“He who is of God hears God’s words. Therefore, you do not hear *them* because you are not of God.”

Jesus Glorifies the Father

48 ¶ Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan, and ^khave a demon?”

49 Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon. But I honor My Father and ^lyou dishonor Me.

50 “And ^mI do not seek My own glory. There is One who seeks and judges.

51 “Truly, truly, I say to you, ⁿif one keeps My word, He will never see death.”

52 Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You ^ohave a demon.

m Jn 7:31; 10:42; 11:45 n Jn 14:15,23 o Jn 1:14,17; 14:6 p Rm 6:14,18,22 q Mt 3:9 r 2 Pt 2:19 s Gl 4:30 t Gl 5:1 u Jn 7:19 v Jn 3:32; 5:19,30; 14:10,24 w Mt 3:9 x Rm 2:28 y Jn 8:37 z Jn 8:26 a Is 63:16 b 1 Jn 5:1 c Jn 16:27; 17:8,25 d Gl 4:4 e Jn 7:17 f Mt 13:38 g 1 Jn 2:16,17 h 1 Jn 3:8-10,15 i Jd 6 j 1 Jn 4:6 k Jn 7:20; 10:20 l Jn 5:41 m Jn 5:41; 7:18 n Jn 5:24; 11:26 o Jn 7:20; 10:20

• Discipleship means obedience. In this obedience, one will know the truth of the gospel and be free from sin.

^pAbraham is dead, and the prophets, and you say, 'If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.'

53 "Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets *also* died. ^qWho do You make Yourself *to be*?"

54 Jesus answered, ^r"If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. ^sIt is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'

55 "However, ^tyou have not known Him. But I know Him. And if I should say, 'I do not know Him,' I will be a liar like you. But I know Him and ^ukeep His word.

56 "Your father Abraham ^vrejoiced to see My day. ^wAnd he saw *it* and was glad."

57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, ^xbefore Abraham was, ^yI AM."

59 ¶ Then ^zthey took up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus concealed Himself and went out of the temple, ^agoing through them, and so passed by.

Chapter 9

Healing a Blind Man

1 ¶ Now as *Jesus* passed by He saw a man who was blind from *his* birth.

2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Teacher, ^awho sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

3 Jesus answered, "Neither has this man sinned, nor his parents, ^bbut that the works of God should be manifested

in him.

4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is ^dday. The night is coming when no one can work.

5 "As long as I am in the world, ^eI am the light of the world."

6 When He had spoken these things, ^fHe spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle. And He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

7 Then He said to him, "Go wash ^gin the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So ^hhe went his way and washed. And he came *back* seeing.

8 Therefore, the neighbors and those who had before seen him that he was blind, said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?"

9 Some said, "This is he." Others *said*, "He is like him." *But* he said, "I am *he*."

10 Therefore, they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"

11 He answered and said, ⁱ"A man who is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed and I received sight."

12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

Doubt of the Pharisees

13 ¶ They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind.

14 Now it was the Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes and I washed, and I see."

16 Therefore, some of the Pharisees

p Zc 1:5 q Jn 10:33; 19:7 r Jn 5:31,32 s At 3:13 t Jn 7:28,29 u Jn 15:10 v Lk 10:24 w Hb 11:13 x Mc 5:2 y Rv 1:8 z Jn 10:31; 11:8 a Lk 4:30 **Chapter 9:** a Jn 9:34 b Jn 11:4 c Jn 4:34; 5:19,36; 17:4 d Jn 11:9,10; 12:35 e Jn 1:5,9; 3:19; 8:12; 12:35,46 f Mk 7:33; 8:23 g Ne 3:15 h 2 Kg 5:14 i Jn 9:6,7

• In the form of the eternal God, and before the incarnation, Jesus existed before Abraham.

said, "This man is not from God because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such signs?" And ^kthere was a division among them.

17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him since He has opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

18 ¶ But the Jews did not believe *it* concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?"

20 His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind."

21 "But by what means he now sees we do not know, nor who has opened his eyes, we do not know. He is of age, ask him. He will speak for himself."

22 These *words* his parents spoke because ^mthey feared the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed that He was *the* Christ, he ⁿwould be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore, his parents said, "He is of age, ask him."

24 ¶ Then again they called the man who was blind and said to him, "Give God the glory. ^pWe know that this man is a sinner."

25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner *or not*, I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see."

26 Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

27 He answered them, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Will you also become His disciples?"

28 Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.

29 "We know that God ^qspoke to ^rMoses. *As for this man*, ^swe do not know where He is from."

30 The man answered and said to them, "Well herein is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from, and *yet* He has opened my eyes.

31 "Now we know that ^tGod does not hear sinners. But if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.

32 "Since the world began it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind.

33 "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."

34 They answered and said to him, "You were entirely born in sins, and you are teaching us?" And they cast him out.

Spiritual Blindness

35 ¶ Jesus heard that they had cast him out. And when He had ^xfound him, He said to him, "Do you ^ybelieve in ^zthe Son of God?"

36 He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

37 And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and ^ait is He who talks with you."

38 And He said, "Lord, I believe." And he ^bworshiped Him.

39 Then Jesus said, "For judgment I came into this world, ^dthat those who

do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

40 Now *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words. And they said to Him, “Are we also blind?”

41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore, your sin remains.

Chapter 10

The Good Shepherd

1 ¶ “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.

2 “But he who enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 “To him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice. And he calls his own sheep by ^aname and leads them out.

4 “And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

5 “And they will never follow a ^bstranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

6 ¶ This parable Jesus spoke to them. But they did not understand the things that He spoke to them.

7 Then Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 “All who came before Me are thieves and robbers. But the sheep did not hear them.

9 “I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will

go in and out and find pasture.

10 “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

12 “But he who is a hireling and not the shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming and ^eleaves the sheep, and flees. And the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

13 “The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care for the sheep.

14 “I am the good shepherd. And ^fI know My *sheep* and My own ^gknow Me.

15 ^h“As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father. ⁱAnd I lay down My life for the sheep.

16 “And ^jother sheep I have who are not of this fold. Them also I must bring and they will hear My voice. ^kAnd there will be one fold *and* one shepherd.

17 “Therefore, My Father ^lloves Me ^mbecause I lay down My life so that I may take it *up* again.

18 “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I ⁿhave power to lay it down and I have power to take it *up* again. ^oThis commandment I have received from My Father.”

19 ¶ Therefore, ^pthere was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings.

20 And many of them said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you hear Him?”

21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. ^rCan a demon ^sopen the eyes of the blind?”

e Rm 2:19 f Jn 15:22,24 **Chapter 10:** a Jn 20:16 b 2 Co 11:13-15 c Ep 2:18 d Is 40:11 e Zc 11:16,17 f 2 Tm 2:19 g 2 Tm 1:12 h Mt 11:27 i Jn 15:13; 19:30 j Is 42:6; 56:8 k Ep 2:13-18 l Jn 5:20 m Hb 2:9 n Jn 2:19; 5:26 o Jn 6:38; 14:31; 17:4; At 2:24,32 p Jn 7:43; 9:16 q Jn 7:20 r Ex 4:11 s Jn 9:6,7,32,33

• Jesus knew the cross was coming, but also the resurrection, for He, as God, had the power to raise Himself.

Unbelief of the Jews

22 ¶ Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem. And it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple courtyard ⁴in Solomon's porch.

24 ¶ Then the Jews came around Him and said to Him, "How long will You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you and you did not believe. ¹⁴The works that I do in My Father's name, they ¹⁵bear witness of Me.

26 "But ¹⁶you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.

27 ¹⁷"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 "And I give to them eternal life. And they will never perish, neither will anyone snatch them out of My hand.

29 ¹⁸"My Father, ¹⁹who gave *them* to Me, is greater than all. And no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand.

30 ²⁰"I and My Father are one."

31 ¶ Then ²¹the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

32 Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have showed you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"

33 The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You. But for ²²blasphemy, and because You, being a man, ²³make Yourself God."

34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, ²⁴*'I said, you are gods?'*

35 "If He called them gods, ²⁵to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture ²⁶cannot be broken),

36 "do you say of Him ²⁷whom the Father has sanctified and ²⁸sent into the

world, 'You are blaspheming,' ²⁹because I said, 'I am ³⁰the Son of God?'

37 ³¹"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.

38 "But if I do *them*, though you do not believe Me, ³²believe the works so that you may know and understand ³³that the Father *is* in Me and I in Him."

39 ¶ ³⁴Therefore, they sought again to take Him. But He escaped out of their hand.

40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan into the place ³⁵where John at first baptized. And He stayed there.

41 Now many came to Him and said, "John did no sign, ³⁶but all things that John spoke of this Man were true."

42 So many believed in Him there.

Chapter 11*Death of Lazarus*

1 ¶ Now a certain *man* was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of ¹Mary and her sister Martha.

2 ²It was *this* Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

3 Therefore, his sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick."

4 When Jesus heard *this*, He said, "This sickness is not to death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God might be glorified by it."

5 ¶ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

6 Therefore, when He had heard that he was sick, ³He stayed two days *longer* in the same place where He was.

7 Then after this He said to *His* dis-

t At 3:11; 5:12 u Jn 5:36; 10:38 v Mt 11:4 w Jn 8:47 x Jn 10:4,14 y Jn 14:28 z Jn 17:2,6,12,24 a Jn 17:11,21-24 b Jn 8:59 c Mt 9:3 d Jn 5:18 e Ps 82:6 f Mt 5:17,18 g 1 Pt 1:25 h Jn 6:27 i Jn 3:17 j Jn 5:17,18 k Lk 1:35 l Jn 10:25; 15:24 m Jn 5:26 n Jn 14:10,11 o Jn 7:30,44 p Jn 1:28 q Jn 1:29,36; 3:28-36; 5:33 **Chapter 11:** a Lk 10:38,39 b Mt 26:7 c Jn 10:40

ciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

8 His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, the Jews just now were seeking to stone You. And are You going there again?”

9 Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble because he sees the light of this world.

10 “But if one walks in the night, he stumbles because there is no light in him.”

11 These things He said, and after this He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go so that I may awake Him out of sleep.”

12 Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps, he will recover.”

13 However, Jesus spoke of his death. But they thought that He was speaking of taking rest in sleep.

14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.

15 “And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe. Nevertheless, let us go to him.”

16 Then Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go so that we may die with Him.”

Comforting Mary and Martha

17 ¶ Then when Jesus came, He found that he had already *been* in the tomb four days.

18 Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs away.

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met

Him. But Mary stayed in the house.

21 ¶ Then Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

22 “But I know that even now, whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”

23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

24 Martha said to Him, “I know that He will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he were dead, yet he will live.

26 “And whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”

27 She said to Him, “Yes, Lord. I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God who comes into the world.”

28 ¶ And when she had said this, she went her way and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, “The Teacher has come and calls for you.”

29 As soon as she heard *this*, she arose quickly and came to Him.

30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met Him.

31 ¶ Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the grave to weep there.”

32 ¶ Then when Mary had come where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

d Jn 8:59; 10:31 e Jn 9:4; 12:35 f Is 9:2 g Jn 12:35 h Mt 9:24 i Jn 14:5; 20:26-28 j Jn 9:31; 11:41 k Jn 5:29 l Jn 5:21; 6:39,40,44 m 1 Jn 5:10 n 1 Co 15:22 o Mt 16:16 p Jn 11:19,33 q Rv 1:17 r Jn 11:21

• Jesus revealed the gospel of the resurrection of the body. The resurrection gives hope to Christians.

33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping who came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

34 Then He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

35 ^sJesus wept.

36 Then the Jews said, "Behold how He loved him!"

37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man ^uwho opened the eyes of the blind have also kept this man from dying?"

Resurrection of Lazarus

38 ¶ Therefore, Jesus again groaning in Himself came to the tomb. It was a cave and a ^ustone lay against it.

39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been *dead* four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would ^vsee the glory of God?"

41 Then they took the stone away from where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

42 "And I know that You always hear Me. ^wBut because of the people standing by I said *it*, so that they may believe that You have sent Me."

43 And when He had thus spoken, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth."

44 And he who was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with ^xgraveclothes. And ^yhis face was bound with

a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

The Murder Plot

45 ¶ Then many of the Jews who came to Mary ^zand had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him.

46 But some of them went their way to the Pharisees and ^atold them what things Jesus had done.

47 ^bThen the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council. And they said, "What will we do? For this Man works many signs.

48 "If we let Him alone, all will believe in Him. And the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation."

49 ¶ Then one of them, ^dCaiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said to them, "You know nothing at all,

50 "nor consider that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

51 Now this he did not speak of himself. But being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

52 and ^fnot for that nation only, but ^ealso that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

53 ¶ Then from that day forth they took counsel together ^hto kill Him.

54 ⁱTherefore, Jesus walked no more openly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called ^jEphraim. And there He continued with His disciples.

55 ¶ ^kNow the Jews' Passover was near.

And many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to ¹purify themselves.

56 ^mThen they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think, that He will not come to the feast?”

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command that if anyone knew where He was, he should report *it* so that they might ⁿtake Him.

Chapter 12

Anointing of Jesus

1 ¶ Then six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany ^awhere Lazarus was, whom He raised from the dead.

2 ^bThere they made Him a supper and Martha served. But Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

3 Then ^cMary took a pound of very costly ointment of ^dspikenard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.

4 ¶ Then one of His disciples, ^eJudas Iscariot, Simon’s *son*, who was intending to betray Him, said,

5 “Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”

6 This he said, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and ^fhad the money bag. And he used to pilfer what was put into it.

7 Then Jesus said, “Let her alone. She has kept this for the day of My burial.

8 “For ^gthe poor you always have with you, but Me you do not always have.”

9 Now a large crowd of the Jews knew

that He was there. And they did not come for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus ^hwhom He had raised from the dead.

10 ⁱBut the chief priests planned that they might put Lazarus also to death,

11 ^jbecause on account of him many of the Jews went away and were believing in Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry

12 ¶ ^kOn the next day many people who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him. And they cried out, “Hosanna! ^lBlessed *is* the King of Israel who comes in the name of the Lord!”

14 And ^mJesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it as it is written,

15 ⁿ“*Do not fear, daughter of Zion. Behold, your King comes, sitting on a donkey’s colt.*”

16 These things ^oHis disciples did not at first understand. ^pBut when Jesus was glorified, ^qthen they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him.

17 ¶ Therefore, the people who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his grave and raised him from the dead, bore witness.

18 ^rFor this reason also the people met Him, because they heard that He had worked this sign.

19 Therefore, the Pharisees said among themselves, ^s“You see that you are not accomplishing anything. Look, the world has gone after Him.”

Jesus Prophesies His Death

20 ¶ Now there ^uwere certain Greeks among them ^uwho came up to worship at the feast.

21 Therefore, these came to Philip ^vwho was from Bethsaida of Galilee. And they asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

22 Philip came and told Andrew. And again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23 Then Jesus answered them, saying, ^w“The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, ^xexcept a grain of wheat falls onto the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit.

25 ^y“He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it unto life eternal.

26 “If anyone serves Me, let him ^zfollow Me; and ^awhere I am, there will also My servant be. If anyone serves Me, him will My Father honor.

27 ¶ ^b“Now My soul is troubled, and what will I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour.’ ^cBut for this purpose I came to this hour.

28 “Father, glorify Your name.” ^dThen there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, “I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again.”

29 ¶ Therefore, the people who stood by and heard *it*, said that it thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

30 Jesus answered and said, ^e“This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sakes.

31 “Now is the judgment of this world. Now will ^fthe ruler of this world be cast out.

32 “And I, ^gif I am lifted up from the

earth, will draw ^hall men to Me.”

33 ⁱThis He said, signifying what *kind of death* He should die.

34 The people answered Him, ^j“We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever. And how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

35 Then Jesus said to them, “Yet a little while longer ^kthe Light is with you. ^lWalk while you have the Light, lest darkness come upon you. For ^mhe who walks in darkness does not know where he goes.

36 “While you have the Light, believe in the Light so that you may become the ⁿsons of Light.” These things Jesus spoke. Then He departed and ^oconcealed Himself from them.

Unbelief and Hardness of Heart

37 ¶ But even though He had done so many ^psigns before them, *still* they did not believe in Him,

38 that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled that he spoke, ^q“*Lord, who has believed Our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?*”

39 Therefore, they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

40 “*He ^rhas blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, ^sso that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, and be converted, and I should heal them.*”

41 ^tThese things Isaiah said because he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

42 ¶ Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed in Him. But ^ubecause of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him* lest they should be put out

of the synagogue.

43 ^vFor they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 ¶ Jesus cried out and said, ^w“He who believes in Me, ^xdoes not believe in Me, ^ybut in Him who sent Me.

45 “And ^zhe who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

46 ^a“I have come as Light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

47 “And if anyone hears My words and does not keep them, ^bI do not judge Him, for ^cI did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 ^d“He who rejects Me and does not receive My words, has one who judges him. ^eThe word that I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day.

49 “For ^fI have not spoken of Myself, but the Father who sent Me. He gave Me a commandment *concerning* what I should say and ^gwhat I should speak.

50 “And I know that His commandment is life everlasting. Whatever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said to Me, so I ^hspeak.”

Chapter 13

Washing of the Disciples' Feet

1 ¶ Now ^abefore the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that ^bHis hour had come that He would depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He ^cloved them to the end.

2 ¶ And during supper, ^dthe devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray Him,

3 Jesus, knowing ^ethat the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He ^fhad come from God and ^gwas going back to God,

4 ^hrose from supper and laid aside His garments. And He took a towel and girded Himself.

5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded.

6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, ⁱ“Lord, do You wash my feet?”

7 Jesus answered and said to him, ^j“What I do you ^kdo not know now, ^lbut you will know after this.”

8 Peter said to Him, ^m“You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, ⁿ“If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”

9 Simon Peter said to Him, ^o“Lord, not only *wash* my feet, but also *my hands and my head.*”

10 Jesus said to him, ^p“He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet. His whole *body* is clean. And ^qyou are clean, but not all of you.”

11 For ^rHe knew who was betraying Him. For this reason He said, ^s“You are not all clean.”

12 So after He had washed their feet and had taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ^t“Do you understand what I have done to you?”

13 ^u“You call Me Teacher and Lord. And you are right, for *so* I am.

14 ^v“If I then, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, ^wyou also ought to wash one another's feet.

v Jn 5:41,44 w Mk 9:37 x Jn 3:16,18,36; 11:25:26 y Jn 5:24 z Jn 14:9 a Jn 1:4,5; 8:12; 12:35,36 b Jn 5:45 c Jn 3:17 d Lk 10:16 e Dt 18:18,19 f Jn 8:38 g Dt 18:18 h Jn 5:19; 8:28 **Chapter 13:** a Mt 26:2 b Jn 12:23; 17:1 c Jn 15:9 d Lk 22:3 e At 2:36 f Jn 8:42; 16:28 g Jn 17:11; 20:17 h Lk 22:27 i Mt 3:14 j Jn 12:16; 16:12 k Jn 13:19 l 1 Co 6:11 m Jn 15:13 n Jn 6:64; 18:4 o Mt 23:8,10 p Lk 22:27 q Rm 12:10

• Because Jesus is now King, all the world that now lives under His kingship will be judged in the end by His word.

15 “For [†]I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

16 ^s“Truly, truly, I say to you, a bond-servant is not greater than his lord, nor he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

17 “If you know these things, happy are you if you do them.

18 “I do not speak of you all. I know whom I have chosen. But that the ^v“Scripture might be fulfilled, ^v ‘*He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.*’

19 ^w“Now I tell you before it comes, so that when it comes to pass you may believe that I am *He*.

20 ^x“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me. And he who receives Me, receives Him who sent Me.”

21 ¶ ^yWhen Jesus had said this, ^zHe was troubled in spirit and testified. And He said, “Truly, truly, I say to you that ^aone of you will betray Me.”

22 Then the disciples looked at one another, being perplexed about whom He spoke.

23 Now ^bthere was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples whom Jesus loved.

24 Therefore, Simon Peter beckoned to him that he ask who it was of whom He spoke.

25 He, leaning back thus on Jesus’ breast, said to Him, “Lord, who is it?”

26 Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And when He had dipped the piece of bread, He gave *it* to ^cJudas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.

27 Now ^dafter the morsel of bread, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

28 Now no one at the table knew for what reason He spoke this to him.

29 For some thought *that* because ^eJudas had the money bag, Jesus had said to him, “Buy *those things* that we have need of for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.

30 So after having received the piece of bread, he went immediately out. And it was night.

Prophecy of Peter’s Denials

31 ¶ Therefore, when he had gone out, Jesus said, ^f“Now is the Son of Man glorified, and ^gGod is glorified in Him.

32 “If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will immediately ^hglorify Him.

33 “Little children, I am with you a ⁱlittle longer. You will seek Me. ^jAnd as I said to the Jews, so now I say to you. ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’

34 ^k“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 ^l“By this will all *men* know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

36 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where ^mI go, you cannot follow Me now. But ⁿyou will follow Me later.”

37 Peter said to Him, “Lord, why cannot I follow You now? I will ^olay down my life for Your sake.”

38 Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Truly,

r 1 Pt 2:21-24 s Mt 10:24 t Js 1:25 u Jn 15:25; 17:12 v Ps 41:9 w Jn 14:29; 16:4 x Mt 10:40 y Lk 22:21 z Jn 12:27 a 1 Jn 2:19 b Jn 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20 c Jn 6:70,71; 12:4 d Lk 22:3 e Jn 12:6 f Jn 12:23 g 1 Pt 4:11 h Jn 12:23 i Jn 12:35; 14:19; 16:16-19 j Jn 7:34; 8:21 k 1 Th 4:9 l 1 Jn 2:5 m Jn 13:3; 14:2; 16:5 n 2 Pt 1:14 o Mk 14:29-31

• God is love. Those who are disciples of God on earth through the Son of God are identified by love.

truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.

Chapter 14

Promises to the Apostles

1 ¶ “Let ^anot your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me.

2 “In My Father’s house are many dwelling places. If *it were not so*, I would have told you. ^bI go to prepare a place for you.

3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, ^cI will come again and receive you to Myself, so that ^dwhere I am, *there* you may be also.

4 “And you know where I am going, and you know the way.”

5 ^eThomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going. How can we know the way?”

6 Jesus said to him, “I am ^fthe way, ^gthe truth, and ^hthe life. ⁱNo one comes to the Father ^jbut through Me.

7 ^k“If you had known Me, you would have also known My Father. And from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

8 Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and that is sufficient for us.”

• 9 Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? ^lHe who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’

10 “Do you not believe that ^mI am in the Father and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you ⁿI do not speak from Myself. But the Father who dwells in Me, He does the works.

11 “Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me. ^oOtherwise, be-

lieve Me for the very works themselves.

12 ^p“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also. And greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

13 “And ^qwhatever you will ask in My name, that I will do so that the Father may be ^rglorified in the Son.

14 “If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

Holy Spirit Promised to Apostles

15 ¶ ^s“If you love Me you will keep My commandments.

16 “And I will ask the Father, and ^tHe will give you another Helper, so that He may abide with you forever,

17 ^u“*even* the Spirit of truth ^vwhom the world cannot receive because it does not see Him or know Him. But you know Him, for He abides with you ^wand is in you.

18 ^x“I will not leave you orphans. ^yI will come to you.

19 “After a little while the world will no longer see Me. But ^zyou see Me. ^aBecause I live you will also live.

20 “On that day you will know that ^bI *am* in My Father and you in Me, and I in you.

21 ^c“He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father. And I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.”

22 ^dJudas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us and not to the world?”

23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My

p Jn 18:25-27 Chapter 14: a Jn 14:27; 16:22,24 b Jn 13:33,36 c At 1:11 d Jn 12:26 e Mt 10:3 f Hb 9:8; 10:19,20 g Jn 1:14,17; 8:32; 18:37 h Jn 11:25 i 1 Tm 2:5 j Jn 10:7-9 k Jn 8:19 l Cl 1:15 m Jn 10:38; 14:11,20 n Jn 5:19; 14:24 o Jn 5:36; 10:38 p Lk 10:17 q Mt 7:7 r Jn 13:31 s 1 Jn 5:3 t Rm 8:15 u 1 Jn 4:6; 5:7 v 1 Co 2:14 w 1 Jn 2:27 x Mt 28:20 y Jn 14:3,28 z Jn 16:16,22 a 1 Co 15:20 b Jn 10:38; 14:11 c 1 Jn 2:5 d Lk 6:16

• Jesus was the revelation of the heart of God to all the world. Those who know Jesus know the heart of God.

words. And My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him.

24 “He who does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.

25 ¶ “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.

26 “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance that I have said to you.

27 “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid.

28 “You have heard how I said to you, ‘I go away and come again to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I.

29 ¶ “And now I have told you before it comes to pass, so that when it comes to pass you may believe.

30 “I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of this world comes, and he has nothing in Me.

31 “But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Chapter 15

The Vine and the Branches

1 ¶ “I am the true vine and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 “Every branch in Me that does not

bear fruit, He takes away. And every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 “Now you are clean through the word that I have spoken to you.

4 “Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me.

5 ¶ “I am the vine. You are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.

6 “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. And they gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

7 “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask what you wish and it will be done for you.

8 “Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples.

9 ¶ “As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. Abide in My love.

10 “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

11 “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full.

12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13 “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

14 “You are My friends, if you do whatever I command you.

e Rv 3:20; 21:3 f Jn 5:19 g Lk 24:49 h Jn 15:26 i 1 Co 2:13 j Jn 2:22; 12:16 k Ph 4:7 l Jn 14:3,18 m Jn 16:16 n Ph 2:6 o Jn 13:19 p Jn 12:31 q Hb 4:15 r Is 50:5; Jn 10:18 **Chapter 15:** a Mt 15:13 b Mt 13:12 c Jn 13:10; 17:17 d Cl 1:23 e Hs 14:8 f 2 Co 3:5 g Mt 3:10 h 1 Jn 2:14 i Jn 14:13; 16:23 j Mt 5:16 k Jn 8:31 l Jn 5:20; 17:26 m Jn 14:15 n 1 Jn 1:4 o 1 Jn 3:11 p Rm 12:9 q 1 Jn 3:16 r Mt 12:50; 28:20

• Beginning with chapter 13, Jesus was in a personal meeting with the twelve apostles, to whom He made this specific promise. The personal meeting continues in the text until the end of chapter 16.

15 “No longer do I call you bondservants, for the bondservant does not know what his lord does. But I have called you friends, ^sfor all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.

16 “You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you. And I ^uappointed you so that you should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain so that whatever you ask of the Father ^vin My name, He may give *it* to you.

17 “These things I command you, that you love one another.

Rejected by the World

18 ¶^w “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it* hated you.

19 ^x“If you were of the world, the world would love its own. But ^ybecause you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

20 “Remember the word that I spoke to you, ^z“The bondservant is not greater than his master.’ If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. ^aIf they have kept My word, they will also keep yours.

21 “But ^ball these things they will do to you for My name’s sake because they do not know Him who sent Me.

22 ^c“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin. ^dBut now they have no excuse for their sin.

23 ^e“He who hates Me hates My Father also.

24 “If I had not done among them ^fthe works that no one else did, they would have no sin. But now they have both ^gseen

and hated both Me and My Father.

25 “But *this came to pass* so that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, ^h“*They hated Me without a cause.*’

26 ⁱ“But when the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, ^jHe will testify of Me.

27 “And ^kyou also will bear witness, because ^lyou have been with Me from the beginning.

Chapter 16

1 ¶ “These things I have spoken to you so that you ^ashould be kept from stumbling.

2 ^b“They will put you out of the synagogues. Yes, the time is coming ^cthat whoever kills you will think that he does God service.

3 “And ^dthese things they will do because they have not known the Father nor Me.

4 “But these things I have told you so that when their time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning because I was with you.

Spirit’s Work through the Apostles

5 ¶ “But now I ^ego My way to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’

6 “But because I have said these things to you, ^fsorrow has filled your heart.

7 “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will

s Gn 18:17 t Jn 6:70; 13:18; 15:19 u Cl 1:6 v Jn 14:13; 16:23,24 w 1 Jn 3:13 x 1 Jn 4:5 y Jn 17:14 z Jn 13:16 a Ez 3:7 b Mt 10:22; 24:9 c Jn 9:41; 15:24 d Js 4:17 e 1 Jn 2:23 f Jn 3:2 g Jn 14:9 h Ps 35:19; 69:4; 109:3-5 i Lk 24:49 j 1 Jn 5:6 k Lk 24:48 l Lk 1:2 **Chapter 16:** a Mt 11:6 b Jn 9:22 c At 8:1 d Jn 8:19; 15:21 e Jn 7:33; 13:33; 14:28; 17:11 f Jn 16:20,22

• When the Holy Spirit would come upon the apostles in Acts 2, He would testify that Jesus was the Son of God.

not come to you. But [§]if I depart, I will send Him to you.

8 “And when He has ^hcome, He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment:

9 ⁱ“of sin, because they do not believe in Me;

10 ^j“of righteousness, ^kbecause I go to My Father and you see Me no more;

11 ^l“of judgment, because ^mthe ruler of this world is judged.

12 ¶ “I have yet many things to say to you, ⁿbut you cannot bear *them* now.

13 “However, when He, ^othe Spirit of truth, has come, ^pHe will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears, *that* He will speak. And He will declare to you things to come.

14 ^q“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will declare *it* to you.

15 ^r“All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and will declare *it* to you.

16 “A ^slittle while and you will not see Me. And again, a little while and you will see Me ^tbecause I go to the Father.”

Sorrow to Joy

17 ¶ Then *some* of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He said to us, ‘A little while and you will not see Me. And again, a little while and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father’?”

18 Therefore, they said, “What is this that He said, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.”

19 ¶ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him. And He said to them, “Do you inquire among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while and you will not see Me, and again a little while and you will see Me’?”

20 “Truly, truly, I say to you that you will weep and ^ulament, but the world will rejoice. And you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into ^vjoy.

21 ^w“A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come. But as soon as she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, because of joy that a human being has been born into the world.

22 “Therefore, you now have sorrow. But I will see you again and ^xyour heart will rejoice, and your joy no one takes from you.

23 “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. ^yTruly, truly, I say to you, whatever you will ask the Father in My name, He will give *it* to you.

24 “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive so ^zthat your joy may be ^afull.

25 ¶ “These things I have spoken to you in figurative language. But the time comes when I will no longer speak to you in proverbs, but I will tell you ^bplainly about the Father.

26 “On that day you will ask in My name. And I do not say to you that I will ask the Father for you.

27 ^c“For the Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and ^dhave believed that I came forth from God.

28 ^e“I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I

g At 2:33 h At 1:8; 2:1-4,37 i At 2:22 j At 2:32 k Jn 5:32 l At 26:18 m Lk 10:18 n Mk 4:33 o Jn 14:17 p Jn 14:26 q Jn 15:26 r Mt 11:27 s Jn 7:33; 12:35; 13:33; 14:19; 19:40-42; 20:19 t Jn 13:3 u Mk 16:10 v Lk 24:32,41 w Is 13:8; 26:17; 42:14 x 1 Pt 1:8 y Mt 7:7 z Jn 17:13 a Jn 15:11 b Jn 7:13 c Jn 14:21,23 d Jn 3:13 e Jn 13:1,3; 16:5,10,17

• It would be the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the apostles to glorify the Son of God, not Himself.

leave the world and go to the Father.”
29 ¶ His disciples said to Him, “Behold, now You are speaking plainly, and not using figures of speech.

30 “Now we are sure that ^fYou know all things and do not need that anyone should question You. By this ^gwe believe that You came forth from God.”

31 Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?”

32 ^h“Behold, the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, ⁱeach to his own, and will leave Me alone. And ^jyet I am not alone because the Father is with Me.

33 “These things I have spoken to you so that ^kin Me you might have peace. ^lIn the world you have tribulation. But be of good cheer, I ^mhave overcome the world.”

Chapter 17

Prayer of Jesus for Himself

1 ¶ Jesus spoke these words, and lifted up His eyes to heaven. And He said, “Father, ^athe hour has come. Glorify Your Son so that Your Son also may glorify You,

2 ^b“even as You have given Him power over all flesh, so that He will give eternal life to as many ^cas You have given Him.

3 “And ^dthis is life eternal, that they might know You, ^ethe only true God, and Jesus Christ ^fwhom You have sent.

4 ^g“I have glorified You on the earth. ^hI have finished the work ⁱthat You gave Me to do.

5 “And now, O Father, glorify Me with

Yourself with the glory ^jthat I had with You before the world was.

Prayer of Jesus for the Apostles

6 ¶ ^k“I have manifested Your name to the men ^lwhom You gave Me out of the world. ^mThey were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

7 “Now they have known that all things whatever You have given Me are from You.

8 “For I have given to them the words ⁿthat You gave Me. And they have received ^othem ^pand have known surely that I came forth from You. And they have believed that ^qYou sent Me.

9 “I pray for them. ^rI do not pray for the world, but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

10 “And all things that are Mine are Yours, and ^sYours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

11 ^t“And now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, ^ukeep through Your own name those whom You have given Me, so that they may be one, ^vas *We are*.

12 “While I was with them, ^wI guarded them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept, and ^xnone of them is lost ^yexcept the son of perdition, so ^zthat the Scripture might be fulfilled.

13 “And now I come to You. And these things I speak in the world so that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 “I have given them Your word. ^{aa}And the world has hated them because they

f Jn 21:17 g Jn 17:8 h Mt 26:31,56 i Jn 20:10 j Jn 8:29 k Ep 2:14 l 2 Tm 3:12 m Rm 8:37 **Chapter 17:** a Jn 12:23 b Jn 3:35 c Jn 6:37,39; 17:6,9,24 d Jr 9:23,24 e 1 Co 8:4 f Jn 3:34 g Jn 13:31 h Jn 4:34; 19:30 i Jn 14:31 j Ph 2:6 k Ps 22:22 l Jn 6:37 m Ez 18:4 n Jn 8:28 o Jn 8:42; 16:27,30 p Dt 18:15,18 q 1 Jn 5:19 r Jn 16:15 s Jn 13:1 t 1 Pt 1:5 u Jn 10:30 v Hb 2:13 w 1 Jn 2:19 x Jn 6:70 y Ps 41:9; 109:8 z Jn 15:19

are not of the world, ^aeven as I am not of the world.

15 “I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but ^bthat You should keep them from the evil *one*.

16 “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 ^c“Sanctify them by Your truth. ^dYour word is truth.

18 ^e“As You have sent Me into the world, even so I have also sent them into the world.

19 “And ^ffor their sakes I sanctify Myself so that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Prayer of Jesus for All Disciples

20 ¶ “I do not pray for these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;

21 ^g“that they all may be one; even as ^hYou, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

22 “And the ⁱglory that You gave Me I have given to them, so ^jthat they may be one, even as We are one;

23 “I in them and You in Me, ^kthat they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 ^l“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may behold My glory that You have given Me, ^mfor you loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 “O righteous Father, ⁿthe world has

not known You. But ^oI have known You, and ^pthese have known that You sent Me.

26 ^q“And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, so that the love ^rwith which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Chapter 18

The Arrest of Jesus

1 ¶ When Jesus had spoken these words, ^aHe went out with His disciples over ^bthe Brook Kidron, where there was a garden in which He and His disciples entered.

2 And Judas also, who betrayed Him, knew the place, ^cfor Jesus had often met there with His disciples.

3 ^dJudas then, having received a detachment *of soldiers* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, ^eknowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth and said to them, “Whom do you seek?”

5 They answered Him, ^f“Jesus the Nazarene.” Jesus said to them, “I am *He*.” And Judas also, who was ^gbetraying Him, stood with them.

6 As soon as He had said to them, “I am *He*,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

7 Then He asked them again, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus the Nazarene.”

8 Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am *He*. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way.”

a Jn 8:23 b 1 Jn 5:18 c Ep 5:26 d Ps 119:9,142,151 e Jn 4:38; 20:21 f Hb 10:10 g Gl 3:28 h Jn 10:38; 17:11,23 i 1 Jn 1:3 j 2 Co 3:18 k Cl 3:14 l 1 Th 4:17 m Jn 17:5 n Jn 15:21 o Jn 7:29; 8:55; 10:15 p Jn 3:17; 17:3,8,18,21,23 q Jn 17:6 r Jn 15:9 **Chapter 18:** a Mk 14:26,32 b 2 Sm 15:23 c Lk 21:37; 22:39 d Lk 22:47-53 e Jn 6:64; 13:1,3; 19:28 f Mt 21:11 g Ps 41:9

• Our common obedience to the gospel brings us into a common universal fellowship with the body of Christ.

9 *This happened* so that the saying might be fulfilled that He spoke, ^b“Of those whom You have given Me I lost none.”

10 ⁱThen Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s bondservant and cut off his right ear. The bondservant’s name was Malchus.

11 Then Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword away into the sheath. Will I not drink of ^jthe cup that My Father has given Me?”

Jesus Before Annas

12 ¶ Then the detachment of soldiers and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus and bound Him.

13 And ^kthey led Him away to ^lAnnas first, for he was the father-in-law of ^mCaiaphas who was the high priest that same year.

14 ⁿNow it was Caiaphas who gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

First Denial of Peter

15 ¶ And ^oSimon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* ^panother disciple. That disciple was known to the high priest and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But ^qPeter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.

17 Then the servant damsel who kept the door said to Peter, “Are you not also *one* of this Man’s disciples?” He said, “I am ^rnot.”

18 And the servants and officers stood

there, who had made a fire of coals, for it was cold. And they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

19 ¶ The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching.

20 Jesus answered him, “I spoke openly to the world. I always taught ^sin the synagogue and ^tin the temple where all the Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.

21 “Why do you ask Me? Ask ^uthose who heard Me what I have said to them. Behold, they know what I said.”

22 And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers who stood by ^vstruck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, “Is that the way You answer the high priest?”

23 Jesus answered him, “If I have spoken wrongly, bear witness of the wrong. But if rightly, why do you strike Me?”

24 ¶ ^xThen Annas sent Him bound to ^yCaiaphas the high priest.

Second and Third Denials of Peter

25 ¶ Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. ^zTherefore, they said to him, “Are you not also *one* of His disciples?” He denied *it* and said, “I am not!”

26 One of the bondservants of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?”

27 Peter then denied again. And ^{aa}immediately a rooster began to crow.

Jesus Before Pilate

28 ¶ ^{bb}Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the hall of judgment. And

it was early morning. ^cBut they themselves did not go into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

29 ^dPilate then went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?”

30 They answered and said to him, “If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.”

31 Then Pilate said to them, “You take Him and judge Him according to your law.” Therefore, the Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.”

32 *This happened* ^ethat the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled that He spoke, ^fsignifying what death He would die.

33 ^g¶ Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus. And he said to Him, “Are you the King of the Jews?”

34 Jesus answered him, “Are you saying this of yourself, or did others tell it to you about Me?”

35 Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?”

36 ^hJesus answered, ⁱ“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to the Jews. But as it is, My kingdom is not from here.”

37 Therefore, Pilate said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this *reason* I was born, and for this cause I came into the world, ^jthat I should bear ^kwitness to the truth. Ev-

eryone who ^lis of the truth ^mhears My voice.”

38 Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, ⁿ“I find in Him no fault.

39 ^o“But you have a custom that I should release to you one at the Passover. Therefore, do you wish that I release to you the King of the Jews?”

40 ^p¶ Then they all cried out again, saying, “Not this man, but Barabbas!” ^qNow Barabbas was a robber.

Chapter 19

Sentencing to Crucifixion

1 ¶ Then ^aPilate took Jesus and scourged *Him*.

2 And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put *it* on His head. And they put on Him a purple robe.

3 Then they came up to Him and said, “Hail, King of the Jews!” And they ^bkept on striking Him with their hands.

4 ¶ Pilate went out again and said to them, “Behold, I bring Him out to you ^cso that you may know that I find no fault in Him.”

5 Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And *Pilate* said to them, “Behold, the Man!”

6 ^dTherefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, “Crucify *Him!* Crucify *Him!*” Pilate said to them, “You take Him and crucify *Him*, for I find no fault in Him.”

7 The Jews answered him, ^e“We have a law, and by the law He ought to die because ^fHe made Himself the Son of God.”

c At 10:28; 11:3 d Mt 27:11-14 e Mt 20:17-19; 26:2 f Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32,33 g Mt 27:11 h 1 Tm 6:13 i Dn 2:44; 7:14 j Mt 5:17; 20:28 k Is 55:4 l Jn 14:6 m Jn 8:47; 10:27 n Jn 19:4,6 o Lk 23:17-25 p Is 53:3; At 3:14 q Lk 23:19
Chapter 19: a Mt 20:19; 27:26 b Is 50:6 c Jn 18:33,38 d At 3:13 e Lv 24:16 f Mt 26:63-66

• Jesus now reigns from heaven. His subjects on earth are His church of disciples who have obeyed the gospel.

8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was more afraid.

9 So he went again into the judgment hall and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" ^gBut Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then Pilate said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You and I have power to release You?"

11 Jesus answered, ^h"You would have no power over Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore, ⁱhe who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."

12 ¶ And from then on Pilate sought to release Him. But the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. ^jWhoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar."

13 ^kTherefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat in a place that is called *the Pavement*, but in the Hebrew, *Gabbatha*.

14 Now ^lit was the preparation of the Passover and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, Your King!"

15 But they cried out, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Will I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, ^m"We have no king but Caesar."

16 ⁿThen he delivered Him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus.

The Crucifixion of Jesus

17 ¶ And ^oHe, bearing His cross, ^pwent out to a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, *Golgotha*.

18 There they crucified Him and ^qtwo

others with Him, one on either side and Jesus in the middle.

19 Then ^rPilate wrote a title and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS."

20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city. And it was written in Hebrew, Greek *and* Latin.

21 Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"

22 Pilate answered, "What I have written I have written."

23 ^sThen the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part; and also *His* coat. Now the tunic was seamless, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it will be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled that said, ^t"*They parted My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots.*" Therefore, these things the soldiers did.

25 ¶ ^uNow there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of ^vCleophas and Mary Magdalene.

26 Therefore, when Jesus saw His mother and ^wthe disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, ^x"Woman, behold your son!"

27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her ^yinto his own household.

The Death of Jesus

28 ¶ After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had now been accomplished, ²that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst."

29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there. And ³they filled a sponge with sour wine and put *it* on hyssop and put *it up* to His mouth.

30 Therefore, when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ⁴"It is finished." And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

31 ¶ Therefore, the Jews, because it was the day of Preparation, so ⁵that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a ⁶high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and *that* they might be taken away.

32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.

33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, ⁷they did not break His legs.

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and immediately ⁸blood and water came out.

35 ¶ And he who has seen has testified, and his record is ⁹true. And he knows that he is telling the truth so that you might ¹⁰believe.

36 For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, ¹¹"*Not a bone of Him will be broken.*"

37 And again another Scripture said, ¹²"*They will look on Him whom they pierced.*"

The Burial of Jesus

38 ¶ And ¹³after this Joseph of

Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly ¹⁴for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that He might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave *him* permission. Therefore, he came and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also ¹⁵Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night. And he brought a mixture of ¹⁶myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

40 Then they took the body of Jesus and ¹⁷bound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

42 Therefore, ¹⁸they laid Jesus there ¹⁹because of the Jews' *day of Preparation*, for the tomb was nearby.

Chapter 20*The Resurrection of Jesus*

1 ¶ On the ²⁰first *day* of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was still dark. And she saw *that* the ²¹stone had been taken away from the tomb.

2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the ²²other disciple ²³whom Jesus loved. And she said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him."

3 ¶ Therefore, ²⁴Peter went out, and the other disciple, and came to the tomb.

4 So they both ran together. And the other disciple ran ahead of Peter and came to the tomb first.

z Ps 22:15 a Ps 69:21; Mt 27:48,50 b Jn 17:4 c Mk 15:42 d Dt 21:23 e Ex 12:16 f Ex 12:46; Nm 9:12; Ps 34:20 g 1 Jn 5:6,8 h Jn 21:24 i Jn 20:31 j Ex 12:46; Nm 9:12; Ps 34:20 k Ps 22:16,17; Zc 12:10; 13:6 l Lk 23:50-56 m Jn 7:13; 9:22; 12:42 n Jn 3:1,2; 7:50 o Mt 2:11 p Jn 20:5,7 q Is 53:9 r Jn 19:14,31 **Chapter 20:** a Mt 28:1-8 b Mt 27:60,66; 28:2 c Jn 21:23,24 d Jn 13:23; 19:26; 21:7,20,24 e Lk 24:12

5 And stooping down *and looking in*, he saw ^fthe linen clothes lying there, but he did not go in.

6 Then Simon Peter also came, following him. And he went into the tomb and saw the linen clothes lying *there*,

7 and ^sthe face-cloth that was around His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but folded together in a place by itself.

8 Then ^hthe other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also. And he saw and believed.

9 For as yet they did not know the ⁱScripture that He must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

Appearance to Mary Magdalene

11 ¶^j But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb.

12 Then she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.”

14 Now ^kwhen she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but ^ldid not realize that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him and I will take Him away.”

16 Jesus said to her, ^m“Mary.” She

turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).

17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ⁿascended to My Father. But go to ^oMy brethren and say to them, ^p‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and *to* ^qMy God and your God.’”

18 ¶^r Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and *that* He had spoken these things to her.

Appearance to His Disciples

19 ¶^s Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were for ^tfear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst. And He said to them, ^u“Peace *be* to you.”

20 And when He had said this, He ^vshowed to them *His* hands and His side. ^wThen the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

21 Then Jesus said to them again, “Peace *be* to you. ^xAs *My* Father has sent Me, even so I send you.”

22 And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*. And He said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

23 ^y“If you forgive the sins of any, *their* sins have been forgiven them. And if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained.”

24 ¶ But Thomas, one of the twelve, ^zcalled Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 Therefore, the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails and

thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

26 ¶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside and Thomas with them. *Then* Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst. And He said, “Peace *be* to you!”

27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger and behold My hands. And ^areach here your hand and thrust *it* into My side. And do not be ^bunbelieving, but believing.”

28 Then Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God.”

29 Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, you have believed. ^cBlessed *are* those who have not seen and *yet* have believed.”

30 ¶ And Jesus did ^dmany other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book.

31 ^eBut these are written so that ^fyou might believe that Jesus ^gis the Christ, the Son of God, ^hand that believing you might have life through His name.

Chapter 21

Beach Breakfast With Jesus

1 ¶ After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the ^aSea of Tiberias. In this way He showed *Himself*:

2 Simon Peter, and ^bThomas called Didymus, and ^cNathanael of ^dCana in Galilee, and ^ethe *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples were together.

3 Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We also

are going with you.” They went out and entered into a boat. And that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore. But the ^fdisciples did not know that it was Jesus.

5 Then ^gJesus said to them, “Children, have you *caught* any fish?” They answered Him, “No.”

6 And He said to them, ^h“Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find *fish*.” Therefore, they cast, and now they were not able to draw it *in* because of the multitude of fish.

7 Therefore, ⁱthat disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on *his* outer garment (for he was naked), and threw himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little boat, for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits, dragging the net with fish.

9 Then as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread.

10 Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish that you have now caught.”

11 Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fish, a hundred and fifty-three. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

12 Jesus said to them, ^j“Come *and* have breakfast.” And none of the disciples ask Him, “Who are You?”, knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise.

a Ps 22:16; Zc 12:10; 13:6; 1 Jn 1:1 b Mk 16:14 c 1 Pt 1:8 d Jn 21:25 e Lk 1:4 f 1 Jn 5:13 g Lk 2:11 h Jn 3:15,16; 5:24 **Chapter 21:** a Jn 6:1 b Jn 20:24 c Jn 1:45-51 d Jn 2:1 e Mt 4:21 f Jn 20:14 g Lk 24:41 h Lk 5:4,6,7 i Jn 13:23; 20:2 j At 10:41

• John concluded his record of the gospel of Jesus with a statement concerning his purpose for recording the seven miracles of the book. If one has only John's personal witness of these miracles, then this is sufficient evidence to prove that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God who revealed the God of love through the gospel.

14 This is now ^kthe third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was risen from the dead.

Commission to Peter

15 ¶ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, *son* of John, do you truly love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.” He said to him, ^l“Feed My lambs.”

16 He said to him again the second time, “Simon, *son* of John, do you truly love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord. You know that I love You.” ^mHe said to him, “Shepherd My ⁿsheep.”

17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, ^oYou know all things. You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.

18 ^p“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked wherever you wished. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands and another will dress you and carry you where you do not wish to go.”

19 This He spoke, signifying ^qby what

death he should glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ^r“Follow Me.”

The Other Disciple

20 ¶ Then turning around, Peter saw the disciple following ^swhom Jesus loved, ^twho also leaned on His breast at the supper. And he said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?”

21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “Lord, and what about this man?”

22 Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain ^uuntil I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.”

23 Then this saying went abroad among the brethren that that disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you?”

24 ¶ This is the disciple who ^vtestifies of these things and wrote these things. And we know that his testimony is true.

25 And ^wthere are also many other things that Jesus did, the which, if they were written one by one, I ^xsuppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

[Now that you have concluded the Holy Spirit's revelation of the Son of God, the following material of the World Gospel Book is designed to bring together all the thoughts of John in order that you are born again in obedience to the gospel. The gospel according to John was written that we might believe that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God who revealed God's heart to us. But this revelation of the heart of God through Jesus must motivate in us a response to the gospel. As you continue your adventure, you will discover how the early believers responded to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Faith, therefore, must move one to continue his or her journey to the eternal home to which God calls all people unto Himself.]

THE WORLD GOSPEL CONNECTION

Section 1

Almost all people have the desire to live forever. No one likes to view the grave as our final resting place. However, there is a serious problem that makes us question our destiny after the grave. This is our problem of doing wrong. All of us struggle in our relationships, both with God and with our friends. In our struggle to please God, we stumble. There are many who do not know what the will of God is, and thus, they do wrong without knowing that they sin. However, there are also those who know His will but still sin. People ignore God either willingly, or ignorantly. In either case, it is called sin.

We struggle in our relationships with others, even though God gave instructions to guide our behavior. But we often ignore these instructions, and thus, we cause harm to others and embarrassment to ourselves. We sin. Life, therefore, is a struggle. This is one reason why God gave us the Bible. He gave it to us to bring hope to those who are struggling in life and realize that they need a road map to happiness.

When we do wrong, we always have a bad conscience or a feeling of guilt. In order to deal with this guilt, many people who do not know the Bible, have simply developed their own solutions to take care of their guilt. As a result, many religions have been created in the

world today in an effort to deal with the problem of sin. Unfortunately, God does not accept man's religious solutions for sin that are created by the imaginations of those who know little or nothing about His will. He does not accept our efforts to self-sanctify (cleanse) ourselves of sin against Him.

God is our creator. The fact that He is our creator means that He is the One who must tell us where to discover happiness. We must allow Him to tell us how to have fulfilling relationships with Him and one another. This means that we must focus on God's law and our problem of sin against His will. When we do this, great things will happen in our lives.

Chapter 1

CREATION AND LAW

The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. His existence is simply assumed. However, as the revelation of God to man, the Bible was given to us by God in order to answer the most important questions we have in reference to our existence.

- **From where did we come?**
- **What does God, our Creator, expect of us?**
- **What will happen when we die and where will we go?**

Everyone has asked these questions. In answer to the first question, the Bible simply states that the first two people on earth were created in the spiritual **image** of God (Gn 1:26,27). We are the product of the God who also created all things (Cl 1:16).

Since we are God's creation, then we should be concerned about what our duty is in reference to our Creator. The Bible says, "*Fear God and keep His **commandments**, for this is the whole duty of man*" (Ec 12:13). This statement answers the second question. It is our duty as God's created beings to obey our Creator. Those who love God will obey Him.

The Bible also answers the third question. Concerning our death, the Bible says, "*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the **judgment***" (Hb 9:27). For the Christian, there is hope of **eternal life** beyond the grave (Jn 3:16). But for those who have not submitted to God, there is a destiny of eternal destruction (2 Th 1:7-9).

The Bible thus answers the most important questions that we must ask. We came from God. We must obey His will. When we die, we will be held accountable in judgment for our obedience or disobedience of His will (2 Co 5:10).

30; 12:31; Rm 14:10; 2 Co 5:10; 1 Pt 4:17, **Eternal life**: Mt 25:46; Jn 5:21,26; 8:12; Ti 1:2, **Eternal destruction**: 2 Th 1:7-9; Rv 20:11-15; 21:8

Chapter 2 THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

God first created two people. They were Adam and Eve. He created Adam and Eve in His own image. All men since Adam and Eve are also in the spiritual image of God. Being in the image of God at least means that **man is a spiritual being** and has the **right to make choices**. We are people who can make choices concerning our behavior and our eternal destiny.

Having the right to make choices means that **we must be held accountable for our choices**. In other words, we will be held accountable in final judgment for the choices we make on this earth. The Bible says, "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad*" (2 Co 5:10).

In order for Adam and Eve to be in a situation or environment that would allow choices to be made,



SCRIPTURE READING: Gn 1,2; Ps 8; 19:1,2; Is 40; At 17:24-28

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Obedience: 1 Sm 15:22; At 5:29; Hb 11:8, **Judgment:** Mt 5:21,22; Jn 5:24-

God had created this present world. This is a world that allows choices to be made. God also made natural laws in order to sustain order in this natural environment. This world, therefore, is the best of all possible environments for the dwelling of individuals who have freedom to make choices of either good or evil.

God gave **moral laws** to us in order to govern our behavior and relationships with one another in an environment where choices must be made. One of these moral laws for Adam and Eve was that they not eat of one special tree in the Garden of Eden, **the tree of the knowledge of good and evil** (Gn 2:16,17). Contrary to God's law, however, both Adam and Eve broke the law and ate of the fruit of this tree (Gn 3:1-8). By eating of this tree they transgressed (sinned against) the law of God. As a result, sin entered into the world because they were the first people to sin. With their sin came also their separation from God, and thus, **spiritual death** (Rm 5:12). Adam personally suffered spiritual death because he personally sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit. In the same way our personal sins separate us from God.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gn 2,3

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Choose: Dt 4:32; 30:19; Ja 24:15; Pv 1:29; Is 7:15,16; 56:9; At 2:40; 3:19; 1 Tm 2:13,14; Hb 11:25; **Law:** Ps 19:7-11; 119:77,97; 1 Tm 1:9; Js 1:25; 2:8; **Judgment:** Mt 25; Jn 5:22; 12:48; At 17:30,31; Rm 2:8,16; Hb 9:27; 10:27; 2 Pt 3:7; **Sin:** Rm 14:23; Js 4:17; 1 Jn 3:4

Chapter 3

SIN AND SEPARATION

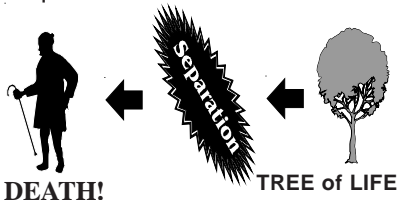
In reference to Adam and Eve's spiritual condition after they ate of the forbidden tree, the Bible records, ***"Therefore, as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin, and so [spiritual] death passed to all men because all have sinned"*** (Rm 5:12).

SPIRITUAL DEATH: When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, their sin caused their personal spiritual **separation** from God. As a result, they personally suffered **spiritual death**. Everyone since the days of Adam and Eve have also suffered spiritual death, ***"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"*** (Rm 3:23). Every person today is spiritually separated from God because of his or her own personal sin, not because of Adam's sin. Adam and Eve were personally responsible for the guilt of their own sin. We are personally responsible for our own sin today.

Isaiah 59:2 states, ***"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden His face from you so that He will not hear."***

PHYSICAL DEATH: Not only did Adam and Eve spiritually die before God when they sinned, they were also driven from the Garden of Eden, lest they also put forth their

hands “*and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever*” (Gn 3:22). Consequently, **physical death** entered into the world for the first time. The Bible speaks concerning what happened when Adam and Eve were separated from the tree of life: “*For since by man came [physical] death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive*” (1 Co 15:21,22). We suffer the consequences of Adam’s sin.



When Adam was separated from the tree of life, all humanity was separated with him. Therefore, all men must physically die (Hb 9:27). We thus suffer the **consequences** of Adam’s sin in reference to physical death because Adam caused all humanity to be separated from the tree of life.

Concerning our choices to sin, we are also like Adam. As Adam, all of us have made choices to sin against God’s law. All of us sin by transgressing the law of God (1 Jn 3:4). We sin by not doing that which we know is good (Js 4:17). For this reason the Bible is correct by stating, “*There is none righteous, no, not one*” (Rm 3:10).

When we think about sin, there-

fore, we must think about separation. When one personally sins, he or she is spiritually separated from God. We thus suffer the **guilt** of our own sin.

We must think about separation even when discussing the subject of physical death. When Adam sinned, he was separated from the tree of life lest he eat of it and live forever (Gn 3:22-24). Because of this separation, it is now necessary that all of us physically die, for through Adam all humanity has been separated from the tree of life (Hb 9:27). We therefore suffer the **consequences** of Adam’s sin in reference to physical death. This is what the Bible means when it says, “*... as in Adam all die ...*” (1 Co 15:22).

Though we sin against God, however, there is hope of reconciliation [reunion]! Even when Adam and Eve sinned, God gave hope in order that all of us be restored to a relationship with Him, for He knew that we would all sin as Adam. This hope for an eternal solution for sin was first given by God to Adam and Eve and recorded in Genesis 3:15.

THE GOSPEL SEED

I will put enmity between you [Satan] and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He will bruise your head, and you will bruise His heel.

In this statement God promised a solution for sin. It is very important that we remember this particular prophecy. This is the first announcement in the Bible of the **great news** (gospel) that God had in His plan to bring us into eternity with Him. Even before the creation of the world, God had a gospel plan to redeem us from sin. He made this plan because He knew that in our weakness we would sin (See Rv 13:8). Genesis 3:15 was a prophecy of God's intentions to set into action His gospel plan of salvation. It was a prophecy about Jesus who would come and crush Satan's head by His death on the cross for the sins of humanity.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gn 3:22-24; Rm 5:12-21; 1 Co 15:20-28

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Separation from God: Mt 7:21-23; Ep 2:1-3; 2 Th 1:7-9, **Physical death:** Ps 6:5; 13:3; 23:4; Jn 5:24; 8:51; 1 Co 15:54-56; Hb 2:14; Rv 2:10, **Spiritual death:** Rm 6; Ep 2:1, **Sin & separation:** Is 59:1,2; Ez 18:20; Mt 7:21-23

Chapter 4 OUR DILEMMA

We must agree with what the Bible says in Romans 3:23: ***"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*** The problem with sin is that it brings spiritual death because sin separates us from God. ***"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"*** (Rm 6:23).

It is necessary that we have moral laws that direct our relationships with one another. It is impor-

tant to understand that we cannot be left alone in a world of human relationships to develop our own moral laws. Throughout history people have tried to establish consistent moral laws by which to direct their social behavior. But when we are left to ourselves to direct our own ways, moral decay is the result. The Bible is right when it says, ***"It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps"*** (Jr 10:23).

When we try to make our own moral laws, we always end up making laws that please our own **worldly** desires. We often make moral laws that will allow us to do as we please. Therefore, if we were allowed to make our own moral laws, then we often make rules that eventually lead to social confusion and moral decay. God knew that we would do this to ourselves, so He took the initiative to give us moral laws that would direct our living in response to the gospel.

But the problem with any system of law is that we cannot keep it **perfectly**. For this reason, all of us have violated God's law. Even if we try to do the best we can, we still break the law. And it is sin to break God's law. Sin thus brings spiritual death because sin separates us from God (Is 59:1,2). When one is in a state of being separated from God because of sin against His law, he cannot by any means or methods of himself reunite himself with God. God, therefore, had to take action on our behalf.

OUR DILEMMA

- **Inability to keep law perfectly in order to save ourselves.**
- **Inability to do enough good works to atone for sins we commit against God.**

We have problems. First, **we cannot keep law perfectly in order to save ourselves, for we have all sinned** (Rm 3:23). Even if our desire is to obey God in every way possible, we still sin. Therefore, because no one can keep God's law perfectly, the law itself condemns us as lawbreakers. We are thus driven to find something other than law in order to be reconciled to God.

Second, **we cannot do good works in order to atone for the sins we commit.** We cannot be saved by good works, **lest we arrogantly boast one against another because of our good works** (Ep 2:9). God simply does not accept our good works as atonement for sin. He cannot because **there is no amount of good works that we can do to earn eternal life in heaven.** Therefore, we are in a state of condemnation in our sin. We are unable to redeem ourselves from our sin against God. All of us stand condemned in the sight of God because of our sins. So what can we do?

SCRIPTURE READING: Rm 3; Ep 2:1-10

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: All sin: Rm 3:23; 11:32; Gl 3:22; 1 Jn 1:6-9, **Sin and death:** Is 59:1-3; Ez 18:4; 1 Jn 3:6, **Definition of sin:** Rm 14:23; Js 4:17; 1 Jn 3:4

Chapter 5

POWER OF GOD'S WAY

In order to enjoy a great life, we must turn to the instructions of our Creator. We are obligated to follow His instructions simply because He created us. When we go wrong, we cannot invent our own religious system of forgiveness in order to sanctify (cleanse) ourselves. We must go only to the Bible in order to find a solution for our problem of sin.

God says of the Bible, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*" (2 Tm 3:16,17).

The word "inspiration" means "God-breathed." The Bible has thus been "breathed out" by God. **It is God's road map to bring us into eternal life in His presence.** It is the guiding measure by which we must direct our lives according to the gospel of His Son. Therefore, we should consider the word of God as David did in his life when he wrote, "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (Ps 119:105). For this reason we hunger and thirst after God's righteousness (Mt 5:6). We yearn for direction from the word of God in order to find our way into His eternal presence (1 Pt 2:2).

God's word can change our

lives. *“For the word of God is living and **powerful**, and sharper than any two-edged sword, **piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart**”* (Hb 4:12).

Obedience to God’s word in our lives will result in great **spiritual growth** and contentment beyond human understanding (Ph 4:7). The Bible says that we must *“grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Pt 3:18). Our only source for knowledge of the gospel of Jesus, is the Bible. Therefore, Paul wrote, *“I commend you to God and to the word of His grace **that is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified**”* (At 20:32). When we grow in knowledge of the Bible, we grow in knowledge of Jesus, for the Bible is about revealing the gospel of Jesus to us. Studying the Bible will spiritually build us up and reassure our souls because we discover the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible, therefore, will do the following:

His Word Works In Us

*For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, **which also effectively works in you who believe*** (1 Th 2:13).

The solution for a stressful life is discovered in the Bible. The solution for a better life is also discovered in the Bible. Our knowledge of what the Bible says, therefore, is necessary in order that we have life and that we have it more abundantly through gospel living (Jn 10:10). The more we understand the gospel, the better our lives will be if we submit to what God has directed us to do. As students of the Bible, it should be our goal to better our lives by living the gospel way.

SCRIPTURE READING: Ps 19:7-11; 119

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Revelation: Mt 11:25; 1 Co 2:6-13; Gl 1:11,12; Ep 3:3-5; 2 Tm 3:16,17; Hb 1:1,2; 2 Pt 1:20,21, **Work of God’s word:** Ps 19:8; 73:24; 119:40,93,104,130; Jn 5:24; 8:51; 15:3; 17:17; 20:30,31; Rm 10:17; 15:4; 1 Co 10:11; 2 Tm 3:15; Js 1:21,25; 1 Pt 1:22,23

Chapter 6

GOD’S AUTHORITY

When God gave the Sinai law to the Jews at Mount Sinai, He warned them about adding to this law. He warned, *“**You will not add to the word that I command you, nor will you diminish from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you**”* (Dt 4:2). This was a stern warning and one that still applies today. God’s final revelation to man was the book of Revelation. With the last verses of instruction to man in this book, God warned us not to add to or subtract from His final word to us through the Holy Scriptures.

No Additions Or Subtractions

*For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book, if anyone adds to these things, **God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.** If anyone will take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, **God will take away his part out of the Book of Life, out of the holy city and the things that are written in this book** (Rv 22:18,19).*

God could not have made His point more clear. **We must not add to His word any of our religious traditions that we invent for ourselves.** We must not add as requirements for our salvation any religious rites of men. **Adding to God's law is saying that His word for us is not sufficient.** It is saying that God needs help to determine what is best for us. But God says that His law is the "**perfect law of liberty**" (Js 1:25). It is perfect in order "*that the man of God may be complete, **thoroughly equipped for every good work***" (2 Tm 3:17). God's law is **perfect** and **complete** in order to bring us to Him through the power of the gospel, and eventually into His presence in eternal heaven.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gl 1:6-10

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Do not add to the word: Pv 30:6; 2 Jn 9-11, **All-sufficient word:** 2 Tm 3:15-17; 2 Pt 1:3, **Word causes growth:** At 20:32; 1 Th 2:13; 1 Pt 2:1,2; 2 Pt 3:18, **Final revelation:** Gl 1:6-9; 2 Tm 4:1-4; Jd 3

Chapter 7

PROBLEMS WITH RELIGION

In the efforts of some to find a solution for the problem of spiritual and physical death, many have developed religions of self-sanctification. It is believed that through the practice of self-sanctifying good works or religious ceremonial rites one can justify himself before God. However, we must remember that good works, and the performance of religious rites, do not atone for our sins. Simply because good works and the performance of religious rites may satisfy our conscience and give us a good feeling about ourselves, we must not be led to believe that such religiosity will replace the gospel of Jesus. **The fact is that in seeking a solution for sin through religious performances, we actually sin by following after our own religiosity that leads us away from the gospel of Jesus. Religion always leads one away from God, whereas the gospel always leads one closer to God and His word.** Therefore, we must ask ourselves if we are living according to the gospel, or after our own efforts to cleanse ourselves of sin.

God is serious about our doing what He has instructed us to do in His word. The Jews of Jesus' day did precisely what millions of people are doing today. Instead of obeying the word of God and responding to the gospel, they seek to sanc-

tify themselves by upholding the traditions of their heritage. Here is what Jesus said of this practice:

Vain Religious Worship

*Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. **In vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**’ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men (Mk 7:6-9).*

Jesus called their religious behavior an act of hypocrisy. It was hypocrisy because they were practicing **their own religious rules and rituals** in order to sanctify (cleanse) themselves, and thus justify themselves before God. But Jesus called this **vain** (useless) worship. It was useless in an effort to please God. **It was useless religion because their hearts were not right with God, though they performed their religious ceremonies of worship.**

Some religious traditions are not wrong, as long as they are recognized as tradition, and thus, **not binding on our consciences as self-sanctifying religious rites.** However, when we make our reli-

gious traditions the law of our religion, then we do as Jesus said of the Jews. They were **“laying aside the commandment of God in order to hold to their traditions”** (Mk 7:8). This is the tragedy of everyone who exchanges self-sanctifying religious rites for the gospel.

Many religious people throughout the world today are often more interested in keeping their religious traditions than in responding to the gospel of Jesus. Here is what Jesus continued to say to such people: **“All too well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition”** (Mk 7:9). Is this our attitude toward the word of God? Are we willing to lay aside the work of God through Jesus in order to keep our religious heritage? Remember, adherence to religion moves us away from, not closer to God.

We must not miss this point that Jesus said to the Jews. Religious traditions originate from our religious history, and thus become our religious heritage. It is not wrong to do things in a traditional manner. However, when the traditional manner of doing something becomes the only way something can be done, then it becomes a religious tradition, or rite, that is bound on the

DIGRESSION INTO RELIGION

Teaching Traditions of Men



Laying Aside Commandments of God to keep traditions



Rejecting Commandments of God to keep traditions

consciences of the people. If we cause division among believers because of our religious traditions, then such traditions have become binding law on our minds. If we believe that our own religious rites must be kept in order to be sanctified before God, then we are moving away from God.

At this point in one's apostasy from the word of God, the traditions start to replace the commandments of God. Jesus said in Mark 7 that we first start this process of falling from God by "**teaching as doctrines the commandments of men**" (Mk 7:7). One then continues to fall away from God by "**laying aside the commandment of God**" in order to practice the religious rites of his heritage (Mk 7:8). Eventually, one finds himself rejecting "**the commandment of God**" in order to keep his traditions (Mk 7:9).



Each one of us must ask ourselves if this has happened to our faith. If it has, then it is the purpose of this book to restore the word of God as the foundation of our faith so that we are able to determine what is tradition and what is the actual word of God. **It is a serious matter to add to the will of God in a futile effort to seek God's favor through our own self-sancti-**

fyng religious behavior. The reason this is serious is because one's religion may actually be useless. Add to this what Jesus said of those Jews who did the same in His day. **They were hypocrites in their religious behavior because they rejected the commandment of God in order to keep their traditions.** They were obedient to their own religious traditions, but rebellious to the commandments of God. This is religious hypocrisy.

Many Jews did believe in Jesus. However, their belief was so weak that it would not move them to leave their religious heritage in order to follow Him. Therefore, Jesus said to these Jews, "**if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed**" (Jn 8:31). But they would not abide in His word as many today will not abide in His word. To the same religious people, Jesus added, "**You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do.**" (Jn 8:44). The closer we move to the word of God, the closer we move to Jesus.

In conjunction with religious traditions, some have been led astray by their own emotions and feelings. They seek to self-sanctify themselves through emotional experiences rather than obedience to the gospel. Some even claim that the Holy Spirit is leading and moving them to do things the Holy Spirit never said He would do in the first place. This is where the disciple of

Jesus should be careful.

The only way we can know what the Holy Spirit will do in our lives is to listen to what He said He would do in the Bible that He inspired to be written and read.

Religions that focus on human emotional experiences, while ignoring the Bible, **are religions that lead one into the deception of self-sanctification.** Remember, strong emotional conviction in religion is not a guarantee that one is of the truth and saved. Having a zeal for God without knowledge of God is a useless religious exercise in reference to our salvation (Rm 10:2; Gl 4:17,18; 1 Tm 1:5-7). For example, Cornelius was a devout man who did many good works (At 10:1,2). However, he had to hear and obey the gospel before he could be saved (At 11:1-14). Simon was a strong religious leader in the city of Samaria. Everyone in the city believed him (At 8:9-11). However, he also had to hear and obey the gospel in order to be saved (At 8:12,13). It is not good enough to be religiously committed, devoted or zealous toward God. We are not saved by works, but through a positive response to the gospel. We must remember that it is not in man to direct his own steps to eternal life (Jr 10:23).

The only way one can know for sure if he or she is doing what God

would have one do is to search the Scriptures. We must be as the Bereans. Luke wrote of them, ***“These were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily to see whether those things were so”*** (At 17:11). Noble believers study their Bibles.

We must be challenged to search the Scriptures in order to determine if our faith is based on the word of God or on our religious heritage. We must be challenged with the following two questions. Our answers to these questions will determine whether we are willing to listen to God concerning His solution for our problem of sin, or continue to trust in our religious heritage.

YES - NO If we discover in the Bible that we have been serving God according to human religious traditions, and not according to the word of God, then are we willing to change in order to do what the Bible instructs us to do in order to find a solution for sin?

YES - NO If we discover something in the Bible that contradicts our present religious heritage, are we willing to change in order to do what the Bible says?

SCRIPTURE READING: Mt 15:1-9 (Is 29:13); Mk 7:1-9; Rm 1:21-32; Cl 2:1-23

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Traditions: Ep 5:6; Cl 2:8,20-23; 1 Tm 6:20, **Deception of traditional religions:** 2 Th 2:10-12; 1 Tm 4:1-5; 2 Tm 4:3-5; 2 Jn 9,10, **Seeking God:** Mt 7:7,8; 11:28,29; Rv 3:20

Chapter 8 IMPOSSIBLE THINGS

We all know that we have a problem with sin. What many have done, however, is attempt to work out their own solutions to remedy their sin problem in order to have a good conscience before God. In this effort to find solutions for sin and behavior that we suppose pleases God, many have simply forgotten two very important principles. Both principles involve the great news that surrounds the truth of the gospel.

1. *We cannot buy heaven with good works.*

Suppose you owed someone so much money that it would take you five hundred years of working every day in order to earn enough money to repay your debt. Could you possibly repay the debt? Certainly not! If you were physically strong, you could possibly live to be eighty or ninety years old. At the time of your death, however, you would still be in debt. For this reason there is no possible way you could personally work the five hundred years in order to repay your debt.



Now suppose God would offer you a gift that was so great that there would be no possible way for you to repay what it cost. Upon accepting the gift according to God's conditions of acceptance, you would say, "What I now owe is greater than what I can repay." You are correct. You could not repay God the cost of the gift.

Remember the parable of the man who owed ten thousand talents to a king (See Mt 18:23-35). There was no possible way for him to repay his debt. When the man was brought to pay his debt, he responded to the king by falling down on his knees. He begged for relief from the debt. The king had mercy and subsequently forgave him his debt. This was grace given to one who could not repay his debt.

So it is with our relationship with God and entrance into heaven. We cannot pay God for eternal life in heaven. **What we would owe is more than what we could possibly pay.** We are thus doomed because we cannot buy forgiveness for our sins that separate us from both God and heaven.

Some people believe that they can pay God with their good works. In other words, they believe they can put God in debt to them by doing good works that will make God owe them their forgiveness and heaven. But the fact is, **one cannot live long enough in order to do enough good works to pay God for one day in heaven.**

We are deceiving ourselves if we think we can buy our salvation from God with good works that we suppose will atone for the sin that separates us from God and heaven. God says we cannot do enough good works to adequately pay for the eternal life that He has to offer. If we could live a thousand lifetimes, we still could not pay the price of our eternal life. If we are trying to do good works in order to buy eternal life, then we have no chance of paying the final bill.

The point is that we cannot put God in debt to give us eternal life. We cannot make God a **debtor**. If the reward of heaven were by good works, then **“the reward is not credited according to grace, but according to debt”** (Rm 4:4). Therefore, we cannot stand in final judgment and demand eternal life from God because of our good works. The gift is too great to be earned by the efforts of any person.

2. *We cannot earn God's favor (grace) with perfect law-keeping.*

The second principle that identifies some who are religiously misguided is the belief that one can so live according to God's law that he or she can demand salvation on the basis of perfect obedience to God's law. Some may feel that they are good because of their self-righteous obedience. However, **one sin makes a sinner**. The Bible says,

*“For whoever will keep the whole law, **and yet stumble in one point, he has become guilty of all**”* (Js 2:10). If we think we are righteous according to our obedience, but break one law, the law condemns us to be unrighteous. Therefore, *“man is not **justified** by the works of law but by the faith of Jesus Christ ... **for by the works of law no flesh will be justified**”* (Gl 2:16). The Bible also says, *“Therefore by the deeds of law no flesh will be justified in His sight”* (Rm 3:20).

The reason why one is not pronounced righteous before God by trying to keep law perfectly is the fact that all men break God's law (Rm 3:23). *“There is none righteous, no, not one”* (Rm 3:10). And the wages of sin is spiritual **death** (Rm 6:23). This is why no one can possibly be justified before God by keeping His law perfectly.

We cannot earn our salvation by doing good works. We cannot keep God's law perfectly in order to live without sin. We are thus condemned by the law of God to be eternally separated from God and heaven. We are in a state of condemnation unless there is a solution for our problem of sin. In recognition of our sinful state of condemnation, every one of us should be driven to ask what Paul proclaimed, *“O wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me from this body of death?**”* (Rm 7:24). The answer to this question is not in the

invention of religion or our own methods of self-sanctification. **When dealing with sin against God, the only solution is God's solution. The only source for discovering God's solution for sin is found in the Bible.**

SCRIPTURE READING: Rm 3,4; Gl 2,3

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Sin and death: Is 59:1,2; Rm 5:8-21; 6:23, **Sin and law:** Ez 18:20; Rm 14:23; Js 4:17; 1 Jn 3:4, **Good works:** Rm 3:27,28; 4:1-5; 11:6; Ep 2:8-10

We must never forget that God created man with the ability and freedom to make choices. Adam and Eve were placed in an environment that allowed choices to be made. We are in the same environment today. Adam and Eve were **free-moral individuals**. They were created to be moral individuals with the freedom to choose concerning the behavior of their lives. So are we.

But with freedom comes responsibility toward God and one's fellow man. And in order to control our behavior toward God, and our relationships with one another, God gave instructions (law). Law is necessary for all of us to live together in harmony. Law assumes that we will be accountable for our behavior.

But with law comes sin, for no one can keep law perfectly. When sin occurs, there is separation from God, and thus, spiritual death. If one continues in a state of spiritual death, he or she will be eternally separated

from the presence of God.

People throughout history have realized that they were sinners, and thus, have constructed various religious practices in order to try to make themselves right in the sight of God. There are thus numerous religions throughout the world that offer different self-sanctifying rites for one to attempt to be justified before God. However, God does not accept the meritorious performance of our religious rites that have been created after our desires to justify ourselves before Him. Man-made religions mean nothing to God. They are only the invention of those who seek to be religious according to their own desires.

We must keep in mind that though people are religious, being religious does not mean that one is right with God. Most people are religious. But being a Christian as one of God's children means that one believes and is conducting his or her life according to the gospel of God. One cannot claim to have faith in Jesus Christ if he refuses to base his faith on the gospel of Christ (See Rm 10:17).

Some have misled themselves into believing that the Holy Spirit can save them directly. Jesus knew that some would deceive themselves into believing that they can be saved directly by the Holy Spirit. So He promised His apostles that the Holy Spirit will **"guide [you apostles] into all the truth"** (Jn 16:13). And

just in case there would be those who would lead themselves to believe that the Holy Spirit would personally reveal other truth than what was revealed through the apostles, Jesus stated that *“He [the Holy Spirit] will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears [from the Father], that He will speak”* (Jn 16:13). And just in case some might

believe the Holy Spirit saves them apart from the gospel, Jesus reminded the apostles, *“He [the Holy Spirit] will glorify Me”* (Jn 16:14). Therefore, any religion that glorifies the Holy Spirit over Jesus is not listening to either Jesus or the Holy Spirit. True faith in Jesus glorifies the gospel of Jesus over the Holy Spirit, for it is Jesus who saves.

GOD’S GOSPEL SOLUTION

Section 2

When Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he spiritually died, for his sin separated him from God (Rm 5:12). He was also separated from the tree of life, and thus, he took all humanity with him from the tree of life and into physical death. Subsequently, all of us must now suffer the consequences of his sin in that we all must physically die (1 Co 15:20-22). In the midst of this human tragedy, however, God made a promise that a gospel solution for sin would come (Gn 3:15). When we discover God’s gospel solution for sin, we will find eternal life.

Throughout the Old Testament there are hundreds of prophecies that speak of the coming Messiah who would atone for the sins of the world. These are prophecies that speak of an opportunity to return to an eternal relationship with our Creator. These are prophecies of the Son of God who would die on the cross in order to reconcile us to

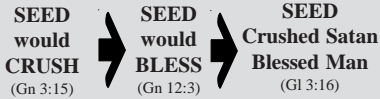
God. He would be the source of eternal life. The Son would come to give us a gospel way to conquer our fear of physical death that terminates life (Hb 2:14). He would do so because He is *“the resurrection and the life”* (Jn 11:25).

Chapter 9

THE GOSPEL BLESSING

Four thousand years ago, God chose a man by the name of Abraham through whose seed He would bring into the world the One who would be our Savior. God promised Abraham, *“And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed”* (Gn 12:3). From the time this promise was made, God continually reminded His people that there was a “Blessing” that was coming who would bear the iniquities of the people (See Is 53). The promise was not only to the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, but to **all families of the earth.**

THE SEED WOULD CRUSH & BLESS



So who was the Blessing? Peter stated, *"You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant that God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed will all the families of the earth be blessed.'* For you first, God raised up His Servant **Jesus** and sent Him to bless you **by turning every one of you away from your iniquities"** (At 3:25,26). **The Seed of Abraham that would bless all mankind was JESUS!** The blessing was that Jesus would turn us away from our sins. Paul wrote, *"Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as to many, but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' who is Christ"* (Gl 3:16). So the Seed was Jesus Christ. After Adam sinned, this was the Seed of woman that God promised would crush the head of Satan (Gn 3:15). Jesus would crush Satan by offering Himself as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. This was the great news of the gospel that would restore the hope of eternal life.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gn 12:1-3; 21:12; 22:18; Is 53; Gl 3

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: **Prophecy of cross:** Ps 22; Is 53, **Prophecy of Jesus:** Ps 41:9; 22; Is 7:14; 9:6,7; 42:1-4 Jr 31:15; Hs 11:1; Mc 5:2; Zc 13:7, **Reconciliation:** Rm 5:10,11; 2 Co 5:19,20; Ep 2:16; Cl 1:20

Chapter 10 THE GOSPEL CRUSH

Exactly how did Jesus crush the head of Satan, and at the same time, become a spiritual blessing to all mankind? Answering this question explains the gospel. By answering this question, we also understand that we must respond to the gospel of God's blessing.

THE GOSPEL BLESSING: God's Solution To Our *Spiritual Death Problem!*

Jesus came to take care of our sin problem. The Bible says, *"He who commits sin is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, so that He might destroy the works of the devil"* (1 Jn 3:8). Because we were spiritually dead in trespasses, Jesus came to die on the cross in order to make a sacrificial atonement for our sins (Cl 2:13-15). In doing this He crushed the works of the devil. However, He bruised His "heel" in that He had to come in the flesh of man in order to die on the cross.

THE GOSPEL BLESSING: God's Solution To Our *Physical Death Problem!*

Not only did Jesus take care of our spiritual death problem in reference to sin, He took care of our

physical death problem. The Bible says, *“Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, **He also Himself likewise partook of the same**, so that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”* (Hb 2:14,15).

Jesus died on the cross in order to take care of our spiritual death problem that results from our personal sin against God (Is 59:1,2). He died in order that people might be brought back to God. He was resurrected in order to give us hope that we too can be resurrected to eternal life in the future. **By His resurrection, He took care of our physical death problem** (1 Co 15:20-22).

• Jesus was the incarnation of God the Son.

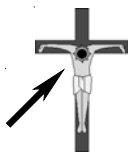
Jesus, as the Son of God, was first in the form of God, but He *“came down out of **heaven**”* (Jn 6:51,62; see Jn 1:14). He lived and was tempted as every man (Hb 4:15). He was the Son of God who *“made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men. **He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross**”* (Ph 2:7,8).



FIRST
COMING

• Jesus died for our sins.

Jesus, the Son of God, was crucified on the cross of Calvary for the sins of all people. He **“bore our sins in His own body on the tree, so that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed”** (1 Pt 2:24). Jesus died for all of us! Through His atoning sacrifice, all people who believe and are obedient to this good news will receive the forgiveness of their sins. **This is great news! This is the gospel, but not all the gospel!**



CRUCIFIXION

Jesus crushed the power of Satan by dying on the cross so that people might have an escape from sin and spiritual separation from God. However, in making such a sacrifice, He bruised His heel (Gn 3:15) in the sense that He had to physically suffer in the flesh on the cross in order to offer atonement for our sins.

Jesus had to shed His sanctifying blood in order that we might be redeemed. Redeemed means that He **bought us with His blood and brought us back from Satan who had captivated us through our own sin**. There was remission of sins, therefore, only through the shedding of His blood. The Bible says that *“without shedding of **blood** there is no remission”* (Hb 9:22). Therefore, the Bible reminds

Christians that we were redeemed **“with the precious blood of Christ”** (1 Pt 1:18,19). Jesus took care of our spiritual death problem that was brought into our lives by our own sin (Rm 5:12). **This is great news!**

• Jesus was buried to be raised.

In order to overcome our problem of physical death, Jesus was buried in a tomb. However, on the third day after His burial He was raised on Sunday morning from the dead. He came forth from the tomb (Mk 16:9). Jesus had the power and authority to lay down His life. He had the power to raise Himself from the dead. He said, *“No one takes it [My life] from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have **power** to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment I have received from My Father”* (Jn 10:18).

If we believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, then this belief becomes the gospel upon which our lives are securely based. We will be raised when Jesus comes again (1 Th 4:14). In fact, when Jesus comes again, *“all who are in **graves** will hear His voice and come forth”* (Jn 5:28,29). However, only those who have believed on Jesus and obeyed the gospel will be resurrected to life, for only “in Christ” is there hope of resurrection



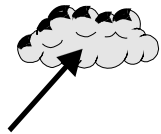
BURIAL

to an immortal state of existence (1 Co 15:22). **Jesus’ resurrection, therefore, is God’s answer to our physical death problem.** This is the gospel of hope!

• Jesus ascended to heaven.

Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection. God manifested great power when He resurrected Jesus *“from the dead and set Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church”* (Ep 1:20-22). This is gospel news!

King Jesus is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father. He is functioning as our high priest. He is our high priest *“who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens”* (Hb 8:1). Because Jesus is in heaven, Christians *“have a **Counselor with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole world”*** (1 Jn 2:1,2). As our **Counselor**, Jesus is at the right hand of God making intercession for us (Rm 8:34; Hb 7:25). He is now King of kings and Lord of lords. He has



ASCENSION

all authority over all things for our benefit (Mt 28:18; 1 Tm 6:15; Hb 1:3). **This is the gospel of great news!**

• Jesus is coming again.

Jesus is coming a second time (Hb 9:28). He is coming to destroy **the last enemy that is physical death** (1 Co 15:26). He will destroy physical death forever by our resurrection from the dead (Jn 5:28,29).

Jesus is coming again to judge the world. It is through Jesus that the Father will **judge** all. *"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad"* (2 Co 5:10). **The righteous will go into eternal heaven** (Mt 25:46; Rv 21:4). **The wicked will be cast into destruction** (2 Th 1:7-9). The earth and the elements of the world as we now know them will be destroyed (2 Pt 3:10,11). At that time there will be the end of time. The Son will then submit all things to God. *"And when all things are subjected to Him [Christ], then will the Son Himself also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, so that God may be all in all"* (1 Co 15:28). **This is gospel news!**

Jesus crushed Satan's work in every way. He came to earth to

save sinners and to teach us a better way of life (Jn 1:29; 10:10). He died on the cross to deliver us from sin, thus saving us from spiritual death. He was resurrected from the dead so that we might have proof and an example of being resurrected from physical death at His final coming. In this way He crushed Satan's power of physical death.

Jesus is coming again to finalize His victory over death by the resurrection of the righteous from the dead. This is great news for those who have obeyed the gospel of Jesus. It is bad news, however, for those who have not obeyed the gospel. The disobedient will be raised for destruction when Jesus comes again. Christians, however, are looking for the coming of Jesus. Because of their faith, Christians are *"looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God"* (2 Pt 3:12). It is often mentioned in their prayers that Jesus come quickly (1 Co 16:22; Rv 22:20). They pray for Jesus to come because this world is not their final home (Ph 3:20).



SCRIPTURE READING: Satan overcome: Cl 2:13-22, **Resurrection:** 1 Co 15; 2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Th 4:13-18
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Authority of Jesus: Mt 13:3; 16:11; 17:2; 28:18, Ep 1:20-22; 1 Pt 3:21,22, **First coming:** Jn 1:1-14; 8:58; 14:5,24; 20:28; Rm 9:5; 2 Pt 1:16; 1 Jn 5:20, **Judgment:** Jn 12:31; 2 Co 5:10; 2 Tm 4:1; Hb 9:27; 1 Pt 4:17; Jd 6, **Atonement on cross:** Jn 1:29; 1 Co 15:3; Gl 1:4; Hb 9:28, **Resurrection:** Jn 5:28,29; 11:24,25; 1 Co 15; 1 Th 4:13-18, **Exaltation of Jesus:** At 2:29-36; Ph 2:5-11; Hb 1:1-3, **Priesthood of Jesus:** Zc 6:12,13; Hb 2:17; 4:14; 5:6; 7:11-28; 9:11, **Kingship of Jesus:** Dn 2:44; 7:13,14; Zc 6:12,13; Rm 5:17; 1 Tm 1:17; 6:15; Rv 19:16

Chapter 11

GRACE VERSUS RELIGION

The gospel of Jesus was revealed over two thousand years ago. It was an event that manifested the grace of God to the world. Jesus said, *“For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved”* (Jn 3:17). In this way, therefore, *“the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men”* (Ti 2:11). Though all people were dead in sin, God’s love was poured out through Jesus (Rm 5:8). Jesus brought a gospel solution for our problem of sin.

The gospel of grace that was revealed through Jesus is briefly explained in the Bible in Ephesians 2:1-10. Verses 4-9 explain this marvelous revelation of God’s love for us.

The Gospel Of God’s Grace

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. And He raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest anyone should boast (Ep 2:4-9).

This is great news! God knew that we could not save ourselves. He knew that we could not keep His law perfectly in order to justify ourselves by perfect law-keeping. In our frustration to keep His law perfectly, He knew that we would invent for ourselves religions that would be based on systems of attempted self-justification through self-sanctifying religious rites and good works. However, God knew that we could never do enough good works to earn our salvation. So for this reason, He had to provide a gospel solution for our sins because we all seek eternal life.

God knew our inabilities, our unrighteousness, and our ungodliness. Nevertheless, because of His mercy He sent His Son into the world. Listen to what the Bible says: *“For when we were still without strength, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God manifests His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us”* (Rm 5:6-8). **That’s grace! And that’s great news!**

God sent His Son to save us even though we did not deserve to be saved. God first extended His hand to take us out of the confusion of our own religious inventions. He sent Jesus to the Jews who were lost in their misguided religiosity. Jesus is still pleading today

to everyone who is lost in the confusion of their self-made religiosity that is vain in the sight of God (Mk 7:6-9).

One may be “very religious” as those in the city of Athens in Greece. However, to such religious people Paul stated, “*And the times of this ignorance God has overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent*” (At 17:22,30). If one is satisfied with man-made traditional religion, then here is what the Bible says concerning self-made religions:

Self-Made Religion

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourselves to ordinances? “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle.” All these concern things that perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men. These things have indeed a show of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and neglect of the body, but not in any value in restraining the indulgence of the flesh (Cl 2:20-23).

These words must challenge us. The Bible says, “*Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith*” (2 Co 13:5). We might think that we are living an acceptable life that is pleasing to God. However, can we prove our religious beliefs and behavior to be that which is acceptable to God? Can we prove

our beliefs with the Bible? In other words, are we trusting in our religious heritage simply because such was practiced by our forefathers? If we are, then we must reconsider our faith in relation to God’s invitation through the gospel.

The following are sobering words of the Holy Spirit. We must read them continually, and then ask ourselves, “Have we too been deceived?”

Deception Of Wickedness

And with all deception of wickedness among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion so that they should believe a lie (2 Th 2:10-12).

Remember, the Jews to whom Jesus first preached were religious. They believed in God. However, they had established their own religion after the traditions of their fathers (See Gl 1:14). Jesus “*came to His own, and His own did not receive Him*” (Jn 1:11). The Jews did not receive the Son of God because they had already rejected the word of God (Mk 7:9). Since they had already rejected the word of God, it was easy for them to reject Jesus. Since they had already created their own religion (see Gl 1:13), they felt that they did not need the gospel of Jesus. It is difficult for the self-righteous to accept Jesus.

Will we be one of those religious people today to whom Jesus comes, but we will reject Him because we are satisfied with our own religion? We must keep in mind that God's grace is not only offered to those who do not know Jesus, but it is also offered to those who have devised their own self-sanctifying religiosity in order to save themselves. It is offered to those who have been trapped in a world of man-made religions. God calls us out of such self-sanctifying religions in order to enjoy the freedom of His grace. He calls, "**Come out from among them and be separate,**" says the Lord. *'And do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you'*" (2 Co 6:17).

Jesus calls us out of the bondage of man-made religion into the freedom of the gospel (Gl 5:1). In Him we can be free from religious institutions, ceremonial religion, binding traditions of men, and authoritarian religious leaders who seek to assume lordship over God's people. Jesus calls us into the freedom of God's grace in order that we become obedient servants of His will.

Those who accept God's grace on His conditions can have hope. *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name"* (Jn 1:12). If one accepts Jesus upon the basis of the conditions that God prescribes in His word, then he has

the right to become a child of God. He or she has a right to come into a covenant relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit by obedience to the gospel. In this relationship we are all headed for heaven and eternal glory in the presence of God. This is the good news that God wants all people in the world to know and obey. This is a free gift of God to all.

SCRIPTURE READING: Jn 1:1-51; 3:1-21; Rm 5
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Salvation in Christ: Lk 19:10; Jn 1:29; At 4:12; Rm 5:8,9; Hb 9:28; 1 Pt 2:24;
God's love: Jn 3:16; Rm 5:8; 1 Jn 3:1; 4:9-11, **Child of God:** Rm 8:16; Gl 3:7; 4:5; Ph 2:15; Hb 2:10; 12:5; 1 Jn 3:2

Chapter 12 GOSPEL RELATIONSHIPS

In order to find our way into eternal life, we must establish a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ. In the New Testament, the phrase "in Christ" is used to explain this gospel relationship. When one is "in Christ," he or she has a **spiritual covenant relationship** with God that is based on the gospel. This is the same as being in the body, the church, for the church is the body of Christ (Cl 1:18).

Jesus is the **head** of the body (Ep 5:23). The word "head" is used figuratively to mean "control" and "center of reference." As our physical head controls our entire body, and is the center of reference for our function as a body, so **Jesus desires to control our lives and be the center of reference for all**

our beliefs and behavior. In this way He brings an abundant life to us because He will always lead us in the right direction (Jn 10:10). When one is in the body of Christ, therefore, he has established a submissive relationship with Jesus, the Head. When we submit to the Head of the body, the Head gives spiritual blessings that result in eternal life.

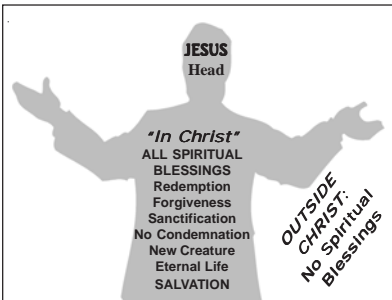
When we are “in Christ,” we have all **spiritual blessings** that come with the covenant that God makes with us. The Bible says, *“Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”* (Ep 1:3). In order to have all these spiritual blessings, we must submit to Jesus as our Head. We cannot be outside Christ and expect to receive those blessings that are only in Christ. Notice in the preceding chart all the spiritual blessings one receives when he or she is “in Christ.”

There are no spiritual blessings **outside** Christ. If one is to have **redemption** and **forgiveness** of

sins (Ep 1:7), then he or she must be in Christ. Outside Christ there is no redemption or forgiveness of sins. If one is to be a **new creature**, then he or she must be in Christ (2 Co 5:17). There are only old creatures outside Christ. If one desires to **live forever**, then he or she must be in Christ (1 Jn 5:11). There is only eternal death outside Christ. Outside Christ all are under condemnation. However, if one comes into Christ, then he or she is **not in a state of condemnation** (Rm 8:1). If one desires to be **sanctified** (cleansed) of all sin, then he or she must come into Christ (1 Co 1:2). All these spiritual blessings add up to **salvation** (2 Tm 2:10). This salvation is only in Christ. Since all spiritual blessings are in Christ, then there is only one question that must be asked and answered.

HOW CAN ONE RECEIVE ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS THAT ARE ONLY IN CHRIST?

Everyone must answer this question. When answered, everyone must make a decision. When the Bible answers this question, we must be willing to accept the answer and do what the Bible says in order to come into Christ. If we are convinced that the answer is clear and necessary as to how one comes into Christ, then we must follow the instructions of the Bible. It does no good to know what to do to come



into Christ, and then, do nothing. Therefore, only a positive response to what the Bible teaches will benefit our coming into a relationship with God in Christ.

SCRIPTURE READING: Ep 1:3-14

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Redemption: Rm 3:24; 8:23; 1 Co 1:30; Gl 3:13; 4:5; Ti 2:14; Hb 9:12; 1 Pt 1:18, **Forgiveness:** Mt 6:12-14; 18:21-35; At 13:38; 26:18; 1 Jn 1:9; 2:12, **Condemnation:** Mt 23:14,33; Mk 3:29; Jn 3:19; 5:29; Rm 3:8, **Eternal life:** Jn 5:24-26,39; 8:12; 10:28; 11:25; 17:2,3; Rm 2:7; 1 Tm 6:12; Ti 1:2; 1 Jn 5:11-13, **Sanctification:** 1 Co 1:30; 6:11; 7:14; 1 Th 4:3; 1 Tm 4:5; Hb 2:11; 10:10; Jd 1, **Salvation:** At 4:12; Rm 1:16; 2 Co 6:2; Ph 2:12,13; Ti 2:11; Hb 2:3; 1 Pt 1:10-12

When Adam sinned, God set in motion His gospel plan to reconcile all men unto Himself. Abraham was chosen as the one through whom God would build a nation from which the promised Seed of woman would be born. When the time came for all prophecies to be fulfilled concerning God's gospel plan of salvation, God sent forth Jesus into the world (Gl 4:4). As the Son of God, Jesus came to be the sacrificial offering for our sins. He now invites all men to come into a saving relationship with Him in His body, the church.

In order to establish a relationship with Jesus who promises us an abundant life in this time, and eternal life to come, one must submit to the headship of Jesus. Submission means that there are conditions for being in Christ. **We cannot choose our own conditions by which to come into a covenant relationship with God.**

Man-made conditions and rules lead one away from God and a denial of His gospel plan to save believers through His offered Son. Neither can we depend on human feelings and emotions that lead one away from God by concentrating on one's self (Jr 10:23). For this reason, all must submit to God's directions as to how we must be obedient to the gospel.

God draws us to Himself by the manifestation of His heart on the cross. His grace that was revealed through the sacrificial offering of His Son manifested His love for us (Jn 3:16). The gospel of the cross was proof that God seeks to call everyone into a covenant relationship with Him (See Ti 2:11). He desires that all people respond to His loving grace. We must remember 2 Peter 3:9: *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness [indifference]. **But He is longsuffering toward you, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.**"*

Since you have come this far in your discovery, **you have discovered the Priceless Pearl, the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.** This is the time to determine what to do with that which you have discovered. We must remember that the Priceless Pearl, according to Jesus, is worth more than all that we have on this earth (Mt 13:44,45). It is worth more than all the treasures of this world.

RESPONDING TO THE GOSPEL

Section 3

The historical event that revealed the gospel was the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins. Jesus was buried in a tomb, but raised Sunday morning on the third day in order to give us the good news that all those who are in Christ will also be raised to eternal life when He comes again. This is the revealed mystery of the gospel that manifested the heart of God (Ti 2:11). In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 the Bible teaches that when Jesus comes again, those who have not obeyed the gospel *“will be punished with everlasting destruction away from the presence of the Lord and away from the glory of His power.”* It is for this reason that every person must discover the gospel and obey it in order to escape the coming destruction. So one must ask himself, **How does one obey the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in order to escape the coming destruction?**

In order to answer this question, and to access all spiritual blessings

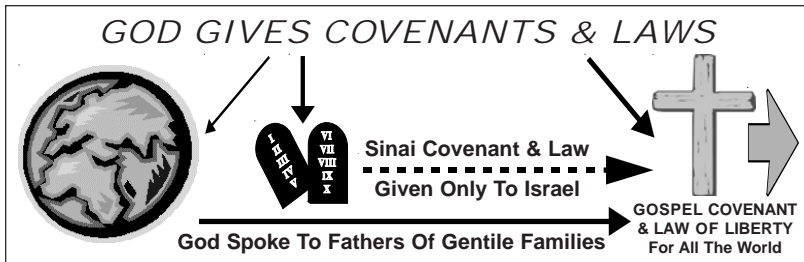
that are necessary for salvation, one must be in a covenant relationship with God when Jesus comes again. The Bible promises that in Christ we are redeemed from sin by Jesus’ cleansing blood. It is in Christ that there is salvation (2 Tm 2:10).

In order to understand what God wants one to do to be in Christ, there are important points that must be understood. These points are often misunderstood by those who live in a confused world where people seek to sanctify themselves through the performance of religious rites.

Chapter 13

THE GOSPEL COVENANT

Before God gave any written law to man on earth, He spoke directly to the **fathers of tribal families**. He gave His spoken laws to these fathers in order that His will be taught to the entire extended family (Hb 1:1). One of these extended family fathers was Abraham.



Of all the fathers of faith in the world at the time, Abraham was God's choice through whom He would bring into the world the Seed, which promise was first made to Adam and Eve (Gn 3:15). The fulfillment of this promised Seed would result in the spiritual blessing of all humanity through Abraham.

God chose Abraham in order to prepare the way for the Seed who would come into the world through him and the nation of Israel. God promised Abraham, "*I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed*" (Gn 12:3).

God established a personal covenant with Abraham concerning the promise that He would fulfill in Abraham's descendants. The fulfillment of the promise would come almost 2,000 years after the promise was made. In order to preserve a part of humanity through whom the Seed of blessing would come, God chose to build a nation through Isaac and Jacob, the sons of Abraham (Gn 12:1-3; 15:5).

Many years after Abraham died, and after God brought the children of Israel out of Egyptian captivity, He established a covenant with Israel as a nation. The law of this covenant was given as a condition for keeping the covenant. Therefore, **the Sinai law was given specifically to the nation of Israel** to be their condition for maintaining the covenant (Ex 24:1-4). Moses said

to Israel, "***The Lord did not make this covenant with your fathers, but with us [Israel], those who are here today, all of us who are alive***" (Dt 5:3).

Concerning the law of the covenant, God said to Israel, "*Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments that I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land that the Lord God of Your fathers is giving you. You will not add to the word that I command you, nor will you diminish from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you*" (Dt 4:1,2).

Until God gave a written law on Mt. Sinai to Israel through Moses, all men were under the moral laws of God that He gave through the fathers of the tribal families. After Mt. Sinai, however, the nation of Israel came under a different law, which law was the condition for their keeping of God's covenant that He established specifically with them (Dt 5:1-5). The Gentiles, however, remained under the system of spoken law that had existed from creation (Rm 2:14,15).

In **Jeremiah 31** God promised that a new covenant would come. "*Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah*" (Jr 31:31). This promise of a new covenant, that was made through the prophet Jeremiah, was fulfilled cen-

turies later in Christ, through whom God established a gospel covenant with all people who would respond to His love for humanity.

Jeremiah 31 is quoted in the New Testament in **Hebrews 8**. It is in the context of Hebrews 8 that the Hebrew writer affirmed that Christians are now under a new covenant, for the old Sinai covenant, with its law, was taken away. The Bible says, *“But now He [Jesus] has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a **better covenant**, which was established on better promises”* (Hb 8:6).

The first covenant and law was given only to Israel. However, the Israelites could not keep perfectly the conditions of this covenant because of man’s common problem. **All men sin and fall short of the glory of God** (Rm 3:23). Therefore, the Bible says, *“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. **Because finding fault with them**, He says: ‘Behold, the days are coming ... **when I will make a new covenant**’”* (Hb 8:7,8).

We are now in the days of a new covenant relationship with God. The Sinai covenant and law that was made exclusively with and for Israel has passed away (Hb 8:13). Under the new covenant are new conditions. There is a new law. It is of this new law that the Bible states, *“But he who looks into **the perfect law of liberty** and continues to abide in it, not being a for-*

*getful hearer, but a doer of the work, **this man will be blessed in his deed**”* (Js 1:25). This is the gospel law of liberty that sets one free from sin and spiritual death. It does so because it is based on the mercy and grace of God.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gn 12:1-3; 18:17-19; 22:15-18; Gl 3:15-18

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Covenant & law: *With Abraham* - Gn 15:18, *With Israel* - Ex 19:4-6; 24:8; 31:16; Dt 4:13; 5:1-5; Ne 8:1; Mt 4:4; Rm 3:1,2, *With all God’s children* - Jr 31:31-34; Hb 8:1-13; 10:11-25; 12:24; 13:20, **References to the law:** Ne 8:1,18; 9:13,14; Lk 2:22-24; Jn 1:17; 7:19; 10:34; 12:34; 15:25; Rm 3:9-19; 7:1-7

Chapter 14

GOSPEL LAW OF LIBERTY

With the passing of the Sinai covenant between God and Israel came the passing of the Sinai law. The Sinai law and covenant passed away when Jesus died on the cross in order to bring into force the gospel covenant and law (Hb 9:16,17).

Jesus did not come to destroy the purpose for which the Sinai law was given. He said, *“Do not think that I came to **destroy** the Law or the Prophets”* (Mt 5:17). The purpose of the law was to bring to Christ those who are of the faith of Abraham (Gl 3:24,25). The Sinai law was a shadow of good things to come (Hb 10:1). What Jesus did do was to fulfill the Sinai law. He stated, *“I did not come to **destroy** but to fulfill”* (Mt 5:17). This is the key to understanding the purpose of the Sinai law (Gl 4:4,5).

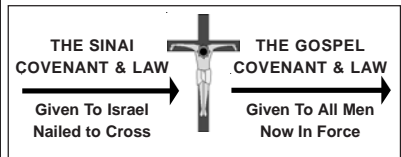
Jesus was the fulfillment of the law in the sense that the law was given to bring Israel to Christ. When the law fulfilled its purpose, therefore, what happened to the law is explained in Hebrews 10:9: “He [Jesus] said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ **He takes away the first** [covenant and law] **in order to establish the second** [covenant and law].” Christians today, therefore, are not subject to the Sinai law of feast days and animal sacrifices. Through their obedience to the gospel, they are free from these restrictions. They are dead to the Sinai law in order to be married to Jesus Christ (See Rm 7:1-4).

We Are Dead To The Sinai Law!

Therefore, my brethren, you [Christians] also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another, even to Him [Jesus] who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God (Rm 7:4).

If anyone would try to live under the Sinai law, or any religious law, in order to be justified before God by the merit of law-keeping, the Bible warns, “*You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace*” (Gl 5:4). This is actually bad news because when one seeks to keep law perfectly in order to save himself, there is no forgiveness of sins (Hb 10:1-

4). But under Christ there is grace. The Bible says that “*the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ*” (Jn 1:17). “*Therefore the [Sinai] law was our headmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor*” (Gl 3:24,25). Christians today are under the gospel of grace and truth. They are not subjects of the Sinai law.



Jesus redeemed us from having to be justified by perfect law-keeping. Under the Sinai law it was impossible “*that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins*” (Hb 10:4). But under the law of liberty we are in a covenant relationship with God who says, “*Their sins and iniquities I will remember no more*” (Hb 10:17). God said this because of the sacrificial blood of Jesus for all men. The Bible says that “*we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*” (Hb 10:10). **This is great news!** Christians, therefore, are sanctified by the eternal sacrifice of Jesus. They do not seek to self-justify themselves by keeping the Sinai law, or to find forgiveness of sins through animal sacrifices.

Why the Sinai Law?

1. **The Sinai law was given as a headmaster (schoolmaster or tutor) in order to bring God's people to Christ (Gl 3:24,25).**
2. **The Sinai law was given in order to morally and socially direct and preserve the nation of Israel until the Seed came (Ex 20:1-17).**
3. **The Sinai law was given in order to manifest sin (Rm 3:20; 7:7).**
4. **The Sinai law was given in order that Christians have an inspired source of learning and edification under the new law of Christ (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).**

SCRIPTURE READING: Rm 7:1-6; Gl 4:21 - 5:2; Hb 10:1-18

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Abolishment of law: Gl 4:4,5; Ep 2:14-16; Cl 2:14; Hb 9:11-25; 10:9,10. **Sacrifice:** Hb 9:15; 10:4. **Better things:** Hb 7:19,22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:35; 12:24

Chapter 15

RESPONDING TO GRACE

The Bible says of Jesus, *“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ”* (Jn 1:17). *“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age”* (Ti 2:11,12). Because of God's loving initiative through the gospel to deliver us from our predicament of sin and spiritual death, we are motivated to live a godly life of gratitude.

Grace is an action on the part of a giver who gives us something that we do not deserve, nor are we able to earn. This is what we call **“unmerited favor.”** Unmerited favor means favor or acceptance that is not earned. God's grace toward us means that He acted in order to give us something that we did not earn, nor did we deserve.

Here's the point: We were lost without hope of living forever. When friends physically died, all of us stood around their graves, sadly feeling that this was the end of our loved ones. We felt that life was terminated at a grave site where there was no hope. But God did not create us for such a devastating end. In order that we have hope, God acted on our behalf (Ti 1:2). His actions have given us the opportunity to have hope for eternal dwelling in a heavenly environment. In order for us to have such a hope, there had to be a sacrifice; there had to be an initiative on God's part that would change the graveyard scene. Because of our destiny of death, God took action by revealing the gospel of life.

Keep in mind that God is the one who had to take the first step. As mortal men, we could do nothing to change our fate of termination in death. Eternal dwelling is God's realm of existence. And in order that we partake of this existence, it was necessary that God reach out and take us into this realm of dwelling. How and what God did

to accomplish this was an action of grace on His part, for we who are limited to this physical world could do nothing to escape the confines of this world. Our limitation to the world confined us to live after our human inability to save ourselves from a dreadful end.

God was not obligated to take the initiative to bring us into His presence through the eternal offering of His incarnate Son. The Son of God was not obligated to take on the form of man in order to die and be raised again so that we also might be raised to eternal life. But the fact is, He did. This is love. This is the heart of God.

The Bible says, "*But God manifests His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us*" (Rm 5:8). What a beautiful thought and action on the part of God. God's loving grace toward us moved Him into action to bring us into His realm of dwelling. In this sense, therefore, the cross of the Son of God was a manifestation of the heart of God. We did not deserve or could be earned this free gift. Grace is not something we earned through good works.

The Bible says, "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast*" (Ep 2:8,9). If God had sent Jesus into the world because we had worked in order to earn such a sacrifice, then the sacrifice of Jesus would not have been

a free gift of God. It would have been payment of debt to us for our goodness (Rm 4:4). But the Bible says, "*And if by grace [we are saved], then it is no longer by works; otherwise grace is no more grace*" (Rm 11:6). The fact is that God gave the gift regardless of our sinfulness. He loved us before we loved Him (1 Jn 4:19). The Bible says, "*In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins*" (1 Jn 4:10).

Our recognition of God's action of grace should move us to respond to His grace. When our faith obediently responds to God's grace, grace reigns "*through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*" (Rm 5:21). **When we see the grace of God on the cross where Jesus died for our sins, faith in God's action motivates us to obediently respond.**

When our faith responds according to how God says we should respond, then we are brought back into a relationship with Him that will eventually end in eternal dwelling with Him. This is the thought behind what the Bible says in Romans 5:1,2: "*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*"

God has extended through Jesus Christ the gospel opportunity to dwell in His presence for eternity. This was an action on the part of God that we did not deserve. We did not earn it. It was thus an action of grace.

SCRIPTURE READING: Rm 3,4,5; Gl 3,4; Ep 2
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: God's love: Rm 5:8; Ti 2:11,14; 1 Jn 4:10,19, **Grace:** 2 Co 8:9; 12:9; 13:14; Ep 1:7; 2:8,9; 4:7; Js 4:6

Chapter 16 THE HEART OF GOD

Grace that comes from the heart of God should move our hearts into action. The Holy Spirit states, *“For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace that is reaching many people may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God”* (2 Co 4:15).

Dead faith never profits anything in reference to our salvation, for even the demons believe and tremble (Js 2:19). Though their belief moved them to tremble, it was still lacking, for it did not move them to obedience. We must remember that *“faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead”* (Js 2:17). Therefore, when one recognizes the loving heart of God that was revealed through the eternal sacrifice of His Son, **he or she will respond to this good news.**

Our faith must respond to our belief that God gave His Son to be our Savior. Salvation by grace through faith means that

God, because of His love for us, gave His incarnate Son in the flesh to save us (Jn 3:16). But we must accept this free gift through **obedient faith**. God offers the free gift, but we must accept it by our obedience to His offer. Our obedience, therefore, **is a response to His great love in offering the free gift of His Son.** In other words, we love because He first loved us (1 Jn 4:19). And because of our love for Him, we want to thank Him by being obedient to His will. Jesus said, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments”* (Jn 14:15). We are thus the friends of Jesus if we do what He says (Jn 15:14). This is exactly what Paul meant when he stated the following concerning his personal obedient response to God's grace to save him:

Gratitude Inspired Obedience

But by the grace of God I am what I am. And His grace toward me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me (1 Co 15:10).

One is not saved by grace if he refuses to receive God's offer of grace. He is not saved if he refuses to respond to God's love. There is a condition attached to our salvation by grace. The condition is our response to the heart of God's love. Jesus tested our hearts by saying, *“If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word”* (Jn 14:23). **We must**

prove our love by keeping His word. Sincere love of God and Jesus moves one to respond to the will of God. ***“This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments”*** (1 Jn 5:3). ***“This is love, that we walk according to His commandments”*** (2 Jn 6).

What profits in our relationship with God, therefore, is **faith working through love** (Gl 5:6). We can thus know those who are God’s people because of their loving response to His grace. The Bible says, ***“But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him”*** (1 Jn 2:5). Living the gospel means living according to the word of God.

SCRIPTURE READING: Jn 14; Rm 5:1-11; Js 2:14-26
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Obedient faith: Rm 1:5; 6:17; 16:26; 1 Th 1:3; 2 Th 1:11, **Love and commandments:** Mt 22:37-40

Chapter 17

INVITATION TO FREEDOM

Most religious people have burdened themselves with countless religious traditions and ceremonies. They are as Jesus said to the Jewish religious leaders, ***“For you load men with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers”*** (Lk 11:46). The Jewish religious leaders bound on the consciences of the people numerous religious rules that God had never bound (Mk 7:1-9). The people could not bear

the burden of these rules, for no one could keep all of them. The people always felt guilty because they could not obey all the man-made rules of the Jews’ religion. **One knows he is living according to religion when he is always burdened with guilt.**

The religious world binds on the consciences of men hundreds of laws and traditions that God never intended to bind. When one comes to Jesus, however, **he is set free from the burden of religion.** He is free in the sense that he knows that religious rules **will not be the standard by which he will be judged.** The only standard by which one will be judged is the word of Christ (Jn 12:48). The Christian need not fear being judged by the religious traditions of men. Jesus, therefore, makes the following invitation to all who have been burdened with religious traditions and ceremonial performances:

Freedom From Religion

Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Mt 11:28-30).

Those who live by the gospel feel great about being set free from the burden of religion. Paul wrote, ***“Stand fast therefore in the lib-***

erty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage" (Gl 5:1). Coming into Christ will set one free from the burden of religion. The gospel sets us free. As free men in Christ, we must never return to religion that is based on the traditions of men. The Holy Spirit warned concerning some who sought to return to self-made religiosity: *"Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"* (At 15:10). Once in Christ, no one can place a yoke of religion on the neck of those who have been set free from the burden of human religiosity. Therefore, **"beware lest anyone take you captive through philosophy and vain deceit according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, and not according to Christ"** (Cl 2:8). When one is set free in Christ, he or she must stay free from the bondage of human religiosity.

SCRIPTURE READING: Gl 4:21-31; Cl 2:11-23
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Freedom in Christ: Rm 8:1,2; 1 Co 7:21,22; Gl 4:26,31; 1 Pt 2:16

The greatest promise that God made to mankind that sparked

hopes in the hearts of those who were sons of Abraham by faith was the promise that in Abraham He would bless every family of the world. In order to preserve a portion of humanity for the fulfillment of this promise, God chose Abraham, through whom the nation of Israel came into existence. God subsequently established a covenant with Israel. He also gave conditions, or laws, for keeping this covenant.

When the promise was fulfilled, Jesus established a new covenant. He is now our High Priest, functioning as our Counselor before the Father. His first coming was the fulfillment of God's promise to both Adam and Abraham. He was the manifestation of God's heart to all men. God worked through Jesus to reconcile all men to Himself. By faith we must therefore respond to the grace that was revealed on the cross. We must respond by learning and obeying the conditions that God has established as to how we must come into a covenant relationship with Him today. When we respond to God's grace, we are set free in Christ. We are free from the burdens of religious traditions that bring our consciences into bondage. We are set free to walk according to the gospel of God's grace.

OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL

Section 4

We have now come to the central message of this book. This

is the most important message that we must hear and do in order to

take advantage of God's grace. It is very important that we thoroughly understand God's conditions for our response to His grace. We must respond to the grace of God according to His instructions. It is not our choice as to how we would respond. It is only our choice as to whether we will respond to grace or to religion.

Chapter 18

GOSPEL OBEDIENCE

Reference to "**obedience of the gospel**" in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 is crucial for our understanding that the gospel, and our obedience thereof, is the beginning of our gospel relationship with Jesus. Obedience to the gospel in this text is in the context of the final coming of Jesus. Since Jesus is the coming King before whom we must make peace before He comes (see Lk 14:31-33), then it is imperative that we understand how to make peace with Him as our judge.

Jesus Is Coming Again

For it is a just thing with God to repay tribulation to those who trouble you, and to give you who are afflicted rest with us when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These will be punished with everlasting de-

struction away from the presence of the Lord and away from the glory of His power. (2 Th 1:6-9).

Frightening? We must never forget that it is the LORD Jesus Christ who will be our final judge. This is King Jesus who is coming as the just judge of all those who have lived on earth.

The coming King Jesus is the One into whose hands God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have given all rights to be our judge (At 17:30,31). *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that everyone may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad"* (2 Co 5:10).

Now here is a very important question every reader of 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 must ask and answer: **Does the text say that if one does not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ that he cannot be saved?** If you answer "no" to this question, then you need to read the passage again. Jesus is coming to judge those who do not know the heart of God, and thus do not respond in obedience to the gospel.

Knowing the preceding truth helps us understand the urgency of Jesus' mandate to *"go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mk 16:15). This is exactly what happened in the first century. Throughout the book of Acts, in every recorded address of the disciples, the gospel was pro-

claimed. The gospel was the first thing that Paul preached when he went to every city on his missionary journeys (1 Co 15:3,4). From Jesus' mandate, to the example of the evangelistic outreach of the early disciples, the gospel was made the central message to which people must obediently respond. If one bypasses the gospel, he has bypassed the heart of God. He is not living a Christ-centered life. He continues to be spiritually dead in sin.

The evangelistic example of the early disciples reveals the importance of preaching the gospel because of what is stated in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9. Jesus is coming again. He is coming with His angels in flaming fire. He is coming to take vengeance. He will take vengeance on those who refuse to know the heart of God, and thus be moved to obey the gospel (Jn 17:3). Those who have found God, but refuse to respond to the heart of God, will be punished with everlasting destruction. The punishment will be just because those who do not respond to the gospel have rejected the heart of God.

One thing is clear from the preceding truth. **One must obey the gospel in order to escape the coming judgment of Jesus.** This Bible truth is declared in a similar manner in 1 Peter 4:17: *"For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God. And if it first begins with us, what will be*

the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?" This is a very serious question. It is a question that demands a correct answer. And the correct answer is that those who do not obey the gospel have no chance for eternal life because they have not responded to the heart of God that was revealed through the gospel.

This certainly brings us to a challenging quest. We must ask and answer two questions that arise from reading 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 4:17. Our answer to these questions will determine our eternal destiny. Here are the two questions:

1. ***WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?***
2. ***HOW CAN ONE OBEY THE GOSPEL?***

SCRIPTURE READING: 2 Pt 3; Jd 14-16

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: **Heaven:** Rm 8:18,23; 1 Co 15:50; 2 Co 4:17; 5:1-10; Hb 11:10,16; 13:14; Js 1:12; Rv 14:13; 21:4; 22:5. **Hell:** Mt 7:13,14,21-23; 13:41,42; 18:8; 23:33; 25:41-46; Hb 6:2; 10:29; Rv 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8

Chapter 19

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?

What would be your answer to the above question? The most common answer is, "It is the good news." This is partially right, but partially insufficient. "Good news" is the meaning of the New Testament Greek word that we translate with the English word "gospel." The gospel is good news. But it would be better to ask, **"What is the good**

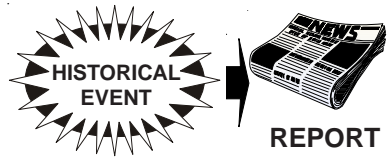
news?" This question will often bring mixed responses.

To the preceding question, some would reply, "The gospel is the teaching of Jesus." But this is not the correct answer. Some also respond by saying, "The Bible is the gospel." Again, this is not a correct answer. Others might answer, "Jesus is the gospel." This would be a correct answer if we understand that Jesus was more than a good man and more than a good teacher. We want to know how Jesus is good news in our relationship with God, and in reference to the judgment to come. Therefore, it is crucial to know Jesus and His gospel mission to offer the abundant life about which He spoke in John 10:10: *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* We seek to know how life can be more abundant through Jesus.

GOSPEL REVELATION

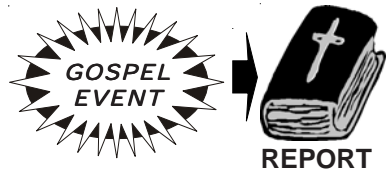
The gospel was actually an historical **event** that revealed the mystery of God's love plan for our salvation (Ep 3:3-5). In a newspaper many events are reported. Each particular event occurred **before** the newspaper was written and printed. A reporter either personally experienced a particular event, or interviewed witnesses who had personally experienced the event. From the testimony of the witnesses, or one's personal experience, a reporter writes a report about each

event that is reported in the newspaper.



The report is not the event.

When we read the newspaper, we believe the reported events because we trust the reliability of the reporter. We must remember that an event is something that occurred in history. But the report was written **after** the event took place. So it is with the revelation of the gospel. **The gospel was revealed through an event.** The New Testament is the inspired **report** of this event that revealed the mystery of the gospel. The New Testament is our "newspaper" to understand the gospel.



1 Corinthians 15:1-4 is one of several statements that explain what we are saying. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to report in verse 1, ***"Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand."*** Now these words were written by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. How-

ever, these words are not the gospel. In other words, **Paul was using inspired words to explain the gospel event.** He wrote that the gospel can be **declared**, that is, one can stand up and declare it to all men. The gospel can be **preached**. Words are used to preach and declare the gospel. The “words” are the **medium** through which the gospel is reported. The words are not the gospel. The gospel can also be **received**, that is, it can be accepted as true. Paul also stated that we “**stand in**” the gospel, that is, the Christian’s entire emotional and spiritual life rests upon the foundation of the truth of the gospel.

In verse 2 Paul continued, “... **by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word** [of the report of the gospel] **which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.**”

Now herein is something very interesting. One is saved by the gospel. But notice here that the Holy Spirit placed a subjunctive “if” in relation to salvation by the gospel. The “if” emphasizes a **condition**. The condition is that one must continue to believe the truth of the gospel. The Corinthians had not personally experienced the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. They had only heard of this event from Paul. Therefore, they had to continue to believe what Paul had reported about the gospel. Today, we must believe the gospel report of the Bible. It is the only source

through which we can gain knowledge of the gospel that was revealed over two thousand years ago.

In these first two verses of 1 Corinthians 15, Paul did not explain the gospel. He only talked about the gospel. However, in verses 3 and 4 he reminded the Corinthians of the gospel that he had preached to them. This was an event of history that changed history forever.

Death, Burial, Resurrection

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

This is the gospel! Jesus sacrificially died on a cross for our sins! He was actually raised from the dead to give us hope! **This is the good news!**

THE GOSPEL

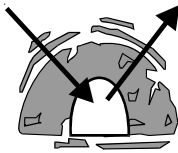
- **The good news is the sacrificial death of Jesus for our sins.**
- **The good news is Jesus’ burial and resurrection to give us hope of eternal life.**

1 Corinthians 15:20 explains the resurrection: “*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who are asleep.*” This is good news!

Jesus was not the first one to be raised from the dead. Jesus had previously raised Lazarus. However, Jesus' resurrection was different from Lazarus' resurrection in two ways: First, Lazarus had to die again. Second, Lazarus was raised with the same body that had to experience again the same sufferings of life and death. His mortal body had not yet put on immortality; his perishable body had not yet become imperishable (1 Co 15:50-55).

On the other hand, **Jesus was raised never to die again. Jesus was raised with the same body, but it was a changed body.** The apostle John experienced Jesus' resurrected body. However, he did not fully understand it, for he later wrote, "*Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we will be. But we know that when He [Jesus] appears, we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He is*" (1 Jn 3:2; see Ph 3:21).

Jesus is the **firstfruits** of all those who die in Christ. His resurrection to never physically die again is the guarantee to those who obey the gospel that they too will experience such a resurrection. **The Christian will be raised with a changed body as Jesus.** He will be raised never to die again. This is the glorious hope of the Chris-



tian. This is the glorious hope of those who seek eternal existence. **This is good news!** It is great news about conquering physical death. The gospel of the resurrection is the guarantee that we will live forever.

SCRIPTURE READING: Mt 27,28; Mk 15,16; Lk 23,24; Jn 19,20

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: The gospel preached: At 2:29-38, **Hear the gospel:** Mt 13:9-23; Mk 1:14,15; 16:16; Jn 3:16; 5:24,25; 6:45; 8:24; 20:30,31; At 10:43; 13:38,39; 15:7; Hb 11:6; Rv 3:20, **Believe the gospel:** Mt 7:21; Lk 6:46; Jn 6:29; 8:24; 12:42,43; 20:30,31; At 13:38,39; Rm 10:16,17; Hb 11:6, **Respond to the gospel with repentance:** Mk 1:14,15; 6:12; Lk 13:3; At 2:38,46,47; 3:19; 17:30; 26:20; 2 Pt 3:9, **Respond to the gospel with confession:** Mt 10:32,33; Lk 12:8; Jn 9:22; 12:42; At 19:17,18; Rm 10:9,10; 1 Tm 6:12; 1 Jn 2:23; 4:2,3,15, **Cases of response to the gospel:** At 2:30-47; 8:5-13, 26-39; 9:10-19; 10:24-48; 16:13-15, 25-34; 18:8; 19:1-5

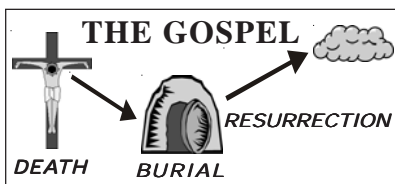
Chapter 20 GOOD NEWS FOR SERIOUS PROBLEMS

Remember that the gospel is good news. It is God's good news to all people concerning our basic problems we have with sin and eternity. But how is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus good news for us today? The answer is simple. Remember that "**all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**" (Rm 3:23). Also remember that the result of sin is separation from God. The Bible says, "**But your iniquities have separated you from your God**" (Is 59:2). Therefore, when we think about sin, **we must also think about separation from God.** And what must one

think about when he is separated from God? The Bible says, **“For the wages of sin is death”** (Rm 6:23). Therefore, when we think about separation from God, we must think about death and eternal destruction.

When we think about death, we must recognize our two greatest problems. Both involve death. The following are the two problems for which every person must have good news:

SPIRITUAL DEATH is the result of being separated from God because of our personal sins against God. This is what the Bible means in Romans 5:12: **“Death spread to all men because all sinned.”** God says that every man has sinned against Him. Without the sacrificial offering of Jesus on the cross, one is **“dead in trespasses and sins”** (Ep 2:1). Remember that this is man’s first and greatest problem! Therefore, we must be **reconciled** (brought back) to God. The gospel answers our problem of spiritual death, **for Jesus died for our sins on the cross** (1 Co 15:3). He died in order to bring us back to God. **This is great news!**



PHYSICAL DEATH also resulted from sin, the sin of Adam. Remember that we must suffer the **consequences** of Adam’s sin. As a result of his sin, we were all **separated from the tree of life** (Gn 3:22-24). Therefore, it is appointed unto all of us that we must physically die (Hb 9:27). The Bible says, **“For as in Adam all die”** (1 Co 15:22).

But again, the gospel is good news concerning our second greatest problem, the problem of physical death. The Bible says, **“Even so in Christ all will be made alive”** (1 Co 15:22). Therefore, **in Christ** Christians will live forever. **This is good news!**

We must remember that our first great problem is our **spiritual separation from God** that resulted from our **personal sins** against God. **The gospel is good news because Jesus came to cleanse our personal sins against God by His sacrificial blood** (1 Co 15:3).

Our second greatest problem is that **each one of us will eventually end up in a grave**. Because of this destiny, we need some good news. Jesus was raised to never die again. He was raised with an eternal, imperishable body. **Those who have obeyed the gospel and are in Christ will also be raised when He comes again. They will be raised to go home with the Lord in an imperishable body** (2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Th 4:13-18). **This is good news! It is good news to**

all those who are seeking more than this world. It is great news for those who want to live forever!

SCRIPTURE READING: Ep 2:1-10; Cl 3:1-11
RESEARCH SCRIPTURES: Gospel: Mk 1:14,15; 8:35; 10:29; 16:15,16; At 15:7; 20:24; Rm 1:16; 10:15,16; 1 Co 4:15; 9:12,19; Gl 1:6-9; 2 Th 2:14,
Hope: Ps 78:7; 119:42-81; At 26:6,7; Rm 8:22-25; Ti 1:2; Hb 6:18,19; 7:19

Chapter 21

OBEDIENCE TO GOSPEL

The gospel of the death of the incarnate Son of God for our sins is good news about our spiritual death problem. **Jesus died for our sins.** The gospel is good news about our physical death problem. **In Christ we will be raised from the dead.** But how does one connect with the gospel event? How can one connect with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus that occurred over two thousand years ago? **How can one obey an event of history?**

We must keep in mind that all who would be saved must come into Christ where one enjoys all spiritual blessings from God. As we live the gospel, God has promised great things (2 Pt 3:13; 1 Jn 1:7; 2:25). **God wants us to have all His blessings in Christ as we live the gospel we have obeyed.**

The good news of Jesus was God's part in our salvation to bring us into His grace. It is now the responsibility of every person to take advantage of what God offers through Jesus. Therefore, we must

first **believe** the gospel. Jesus came preaching, "*The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel*" (Mk 1:15). One must believe the gospel before he will respond to the gospel.

If one believes that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, then how can he be **reconciled to God through the cross of Jesus?** How can one have hope of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus?

ROMANS 6:3-6

In Romans 6:3-6 the Holy Spirit, through the apostle Paul, wrote to Christians. He wanted them to re-view their past obedience to the gospel. **Verse 3** is a question, "*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*" But Jesus died in Jerusalem. He died over two thousand years ago. Nevertheless, one can be "baptized into His death" today. Romans 6:4 explains how this is done.

Buried Into His Death

Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, even so we also might walk in newness of life.

It would be hard to miss this clear explanation of how to be baptized into the death of Jesus. No-

tice the preposition “with.” By immersion in water (baptism), **one goes to the grave with Jesus.** Something great and spiritual happens in baptism. Jesus was buried. In obedience to the gospel of His death for our sins and resurrection for our hope, **we crucify ourselves through repentance and are also buried with Him.** Through immersion, one comes into a spiritual union **with** Jesus. A gospel covenant is established. A personal relationship with God is beginning. Because of the seriousness of this teaching, the Holy Spirit further explained in **verse 5** what it means to be “baptized into His death.” He does not want this point to be misunderstood. In order to come into Christ, and into a covenant relationship with God, one must be baptized into Christ.

United In Death & Resurrection

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection.

Through immersion into Jesus one is united together in

the likeness of Jesus’ death. Because Jesus died on the cross, of necessity He had to be buried. As Jesus went to a tomb over two thousand years ago, so we also can go to a tomb of water together with Him today. Subsequently, we are raised with Him in order to walk in newness of life. **This is great news!** In immersion, therefore, we are buried with Jesus. We are also raised with Him. In baptism one connects with the gospel, by being buried in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

However, before one goes to the grave with Jesus, he or she must also go to the cross with Jesus. There must be death before there can be a burial. And there must be a burial before there can be a resurrection to life. The Holy Spirit explained this in **verse 6**:

Crucifixion Of The Old Man

Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer be servants of sin.

Here again is the preposition “with.” Jesus was crucified. We



must also be crucified **with** Him. The old man of sin must die. Our old man of greed, selfishness, drunkenness, cheating, lying, etc. must die on a cross of self-denial with Jesus (See Cl 2:1-17). Paul wrote concerning his personal crucifixion: *"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me"* (Gl 2:20). **In order to live with Christ, one must be crucified with Christ.** Before one can be buried with Him in the waters of baptism, the old man must die. The Bible says, ***"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"*** (At 2:38).

Something wonderful is revealed in Romans 6:6 that is often missed. The verb "was crucified" is passive tense. In other words, our old man of sin was **acted upon** by another. And who was the One who "acted upon" our old man of

sin? It was Jesus! When Jesus took Himself to the cross (Jn 10:17,18), He took us with Him. He took the sins of all the "old men of sin" of the world with Him to the cross. Therefore, when Paul wrote that we are "crucified with Him," our crucifixion with Jesus took place two thousand years ago. When we believe in Jesus' atonement for our sins on the cross two thousand years ago, and are buried with Him in baptism, then the cleansing power of His blood is activated in our lives today. So when one believes in Jesus, he believes that his old man of sin dies with Christ. He then is buried and raised from the dead to walk in newness of life. Belief means nothing, therefore, unless one recognizes that he is a spiritually dead person. He then must crucify himself, and then find a grave of water into which the old spiritually dead man can be buried. He then will be resurrected as a new man in Christ.

We must always remember that what God wants us to believe and do in order to be saved is the first thing Satan will attack in order to keep us out of heaven. Since we must believe the gospel and obey it in order to be saved, then we must assume that Satan will lead some people to deny the fact that one must believe and obey the gospel for the remission of their sins. For this reason, we must not let anyone tell us that the gospel, and obedience to it, is not necessary in order to establish a gospel covenant relationship with God in Christ.

SCRIPTURE READING: Rm 6:1-7; 1 Co 15:1-4; Cl 3

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Baptism: Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16; Jn 3:3-5; At 2:38; Gl 3:26,27; 1 Pt 3:21,

Baptism in water: Mt 3:11; Jn 3:23; At 8:36; 10:47, **Baptism is a burial in water:** Rm 6:3,4; Cl 2:12 (The Greek word that is translated baptize, is *baptizo*. The word means "to dip," "plunge," or "immerse."

GOD'S GOSPEL FAMILY

Section 5

When one is baptized in response to the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, **God adds that person to His worldwide family (church).** About three thousand people were first immersed in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost, thus this was the beginning the body of Christ for the first time in history (At 2:41). Every member of the body then was *"praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved"* (At 2:47).

Wherever in the world one obeys the gospel, God adds that person to the universal body of Christ. **It is for this reason that wherever there is a baptized believer, the church of Christ exists.** When one does what God says he or she must do in order to be saved, God is the one who adds that person to His people. It is not our option to join a church of our choice. It is only our choice to obey what God has said to do in order that He add us to His people.

The word "church" comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*. The word means a "called out assembly" of people. The church is the univer-

sal assembly of God's people who have been called out of the world through the gospel. The church of God's people has been called out of the world because of the members' belief in Jesus as the Son of God and their obedience to the gospel. God *"calls you into His own kingdom and glory"* (1 Th 2:12). However, God calls us through the appeal of the **gospel** *"for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Th 2:14).

When we accept the call of God through the gospel by our obedience to the gospel, we are added to the worldwide family of God, the church. As obedient disciples, we are God's priests (1 Pt 2:5,9). We are priests because we have given our lives as a total sacrifice to Jesus (Rm 12:1,2). When the word "church" is used in the New Testament in reference to Christ's work through His people, **we must think about people.** The church is not a building. It is the community of people who have given themselves to Jesus Christ in their obedience to the gospel.

If one obeys the gospel according to the will of God as set forth in the preceding chapters, then he or

she must seek out God's people in his or her community. We mention here some things for which to look when searching for God's people. If one cannot find the church of God in his area that worships and serves God according to simple New Testament principles, then one should start a group of those who have obeyed the gospel. One must fellowship with those who worship and serve God according to His will. Because we have obeyed the gospel, we have been added to the church by God (At 2:47). Therefore, we must fellowship with those disciples who have also obeyed the gospel. This is important lest we create a religion after our own desires or the misguided desires of others. We must remember that God does not accept the vain worship of those who have invented their own religious groups after the traditions of their fathers or the emotions of misguided religionists (Mk 7:1-9). God seeks those who worship according to what He desires, for He is our Creator.

As obedient disciples who have been baptized for remission of sins, we must heed the Bible's exhortation of Colossians 2:20-23 in reference to man-made religions. In this text God says, *"Therefore, if you died with Christ from the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances? Do not touch. Do not taste. Do not handle"* (Cl 2:20,21).

We must remember that man-made religions *"have indeed a show of wisdom in self-made religion, false-abasement and neglect of the body, but not of any value in restraining the indulgence of the flesh"* (Cl 2:23).

Because of the vast number of man-made religions in the world today, the following chapters offer some help in discovering the church of gospel-obedient people. These are important points that will help one either discover the family of God in one's community or start an assembly of God's people.

Chapter 22

HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Head refers to **control** and **center of reference**. As our physical head is the **center of reference** to our body from which all parts of our body are controlled, so Jesus wants to spiritually control our lives. He wants to deliver us from following after the lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes, or the pride of life (1 Jn 2:15,16). The Bible says that Christ *"is the head of the church. And He is the Savior of the body"* (Ep 5:23). *"He is the head of the body, the church"* (Cl 1:18). As the only head of the church, Jesus demands absolute control over those who submit to His will. He can have no competition in the area of headship. For this reason, those who live by the gospel of Jesus are directed in their lives by the headship of Jesus.

Jesus exercises His control of His body by our voluntary submission to the gospel. We submit because we have accepted Him as the only way into eternal glory (Jn 14:6; At 4:12). Submitted disciples realize that they must face final judgment (accountability) for their behavior on earth (Hb 9:27). They realize that Jesus will be their judge (At 17:30,31). And they realize that the word of Jesus, not the traditions of men, will be the standard by which they will be held accountable (Jn 12:48). Therefore, one need not be fearful of those who would seek to bind on us the religious traditions of men. Jesus' control of our lives means **freedom from the religious laws and rites of those who would intimidate or cause fear in our hearts that we follow them**. The gospel sets one free from the intimidation of religious rules. The Bible says the following to those who have obeyed the gospel:

SET FREE, STAY FREE!

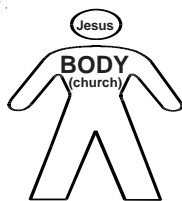
Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage (Gl 5:1).

Since Jesus is the only head of the body, then there can be no other head that would distract from His absolute headship of His disciples throughout the world. God, the Father, has *“put all things under His [Jesus'] feet, and gave Him to be*

head over all things to the church”(Ep 1:22).

Jesus has all authority. There can be no other authority among His disciples that would compete with Him (Mt 28:18). He is Lord of lords and King of kings (1 Tm 6:15). His authority extends even beyond that which is of this world. The Bible says, *“For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living”* (Rm 14:9). Jesus *“has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him”* (1 Pt 3:22).

How much more authority and power can one have than all authority and power? Any church that would establish another head of the church other than Jesus is actually distracting from the headship of Jesus over all things. It is important to believe that when we come to Jesus in order that our lives be corrected and directed, we must submit to His control. He must have our total commitment. Jesus said, *“If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples”* (Jn 8:31).



SCRIPTURE READING: Ep 1:20-23; Ph 2:5-11; Cl 1:9-18

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Jesus' authority: Mt 7:29; Mk 1:22-27; Lk 5:24; 20:2-8; Jn 5:22,27; 13:3; 17:2, Jesus will judge: Mt 16:27; 25:32-46; Jn 5:22; At 10:42; 17:30,31, Jesus is King: Is 9:6,7; Jn 18:36,37; 1 Co 15:20-28; Rv 3:21, Jesus is high priest: Hb 4:14-16; 7:25,26; 8:1,6; 9:24

Chapter 23

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

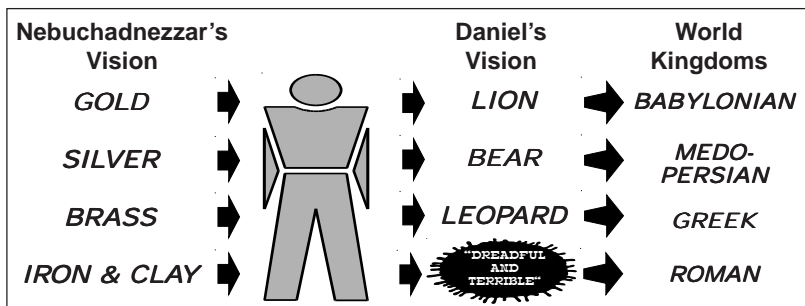
The establishment, or origin of the church of Christ, is related to the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus. **When people in the first century first responded to the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven, the church of Jesus Christ came into existence on earth.** Therefore, when we determine when the reign of Jesus was established and officially announced as the coronated King, then we will discover when His church of disciples was established, for it was established when people first responded to the gospel of King Jesus.

It is important to understand some key prophecies that pointed to the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus. According to our calendar today, the announcement of Jesus' kingdom reign was first made in the city of Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30. Thus, the church of King Jesus was established on this day when men

and women first responded in obedience to the gospel to the first official announcement of the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven.

• **Prophecy of Daniel 2 & 7:**

Daniel 2 is a record of the vision of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. This vision occurred over six hundred years before Christ. In the vision, the King saw a great image. The image was a prophecy of **four world kingdoms** (See Dn 2:36-45). The image had a head of gold. This head represented the **Babylonian Kingdom** over which Nebuchadnezzar reigned. The breast and arms of the image were of silver that represented the **Medo-Persian Kingdom**. The image also had a belly of brass that represented the **Greek Kingdom**. The last kingdom was represented by feet and legs of part iron and clay. This was a representation of the **Roman Kingdom**. In verse 44 Daniel interpreted, *“And in the days of these kings [the Roman kings] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be de-*



stroyed. And the kingdom will not be left to other people. It will break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms. **And it will stand forever.**" The kingdom reign about which Daniel prophesied would be established in the days of the Roman kings.

Daniel 7 is a record of Daniel's vision that is a parallel vision to Nebuchadnezzar's vision of Daniel 2. The same four kingdoms are represented, but with different figures. Babylon was the lion; Medo-Persia was the bear; Greece was the leopard; Rome was the beast that was "dreadful and terrible." Daniel again prophesied that in the days of the Roman Kingdom God would set up a kingdom reign from heaven. In the days of the fulfillment of this vision, Daniel spoke of the ascension of the "Son of Man" to the Ancient of Days (God). After this ascension, there was given to the Son of Man "**dominion and glory and sovereignty, so that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him**" (Dn 7:13,14).

- **Prophecy of Isaiah 2:1-5:**

In this prophecy Isaiah spoke of the house of God being established. He spoke of the word of God going from Jerusalem. He prophesied that all nations would flow unto the house of God (See also Mc 4:1-3).

- **Prophecy of Joel 2:28-32:**

Joel prophesied the outpouring

of the Holy Spirit in the last days. God would no longer pour out the Holy Spirit on the prophets alone. He would pour out His Spirit on "all flesh" (At 2:16-21).

- **Prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31-34:**

God promised that He would establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and Judah. This new covenant would bring all the obedient of all nations into a new covenant relationship with God (Hb 8:6-13; 10:15-18).

These and many other prophecies concerning Jesus have all been fulfilled. When John the Baptist came in the first century, he preached, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand***" (Mt 3:1,2). When Jesus came, He also preached, "**The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is **at hand**. Repent, and believe in the gospel**" (Mk 1:14,15). "At hand" means near or soon. In other words, the kingdom about which both John and Jesus spoke, and of which the prophets prophesied, was soon to be established soon after the personal ministries of John and Jesus.

Neither the kingdom reign of Jesus, nor the church, were established in the days of either John the Baptist or Jesus. During their ministries, both spoke of the church as something that would come in the near future. **Concerning the kingdom**, Jesus said, "*Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are*

standing here who will not taste death **until they see the kingdom of God come with power**" (Mk 9:1). **Concerning the church**, He said, "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church**, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18). Both the kingdom reign of Jesus and the church, therefore, were yet in the future in reference to Jesus' earthly ministry.

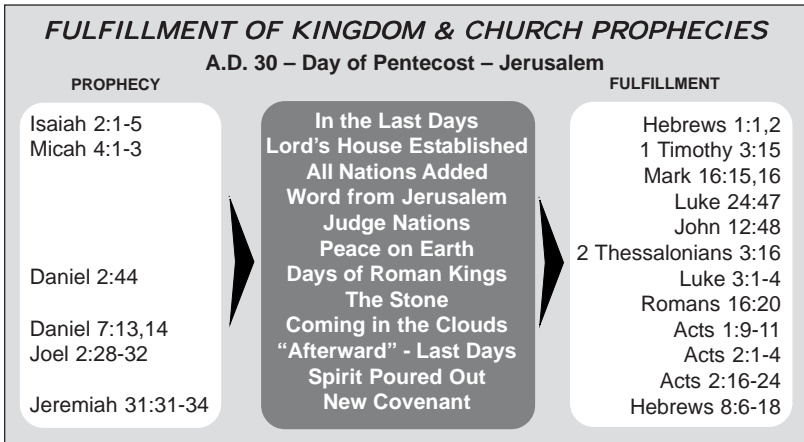
The words "kingdom" and "church" refer to two different things in reference to God's reign and rule among people on earth. "Kingdom" refers to **God's reign and rule from heaven**, whereas "church" refers to **the response of people on earth to kingdom reign from heaven**.

Jesus said, "**The kingdom of God is within you**" (Lk 17:20,21). "**My kingdom is not of this world**" (Jn 18:36). Therefore, the kingdom of Jesus is not physical as the Baby-

lonian, Medo-Persian, Greek and Roman kingdoms. It is **spiritual**. Here's how. Jesus asked the disciples to pray, "**Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven**" (Mt 6:9, 10).

When the will of the Father is done on earth in the hearts of men as it is done in heaven, then the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven is revealed through the church of gospel-obedient people on earth.

We must also understand the time when the prophecies of the kingdom were fulfilled. They were fulfilled when Jesus ascended to the Father to receive glory, dominion and kingdom reign. This hap-



pened in the first century and was recorded in Acts 1. Jesus ascended to the right hand of God about a week before the Pentecost of A.D. 30 (At 2:29-35). On the Sunday of the Jewish **Pentecost**, Peter proclaimed the message of the gospel: the death of Jesus for our sins, His burial, His resurrection for our hope, and His ascension to reign at the right hand of God (At 2:29-35). Peter then proclaimed, *“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that **God has made this same Jesus whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ**”* (At 2:36).

When men and women first heard of the existing reign of Jesus, **they responded with submission**. Listen to what happened after Peter’s first historical announcement of the kingdom reign of Jesus: *“Now when they heard this, **they were cut to the heart**. And they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what will we do?’”* (At 2:37). In Peter’s audience there were those who responded to the gospel of Jesus. In order to answer their response, Peter instructed them, *“**Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**”* (At 2:38).

Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father in order to reign as King (Ep 1:20-23). The kingdom reign of Jesus existed **before** the

existence of gospel-obedient saints. The first announcement of Jesus’ kingdom reign took place on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. About 3,000 people responded to this first announcement by allowing the will of God to be done on earth in their hearts as it is done in heaven (At 2:41). Therefore, the church began in Acts 2 when people first responded to King Jesus. **The church began when men and women first responded to the first official announcement of the kingdom reign of Jesus**. This happened on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 in the city of Jerusalem two thousand years ago.

SCRIPTURE READING: Dn 2:14-45; 7:9-28; At 1,2
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Kingdom prophecies:
 2 Sm 7:12,13,16; Ps 45:6,7; 110:1; Is 9:6; 22:22-25;
 Jr 23:5,6; Zc 6:12,13

Chapter 24 GOSPEL-OBEDIENT PEOPLE

The Lord Jesus Christ is the universal head of His body, the church (Cl 1:18). He rules in the hearts of His disciples through the authority of His written **word** (Jn 12:48). His control and direction for His body is accomplished through those who have voluntarily responded to the gospel of His atoning sacrifice on the cross, His resurrection and His kingdom reign over all things.

The center of reference of the body of Christ is thus from heaven.

God never intended to set up on earth any authorities that would either take the place of or challenge the lordship of Jesus. Any religious body that would either challenge or set aside the authority of Jesus by establishing their own religious laws is being rebellious to the sovereign reign of Jesus. Jesus warned, “*He who rejects Me and does not receive My words, has one who judges him. **The word that I have spoken, the same will judge him in the last day***” (Jn 12:48).

Gospel leadership among the members of the body is revealed through the lives of those who live to serve (See Mk 10:44,45). These devoted workers do not have the authority to establish laws that would be bound on the consciences of God’s people. Their designation as leaders is to nurture the body through teaching, evangelism, the example of gospel living, and ministering as servants to the needs of those who have voluntarily submitted themselves to the direction of Jesus (Hb 13:17).

All leadership among the disciples must be based on the leadership principles that Jesus set forth in His instructions to the disciples. The following are some of these fundamental principles:

Leadership Through Service

*You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them. **And their great ones exercise authority over***

*them. **But it will not be so among you. But whoever desires to be great among you, will be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first will be bondservant of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many*** (Mk 10:42-45).

Whenever we consider leadership among the disciples, therefore, we are discussing those who have dedicated themselves to be servants to the spiritual needs of those who have submitted to living the gospel (See 1 Co 16:15,16).

GOSPEL PREACHERS

Evangelists function in two special works: First, their primary function is **to proclaim to the lost the good news of Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection and reign.** Second, they work **to edify the church** through the teaching of the word of God. The Bible exhorts evangelists, “*Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching*” (2 Tm 4:2). Evangelists must “*be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist***” in order to fulfill their ministry (2 Tm 4:5).

It is the work of the evangelist to set a gospel example for others to follow. They are to minister the gospel to the world, both in teaching and by the gospel example of

their lives. The apostle Paul wrote to the evangelist Timothy, *“Let no one despise your youth. But you be an **example** to the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Until I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching”* (1 Tm 4:12,13).

GOSPEL SHEPHERDS

Local leadership responsibilities among the people of God is given to a designated group of men who are commonly referred to as **elders** or **shepherds**. Depending on one’s translation of the Bible, throughout the New Testament these men are also referred to as **bishops**, **overseers**, or **presbyters**. These are all references to the same designated leaders. **Different words are used to identify them by the nature of their service for the flock of God.**

Shepherds have the responsibility to teach and lead the church through their example of living the gospel. They must lead through teaching the word of God (2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3; Jd 3).

When elders were designated in the first century church, there was always a **plurality** of elders designated for all the members in any one area (At 14:23). Though the disciples met in different houses, the elders always worked as a group to service the needs of the members who lived throughout the community.

Before shepherds are desig-

nated, they must have certain physical qualifications and spiritual qualities. These qualifications and qualities are set forth in **1 Timothy 3:1-7** and **Titus 1:7-9**. These qualifications and qualities are given in order to guide the disciples in designating those men who are spiritually qualified to function as their shepherds.

Shepherds have the responsibility of caring for the flock of members who can personally know them (1 Pt 5:2). They are to offer their spiritual presence, teaching and gospel life-style as an example to those with whom they associate.

The work of elders is shown in the following New Testament instructions: *“**Shepherd** the flock of God that is among you, **servicing as overseers** ... being **examples** to the flock”* (1 Pt 5:2,3). *“Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers, to shepherd the church of God”*** (At 20:28). It is the work of shepherds to function in counseling and caring for the flock of God. They must look out over the flock of God in order to make sure that spiritual and physical needs are serviced among God’s people (Hb 13:17). It is their responsibility to teach the flock.

Disciples in a particular region may not have a plurality of qualified men to function as a designated group to shepherd the flock of God. However, this does not mean that they are without the benefit of godly

counseling and spiritual direction that is offered through mature disciples. There are always godly members who can give spiritual counseling and direction for young and inexperienced members. However, if there are godly men who do not have the physical qualifications that are given in the New Testament, then they cannot be publicly designated as shepherds of the flock. Nevertheless, they can fulfill their Christian responsibility of helping others through times of trial, as well as, ministering in the work of teaching the word of God (See 1 Co 16:15,16; Gl 6:1,2).

SPECIAL MENSERVANTS

Special servants, or deacons, are designated for the purpose of **serving special needs of the body** (Ph 1:1). As the shepherds, they also are to fulfill specific physical qualifications and spiritual qualities before they are designated for special ministries. These qualifications and qualities are revealed in **1 Timothy 3:8-12**. In their designation as deacons, they function to mature and edify the members through the example of gospel service to the needs of the flock.

SCRIPTURE READING: **Servant leadership:** Mk 10:35-45; Jn 13:1-17; 1 Co 16:15,16, **Elders:** At 20:28-32; 1 Tm 3:1-7; Ti 1:7-9; 1 Pt 5:1-3, **Evangelists:** 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus (These three New Testament books were written specifically to the evangelists Timothy and Titus.)

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: **Principle of servanthood:** Mt 20:20-28; Mk 9:33-37; 10:35-45; Lk 22:24-30; Jn 13:1-17, **Work of servanthood leaders:** 1 Co 16:15,16; Hb 13:17, **Elders:** At 15:4,5,23;

20:17,28; Ep 4:11; Ph 1:1; 1 Th 5:12,13; 1 Tm 3:1-7; 5:1,17-19; Ti 1:7-9; Js 5:14,15, **Evangelist's life:** At 20:22-24; 21:8; Rm 1:15; 1 Co 9:25-27; 2 Co 4:1,2; 10:12-16; 1 Th 3:2; 1 Pt 4:11 (See 1,2 Tm; Ti), **Evangelist's work:** Rm 10:14,15 (See 1,2 Tm; Ti)

Chapter 25

SEARCH FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

The disciples in the New Testament are referred to with words and phrases that describe **ownership** and the disciples' **relationship** with one another, and with God through their obedience to the gospel. These words and phrases either identify the owner to whom members have given allegiance or explain the organic function of the members. These words and phrases are not proper names or titles that should divide disciples from one another. They are references that are commonly used in the New Testament to refer to the worldwide collective body of those whom God has called out of the world through their voluntary obedience to the gospel:

- **The church of God** (1 Co 1:2)
- **The body of Christ** (Ep 1:22,23)
- **The church of Christ** (Rm 16:16)
- **The house of God** (1 Tm 3:15)
- **The flock of God** (1 Pt 5:2,3)
- **The bride of Christ** (Rv 21:9)
- **The church of the Lord (God)** (At 20:28)
- **The household of God** (Ep 2:19)
- **The temple of God** (1 Co 3:16)

As with phrases that define the organic nature of the global body, individual members are referred to in the New Testament with terms that describe the nature or ownership of the saints. The following is a brief list of descriptive terms that are used to describe the members of the body:

- **Disciples** (At 11:26)
- **Christians** (At 11:26; 1 Pt 4:16)
- **Saints** (Rm 1:7; Ep 1:1; Ph 1:1)
- **Children of God** (Rm 8:16; Ep 5:8)
- **Sons of God** (Gl 3:26)
- **Brethren** (Ph 4:21; 1 Pt 2:17)
- **Servants** (Rm 16:1,2)
- **Priests** (1 Pt 2:5,9; Rv 1:6)

It is always a good principle to use Bible references to describe Bible teachings and the function of the organic body. Man-made titles and names that are used in the religious world often divide the disciples and exalt one disciple over another. Such names should be avoided. Those who seek to establish unity will always use references that encourage unity among Christians and promote the organic function of the body.

We must always keep in mind that any references to unique ministries among God's people should not be used in either a divisive manner, or in a way that would exalt one disciple over another (See Mk 10:42,43). References as "shepherd" or "evangelist" are used to identify the function of particular

individuals in their responsibility of ministry in the universal body.

The Holy Spirit did not want to promote any division among gospel-obedient saints. For this reason the assemblies of the saints throughout the world are collectively referred to as the churches of Christ (Rm 16:16).

SCRIPTURE READING: Mk 10:35-45; Cl 1:9-18
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Ownership of the church: At 20:28; 1 Co 6:20; Ti 2:14, **Glorify God, not man:** Jn 12:28; 16:14; 17:5; Rm 1:21; Gl 6:13,14; Cl 3:17; 1 Pt 4:16; Rv 4:11

Chapter 26 GOSPEL WORSHIP & SERVICE

Jesus made a very important statement in John 4:23: *"But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him."* It is very important how we worship God. **God is our Creator and it is He who gives directions as to how He wants to be worshiped.** Therefore, **it is not our choice as to how we would worship God.** We must look to God's word in order to determine how He wants to be worshiped.

Many religious people today are worshiping God according to their own desires. But if we worship God after the religious ceremonies of men, then we worship God in **vain**. Jesus said, **"And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the**

commandments of men" (Mk 7:7). If we worship God in **ignorance** of God and the gospel, then we also worship Him in vain. The apostle Paul addressed such worshipers in Acts 17. He said to them, "*The One whom you worship without knowing, Him I declare to you*" (At 17:23). In order that these to whom Paul spoke would worship God according to the truth of the gospel, he preached to them the gospel of the one true God (At 17:23-31).

The world is filled with those who worship God according to their own religious performances and ceremonial rites. The Bible speaks of such worshipers: "*These things have indeed a show of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and neglect of the body*" (Cl 2:23). It is important to worship God according to what He desires, **not according to our own desires**.

Unfortunately, when it comes to worship and service of God, many are as those about whom Paul wrote whose worship and service was rejected by God: "*For I testify of them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God*" (Rm 10:2,3). We must seek the righteousness of God that was revealed on the cross of His Son. Those who do not know the gospel will seek to worship God according

to their own rules and ceremonies, or even for their own pleasure. They do not worship in thanksgiving of the gospel.

Worship should never be an effort to entertain ourselves. Worship is the outpouring of a heart that walks in thanksgiving of the gospel. True worshipers do not consider entertaining ourselves when meditating on the awesome eternal sacrifice and suffering of the cross.

GOSPEL WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

It is great news that Christians today are not obligated to worship God in ignorance of the gospel or after the ordinances of the Sinai law. Animal sacrifices are no longer necessary in worship to God. Christians today have been freed from the necessity of offering the blood of bulls and goats that could not take away sins (Hb 10:1-4). The gospel has freed us from ignorantly worshiping God according to our own desires and the religious rules of men. Christians today have the advantage of God's direction in worship through His inspired word.

In response to the gospel, the Christian's worship and service to God today is on a daily basis and according to the directions of His will. Worship of God is not confined



to buildings or particular locations, for God “*does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands as though He needed anything*” (At 17:24,25).

Worship of God is not confined to a particular time or day. The Bible says, “*I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service*” (Rm 12:1). The Christian has presented his entire life as a “living sacrifice” in response to the gospel. Paul wrote of himself, “*I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me.** And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me*” (Gl 2:20). The total life of the Christian is a gospel sacrifice. Therefore, Christians worship daily in living the gospel. Wherever a Christian may be, and at any time, he has the privilege of worshipping God in ministry.

All Christians are priests of God. They “*are being built up a spiritual house, a **holy priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*” (1 Pt 2:5). They are a “*chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, a holy nation, a special people*” to God (1 Pt 2:9). As priests, **Christians are on duty at all times.** Their whole life is given in service to God. The following are some of the important things Chris-

tians do in their daily gospel worship and service of God:

Gospel Living Through Daily Study And Proclamation Of The Gospel

The early Christians determined to preach the gospel on a daily basis. “*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ*” (At 5:42). They “*went everywhere preaching the word [of the gospel]*” (At 8:4). Because they had been saved by the gospel of grace, they had great news for all the world. It was their work, therefore, to preach the gospel daily to every person in the world (Mk 16:15).

SCRIPTURE READING: Mt 15:1-9; At 17:16-30; 2 Tm 4:1-3

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: **Worship:** Gn 22:5; Ps 45:11; 95:6; Mt 2:2; At 24:14; Hb 10:24,25; Rv 4:10; 14:7; 19:4. **Preach:** Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16; Rm 10:8-15; Ep 3:8,9; 4:11,12; 1 Tm 4:13, 2 Tm 2:15

Gospel Living Through Daily Song And Admonition Of One Another

As the community of God, Christians are exhorted to speak to “*one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord***” (Ep 5:19). “*Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, **teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord***” (Cl 3:16). Christians should with their voices be known

for their daily teaching of one another in song. They should use the medium of songs to voice their praises to God.

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: At 16:25; Rm 15:9; 1 Co 14:15; Hb 2:12; Js 5:13

Gospel Living Through Daily Prayer And Fasting

The Bible says to “*pray without ceasing*” (1 Th 5:17). Disciples of Jesus should not be “*anxious for anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving,*” they must let their requests be made known to God (Ph 4:6). Christians direct their prayers **to the Father**, for it is He who answers our prayers (Jn 14:13).

During His earthly ministry, Jesus said, “*But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days*” (Mk 2:20). In this statement, Jesus spoke of Himself going away to reign in heaven. He has since gone into heaven, and thus, **His disciples now fast**. The disciples now fast often during their intense prayers to call on God to work in their lives (At 13:1-3). They give themselves to fasting (1 Co 7:5).

SCRIPTURE READING: Mk 2:18-20; At 4:23-31
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Prayer: At 2:42; 12:5,12; 1 Co 14:14-17; Cl 3:17; 4:12; 1 Tm 2:8, **Fasting:** Mt 17:21; Lk 2:37; At 13:1-3; 14:23

Gospel Living Through Daily Good Works Of Gratitude

In his worship and reverential response to the gospel, the disciple is not his own. He has been bought with the price of the cross. This price was the offering of the incarnate Son of God on the cross for our sins. Therefore, the Bible says, “*For you have been bought with a price. **Therefore, glorify God in your body***” (1 Co 6:20). Christians walk in gratitude of the gospel. Since the Christian is not his own person, he realizes that what he has is from God. Therefore, the Christian uses his possessions (money or material things) in a sacrificial manner to provide for himself and his family, and to do the work of God. Christians give in gratitude of the gospel. They daily give in a sacrificial manner to any spontaneous need that may arise. **God is a giver, and those who would claim to be godly, must also be givers.** “*Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of the faith*” (Gl 6:10).

SCRIPTURE READING: At 2:44,45; 4:34-37; Ph 4:10-20
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Giving: 1 Co 16:1-3; 2 Co 8:1-4; 9; Gl 2:10, **Doing good:** Lk 10:30-37; Js 1:27; 4:17; 1 Jn 3:13-18

Gospel Living In Communion With Jesus And One Another

Though worship of God is individual, on the first day of the week, Christians seek to bring their worshipful spirits together in order to praise and thank God. They come

together to remember Jesus and the gospel of grace that was poured out for them when Jesus died on the cross (Ti 2:11). An important part of this assembly is the communion of disciples with one another and Jesus around the Lord's Supper and during a love feast. As with the Passover meal of the Jews, the early Christians came together to celebrate the gospel of Jesus by partaking of the Lord's Supper (At 20:7; see 2 Pt 2:13; Jd 12). They partook of the Lord's Supper that was instituted by Jesus. In writing to a Jewish audience, Matthew reminded his readers that Jesus changed the meaning of the bread and fruit of the vine of the Jewish Passover meal:

The Gospel "Passover"

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mt 26:26-28).

Concerning the **bread** of the Supper, Jesus revealed that His disciples must remember Him when they eat of the bread. *"This is My body which is for you. This do in remembrance of Me"* (1 Co 11:24). Concerning the **fruit of the vine**, Jesus said that in His kingdom it

represented the sanctifying blood of the gospel covenant that the disciples have with Him. He said, *"This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me"* (1 Co 11:25).

The **bread** of the Supper represents the **body of Jesus**. The **fruit of the vine** represents the **blood of the gospel covenant** that God has made with all Christians. The **bread** that Jesus used when the Supper was instituted was bread that represented life, for God provided manna (bread) to sustain the nation of Israel during their forty-year wilderness wanderings when they came out of Egyptian captivity. It was the unleavened bread of the Jewish Passover Feast (Ex 34:25; Lv 25:5-8). The **fruit of the vine** was juice from grape vines (Mk 14:24,25). The New Testament does not say that either the bread or fruit of the vine turn into the literal body and blood of Jesus. Neither does it say that Jesus' body and blood are present in the elements. The bread and fruit of the vine are simply **representative** of Jesus' body and blood.

Jesus used these two physical things—bread and fruit of the vine—to represent important spiritual truths. These truths are that He sacrificially gave His incarnate body (the bread), and poured out His blood (the fruit of the vine), in order to give us life (Ep 1:7; 1 Pt 1:2,19). When we partake of the Supper, we

remember Jesus. We proclaim Jesus. The Bible says, *“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes”* (1 Co 11:26). When Christians partake of the Lord’s Supper, they are preaching the gospel of the atoning sacrifice of Jesus.

The disciples of Jesus must search their hearts at the time they eat and drink of the Supper. *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup”* (1 Co 11:28).

In reference to observing the Lord’s Supper, the Holy Spirit directed Paul to write, *“... as often as you drink ... as often as you eat ...”* (1 Co 11:25,26). The Lord’s Supper is in memory of the gospel that set us free from sin. For this reason, the early disciples observed the Lord’s Supper every first day of the week (At 20:7). Since the Lord’s Supper is a remembrance of the gospel of Jesus, Christians should make every effort to celebrate the gospel through the Supper when they come together every first day of the week. When they do this, they proclaim to the world that they are gospel-obedient disciples of the Son of God (1 Co 11:26). In this regular observance of the Supper, the disciples proclaim the unity that exists between them and God. They are preaching the gospel to the world that they are people who have obeyed the gospel.

GOSPEL UNITY

Another important remembrance of the Supper is to consider the oneness of the universal body of Christ. All those who have obeyed the gospel throughout the world are blessed with unity in Christ. Our common obedience to the gospel has brought us into a common fellowship with one another (Jd 3). In partaking of the Supper, we are celebrating our blessing of oneness in Christ. The Bible says, *“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ? For though we are many, we are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread”* (1 Co 10:16,17).

When we partake of the bread, therefore, we must remember the unity of the universal body. The church is one universal body because the members have obeyed the one gospel. God has added then to the one universal church (At 2:47). The Bible says, *“For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”* (1 Co 12:12,13).

DYNAMIC GOSPEL LIVING

Disciples present their entire lives in reverential worship and service to God (Rm 12:1,2). Their wor-

shipful attitudes are expressed in their daily proclamation of the gospel, singing of spiritual songs, praying, doing good to others, and giving to others to the glory of God. These living responses to the grace of God manifest our thanksgiving to God for saving us through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus on the cross (1 Co 15:10; 2 Co 4:15). *“Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”* (1 Co 10:31). *“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him”* (Cl 3:17). **Therefore, when worshipful Christians assemble on Sunday to partake of the Lord’s Supper, a dynamic spiritual fellowship of praise to God happens that is very encouraging.**

SCRIPTURE READING: Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:14-20; 1 Co 11:23-29
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: At 2:42; 20:7, **One body:** 1 Co 12:12-31; Ep 4:4-6; Cl 1:16-18

Chapter 27 FINDING GOSPEL PEOPLE

One can identify other disciples of Jesus by simply knowing the identifying characteristics of God’s people that are recorded in the New Testament. Since the church exists wherever there is one who has obeyed the gospel, then the church of disciples is first identified by those who have been obedient to the one gospel that has been revealed to

us through Jesus Christ (Jd 3).

We must realize that religious people may partially teach and practice some of the identifying characteristics of the body of Christ. However, they may not be members of the body if they have added to the gospel other required religious rites (Gl 1:6-9). Also, obeying only part of what God requires does not identify one to be a Christian. A disciple of Jesus is one who believes and obeys the one gospel of Jesus.

We must remember that people can be religious, but not all religious people are disciples of Jesus. We must be careful, therefore, for many people are religious on the foundation of practicing the religious rites of their unique church heritage. They have brought themselves into the bondage of the doctrines and religious traditions of men. In doing this, they have often ignored portions of the full gospel of God’s plan of redemption. False teachings are always taught throughout the world. Therefore, one must beware lest he or she is deceived by the religiosity of misguided people. All teachings must be tested by the word of God (See 1 Jn 4:1; Rv 2:2). The Bible says, **“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test your own selves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you are disqualified?”** (2 Co 13:5). We must not forget the following very important warnings:

Departing From The Faith

Now the Spirit clearly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron (1 Tm 4:1,2).

Turning From The Truth

For the time will come when they will not endure sound teaching. But to suit their itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires. And they will turn their ears from the truth and will be turned to fables (2 Tm 4:3,4).

Be careful! Be not deceived!

One would be foolish to believe that every person who affirms Jesus to be the Son of God, or claims to be following the Bible, is actually living what the Bible says one must live in order to be saved. We must identify true disciples in our community

and test their beliefs by the word of God. We must identify true disciples by what they believe, teach, and live in response to the gospel. What is practiced and taught must be according to the word of God (Mt 7:15-23).

It is important that we do not add to God's word (2 Jn 9; Rv 22:18,19). It is important that we not add religious rites and rules to the gospel, and thus promote another gospel (Gl 1:6-9). It is our plea, therefore, that everyone search the Scriptures in order to discover other disciples of Jesus in his or her community who have also obeyed the gospel. It is our mission to find others who are disciples of Jesus (See At 18:1-3; 19:1). When we find other disciples, then it is time for mutual Bible study of the word of God.

SCRIPTURE READING: At 20:28-30; 2 Pt 2:20-22
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: **Apostasy:** Gl 3:1-5; 1 Tm 4:1-3; 2 Tm 2:18; 4:4,10; Hb 6:4-6; 10:26-31; Rv 2:4, **Deception:** Ps 43:1; 55:23; Mt 24:11,24; 1 Co 3:18; 2 Co 4:2; 11:13; Ep 4:14; 5:6; Cl 2:8; 2 Tm 3:13

GOSPEL LIVING FOR JESUS

Section 6

The Holy Spirit exhorts, "Let your behavior be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Ph 1:27). Our lives are worthy of the gospel when we live for Jesus. If one has truly obeyed the gospel from the heart, then it is only natural to share the gospel with others. As a disciple, it is natural to share the gospel and

seek to be with gospel-obedient disciples in order to promote love and good works (Hb 10:24,25). Doing this means that we must take a stand for what the Bible teaches concerning the gospel.

In reference to being associated with that which is false, the Bible says such things as, "And

what union has the temple of God with idols? **Come out from among them and be separate**" (2 Co 6:16,17). *"If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not give him greeting. For he who gives him greeting participates in his evil deeds"* (2 Jn 10,11). These are direct statements from the Holy Spirit that emphasize the seriousness of what one must do as a disciple in order to maintain purity of belief and behavior as a son of God.

When one obeys the gospel, and is added to the church by God, he or she is added to the universal church of God, not to a unique sect of religion that has been created after the traditions of men (At 2:47). God does not add us to false religious groups. He does not want us to continue to worship in error with a false religious sect. He does not add the obedient to something that is contrary to His revealed word. We are added to the universal family of God that is united by the members' common obedience to the gospel (Jd 3).

As members of the one church, we are obligated to teach others what we have learned from our personal study of the Bible. In other words, one cannot obey God's plan of obedience to the gospel in order to be saved and then continue to worship and serve God according to the religious rites of men (Mk 7:1-9). We must act now, both in our

own response to the gospel, and in teaching the gospel to others.

We must worship God with His people in spirit and truth (Jn 4:24). If there are other gospel-obedient people in one's community, **then we must worship God with this fellowship of disciples**. We must come out from among false religions and be separated from false teachings in order to worship God in spirit and in truth (2 Co 6:17,18).

The gospel of the cross, resurrection and current reign of Jesus first applied to our response to the gospel. Because we were motivated by the heart of God to be saved, we are also motivated to live according to the gospel (Ph 2:5-8). The gospel is our motivation to live according to the example of Jesus.

Chapter 28 GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP

The early disciples first met in their homes. In fact, they met in their homes until the first part of the fourth century. The first church buildings were not constructed until Constantine, Emperor of Rome, built the first building for an assembly in the early fourth century. But for centuries, Christians met in homes when they established assemblies throughout the world. There are many historical statements in the New Testament that mention the meeting of the saints in their homes (See At 5:42; 20:20; Rm 16:5; 1 Co 16:19; Cl 4:15; Pl 2).

One of the first things to learn about the fellowship of the disciples is that it does not make any difference where the saints assemble for worship and mutual edification. God is not concerned about places of meeting, or our desire to create special places of worship. In fact, during His ministry, Jesus taught against establishing an "official" place of worship when He made the following statement to a woman from Samaria who questioned Him about locations of worship:

Meet Anywhere, Any Time

Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father.... But the hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him (Jn 4:21-23).

Christians have the privilege of worshiping God everywhere. Since worship is individually focused on God, **one can worship God anywhere and anytime.** Since God is everywhere, Christians can bring their worshipful spirits together anywhere it is convenient.

After one's obedience to the gospel by immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, he or she may be the only disciple in his or her community. Therefore, if there is no assembly of gospel-obedient disciples in one's community,

then one should offer an opportunity for assembly in one's own home. We must not forget that it is our responsibility to serve God in truth. It may be that our house is the only place to meet in our community in order to pour out our hearts in worship. Here are some suggestions to begin an assembly of disciples:

GOSPEL LEADERSHIP

To begin an assembly of disciples, decisions must be made. Many decisions will rest on the shoulders of the one who is initiating the establishment of an assembly. However, as soon as possible one must bring all the disciples together in order to make decisions as a group. The group is led by mature disciples (Gl 6:1,2). It is unwise for groups of disciples to be controlled by the decisions of only one person, or new converts. In the New Testament, all the disciples were involved in making decisions that affected the entire church (At 15:22).

In the beginning of the assembly in a community, gospel-minded people must take the lead. In 1 Corinthians 16:15,16, Stephanas and his household took the lead in ministering to the disciples in Corinth. **They took the lead by devoting themselves to serve others.** Leadership, therefore, is service to others. It is giving gospel life examples for others to follow (Jn 13:1-17; Ph 2:5-11). People will follow those who lovingly humble

themselves as examples to serve the needs of others (Mk 10:35-45). **Those who live the gospel are naturally followed by those who have obeyed the gospel.** When faithful disciples set themselves to serve the needs of the community, first by preaching the gospel, and then by servicing the needs of the saints, others will follow. Therefore, as a disciple of Jesus, **“do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of the faith”** (Gl 6:10; see Jn 13:34,35).

SCRIPTURE READING: Mt 20:20-28; Lk 22:24-30
SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Leaders love the church: Mt 20:28; Jn 10:11; 13:34,35; 15:13, Leaders give examples: 1 Co 11:1; Ph 4:9; 1 Tm 4:12; 1 Pt 5:2,3, Leaders give service: Mk 10:45; 1 Co 16:15,16; Gl 6:1,2; Hb 13:17, Leaders give vision: Jg 5:2; Mk 16:15; At 20:24; Ph 3:14

GOSPEL ASSEMBLIES

The Bible does not teach that a church is established because all the members in a particular location are able to meet together at the same place on Sunday. The word “church” refers to people. The church is a community of people who have obeyed the gospel. They are not identified by where they meet, or what they do when they meet. We must remember that the church exists wherever God has added gospel-obedient believers to His universal body. **Wherever there are people who have obeyed the gospel, the church exists.** The church is not identified by the ability of all the members in a particular area to meet together

at the same place. The church existed in Jerusalem **before** the 3,000 baptized believers could meet the following Sunday after the Pentecost Sunday of Acts 2 (See At 2:41-47). We must keep in mind that the church is identified by people who have obeyed the gospel, not by any rituals or ceremonies they might conduct in an assembly.

When we establish a meeting of the members, the church will naturally grow and become too large to meet in one house alone. When this happens, we start meeting in two or more houses of the members. In many cities, there are no public buildings to rent. Therefore, members must continue to multiply the number of assembly locations when the assemblies become too large for each place of meeting. **We must keep in mind that regardless of how many assemblies we have in a particular city or village because of space and distance from one another, all the members are still one church of Christ. The members do not define the existence of the church by their assemblies.**

The church of the New Testament was first universal. In reference to city assemblies, the church was referred to as the church in Corinth (1 Co 1:2), the church of Ephesus (Rv 2:1), or the church of Smyrna (Rv 2:8). Though the church in these cities met in many different locations, God still considered the disciples of the city to be

one church. Regardless of how many facilities in which we must meet, we are still part of the one universal church.

There may be the opportunity to meet in a public facility as a school or rented building. If this is the case, then all the Christians can join together to pay the rent for such a building. Some groups have even built their own buildings. We must keep in mind that it is not important where we meet. What is important is assembling the disciples together in small or large groups for mutual edification and encouragement. We must keep in mind also that all the members need not to meet together at the same place and time on Sunday in order to be one united body in the area. All the members meeting together may not be practical because there is no building that will house all the members, or it may be too far to walk for some members to come together regularly into one place. What is important is that the members meet with one another for mutual edification.

We must refresh our memories concerning what Jesus said in John 4:21 when He spoke to the Samaritan woman. *“Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem worship the Father.”* Jesus’ point was that there would be no special places of worship for His disciples as the Jews had designated Jerusalem and the Samaritans had designated a special

mountain. No special places of worship would be designated by the disciples of Jesus in order to prevent the members from restricting their worship to special places of worship.

GOSPEL ENCOURAGEMENT

Christians meet together in assembly in order to stir up love and good works.

Encouraging Gospel Living

And let us consider one another to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the habit of some, but exhorting one another (Hb 10:24,25).

The assembly of the disciples of Jesus must be an occasion for **stirring up love** in our hearts. In order to accomplish this, close relationships must be established between members. Love grows when members begin to know one another in a personal manner (See Jn 13:34,35). Our assemblies, therefore, must be conducted in a manner that will allow members to participate and get to know one another (1 Co 14:26).

Members must be **stirred up to do good works**. Each member must be encouraged to use their gifts to minister to others. Assemblies should be occasions to encourage each member to minister to others out of love for others (See 1 Co 13: 1-13; Js 2:14-26). Those

who do not want to work will often stay away from assemblies that focus on motivating one's heart with the gospel. Regardless of how we conduct our assemblies, we must keep in mind that the directive of Hebrews 10:24,25 must be accomplished. Love must be generated and works must be stirred up by the gospel.

We worship God both in our hearts and in the behavior of our lives (Rm 12:1). Since God is the one we worship, we must worship Him according to His instructions. There are few instructions in the New Testament concerning how the actual assembly of the disciples should be conducted, though we have some examples of how the early disciples assembled. A general principle for conducting an assembly that is directed specifically for worship is stated in 1 Corinthians 14:40: *"Let all things be done decently and in order."* This at least means that the assembly of gospel-obedient disciples must not become an occasion for chaos. Assemblies must not be an opportunity for any member to emotionally lose control of themselves and cause confusion.

When Christians come together to worship, they do not come together to please themselves or to carry on with their own inventions of worship behavior. We must remember that worship is directed to God. It is He who instructs, *"The true worshipers will worship the*

Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (Jn 4:23). The religious world is filled with those who seek to worship according to their own desires. However, the Father is seeking those who will worship Him according to the instructions of His word.

We must not forget that the assembly of the saints is for the edification of the disciples. It is a time of celebration, a time to remember the Lord's death for our sins and resurrection for our hope. It is thus a time to take the opportunity to celebrate the gospel around the Lord's Supper (At 20:7). It is an opportunity to speak to one another in songs (Ep 5:19; Cl 3:16). It is an opportunity for discussing the word of God (At 20:7). It is a time to contribute to special needs that the members have decided to accomplish as a group (1 Co 16:1,2). It is also a time when Christians can join together in prayer (At 4:23-31). The Sunday assembly of gospel-obedient disciples, therefore, should be a time of great fellowship and encouragement for all the members.

When worshipful disciples come together in assembly, they naturally worship God as a group. One individual member, therefore, must not use the occasion to show pride or call attention to himself. One must not use the occasion to exalt himself above others. God is the focus of our attention in our assembled worship. Our worship, therefore, must be based on the

principles of love that the Holy Spirit revealed in **1 Corinthians 13**.

There are no directions of order in the New Testament concerning how an assembly of disciples is to be conducted. God, therefore, expects us to use our common sense in order to determine what to do. We are thus free to make decisions concerning how to conduct ourselves when we come together in assembly.

GOSPEL GIVING

Contributing money or things to help others, and to help others preach the gospel to the lost, is an opportunity to reveal that we are living according to the gospel. It is a way we can express our gratitude for the gospel. Therefore, we must take every opportunity to do good (Gl 6:10). As givers, we must be ready at all times to give when occasions arise for which sacrificial giving must come from us as Jesus sacrificially gave to us. In the New Testament, there are many examples of Christians giving to special needs.

- **Acts 4:32-37** is an example of Christians giving to help those in need in the city of Jerusalem.
- **Acts 6:1-7** is an example of Christians making a regular distribution to the widows of the church (See 1 Tm 5:8-11).
- **1 Corinthians 16:1-4** is an example of Christians giving money to fulfill a special need. The Corin-

thians were helping Christians who were suffering from famine in the area of Judea.

- **2 Corinthians 8:1-4** is an example of saints in many areas working together in fellowship with one another in order to give to others in need.
- **Philippians 4:10-18** is an example of Christians giving for the purpose of supporting evangelists (See 2 Co 11:7-9; 3 Jn 5-8).

Mentioned above are many things for which the disciples can join together in order to support. They can join together in order to support evangelists to go to unevangelized areas. They must take care of orphans and widows (Js 1:27). The important thing to remember is that **gospel-obedient disciples must make sacrificial contributions, and they must make such contributions cheerfully** (2 Co 9:6,7). This is the spirit of the gospel, for Jesus sacrificially gave up heaven for us (See Ph 2:5-8). From the very beginning of the assembly of the disciples, contributions need to begin in order that the gospel be preached to the world (See Ph 4:15-17).

GOSPEL PROCLAIMING

As disciples of Jesus, we should desire that others join with us in our journey to eternal life. We should thus teach others the gospel road map to heaven. However, when we preach the gospel, Satan will fight against us. There will al-

ways be those who will persecute those who work for Jesus. They will persecute the disciples of Jesus in order that they be discouraged about preaching the gospel to the lost. Regardless of persecution, however, we must remember Paul's words, "*For woe is me if I do not preach the gospel*" (1 Co 9:16). Paul had to preach the gospel because it was the gospel that he was living (Gl 2:20).

Persecuted For Jesus

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for in the same manner they persecuted the prophets who were before you (Mt 5:10-12).

Regardless of persecution and mocking, we must preach the gospel to our communities. Jesus commanded that we preach the gospel to everyone (Mk 16:15). He taught that we must go to all nations (Mt 28:19,20). This is exactly what the early Christians did. "*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ*" (At 5:42). This is exactly what we must do also. The early disciples went everywhere preaching the

word of the gospel (At 8:4). They did so because they sincerely believed that people must obey the gospel in order to be saved.

An example of evangelistic outreach was the work of the disciples in both Philippi and Thessalonica. The Philippian disciples were only a few weeks old in the faith when they started sending regular support to evangelists who preached in other areas (Ph 4:15-17). From the very beginning of their lives as disciples, the Thessalonians likewise sent forth word of the gospel, not only in their region, but also in every place (1 Th 1:5-10). The only qualification for preaching the gospel is knowing and obeying the gospel. Since everyone who has obeyed the gospel knows the gospel, then our knowledge makes us responsible to preach the gospel to others. For this reason, "**Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season" to preach the gospel (2 Tm 4:2).

SCRIPTURE READING: Lk 10:25-37; At 4:32-37; 6:1-7; Ph 4:10-18; 1 Th 1:2-10; 1 Jn 3:16-23

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH: Giving: Mt 19:21; At 20:32-35; 2 Co 9; Gl 2:10; 6:10; Ep 4:28

Chapter 29 GOSPEL COMMITMENT

The word "commitment" frightens many people because they know that God expects of them more than what they are often willing to give. But commitment to God should not frighten us. It will not if

we love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Mk 12:30). If we do love God, then we must be committed to move into action for Jesus. Paul wrote, *“For the love of Christ compels us”* (2 Co 5:14). When one realizes what God has done for him through the gospel of His grace, he should do as Paul: ***“His grace toward me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me”*** (1 Co 15:10). Paul was moved into action because he realized the tremendous grace of God that was shown to him through the gospel of the cross of Jesus. Listen to his words in 2 Corinthians 4:15: *“For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace that is reaching many people may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.”* The more we appreciate the grace of God in saving us, the more we are moved to work for Jesus (1 Jn 4:19).

We must not forget the words of Jesus: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven”* (Mt 7:21). If one truly

loves Jesus, he or she will take up the cross and follow Him (Lk 9:23).

The gospel inspires obedience. Jesus became the author of eternal salvation **only for those who obey Him** (Hb 5:8,9). If we love Him, **we will keep His commandments** (Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 5:3). Heaven, therefore, is prepared for those who love God so much that they are moved into action to preach the gospel to the glory of God.

We must totally surrender our lives to Jesus. We must commit ourselves to trust totally in God. God loves all people and is not willing that any should perish (2 Pt 3:9). However, He is a just God. In other words, He will not bless those who curse Him by rebellious living. Jesus said, *“Whoever will confess Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever will deny Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven”* (Mt 10:32,33). Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to those who deny themselves in order to live and preach the gospel of His eternal offering for all people (See Hb 2:10; 5:9; 12:2; Rv 14:13).

THE GOSPEL OPPORTUNITY!

If you have not obeyed the gospel, **find someone immediately to immerse you into Christ in order to come into contact with the sanctifying blood of Jesus.** After this, go out and tell others about what you have done. Speak to others about the grace of God that was revealed on the cross and has given you freedom in Christ (Gl 5:1; Ti 2:11). Tell them how you responded to the grace of God by obedience to the gospel in baptism (Rm 6:3-6; Cl 2:11-13). Encourage others to join with you in this new life in Christ. When one obeys the gospel, he or she can tell others what Paul told us about his life: *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me”* (Gl 2:20).

We must not allow opposition to discourage us. We must remember what Paul said to Timothy, **“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution”** (2 Tm 3:12). Every disciple will suffer persecution. However, we must be as the apostles when they were persecuted. We must rejoice that we are *“counted worthy to suffer shame for His [Jesus’] name”* (At 5:41). The Bible encourages, *“Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter”* (1 Pt 4:16). We must fight the good fight of the faith (1 Tm 6:12). Gospel-obedient believers are headed for eternal dwelling in the presence of the eternal God. God is working for us in all things in order to bring about that which is good (Read Rm 8:31-39).

YOUR GOSPEL JOURNEY

THE GOSPEL MISSION

Mark 16:15,16

THE GOSPEL FAITH

John 5:24; 20:30,31

THE GOSPEL CONFESSION

Matthew 10:32,33; Romans 10:8-10

THE GOSPEL REPENTANT

Luke 13:3

THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

Acts 2:37,38; 16:30-33

THE GOSPEL QUESTION:

1 Peter 4:17

THE GOSPEL ANSWER:

2 Thessalonians 1:7,8

THE GOSPEL REWARD

Matthew 25:34

GLOSSARY OF KEY WORDS

- Apostle:** One who has left home and is sent out by either Jesus or the church in order to accomplish a specific mission for either Jesus or the church.
- Atonement:** The offense is appeased that caused the separation of two parties in order that they once again come together.
- Christian:** To be "of Christ," and thus identified in name as belonging to Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- Covenant:** An agreement based on conditions between two parties where both parties enjoy the benefits of the covenant relationship as long as both parties comply with the conditions of the covenant.
- Disciple:** A follower of one whom the disciple has submitted himself to learn.
- Fellowship:** The joint partnership of those who have committed themselves to walk in harmony with one another in order to accomplish the purpose of their fellowship.
- Grace:** That which is given by another, but is not merited or earned by the one who enjoys the pardon of all transgressions.
- Greek Kingdom:** Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C., thus ending his Middle East control by the Greeks.
- Headmaster:** An educational tutor under whose care a student is entrusted in order that the student be brought to a required standard of education.
- Heart:** The emotional energy that motivates one into making a decision, and subsequently acting upon that decision. One who is motivated by the heart of God acts upon what God did for him at the cross.
- Incarnation:** The Son of God was first with God in spirit, but was revealed on earth in the flesh of man (See Jn 1:1,2,14; Ph 2:6,7).
- Inspiration:** Recording without error that which is either given by revelation, historically known, or personally experienced.
- Justification:** A legal term used when one was pronounced innocent of a crime for which he should have received just punishment. The defendant was thus set free because he was shown mercy by the judge.
- Medo-Persian Kingdom:** Conquered by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C.
- Mount Sinai:** The mountain to which Israel went after the nation's initial freedom from Egyptian captivity. At this location, God establish a covenant with the nation, and then revealed the law of the covenant around 1445 B.C.
- Nebuchadnezzar:** King of Babylon who reigned from 605 to 562 B.C.
- Passover/Pentecost:** The Jews' feast during which the nation celebrated their deliverance from Egyptian captivity. Pentecost was the day after (Sunday) of seven consecutive weeks from the Passover.
- Pentecost of A.D. 30:** Herod the Great died in 4 B.C. Jesus was born within two years before His death (Mt 2:16). Jesus was about 30 years old when He begin His ministry (Lk 3:23). His ministry was about three and a half years, and thus He was crucified in A.D. 30 when He was 33/34 years old. The church was established on the Pentecost of A.D. 30.
- Reconciliation:** Two parties are reunited with one another when atonement is made for that which caused their separation. The parties are thus brought into fellowship with one another and God.
- Redemption:** The redeemed are purchased for freedom. Redemption infers that one cannot pay for his own freedom, and thus, another party must pay the redemption price for freedom.
- Revelation:** Truth from God that is unveiled to man that man by no other means could have known.
- Rome:** The city of Rome, the capital of the Roman Kingdom, fell in A.D. 476.
- Sanctification:** Cleansed of that which made one impure. In our relationship with God, the impurity of sin was cleansed by the blood of Jesus, and thus we are justified righteous before God.
- Standard:** The measure by which one seeks to guide his life, or the measure or rule by which God seeks to direct the lives of those who have committed themselves to follow Him.
- Unleavened bread:** Making unleavened bread for the Lord's Supper is not difficult. With some flour of some grain, mix a little oil and a pinch of salt. Add a raw egg if desired, and according to the amount of bread one is making. Roll the mixture flat, and then bake slowly in a pan over an open fire, occasionally turning the bread in the pan. If there is an oven available, then bake slowly until the bread is lightly browned on the outside.

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ENCYCLOPEDIA STUDY GUIDE

BAPTISM

(Obedience to the gospel)

The English word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo* which means "to dip," "plunge," "immerse," or "overwhelm."

A. Definition of baptism (immersion):

1. One is buried by immersion (Rm 6:4).
2. One is buried with Christ (Cl 2:12).
3. Much water is required for immersion (Jn 3:23).

B. Candidates for immersion:

1. For those who are taught (Mt 28:19,20; Jn 6:45).
2. For those who believe (Mk 16:16; At 2:36-38; 8:36,37; 16:30-33).
3. For repentant believers (At 2:36-38,41; 3:19).
4. For men and women (At 8:12).

C. Reasons for immersion:

1. To become a new man (Rm 6:4,5).
2. To be in Christ (Rm 6:3; Gl 3:26,27).
3. To put on Christ (Gl 3:27).
4. To be of Christ (1 Co 1:12,13).
5. To be regenerated (Ti 3:5).
6. To be washed of sin (At 22:16).
7. To receive remission of sins (At 2:38).
8. To be saved (Mk 16:16; 1 Pt 3:21).
9. To be freed from condemnation (Mk 16:16).

D. Examples of immersion:

1. The Jews on Pentecost (At 2:31-47).
2. The Samaritans (At 8:5-13).
3. The Ethiopian eunuch (At 8:26-40).
4. Saul of Tarsus (At 9:10-19).
5. Cornelius and his household (At 10:24-48).
6. Lydia and her household (At 16:13-15).
7. The Philippian jailor (At 16:25-34).
8. The Corinthians (At 18:8).
9. The Ephesians (At 19:1-5).

E. Spiritual blessings of baptism into Christ:

1. Forgiveness of sins (Ep 1:7).
2. Redemption (Rm 3:24; Cl 1:14).
3. Becoming a new creation (2 Co 5:17).
4. Joining all sons of God (Gl 3:26,27).
5. Eternal life (1 Jn 5:11).
6. Receiving seal of the Spirit (Ep 1:13).
7. State of no condemnation (Rm 8:1).
8. Sanctification from sin (1 Co 1:2; 6:9-11).
9. Salvation (2 Tm 2:10).

BENEVOLENCE

Benevolence is one's goodwill toward his fellow man without expecting repayment. One manifests his love for his neighbor by showing benevolent mercy toward others.

A. Commandments concerning benevolence:

1. Help orphans and widows (Jn 1:27).
2. Remember the poor (Mt 19:21; Gl 2:10).
3. Give to the needy (At 4:34,35; Ep 4:28).
4. Help the saints (1 Co 16:1,2; Gl 6:10).
5. Help brothers in need (1 Jn 3:16-23).

B. Examples of benevolence:

1. Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).
2. Benevolence of the early Christians (At 2:45; 4:32-37; 6:1-6; 1 Co 16:1,2; 2 Co 9).
3. Benevolence of the Philippians (2Co 8:1-4; Ph 4:14-18).

C. Rewards for being benevolent:

1. Produces rewards to come (1 Tm 6:17-19).
2. Produces blessedness (At 20:32-35).
3. Enriches one's life (Pv 11:25; Is 58:10,11).
4. Exemplifies God's grace (Rm 12:6,13).
5. Brings reward in life (Lk 6:38).
6. Produces happiness (Jn 13:17).

BLOOD

The significance of a blood sacrifice is based on the fact that life is offered for the saving of another life. In the spiritual realm, sacrificial death takes place in order that another might have eternal life.

A. Old Testament blood offering of animals:

1. Life is in the blood (Lv 17:11).
2. No forgiveness without shedding of blood (Hb 9:22).
3. Animal blood was offered for atonement (Lv 17:11).
4. Animal life was offered to ratify a covenant between man and God (Hb 9:19,20).
5. Blood sacrifice was offered annually (Hb 9:7).
6. Animal sacrifice could not produce forgiveness of sins (Hb 10:1-4).

B. New Testament blood offering of Jesus:

1. Jesus offered His blood only once for all men for all time (Rm 3:25; Hb 9:15,25-28).
2. New covenant instituted by the sacrificial blood of Jesus (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24).
3. We eat and drink Jesus blood (Jn 6:53-56).
4. We commune with Jesus' blood (1 Co 10:16).
5. Brought near to God by Jesus' blood (Ep 2:13).
6. Set free by Jesus' blood (Rv 1:5).
7. Justified by Jesus' blood (Rm 5:9).
8. Atoning sacrifice accomplished by Jesus' blood (Rm 3:25).
9. Redeemed by Jesus' blood (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14; Hb 9:12).
10. Peace with God through Jesus' blood (Cl 1:20).
11. Cleansed by Jesus' blood (Hb 13:12; 1 Jn 1:7; Rv 7:14).
12. Bought by Jesus' sacrificial blood (At 20:28; 1 Co 6:19,20; 1 Pt 1:18,19).
13. Victorious over death by Jesus' blood (Rv 12:11).
14. Enter holy place through Jesus' blood (Hb 10:19).
15. One can turn from Jesus' blood (Hb 10:29).

COMING OF JESUS

The Greek word *parousia* is often translated "coming" in the English Bible. The word means "presence." Jesus'

presence (coming) was manifested "in time" in judgment on Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He will be bodily revealed at the end of time when He comes again.

A. Events of Jesus' final coming:

1. He will come (Jn 6:40,44).
2. He will come quickly (1 Th 5:2).
3. He will descend with a shout (1 Th 4:16).
4. He will come at sound of trumpet (1 Co 15:52).
5. He will be seen by every eye (Rv 1:7).
6. He will come in the clouds (At 1:9-11).
7. He will come with fire (2 Th 1:7-9).
8. He will come with angels (Mt 25:31; 2 Th 1:7-9).
9. He will bring the souls of saints (1 Th 3:13; 4:14).
10. He will raise the dead (Jn 5:28,29).
11. He will bodily change Christians (1 Co 15:52).
12. He will reunite the souls of the righteous with their resurrected bodies (1 Th 4:14-16).
13. He will judge the living (Jn 12:48).
14. He will take righteous to heaven (1Th 4:16,17).
15. Earth and heavens will pass away (2 Pt 3:9-11).
16. Satan, his angels and the wicked will be cast into the destruction of hell (Mt 25:41; 2 Th 1:7-9).

B. Time of Jesus' final coming:

1. He will come at an unexpected time (1 Th 5:2,3).
2. He will come as a thief (1 Th 5:2).
3. He will come at the last trumpet (1 Co 15:51,52).
4. He will come at an unknown time (Mt 24:27,26).
5. He will come regardless of scoffers (2 Pt 3:3,4).

C. Why Jesus is coming again:

1. Coming to enlighten hidden things (1 Co 4:5).
2. Coming to take vengeance (2 Th 1:7-9).
3. Coming for the bodies of dead saints (1 Th 4:16).
4. Coming for living saints (1 Th 4:17).
5. Coming to execute judgment (2 Tm 4:1; Jd 14).
6. Coming to resurrect the dead (Jn 5:28,29; 1 Co 15:50-58).
7. Coming to destroy death (1 Co 15:24-26).
8. Coming to reward saints (Mt 16:27; Jn 5:28,29; 2 Tm 4:6-8).
9. Coming to glorify saints (Ph 3:20,21).
10. Coming to reveal glory to saints (Rm 8:18).

D. Attitude toward Jesus' final coming:

1. We should pray for His coming (Rv 22:20).
2. We should love His coming (2 Tm 4:8).
3. We should look for His coming (Ph 3:20,21; Ti 2:13; Hb 9:28).
4. We should wait for His coming (1 Co 1:7; 1 Th 1:10).
5. We should have confidence in His coming (1 Jn 2:28).
6. We should be ready for His coming (Mt 25:1-13).
7. We should desire His coming (2 Pt 3:12).
8. We should find comfort in His coming (2 Th 1:7).
9. We should hope for His coming (1 Pt 1:13).
10. We should look forward to receive Him (1 Pt 4:13).

COVENANT

A covenant is an agreement between two parties that is based on conditions. Christians are in a covenant relationship with God through Jesus. In the Lord's Supper Christians remember this covenant.

A. Examples of covenants between God and man:

1. God's covenant with Noah (Gn 6:18).
2. God's covenant with all mankind (Gn 9:9-16).
3. God's covenant with Abraham (Gn 15:18; 17:2-21).
4. God's covenant with Israel (Ex 6:4,5; 34:10-28).
5. God's covenant with David (2 Ch 7:18).

B. God's covenant with Christians:

1. Prophecy of new covenant (Jr 31:31-34; Hb 8:8).
2. Christians are in a new covenant (Hb 8:13).
3. Jesus is mediator of the new covenant (Hb 8:6; 12:24).
4. Jesus offered blood for the new covenant (Mt 26:26-28; Hb 13:20).
5. We have an everlasting covenant (Hb 13:20).

**CROSS
(Crucifixion)**

Death by nailing on a cross of wood was a common means of Roman execution. The Greek word *stauros* referred to an upright stake on which malefactors were commonly executed by the Roman government.

A. Prophecy of the cross (crucifixion):

1. The cross was planned before creation (Rv 13:8).
2. Jesus would crush Satan (Gn 3:15).
3. Jesus would suffer for our sins (Is 53).
4. Events of the cross were foretold (Ps 22).

B. The event of the cross:

1. Account of the crucifixion (Mt 27; Mk 15; Lk 23; Jn 19).
2. Jesus died before witnesses (At 26:26).
3. His death witnessed to His sonship (Mt 27:54).
4. Jesus willingly died (Jn 3:14-16; 8:28; 10:18).
5. He was cursed for our sake (2 Co 5:21; Gl 3:13).
6. He endured the cross for the joy after it (Hb 12:2).
7. He humbled Himself to death on the cross (Ph 2:5-8).

C. Purpose of the cross:

1. To take away sins (Jn 1:29; Hb 2:9).
2. To bear our sins in His body (2 Co 5:21; 1 Pt 2:24).
3. To save us from our sins (Mt 1:20,21).
4. To wash us of our sins (1 Jn 1:7; Rv 1:5).
5. To reveal God's grace (Ti 2:11).
6. To redeem us (Ti 2:14).
7. To reconcile us to God through Jesus (Rm 5:8-10; Ep 2:14-16).
8. To establish a covenant (Mt 26:28).
9. To purchase the church (At 20:28).

D. Effect of the cross:

1. It is the power of God to salvation (1 Co 1:18-24).
2. Christians boast in the cross (Gl 6:14).
3. Christians preach the cross (1 Co 2:2).
4. Because of the cross of Jesus, Christians bear their own cross (Mt 10:38; 16:24,25; Lk 9:23; Gl 2:20; 5:24; 6:14).

DEATH

We must physically die because we have been separated from the tree of life. In physical death the body and spirit are separated. Death is the loss of life as the result of a separation of the body and spirit.

A. Description of physical death:

1. Death is an appointment (Hb 9:27).
2. Death is a necessity (1 Co 15:22).
3. Death was the result of Adam's sin (Gn 3:22; 1 Co 15:21).
4. Death is a termination of the present physical body (1 Co 15:51,52).
5. Death is a sleep of the body (Jn 11:11-14; At 7:60; 13:36; 1 Th 4:13-18).
6. Death is being unclothed with the physical body (2 Co 5:1-8).
7. Death is a separation of spirit and body (Js 2:26).
8. Death is giving up the spirit (Gn 25:8; At 5:10).
9. Death results in return of spirit to God (Ec 12:7).
10. Death results in a return of the body to dust (Gn 3:19; Ec 12:7).
11. Death is the perishing of our earthly tabernacle (2 Co 5:1; 2 Pt 1:13,14).
12. Death results in our departure from this world (Ph 1:23; 2 Tm 4:6).

B. The Christian and physical death:

1. Death of the saint is noticed by God (Ps 115:15).
2. Death is a rest for the Christian (Rv 14:13).
3. Death in order to be with Jesus is better for the Christian (Ec 7:1; Ph 1:23).
4. Death is gain for the Christian (Ph 1:21).
5. Death is victory for Christian (1 Co 15:50-57).
6. Death is not without hope (Ph 3:12-14; 1 Th 4:13-18; Ti 1:2; Hb 6:18,19).
7. Death will be destroyed by the resurrection (1 Co 15:26; Rv 20:11-15).

C. Description of spiritual death:

1. It is the result of sin (Rm 6:23; Is 59:2).
2. It is the result of separation from God (Is 59:1,2; 2 Th 1:9).
3. It is the state of the wicked (Mt 25:41,46).
4. It will lead to the second death when Jesus comes again (Rv 20:14; 21:8).
5. It will result in eternal destruction (2 Th 1:7-9; Rv 20:13-17).
6. It does not affect the Christian (Jn 8:51,52).

D. Description of the second death:

1. It is the final separation from God (Rv 20:6).
2. It is being cast into destruction (Rv 20:14).
3. Christians will not suffer the second death (Rv 2:11).
4. The wicked will suffer the second death (Rv 21:8).

DEMONS

In the New Testament, demons are also referred to as unclean spirits, evil spirits, and the devil's angels. God allowed demons to possess people in the first century in order to manifest the authority and power of Jesus and His disciples over Satan's kingdom.

A. Cases of demon possession:

1. Matthew 8:28-34 (Mk 5:1-20; Lk 8:26-39)
2. Luke 8:1-3
3. Matthew 9:32-34
4. Matthew 12:22,23 (Mk 3:20-27)
5. Matthew 15:21-23 (Mk 7:24-30)
6. Matthew 17:14-21 (Mk 9:17-29; Lk 9:37-43)
7. Luke 4:33-37 (Mk 1:21-28,32-34)

8. Acts 8:7
 9. Acts 16:16-18
 10. Acts 19:13-16
- B. Intelligence of demons:**
1. They recognized the final judgment (Mt 8:29; 25:41; Mk 1:24; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).
 2. They believed in God (Lk 8:28; Js 2:19).
 3. They recognized the deity of Jesus (Mt 8:29; Mk 1:24; Lk 4:34).
 4. They recognized the power and authority of Jesus (Mt 8:29; Mk 45:6,7; Lk 8:31).
 5. They recognized they were headed for destruction (Mk 1:24; Lk 4:33-36; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).
- C. Biblical definition of demon possession:**
1. Demons could understand the prophecies of their own doom (Mt 8:29).
 2. Demons could speak (Mk 1:34).
 3. Demons could carry on a coherent conversation (Mk 5:7).
 4. Demons could obey (Mt 8:16; 17:18).
 5. Demons could entreat (Lk 8:31).
 6. Demons had intellectual abilities (Mt 8:29; Mk 1:24).
 7. Some demons enhanced the physical strength of those they possessed (Lk 8:29).
 8. Some demons possibly caused physical deformities (Lk 13:11-17).
 9. Some demons possibly caused blindness (Mt 9:32,33).
 10. Some demons possibly caused dumbness (Mk 9:17,25).
 11. Some demons possibly drove the individual they possessed to suicidal mania (Mk 9:22).
 12. Some demons possibly caused mental disorders (Mt 8:28,29; Lk 8:26-36).
 13. Demons could easily be cast out by the word of Jesus (Mt 17:18; Lk 9:41,42).
 14. Demons could easily be cast out by Jesus' disciples (Lk 10:17; At 16:16-18; 19:11,12).
 15. Demons could pass through "waterless places" and not find rest (Mt 12:43-45).
 16. Demons could leave men and enter animals (Mt 5:12-14).
 17. Demons indwelt ordinary people who did not practice occult religions that promoted psychological and mental control which people today call demon possession. This seems to be the case of Mark 9:14-29. The possessed son had been troubled with an unclean spirit from childhood.
 18. Demons recognized and confessed the Son of God (Lk 8:28).
 19. Demons confessed the one true God (Lk 8:28).
- D. Characteristics of Bible exorcism:**
1. Exorcism was in the name of Jesus (Lk 10:17; At 16:18).
 2. Exorcism was by word only (Mt 8:16).
 3. Exorcism was by the finger of God (Lk 11:20).
 4. Exorcism was by command (At 16:18; 19:13-15).
 5. Exorcism was a miraculous work (At 8:7,13).
 6. Exorcism was worked only by Jesus and His disciples in the first century (Mt 9:32-34; Mk 9:38-41; 16:17; Lk 10:17-20).

FAITH

Faith (Gr., *pistis*) is a conscious belief in that which is beyond one's empirical world. Superstition is belief without evidence, whereas faith is based on evidence.

A. Description of obedient faith:

1. Faith is evidence of unseen things (Hb 11:1).
2. Faith is complete assurance (Rm 4:20,21).
3. Faith is a work (Jn 6:29; 1 Th 1:3).
4. Faith originates in the heart (Rm 10:9,10).
5. Faith works through love (Gl 5:6).
6. Faith hearkens to God's will (Rm 10:16).
7. Faith obeys (Rm 10:16; Hb 11:4-31).
8. Faith without works is dead (Js 2:14-26).
9. Faith is not walking on the foundation of the things we experience (Jn 20:24-29; 2 Co 5:7).

B. Sources of obedient faith:

1. Faith comes by hearing and believing God's word (Jn 17:20; Rm 10:17).
2. Jesus is the author of faith (Hb 12:2).
3. Jesus' life and works produce faith (Jn 20:30,31).
4. Faith stands in the power of God (1 Co 2:5).
5. Faith comes by following heroes of faith (Hb 11).

C. Necessity of obedient faith:

1. Necessary to believe (Jn 8:24).
2. Necessary for salvation (Mk 16:16; Jn 3:16-18).
3. Necessary for remission of sins (At 10:43).
4. Necessary to please God (Hb 11:6).
5. Necessary for eternal life (Jn 3:36).
6. Necessary for justification (At 13:39).

D. Results of obedient faith:

1. Peace (Rm 5:1).
2. Sanctification (At 15:9).
3. Justification (Rm 3:27,28).
4. Life in Christ (Jn 20:31).
5. Eternal life (Jn 3:16; 6:47; 20:31).
6. Obedience to the gospel (At 16:15).

E. Examples of obedient faith:

1. Old Testament patriarchs (Hb 11).
2. Jesus (Jn 13:1-17).
3. Moses (Hb 3:2-5).
4. The Wise Steward (Lk 12:41-48).
5. Multi-talented people (Mt 25:14-30).
6. The centurion (Mt 8:5-13; 9:20-29).
7. Christians who stand faithful (1 Co 4:1ff; 15:58; 16:13; Ep 6:10; Ti 2:10; Rv 2:10).

FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness refers to one's dependence on the grace of God by remaining true to the conditions of the covenant one has established with God.

A. God is faithful ...

1. ... to those He calls (1 Th 5:24).
2. ... to forgive sin (1 Jn 1:9).
3. ... to provide a way of escape (1 Co 10:13).
4. ... to protect us from evil (Ps 31:23; 2 Th 3:3).
5. ... to keep His promises (1 Co 1:9; Hb 10:23).
6. ... to establish the saints (2 Th 3:3).

B. We must be faithful:

1. Faithfulness required (Lk 16:10-12; 1 Co 4:2).
2. Faithful stewards (Mt 24:45-49; Ti 2:10).

3. Faithful servants (Mt 25:14-23; Ep 6:5-9).
 4. Faithful over small things (Lk 19:17).
 5. Faithful Christians preach gospel (2 Tm 2:2).
 6. Faithful unto death (Rv 2:10; 17:14).
 7. Faithful wives (1 Tm 3:11).
- C. Examples of faithfulness:**
1. Jesus (Hb 3:2).
 2. Abraham (Gl 3:9).
 3. Timothy (1 Co 4:17).
 4. Tychicus (Ep 6:21; Cl 4:7).
 5. Epaphras (Cl 1:7).
 6. Onesimus (Cl 4:9).
 7. Moses (Nm 12:7; Hb 3:5).
 8. Antipas (Rv 2:13).
- D. Christians must be faithful in ...**
1. ... caring for orphans and widows (Js 1:27).
 2. ... helping others (Gl 6:2).
 3. ... giving to others (Mt 6:1-4; 10:8; 1 Co 16:1,2).
 4. ... assembling with saints (Hb 10:24,25).
 5. ... prayer (1 Th 5:17).
 6. ... teaching (1 Pt 3:15).
- E. Rewards of the faithful:**
1. Crown of life (Rv 2:10).
 2. Enter the presence of the Lord (Mt 25:21).
 3. Abound with blessings (Pv 28:20).

FAMILY

God's purpose for the family is to produce citizens of this world who will be able to cohabit with one another in life. The family is an institution of God that is based upon divine principles that must not be violated.

A. Principles concerning marriage:

1. God instituted one man for one woman for life (Gn 2:18,21-24; 3:16; Mt 19:4-8).
2. God allows putting away of spouse if fornication is committed (Mt 5:31,32; 19:3-9; Mk 10:2-12; Lk 16:18; Rm 7:1-3; 1 Co 7:1-7).
3. God allows separation when living together is impossible (1 Co 7:10-17).
4. Deserted believer is not under bondage (1 Co 7:15).
5. Sexual relations outside marriage is adultery (Rm 7:1-3).

B. Responsibilities of family members:

1. The husband is the head of the wife (Ep 5:23).
2. Husbands must love their wives (Ep 5:25).
3. Wives are to be in subjection to husbands for the sake of the children (Ep 5:22; Cl 3:18).
4. Wives are to love husbands and children (Ti 2:4).
5. Wives are to be keepers of the home (Ti 2:5).
6. Wives follow husbands (1 Co 9:5; 1 Pt 3:5,6).
7. Children must be obedient to parents (Ep 6:1; Cl 3:20).
8. Fathers must admonish children (Ps 22:6; Ep 6:4).
9. Parents are to teach children (Dt 6:1-9; Pv 22:6).

FASTING

Fasting is the depriving of the body of either food or drink in order to focus one's attention on the spiritual nature of man. Fasting is not a command. It is often coupled with prayer in order to manifest one's dependence on God's help.

A. Fasting in the Old Testament:

(Jg 20:26; 1 Sm 7:6; 2 Sm 12:21-23; Ez 8:23; Ne 1:4; Et 4:16; Ps 35:13; 69:10; 109:24; Is 58:3,4; Jr 14:12; Dn 9:3; Jl 2:12).

B. Fasting in the New Testament:

1. Fasting is a ministry (Lk 2:37).
2. Jesus fasted forty days (Mt 4:2).
3. The Pharisees and John's disciples fasted (Mt 9:14,15; Mk 2:18; Lk 5:33-35; 18:12).
4. The early Christians fasted (At 13:1-3).
5. Jesus taught His disciples to fast (Mk 9:29).
6. Jesus gave instructions on fasting (Mt 6:16-18).

FEAR

Fear of God is a positive attitude in one's life, whereas fear of that which is in life is a negative attitude that works against faith. Faith and love work against fear.

A. The things that men fear:

1. Fear of God (Gn 42:18; Ps 19:9; 34:9; 36:1; 111:10; Ec 12:13; Mt 10:28; 1 Pt 2:17).
2. Fear of man (Pv 29:25; Jn 9:22; At 5:26).
3. Fear of death (Ps 23:4; Hb 2:15).

B. Biblical exhortations concerning fear:

1. Do not fear (Is 35:4; Mt 1:20; 10:31; 28:5; Lk 12:32; At 27:24; 2 Tm 1:7; Hb 13:6; Rv 2:10).
2. Godly fear (Hb 5:7).
3. Fear promotes obedience (Lv 25:17,36,43; Dt 6:13-15; 7:4; At 10:35; 13:16,26; 2 Co 5:10; Rv 14:9,10).
4. Necessary fear (Rm 11:20; Hb 4:1).
5. Cases of fear (Gn 22:12; 28:16,17; 42:18; Ex 1:17,21; 9:20; Mk 5:33; At 10:2; Hb 11:7).

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is the release from the mind and heart of the feelings of resentment toward an offender, which feelings, if continued, will hinder the spiritual and emotional growth of the offended.

A. God's forgiveness:

1. God is ready to forgive our sins (Ps 86:5).
2. God forgives trespasses (Cl 2:13; 1 Jn 2:12).
3. God forgives all manner of sin (Mt 12:31).
4. Sin against Spirit is not forgiven (Mt 12:31).
5. God remembers sin no more (Hb 10:17).
6. God forgives for Christ's sake (Ep 4:32).
7. Forgiveness is in Christ (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14).
8. Confessed sin is forgiven (1 Jn 1:9).
9. God forgives those who forgive (Mt 6:14,15).
10. Jesus forgave sin when on earth (Mt 9:6).

B. Christians' forgiveness of one another:

1. Blessed are the merciful (Mt 5:7; Lk 6:35-37).
2. Do not resist evil (Mt 5:39-46; Lk 6:27-34).
3. Forgive as we have been forgiven (Mt 6:12).
4. Forgive to be forgiven (Mt 6:14,15; Mk 11:25).
5. Continually forgive (Mt 18:21-35).
6. Have a forgiving spirit (Ep 4:32).
7. Have a forbearing spirit (Cl 3:13).
8. Forgive the repentant (Mt 18:21,22; Lk 17:3,4).
9. Forgive enemies (Pv 24:17; 25:21; Rm 12:20).
10. Forgive persecutors (1 Co 4:12,13).

- Vengeance belongs to God (Rm 12:14,17-21; 1 Pt 3:9).

GIVING

Giving of oneself and one's possessions is an expression of one's appreciation and thanksgiving for his salvation by the grace of God.

A. The nature and reason for giving:

- We are entrusted with God's goods (Lk 16:1-13).
- We are to produce (Mt 25:14-30).
- We are to sacrifice our lives (Rm 12:1,2).
- We are to deny ourselves (Lk 9:23).
- We are to forsake world (Mt 6:34; 1 Jn 2:15).
- We are to crucify ourselves (Rm 6:6; Gl 2:19-21).
- We are to set our minds on things above (Cl 3:1,2).

B. Attitudes for giving:

- Give according to ability (1 Co 16:1,2).
- Give liberally (2 Co 9:6-15).
- Give in our poverty (Mk 12:42,43; 2 Co 8:1-4).
- Give cheerfully (Mt 10:8; Lk 6:38; 12:33; 2 Co 9:7).
- Give humbly (Mt 6:1-4).
- Give with purpose (At 11:29; 2 Co 8:3-12; 9:7).

C. What to give:

- Money (At 4:32-35; 1 Co 16:1,2; 2 Co 9).
- Material things (Ph 4:18,19).
- Ourselves (Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20).

D. When to give:

- When needs arise (Mt 5:42; 1 Co 16:1,2; Gl 6:10; Ep 4:28).
- On a regular basis for a purpose (1 Co 16:1-3).

E. Motives for giving:

- Because of love (1 Co 13:3; 1 Jn 3:17).
- Because it is more blessed to give (At 20:35).
- Because we are debtors to God (Rm 1:14).
- Because we want the gospel preached to the lost (At 2:34; Rm 10:14,15; 3 Jn 7,8).
- Because others need help (At 2:44,45; 4:32-37).
- Because we are commanded (1 Co 9:14).

GOD

All things exist because there is a Higher Power, God (Gr., *theos*) from which all things have originated. It is logical to assume that nothing exists that did not originate from God.

A. The nature of God:

- He is eternal (Ex 3:13,14; Ps 102:24-27; Is 57:15).
- He is all-knowing (omniscient) (Jb 37:16; Ps 139:2-4; 147:4,5; Mt 10:29,30; Rm 11:22-36).
- He is everywhere (omnipresent) (Jr 16:17; 23:23,24; Ps 139:8-12; At 17:28,29; Hb 4:13).
- He is all-powerful (omnipotent) (Gn 1:3,11; Ps 33:8,9; Jr 32:17; Is 40:21-31; Hb 13:5,6; Rv 11:17).
- He knows the hearts of all men (1 Kg 8:39; 1 Ch 23:9; Lk 16:15; At 1:24; Rm 8:27; Rv 2:23).
- He is unchangeable (Nm 23: 19; 1 Sm 15:29; Js 1:17).
- He is faithful (Is 49:7; Rm 3:3-5; 1 Co 1:9; 10:13; 1 Th 5:23,24; 2 Th 3:3; 1 Pt 4:19; 1 Jn 1).
- He is impartial (Dt 10:17; At 10:34,35; Rm 2:11).
- He is merciful (Mt 5:45; Lk 6:36; 15:11-24;

Rm 2:4).

- He is holy (Is 6:3; Js 1:13; 1 Pt 1:15,16; Rv 4:8).
- He is love (Jn 3:16; 1 Jn 3:1; 4:7,8,19).

B. Man's response to God's existence:

- We must create no other gods in our minds (Ex 20:1-6; At 14:8-15; 17:16-31; 1 Jn 5:21).
- We must seek God (Dt 4:29; Mt 6:33; At 17:27).
- We must trust God (Pv 2:6; 3:5; Mk 11:22; Hb 11:6).
- We must worship God (Dt 10:12,21; Ec 12:13; Jn 4:23,24; Hb 12:28,29).
- We must obey God (Jn 14:15; 15:14; 1 Jn 5:3).
- We must love God (Mt 22:37-40).

GRACE

Grace (Gr., *charis*) is the unmerited favor of God toward man that was made possible by the sacrificial offering of Jesus on the cross. Grace is thus the free gift of God because we cannot, through meritorious works or perfect keeping of law, earn God's favor and justification. God saves by grace because of our obedient response to Him by faith.

A. Origin of grace:

- Grace was given by God (Rm 15:15; Ep 2:8).
- Grace came through Jesus (Jn 1:17; Rm 1:5).
- Grace was revealed through Jesus (1 Co 1:4; Ep 4:7).
- Grace revealed on the cross (Ti 2:11; 2 Tm 1:9).
- Grace is accessed by faith (Rm 5:2).

B. Description of grace:

- It is great (At 4:33).
- It is glorious (Ep 1:6).
- It is abundant (Rm 5:15-20).
- It is the gift of God (Ep 2:8; 3:7).
- It is free (Rm 5:15).

C. Result of grace:

- God's unmerited favor toward man (Rm 5:8; Ep 2:4,8,9; Ti 2:11; 3:5).
- Justification from sin (Rm 3:23,24; Ti 3:7).
- Salvation (At 15:11; Rm 8:1; Ep 2:5-8).

D. Relationship between grace and salvation:

- We are saved by grace (Ep 2:5).
- We are justified by grace (Rm 3:23,24; Ti 3:7).
- We grow in grace (2 Co 8:7; 2 Pt 3:18).
- We stand in grace (Rm 5:2; 1 Pt 5:12).
- We continue in grace (At 13:43).
- We hope through grace (2 Th 2:16).
- We abound through grace (Rm 5:17; 2 Co 9:8).
- We are called by grace (Gl 1:15,16; 2 Tm 1:9).
- The humble receive grace (Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5).
- We can fall from grace (Gl 5:4).
- We must not turn grace into lascivious living (Rm 6:1,2; Jd 4).
- We cannot earn grace (At 13:39; Ep 2:9; Ti 3:4,5).
- We are taught to live godly (Ti 2:11,12).
- Grace causes thanksgiving (2 Co 4:15).

HEAVEN

Heaven is the future dwelling in eternity wherein the resurrected and redeemed will exist with a new body in the presence of God. It is in heaven that Jesus will dwell among His brethren.

A. The divine nature of heaven:

1. Dwelling place of God (Mt 6:9; 10:31,32; 18:10).
2. Dwelling place of Jesus (Hb 8:1; 9:24; 10:12).
3. Realm from where Jesus first came (Jn 16:28).
4. Dwelling place of angels (Mt 18:10).
5. Place of no flesh and blood (1 Co 15:50).

B. The spiritual nature of heaven:

1. Place of rest (2 Co 5:1-10; Hb 4:1-4,9-11, Rv 14:23).
2. Place of joy (Mt 25:21; Lk 15:7,10; Rv 21:4).
3. Place of no sorrow (Rv 7:16,17; 21:4).
4. Place of righteousness (2 Pt 3:13; Rv 22:15).
5. Place of glory (Rm 8:18; 2 Co 4:17; Cl 3:4).
6. Place of no death (Lk 20:35,36; Rv 20:14, 21:4).
7. It is eternal (Mt 25:46; 1 Th 4:17; Hb 5:9).

C. The purpose of heaven:

1. Reward for the obedient (Mt 5:11,12; Cl 3:24).
2. Inheritance for God's sons (Ep 1:14; Cl 1:12; 3:24; 1 Pt 1:4).
3. Immortality for the mortal (1 Co 15:42,50; 2 Co 5:4).
4. Crown of victory for the faithful (1 Co 9:24,25; 2 Tm 4:8; Js 1:12; 1 Pt 5:4; Rv 2:10).

D. Those who will inherit heaven:

1. The pure in heart (Mt 5:4-10).
2. The persecuted Christian (Mt 5:12; Rv 2:10).
3. The undefiled (Rv 21:27).
4. The moral believer (Gl 5:19-21; Rv 22:15).
5. Those who know God (2 Th 1:6-9).

HELL

The Greek word *gehenna* is translated "hell." The English word "hell" is also used in some translations to translate the word *hades*, a word that refers to the unseen state of the dead. *Gehenna* originally referred to the consumption of waste in the Valley of Hinnom outside the walls of Jerusalem.

A. Gehenna in the New Testament:

1. Jesus referred to *gehenna* (hell): (Mt 5:22,29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15; 23:33; Mk 9:45; Lk 12:5).
2. James referred to *gehenna* (Js 3:6).

B. Description of hell:

1. A place of punishment (Mt 25:46; Hb 10:29).
2. A place of condemnation (Mt 23:33; Jn 5:29).
3. A place of destruction (Mt 7:13,14; 2 Th 1:9).
4. A place of fiery torment (Mt 18:8; 25:41; Mk 9:48; Rv 19:20; 20:10,14,15; 21:8).
5. A place of darkness (Mt 8:12; 25:30; Jd 13).
6. A place of anguish (Mt 8:12; 25:30).

C. Occupants of hell:

1. Satan and his angels (Mt 25:41; see Mt 8:29; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).
2. Those who do not know God (2 Th 1:7-9).
3. Those who do not obey the gospel (2 Th 1:7-9).

HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the manifestation of God who works in and through Christians in this dispensation of time in order accomplish the work of God on earth through those who have obeyed the gospel.

A. References to the Holy Spirit:

1. Spirit (At 2:4; 1 Tm 4:1).
 2. Spirit of truth (Jn 14:17; 16:13).
 3. Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; 28:19).
 4. Spirit of God (1 Co 6:11; Ph 3:3).
 5. Spirit of Christ (Rm 8:9; Ph 1:19).
- B. The Holy Spirit as a manifestation of God:**
1. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have manifested themselves as three on the same occasions (Mt 3:16,17; 28:20; Mk 1:9-11; At 10:38; 1 Co 12:4-6).
 2. The Spirit is Lord (2 Co 3:16-18).
 3. The Spirit is all-knowing (Is 40:12-17; 1 Co 2:10,11).
 4. The Spirit is everywhere (Ps 139:7-10).
 5. The Spirit is eternal (Hb 9:14).
- C. The Holy Spirit during the ministry of Jesus:**
1. Jesus was conceived by the Spirit (Mt 1:18-20).
 2. The Spirit came upon Jesus (Mt 3:16).
 3. Jesus was full of the Spirit (Lk 4:1; Jn 4:34).
 4. Jesus administered the Spirit (Mt 8:11; At 1:5; 11:16).
 5. Jesus promised the Spirit to the apostles (Jn 14:26; 16:13; 20:22).
 6. Jesus worked through the Spirit (Mt 12:18,28; Lk 4:14; At 1:2).
 7. Spirit raised Jesus (Rm 8:11).
 8. The Spirit glorifies Jesus (Jn 16:14).
- D. The Christian and the Holy Spirit:**
1. Christians received the Spirit (At 2:38; Gl 3:2,3,14).
 2. Christians have the Spirit (1 Co 6:19; 7:40).
 3. Christians have the indwelling of the Spirit (Rm 8:9; 1 Co 3:16; 6:19; Ep 2:22; 2 Tm 1:14).
 4. The Christian's body is the temple of Spirit (1 Co 3:16).
 5. Christian lives manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gl 5:22,23).
 6. Christians are strengthened by the Spirit (Ep 3:16).
 7. Christians are filled with the Spirit (Ep 5:18,19).
 8. The Spirit is the guarantee of the Christian's sonship (Gl 4:6; Ep 1:14; 4:30; Rm 8:15,16).
- E. First century work of the Spirit:**
1. Joel prophesied that the Spirit would be poured out upon all flesh (Jl 2:28).
 2. Jesus promised that the early church, as a group, would work miracles (Mk 16:14-20; Hb 2:3,4).
 3. Jesus promised that the apostles would be baptized with the Spirit (At 1:1-8).
 4. The apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30 (At 2:1-4).
 5. By the laying on of the hands of the Christ-sent apostles, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were given to others (At 18:8; 19:6; Rm 1:11).
 6. The miraculous gifts passed away with the completion of the written word of God (1 Co 13:8-10).
 7. The Holy Spirit inspired the written word of God in order to guide Christians throughout the centuries (2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:3; Jd 3).
 8. The Bible warns of those who would deceive others through false miraculous works (Mt 24:11,23,24; 2 Th 2:9-12).

- The Spirit continues to lead Christians today (Rm 8:14; Gl 5:18)

HOPE

The Christian's hope is in that which is yet to come. Hope is based on one's faith that God has prepared for His people something far greater than our existence in this present world.

A. Source of hope:

- Comes from the word of God (Ps 119:42,43,81, 114,147).
- Comes from God's promises (At 26:6,7; Ti 1:2).
- Comes from the oath of God (Hb 6:18,19).
- Comes from trusting God (Ps 78:7; 146:5; Jr 17:17; Rm 15:13).
- Comes from love (1 Co 13:7).

B. Description of the Christian's hope:

- It is better (Hb 7:19).
- It is good (2 Th 2:16).
- It is blessed (Ti 2:13).
- It is steadfast (Hb 6:19).
- It is living (1 Pt 1:3).

C. Object of the Christian's hope:

- The final coming of Jesus (Rm 8:22-25; Ti 2:13; Rv 22:20).
- The bodily resurrection (At 23:6; 2 Co 5:1-8).
- Eternal life (Ti 1:2; 3:7).
- Glory (Rm 5:2; 8:18; Cl 1:27).
- Christ (1 Co 15:19; 1 Th 1:1).

D. Earthly results of hope:

- Hope gives peace of mind (At 2:26; Ph 4:6).
- Hope generates boldness (Rm 5:5).
- Hope produces rejoicing (Rm 12:12).
- Hope encourages unity (Ep 4:4).
- Hope gives assurance (Hb 6:11; Pv 14:32).
- Hope is an anchor for life (Hb 6:18,19).
- Hope produces self-discipline (1 Jn 3:3).

JESUS CHRIST

The name "Christ" is from the Greek word *crustos* which means "the anointed." Christ is the equivalent Greek word for the Hebrew Messiah. Jesus was the anointed one of God who fulfilled all prophecy concerning the Messiah of Israel.

A. Prophecy of the Messiah (Christ):

- Would crush Satan (Gn 3:15).
- Descendant of Abraham (Gn 12:1-3; see Gl 3:16).
- Descendant of Isaac (Gn 21:12; see Hb 11:18).
- Born of Judah (Gn 49:10; see Hb 7:17).
- Descendant of David (2 Sm 4:12ff; see Rv 22:16).
- Born of a virgin (Is 7:14; see Mt 1:23).
- Born in Bethlehem (Mc 5:2; see Mt 2:1,8; Jn 7:42).
- Born during Roman Empire (Dn 2:44; 7:13,14).
- Have a forerunner (Ml 3:1; 4:5; see Mt 3:1-3).
- Slaughter of babies at birthplace (Jr 31:15; see Mt 2:16-18).
- Sojourner in Egypt (Hs 11:1; see Mt 2:15).
- Live in Galilee (Is 9:1,2; see Mt 4:15).

- Live in Nazareth (Mt 2:23).
- Would teach in parables (Ps 78:2; Is 6:9,10; see Mt 13:34,35).
- Would be betrayed (Ps 41:9; see Mk 14:66-72).
- Die with malefactors (Is 53:9,12; see Lk 22:37).
- Would be pierced (Ps 22:16; see Jn 19:34-37).
- Would rise from the dead (Ps 16:10; see At 2:32).
- Would ascend to heaven (Ps 68:18; see Lk 24:51).

B. References to Jesus:

- King (Mt 2:2; 21:15; Jn 18:36).
- Lord (At 2:36; Rm 10:9; Ph 2:11).
- Emmanuel (Is 7:14; Mt 1:23).
- Alpha and Omega (Rv 22:13).
- Good Shepherd (Jn 10:1-14; 1 Pt 2:25; 5:4).
- Prince of peace (Is 9:6).
- God (Is 9:6; Jn 1:1,2; 1 Jn 5:20).
- High Priest (Hb 3:1; 4:14; 7:26).
- Lamb (Jn 1:29; At 8:32-35).
- Prince of life (At 3:15).
- Savior (At 4:12; Ep 5:23; 1 Jn 4:14).
- The Word (1 Jn 1:1,2).
- Son of David (Mt 1:1; Lk 1:32; Rv 5:5; 22:16).
- Son of Man (Mk 2:27,28; Lk 19:10).
- Prophet (Lk 13:33; Jn 1:21; At 3:22-26).
- Bridegroom (Mt 9:14,15; 2Co 11:2; Rv 19:7,21,9).
- Bread of life (Jn 6:35-68).
- The Just One (At 3:14; 7:52; 22:14).

C. The divine characteristics of Jesus:

- He was holy (Lk 1:35; Rv 3:7).
- He was righteous (Is 53:11; At 3:14; 1 Jn 2:1).
- He was sinless (Jn 8:46; 2Co 5:21; Hb 4:15; 7:26).
- He was faithful (2 Th 3:3; 2 Tm 2:13).
- He was obedient (Jn 4:34; 6:38; Hb 5:8).
- He was compassionate (Lk 7:13; 19:41; Hb 2:17).
- He was loving (Jn 13:1; 15:13,14).
- He was forgiving (Lk 23:34).
- He was humble (Is 53:7; Ph 2:8).
- He was sacrificial (Ph 2:5-7).

D. The human characteristics of Jesus:

- He was born of a woman (Lk 1:30,31; Gl 4:4).
- He was flesh and blood (Jn 1:14; Hb 2:14).
- He knew hunger (Mt 4:2; 21:18).
- He knew thirst (Jn 4:7; 19:28).
- He knew sorrow and grief (Is 53:3,4; Lk 22:44).
- He could be tempted (Hb 4:15).
- He knew what it was to be tired (Jn 4:6).

E. The work of Jesus:

- To reveal the Father (Jn 1:18; 14:7-9).
- To bring remission of sins (Jn 1:29; 1 Co 15:1-4; Ep 1:7; Hb 9:14,28; 1 Jn 3:5).
- To destroy the works of the devil (Jn 1:4; 8:12,32; 10:10; 17:3; Hb 2:14,15; 1 Jn 3:8).
- To become our High Priest (Hb 2:17,18; 4:14-16; 7:25).
- To work on our behalf from heaven (Rm 8:34; Hb 1:1-3; 7:25; 12:25; 1 Jn 2:1).
- To give hope of the resurrection (1 Co 15:20-22).
- To reveal the gospel of God (Jn 3:16).

JUDGMENT

God has come in judgment on nations and people "in time." He will come in judgment on the world through

Jesus at the "end of time." The purpose of His judgments in time was to bring about the purpose for the existence of the world, that is, to bring the obedient into eternal dwelling with Him at the end of time.

A. Time of the final judgment:

1. At the last day (Jn 12:48).
2. At an appointed day (At 17:31).
3. Immediately for those who die (Hb 9:27).
4. When Jesus returns for the living (Mt 25:31,32).

B. Description of the day of judgment:

1. All judged before Jesus (2 Co 5:10).
2. A day of wrath for wicked (Rm 2:5; Rv 6:15-17).
3. A day of destruction (2 Th 1:7-9; 2 Pt 3:7).
4. All will be revealed (Mk 4:22; Rm 2:16; 1 Co 4:5).
5. A day of fiery indignation (Hb 10:27).
6. Judgment without respect of persons (1 Pt 1:17).
7. Judgment by God's standard (Jn 12:48; Rv 20:11-15).
8. Our works will be manifested (1 Co 3:13; 2 Co 5:10).
9. Saints can be bold toward (1 Jn 4:17).
10. Jesus will reward (Rv 1:23; 20:12; 22:12).

C. Standard of judgment:

1. Judged by Jesus' words (Jn 12:48; Rm 2:16; Js 2:12).
2. Judged from the book of life (Rv 20:12,15).
3. Judged by deeds (Mt 16:27; Rm 2:6; 2 Co 5:10; 1 Pt 1:17; Rv 20:17).

D. Jesus will judge:

1. Jesus has authority to judge those who now live on earth (Jn 5:22; At 17:31).
2. Jesus is ordained to judge (Mt 16:27; At 10:42).

E. Results of judgment:

1. Wicked and righteous will be separated (Mt 25:32,34,41,46).
2. Righteous rewarded with life (2 Tm 4:8; Rv 11:18).
3. Wicked will suffer destruction (Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:7-9).
4. Saints will rest (Jn 5:29; Rv 14:13).

JUSTIFICATION

Justification means that we are legally made right before God as a result of God's forgiveness of our sins through the sacrificial blood offering of Jesus.

A. Origin of justification:

1. Made available through the gospel of God's grace (Rm 3:24; 5:17-21; Ti 3:7).
2. Made possible by Jesus' blood (Rm 5:9).
3. Made possible by Jesus' resurrection (Rm 4:25).
4. Made possible by sacrifice of Jesus (Rm 5:18).
5. Made applicable by faith (At 13:39; Rm 3:26-28; 5:1; Gl 3:8,24).

B. Means of justification:

1. Justified by God's grace (Rm 3:24).
2. Justified by faith (Rm 3:28; 5:1; Gl 3:8).
3. Justified by works (Js 2:21-25).
4. Justified by Jesus' blood (Rm 5:9).

C. Necessity of justification:

1. To receive forgiveness of sins (At 13:38,39).
2. To have peace with God (Rm 5:1).
3. To be heirs of eternal life (Ti 3:7).

D. Conditions for justification:

1. Believe in Jesus (At 13:39; Rm 3:26; 5:1).
2. Obey the gospel (Rm 8:30; 2 Th 2:14).
3. Abide in faith (Rm 3:26-30; 5:1; Gl 3:24).
4. Maintain works (Ep 2:10; Js 2:21-26).

E. One is not justified by the following:

1. Perfect keeping of law (Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16; 5:4).
2. Meritorious good deeds (Rm 11:6; Ep 2:9).
3. Faith only (Js 2:21-26).

LEADERSHIP

Those who are leaders among God's people are those who serve the needs of others.

A. How leaders lead the church:

1. By understanding the mission of Jesus (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15; At 5:42).
2. By self-examination (Rm 11:20; 1 Co 10:12; 11:28; 2 Co 13:5; Gl 6:1,4; Js 1:22-25).
3. By loving the church (Mt 20:28; Jn 10:11; 13:34,35; 15:13).
4. By examples of service (1 Co 11:1; 1 Tm 4:12).
5. By humble service (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45; 1 Co 16:15,16; Gl 6:1,2; Hb 13:17; 1 Jn 5:16).
6. By church recognition (At 6:3; 14:23; 15:22; 1 Tm 3:1-7; Ti 1:4-9).
7. By church agreement (At 6:5; 15:22; 1 Co 16:3; 2 Co 2:6; 8:16-24).
8. By vision (Jg 5:2; Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15; At 9:15; 20:24; Rm 15:23,24; Ph 3:14).

PRAYER

Prayer is an expression of one's most inner feelings of thanksgiving to God and request for His help. Prayer is often combined with fasting on the part of the one who prepares his or her mind for prayer.

A. Necessity of prayer:

1. Pray after Jesus' example (Lk 5:16; 6:12; 22:45).
2. Jesus gave model prayer (Lk 11:1-4).
3. Example of the Christian's prayers (At 2:42; 6:4; 12:5; Rm 1:9; 12:12).

B. How to pray:

1. Pray to God the Father (Lk 16:27; 2 Co 13:7).
2. Pray in the name of Jesus (Jn 14:13; Rm 1:8; Cl 3:17).
3. Pray in faith (Mt 21:22; Js 1:6,7).
4. Pray earnestly (Cl 4:12; Js 5:16,17).
5. Pray believing (Mt 21:22; Mk 11:24).
6. Pray everywhere (1 Tm 2:8).
7. Pray publicly (At 4:23-31).
8. Pray in secret (Mt 6:4-6).
9. Pray in humility (Js 1:5-8).
10. Pray unselfishly (Js 4:3).
11. Pray with thanksgiving (Ph 4:6).
12. Pray according to God's will (1 Jn 5:14).
13. Pray unceasingly (Rm 12:12; Cl 1:3,9; 1 Th 3:10; 5:17).
14. Pray intensely (Mt 7:7-11; Cl 4:12).
15. Pray with righteous living (Js 5:16; 1 Jn 3:22).

C. Pray for:

1. Persecutors (Mt 5:44).
2. Wisdom (Js 1:5-8).

3. Daily bread (Mt 6:11).
 4. That God's will be done (Mt 6:10).
 5. Forgiveness (Mt 6:12).
 6. For relief from temptation (Mt 6:13).
 7. For one another (Jn 5:16).
 8. For deliverance (Mt 6:13; 2 Th 3:1,2).
 9. For relief from sickness (Jn 5:14,15).
 10. That leaders might have wisdom (1 Tm 2:1,2).
 11. For laborers in God's harvest (Mt 9:38).
- D. God's response to prayer:**
1. He restores health (2 Kg 20:1-4; Jn 5:13-16).
 2. He opens doors (Mt 6:9-13; 1 Co 16:9; 2 Co 2:12).
 3. He provides food (Mt 6:25-34).
 4. He provides escape from sin (1 Co 10:13).
 5. He delivers (Rm 15:30-32; 2 Tm 4:18; 2 Pt 2:9).
 6. He raises up laborers (Mt 9:38; 1 Tm 1:12).
 7. He limits temptations (Ps 125:3; Lk 22:32; 1 Co 10:13).
 8. He aids our service (1 Co 8:6).
 9. He gives safe journeys (Rm 1:9,10).
 10. He protects (Pv 18:10; 29:25; 2 Co 1:10,11; Ph 22).
 11. He changes adversity (Ph 1:12-19).
 12. He produces opportunities (At 19:8-10; Cl 4:3; Pl 14).
 13. He helps us stand (Cl 4:12; 2 Jn 4; 3 Jn 3,4).
 14. He brings brethren together (1 Th 3:10).
 15. He brings forth fruit (1 Co 3:5,6; 1 Th 1:2-8; 2 Th 1:11,12).
 16. He makes fruit glorify Jesus (1 Co 1:31; 1 Th 2:20).
 17. He opens doors for preaching (Ep 6:18,19; 2 Th 3:1,2).
 18. He delivers from wicked men (2 Th 3:1,2; 2 Tm 4:17).

REDEMPTION

Redemption occurs when another pays the price of deliverance for one who cannot redeem himself from bondage.

A. Concept of redemption in Old Testament:

1. Israel was redeemed by God as a nation out of Egyptian bondage (Ex 6:6; 15:13).
2. Laws concerning redemption in the society of Israel (Lv 25:25-49; 27:13-31).
3. Examples of redemption (Rt 4:4-6; Is 44:22,23).
4. Israel looked for spiritual redemption (Lk 2:38).

B. The Christian's redemption in Christ:

1. God's people redeemed through Jesus (Lk 1:68).
2. The gospel obedient were redeemed by Jesus' blood (Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14; Rv 5:9).
3. Blood redeemed those under the law (Hb 9:15).
4. Redeemed from the curse of law (Gl 3:13).
5. Redeemed from law (Gl 4:5).
6. Redeemed from iniquity (Ti 2:14).
7. Redeemed in Christ (Rm 3:24; 1 Co 1:30; Ep 1:7; Cl 1:14).
8. Redeemed for all time (Hb 9:12).
9. Wait for redemption of body (Rm 8:23).
10. Saints redemption in the end (Ep 1:13,14; 4:30).

REPENTANCE

Repentance is a change in thinking and life behavior because one changes his or her heart. True repentance

must be motivated by the grace of God.

A. Definition of repentance:

1. It is a change of mind (Mt 21:28,29).
2. It is returning to our "first love" (Rv 2:5).
3. It is turning to God (1 Sm 7:3; Lk 17:4; At 9:35; 26:20).
4. It is part of conversion to God (At 3:19; 15:3).
5. It produces joy in heaven (Lk 15:7,10).
6. It is the product of godly sorrow (2 Co 7:9,10).

B. Repentance is commanded:

1. Jesus said we must repent (Lk 13:3,5).
2. God commands repentance (At 2:38; 8:22; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9).
3. Men must repent from wickedness (Rv 2:16,21,22).

C. Things that stimulate repentance:

1. Fear of judgment (At 17:30,31).
2. The goodness of God (Rm 2:4).
3. The patience of God (2 Pt 3:9).
4. Conviction of our sins (At 2:37,38).
5. Godly sorrow (2 Co 7:10).
6. Exhortation by brothers (Lk 17:3; Gl 6:1; 1 Jn 5:16).

D. Why people do not repent:

1. Because of willful sinning (Hb 6:6).
2. By failing to see sinful self (Lk 18:9-14; Jn 1:23,24).

RESURRECTION

In the resurrection our physical bodies will be bodily resurrected, though they will be changed. We do not know the nature of the resurrected body, though we know that we will be like Jesus.

A. Resurrection of Jesus:

1. Was prophesied (Ps 16:10,11; At 13:34,35).
2. Was prophesied by Jesus (Mk 9:9,10; Jn 2:19-22).
3. Was preached by apostles (At 2:32; 1 Co 15).
4. Was declaration of Jesus' sonship (Rm 1:4).

B. Time of the final resurrection:

1. At Jesus' final coming (Mt 25:31ff; 1 Th 4:13-18).
2. At sound of trumpet (1 Co 15:52; 1 Th 4:16).
3. At the end (1 Co 15:20-28).
4. At the last day (Jn 6:39-44; 11:23,24).
5. At the last hour (Jn 5:28,29).

C. Those who will be resurrected:

1. The good and evil (Jn 5:28,29).
2. The righteous saints (1 Th 4:13-18).
3. The just (Lk 14:14).

D. Certainty of the resurrection:

1. Was made certain by Jesus' resurrection (1 Co 15:20-22; Cl 1:18).
2. Made possible by God's power (1 Co 6:14; 2 Co 4:14).
3. Preached by inspiration of Spirit (At 1:22; 4:2,33; 17:18,32).

E. Bodily resurrection of the saints:

1. We will be changed (1 Co 15:51).
2. We will be changed to have a body like Jesus (Ph 3:21; 1 Jn 3:2).
3. We will have a glorious body (1 Co 15:43; Ph 3:21).

4. We will have an incorruptible body (1 Co 15:52-54).
 5. We will have a habitation from God (2 Co 5:1-8).
 6. We will have a spiritual body (1 Co 15:44).
 7. We will be like angels (Mt 22:30).
 8. We do not fully know what we will be (1 Jn 3:2).
- F. Resurrection of the righteous:**
1. Raised to forever be with the Lord (1 Th 4:17).
 2. Raised to everlasting life (Jn 5:29).
 3. Raised to certain life (Mt 25:46).
 4. Raised to receive glory (Rm 8:18; 1 Co 15:43).
 5. Raised to have an incorruptible body (1 Co 15:42).
 6. Raised to receive immortality (1 Co 15:50-54).
 7. Raised to receive a reward (Lk 14:12-14).
- G. Resurrection of the unrighteous:**
1. Raised for judgment and condemnation (Mt 7:23; 24:41; At 10:42; 2 Co 5:10).
 2. Raised for certain punishment (Mt 25:46).
 3. Raised to experience God's wrath (Rm 2:5; 1 Th 1:10).
 4. Raised for certain destruction (Ph 3:19; 2 Th 1:9).

SATAN

Satan (Gr., *satanas*), the devil (Gr., *diabolos*), and serpent, is the adversary of God and His people. He works against all that is good and right in order to bring into destruction the work of God.

A. Satan is the adversary:

1. Adversary of God and Christ (Mt 4:10; 12:26; Mk 1:13; 3:23,26; 4:15; Jn 13:27).
2. Adversary of God's people (Jb 1:6-11; 2:1-5; Lk 22:31; At 5:3; Rm 16:20; 1 Co 5:5; 7:5; 2 Co 11:14; 12:7; 1 Th 2:18; 1 Tm 1:20; 5:15; Rv 12:9).
3. Adversary of all men (Lk 13:16; At 26:18; 2 Th 2:9; Rv 12:9,10; 20:7).
4. He is a real spiritual entity (Jn 14:30; 2 Co 5:21; Hb 4:15).

B. The work of Satan:

1. He tempts (Mt 4:1; Lk 4:2,13; 1 Co 7:5; Ep 4:27).
2. He ensnares (1 Tm 3:7; 2 Tm 2:26).
3. He devours (1 Pt 5:8).
4. He takes captive (2 Tm 2:26).
5. He is an enemy (Mt 13:39).
6. He takes advantage of us (2 Co 2:11).

7. He hinders (1 Th 2:18).
8. He is the father of liars (Jn 8:44).
9. He oppresses (At 10:38).
10. He fills one's heart (At 5:3).

C. What Christians must do:

1. Do not give opportunity to Satan (Ep 4:27).
2. Stand against (Ep 6:11).
3. Resist (Js 4:7).
4. Crush under our feet (Rm 16:20).

D. The doom of Satan:

1. Doom sealed by cross of Christ (Lk 10:18; Rv 20:2,10).
2. Christ triumphed over Satan (Hb 2:14; 1 Jn 3:8).
3. Christians have victory over Satan (Rm 16:20).
4. Satan will be destroyed (Mt 25:41; Rv 20:10).

YOUTH

It is the purpose of the home to maintain godly principles and attitudes that must be instilled within the thinking and hearts of young people. The home is the environment wherein young people are trained for adulthood and to be a benefit to society. The children of parents submit to the direction of the parents in order that they reflect the gospel of Jesus to the world.

A. The young should manifest the following:

1. Abstain from evil (1 Th 5:22).
2. Be mature in mind (Ti 2:6).
3. Flee lusts of the flesh (2 Tm 2:22).
4. Keep law of God (Pv 7:1ff; 28:7).
5. Remember God (Ec 12:1).
6. Be example (1 Tm 4:12).
7. Be enthusiastic (1 Sm 17:26-50).
8. Listen to Scriptures (Ps 119:9).
9. Praise God (Ps 148:12).
10. Listen to parents (Ps 10:1; 13:1; 17:25).
11. Be obedient to parents' instruction (Ep 6:1).
12. Honor parents (Ep 6:2).

B. The young should not do the following:

1. Have evil companions (1 Co 15:33).
2. Despise father's instructions (Pv 15:5).
3. Allow others to despise them (1 Tm 4:12).
4. Be self-willed (Lk 15:11-21).
5. Be disobedient to parents (Ep 6:1).

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ABBREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Ci**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pi**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**