

# Discovery Series



SECTION ONE

The background is a piece of aged, yellowish parchment with irregular, torn edges. In the top left corner, there is a faint illustration of a compass rose with cardinal directions (N, S, E, W) and degree markings (090, 120, 140, 160). Faint, illegible text from a map is visible in the background, including the words "CAPE SERRE" and "LISBON".

# Discovering God

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# Table of Contents

Features of this Workbook .....	page 5
Introduction .....	page 7
The One True God .....	page 9
The One True God, continued .....	page 15
Three In One .....	page 21
God the Father .....	page 27
God the Son .....	page 33
God the Holy Spirit .....	page 41
The Creation & Purpose of Man .....	page 47
The Fall of Man .....	page 55
The Effects of the Fall .....	page 61
The Relentless Redeemer .....	page 67
The Meaning of Covenant .....	page 73
The Incarnation: A New Covenant & A New Kingdom .....	page 81
Jesus Christ: God's Servant Among Us .....	page 89
Jesus Christ: God's Word to Us .....	page 97
Jesus Christ: Our Great High Priest.....	page 103
Jesus Christ: The Great King.....	page 109
Jesus Christ: He Knows our Needs .....	page 115
The Work of Christ: His Atoning Death.....	page 121
The Work of Christ: His Resurrection .....	page 127
The Work of Christ: His Exaltation.....	page 133
The Holy Spirit: His Enabling Work .....	page 137
Definition of Terms .....	page 145
Test .....	page 149



## FEATURES OF THIS WORKBOOK

Obviously, this is quite a task laid ahead of you. But for now, you are on the receiving end of discipleship. We have prepared this workbook for you to help you along the way. There are several features built into this workbook you should be aware of.

- 1) It is designed for self-study. Although someone will be help you through it, you will be doing most of the work yourself. The material is arranged so you will cover one topic each week. You may either complete all five pages of this weekly material at one time or you may easily break it up and do a page of work on five separate days.
- 2) Most of the Bible verses are cited for you to look up rather than being quoted in the text for you. This is intentional in order to help you learn how to find your way around the Bible for yourself. At first you may need to look up each book of the Bible in the table of contents of your Bible. But as time goes on, you will find yourself becoming more and more familiar with the Scriptures and easily turn to any book of the Bible.
- 3) The workbook is based on the New International Version 2011 (NIV) of the Bible. There are several good translations of the Bible available, but we chose to use the NIV because of it's contemporary wording. If you do not already have an NIV Bible you should get one to make your studies go smoother.
- 4) In some of the sections, you will be given a Scripture to memorize each week. Please be faithful to commit these verses to your heart. The Word of God has power to change your life and make you want to do the things God has called you to do. Write down your memory verses on a card and carry it around with you. Memorize it as you do your daily activities like brushing your teeth and washing your dishes.
- 5) When you have completed the material for a topic, someone in your small group (who has already gone through it) should review it with you. They will be available to answer any questions you have. Their main purpose will be to help you see the importance of what you learned for being a more effective disciple of Jesus Christ. You can also complete the test in the back, turn it in to the office & receive a certificate of completion.
- 6) This is the second of seven workbooks in our "Discovery Series." Don't be alarmed at the length of time it may take to complete them. You can go through them one step at a time and at your own pace so you will not be overwhelmed. And remember, you have a lot of ideas, desires, and habits left over from your old life that must be overcome if you are to live and love like Jesus.



# Introduction

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## Can a person know God?

Many have presumed that it is impossible. However, throughout the Bible, it is made plain that not only *can* we know God, but it is God's *desire* that we know Him, and it is *best* for us to know Him.

### **Exodus 31:13**

“Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, **so you may know that I am the LORD**, who makes you holy.

It is one thing to know *about* God, knowing facts about Him. We call this *academic* knowledge, the kind of knowledge you get from education or knowledge. It is quite another to know God *personally* – as you would know someone with whom you have a relationship.

Isaiah 43:10 “You are my witnesses,” declares the LORD, “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.

**John 8:19** . . . “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.”

**John 10:14** “. . . I know my sheep and my sheep know me . . .”

God is an active God. He is always at work in the lives of mankind. He extends an invitation to us, “Come to me . . . “

**Isaiah 55:3** “Give ear and come to me; listen that you may live . . . “

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) show Jesus entering the lives of people and inviting them to follow Him from wherever they were at the time. From tax booths and fishing boats. He required nothing else of them but that they follow Him. They did not delay their response, but evidently sensed the urgency inherent in the invitation.

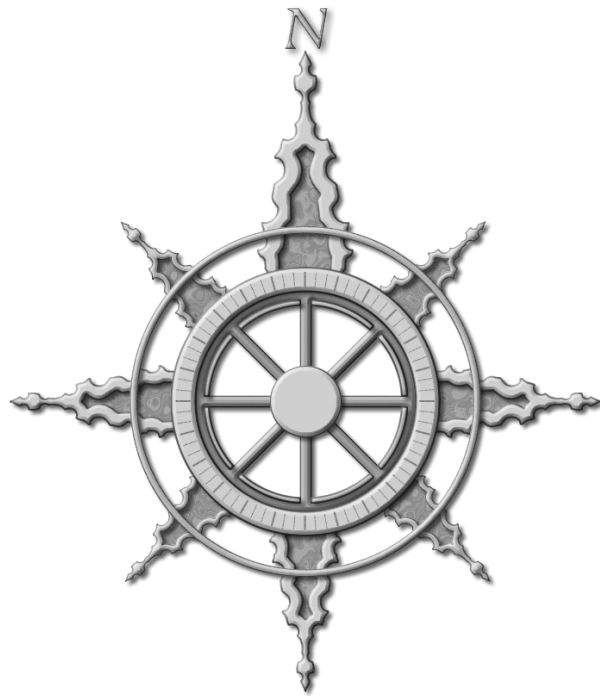
**Isaiah 55:6** “Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.”

God invites, and we respond. Hopefully, we respond by moving forward, with a desire to know Him better and better. May God bless your journey as you get acquainted and build your relationship with Him.





# The One True God



# Who God Is

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We'd like to start each lesson with prayer. Let your prayer come right from your heart. Speak to God as if He is right there with you – because He IS! Even though you may choose different words, here's an example of what you could ask of Him:

*“Father God, I want to know you. I want to know you better and better each day – and I don't want just an academic knowledge of You. I want to know you personally, deeply, intimately. As I go through this study, I ask that you reveal yourself to me and speak to me. Open my heart and my mind and help me to receive everything that you have for me. I give myself to you right now. In Jesus' Name. Amen.”*

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There is nothing new under the sun. Since ancient times, individuals, kingdoms and nations have created their own special 'gods' based upon their own particular feelings, opinions, superstitions and beliefs. Unfortunately, our feelings and opinions are fickle at best. Out of these feelings and opinions come equally unsteady superstitions and beliefs. Therefore, the following statement, made by Jesus, is of great magnitude in our pursuit to know the one true God.

## John 17:3

“Now this is eternal life: that they \_\_\_\_\_ you, the \_\_\_\_\_ God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

## WHO IS GOD?

At some point in our lives each of us has a tendency to wonder, “Is there a God?” and if there is a God, “What does that mean to me, personally?”

How wonderful it is to come to the realization that God IS real and active in our lives – and not only that, but He yearns for us to know Him and entreats us to come to Him. How do we know this? Because He has given us an account of Himself and how He relates to mankind. He has a plan for our individual lives and for all of creation. He has

revealed these things to us in the Bible.

Later on, we'll talk more about the Bible and why we believe it is authentic and authoritative for us today. For this particular lesson, we simply want to present what the Bible says about God Himself.

## God is SOVEREIGN

When we say that God is sovereign, we mean that He is the One who has ultimate authority to rule. He is the King, the Lord, the “boss.” The Bible teaches us that there is only ONE God. He reigns over all creation and all people.

### Ephesians 4:4-6

There is \_\_\_\_\_ body and \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit, just as you were called to \_\_\_\_\_ hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ faith, \_\_\_\_\_ baptism; <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

## He is the One who created all things . . .

### I John 1:3

Through him \_\_\_\_\_ things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

## therefore He has control over all things . . .

### Isaiah 14:24

The LORD Almighty has sworn, “Surely, as I have \_\_\_\_\_, so it \_\_\_\_\_, and as I have purposed, so it will happen.

## . . . and He sustains all things.

### Colossians 1:16-17

. . . all things have been created \_\_\_\_\_ him and \_\_\_\_\_ him.  
<sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things \_\_\_\_\_.

# Who God Is

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## God is ETERNAL

He existed before anything else existed. He has no beginning or end. God was God before time and exists outside of time.

### Psalm 90:2

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ you are God.

He is not bound by time or controlled by time, as we humans are. Think of that marvelous truth!

### II Peter 3:8

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a \_\_\_\_\_ is like a thousand \_\_\_\_\_, and a thousand years are like a day.

God created time and exists outside of it.

### Revelation 1:8

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who \_\_\_\_\_, and who \_\_\_\_\_, and who \_\_\_\_\_, the Almighty."

## God is COMPLETE

God is complete in Himself and has no need to depend upon anything or anyone else.

### John 5:26

For as the Father has life \_\_\_\_\_, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

### Acts 17:25

And he is \_\_\_\_\_ by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

Though He is separate from creation, He has not separated Himself from the care and sustenance of

His creation.

### Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God \_\_\_\_\_ the heavens and the earth.

### Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father \_\_\_\_\_ them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

## God is OMNISCIENT

Omniscience simply means that God knows everything! He is intimately acquainted with every detail of His creation. He created it all, and He knows it all! I love the quote by Ken Hamm, "Compared to God, we don't know very much."

### Isaiah 46:9-10

Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. <sup>10</sup> I \_\_\_\_\_ the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.'

### Psalm 147:5

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has \_\_\_\_\_.

He knows all that happens, all that exists, and all time - past, present, and future. God knows all people, because He created each one.

### Hebrews 4:13

\_\_\_\_\_ in all creation is \_\_\_\_\_ from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

# Who God Is

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God knows you better than anyone else, better than you know yourself.

## Psalm 139:1-4

You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down; you are \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_. <sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

God knows the motives of your heart (why you do what you do).

## Proverbs 16:2

All a person's ways seem pure to them, but \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_ by the LORD.

God knows your thoughts - everything that is in your mind.

## Ezekiel 11:5

... "This is what the LORD says: That is what you are saying, you leaders in Israel, but I \_\_\_\_\_ what is going through your \_\_\_\_\_."

## Psalm 139:2

... you perceive my \_\_\_\_\_ from afar.

God knows you intimately, even down to the number of hairs on your head! He knows your name. He's known you since you were being formed in your mother's womb.

## Luke 12:7

Indeed, the very \_\_\_\_\_ of your head are all \_\_\_\_\_.

## John 10:3

... He calls his own sheep \_\_\_\_\_ and leads them out.

## Psalm 139:13

For you \_\_\_\_\_ my inmost being; you \_\_\_\_\_ together in my mother's womb.

No one can know creation better than the One Who created it!

## God is OMNIPRESENT

When we say that God is omnipresent, we simply mean that He is everywhere at all times. The Bible describes Him as being both near and far away.

## Proverbs 15:3

The eyes of the LORD are \_\_\_\_\_, keeping watch on the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Jeremiah 23:23

"Am I only a God \_\_\_\_\_," declares the LORD, "and not a God \_\_\_\_\_?"

## Acts 17:27

... he is \_\_\_\_\_ from any one of us.

# Who God Is

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## God is OMNIPOTENT

His power is unlimited. He exercises his ability effortlessly. He is self-sufficient, needing nothing. He is called “El Shaddai”, which means “self-sufficient” or “almighty.”

A.W. Tozer wrote, “Since He has at His command all the power in the universe, the Lord God omnipotent can do anything as easily as anything else. All His acts are done without effort. He expends no energy that must be replenished. His self-sufficiency makes it unnecessary for Him to look outside of Himself for renewal of strength. All the power required to do all that He wills to do lies in undiminished in His own infinite being.”

Even though God *can* do anything, He does not act in contradiction to His own nature. Even though He has the power to do anything, the Bible says that God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18). His nature is good, honest, and true – therefore to act in a way that is bad, deceitful and false would be contrary to His nature.

- **God is omnipotent in Creation.** In Isaiah 44:24, God says that “I am the Maker of all things . . . I spread out the earth by Myself.”
- **God is omnipotent in the Resurrection.** He has power and authority over death. Jesus laid down His life and then took it up again. (John 10:17-18)
- **God is omnipotent in Salvation.** He is able to keep you from stumbling, able to complete the work He has begun in you. (Jude 24-25)
- **God is omnipotent in His understanding.**

### Psalm 147:5

Great is our Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has \_\_\_\_\_.

Having an omnipotent God gives us a source for confidence. He can handle any problem you have! He has the power to help you! Nothing is too difficult for Him. No prayer is too hard for Him to answer. No need is too great for Him to supply. No passion is too strong for Him to conquer. No temptation is too powerful for Him to deliver you from. No despair is too deep for Him to relieve.

### Jeremiah 32:27

“I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is \_\_\_\_\_ too hard for me?”

***“Although such power might seem frightful, remember that God is good. He can do anything according to His infinite ability, but will do only those things that are consistent with Himself. That’s why He can’t lie, tolerate sin, or save impenitent sinners.”***

John Fullerton MacArthur

# Who God Is

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## God is HOLY

The word, 'holy' is often misunderstood. The word translated from the Hebrew actually means "set apart" or "dedicated for a righteous cause." Something that is holy is separated from defilement or impurity, and kept for things that are pure and good.

God is set apart – unique – there is no other like Him. He is perfect in His character and actions. His nature and presence are magnificent.

Even though the next passage, from the book of Isaiah, is lengthy, it is very important in showing the contrasts between God and man.

### Isaiah 6:1-6

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. <sup>3</sup> And they were calling to one another: "\_\_\_\_\_, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory." <sup>4</sup> At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of \_\_\_\_\_ lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty."

So, here in Isaiah, we see the contrast between man and God. God is holy. Man is unclean. And yet, he calls us to be *like* Him.

### Leviticus 19:1-2

... 'Be \_\_\_\_\_ because I, the LORD your God, am \_\_\_\_\_.'

### Roman 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

God's holy nature calls for separation from anything that is impure. Sin causes us to be separated from God because it is against his nature.

The word translated from the Greek as 'sin' means 'missing the mark.' It includes wrongdoing, bad attitudes, failure, impurity and other negative forms of behavior. Sin causes us to "miss the target" – to move away from the purpose for which God created us. He hates the sin, yet offers redemption from anything that is unclean.

He wants to have fellowship with us. So – God's desire for us is that we allow Him to make us holy, as He is holy. His very nature influences us toward repentance, redemption and holiness.

### I John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

### I John 3:5

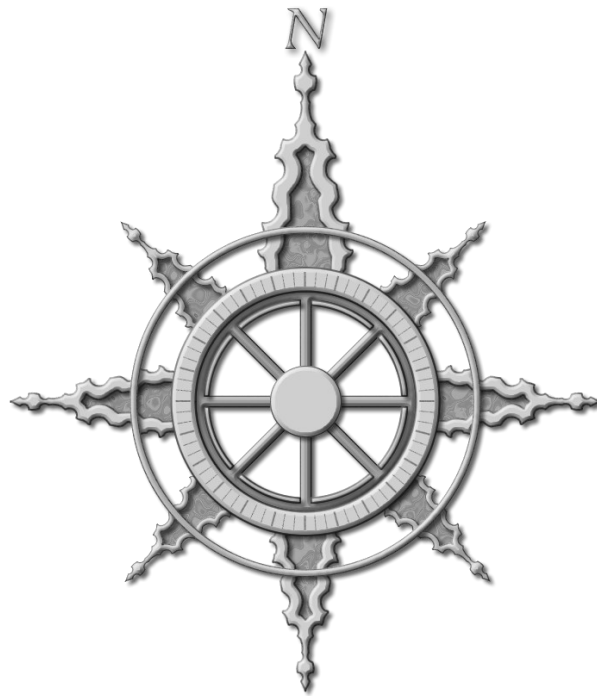
But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin.

If the end of the matter was simply that God is holy, and humanity is sinful, that would not be very good news at all! But that is not the end of the matter.

The majestic, holy, all-powerful God loves us and has provided a way for us to escape the curse and bondage of sin. This is a very important topic which deserves special attention. So we will address it in detail in an upcoming chapter.

# The One True God

Continued



# God IS Love

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Again, let's start with prayer. You can pray these words, or choose your own, always speaking from your heart right to God Himself.

*“Father God, be with me as I learn more about You. Help me to know you—your character, your personality, your love. I want to be more like You, to think more like you think, to love like you love. Open my heart to receive from you as I study this lesson. I have committed myself to you and will follow you. Lead me on, Lord. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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## God is LOVE

In the New Testament Greek, the word for God's kind of love is *agape*. *Agape* is different from other kinds of love. God's love for us is unique in that it is self-sacrificing and completely pure in motivation.

It was the motivation of this godly love that caused God to sacrifice His only Son, Jesus Christ, and send him into the world to die on a cross for our sins. Christ died so we might have life. No one has ever loved so much. This is the standard by which all other love is measured.

### John 3:16

For God so \_\_\_\_\_ the world that he \_\_\_\_\_ his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

The willingness of God to send His Son, and the willing death of Jesus Christ *demonstrates* His love and His desire to redeem and liberate us. God continually causes good to triumph over evil, and He promises that nothing can separate us from His love.

### Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? . . . <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that

neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.



# The Personhood of God

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## The Personhood of God

No one doubts the personhood of man, and according to Genesis 1:26-27, man is made in God's image. So let's consider God as a *person*, with a definite personality, and the characteristics of personality.

All through the Bible, the personal pronouns, *He*, *Him* and *His* are used to describe God. Nowhere is he referred to as, "It."

When we say that God is a "person," we do not mean that He is human - far from it. We mean that God is a rational being with a mind, will and emotions.

**MIND - God has intelligence.** Now that may seem like a redundant statement, since earlier in this lesson we talked about God being "all knowing." But now we are talking about his intellect in terms of personality.

### Psalm 139:17

How precious to me are your \_\_\_\_\_, God! How vast is the sum of them!

**WILL - God has a will.** He makes decisions, and He has desires and preferences.

### 1 Corinthians 1:1

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, . . .

### Hosea 6:6

For I \_\_\_\_\_ mercy, not sacrifice, . . .

**EMOTIONS - God has emotions.** The emotions of God are clearly seen throughout the Bible

- He loves.

### John 3:16

For God so \_\_\_\_\_ the world . . .

- He hates.

### Psalm 11:5

. . . those who love violence, he \_\_\_\_\_ with a passion.

### Malachi 2:16

"For I \_\_\_\_\_ divorce!" says the LORD, . . .

- He can be pleased.

### Matthew 3:17

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am \_\_\_\_\_."

- He can be displeased, annoyed, angry, irritated - vexed!

### Psalm 78:41

Again and again they put God to the test; they \_\_\_\_\_ the Holy One of Israel.

- He feels compassion.

### Genesis 19:16

. . . for the LORD was \_\_\_\_\_.

### Psalm 135:14

For the LORD will give justice to his people and have \_\_\_\_\_ on his servants.

- He can be angry

### Numbers 22:22

But God was \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

- He feels joy.

### Nehemiah 8:10

. . . for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD is your strength."

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE . . .

# The Personhood of God

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- He grieves

## Genesis 6:6 (NLT)

So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It *broke his heart*.

- He rejoices.

## Isaiah 62:5

. . . as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God \_\_\_\_\_ over you.

- He feels jealousy.

## Exodus 34:14

Do not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a \_\_\_\_\_ God.

- He has desires.

## II Chronicles 9:8

. . . Because of the love of your God for Israel and his \_\_\_\_\_ to uphold them forever, . . .

## The Desire of God

God knows us – and he wants us to know Him. He placed us on the earth at the specific time and the geographic location where we were born. As you’ll see in Acts 17:26, He did this for a purpose – so that we would seek Him and find Him.

## Acts 17:26

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.<sup>27</sup> God did this \_\_\_\_\_ they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

## Micah 6:8

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to \_\_\_\_\_ humbly \_\_\_\_\_ your God.

I love that this verse tells us to *walk with* our God! This relationship we have with Him is a journey—an on-going, life-long journey.

God does not hide from us. He says all we need to do is seek Him and we will find Him. He has plans for each of us – to do us good. He listens to us when we speak to Him. Why not call out to Him, ask Him questions, and listen to see what He will speak to us?

## Jeremiah 29:11-13

For I know the \_\_\_\_\_ I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.<sup>12</sup> Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will \_\_\_\_\_ to you.<sup>13</sup> You will \_\_\_\_\_ me and \_\_\_\_\_ me when you seek me with all your heart.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

Consider and meditate upon the characteristics of God taught in this lesson.

How did you view God prior to this lesson?

Has your view of God changed as a result of this lesson? If so, how?

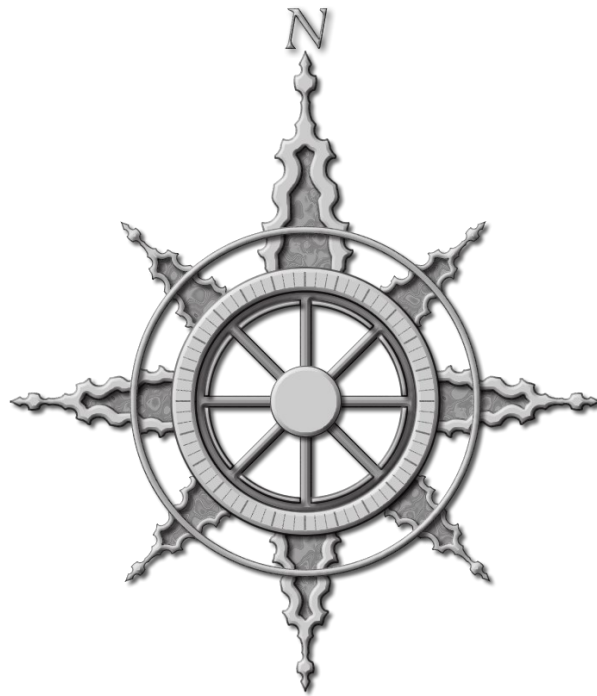
Can you think of any other characteristics to add to this list?

Has your view of yourself changed as a result of knowing God better? If so, how?

Have you begun your personal relationship with God? If so, how would you describe your relationship?



# Three in One



# GOD: The Trinity

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Remember to pray as you continue in your study.

*“Father, be with me today as I study Your Word. I open my heart to You now. I ask You to show me your truth and help me to go beyond mere facts to know you personally – your character, your wisdom, your love, and your ways. I want to grow to be more like you each day. I pray in the Name of Jesus, Amen.”*

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God reveals Himself in scripture as both one and three, a difficult concept to fully comprehend. But as we learn about it, and apply the model of the Trinity to our own lives, we are better able to keep a balance between unity and diversity, the one and the many. In ourselves, we tend to choose one over the other, which leads to an imbalance with independent people on one side and a controlling community on the other. Either of these extremes is undesirable and improper.

**The Trinity is the model for the life of the individual in the community. There is distinction without separation. There are differences without division. This is clearly God’s desire for His people.**

## John 17:11

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that \_\_\_\_\_ may be \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_.

First, let’s acknowledge that when we learn about the Trinity, we are learning about a *mystery*. The Bible, God’s Word, is our foundation and our standard for studying this profound revelation of Who God is.

The doctrine of the Trinity is a central truth of the Christian faith. Before we proceed, we must look at the fact that **the God of the Bible is one in nature, yet three in personhood**. In God, there is a perfect balance between unity and diversity.

## The DIVERSITY of the Trinity

According to the Bible, God is three distinct persons. Each of these persons is recognized as God.

### The Father is God

Scripture says plainly that the Father is God. Jesus Himself acknowledged God as Father, and taught us to pray to ‘Our Father,

#### Romans 1:7

... Grace and peace to you from God \_\_\_\_\_ and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Matthew 6:9

“This, then, is how you should pray: “ ‘Our \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven, hallowed be your name, . . . ”

### The Son is God

In spite of grossly erroneous claims made by atheists and deceivers that Jesus never claimed to be God, or the Son of God, the Bible also clearly reveals that the Son, Jesus Christ, is God. Beyond that, scripture also proves that Jesus believed it himself and stated it himself. Jesus Christ is God, and He says so!

#### Colossians 2:9

For in Christ all the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ lives in bodily form,

#### Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born, . . . he will be called Wonderful Counselor, \_\_\_\_\_, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

#### John 5:17-18

In his defense Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”<sup>18</sup> . . . but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.

# GOD: The Trinity

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## The Holy Spirit is God

Perhaps the most often ignored or misunderstood Person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit. Yet, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is God, which ought to make us want to get to know Him better. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” or “Helper,” the “Promised One,” who would guide us into all truth.

### Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.<sup>2</sup> Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the \_\_\_\_\_ of God was hovering over the waters.

### John 15:26

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the \_\_\_\_\_ of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.”

When Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit concerning their giving, Peter told them that they had lied to God Himself.

### Acts 5:3-4

Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?<sup>4</sup> Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but \_\_\_\_\_.”

## The UNITY of the Trinity

Even though God is revealed as three persons, all three members of the Trinity function in perfect harmony and union – as one. We call this “the Godhead.” Three, yet one. We see this from the very beginning.

### Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “Let \_\_\_\_ make mankind in \_\_\_\_\_ image, in \_\_\_\_\_ likeness, . . .”

Notice in Genesis 1, verse 26, that God is speaking and He uses the plural form in referring to Himself. He uses the word “us” and then “our”. If God had been only one, he would have said, “I will make mankind in *my* image, in *my* likeness.”

And yet, He reveals Himself as One.

### Deuteronomy 6:4

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is \_\_\_\_\_.

## The unity between the Father and the Son is amazing and perfect.

Jesus said that Father and Son were one and the same, and that He could do only those things that He saw the Father doing ... it is His heart's desire to please the Father.

### John 10:30

“ . . . \_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_.”

### John 5:19

Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

### John 8:28-29

So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.<sup>29</sup> The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I \_\_\_\_\_ do what \_\_\_\_\_ him.”

# The Unity of the Godhead

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## In the same way, the unity between the Son and the Holy Spirit is perfect.

The Holy Spirit declares what is from Jesus, He honors and brings glory to Jesus, and He represents Jesus in the earth.

### John 16:13-14

(Jesus speaking) “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.<sup>14</sup> He will \_\_\_\_\_ because it is \_\_\_\_\_ that he will receive what he will make known to you.”

## There is perfect unity between the Father and the Holy Spirit

And, it is critical to understand that there is perfect unity between the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Spirit goes out from the Father, and He is the One Who makes the Father's will known to us.

### John 15:26

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_—he will testify about me.

### I Corinthians 2:10-11

. . . these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

<sup>11</sup> For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

## Finally, there is perfect unity between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together.

Jesus himself instructed believers to be baptized in the name of the Father, in name of the Son, and the name of the Spirit. Then, the apostle Paul

blessed the Church in Corinth in the same way. He speaks of all three as equals. In the Trinity there is grace, love, and communion.

### Matthew 28:18-19

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.<sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the \_\_\_\_\_ and of the \_\_\_\_\_ and of the \_\_\_\_\_, . . .”

### II Corinthians 13:14

May the grace of the Lord Jesus \_\_\_\_\_, and the love of \_\_\_\_\_, and the fellowship of the \_\_\_\_\_ be with you all.

## The ACTIVITY of the Trinity

As we discussed earlier, during Creation, right before He created Adam, God said, 'Let *us* make man in *our* own image.' In God, there is distinction without separation, a perfect example of the unity we need to have as the body of Christ. We must realize that throughout history, *all* of God does *all* that God does. Creation provides a picture of this:

- The Father initiates (the thought)
- The Son mediates (through the Word)
- The Holy Spirit administrates (through action—the dynamic power)

Another picture of the Trinity is found at the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The Father spoke from Heaven, Jesus obeyed, and the Spirit anointed and empowered Jesus.



## THINGS TO DISCOVER

Why is it important for us to understand that God is One?

Has your perspective of God changed as you discover more about the Tri-Unity of God?

How does this understanding change how you view yourself and the way you function in the body of Christ, his church?

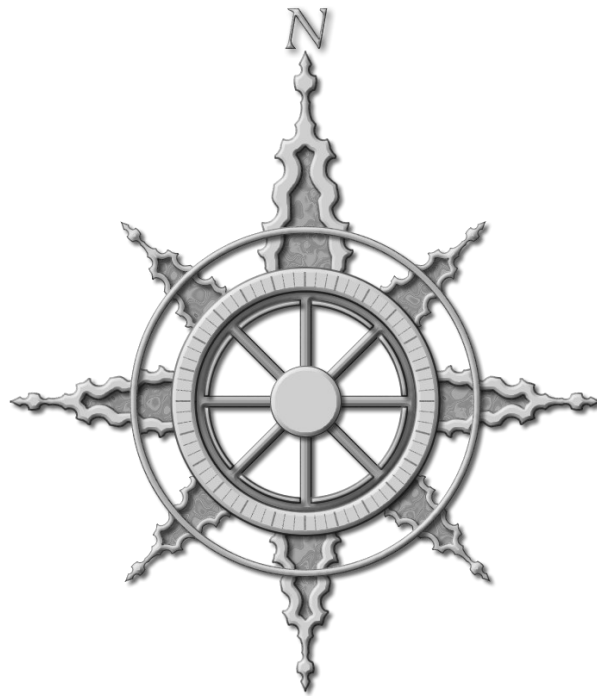
How can you apply the model of the Trinity to your own life? Do you consider yourself a “unified person?” Are you the kind of person who brings unity to those around you? Or do you allow yourself to get involved in strife and disunity?

Is there disunity in your family or church? If so, what are positive steps that can be taken to have unity with diversity of gifts and functions?

Read through the Gospel of John. As you do, take care to notice the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.



# GOD the Father



# Our Father God

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Prayer:

*“Father, I thank You for your Word, where you reveal so much of yourself if we only seek. Thank you for your promise that if I seek You I will find You. I am coming before you now to ask that you will bless my desire to know you more deeply. Show me Yourself, Lord, in Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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All through the Bible God consistently reveals Himself as Father. He is the Father of Israel. Prophets refer to God as the Father. He is the Father to all who claim Jesus Christ as their Lord. Fatherhood is the heart of God, and He wants no one to be left fatherless.

## Psalm 68:5

A \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.

When the disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray, Jesus began with, “Our Father . . .”

## Matthew 6:9

“This, then, is how you should pray: “ ‘ \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven, hal- lowed be your name, . . .”

Jesus did not instruct them to pray, “Father of Je- sus . . .” He taught them to pray, “OUR Father . . .” By doing this, he reveals that God is close to us in relationship. He is involved with us, closely and personally. He is *involved* with His creation, not far away from us.

## Acts 17:27

God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is \_\_\_\_\_ from any one of us.

The Bible clearly shows that **He is a Father who yearns for relationship and intimate fellowship**

**with His children.**

Our last lesson discussed the Father's role within the Trinity. This lesson will discuss His relation- ship with us.

## GOD THE FATHER

God is not simply a father; He is THE Father, and He has purposefully revealed Himself this way in the Bible.

## He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father in that He is uniquely the eternal Son. He is also the only Son of God who was actually born from the Fa- ther in human form, although he has existed with the Father eternally.

## John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

## Believers are Children of God by Adop- tion

When we believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and we confess Him as Lord of our lives, an amazing and wonderful transition occurs ... we are adopted into the Father's family. We become His children by adoption.

## Romans 8:15-16

. . . the Spirit you received brought about your \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”<sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that \_\_\_\_\_.

# Our Father

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## He is the Father of Israel

Scripture repeatedly reveals God as the Father of Israel. He formed and preserved the nation through His power. For those who become believers in Christ, we are adopted into His family, God is our Father, and each one of us becomes an 'heir' of His promises.

### Jeremiah 31:1

"At that time," declares the LORD, "I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be \_\_\_\_\_."

### Hosea 11:1

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."

## THE FATHER AS THE CREATOR

God existed as the Father even before He created the heavens and the earth. Everything else came out of His fatherhood. God the Father created all things and by Him all things are sustained.

### I Corinthians 8:6

... yet for us there is but one God, the Father, \_\_\_\_\_ and for whom we live. . .

### Nehemiah 9:6

You alone are the LORD. \_\_\_\_\_ the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You \_\_\_\_\_ to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

He lavishly provides for His creation.

### Matthew 5:45

... that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ on the evil and the

good, and \_\_\_\_\_ on the righteous and the unrighteous.

He so greatly loves His creation (mankind specifically) He went so far as to provide redemption for it.

### Matthew 6:26

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father \_\_\_\_\_ . Are \_\_\_\_\_ not much \_\_\_\_\_ than they?

### John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

## THE FATHER OF HIS CHILDREN

God wants to be your Father, and for you to be His child. As we read and study the Bible, we can see His nature as Father expressed in many ways: love, discipline, protection, provision, and presence.

### II Corinthians 6:18

And, "I will be a \_\_\_\_\_ to you, and you will be my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, says the Lord Almighty."

God is the **perfect father**, and as such, the perfect example of how a father is to be. There are so many things we can learn from this.

# The Fatherhood of God

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## How the Father God relates to His Children

- **He loves them.**

### I John 3:1

See what \_\_\_\_\_ the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_!

And that is what we are! . . .

- **He disciplines them.**

### Hebrews 12:6-7

. . . because the Lord

\_\_\_\_\_ the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.”<sup>7</sup> Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?

- **He protects them.**

### Deuteronomy 1:30

The LORD your God, who is going before you, will \_\_\_\_\_, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes,

### Psalms 59:16

But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my \_\_\_\_\_, my refuge in times of trouble.

- **He is with them.**

### Exodus 33:14

The LORD replied, “My \_\_\_\_\_ will go \_\_\_\_\_ you, and I will give you rest.”

### Hebrews 13:5

. . . because God has said,

“\_\_\_\_\_ will I \_\_\_\_\_ you; \_\_\_\_\_ will I \_\_\_\_\_ you.”

- **He seeks out those who are lost**, those who may turn away from Him and fall into trouble. The Father loves His children, and does not forget them.

### Matthew 18:12-14

“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ that wandered off?<sup>13</sup> And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off.<sup>14</sup> In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

- **He is even a Father to the fatherless!** Those who have been deprived by natural conditions have a Father and a friend in God, and they find family in the family of God.

### Psalms 68:5-6

. . . A \_\_\_\_\_ to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.<sup>6</sup> God sets the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, . . .

# The Father: Initiator of Relationship

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## THE FATHER, INITIATOR OF COVENANT

We have seen how much God yearns to have relationship with us. As our Father, He wants to “dwell” with us, to live with us throughout our lives and to have that close, intimate relationship with us. He has continually, throughout history, initiated covenant relationships with people.

When we say that He is the initiator, we mean that He is the *starter*, the *originator* of the action. He reaches out to us, and we respond to Him.

### The Father originated covenant with:

- **Noah**

#### Genesis 9:8-11

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup> “I now \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_ with you and \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ after you <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

- **Abraham**

#### Genesis 15:18

On that day the LORD made a covenant with \_\_\_\_\_ and said, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—

- **Israel** (Exodus 19 through 24)

- **David** (II Samuel 7:1-17)

- **All**, through Jesus Christ, the promised New

## Covenant

### Jeremiah 31:31

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a \_\_\_\_\_ covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.

### Hebrews 9:10-15

Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. . . <sup>11</sup> But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation. . . <sup>15</sup> For this reason Christ is the mediator of a \_\_\_\_\_ covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

# The Father's Example

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## THE MODEL FATHER

God is the only perfect Father, the example and model for all fatherhood. He provides a pattern for earthly fathers to follow.

- **Headship -He leads us**

### Psalm 23:1

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures, he \_\_\_\_\_ beside quiet waters,

- **Care -He provides for us**

### Genesis 22:14

So Abraham called that place The LORD \_\_\_\_\_

### II Peter 1:3

His divine power has given us \_\_\_\_\_ we \_\_\_\_\_

for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

- **Nurture -He gives and sustains life**

### Job 33:4

The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_.

### Psalm 54:4

Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who \_\_\_\_\_ me.

- **Commitment -He never leaves or forsakes us**

### Deuteronomy 31:6

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will \_\_\_\_\_ you nor \_\_\_\_\_ you.”

God not only provides an example for earthly fathers to follow, but as the loving Father of all who will believe in Him, He will help and strengthen fathers who call upon His Name.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What difference does it make that God is revealed as a Father?

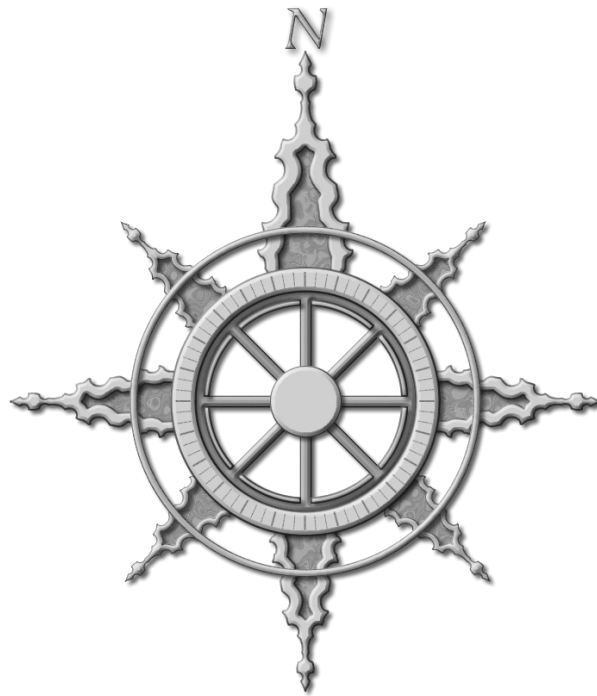
Who did Jesus come to reveal? (See John 8:28-29)

God is the perfect example of a Father's love. Can you think of one person who is in need of your love and concern?

When you look at the example of God, the Father, what practical ways can you think of to express love to others? To your wife? To your own children? To the members of your church? To friends and neighbors? To strangers?



# GOD the Son



# The Messiah: God the Son

Take some time to pray:

*“Father, thank you so much for your Father’s heart. Thank you for your love. Thank you for your desire that we would know You. Now, Lord, I am starting a lesson to learn more about Your Son, who you sent because you loved us so much. I want to be able to grasp more and more of Your love. Teach me, Lord. I surrender to You. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

Throughout history, many men have claimed to be ‘messiahs’. Even in our modern day, there are those who claim that they are the ‘way to God,’ or that some new or unusual philosophical concept will bring them salvation. But Jesus said, “If you hold to *my* teaching, you are really *my* disciples. *Then* you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31-32)

The fact is, we do not get to make the decision about who is our mediator. God, the Father, has already made that determination. He sent Jesus Christ, his only Son, as the *only* mediator between God and man.

## **I Timothy 2:5**

For there is one God and \_\_\_\_\_ mediator between God and mankind, the man \_\_\_\_\_,

Many presume that there are many ways to reach God. They think that any and all religious paths eventually lead to God. This is a very serious mistake. There is only one way, through Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Some people ask, “Why does it HAVE to be Jesus?” The reason it has to be Jesus is because that is the way that God has set it up! It was HIS decision that we must come through Jesus, the promised Messiah. Only by accepting Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf can we find reconciliation with God, salvation from our sins, and eternal life.

Rather than questioning or rejecting the way God has provided, we should be grateful that God did

not choose to destroy us because of our sin – grateful that He has offered us a way to be reconciled with Him!

## **John 14:6**

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except \_\_\_\_\_.

God the Son has always been and will always be with the Father. He is eternal. He willingly gave up his position to become man in Jesus Christ.

## **THE SON IS ETERNAL**

Even though the Trinity is a mystery, scripture plainly tells us that God, the Son, is eternal with God the Father.

- **The Son existed in the beginning** with the Father even before the creation of the world.

## **John 1:1**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus Himself told the Jews of His day, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” (John 8:58)

- **The Son receives worship.**

## **Matthew 14:33**

Then those who were in the boat \_\_\_\_\_ him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

- **The Son shares the Father’s glory**

## **John 17:5**

And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the \_\_\_\_\_ before the world began.

# From Creation to Incarnation

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- **The Son was present and active in creation.**

## Colossians 1:15-17

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For \_\_\_\_\_ all things were \_\_\_\_\_: . . . all things have been created \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

- **The Son is ruler over creation.**

We see the rulership of Jesus in many ways, including His Lordship over:

- Nature: He calms the wind and the sea (Matthew 6:23-27)
- Disease: He heals the sick (Mark 6:56)
- Demons: He casts out evil spirits (Luke 8:26-35)
- Life: He raises the dead (John 11:38-44)

## GOD THE SON BECAME MAN

Because of His concern over man's condition of sin and death, God the Father sent the Son to earth to become man and to deliver everyone who would believe Him. God the Son was incarnated as a man named Jesus. He is called Jesus Christ because 'Christ' means 'Savior' or 'Anointed One.'

- **He became man in his birth**

## Matthew 1:18-21

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph . . . <sup>20</sup> . . . an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will \_\_\_\_\_ to a son, and you are to give him the name \_\_\_\_\_, because he will save his people from their sins."

## Isaiah 9:6

For to us a \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, \_\_\_\_\_, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

- **He became man in his development.**

## Luke 2:40

And the \_\_\_\_\_ and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

## Luke 2:52

And Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ in wisdom and \_\_\_\_\_, and in favor with God and man.

- **He became man in his likeness.**

- He took the form of a servant

## Philippians 2: 7

. . . rather, he made himself nothing by \_\_\_\_\_ the very \_\_\_\_\_ of a \_\_\_\_\_, being made in \_\_\_\_\_ likeness.

- He took on flesh and blood

## Hebrews 2:14

Since the children have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, he too \_\_\_\_\_ in their \_\_\_\_\_ so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death . . .

- He faced temptations, as all men do.

## Hebrews 2:18

Because he himself \_\_\_\_\_ when he was \_\_\_\_\_, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

# God the Son, as a Man

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- He became man in his limitations.

- He experienced hunger and thirst.

**Matthew 4:2**

After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 19:28**

Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am \_\_\_\_\_.”

- He experienced weariness.

**Matthew 8:24**

Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was \_\_\_\_\_.

**John 4:6**

Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, \_\_\_\_\_ as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

- He experienced pain and death.

**I Corinthians 15:3**

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins according to the Scriptures,

**I Peter 4:1**

Therefore, since Christ \_\_\_\_\_ in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin.



# Our Mediator

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God is completely holy and righteous. Because of sin, mankind was and continues to be separated from God. There is only one who is able to mediate between God and man – Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Why is He the only one qualified to be our mediator before the Father?

Sin had brought the curse of separation and death to humanity. Mankind needed a deliverer, one who could pay the price for sin and break the curse. But there was no one person without sin, no one who was worthy to pay the price for the sins of man. In order to break the curse of sin, a man must pay the price. How could this impossible stalemate be broken?

- **He mediates for us through His sinless life.**

## Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.<sup>16</sup> Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

God became man in Jesus, and He lived a completely sinless life. Though He faced temptation in all areas, He did not ever give in. He never 'missed the mark'.

- **He mediates for us through His sacrificial death.**

## Hebrews 9:26

... he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the \_\_\_\_\_ of himself.

Then, He died in our place. He died for all of the sins that had ever been committed before His day, as well as for all of the sins that have been committed since then.

- **He mediates for us through His resurrection.**

## John 11:25-26

Jesus said to her, “\_\_\_\_\_ the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die;<sup>26</sup> and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”

## I Corinthians 15:20-22

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.<sup>21</sup> For since death came through a man, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the dead comes also through a man.  
<sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.

Thank God, the story does not end there; because Jesus triumphed even over death, rising again just as He had promised.

- **He mediates for us through His ascension.**

## Acts 1:9-11

After he said this, he was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.<sup>10</sup> They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.<sup>11</sup> “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will \_\_\_\_\_ in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

After His Resurrection, He taught His followers about the kingdom of God, and then ascended into Heaven, where He now sits at the right hand of the Father ... praying for you. He is our one and only Mediator.

# Our Priest, Prophet & King

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The Son is the supreme example of service to the Father.

- **He fulfilled the office of a Priest**, offering Himself as a sacrifice.
  - He cleansed the earthly temple, declaring it to be a house of prayer.

## Luke 19:45

When Jesus entered the temple courts, he began to \_\_\_\_\_ those who were selling.<sup>46</sup> “It is written,” he said to them, “‘My house will be a house of prayer’; but you have made it ‘a den of robbers.’”

- He prepared the heavenly temple through His sacrificial death

## Hebrews 9:23

It was necessary, then, for the copies of the heavenly things to be \_\_\_\_\_ with these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves with \_\_\_\_\_ than these.

<sup>24</sup> For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence.

- Now, as high priest, he makes intercession for his people.

## Hebrews 7:25

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to \_\_\_\_\_ for them.

- **He fulfilled the office of a Prophet**, one who reveals the Word and the heart of God. In fact, He is the ‘Word made flesh’. There has never been a greater prophet than Jesus.

- Jesus is called the “Word of God.”

## John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.<sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

- Jesus proclaimed the Good News (the Gospel)

## Matthew 4:23

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the \_\_\_\_\_ of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

- Jesus warned prophetically of coming judgment.

## Mark 13:5-31

Jesus said to them: “\_\_\_\_\_ that no one deceives you. . .<sup>7</sup> When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. . . (read to verse 31)

- Jesus holds everything together by His Word.

## Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, \_\_\_\_\_ by his powerful \_\_\_\_\_.

# Our Priest, Prophet & King

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- He fulfilled the office of King, the ruler of all things

And, Jesus is the King, the Ruler of all things. He was crowned Lord and King by God the Father, and He Himself declared that He was the King. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Jesus Christ.

- Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of his kingship.

## **John 12:14**

Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written: <sup>15</sup> “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your \_\_\_\_\_ is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”

- The Magi traveled from far off to visit the promised king.

## **Matthew 2:1-2**

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, “Where is the one who has been born \_\_\_\_\_ of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

- Jesus confirmed his kingship.

## **John 18:36-37**

Jesus said, “My \_\_\_\_\_ is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” <sup>37</sup> “You are a \_\_\_\_\_, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”

- He was recognized by others as King

## **Acts 17:7**

. . . and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another \_\_\_\_\_, one called Jesus.”

- He is crowned Lord and King

## **Revelation 11:15**

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and \_\_\_\_\_ for ever and ever.”

## **Revelation 17:14**

They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will triumph over them because he is Lord of lords and \_\_\_\_\_ of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.”

# Obedient to His Father

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Even at the age of 12, it was clear that Jesus was a remarkable young man. All were amazed by Him, even the great wise men of that day. Jesus understood clearly that He was to do the will of the Father, and He said this to his earthly parents, Joseph and Mary. Yet, He was also able to submit Himself to them as the parents to whom the Father had entrusted Him. Because of this, He grew in favor with God and all those who were around Him.

## Luke 2:49

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I \_\_\_\_\_ in my Father’s house?”

Jesus prayed daily, seeking the Father's will. He only wanted to do those things that pleased the Father, and He was attentive to the Father's voice.

## Mark 1:35

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he \_\_\_\_\_.

Jesus was not even willing to allow death to stand between Him and His Father's will. When He faced the prospect of a terrible death on the cross, He plainly did not wish to inflict it upon Himself. But He was willing to endure it to fulfill the Father's purpose and 'because of the joy that was set before Him.' The Father's will was His overriding motivation.

## John 8:28-29

So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. <sup>29</sup> The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I \_\_\_\_\_ do what \_\_\_\_\_ him.”

## Matthew 26:39

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_.”

Having fulfilled His mission in death, resurrection, and ascension, He obtained an excellent inheritance and reward from the Father, the Name of Jesus is above every name that has ever been named.

## Philippians 2:8-9

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ – even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ God \_\_\_\_\_ him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What Scriptural evidence can you find that reveals Jesus to be co-equal with the Father?

What proof exists of Jesus' humanity?

How does His obedience to the Father apply to your own life?

Take some time to memorize John 14:6 so you will be able to share it with those who believe there are 'many paths to God.'



# GOD the Holy Spirit



# Who is the Holy Spirit?

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Take a moment or two to calm yourself and talk to the Lord in prayer:

***“Father, thank You so much for giving us Your precious Son. Jesus, thank You for coming and for paying the price so I can be free from sin and a part of Your Kingdom, Your Family. Now I’m delving into learning about Your Holy Spirit. I ask that you continue to teach me and reveal Yourself to me. I belong to You. Have Your way in me. In Jesus’ Name I pray. Amen.”***

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God the Father has always initiated and invited people (including us) into relationship. God the Son paid the price so that we could be reconciled with the Father. God the Holy Spirit is our teacher, the One who “leads us into all truth,” making God’s promises a reality in our lives.

The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 14:17 that the kingdom of God is ‘righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.’ Through His Holy Spirit, God enables us to do His will ‘on earth as it is in heaven.’ In this lesson, we will see how the Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son. He is God – and He is present with us right now.

Historically, too little attention has been paid to the role of the Holy Spirit. This has resulted in a distortion of Christian doctrine (teaching) and a lack of vibrant power in the life of believers. Learning about the role of the Holy Spirit brings dramatic renewal to individual lives and into every facet of the role of the Church on earth. For some reason, people have been wary and reluctant to delve into this teaching. However, even a simple study of the word, “spirit” through the Bible opens up the truths we are about to talk about here.

## The Holy Spirit’s Identity

Sometimes, when making an effort to describe something, it is helpful to describe what it is NOT. So, for our description of the Holy Spirit,

we can say that He is NOT a nebulous abstract force. He is NOT a vague or spooky, ghost-like entity. And He is NOT a funny shivery type of feeling.

The Holy Spirit IS a *person* – one of the three persons of the Triune (three in one) God.

### Genesis 1:1-2

In the beginning \_\_\_\_\_ created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> . . . And the \_\_\_\_\_ of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

He was present and active with the Father and the Son at creation. He flows forth and progresses from the Father and the Son.

**Because He is God, the Holy Spirit has all the qualities of the divine nature.**

- He is eternal.

### Hebrews 9:14

. . . For by the power of the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit . . .

- He is omnipresent (everywhere, constantly present).

### Psalms 139:7

I can \_\_\_\_\_ from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence!

- He is omnipotent. (all-powerful)

### Acts 1:8

But you will receive \_\_\_\_\_ when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. . .

- He is omniscient.

### I Corinthians 2:11

. . . no one \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ except the Spirit of God.

# The “Personhood” of the Holy Spirit

When we use the word “personhood,” we are talking about the fact that the Holy Spirit is a *person*. He is not merely a force, or a feeling. He is one of the three **persons** of the Trinity.

Many people have not related to the Holy Spirit in this way, mainly because this concept has not been properly taught. So, in order to demonstrate the “personhood” of the Holy spirit, we cite the following characteristics found throughout the Bible.

- **He reveals & searches**

## **I Corinthians 2:10**

... these are the things God has \_\_\_\_\_ to us by his Spirit. The Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ all things, even the deep things of God.

- **He judges**

## **Acts 15:28**

It \_\_\_\_\_ to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

- **He hears & speaks**

## **John 16:13**

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will \_\_\_\_\_ only what he \_\_\_\_\_, and he will \_\_\_\_\_ you what is yet to come.

- **He chooses**

## **I Corinthians 12:11**

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just \_\_\_\_\_.

- **He teaches & reminds**

## **John 14:26**

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will \_\_\_\_\_ you all things and will \_\_\_\_\_ you of everything I have said to you.

- **He helps and intercedes for us.**

## **Romans 8:26-27**

In the same way, the Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself \_\_\_\_\_ for us through wordless groans.<sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

- **He leads & guides**

## **Romans 8:14**

For those who are \_\_\_\_\_ by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

## **John 16:13**

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will \_\_\_\_\_ you into all the truth. . .

- He advocates and testifies.

## **John 15:26**

“When the \_\_\_\_\_ comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will \_\_\_\_\_ about me.

## Personhood

—Noun

1. The state or fact of being a person.
2. The state or fact of being an individual or having human characteristics and feelings.

From Dictionary.com

# The Power of the Holy Spirit

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The more we read and study the Bible, the more we see how active the Holy Spirit has been throughout history, on the earth, and in our lives.

Jesus told His disciples that the Spirit would give them power to be His witnesses on the earth (Acts 1:8). And to this day, it is the Holy Spirit who empowers believers everywhere to continue being witnesses that God is real, active and full of love toward all mankind.

The Bible is full of examples of how the Holy Spirit led and inspired men and women of God. And the story continues, because He leads and inspires us today.

## II Peter 1:20-21

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things.

<sup>21</sup> For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were \_\_\_\_\_ by the Holy Spirit.

When the Father put His redemptive plan into place, sending Jesus to us, the Holy Spirit was integrally involved.

- **Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit.**

## Matthew 1:20

... what is \_\_\_\_\_ in her is from the Holy Spirit.

- **Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit.**

## Luke 4:18

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has \_\_\_\_\_ me to proclaim good news . . .

- **Jesus was raised from the dead by the Spirit.**

## Romans 1:4

... and who \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

- **The Holy Spirit is involved in our salvation and on-going renewal.**

## Titus 3:5

... he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by the Holy Spirit,

We are renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit. He washes and regenerates us because of His mercy and grace. The Greek word *anakainosis* for *renewing*, suggests a transformation and change of heart.

The Spirit not only helps us to be witnesses, but He Himself is a witness through:

- **Signs & wonders, miracles and gifts**

## Hebrews 2:4

God also testified to it by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and various \_\_\_\_\_, and by \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

- **Convicting the hearts of men**

## John 16:8 (NLT)

And when he (the Holy Spirit) comes, he will **convict** the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment.

# Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

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The Holy Spirit is the Helper (advocate) promised to us by the Lord Jesus (John 14:16), and He dwells within the heart of every believer. If we will hear His voice, and obey, we can have the abundant life Jesus promised and receive the power to fulfill God's purpose for our lives.

In I John 2, We are warned about people who will try to lead us away from the truth:

## **I John 2:26-27**

I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.<sup>27</sup> As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing \_\_\_\_\_ you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.

The Spirit teaches us, and helps us to know the truth. Without His guidance, we could easily fall into error, deception, and sin. He is the source of God's truth and the revealer of God's wisdom.

If we are God's children, the Holy Spirit leads us. By the Spirit, we are led in worship, praise and prayer (Phil 3:3). He motivates us and leads us in evangelism, so we can share the Good News of Christ's Kingdom with other people. He will even remind us of the right words to say when our own wisdom fails us.

## **John 14:26**

. . . the Holy Spirit . . . will \_\_\_\_\_ you all things and will \_\_\_\_\_ you of everything I have said to you.

As we yield our lives to Him, we give him more and more trust and control. Our lives become more stable. And we are rewarded with:

- Sanctification — a Spirit-filled life
- Assurance — a Spirit-sealed life
- Fruitfulness — a Spirit-led life
- Dynamic enthusiasm — a Spirit-gifted life

With all of these blessings in mind, is it any wonder that the Apostle Paul urged the young Christians in the city of Ephesus to be filled with the Spirit? He encouraged them to speak to one another with songs from Scripture, hymns that they had written, and songs that the Spirit put in their hearts, and to do these things continually and repeatedly. (Eph 5:18-20)

We are empowered by the Spirit, Who is our Helper and Comforter (John 14:26 KJV). He helps us in our weaknesses and helps us in our prayers. The Spirit gives us boldness, because our confidence is in Him and in the strength that He gives.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

How do we know that the Holy Spirit is a person?

Can you list four characteristics of the Holy Spirit that reveal He is God?

In what area of -your life do you most need the Holy Spirit's help right now?

Take a moment to seek Him. Ask Him to fill you up to overflowing, to use you as He chooses. Ask Him to speak to you. Then take some time to be quiet and listen.

If you sense the Lord speaking anything to you, write it down & share it with a trusted mentor.

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For a more in-depth study of The Holy Spirit, see our Life Study Section entitled, *The Holy Spirit*.

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# The Creation & Purpose of Man



# Created in the Image of God

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Before you begin, take some time to pray:

*“Father, thank you so much for Your Holy Spirit. I pray that You will help my heart and mind to be open to His leading. Fill me up today and help me to grow closer to You and more like You. I ask again that I would not just know you academically, but also personally and intimately. Today, as I begin this study, I pray that you will help me to see myself as You see me, and correct me about things that I may have believed that were not true. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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Mankind was created to be like God - a reflection of the image of God. How unfortunate that so many people believe they are descended from animals. This is one of the twisted view of man which helps to perpetuate the degraded and immoral behavior of mankind.

How can we, as imperfect people, properly reflect His image? As we press on to know the Lord and to be pleasing to Him, we are transformed “from glory to glory” by His Spirit. (II Cor 3:18)

## Man, the “Crown” of Creation

The Bible tells us that man is not here for the world, but rather the world is here for man. Take time to read Genesis, chapters 1 & 2. You will see that there is an order to creation. God created things for the sake of man.

### Genesis 1:25

. . . And God saw that it was \_\_\_\_\_.

When God finished His work at creation, He looked it over and declared that it was good. He was pleased with it all. After God declared all things good, He then created man. Man’s creation was unique and separate, the only thing He created in His own image.

### Genesis 1:26

Then God said, “Let \_\_\_\_\_ make mankind in \_\_\_\_\_ image, in \_\_\_\_\_ likeness . . .”

God discussed with Himself (the three persons of the Trinity) the creation of man.

### Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and \_\_\_\_\_ into his nostrils the breath of \_\_\_\_\_, and the man became a living being.

God, personally, breathed life into Adam.

### Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

God gave man authority over all of creation, instructing him to subdue it.

### Genesis 1:27

So God created \_\_\_\_\_ in his own image, in the image of God he created \_\_\_\_\_; male and female he created them.

Mankind (both male and female) are created in God’s likeness.

### Genesis 1:31

God saw all that he had made, and it was \_\_\_\_\_ good. . .

Then, after He had created man - he looked again at His creation and declared it not merely good, but, “VERY good.”



# The Image of God

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What does it mean, to be created in the image of God? The image, or likeness, of God sets man apart from animals and plants, and even angels. Though we share some common traits with other created beings, we are also very different because of our unique nature.

A man is a person, not an animal. Once accepted as common sense, this statement has been increasingly attacked by those who do not know their Creator or understand His purpose for their individual lives and for humanity. But Scripture and history clearly show us that man has been given some very distinct characteristics.

## Genesis 2:16-17

And the LORD God

\_\_\_\_\_ the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;  
<sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

**We have the ability to reason.** God spoke to man, instructing and commanding him. We don't see God speaking to animals or plants, or anything else after He spoke them into existence. We don't see God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, having fellowship with any other object or creature (Genesis 3:8).

**We have the ability to respond to God.** We have a choice – we can either be a follower of God or we can reject Him. This choice is not offered to any other creature or object. Animals and plants bring glory to God simply because they were created by Him. They don't have the reasoning power to make a decision to follow Him or reject Him.

## Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_ over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

**We represent God in our work and creativity.**

God gave man work to do. He gave man rulership over all He had created.

## John 4:23

... the true worshipers will \_\_\_\_\_ the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks.

**We have the ability to worship.** We are called to give thanks to God. Out of all of creation, we alone have the ability to direct our thoughts and attitudes to give glory to God – or to reject Him utterly.

**As male and female, mankind was created differently than the angels.**

Also under attack today is the Scriptural truth that God created the male and female identities. Men *are* different from women. In creating male and female, God also created family and called the 'two to become one.' This is another way in which man is created in the image of God. This is also a reflection of the unity and diversity of the Trinity.

## Genesis 2:18

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a \_\_\_\_\_ for him.”

We are called to relationship, with God and with others of mankind.

## Genesis 1:27

So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created \_\_\_\_\_ ; \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ he created them.

So – in mankind there is equality in value, but diversity in purpose. Both male and female, separately and together reflect the image of God.

# Man is a Creature (A Created Being)

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Some believe that mankind is becoming better, evolving, becoming more godlike as time goes by. But human progress has been merely technological, not moral or spiritual. Looking back through history, it doesn't take a degree from Harvard to see that, except for brief periods of spiritual revival in small pockets of the world, we humans practice evil most of the time. Leave us to ourselves, remove the laws of the land, and we would destroy one another and make chaos out of the world God created.

Even though we are created in God's image, there is a vast difference between God and man. As popular t-shirts and bumper stickers read, "1) There is a God. 2) You are not Him." We cannot truly reflect the image of God, or even value ourselves correctly, if we don't understand these differences.

## Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed a man from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ into his nostrils the breath of \_\_\_\_\_, and the man became a living being.

God created man out of the dirt. He gave us our very breath.

## Matthew 6:31

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

We must eat and drink and rest to survive. We depend upon God for life itself. We are born and we die. We cannot be God because we were created by Him. We are created beings. God has always been and always will be - He is eternal.

## GROWING IN GLORY

How can we be transformed and restored so that we can reflect the image of God? The Bible describes mankind as "fully set to do evil." (Ecclesiastes 8:11). But God loved us too much to leave us that way. In His great kindness

and mercy, God has made a way for us. It starts by becoming aware of and acknowledging our sinful state and accepting the sacrifice of God's sacrifice, His only Son. This is the beginning of our journey.

## II Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being \_\_\_\_\_ into his image with \_\_\_\_\_ glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Jesus was the ransom paid to rescue us from our sinful state. Those of us who have accepted this wonderful gift of God, can see and "contemplate" His glory. As we see Him and receive His nature, we are set free from that sinful nature and we are changed - with ever-increasing glory!

## Luke 2:52

And Jesus grew in \_\_\_\_\_ and stature, and in \_\_\_\_\_ with God and man.

Jesus provided the ultimate example of how we are transformed:

- We grow in wisdom - in our intellect and behavior. (Psalm 111:10)
- We grow in stature - physically we grow from children to adults. Spiritually, there is also a growth in stature, described in I John 2:12-14.
- We grow in favor with God - spiritual growth, knowing Him more intimately, becoming more like Him, loving Him so much that our entire desire is to be pleasing to Him. (Psalm 19:14)
- We grow in favor with man - socially, as our character is transformed we can be more pleasing and admirable to man. However, we also may face rejection and judgment from those who are enemies of God. (Esther 9:4, Proverbs 3:4)
- We change from earthly to heavenly - from a physical body to a spiritual one, from our natural thinking to more heavenly thinking. (I Cor 15:49)

# The Function of Mankind

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A cup is created for a purpose - to hold liquid. If it is used as a hammer, it will be damaged, if not totally destroyed. If it never holds liquid, it has not fulfilled the purpose for which it was created.

Mankind, in general, been created for a purpose. Each *individual* has been created for his or her individual purpose. We cannot function properly or be at peace in our lives apart from the purpose of our Creator. So, we need to discover what it is we were created for. While each individual person has a unique God-given purpose for their lives, there are three general purposes we all have because we are a part of mankind.

- 1) **We are created to be in relationship with God.** As we discussed earlier in this lesson, we owe our existence to God and we are dependent upon God for our daily life. He is God, our Creator. He knows best what we were created for and how we are to function. He has also graced us with kindness and mercy when we were not deserving of it. He deserves our worship and our accountability.

## John 4:24

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

- 2) **We are created to be in relationship with our fellow man.** We were not created to be complete on our own. We are interdependent upon one another. Each person has a need for

fellowship, and we cannot completely fulfill our purpose if we separate ourselves from one another. As each person finds his purpose and begins to live accordingly, everyone is blessed, "as each part does its work."

## Romans 13:9

. . . whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "\_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ as yourself."

## Ephesians 4:16

From him the \_\_\_\_\_ body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, \_\_\_\_\_ and builds itself up in love, as \_\_\_\_\_ does its work.

- 3) **We are created to be faithful stewards over God's creation.** By God, we have been given this wonderful place to live in, to enjoy, to cultivate, and to care for. We are not to neglect, abuse or misuse what He has given us, or we will spoil it for ourselves, and for others around us. We are not the owners of the earth, but God has given us authority to "rule" over it.

## Psalms 8:6

You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet:



# The Purpose of Man

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Take a moment to speak with the Lord and enter into His presence:

*“Father, Creator, Lord, I come to you today with a desire to know you more. You, as my creator, know what’s best for me. Lead me today as I study about the purpose of man, and help me to recognize my own purpose. Holy Spirit, teach me, fill me and let me be a blessing to You and to others as I live in this world. Help me to see myself the way You see me, and to love others the way You love them. In Jesus’ Name, AMEN.”*

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We have a purpose for living. God was not random in His creation. He didn’t haphazardly place people on the earth. You were not born by chance. He has a purpose for your life and you will be blessed as you seek to fulfill it. Not only will you be blessed, but you will become a blessing to those around you.

From the very beginning, starting with Adam and Eve, God gave man work to do – to subdue the earth and have dominion over it. This assignment would probably take centuries to complete – but that’s OK, because Adam and Eve were created as eternal beings. Sin and death had not yet entered the world.

We will look at Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden and through their story, we discover our own purpose in creation.

## IN THE GARDEN

The Garden of Eden – it must have been a place of unimaginable beauty and abundance! Can you imagine it? The perfect climate. Lush green plants. Delicious fruits and vegetables. Sin had not entered the world yet, so there was no decay. God declared it all, “Good.”

There was a river flowing through the garden to water it, and this river branched out into four more rivers, spreading further out into the world.

Into this verdant setting God placed Adam – the first man He created.

### Genesis 2:15

The LORD God took the man and \_\_\_\_\_ him in the Garden of Eden to \_\_\_\_\_ it and take care of it.

Examining the Hebrew word translated as “work,” we find this word can also be translated into other words of similar meaning – “serve, dress, cultivate,” etc. Looking at the Hebrew word for “take care,” we find “guard, protect, attend to.”

So, Adam was commanded to cultivate (dress and tend) this beautiful garden God had created. To do this, Adam would need to understand creation (this was the beginning of Science, the study of God’s creation). He would also need to creatively enhance, perhaps even restructure creation (this was the beginning of Art, creative expression using God’s creation).

This was a monumental task, and Adam could not do it alone. There were no compatible helpers among any of the animals. So God, as Adam was sleeping, took a rib from his side and created Eve, a well-suited partner.

### Genesis 2:18

The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a \_\_\_\_\_ for him.”

Eve was ‘bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh,’ and is called woman (which means ‘out of man’). God brought Eve to Adam, creating a union. Together, they were to carry out their task as co-laborers.

# Man's General Purpose in the World

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## Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and \_\_\_\_\_ in number; \_\_\_\_\_ the earth and \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_ over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

This real, literal Garden of Eden, and the river flowing from it was a symbol of God's intention for the entire world.

## Exodus 19:5-6

... Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the \_\_\_\_\_ earth is \_\_\_\_\_, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and a holy nation.' ..."

## Revelation 1:6

... and has made us to be a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

That river, flowing out in four different directions is a beautiful symbol of God's purpose and concern for the 'four corners' of the earth. Man was to:

- Be fruitful,
- multiply,
- fill the earth,
- subdue the earth,
- and rule over all creation.

## ROYAL PRIESTS

### Revelation 5:10

You have made them to be a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

## 1 Peter 2:9

But you are a \_\_\_\_\_ people, a royal \_\_\_\_\_, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

The Bible calls God's people a "kingdom and priests" a "royal priesthood." Jesus is also called the "King of Kings," (Rev 19:16) and, "Our Great High Priest." (Heb 4:14) When we consider the roles of both Kings and Priests, how should those descriptions apply to us? How do those two roles relate to one another?

Jesus provided the perfect example of a King. He is Almighty God, yet He chose to serve, to give His life. So, a **King's role** is not merely to rule, but **to serve**. From the beginning, man was to cultivate the Garden, to spread the culture of the Garden out into the world, and to extend the glory of God by filling the earth with godly children.

Jesus also provided the perfect example of a Priest. He gave gifts to men and offered Himself as the great sacrifice. He sits at God's right hand, serving in "the sanctuary." So, a **Priest's role** is to **guard** (watch over, protect) the earth, his home, his sanctuary, his family and himself (His own heart). It all centers on the adoration of God.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

How is God's image distorted in popular culture – especially in literature and entertainment?

Have you learned anything new about what it means to be human? If so, how has your attitude changed because of what you've learned?

In the Humanist Manifesto of 1933, the following is declared: 'Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created'. What does this statement reveal about humanists?

Since man is to be a steward over creation, how are we to approach environmental concerns?

Take time to ponder: You are a King & a Priest. How does that understanding affect your view of yourself?

How do the roles of King and Priest affect our families

How do the roles of King and Priest affect our employment in the marketplace?

What areas has God given to you to cultivate and protect?

How well are you functioning in your priestly role – praying, reading Scripture, and worshipping? Are you guarding your own heart?

What happens when we let our guard down, and how can we keep this from happening again?

What are the blessings that come from properly functioning in our kingly and priestly roles?

# The Fall of Man



# What Happened?

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Take a moment. Talk to the Lord and enter into His presence. He promised that if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us.

*“Father, thank You for opening Your truth to me. Help me to view myself, and others, and your creation as You do. I want to know You more. Teach me about Yourself and Your ways. Teach me about myself and my nature so that I can turn myself to Your ways and take on Your nature. In Jesus’ Name, Amen,”*

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## What Happened?

We’ve studied about God, His form, His nature, His heart. We’ve seen His magnificent purpose for mankind. So - what happened? What caused the change between that perfect, ideal creation and the twisted world we live in today? Is there any hope for restoration?

What happened, simply, is **sin**. Sin ruined everything! Sin continues to ruin everything! Sin, simply defined, is a violation or transgression of a command; the state of being alienated from God.

Sin didn’t begin on earth. It began in the heavens. Lucifer (aka “Satan”), the archangel, lifted himself up against God. Sometime after that rebellion, Satan saw the beautiful creation and the creatures that God had made, that God loved. His hatred of God caused him to hate what God loved, so he set out to corrupt it and destroy it.

So he took the form of a serpent and came to Adam and Eve, who had been given dominion, rulership over creation. And he set about to tempt them to disobey their Creator.

## GOD'S COMMAND

Against God’s specific instructions, Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In doing so, they sinned by rebelling against the will of their wise and loving Creator. This sin resulted in inconceivable calamity, not only for Adam and Eve, but for every person who has ever lived after them.

And so, sin was ushered into the world. By examining this historical event, we gain valuable insight that can help us overcome sin when we are tempted.

### Genesis 2:15-17

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are \_\_\_\_\_ to eat from \_\_\_\_\_ tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

In our last chapter, we learned that the Lord had planted a beautiful and abundant Garden, and had given it to man for cultivation and protection. Everything in this Garden was available as a blessing to Adam and Eve. There was abundant food and provision. However, the Lord told Adam that there was only one -tree they should not partake of - the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God warned Adam that if they ate from that tree, it would result in their death.



# The Temptation & Fall of Man

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Satan's strategy in the Garden of Eden is pretty much the same strategy he uses today. The nature of temptation and rebellion hasn't changed much either. Satan didn't go to Adam, the one who actually *heard* the command directly from the mouth of God. Instead, he appeared to Eve, not in his own form (archangel), but in the form of a serpent. And He questioned the words of God, seeking to bring confusion.

## Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,<sup>3</sup> but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"<sup>4</sup> "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman.<sup>5</sup> "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."<sup>6</sup> When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Satan is no dummy! He knows Scripture and will sometimes try to twist it in our minds and cause us to doubt what God has said. With Eve,

- He questioned God's word, "Did God *really* say . . .?"
- He called God a liar, "You will NOT certainly die," directly contradicting what God had said.

- He appealed to the ego of man, "For God knows . . . your eyes will be open, and you will be like God," sowing seeds of mistrust and cynicism,
- He questioned God's motives, making Eve feel as though God was holding back from her.

Satan, (aka "the devil") is a shrewd liar. He tells people what they want to hear and manipulates them for his own purpose - to separate us, or keep us separated from God. Can you imagine the heart of God - the grief he must feel when we doubt Him? When we wonder about His intention toward us? When we don't trust Him? We reject Him, based on lies and deception from the enemy of our souls - and break the heart of the One who loves us.

## John 8:44

. . . the devil, . . . there is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

## II Corinthians 11:3

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Eve was deceived by the serpent, so she took the forbidden fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to Adam who also ate. Adam failed, first by eating the fruit. Then he failed as the priestly guardian. He did not guard the Garden against the serpent. He didn't protect Eve. Finally, he failed to guard his own heart against disobedience (sin).

## TWO SPECIAL TREES

### Genesis 2:9

The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the \_\_\_\_\_ of good and evil.

There were two special trees in the middle of the Garden of Eden – The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and The Tree of Life. The **Tree of Life** represented the blessings of obedience. It was not forbidden, they could have all of the fruit they wanted from that tree. But the **Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil** represented disobedience and death. God forbade them to eat from that tree, and that tree only, because He knew what would occur if they ate of it. His command not to eat of it was for their protection. Adam and Eve chose death over life. And we, sometimes naively, sometimes deliberately, make the same choice today.

## THE NATURE OF SIN

In pride, Satan lifted himself up against God, wanting to BE God (read Isaiah 14:12-15). He boastfully said in his heart:

- I will ascend into heaven
- I will exalt my throne
- I will sit on the mount
- I will ascend above the clouds
- I will be like the Most High

Instead of exaltation, his sin caused him to be thrown out of heaven. This judgment was so quick and severe, it was described to be ‘like lightning.’

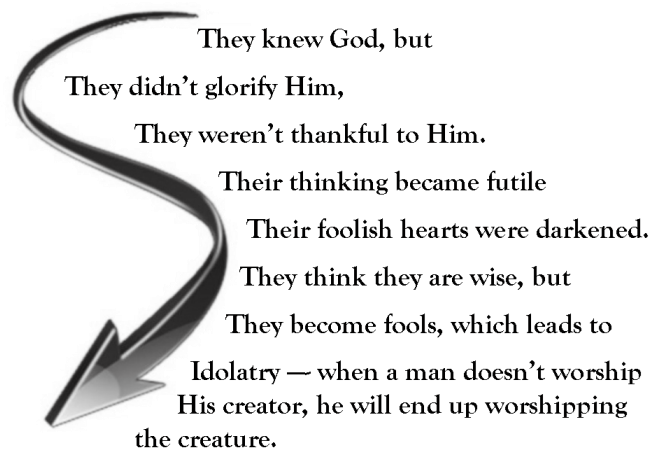
This is the nature of sin! Instead of bringing us up, it brings us down. The pathway to sin ultimately leads to death. Natural, physical death may not occur right away, but spiritual death is like a downward spiral. It can begin with an apparently innocent seed of doubt and end in destruction.

Adam, and all mankind after him, basically sins in the same way – we attempt to transcend what we are to become what we were never created to be. Our sin reveals that we want to “play God” by deciding what is right and wrong for ourselves, to have no accountability outside ourselves. We also sin through impatience – we grasp and grab for what we want without waiting for God, allowing Him to bless us. We have a very destructive and frustrating propensity to grasp by human effort what can only be given by God.

### Romans 1:21-23

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their \_\_\_\_\_ became \_\_\_\_\_ and their foolish hearts were darkened.<sup>22</sup> Although they \_\_\_\_\_ to be wise, they \_\_\_\_\_<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

Here in the first chapter of the book of Romans, the Apostle Paul paints a starkly accurate picture of the results of sin:



Ultimately, when man refuses to acknowledge or worship his Creator, he will end up serving and worshipping foolish creatures. No wonder it says, in Psalm 14:1, “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”

Man cannot go beyond what he was created to be. We are not and cannot be God. Whenever we reject His wisdom or care in favor of our own, we find failure and destruction. Instead, we should follow the example of Jesus, who humbled Himself and was therefore exalted to God's right hand.

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## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

Why did God go to Adam first after he and Eve sinned?

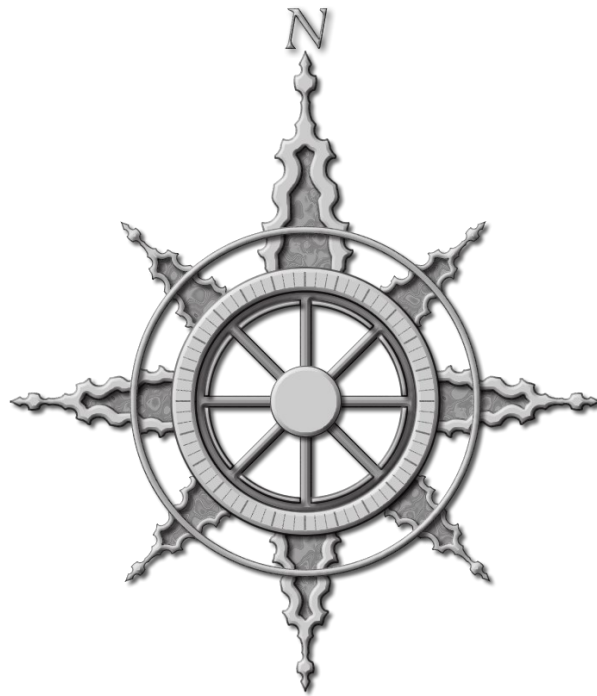
Are there areas in your life where you are attempting to seize control from God?

Do you have any “idols” - anything that comes between you and God?

There is a way to break out of the downward spiral: 'The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord' (Romans 6:23NKJ).



# The Effects of the Fall



# Creation & Sin

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Take some time to quiet your soul. Breathe. Focus upon the Lord and pray.

*“Holy, Heavenly Father, teach me your ways. As I continue to learn about what happened in the beginning, help me to understand just how important and precious it is to have a relationship with You. I want to know You, Lord, please reveal more of Yourself to me as I continue this study. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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## Creation & Sin

The “fall” of Adam & Eve wasn’t just one isolated incident. It affected all of mankind from that moment until now. Sin now entered the world and brought a curse upon all of mankind and the whole of creation. When we say, “The whole of creation” we mean everything – the earth, mankind, animals, plants, etc – quite literally, everything. Before sin, there had been no sickness, no death, no problems with predatory or annoying animals, no plant disease, no need for crop rotations, no stormy weather, etc. The problems that we face today can be directly traced back to the sin begun by Adam & Eve in the Garden. Understanding the effects of sin helps us to view our present condition more accurately.

### Genesis 3:7

At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt \_\_\_\_\_ at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.

Immediately after Adam & Eve sinned, God came to them, as He always had, for fellowship and blessing. But Adam & Eve hid from Him. They must have felt terrible guilt and shame as they realized what they had done. They now had to face the harsh reality of their new status – their relationship with God had been broken and they no

longer had the intimacy with Him they had enjoyed up to this point. So – as God had warned them, they were now in the condition of being under judgment. And God, the righteous judge, pronounced the sentence (Read Genesis 3:14-19):

- First, He cursed **the serpent**. There is a literal curse upon the entire species – God made them the lowest of the low, cursed above both tame and wild animals, crawling on its belly (humiliated), and eating dust (dirt). There is also a curse upon the devil, and a prophetic promise that there would come a specific “offspring” of Eve Who would crush the devil’s head.
- Then, God spoke to **Eve**. Without directly cursing her, He told her that she would suffer pain in pregnancy and childbirth, and that she would desire to control her husband but she would not get her way. This severely changed her role as a wife and mother. Think of it – multiplied sorrow, pain in childbirth, and conflict in marriage.
- Finally, the Lord spoke to **Adam**. Again, He did not curse him directly, but told Adam that because he had listened to Eve instead of God, he had brought a curse upon the ground. Now, instead of enjoying his work as caretaker, he would struggle with obstacles like thorns and thistles. Instead of having food readily and plentifully available, he would have to work up some “sweat of his brow.” This would continue until his resulting death and his return to the dust from which he was taken.

### Romans 5:12

When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam’s sin brought \_\_\_\_\_, so death \_\_\_\_\_ to everyone, for \_\_\_\_\_ sinned.

# Sin & Relationships

First, sin caused man to lose his peaceful and idyllic relationship with God. Stress became the prevailing state of being. Only through Christ can we be reconciled to God and receive His peace.

## Genesis 3:7-13

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they \_\_\_\_\_ they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they \_\_\_\_\_ from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

<sup>10</sup> He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was \_\_\_\_\_ because I was naked; so I hid.”

<sup>11</sup> And he said, “\_\_\_\_\_ told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Notice how sin results in **personal** dysfunction. Prior to this, the Bible says, “they were both naked and were not ashamed.” (Gen 2:25). They had been at complete peace with who they were. Once they sinned, shame entered their awareness – they suddenly realized they were naked and tried to cover themselves up.

They also experienced fear for the first time. Adam answered God, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid . . .” This suggests a sense of personal guilt. Shame and guilt had entered into the world,



and we have all (deservedly) suffered from them.

Notice also how sin results in **relational** dysfunction. Previously, Adam and Eve had enjoyed complete harmony with one another. Now, selfishness took over their interpersonal relationship.

Adam was quick to blame God, “. . . the woman **you** put here . . .” and then Eve for what had happened, “**she** gave me some . . .” Eve was quick to pass the blame as well, “The **serpent** deceived me. . .” This is the very first blame game in history, and we have all since learned to play the game quite well. When we are personally threatened (whether due to some fault in ourselves or not), we usually try to shift responsibility away from ourselves.

Now, most importantly, watch how sin results in a broken relationship with God. Adam and Eve chose to follow the leading of a creature instead of the Creator’s command. This choice led to the unraveling of their relationship with God.

Their first attempt at hiding from God was a pathetic fig-leaf garment. Their second attempt was to run and hide from God when He approached them. Their third attempt was to try to shift blame upon others.

God did not strike them dead, as they deserved. He showed his true character by asking some hard questions. God knew the answers to these questions before He asked them. He did not ask the questions for his own benefit, he asked them for *their* benefit, so that they would acknowledge their sin and take responsibility for their own choices.

because of sin, man did not only lose peace with God, but we also lost **peace with man**. If you pay any attention to the news today, you know that the effect of sin continues to dramatically manifest itself in our world. Adam & Eve didn’t have to wait very long to see it happen – one of their sons murdered the other.

# Sin & Inheritance

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Take a minute or so to read the account of Cain & Abel in Genesis 4:1-11.

Cain, the eldest, became jealous of his brother Abel, and killed him in the field. Can you imagine, as a mother, the agony Eve must have endured at this great sorrow involving her two beloved sons?

Sin also caused man to lose **peace with creation**. Nature itself revolted, and animals which were once docile toward man became wild, hostile beasts. Some even became predators upon other animals and even upon man.

## Genesis 3:15

And I will cause \_\_\_\_\_ between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

## SIN AND INHERITANCE

God had created the Garden of Eden for Adam & Eve. He had placed them within this garden, giving them stewardship of it, providing for their every need. He gave them simple guidelines for their continued prosperity in this lavish place. Because of Adam’s failure to guard the garden and his wife, he lost his inheritance. Paradise lost – God’s judgment.

## Genesis 3:22-24

Then the LORD God said, “Look, the human beings have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? Then they will live forever!”<sup>23</sup> So the LORD God \_\_\_\_\_ them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made.<sup>24</sup> After sending them out, the LORD God stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

So, Adam & Eve were driven out of the haven in the Garden, and never permitted to return. Later, after he had murdered his brother Abel, Cain was driven out of Eden itself, his home. Finally, as mankind continued to pile sin upon sin, the Great Flood in the days of Noah drove men from the face of the earth. Sin causes man to lose his sanctuary, his home, his identity, and ultimately, his life.

## Genesis 6:1-8

Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them.<sup>2</sup> The sons of God saw the beautiful women and took any they wanted as their wives.<sup>3</sup> Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not put up with humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years.” . . .<sup>5</sup> The LORD observed the \_\_\_\_\_ of human \_\_\_\_\_ on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil.<sup>6</sup> So the LORD was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart.<sup>7</sup> And the LORD said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.”<sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor with the LORD.



# Conclusion

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The sin of Adam affected *all* of creation, bringing it under a curse. But man's fall did not stop God! He had a plan to redeem and restore what had been lost. Sinful man does not seek after God. Instead, just like Adam, we run away and hide. But a loving God seeks us out with His redemptive purpose. Just as God called out, "Adam, where are you?" God is a "Redeemer." He calls out to us continually, wanting to draw us back to Himself. He is always working. He is always willing to turn

our failure and our troubled circumstances into opportunities for good. He's worked all through history - through prophets, through sending His Son, through the Holy Spirit, and now through the Church. The Bible, from beginning to end, is a history of God's desire to redeem the fallen race of man. Indeed, history itself is literally "HIS story", which becomes more and more apparent to us as we get to know Him better and watch Him at work in this world.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What happened to man's nature after the fall? Read Romans 7:13 and Romans 8:3 Describe man's problem.

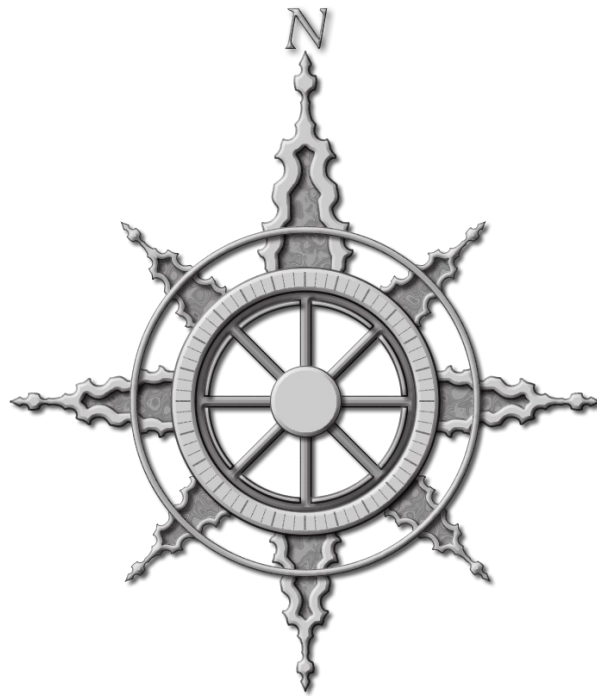
Does man have the ability within himself to do good?

How can man be delivered from the power of sin?

Finally, examine your own life for any broken relationships. Are you seeking reconciliation?

What happened to work as a result of the fall? How do you feel about your job? Do you enjoy it? Do you find it difficult? Are you working "as unto the Lord?" Allow God to redeem your enjoyment of work by renewing your heart from the inside out.

# The Relentless Redeemer



# The Redeeming Nature of God

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Take a few moments before you begin this lesson and ponder what we've learned so far.

PRAYER --

*“Lord, . . . thank You for your heart of love toward me. I want to understand more and more about the things you've done. Help me to always be grateful and recognize your Spirit at work in my life. Enlighten my mind as I study further. In Jesus' Name. Amen.”*

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## AFTER THE FALL

God loved Adam & Eve so very much. They had disobeyed and disappointed Him. They had brought a curse upon His creation. They had spoiled their position and purpose and had tainted all of their descendants. Yet God did not hesitate, He immediately showed His redeeming love and desire to rescue them from themselves. He set His plan for restoration into motion.

*“Your love never fails,  
It never gives up,  
It never runs out on me.”*

One Thing Remains, by Brian Johnson, Christa Black, Jeremy Riddle  
© 2010 Bethel Music/Mercy Vineyard Publishing

### Genesis 3:15

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your \_\_\_\_\_ and hers; he will \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_, and you will strike his heel.”

He promised that the offspring of the woman would crush the serpent's head. He was saying that the deceiver would be defeated by the descendant of the one who had been deceived. Isn't that just like God – to work everything out for our good?

### Genesis 3:21

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Notice the noble and merciful character of our God! He could have destroyed them because of their sin. Instead, he “covers” them. He covered them literally, clothing them with animal skin. He covered them spiritually, providing a way for them to be reconciled to a good relationship with Himself.

Because of their sin, Adam and Eve suddenly noticed and felt shame at their nakedness. They tried to hide by covering themselves up with fig leaves. God, himself, killed the first animal so they

could be clothed with animal skins. This is also a picture of the sacrificial system which was to come - the innocent suffers to provide a covering for the guilty. This is also an example for us – that our sin has an effect upon others. I think of the example of

divorce – how the children may not have any sin involved in the relationship between their mother and father, but they certainly suffer as a result of it.

Finally, Jesus (the innocent, without sin) became the sacrifice once and for all to cover the sins of humanity. Our sins are covered by His sacrifice. Our own attempts at doing good are tainted by our sin. There is no way that we can redeem ourselves.

# The Flood & the Patriarchs

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Because of Adam's sin, mankind received a propensity toward sin. The sinful nature became a part of every descendant of Adam, causing all to sin. Within just a few generations, the sins of mankind had become so dreadful that the Lord began to regret that He had made human beings. So He decided to wipe mankind from the face of the earth! Mankind totally deserved the judgment that was coming.

## Genesis 6:5-8

The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. <sup>6</sup> The LORD \_\_\_\_\_ that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply \_\_\_\_\_ . <sup>7</sup> So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." <sup>8</sup> But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.

Do you see in these verses how upset God is? Notice the emotion He is feeling – He's filled with regret and He is troubled. And yet, He is always working. He is always willing to turn our failure and our troubled circumstances into opportunities for good. He saw one man, Noah, who was pleasing to Him. We all owe Noah a debt of gratitude, because if it weren't for Him, mankind would have been destroyed.

If you read Genesis chapters 6 through 9, you'll see that God instructed Noah to build a large ship, an ark. He gave Noah exact instructions about how to construct this ark, and the materials he was to use. Then He told Noah to gather two of every type of creature (male & female) and take them into the ark. He told Noah to fill the ark with

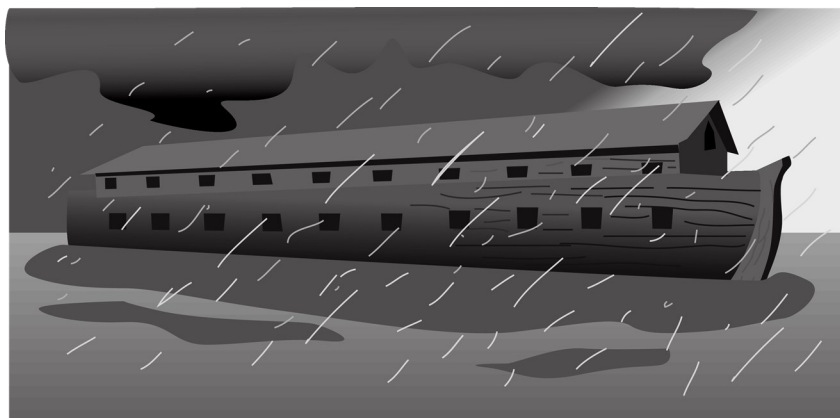
food, for his family and for all the animals. Can you imagine it? The ark must have been huge! The Bible says that Noah did everything just as God commanded him. (Gen 6:22) This ark would take Noah, his family, and all those animals safely through the coming flood. Then God caused the rain to start. This was the first time rain had ever fallen upon the earth. It rained for forty days and nights, and water covered the entire earth and every living thing was killed except for what was preserved on the ark.

So, even though God sent this righteous judgment because of the sin of mankind, His heart was still to continue His redemption. He not only saved Noah, his family & the animals, but by doing so, he preserved the descendants of Adam and Eve so that His promise of the redeeming offspring could be fulfilled. He didn't give up on us!

## THE PATRIARCHS

Genesis, chapters 12 through 50 is the account of the "Patriarchs" of the faith – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God had called them to start the family line from which the promised redeeming "offspring" would come, to bless all nations and peoples of the world. We encourage you to read these chapters. There are things to be learned from each one.

Later, when the nation of Israel (the descendants of these Patriarchs) was enslaved in Egypt, God called Moses, and through him formed the nation from which the redeeming offspring would come – the nation of Israel.



# The Nation of Israel

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As we read the history of the nation of Israel from the books of Joshua through Chronicles; we see how the people had wonderful seasons of turning toward God and tragic seasons of turning away from Him toward wickedness and destruction. Again and again this cycle is repeated. But God never forgot His purpose or His promise.

God raised up judges to save the people (Judges) and He sent prophets to warn them (Isaiah through Malachi). Even in the midst of suffering and defeat, He mercifully and miraculously spared a remnant of the people.

Finally, God raised up a young man named David to produce a Kingly lineage for the redeeming offspring, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who would reign forever. (II Samuel 7)

## Hebrews 1:1-3

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the \_\_\_\_\_ at many times and in various ways,<sup>2</sup> but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.<sup>3</sup> The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.



# The Lord Jesus Christ

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## John 3:16

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

At last, we see God's redemptive nature revealed in the redeeming offspring Himself, Jesus Christ. When the time came, God sent His own Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born from a young virgin named Mary. Jesus was tempted in every way a man could be tempted, but he lived a sinless life.

## Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Jesus willingly went to the cross and gave up his life, becoming the sacrifice for our sins.

## Hebrews 9:26

... But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

## 1 John 4:10

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an \_\_\_\_\_ for our sins.

Then Jesus rose from the dead, conquering death and Satan (crushing the head of the serpent) and saving mankind.

## Colossians 2:13-15

... He forgave us all our sins,<sup>14</sup> ... which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.<sup>15</sup> And having disarmed the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, he made a public spectacle of them, \_\_\_\_\_ over them by the cross.

Jesus now reigns, even as His Church proclaims His victory and His redemptive purpose in all of the earth. Scripture promises that all creation will be redeemed and the Kingdom will be handed back to God the Father, our relentless Redeemer.

## Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."<sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

## 1 Corinthians 15:24

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.

# Conclusion

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Learning more about our God, our relentless redeemer, will cause us to love Him more and more. When we give our lives to Him, He promises to complete the work He has begun in us. We can trust Him to “complete” our salvation. When we understand the redeeming heart of God, it helps us to face the situations of our lives with faith and hope. Knowing how much He loves us should motivate us to find out what we can do to serve His purpose on the earth - in the lives of others who don’t know Him yet.

Our knowledge of God's redemptive nature will cause us to love Him even more, and to trust Him to complete our salvation. Understanding His redemptive purpose will help you to face every situation with faith and hope, and motivate you to find how you can serve in that purpose. When we are involved in His purpose we discover our destiny.

We want to make his loving heart of redemption known to as many people as possible so they can know Him and be redeemed.

## **II Corinthians 5:17-20**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.

## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

When you think about the eternal purpose of God, what does that tell you about why you are here on earth?

When you understand more about the loving and redemptive nature of God, does that change the way you think about other people? If so, how?

When you understand more about the love and redemptive nature of God, how does that help you to trust Him?

Ask God about your part in His redemptive purpose and listen for what He might speak to you. Perhaps you can begin to identify some people who don’t know Him yet and you may be used to help them come to know Him too.



# The Meaning of Covenant



# Joined Together

Sit still for a time, quietly waiting upon the Lord. Bask in His presence. Tell Him how great He is. Pray:

*Father God, You are merciful and loving. Help me to draw more and more near to you so that I can learn from You. I pray that you will keep me close to you, and help me to live by Your wisdom instead of my own. Thank You, Lord, for the work you have begun in me. In Jesus's Name I pray. Amen.*

God has established relationships with people through covenant. In fact, the Bible is made up of the Old and New Covenants, or Testaments. Scripture shows God establishing covenantal relationships with people through whom He accomplishes His purpose. He is a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God who continues to relate to His people in this way today. Therefore, it is critical that we have an understanding of the significance and nature of covenant. This is a concept that is greatly misunderstood in modern culture.

## JOINING TOGETHER

Our highest understanding of covenant is that it is a bond which God has established to join His people to Himself, and to join His people together. The basic meaning of covenant is 'to bind together'.

The root meaning of the Hebrew word *berith*, ('covenant' or 'to cut covenant') probably originates from a common covenant-making ritual from Bible times. Animals were cut in half, and the pieces arranged side by side with a path between them. The parties making the agreement would then walk between the pieces, symbolizing the fact that they were giving up separate lives to begin a new relationship. They pledged their lives to be faithful to the relationship. The common penalty for breaking the covenant would be – death. That is an indication of how important and how seriously the covenant was to be considered.

## Genesis 15:8-21

But Abram said, "Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?"<sup>9</sup> So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon."<sup>10</sup> Abram brought all these to him, \_\_\_\_\_ them in \_\_\_\_\_ and arranged the halves \_\_\_\_\_ each other . . .<sup>18</sup> On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram and said, "To your descendants I give this land . . ."

## Jeremiah 34:18-20

Those who have \_\_\_\_\_ my covenant and have not fulfilled the terms of the covenant they made before me, I will treat like the calf they cut in two and then walked between its pieces.<sup>19</sup> The leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the court officials, the priests and all the people of the land who walked between the pieces of the calf,<sup>20</sup> I will deliver into the hands of their enemies who want to kill them. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds and the wild animals.

## Covenant

*Kuhv'-uh-nuhnt*

- Noun

1. An agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do or not do something specified.
2. *Law.*
  - a. An incidental clause in such an agreement.
  - b. A formal agreement of legal validity.
3. *Ecclesiastical.* A solemn agreement between the members of a church to act together in harmony with the precepts of the gospel.
4. *Bible.*
  - a. The conditional promises made to humanity by God, as revealed in Scripture.
  - b. The agreement between God and the ancient Israelites in which God promised to protect them if they kept his law and were faithful to Him.

-Verb (used without object)

5. To enter into a covenant.

-Verb (used with object)

6. To promise by covenant; pledge.

7. To stipulate.

# Covenant

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The English word *covenant* comes from a Latin word meaning, 'a coming together', and means 'a binding and solemn agreement' (Webster's Dictionary, 1828 Edition).

Though there are covenants between equals, the covenants of God are Sovereign. God initiates the covenant and He establishes its terms. Man then either accepts or rejects God's covenant.

Covenant causes two to become one. Marriage is a covenant whereby the partners are to lay down their lives for one another. The marriage covenant is to be a "prophetic picture" or representation of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

## Genesis 2:24

... a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they \_\_\_\_\_ flesh.

## Malachi 2:14

... the LORD is the \_\_\_\_\_ between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your \_\_\_\_\_.

## Ephesians 5:21-32

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. . . .<sup>23</sup> . . . the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.<sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her<sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,<sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. . . .<sup>30</sup> for we are members of his body. . . .<sup>32</sup> This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.

## HISTORY OF COVENANT WITH GOD

God has revealed His purpose, and His relationships with people, through a series of covenants.

His first relationship with man was established in what is called, "The Dominion Covenant" with Adam. God established mankind as His representative authority on the earth, giving him rulership (dominion) over what He had created (Genesis 1:26). He specifically set out man's responsibility. He gave man great freedom and abundance, along with certain boundaries and restrictions. And – God clearly warned man of the penalty for disobedience (Genesis 2:15). We learned about this in *Lesson 8: The Fall of Man*.

After the Great Flood, God reestablished His covenant with Noah and his descendants –that they would be the family through which redemption would come to the nations. Take a few minutes now and read Genesis 9:1-17, the entire passage. You'll see God's promises, and the conditions He expects man to uphold. Today, every time we see a rainbow, we are reminded of this covenant.

## Genesis 9:1-17

Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. . . .<sup>9</sup> "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you. . . .<sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you: \_\_\_\_\_ will all life be destroyed by the \_\_\_\_\_ of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." . . .<sup>13</sup> I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>17</sup> So God said to Noah, "This is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ I have established between me and all life on the earth."

# Covenant Promises & Requirements

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It was by covenant that God formed the children of Israel into a nation through which He would reveal Himself in the earth. Notice again, the promises God makes and the requirements He sets.

## Exodus 19:3-6

Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you . . . are to tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my \_\_\_\_\_ possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' . . ."

Later, God made covenant with David to bring the Redeemer King from among his offspring. Here, in Psalm 89, David (the writer of this Psalm) rejoiced in the promises and the conditions God had set before him. **Through these covenants, we see the character of God**, who has never once broken His promises. Every time a covenant has been broken, it is man who has violated it. What a gracious and merciful God we serve! He may be disappointed in us or become angry with us, but He does not give up on us. He is certainly the God of "second chances" – and often third, fourth, fifth chances and beyond!

## Psalm 89:1-4

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. <sup>2</sup> I will declare that your \_\_\_\_\_ stands firm forever, that you have established your \_\_\_\_\_ in heaven itself. <sup>3</sup> You said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, <sup>4</sup> I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations."

## THE NEW COVENANT

God's Law in the old covenant was written upon tablets of stone, and proclaimed by the prophets. But the prophet Jeremiah declared that there would come a New Covenant that was written upon the hearts of the people.

## Jeremiah 31:31-33

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant . . . <sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors . . . <sup>33</sup> "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their \_\_\_\_\_ and write it on their \_\_\_\_\_. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

The new covenant was initiated by Jesus Christ Himself when he ate with His disciples at the Last Supper, described in the 22<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Luke.

## Luke 22: 20

In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the \_\_\_\_\_ in my blood, which is poured out for you."

According to the writer of Hebrews, this **New Covenant is a better covenant**, with a better priest, a better sacrifice, and better promises.

## Hebrews 7:22

. . . Jesus has become the guarantor of a \_\_\_\_\_.

# The Law & Covenant

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There is nothing wrong with the Law whatsoever, except for the people who are supposed to keep it! In the New Covenant, there is not only forgiveness available when we sin, but there is power to help us stop sinning.

## Hebrews 10:16-18

“This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.”<sup>17</sup> Then he adds: “Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more.”<sup>18</sup> And where these have been forgiven, \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.

The new covenant reaches beyond the nation of Israel. It includes Jews and Gentiles, and forms all who believe into one Body, with Christ as the Head.

## Ephesians 2:11-22

Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth . . . excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_ have been \_\_\_\_\_ by the blood of Christ. . .<sup>22</sup> And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

## Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus.

## COVENANT & GOD'S PURPOSE

Through making covenant, God has bound Himself to fulfill His purpose on the earth even though man (the first man - Adam) failed and broke the relationship between God and man.

## Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through \_\_\_\_\_, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—

## Isaiah 59:2

But your iniquities have \_\_\_\_\_ you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

However, God sent another man, His own Son Jesus (called 'The Second Adam'), Who kept the covenant and reunited God with those who believe.

## Romans 5:17

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the \_\_\_\_\_, Jesus Christ!

## 2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had no sin to \_\_\_\_\_ for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

# Jesus Fulfilled the Covenant

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It's important to realize that Jesus was both fully God and fully man, and because of this, He fulfilled the covenant for **both parties**.

## Fully God:

### Colossians 1:15-19

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

## Fully Man:

### Philippians 2:5-8

. . . as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

## Withstood Temptation:

Jesus fulfilled the covenant by resisting every temptation. He was tempted in every way possible that any person can be tempted, but He never sinned. Jesus was fully obedient to the Father, and only wanted to please Him.

### Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

## Fully Obedient to the Father:

### John 12:49-50

For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. <sup>50</sup> I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

According to God's covenants with Abraham and David, Jesus is in their lineage, or family line, the “seed of Abraham”. He is in the *royal* line of ancestry through Joseph, His earthly father, and He is in their *natural* line of ancestry through His mother, Mary.

### Acts 2:29-31

“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet and knew that God had \_\_\_\_\_ him on oath that he would place one of his \_\_\_\_\_ on his throne. <sup>31</sup> Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the \_\_\_\_\_, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.

# The Perfect Sacrifice for a Better Covenant

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Jesus is the High Priest of a better covenant, and is the perfect sacrifice offered for all who have broken the covenant.

## 2 Corinthians 5:21

God made him \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ to be sin for us, so that  
in him we might become the righteousness  
of God.

## Hebrews 7:27

Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He \_\_\_\_\_  
for their sins \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_  
when he offered \_\_\_\_\_.

**In Jesus, God is fulfilling His original intent for mankind.**

## Hebrews 2:5

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. <sup>6</sup> But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him?"

<sup>7</sup> You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor <sup>8</sup> and put everything under their feet." In putting everything

under them, God left nothing that is not subject to them. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to them.

<sup>9</sup> But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

## CONCLUSION

When we accept and receive the gift/sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, we enter into a covenant with God, complete with all of its blessings and responsibilities.

All of history meets at the cross of Christ. At the cross, the full penalty of the broken covenant was paid. Jesus, fully God and fully man, became the perfect sacrifice, once and for all.

Jesus not only speaks and reveals the Covenant Word of God, but He is the "Living Word." Covenant is part of His very being. It is infused within his character.

Now, the Holy Spirit works in the Church. Christ's Kingdom is being extended throughout the whole earth. So, through mankind, Jesus Christ, and the Church, God is fulfilling His original covenantal intent.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

As we have learned, a covenant demands loyalty, whether it is with God or with other people. Read Psalm 15.

According to Psalm 15, how is the person who honors God rewarded?

What does it mean to you to “never be shaken?”

What are some of the things Psalm 15 assumes about a person who is loyal to the Lord?

How has God demonstrated His faithfulness to you?

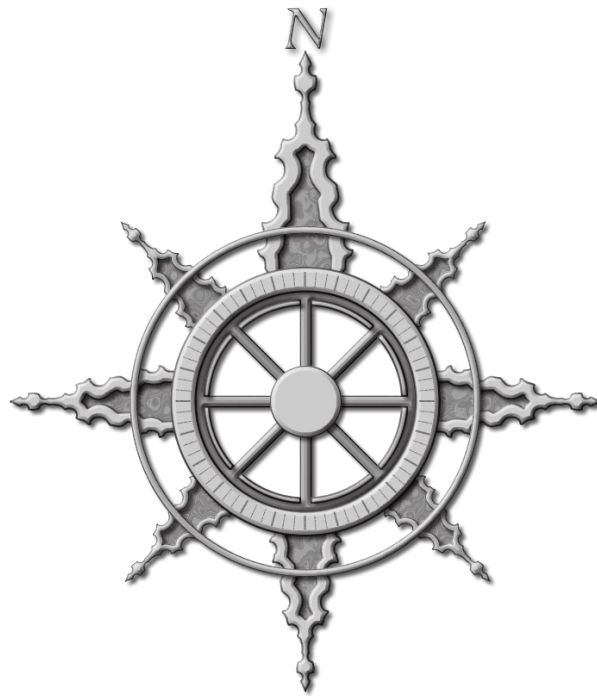
How do you consider your decision to follow Jesus in light of having a covenant relationship with God?

At what point in your life on earth will your covenant with God come to an end?



# The Incarnation

A NEW COVENANT & A NEW KINGDOM



# Preparation for the Fulfilled of the Promise

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Before we begin this lesson, let's pray.

*“Father, thank you for loving me. Thank you for leading me and drawing me close to you so I can know you. Now, as I continue learning more about your plan for me, I ask that you show me everything I need to know and help me to absorb what you're teaching me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.”*

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Once God made His covenant with Man, He intended to fulfill it. And so, when the time came, He sent His Son to be born from a woman, born onto earth, born under God's law. Through the human birth process, God's Son took the form of a human man and was named Jesus. From infancy to adulthood, Jesus of Nazareth lived on earth, completely man and completely God (not half & half). Jesus, as God incarnate, fulfilled all previous prophecies promises and covenants. He accomplished for us what we could never have accomplished for ourselves - a right relationship with God the Father. Jesus provided the way for us to be restored to our covenant relationship with the living God.

This lesson shows the detailed preparation for and the significance of God Incarnate - Jesus, the Son of God. His incarnation is the complete fulfillment of all God's covenantal promises in the Old Testament.

## THE PREPARATION

### Adam & Eve

At the time of Adam & Eve's fall into sin, God revealed His plan to vanquish Satan through the descendant of Eve.

#### Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between you (Satan) and the woman, and between your \_\_\_\_\_ and hers; he will \_\_\_\_\_ your head, and you will strike his heel.”

### Abraham

In addition, God clarified His intentions by forming a covenant with Abraham and his family. God was pleased with Abraham because of his obedience. His covenant promise was that God would bring His blessing to all the people on earth through Abraham's descendants.

#### Genesis 22:18

“... and \_\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_\_ all nations on earth will be \_\_\_\_\_, because you have obeyed me.”

#### Galatians 3:16

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,” meaning one person, who is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Jacob

Following up on God's covenant promise with Abraham, his grandson Jacob foretold that a ruler would come from the tribe of his son, Judah (Abraham's great-grandson). The tribe of Judah would supply triumphant leadership for the nation of Israel for generations! At long last, this would conclude with the birth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, the “Lion of the Tribe of Judah” (Rev 5:5). The Old Testament writers continually reaffirm this prophecy of the Messiah to come.

#### Genesis 49:10

The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until \_\_\_\_\_ shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.

# Preparation for the Fulfilled Promise

## Moses

God continued to prepare His people, continued to encourage them with His promise of things to come. With Moses, he promised that a “prophet” would come who would be like Moses because He would be a deliverer of His people.

### Deuteronomy 18:18

I will raise up for them a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him.

## David

We can see God at work through generation after generation, reminding His people of the promise – and forming covenants with key people. One of them was David, who He raised up from tending sheep to being the King over all Israel. David was so pleasing to the Lord that God called him, “A man after my own heart.” (Acts 13:22) Nathan, the prophet during David’s reign, clearly foretold that the Holy Seed would come through King David. Both king and kingdom would continue forever.

### 2 Samuel 7:11b-16

... ‘The LORD declares to you that ...

<sup>12</sup> I will raise up your \_\_\_\_\_  
to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. . .

<sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your \_\_\_\_\_  
will be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ .”

## Prophets

Many prophets, like Ezekiel, Joel and Amos, refer to the coming 'Day of the Lord'. (Ezek 7:19, Joel 1:15, 2:11, 2:28-32, 3:1-21, Amos 5:18)

Micah calls Him 'the Ruler of Israel', and specifically names the town of Bethlehem as the place of His birth.

### Micah 5:2

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

Of all the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah foretells the most details concerning the features and characteristics of the coming king. He foretells the virgin birth and calls Him ‘the Branch,’ ‘Immanuel (God with us),’ the ‘Lord’s Servant’ and ‘Savior’ – even describing details about His suffering and death. Truly, this was God speaking through a man, foretelling things that were to come 680 years in advance!

### Isaiah 4:2

In that day the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.

### Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a \_\_\_\_\_ : The \_\_\_\_\_ will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him \_\_\_\_\_.

## Incarnation

*In-kahr-ney'-shuhn*

1. An incarnate being or form
2. A living being embodying a deity or spirit
3. Assumption of human form or nature
4. Theology, The doctrine that the second person of the Trinity assumed human form in the person of Jesus Christ and is completely both God and man.

# The Father's Gift: God Incarnate, Jesus Christ

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Take some time, slowly read through this next portion of the book of Isaiah. Let it soak in to your mind and heart the things that Christ suffered for us.

## Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

<sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were appalled at him— his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being and his form marred beyond human likeness— <sup>15</sup> so he will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. <sup>Isaiah 53:1</sup> Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? <sup>2</sup> He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

<sup>4</sup> Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup> But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. <sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off

from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished.

<sup>9</sup> He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.

<sup>10</sup> Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. <sup>11</sup> After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. <sup>12</sup> Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

From *The Message*, verse eleven of Isaiah fifty-three is described like this, “Out of that terrible travail of soul, he'll see that it's worth it and be glad he did it. Through what he experienced, my righteous one, my servant, will make many ‘righteous ones,’ as he himself carries the burden of their sins.”

Jesus came to earth as a man. It couldn't have been very pleasant for him, being God, limiting himself to a human body for 33 years, feeling our emotional, and physical pain and temptations. Then He faced the cross, knowing what He would experience. And yet he chose to bear all that suffering because He knew He would be making a way for us to be restored to a relationship with God.

# Incarnation & the New Covenant

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The old covenant was established and maintained through a system of animal sacrifices. It was initiated by God with Adam & Eve. God killed an animal, shedding its blood, and made coverings for them. There must be death in payment for sin – blood must be shed. Adam & Eve were deserving of death, but in His mercy, God allowed an animal to be killed in place of Adam & Eve.

## Leviticus 17:11

For the \_\_\_\_\_ of a creature is \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

## Hebrews 9:22

In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ there is \_\_\_\_\_ forgiveness.

God continued the old covenant in terms of animal sacrifices. He wrote the terms on tablets of stone and delivered them to His people through Moses. This covenant was broken again & again, not by God, but by the people.

Now, God writes the new covenant on the tablets of human hearts.

## Jeremiah 31:31-33

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a \_\_\_\_\_ covenant . . .”<sup>33</sup> “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and \_\_\_\_\_ it on their \_\_\_\_\_. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Through the sacrifice of his own life, Jesus of Nazareth met all requirements of God's holiness once and for all. This is why Jesus is called “The Lamb of God” because his sacrifice took the place of animal sacrifice.

## I Corinthians 11:25

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ in my \_\_\_\_\_; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” (see also Luke 22:20)

With this “new covenant,” God has established a much better covenant. All that the sacrificial system of the old covenant meant in terms of human failure and rebellion, Jesus, the God-Man, gathered up in Himself and paid the price for that failure and rebellion. Jesus established the new covenant through shedding His own blood. He fulfilled all the terms of the new covenant. Therefore, He and He alone, was able to initiate the new covenant, set it in motion, and maintain it.

## Hebrews 8:7-13

For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another.<sup>8</sup> But God found fault with the people and said: “The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.”<sup>9</sup> It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord.<sup>10</sup> This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.<sup>11</sup> No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.<sup>12</sup> For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”<sup>13</sup> By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.

We see in verse 11, that it is now and has always been God's desire that we would “know” Him – and be close with Him. He wanted it so greatly that He was willing to sacrifice the *ultimate* sacrifice.

# Why the Incarnation?

The covenant was made by two parties – God and man. So only one who was both God and man could make atonement for our sins.

## Hebrews 10:4-10

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me;<sup>6</sup> with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased.<sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, my God.’”<sup>8</sup> First he said, “Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them”—though they were offered in accordance with the law.<sup>9</sup> Then he said, “Here I am, I have come to do your will.” He sets aside the first to establish the second.<sup>10</sup> And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- He had to be God, because no one else *could* achieve it!
- He had to be man, because no one else *should* pay the price. Man is the guilty party, but his sin renders him impotent.
- So – the “God-man” (Jesus) is the only one who is qualified.

Through Jesus, God shows His great love for us, even in our sinful state. He obviously places great value on human life – mankind as a whole, and each individual life!

## Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: \_\_\_\_\_ we were \_\_\_\_\_, Christ died for us.

## I Timothy 1:15

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ \_\_\_\_\_ into the world \_\_\_\_\_ –of whom I am the worst.

Through Jesus, God shows that He is able to understand us and sympathize with us. Stop and think about this – God understands! He sympathizes! Shouldn’t this make us want to be closer with Him? Shouldn’t this result in our desire to be united with Him, seeking Him and His help?

## Psalms 103:11-14

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so \_\_\_\_\_ is his \_\_\_\_\_ for those who fear him;<sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.<sup>13</sup> As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has \_\_\_\_\_ on those who fear him;<sup>14</sup> for he \_\_\_\_\_ how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

## I Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is \_\_\_\_\_; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ so that you can endure it.

Through Jesus, God shows us an example of how a person ought to relate to God and live in the world.

## I Peter 2:21

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

# The Means of the Incarnation

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## The necessity of the Virgin Birth

One of the problems some people have with Christianity is they scoff at the virgin birth, finding it difficult to believe. Mary, herself, asked the question, "How can this be?"

### Luke 1:30-34

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." <sup>34</sup> "\_\_\_\_\_," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

Continuing in Luke, chapter One, we see that the Spirit of God overshadowed the Virgin Mary, and by His power produced a miraculous conception. Mary gave birth to the Child, who was the only Son of God born in this way (the 'only begotten Son of God.') By God's creative Power, the Spirit began a spiritual nation - people who experience a 'new birth' through faith in Christ their King. He became the First, the Leader, the New Adam.

- Jesus avoided the curse of original sin by means of the virgin birth. If He had been born through Mary and her human husband, Joseph - he would have carried the sin that is inherent in all people. He would have been just like the rest of us, not God-man, just man. (Rom 5:12, Gal 4:4)
- Also, God had said that it would be the offspring of *woman*, not man, that was to crush the serpent's head Gen 3:5). This is the only place in the entire Bible where the offspring of a woman is mentioned.

## CONCLUSION

### "Someone is Coming!"

The Old Testament is full of references to someone who is coming to fulfill all the prophecies and finalize all the temporary solutions to the problems caused by man's sin. Only God had the power to achieve any real change. Man was the wrongdoer who had no power to change his condition. Therefore, God himself came, as a man (incarnation) in a way (virgin birth) that avoided the curse of original sin, establishing a new covenant through shedding His own blood on the cross.

## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

How does Jesus Christ uniquely qualify as the One who could break the curse of sin and death over mankind?

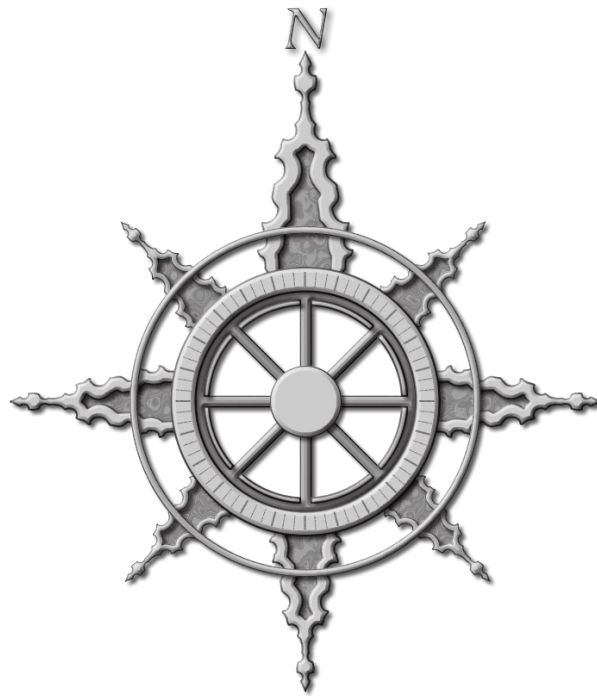
Have you, personally, accepted the price that was paid for you to be made right with God?

Have you decided to follow the example of Jesus? If so, how has this impacted your personal life?



# Jesus Christ

GOD'S SERVANT AMONG US



# Christ, the Servant

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Let's take some time again to seek God in prayer:

*God, my Father, I ask you to be with me now as I continue to learn about You and Your Son. Open my mind and heart to know and love you more and more. This is the greatest pursuit of my life. I ask that your Spirit will lead me and guide me as I pursue Your truth. In Jesus's Name, Amen.*

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As we seek more deeply into our pursuit of knowing God, we continue our study toward Jesus Christ, God the Son. In this chapter and the three that follow it, we will study about Christ in his roles as prophet, priest, teacher, savior, and Lord over the universe and the church. Let's begin again, at the beginning, with Genesis:

## Genesis 1:26

Then God said, "Let \_\_\_\_ make mankind in \_\_\_\_\_ image, in our likeness . . ."

Notice - God, the Father, did NOT say, "*I* will make mankind in *my* own image, in *my* likeness." He uses the plural forms for the pronouns, "us" and "our," indicating that there was more than one person of the Godhead involved in the creation of all things.

So the second person of the Triune (three-in-one) God, the One who was to become Jesus, the Christ, has always *been*, will always *be*. He was present at the creation.

## Colossians 1:15-17

The \_\_\_\_\_ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For \_\_\_\_\_ all things were \_\_\_\_\_: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

This passage further clarifies that "the Son," Jesus Christ was present and involved in creation. Now, this next passage describes the same event, calling Him, "the Word." This "name" has great significance for helping us understand the nature and character of Christ.

## John 1:1-5

In the beginning was the \_\_\_\_\_, and the Word was with God, and the \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

## THE SERVANT

In order to understand Jesus as God's Word (Prophet), we need first to look at His role as a servant. It's hard to fully comprehend just how much Christ humbled Himself. He is Almighty God, the Creator of man, and yet he *became* a man in order to come and serve us in the most humiliating way - subjecting Himself to every weakness and temptation, being mocked, spat upon, beaten, and hung on a cross to die like a criminal.

## Matthew 20:28

. . . just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but \_\_\_\_\_, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The book of Isaiah foretells the coming of this extraordinary servant, and the apostolic writers of the New Testament look back in wonder and admiration at the depths of servitude that Christ displayed among them. Jesus lived His servanthood as an example for us. It is to be the most plainly identifying feature of His followers, the Church.

# The Servant Foretold

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The prophet Isaiah, predicted the servant-nature of the Messiah. This fact, however, was misinterpreted or misunderstood by the leaders of Israel.

Isaiah sees the Servant as the Chosen of the Father, strengthened and upheld by the Father's hand, the One who is the Father's covenant to the nations. He bears witness to the Father; He comes as Light to the Gentile nations of the earth. Formed from the womb to be the Father's Servant, He brings restoration to Israel.

## **Isaiah 52:13-15**

See, my \_\_\_\_\_ will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.<sup>14</sup> Just as there were many who were appalled at him— his appearance was so \_\_\_\_\_ beyond that of any human being and his form \_\_\_\_\_ beyond human likeness—<sup>15</sup> so he will sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand.

Isaiah portrays the suffering Servant, disfigured and marred beyond all human likeness, a root out of dry ground, despised and rejected by people. Isaiah sees Him as struck by the Father, smitten, afflicted, pierced, crushed, and wounded. As the guilt offering, the Father lays on Him all the sins of the world. By knowing the Righteous One, the Father's Servant, many will find justification and salvation. Isaiah, here in chapter 52, verse 15, even prophesies the misinterpretation of these things!

It's not surprising that the readers and scholars of Isaiah's time misinterpreted the Servant-Person! Yet in the light of the fact that our salvation has been completed, we re-examine the book of Isaiah and stand in awe at the Servant. Jesus, His disciples, and those who heard Him carried in their hearts Isaiah's prophecies.

## **Isaiah 61:1-3**

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,<sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,<sup>3</sup> and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

# The Servant at Work

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John wrote that he had seen Him, observed Him, and touched Him.

## John 20:29

Then Jesus told him, "Because you have \_\_\_\_\_ me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Luke recognized Him as Isaiah's Messiah, anointed with the Good News for the poor and captive, to release them into sight, healing, and God's favor.

## Luke 4:18-19

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

## Luke 24:25-26

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ all that the prophets have spoken!<sup>26</sup> Did not the Messiah have to \_\_\_\_\_ these things and then enter his glory?"

Matthew noted His modest behavior by describing occasions when Jesus cautioned His followers not to divulge His real identity or work. Yet each writer of the Gospels were amazed at the miracles, healings and deliverances Jesus performed.

Jesus was not the expected version of their long-awaited Messiah. In that day, the standard expectation was to see the Messiah as a royal, majestic person, coming from the Father with enough troops to defeat Rome and re-establish Jerusalem as the capital of the earth. Instead, Jesus came as a servant, meeting the needs of ordinary people, cautious about divulging His true identity, and exposing the hypocrisy of religious leaders. Jesus explained to His disciples three times the necessity of His going to Jerusalem to die. Even Peter re-

buffed Him, saying, 'God forbid it, Lord. This shall never happen to You.'

To complicate the picture further, Jesus declared that

- He came to earth because the Father sent Him; that
- He came to accomplish the Father's will;
- He does nothing on His own initiative, but only what He sees the Father doing;
- His teaching is not His own, but the Father's who taught Him;
- The very works which He does are the ones the Father sent Him to accomplish;
- He carries the Father's authority, not His own.
- The only authority He carried was that of laying down His own life at the cross -and that commandment He received from His Father. (John, chapters 13 through 17)

Jesus continued this servant posture all the way to the end of His earthly life and throughout His ministry. He saw Himself as His Father's servant, sent on the Father's initiative, speaking the Father's words, doing the Father's work, and representing the Father's heart. As He served His Father, Jesus fulfilled all the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Messiah.

When Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father, Jesus may have been a bit hurt. He said, "Don't you KNOW me, Philip . . .?" and saying, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9)

Jesus' delight was to accomplish His Father's purposes. Because of this He received the Father's audibly spoken approval.

## Luke 3:22

. . . And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am \_\_\_\_\_."

# The Servant in His Death

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Jesus did not come to earth with a reluctant or unwilling attitude. He didn't even think about the humiliation he would bear. He valued every day on the earth as an opportunity to please His Father. This is the example He has set for us as we continue our life learning and practicing His ways.

Written in the Gospels, we find three times where Jesus talked about His purpose for going to Jerusalem – to lay down His life for the people of the world. The disciples were all astonished by this, and responded with disbelief.

## **Matthew 16:22**

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”

Even though Jesus specifically stated that he would be raised three days after His death, this concept was so different from the popular teachings about the Messiah, that the disciples couldn't comprehend it. Jesus admonished them for scorning Mary's pre-burial anointing of Him.

## **Matthew 26:7-12**

A woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. <sup>8</sup> When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. <sup>9</sup> “This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.” <sup>10</sup> Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>11</sup> The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.

<sup>12</sup> When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to \_\_\_\_\_ me for \_\_\_\_\_.

ant of the day. He also acknowledged that he was aware of His betrayer. He gave them His “new commandment” – to love one another as He had loved them. He promised them that he would always be with them and told them about the coming of the Holy Spirit and described the work that the Spirit would do. He taught them about the vine-branch relationship. He said goodbye to them. Then he spent His last hours alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, in His Father's presence, praying for His disciples and to all the believers who were yet to come, including you & me. So, to the very end, Jesus continued with His servant's heart.

Just a few days before His arrest, trial and execution, Jesus set aside some private time with His disciples. He humbled himself before them by washing their feet, the task of the most lowly serv-

# The Servant in His Ascension

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After His death, burial and resurrection. His friends were walking along the road to Emmaus. He appeared to them and walked along with them, but they didn't recognize Him. So he gently reproved them for not grasping the truth of what the prophets had spoken.

## **Luke 24:25-27**

He said to them, "How \_\_\_\_\_ you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Jesus had always known that He had come to die. He had always known that the Father would raise Him from the dead. His servant attitude was one of trust, of willingness to obey the Father – even to His own suffering and death.

## **Luke 22:42**

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."

Jesus' journey from Heaven to earth, as described by Paul, is a seven-step process:

- Jesus recognized His equality with the Father
- Jesus emptied Himself of His rights and privileges
- Jesus took on the nature of a servant, the likeness and nature of man
- Jesus humbled Himself
- Jesus became obedient, even to the point of death on a cross
- Jesus is exalted to the Father's Right Hand as Ruler
- Jesus is given (by the Father) the Name that is above all names

From the obedient, suffering Servant, the Father produced the Sovereign Servant. Jesus rules at the

Father's right hand until all things are in subjection under His feet.

## **I Peter 3:21**

. . . Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

The Lord Jesus Christ, triumphant, will deliver up the Kingdom to His God and Father. Jesus came to earth as Servant-King; He now continues in Heaven as Servant-King.

## **Hebrews 7:24-25**

. . . but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.

<sup>25</sup> Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

## **CONCLUSION**

Jesus of Nazareth came to fulfill His Father's purposes for mankind. He willingly laid down His life to fulfill His Father's unfathomable love for fallen mankind. So the Father raised Him from the dead, placed Him at His own right hand and gave Him all authority in Heaven and on earth. There, the Bond-Servant rules as Servant-King.

## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

Why was the servanthood of Jesus so difficult for society and even the disciples to accept?

How does the servanthood of Jesus affect your own attitude toward serving?

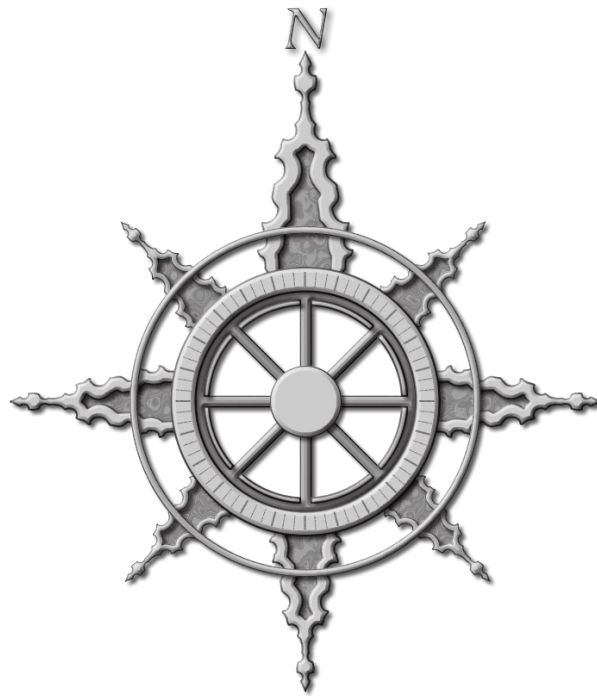
Why must we be servants in order to rule?





# Jesus Christ

GOD'S WORD TO US



# The Word Became Flesh

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Let's begin once more, by going to God in prayer:

*Holy God, You are my source of truth. Teach me your ways. Give me wisdom and understanding so that I can love you more and give you greater glory so that others will want to know you too! Holy Spirit, guide me into more truth as I apply myself to learn. In Jesus's Name. Amen.*

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In previous lessons, we've learned about the triune (three-in-one) God. From this we realize that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit were all with the Father in the beginning when He created everything. Now we will return to what has become a familiar passage of scripture—

## The Gospel of John, Chapter 1, verses 1 through 14

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the \_\_\_\_\_, and the Word was \_\_\_\_\_ God, and the Word \_\_\_\_\_ God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

This "Word" is here described as being God Himself - part of the Triune Godhead. It refers to the "Word" with the pronoun, "He." And it says that all things were made through "him."

<sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Now, John changes his metaphor and starts describing this "him" as life and light. There are many places in the Bible that talk about the Word of God bringing light and life.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a \_\_\_\_\_ to testify concerning

that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

Now, John writes about John the Baptist, calling him a witness to the light. This is what we are called to be. Like John the Baptist, we are not the light ourselves, but we are reflectors and witnesses to the true Light.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

John shifts now to Jesus Christ, through whom all things were created. He came but for the most part, his own people didn't recognize or acknowledge Him.

<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—  
<sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

And yet, there were some who did receive Him. They realized that He was the true Light, the Messiah, the Word. These are the ones who become children of God - this is describing a different kind of birth - a spiritual birth, what we call being "born again." We are now born spiritually into God's family and become His children.

<sup>14</sup> The Word \_\_\_\_\_ and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

And so the Word, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to earth and lived among us.

# The Prophets

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God has always spoken. He spoke the universe into existence. He spoke to Adam and Eve, Abraham & many others. He spoke to his people through prophets. We start this lesson by learning about the ministry of the Old Testament prophets -those who were prophets before Christ came to earth.

## OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS

God called Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. Moses, in response, argued with God about his ability to be the kind of leader God wanted.

### Exodus 4:10

Moses said to the LORD, "Pardon your servant, Lord. I have \_\_\_\_\_, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

In this exchange with God about his leadership, we find a clear picture of the Hebrew concept of the prophet. Because Moses was reluctant to carry God's Word himself, God chose Aaron to be the mouthpiece for Moses.

### Exodus 4:14-16

Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? . . . <sup>15</sup> **You shall speak to him and put words in his mouth; I will help both of you speak and will teach you what to do.** <sup>16</sup> **He will speak to the people for you, and it will be \_\_\_\_\_ he were \_\_\_\_\_ and as if you were God to him.**

The prophet is, essentially, God's mouthpiece, or God's 'mouth'. What they heard directly from God, they repeated to the people.

- **Abraham** expressed God's Fatherhood to Israel and the Gentile nations. (Gen 20:7)

- **Hosea** demonstrated God's redemptive love, His faithfulness and forgiveness in the midst of Israel's unfaithfulness. (Hosea 1-14)
- **Jeremiah** demonstrated God's Sovereign response to Israel's sin. (Jeremiah 1-52) He is often referred to as the "weeping prophet" because he lamented so much over the condition of Israel.
- **Moses** revealed more about God than any other human prophet. He presented the 17 names of God throughout the Pentateuch, such as, "Jehovah Jireh (God Provides), Jehovah-Nissei (God our banner), etc. Each name presented another aspect of God's nature and personality. Moses stands above the others as the principal prophet speaking for God to Israel. He experienced God's very Presence, and listened as God declared His own nature for all the world to know the One who is . . . 'compassionate and gracious.' (Deut 34:10)

### Deuteronomy 34:10

Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

- **Samuel** was established as a prophet by God, who 'let none of his words fall to the ground.' (I Sam 3:19)
- The Word of the Lord came to **Elijah**, boldly confronting Ahab and Jezebel, leading to the destruction of 400 false prophets. (I Kings 18).
- **Elisha**, as heir to Elijah, asked for and received a double prophetic portion and bravely went on to stand against kings and commoners who ruled and lived in direct opposition to God's direction. (I Kings 19 - II Kings 13)

# The Prophets

Continuing with Old Testament Prophets:

- God had made **Israel** a *prophetic community* — His voice on earth. Israel became the only nation on earth to know God's mind and heart concerning itself and the surrounding Gentile nations. Kings of Israel consulted with the prophets on matters of state. Those kings who disregarded God's voice (though His prophets) suffered and died. Much of Israel's historic identity as a nation is due to the input of God's prophets. Even foreign nations respected Israel because of the testimony of their relationship to God. (Num 11:29)

Early in Israel's history, Moses identified the great prophet who was to come, God's final and greatest Prophet — **Jesus Christ**.

## Deuteronomy 18:15

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must \_\_\_\_\_ to him.

## NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS

- **John the Baptist** arrived as the first authentic prophet in Israel in more than 400 years. He was critical of popular religion and its leaders. He had an uncompromising message, calling God's people back to righteousness. The hearts of the people were drawn to his message and they flocked to see him. But the leaders, including King Herod Antipas took personal offense at his righteous demands and put him in prison for execution. Jesus considered him the greatest of the prophets. (John 1-5)
- **Jesus of Nazareth** was the fullest example of a prophet of God — God's prophetic voice on earth. Jesus insisted on being baptized by John the Baptist. Because of this baptism Jesus identified himself with John in the minds of the people, and also with the entire line of prophetic tradition from the Old Testament prophets.

## Jesus' Prophetic Ministry

The masses of Israel recognized Jesus as Prophet, fulfilling the prophetic office so clearly stated in the Old Testament.

### Mark 6:14

King Herod heard about this, for \_\_\_\_\_ had become well known. . . . <sup>15</sup> Others said, "He is Elijah." And still others claimed, "He is a \_\_\_\_\_, like one of the prophets of long ago."

Jesus referred to Himself as Prophet. As the 'Word made flesh,' He expressed in word and deed what all the previous prophets had said.

### Mark 6:1-4

Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. <sup>2</sup> When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this \_\_\_\_\_ that has been given him? What are these remarkable \_\_\_\_\_ he is performing?" <sup>4</sup> Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home."

Jesus spoke uniquely as the Father's Prophet. His voice and manner carried astounding authority, certainly absent from the religious teaching of His day.

### Matthew 7:28-29

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the \_\_\_\_\_ were \_\_\_\_\_ at his teaching, <sup>29</sup> because he taught as one who had \_\_\_\_\_, and not as their teachers of the law.

# Jesus Christ, as Prophet

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Jesus' voice powerfully affected His listeners, because He spoke the words He had heard from the Father. And His words impelled demonic spirits to reveal themselves and to be cast out. To the end of His days, Jesus represented Himself as Spokesman for the Father, the 'Way, the Truth, and the Life,' who leads others into the Father's presence.

The focus of His prophecy was Himself. This was also unique among the prophets. Other prophets pointed away from themselves, Jesus pointed to Himself. Other prophets were self-effacing; Jesus was self-advancing, in a righteous sense. Other prophets said, "This is the truth, follow it." Jesus said, "I am the truth, follow Me."

## Mark 8:34

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and

\_\_\_\_\_.

## JESUS, OUR PROPHET-TEACHER TODAY

Our knowledge of God can only come through *revelation* – whatever God *reveals* to us about Himself and His ways, and His plans.

Jesus reveals God to us in three ways:

- Through His Word (he IS the Word!) and the revelation that comes from it as the Holy Spirit illuminates and clarifies it to us; (Psalm 119:105, I Thess 1:5)
- Through the indwelling Holy Spirit as our Teacher; (John 16:13) and
- Through the five ministry gifts for equipping Jesus' followers. (Eph 4:11 – Pastor, Prophet, Teacher Evangelist, & Apostle)

## THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH AS GOD'S PROPHETIC VOICE

Just as the nation of Israel had been chosen as God's prophetic voice to the nations, so the church is to be a prophetic voice in the world.

As one of the five ministry gifts (Eph 4:11), prophets today carry the Spirit's insight for interpreting the Church's place in the world. They carry God's perspective for life within the Church. Paul exhorts the Corinthian Elders to pursue prophesy, for prophesy exhorts and edifies the Church (I Cor 14:4). Further, he exhorts the Church to use prophesy as a sign to those who believe. As in Paul's day, we should 'be eager to prophesy.' (I Cor 14:39)

The Bible does not say that the apostles and prophets were built upon the church but that the church was built upon the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20). This is an important distinction. The church does not bestow apostolic and prophetic authority upon certain people. It is God who gives these gifts, described in Ephesians 4:11. So, the church doesn't *authorize* a prophet - they merely *recognize* the gift given by God.

As the prophetic ministry continues to emerge in Christ's Church today, we see once again Jesus Christ, the Father's greatest prophet, speaking, exhorting, confronting, and edifying. We must learn to recognize the prophetic voice, encourage yet challenge it, until we can once again receive Jesus' on-going prophetic voice to His Church.

In other words, Jesus called us all to be "salt & light" in this world, saying, "What would happen if salt loses it's savor? What would happen if the light is hidden?" (Matt 5:13, 14-16) He was warning us that if we don't use our "prophetic influence" in the world, then the world will run more and more to darkness.

# Conclusion

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Through the Old Testament prophets, God revealed His nature, His purposes for Israel, and for the Gentile nations. Moses pointed to the 'great' prophet who was to arise from within Israel. In His day, people recognized Jesus as the 'Prophet'. Jesus' prophetic uniqueness lay in the fact that His authority exceeded any of His predecessors. Further, He came from the Father's Presence with the highest and final revelation of the Father. As God's supreme Prophet, Jesus reveals God in His inspired Word, by the indwelling Holy Spirit, and through His anointed prophets in the Church.

Jesus Christ is the Word of the Living God, forever

in His presence, forever God. As Eternal Word, Jesus expresses the heart of the Father in communicating with fallen mankind. Jesus is the Father's communication with people . . . He is Word and Prophet. And Jesus came to declare to us the words that His Father had taught Him while still together in Heaven. As the Father's expressed Word, or Prophet, Jesus gave to His disciples His own prophetic words, teachings, and gifts. When the Father poured out the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, the Church received Jesus' mantle as Prophet to the Church and society. As His Church, we are called to live as His corporate prophetic voice on earth.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

In what sense can preaching (or proclamation) be prophetic today?

Can you name any present-day ministers who proclaim in a prophetic way?

How do you express a prophetic burden which you feel God gave you?

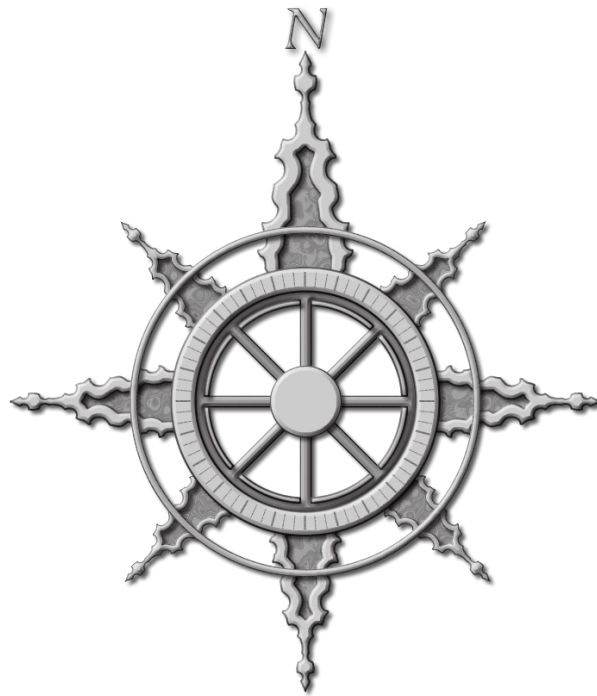
What are the similarities and differences between the 'prophetic community' of Israel, and that of the Church?

How can the local church move into its prophetic function?

How can you, personally, live a lifestyle that has a prophetic influence upon your culture?

# Jesus Christ

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST



# Christ—God’s High Priest for Us

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Take some time to pray:

*Father, I’m so grateful for what you have provided for me. I ask that You be with me and enlighten me as I continue to study and learn more about Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for being near. In Jesus’s name, Amen*

---

## OLD COVENANT PRIESTHOOD

We first find priests representing the Living God in the book of Genesis, but there is no explanation offered as to how they began or how they functioned. as to their origin or functions. The first mention of a priest in the Old Testament was when Abraham met Melchizedek and received his blessing.

### Genesis 14:18-20

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was \_\_\_\_\_ of God Most High,<sup>19</sup> and he blessed Abram, saying, “Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth.<sup>20</sup> And praise be to God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand.” Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

At Mount Sinai, God gave His Law to Moses and established Israel as His covenant people. **Aaron and the tribe of Levi** were appointed (by God), and ordained as priests. This is called the “Levitical priesthood.” They were to represent God to the people and represent the people to God, a “go-between.” Through very specific rituals of grain and animal sacrifices, the Lord granted forgiveness for sin and access to Himself, but in a limited way. He called Israel to be a “kingdom of priests,” a holy nation, special to him above all other nations.

### Exodus 19:5-6

Now if you \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_ and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine,<sup>6</sup> you will be for me a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and a holy nation.’ . . .”

But all the rituals and sacrifices under the Levitical priesthood could not alter the hearts of men. They simply were not adequate. Man, in his condition, could not fully obey the Lord and keep the covenant. When he established the new covenant, God changed both the priesthood and the Law behind it.



# The New & Better Covenant

## Christ, the Priest

Old Covenant	New Covenant
Established in blood (the life is in the blood) through animal sacrifice as a substitutionary payment of life for man's sin	Established in the blood of Jesus Christ as the substitutionary payment of life for man's sin.
Human priests, standing between God and man, offered animals as sacrifices.	Jesus Christ, our high priest, offered Himself as the sacrifice.
Human priests interceded for the people on earth.	Jesus Christ, our high priest, intercedes for us in Heaven.
Human priests received their priesthood by inheritance.	Jesus Christ was appointed by God and has an eternal & unchangeable priesthood based upon the Father's promise.
Because they were sinful, the human priests first had to offer sacrifice for themselves.	Jesus Christ was one who had no sin, therefore He had no need to offer sacrifice for Himself.
These sacrifices were inadequate. They didn't do the job. (Mic 6:6-7, Heb 10:4-7)	Christ's sacrifice itself (His own body), being perfect, could actually remove the curse of sin in our lives. (Heb 9:11-14)
These sacrifices were incomplete, they had to be offered over and over again.	The sacrifice of Christ, perfect, complete & eternal, rendered any further sacrifice unnecessary. (Heb 10:12-14)

## God appoints Jesus as High Priest

In his merciful, timeless wisdom, God the Father appointed His Son, Jesus, the High Priest.

### Psalm 110:4

The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a \_\_\_\_\_, in the order of Melchizedek."

Jesus' priestly function enables Him to inaugurate a new covenant, based on better, or more effective promises.

## THE NEW COVENANT

### FOUNDED UPON JESUS CHRIST

The new covenant, made effective through the life, ministry, and death of Jesus of Nazareth, obtained for us eternal redemption. The sacrifice does not need to be repeated; He offered Himself once and bore the sins of the people. Jesus laid down His

own life and offered His own blood, not that of bulls and goats. We, His Church, have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all.

### Jeremiah 31:31

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. <sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors . . . , \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_ my covenant, . . ." declares the LORD.

### Hebrews 9:11-12

But when Christ came as high priest . . . <sup>12</sup> He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his \_\_\_\_\_ , thus obtaining eternal redemption.

# Jesus Christ, the Sacrifice & Guarantee

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We had sinned. We were guilty of breaking God's law. The judgment was death. Jesus took on the legal responsibility and penalty for our sin. He made one sacrifice for all time, and became the sacrifice that satisfied the righteous requirements of an all-holy God.

Jesus needed no sacrifice for His own sin — He had no sin. He was innocent. His life, His own body and blood became our sacrifice and provided the removal of the curse of sin. His sacrifice was perfect, complete, and eternal. No other sacrifice is, or ever will be, necessary. From the cross, Jesus cried, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

## Jeremiah 31:33

"This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.<sup>34</sup> No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all \_\_\_\_\_, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For \_\_\_\_\_ their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Again, we see the yearning of God that we would *know* Him. He has formed this new covenant for our sake, so we can have relationship with Him again. He promises to change our hearts, to be our God. This covenant gives us the opportunity and enables us to *know* Him - anyone, from the greatest to the least!

## JESUS CHRIST, OUR INTERCESSOR

### His intercession while on earth

Jesus' prayer for Peter helps us understand His intercession for us today.

## Luke 22:31-32

"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.<sup>32</sup> But I have \_\_\_\_\_ for you, Simon, that your \_\_\_\_\_ . And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

Jesus interceded for all His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane, where he also interceded for all of us who would come to believe in Him later.

## John 17:20-21

"My prayer is \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ alone. I pray also for those who \_\_\_\_\_ in me through their message,<sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

His prayer in the Sermon on the Mount (commonly called, "The Lord's Prayer") also helps us understand how He prays and how He wants us to pray.

## Matthew 6:9-13

"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.<sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread.<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.<sup>13</sup> And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

### Dictionary Definition

#### Intercession

in·ter·ces·sion

1. The act of intercession
2. Prayer, petition, or entreaty in favor of another.

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# Christ's Role, Our Role

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## His intercession at the throne

We, as His Church, can be encouraged by how He prayed here on earth, knowing that He continues that intercessory role in Heaven as our High Priest. Today, the Holy Spirit carries out Jesus' ministry of intercession. The indwelling Spirit knows the mind of Christ and intercedes for us according to the will of God.

### Romans 8:26-27

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself \_\_\_\_\_ for us through wordless groans.<sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

Some have described the process of intercession as a holy law firm with us as clients. Satan is like the prosecuting attorney, who wants nothing more than to have us condemned by the righteous judge, the Father. Jesus is not only our defense attorney, but He has taken our guilt upon Himself and is at His Father's right hand interceding for us. The Holy Spirit is like our defense attorney here on earth, also interceding for us.

## OUR ROLE AS PRIESTS

God calls us, as His children, a 'Royal Priesthood'. We represent God to others. Part of our role is to pray to God, imploring Him to reveal Himself to them and draw them to Himself.

### I Peter 2:9-10

But \_\_\_\_\_ are a \_\_\_\_\_ people, a royal \_\_\_\_\_, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.<sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of

God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

We no longer make sacrifices for sin; Christ's sacrifice was enough for all time. But we do have the responsibility to represent Jesus Christ before our families, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. We can plead with God for their sake. We can show kindness to them, laying down our lives for them as Jesus laid down His life for us. We can be a witness to them of God's loving hand in our own lives, bringing them hope for their own lives. We can be instrumental in leading them to their own relationship with God. What a great and wonderful ministry we have while we live on this earth!

## CONCLUSION

The covenant that God established with Abraham, Moses, and David was ratified by the blood of animals. It was symbolic, temporary, and ineffective. Christ, our high priest — different from any other priest, established the new covenant by His own blood. Called, "the Lamb of God," His sacrifice was the real, eternal and effective means of removing sin forever. The God-man, Jesus Christ, as mediator between God and people, now intercedes for us before the throne of God. And the indwelling Holy Spirit also intercedes for us, as well as helping us to intercede for others. It is now a large part of our role as believers to be "priests" here on earth, helping others to come into relationship with God along with us.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What is the nature of Jesus' intercession today at the Father's right hand?

What qualifies Jesus to be the Mediator and guarantee of the new covenant?

What is our participation in the Royal Priesthood?

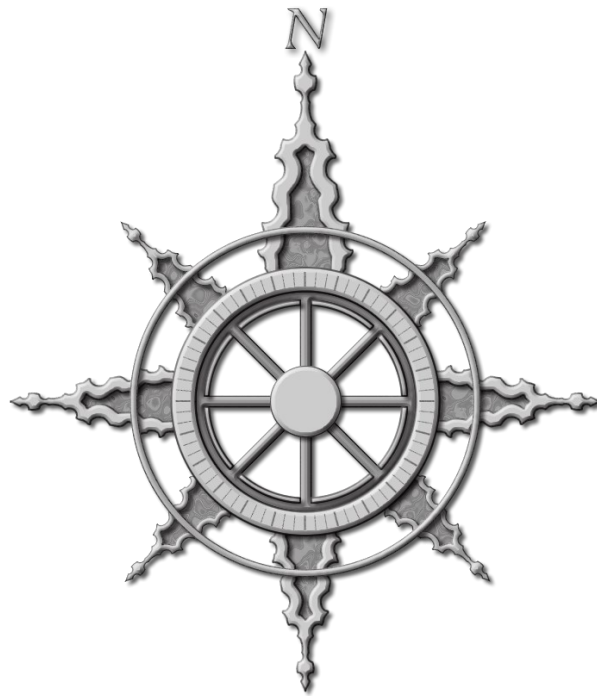
What is the best way to bring people to be friends (reconciled) with God?

Do you realize that intercessory prayer was the heart of Jesus' prayers? Following His example, have you decided to intercede for others in your own prayer life?

Paul wrote that we (the church, as believers) have been given the "ministry of reconciliation." (II Cor 5:18) This means we have a directive to reach out to put things and people back together that Satan has divided or damaged. How does this impact your thinking when it comes to being involved in your local community, and even the nation and the world?

# Jesus Christ

THE GREAT KING



# Christ: God's King Reigning Over Us

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Allow yourself to be at peace, entering God's presence.

*Father, I thank You for making Jesus Christ my high priest – that because I have accepted His sacrifice, I have been forgiven of my sin and have a relationship with You. I am so grateful that I am Your child, that I can come to you at any time and receive forgiveness, wisdom, and strength. I love You Lord, help me to know and love You more. In Jesus's Name, Amen.*

## GOD'S KINGDOM in the OLD COVENANT

Almighty God (The Trinity: Father, Son & Holy Spirit) has always ruled over the entire kingdom of heaven and earth. Before Him, there was nothing — He created everything and it is all held together by Him. (Colossians 1:16)

In the Old Covenant, God focused on Moses, the elders and the nation of Israel. He established His gracious and forgiving covenant, not merely over a family and clan (Abraham), but over a nation of roughly two million people.

Then God made a covenant with David — to establish David's household and throne as eternal. In this covenant we find a heavenly pattern in addition to the earthly pattern. God's promises to King David went far beyond a human throne and dynasty. (II Sam 7:10-17)

### II Samuel 7:16

Your house and your kingdom will endure \_\_\_\_\_ before me; your throne will be established \_\_\_\_\_.' ”

Later, Isaiah linked David's throne to a descendant of David – the Messiah, or “the one who is to come.” He declared that for this “Son,” there would be **no end** to the increase of government and peace. And so, God brought forth Jesus, as a descendant of David, giving Him David's eternal throne and Kingdom.

### Isaiah 9:6-7

For to us a child is born, to us a \_\_\_\_\_ is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. . . <sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and **forever**. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

The prophet Daniel had a vision, foreseeing the coming kingdom and its leader. He described one, “like a son of man” (Jesus) approaching the “Ancient of Days” (God the Father). And so, approximately 600 years before the birth of Jesus, Daniel foretold what was to take place. (Daniel 7:13-14)

And so, because He humbled Himself and made the ultimate sacrifice, Jesus has been given the Name that is above every other name. He has become the ruler of the present phase of God's eternal Kingdom.

### Philippians 2:5-11

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he \_\_\_\_\_ by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he \_\_\_\_\_ by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

<sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

# God's Kingdom in the New Covenant

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The archangel Gabriel declared the manifestation of God's eternal Kingdom at the point of Jesus' conception. He told Mary that her Son would fulfill God's promise to King David.

## Luke 1:30-33

But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.<sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.<sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the \_\_\_\_\_ of his father \_\_\_\_\_,<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Then, John the Baptist quite forcefully and publicly proclaimed that God's Kingdom was imminent.

## Matthew 3:1-2

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea<sup>2</sup> and saying, "Repent, for the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ has come \_\_\_\_\_."

After successfully enduring Satan's testing, Jesus began to proclaim the same message, explaining that God's Kingdom was right among them. However, since all Israel expected only an earthly Kingdom, won by angelic forces, they did not understand Jesus' message.

## Matthew 4:17

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "\_\_\_\_\_, for the kingdom of heaven has come \_\_\_\_\_."

## Luke 17:20-21

Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed,<sup>21</sup> nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the \_\_\_\_\_ of God is \_\_\_\_\_."

Jesus proclaimed the kingdom of God as His central message. All other teachings and events revolved around this kingdom. His preaching, His miracles, and parables all focused on the coming of God's Kingdom. The church is a community that is a result of the Preaching of the Kingdom — it is not the kingdom itself. Whenever we engage in the new birth, the work of the Spirit, sanctification and healing, we witness that the powers of the future Kingdom have arrived. Jesus' Kingdom is sourced in heaven, not in the world system; His Kingdom is *in* this world, not *of* this world.

## Colossians 1:13

For he has rescued us from the dominion of \_\_\_\_\_ and brought us into the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ he loves,

## John 18:36

Jesus said, "My kingdom is \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_."

As we come in to the Kingdom of God through the new birth, the Father transfers us out from under the world's authority into the Kingdom of His beloved Son. The presence of God's Kingdom forces demonic powers to reveal themselves and release God's people (Matt 9:32-34, 12:22-28). Yet we await with anticipation the return of the King to walk into the *fullness* of everything the Father has planned for us as members of His Kingdom.

# God's Kingdom in the Future

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The future phase of the Father's Kingdom begins when the Son of God returns in power and subjects all creation to Himself. Neither our personal or corporate lives will even come close to perfection until the coming of the King and the consummation of His Kingdom. Completion, fullness, and perfection will become reality; nothing less will be tolerated.

## **Daniel 7:14**

He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Even death yields to Christ the King. The issue of the timing and accompanying events is not in focus here. No one knows when He will come. We only know that He WILL come again. Our 'blessed hope' is the 'appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.' God asks us to 'occupy until He comes.' We are to live faithful, fruitful lives, by the power of His Spirit, anticipating the arrival of King Jesus.

## **Revelation 21:3-4**

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. <sup>4</sup> 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

**Hallelujah! For the Lord our God,  
the Almighty, reigns!**

## **KING JESUS, SUPREME RULER OVER GOD'S KINGDOM**

The Scriptures show four aspects of Jesus' receiving all authority and power. The Father

- raised Him from the dead,
- seated Him at His own right hand,
- put all things in subjection under His feet, and
- placed Him as the Head of the Church over all things.

Paul adds that the Father gave Him the name that is above every name. And to that name every created thing will bow in heaven and earth. Upon His Resurrection, Jesus states that the Father has given Him all authority and power in heaven and on earth. Jesus Christ is truly Lord today.

## **Romans 14:11**

It is written: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; \_\_\_\_\_ will \_\_\_\_\_ God.' "

## **Philippians 2:9-10**

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ should \_\_\_\_\_, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,



# Christ, the Example for the Church

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Christ is our prophet, priest, and king above all others. In a lesser and derived sense, we are prophets, priests, and kings as well.

- **As prophets**, we speak for God in the world. (Acts 2:16-18)
- **As priests**, we don't exercise the Old Testament role of the priest, which is no longer necessary. Instead
  - We all have *access* to God because of Christ's sacrifice (Heb 10:19-20)
  - We all *offer ourselves* as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1) in response to Christ's sacrifice, and
  - We are to *intercede* for each other and for the world.
- **As kings**, we are to reign in life and in the life to come, with Him. (Rom 5:17, Rev 5:10)
  - Our kingship must be expressed, not in privilege, but in responsibility — bringing every area of our lives under the discipline of the Word of God by the power of the Spirit (I Pet 2:9-17).

## CONCLUSION

After His resurrection, the Father seated Jesus Christ at His right hand and placed all things under His feet. Jesus now governs the Church, the earth, and all matters in both spheres. He rules over the Father's Kingdom, both believer and non-believer, in heaven and on earth. The Father granted Jesus this rulership as a result of His faithfulness in life and death.

God used David's throne and dynasty to establish the pattern for His eternal and righteous dominion. Jesus fulfilled this pattern and established His Kingdom in earth in a limited way. The Church continues to express and extend Christ's Kingdom on earth. He will return one day to complete all that is lacking. Until then, we reign with Him through our placement within His church on earth.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

If Christ has been given all authority and reigns even now, how do we explain all the tragedy, suffering and injustice that is still in the world? (Answer: It is the result of man's free will — our freedom to choose.)

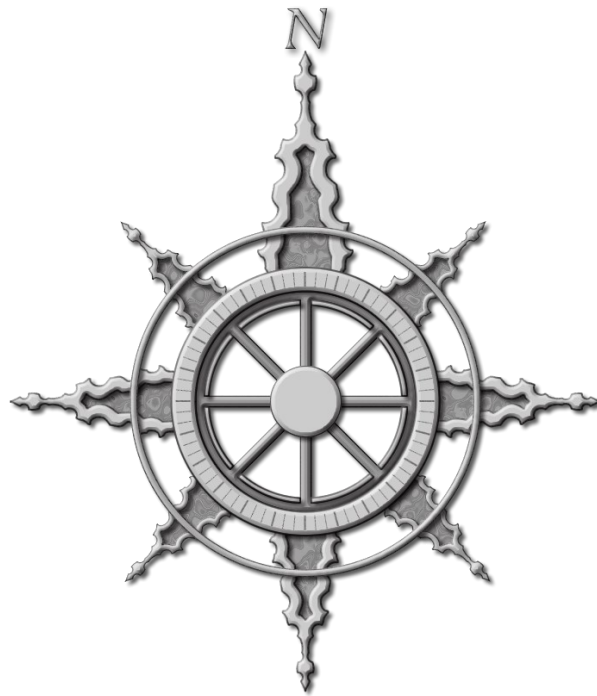
If Christ reigns in Heaven now, how can we reign with Him now?

What are the practical limitations? Just how does God's active ruling (Kingdom) touch our lives at home and work?

Just how does God's active ruling today impact Satan's dominion? In other words, how does the Kingdom of God confront the kingdom of Satan in our lives every day? How do you, personally, collaborate with this confrontation?

# Jesus Christ

HE KNOWS OUR NEEDS



# Our Need for Salvation

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Take a moment. Quiet your soul. Remember where you came from and what has been given to you. Offer this time to the Lord.

*King Jesus, I thank You that You are not far away, but You are near to each of us all the time. I thank You for the price you paid for me so that I could be made right with the Father and walk in Your ways. Holy Spirit, bring light to my mind and help me to understand and appreciate more fully so that I can respond with gratitude and praise. In Jesus's Name, Amen.*

We covered the story of Adam & Eve and their fall from grace in Lesson 8. In this lesson, we're going to revisit that story. We want to discuss the subject of sin from God's point of view. We also want to address the radical nature of sin and the terrible effect it has on our lives.

When Adam and Eve sinned, rebelling against His ways and choosing their own, God introduced judgment into the human race. Willfulness and selfishness passed from Adam to all subsequent generations, resulting in physical death. Jesus came, took our human form, and endured our pathetic condition without sinning himself.

## SIN IS UNIVERSAL

Our inheritance of the tainted nature of Adam's race brings to all humans the nearly irresistible tendency to ignore God's purposes and ways. None of us has escaped it. The Bible says we all have sinned – yes, all! Many find this difficult to accept. **No one likes to think of themselves as a sinner, but we must face the truth.** We cannot deal with it if we do not face it. Scripture also says that the truth will set us free – because once we see it, we can make better decisions as to what to do about it.

### Psalm 14:3

\_\_\_\_\_ have turned away, \_\_\_\_\_  
have become \_\_\_\_\_;  
there is no one who does good, \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

### Romans 3:23

. . . for \_\_\_\_\_ have  
\_\_\_\_\_ and fall short of the  
glory of God,

Sin is an all-pervasive spiritual infection that is passed from generation to generation without skipping a beat. There are no exceptions. We are conceived in it, born in it, and live in it every day of our lives.

### Psalm 51:5

Surely I was \_\_\_\_\_ at  
\_\_\_\_\_, sinful from the time my  
mother \_\_\_\_\_  
me.

Yes, even our sweet, innocent babies have that sinful nature. They are born with it. Parents may find this concept ridiculous – after all, babies aren't capable of doing much! But have you ever noticed that as a child grows, they don't need to be *taught* to lie or disobey? They just naturally begin to do those things. Where does that come from? It comes from the sinful nature they were born with!

### Psalm 58:3

Even from \_\_\_\_\_ the wicked go  
astray; \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_  
they are wayward, spreading lies.

This basic "sin-principle" in our lives is the root cause of all our individual sins.

### Romans 6:6

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body  
\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_  
might be done away with, that we  
should no longer be slaves to sin.

So – there is hope! We do not have to be "slaves" to sin!

# God's Viewpoint

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## The Core of Sin is Unbelief

The core of sin is rebellion, pride, and unbelief. We, like Adam and Eve, choose to believe the liar, Satan, rather than God. For we really want to become like God. The New Age movement and many religious cults build themselves around the false belief that men (and women) can become gods.

### Romans 11:20

. . . they were broken off \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble.

### Hebrews 3:12

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ heart that turns away from the living God.

## GOD'S VIEW OF SIN

The modern, politically-correct view of sin is to trivialize; to dismiss it as an old-fashioned and primitive mindset, out of date with the scientific mind. The person, untouched by God, sees sin as a mistake, a slip-up, an error in judgment or simple misbehavior. In sharp contrast, God views sin as rebellion against Himself—the fundamental sin of Satan and his angelic forces. God plainly expressed His view of sin while maintaining the witness about Himself in creation, conscience, and providence. He has mercifully overlooked mankind's times of ignorance and asked them to repent.

### Romans 1:18

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven \_\_\_\_\_ all the \_\_\_\_\_ and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

### Proverbs 1:22

“How long will you who are simple love your simple ways? \_\_\_\_\_

will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? <sup>23</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ at my rebuke! \_\_\_\_\_ I will pour out my thoughts to you, I will make known to you my teachings.

The clearest expression of God's view of sin lies in the price He paid for providing the remedy—He sent His own Son to pay the cost for removing sin. In other words, if sin is not a desperate issue, then why did Jesus need to come and go to the cross?

### John 3:16

For God so \_\_\_\_\_ the world that he \_\_\_\_\_ his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

## SIN = ALIENATION FROM GOD

The Bible characterizes sin, not only as actions that offend God, but more exactly as a state of complete alienation from God. The old nature in people does not submit to the Law of God, it is not able to do so. We have become prisoners to the law of sin, which results in death.

The humanistic view of mankind completely misses God's perspective. A simple view of history, revealing man's 'inhumanity to man' dispels the belief that man is basically good. Any 'spark of goodness' in man has turned out to be a conflagration of willfulness and disregard for one another. The more clearly we see our 'total depravity', our total inability to walk in God's ways, the more thankful we become for God's full provision in Jesus Christ.

### Isaiah 59:2

But your iniquities have \_\_\_\_\_ you from your God . . .

### Romans 7:18

For I know that \_\_\_\_\_ itself does \_\_\_\_\_ in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.

# Sin's Effect On Our Lives

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Throughout the generations since Adam, sin's effect in peoples' lives has spread unavoidably into all features of our nature and personality. The knowledge of God grows increasingly dim. God's standards become less relevant. Now we are caught in a bondage that compels us to live only according to own desires and purposes. Impurity and lawlessness grow individually and culturally. The willful lifestyle practiced by parents passes on to the third and fourth generation of their offspring. Sin becomes culturally acceptable — the cultural norm.

## James 1:14

. . . each person is tempted when they are dragged away by \_\_\_\_\_ evil \_\_\_\_\_ and enticed.<sup>15</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

This 'law of sin and death' produces guilt, alienation, and deep resentment in relationships – families, friendships, and even entire societies. The separation between people and God grows inevitably wider, producing physical death and eternal separation from God. God laments (grieves, mourns) over this separation. Can you sense the heart of God – the sorrow He endures because of our misjudgment and rejection of Him, when He loves us so much and longs to have relationship with us?

## Romans 3:10

As it is written: “There is no one righteous, \_\_\_\_\_;<sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands; there is \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ God.

<sup>12</sup> All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.”<sup>13</sup> “Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit.” “The poison of vipers is on their lips.”<sup>14</sup> “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”<sup>15</sup> “Their feet are swift to shed blood; <sup>16</sup> ruin and misery mark their ways, <sup>17</sup> and the way of peace

they do not know.”<sup>18</sup> “There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

## Romans 6:23

For the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin is death, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Notice the word “wages.” We truly earn for ourselves our own misery and death. It has been so bad, that God once even destroyed the earth by flood. (Gen 6:1-8)

## Genesis 6:12

God saw how \_\_\_\_\_ the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.

God knew we needed a Savior, and so He sent His Son. And His Son was willing to go.

## JESUS CAME!

Jesus came to earth and took on the form and nature of humanity. His virgin birth kept Him from inheriting Adam's sinful nature. Satan tested Him from the days of the wilderness until the Garden of Gethemane. Jesus entered the human condition, yet without Adam's fallen nature. Jesus came and walked in our pathway, facing our temptations, and experiencing our relationships. He lived in joyful obedience to His Father by the power of the Spirit. He brought the Law of the Spirit of Life and finally provided the release from the law of sin and death.

# Conclusion

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## CONCLUSION

The sin of Adam and Eve contaminated them and spread upon all their descendants, including our own generation. We easily and willingly follow our own pathway instead of God's. Sin is not just a series of rebellious acts or events. Rather, sin takes over our nature and entices our natural activities in a direction away from God. Without God's consistent intervention in lives, families, societies, and

nations, we would have become all that sin could become. The effect of sin in our lives brings us finally to the grave. Jesus of Nazareth came to live among us, to know our situation and needs. He walked by the power of the Holy Spirit, without the taint of Adam's nature. He endured the testing and the suffering and fulfilled the Father's purposes in our behalf. By this act, we truly know what love is.

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

Why do people (including Christians) tend to take a light view of sin?

In what ways do people attempt to ignore or get rid of their guilt?

How has sin affected your fellowship with God?

What kinds of wicked things does our culture take lightly?

What forms of daily activity can you label as sin?

How do we lovingly confront sin without a condemning attitude toward ourselves and others?

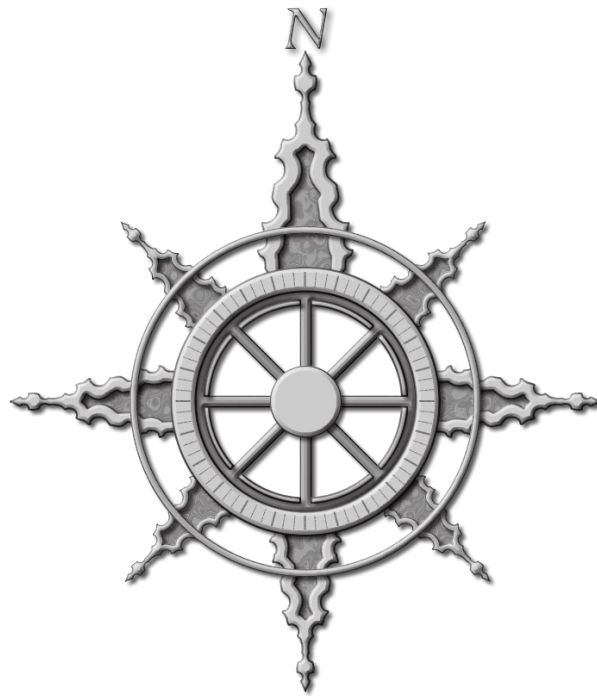
Have you seen your own need for a Savior? Have you accepted and embraced God's way?





# The Work of Christ

HIS ATONING DEATH



# Jesus Christ Personally Pays for Our Sins

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Before you start this lesson, take some time to pray.

*“Father, I’ve looked at sin. I’ve seen it in myself. Help me now to grasp what You have done for me by sending Your Son – and what He has done to make it possible for me to be reconciled to You. Thank you, Lord, for your great mercy and grace. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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When Jesus announced to His followers that He was on His way to Jerusalem to die (Matthew 16:21), they could not comprehend or even begin to grasp the intention or the necessity of it. Later on, after the Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit, they began to understand what He had been trying to tell them. So often we fail to comprehend similar things. So in this chapter, we want to look at the vitally important significance of the atoning death of Christ on the cross, and how it affects our lives.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

God had warned Adam and Eve that they would die if they ate of the forbidden fruit. Therefore, when they ate of it, death entered their realm.

### Genesis 2:17

“. . . but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

### Romans 6:23

For the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin is \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

Ever since Adam and Eve fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, God grieved over the separation that had been caused between mankind and Himself. The entire Old Testament sacrificial system shows the motivation of the heart of God and His involvement in making it possible for mankind to approach Him again. Through Moses, He estab-

lished certain rituals and sacrifices through which He could forgive sin and re-establish relationship with Him.

### Leviticus 17:11

For the \_\_\_\_\_ of a creature is in the \_\_\_\_\_, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the \_\_\_\_\_ that makes \_\_\_\_\_ for one’s life.

### Hebrews 9:22

. . . without the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ there is no forgiveness.

So, we see that blood has to be shed – death must take place to pay (atone) for sin. However, under the Mosaic Law, the sacrifice of animals was only a temporary solution. *Continual* sacrifice was necessary because sin continued. These sacrifices covered, or atoned for sin, but they could not completely remove it.

## Two important factors influenced the Old Testament sacrificial system.

- Man must not despise God, committing sin in pride and arrogance, and expect a sacrifice to compensate for it.
- God provided the sacrificial system for those who would approach him in faith and repentance, not with arrogance and defiance.

Again and again, Old Testament prophets challenged the Israelites, warning them about their unbelief and spiritual blindness. They also promoted the message that God had promised to provide One who would take upon Himself the punishment deserved by sinners. Moses foresaw that God would raise up a 'prophet like me from among you . . . you shall listen to Him.' and warned them that those who do not listen to that prophet will be utterly destroyed from among the people (Deut 18:15-16). Yes, God provided a sacrificial system, but there is no Law that can impart life. So God provided a 'better way' in Jesus Christ.

# The Cross

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## The Death of Christ

- Was foretold in the Old Testament. (Isa 53:5, Ps 22:1, Ps 41:9)
- Is historically recorded in the Gospels, and many other references.
- Is the main purpose for Jesus' incarnation (birth and life as a man).
- Is the fundamental theme of the Gospel (1 Cor 15:1-5). The death of Christ for man's sin is truly "good news!" It means that man does not need to die for his sin.
- Is essential to Christianity. (1 Cor 1:18, 1 Cor 2:2, Gal 6:14)
- It is essential to our salvation. (John 3:14, John 12:24, Acts 17:3)

**Jesus Christ, God Himself, was the only one who was *QUALIFIED* to pay for our sin.**

Because Jesus was first conceived by the Holy Spirit and born through a virgin, He did not inherit man's sinful nature passed down from Adam. His carried a clean human nature, but it hadn't been tested.. Then, in the wilderness, Satan's temptations challenged Jesus to go His own way instead of to continue in obedience to His Father. Even from His own family, Jesus endured skepticism and rejection. He was tempted in every way, just like we are, but Jesus continued to choose His Father's path. This kind of temptation was with Jesus all the days of his earthly life.

### Hebrews 4:15

For we do not have a high priest who is \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Christianity without the cross isn't Christianity at all – because without the cross, there is no power to change people's lives, and no power to influence societies.

# The True Meaning of Christ's Death

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Scripture shows us that Christ did not die for His own sins. He was sinless. He offered Himself as a substitute for us – the sinless One for the sinner. He took our place as a sacrifice for sin. That is why He is called, “The Lamb of God” and “The Passover Lamb.”

## Romans 5:7-8

Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die.<sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: \_\_\_\_\_ we were still \_\_\_\_\_, Christ died for us.

## 1 Corinthians 5:7

... For Christ, our \_\_\_\_\_, has been sacrificed.

Christ's death satisfied the justice and holiness of God. Because we all have sinned, we all deserve death. Jesus fulfilled all that God's Law and holiness required.

The Hebrew word *kaphar* is translated as “atonement.” It means “to cover over” so as not to be seen.

So, through Jesus' death on the cross, He made atonement for our sin. He has, in a sense, washed our hearts in His own blood. Since our sin has been removed, then God's justice has been satisfied. Christ's death opens the way for our reconciliation with God.

## Matthew 20:28

... the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a \_\_\_\_\_ for many.”

Scripture also describes Jesus' death as a *ransom* for sinners. It's as if we had been kidnapped and held for ransom by an enemy (Satan). Jesus' life was the ransom to pay for our release. Because of this, we have been set free from the power of sin and the power of the enemy. He no longer has any

hold upon us and we no longer have to be under his control or dominion. We are no longer captive!

Finally, Christ's death ratifies the new covenant, making it effective. We stand washed and forgiven before God. Jesus died to bring His people into this new covenant relationship with God. This is the only reason we can *know* God. If Jesus had not died, we would not be able to have a relationship with God.

## Jeremiah 31:31-34

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.<sup>32</sup> It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.<sup>33</sup> “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.<sup>34</sup> No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘\_\_\_\_\_ the LORD,’ because they will all \_\_\_\_\_ me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

## WRAPPING IT ALL UP

- The Death of Jesus Christ on the cross provided a substitute so that people do not have to die eternally for their sin.
- Jesus satisfied the justice and holiness of God, forever fulfilling all that God requires in Law.
- Christ's atonement paid the ransom, redeemed us from the law of sin and death, and restored us to fellowship with God.
- The atonement makes possible the establishment of the new covenant.
- Atonement has been defined as 'At-one-ment' — we who were separated from God are now rejoined to Him through the blood of Jesus Christ. That is Good News!

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What were some of the Old Testament requirements for atonement? Why was it necessary to make blood sacrifices?

How did these Old Testament sacrifices represent what Christ would come to provide?

Do you, personally, see why the death of Christ is so important?

Do you, personally, see why we should not take our relationship with God lightly?

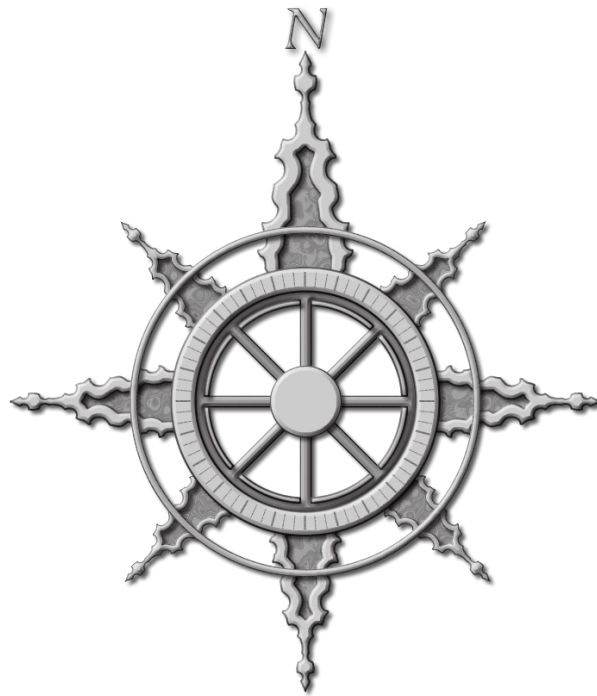
Do you see how horrible it is to disdain or rebel against what God has sacrificed for our sake?

How can we lovingly communicate to people the terrible consequences of their sin?



# The Work of Christ

HIS RESURRECTION



# The Resurrection of Christ

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As you begin this lesson about the resurrection of Jesus, take some time to pray.

*“Father God, I’m amazed again at the price you paid to set me free. Thank You for loving me so much. Now, as I continue to explore what You have done, open my eyes, mind and heart to know You better. In Jesus’ Name I pray, Amen.”*

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The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the most important doctrine of the Bible. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, then death has not been conquered. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, the authenticity of the Christian faith is called into question. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, the events and prophecies of the Old Testament lose their focus. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, The New Testament loses its validity, Jesus becomes just another good man, a good preacher.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST’S RESURRECTION

**The resurrection is the most fundamental doctrine of Christianity.**

Paul said that everything we believe stands or falls with the truth of this doctrine.

### **I Corinthians 15:12-19**

But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. <sup>15</sup> More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. <sup>17</sup> And \_\_\_\_\_ Christ has

\_\_\_\_\_ been \_\_\_\_\_, your \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. <sup>19</sup> If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

The central message of the apostles was the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This fact makes Christianity unique among all other world religions.

**The resurrection is important in the application of salvation.**

It makes Jesus Christ the head over all things to the church.

### **Ephesians 1:20-22**

... he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be \_\_\_\_\_ over everything for the \_\_\_\_\_, It is important as a demonstration of divine power.

Christ's Resurrection is an exhibition of divine power even more important than the saving power God demonstrated in the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt. This power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power that raised Lazarus and others from the dead. It is the same power that accomplished all the miracles in the Old and New Testaments, and it is available for Christians today.



# The Reality of Christ's Resurrection

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## It was an authentic resurrection.

Jesus did not just faint and then regain consciousness from the cool air of the tomb! The Centurion and Roman soldiers had declared Him dead. They tested the fact of his death by piercing his side with a sword, and they witnessed the blood and water that poured from the body (John 19:33-35).

### Mark 15:44-45

Pilate was surprised to hear that he was already dead. Summoning the centurion, he asked him if \_\_\_\_\_ had already \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>45</sup> When he learned from the \_\_\_\_\_ that it was so, he gave the body to Joseph.

### John 19:33

But when they came to Jesus and found that he was \_\_\_\_\_, they did not break his legs.

When his disciples saw Him alive, they were seriously astounded.

### Luke 24:34-37

. . . and saying, "It is true! The \_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_ and has appeared to Simon."<sup>35</sup> Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.<sup>36</sup> While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."<sup>37</sup> They were \_\_\_\_\_ and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost.

## It was a bodily Resurrection.

Now, we can understand why the resurrection is hard to believe. Resurrections don't happen very often, do they? Some tried to say that after His death, Jesus "appeared" to be in the flesh, but it was just an appearance of His "spirit." The fact is, there is a lot of evidence — proofs that He rose bodily.

For example, He ate food with the disciples. Thomas, skeptical the whole time, was invited to put his fingers into the nail scars in Jesus' hands.

### Luke 24:38-43

He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?<sup>39</sup> Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! \_\_\_\_\_ me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."<sup>40</sup> When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet.<sup>41</sup> And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"<sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of broiled fish,<sup>43</sup> and he took it and \_\_\_\_\_ it in their presence.

Many Scriptures would make no sense if Christ did not rise bodily.

### 1 Corinthians 15:20

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

### Romans 6:9

### Hebrews 11:9

### Revelation 1:5

# A “Unique” Resurrection

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All other resurrections were temporary. Those people all died again at some point. Jesus did not die again, but ascended in view of many witnesses.

## **John 20:17**

Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am \_\_\_\_\_ to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”

## **Mark 16:19**

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was \_\_\_\_\_ into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

## **Acts 1:9**

After he said this, he was \_\_\_\_\_ before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

## **1 Timothy 3:16**

Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the \_\_\_\_\_, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was \_\_\_\_\_ in glory.

There were specific, recognizable features to Christ’s resurrected body. It was a real body, not a spirit. It was recognized as the same body, not another.

## **Matthew 28:8-9**

So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them. “Greetings,” he said. They came to him, \_\_\_\_\_ his \_\_\_\_\_ and worshiped him.

The marks of His crucifixion helped to identify Him. The same people who saw Him die on the cross also saw Him after his resurrection.

## **John 20:27-28**

Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my \_\_\_\_\_. Reach out your hand and put it into my \_\_\_\_\_. Stop doubting and believe.” <sup>28</sup> Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”

These same marks will be visible when He returns.

## **Revelation 1:7**

“Look, he is coming with the clouds,” and “\_\_\_\_\_ will see him, even those who \_\_\_\_\_ him”; and all peoples on earth “will mourn because of him.” So shall it be! Amen.

It is said that Christ’s resurrected body was a “glorified” body. He was not limited by time or space. He appeared in rooms where doors were closed. He also appeared in various places which were widely separated by distance in short periods of time. No other resurrected individuals had any such abilities, and as we said before, they died again in the course of time.

# Results of Christ's Resurrection

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## Christ's Resurrection attests to His Deity.

Christ was declared to be the Son of God with power by the Resurrection from the dead. Christ Himself said that the Resurrection was the sign that would be given to the people of Israel.

### Romans 1:4

... and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

### Matthew 12:38-40

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." <sup>39</sup> He answered, "A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in the heart of the earth.

## Christ's resurrection assures us that He accomplished everything He had come to do.

He died for our sins, and was raised up for our justification.

### Romans 4:24-25

... for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. <sup>25</sup> He was delivered over to death for our sins and was \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ for our justification.

## Christ's resurrection made Him our High Priest.

Through the Resurrection, He became our Intercessor and Protector.

### Ephesians 1:19-22

... and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be \_\_\_\_\_ over \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_,

## Christ's resurrection provided additional blessings:

For those who believe, it provides personal salvation.

### Romans 10:9-10

\_\_\_\_\_ you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and \_\_\_\_\_ in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you \_\_\_\_\_ your faith and are saved.

We believers can be assured that our God is all powerful and help from Him is amply available.

### Ephesians 1:18-20

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know . . . <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably \_\_\_\_\_ for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead . . .

Because Christ was raised from the dead, we can be assured that we will be raised also. The condition of Christ's body after His resurrection also gives us clues as to what our resurrected bodies will be like.

# Conclusion

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Christ's resurrection guarantees us that there will be a judgment of the godly and the ungodly = no matter how others may want to dispute it. He has been victorious over death – proving that He has authority over it, and authority to judge the righteous and the unrighteous.

## Acts 17:31

For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

## THINGS TO DISCOVER

What are the implications of the fact that the Holy Spirit is the power that raised Christ from the dead?

What can that same power do in and through us?

What did that same power do in and through those early disciples who spread out all over the empire, motivated and empowered by the Truth that 'Jesus Christ is risen from the dead?'

Is it as important now in our Christian lives to re-examine the power of the Resurrection as it was when we were seeking salvation?

What proof of the Resurrection is evident in your own life right now?

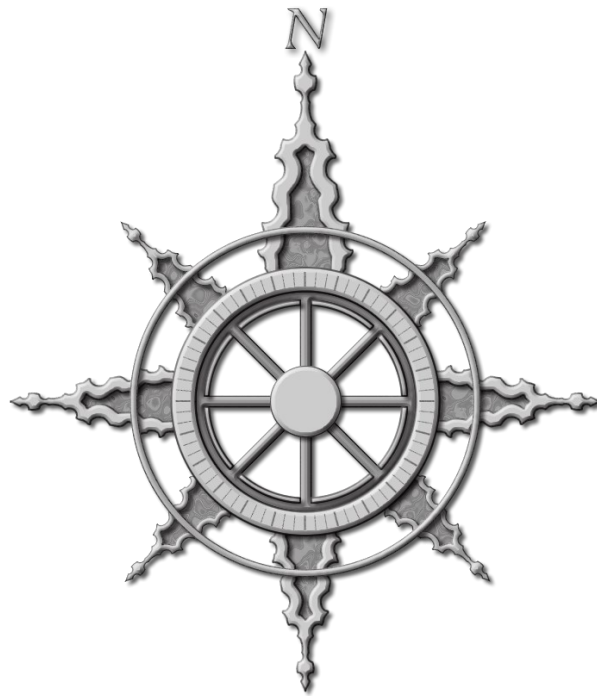
How can you avail yourself of this power in your life and ministry today? — especially in terms of being a witness for Christ?

## Acts 1:8

“But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

# The Work of Christ

HIS EXALTATION



# The Exaltation of Christ

Take some time to quiet yourself before the Lord, allowing Him to prepare your mind and heart as you continue to learn more of Him.

*“Father, I stand in awe of You, and Your glory and power. You have done wonderful things. I ask You to do wonderful things in me — teach me, mold me, use me. Allow me to be a witness to others of your goodness and greatness. I love You, Lord. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”*

The exaltation of Christ proves all His claims about Himself — especially those statements about His identification with God. His resurrection, Ascension and Session (seating at the right hand of God the Father) place ‘one of us’ on the throne of Heaven. Having been given all authority in Heaven and on earth, Christ constantly intercedes for us at the throne of God. From there, he pours out the Holy Spirit on His Church to enable it to minister as a body in the same way HE ministered in the flesh. He not only oversees the Church, but he exercises authority over unbelievers. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord. Finally He will come in His glory to judge the living and the dead and to set up His everlasting Kingdom.

**Spirit of the Living God,  
Fall afresh on me.  
Spirit of the Living God,  
Fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me,  
Fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the Living God,  
Fall afresh on me.**

Unknown © Public Domain

## CHRIST’S RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD

We learned about Christ’s resurrection in the previous lesson; but it is also important for learning about His ascension. Why? Because the resurrection is the transition point between Christ’s humiliation and His exaltation. It is the link between the cross and the crown!

## CHRIST’S ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

### Points about the ascension of Christ:

- Heaven refers to a *place*, not just a spiritual state. Just because God is pure Spirit does not mean that heaven is just a state of being. The apostle Paul indicated three “heavens:”
  - the visible heavens or earth’s atmosphere,
  - physical heavens beyond our planets and constellations,
  - and the dwelling of God. —all of which are *places*.

### John 14:2-3

My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to \_\_\_\_\_ that you also may be where I am.

- We do not know all that Christ is doing in heaven, but we are sure He is preparing a place for us, and that tells us of His present interest and activity on our behalf.
- The great wonder of the Ascension is that glorified flesh now sits on the throne in heaven. Dust of earth is now in majesty on high.

### John 1:14

The \_\_\_\_\_ became \_\_\_\_\_ and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### 1 Timothy 3:16

... the mystery from which true godliness springs is great: He appeared in the flesh, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

# Christ's Session at the Throne

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When we refer to the “session” of Christ – we mean that he is “seated” at the right hand of the Father. (session = seated)

## Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he \_\_\_\_\_ at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Christ completely fulfilled the Father's will in the work of redemption, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father reigning over the Church and the universe, and interceding on our behalf.

## Acts 2:33-36

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. <sup>34</sup> For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “ \_\_\_\_\_ at my \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>35</sup> until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” ’ <sup>36</sup> “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

As believers, we share in Christ’s authority over demonic power and in victory over sin.

## Ephesians 2:6

And God raised us up with Christ and \_\_\_\_\_ us \_\_\_\_\_ him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

## Ephesians 6:10-11

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can \_\_\_\_\_ against the devil’s schemes.

## Romans 6:11-14

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer any part of yourself to sin . . . <sup>14</sup> For \_\_\_\_\_ shall \_\_\_\_\_ be your \_\_\_\_\_, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

# Christ's Glorious Return

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Christ's exaltation will be complete when He returns to the earth in glory! At that point, Christ will publicly reign in triumph. All His enemies will be cast down. And He will judge both the living and the dead.

## **Matthew 25:31-46**

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, . . . <sup>34</sup> "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. . . . <sup>41</sup> "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . <sup>46</sup> "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

On that great and glorious day, His Kingdom will be established and He will reign forever.

## **Revelation 11:15**

The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the \_\_\_\_\_ has \_\_\_\_\_ the kingdom of our \_\_\_\_\_ and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever."

## **Revelation 22:3**

No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

## **What a day that will be!**

## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

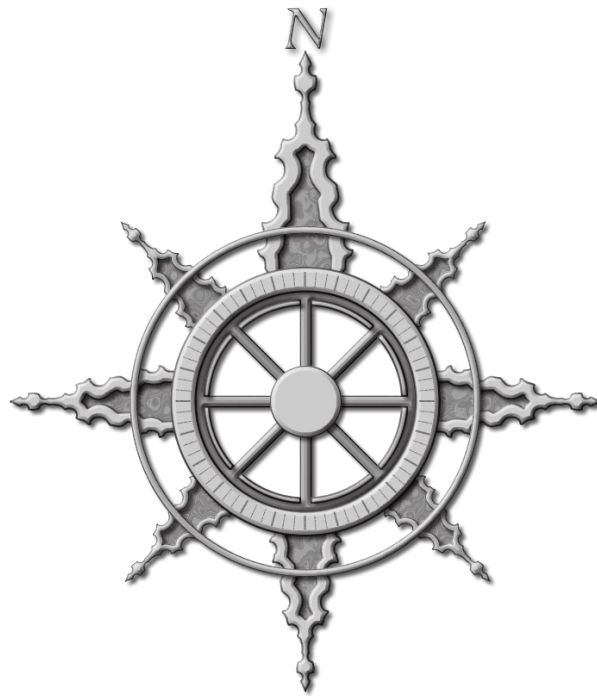
We have someone on the throne who truly knows us. He has walked on this earth as one of us. The Bible says, "He knows how we are formed. . ." (Psalm 103:14, Hebrews 4:15) and he is able to empathize with our weaknesses. In view of these things, what benefits are there in having Him on the throne?

Christ is constantly interceding on our behalf. How does this affect the spiritual warfare we face?



# The Holy Spirit

HIS ENABLING WORK



# The Work of the Holy Spirit

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Take a few moments before you begin the lesson. Enter into the Lord's presence, sitting quietly before Him.

*“Almighty God, you are an awesome God, far beyond what I can even imagine. And yet, you want a relationship with me. I want that too, Lord. Draw me close to You. Help me to know you more and more as I continue in my life with You. Holy Spirit, enlighten me as I set my mind and heart to learn more about You. In Jesus’ Name. Amen.”*

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The Holy Spirit is the “Advocate” (Counselor/Helper) that Jesus said would be sent by the Father. He acts as a “teacher,” helping us to understand and implement the Word of God into our lives. It is the Spirit that draws us to the Lord, convicting us of our sin and poor judgment. He helps us to understand and know the depths of God’s love for us.

## John 14:26

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the \_\_\_\_\_ in my name, will **teach** you all things and will **remind** you of everything I have said to you.

## John 16:7

... it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will \_\_\_\_\_ to you.

## THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SCRIPTURES

The Holy Spirit works as to **illuminate** our minds so that we can understand the Scriptures. Notice the words in the following passage that are used to describe what He does.

## 1 Corinthians 2:10-16

... these are the things God has **revealed** to us by his Spirit. The Spirit **searches** all things, even the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup> For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may **understand** what God has freely given us. <sup>13</sup> This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words **taught** by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. <sup>14</sup> The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are **discerned** only through the Spirit. <sup>15</sup> The person with the Spirit **makes judgments** about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, <sup>16</sup> for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

It was the Holy Spirit who was the original divine influence at work in the men of God who wrote the Scriptures. In other words, the authors of the Bible wrote as He **inspired** them. In this way, the Scriptures are “God-breathed.”

## II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

The Holy Spirit continues to “watch over” the Word, to **safeguard** the original meaning of the Scriptures throughout all the various translations and versions. The Bible is the most amazing compilation – and has withstood the test of time because of the protection of the Holy Spirit.

## Jeremiah 1:12

The LORD said to me, “You have seen correctly, for I am \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ that my \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.”

# The Work of the Holy Spirit at Salvation

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At the point of our surrender and acceptance of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, we become predestined to be made like the image of God's Son. The Spirit of God takes on the work of transforming us into that

image. He works to renew the *entire* person, by leading us to separate ourselves from a sinful lifestyle so we can dedicate ourselves to God and His purposes. He influences us to lose our desire for the things of the world. The very things we used to do can become distasteful or disgusting to us. This is the Holy Spirit helping us to "die to sin" and "live for righteousness." He sets us free from the "law of sin and death."

## He convicts us of sin.

Without the conviction of the Holy Spirit, man tends to look at sin as "mistakes" or as a human-level "problem." We may see sin as social misconduct, meaning different things in different cultures.

The Holy Spirit's conviction brings us to a deep, godly sorrow. This sorrow is more than just being sorry for being "caught" at some kind of wrongdoing. This sorrow is a grief – an anguish, over having displeased a Holy God. We literally feel horrible because we come to the realization that we have gone astray from the One who loves us so much. This is more than just an emotion – it motivates us to change! It is a godly sorrow that leads us to repentance. We no longer want to continue living the way we have. It is the Holy Spirit that causes us to see sin as rebellion against God.

### II Corinthians 7:10

Godly sorrow brings

\_\_\_\_\_ that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

The conviction of the Holy Spirit brings us into agreement with God. It is the truth that ultimately sets us free. (John 8:32)

### Psalm 51:4

Against you, you only, have I \_\_\_\_\_ and done what is evil in your sight; so you are \_\_\_\_\_ in your verdict and \_\_\_\_\_ when you judge.

## He regenerates us.

This regeneration begins with our "new birth" – being "born-again." The new birth is a significant, awe-inspiring act.

### John 3:3

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are \_\_\_\_\_."

Notice how God gives us natural examples for spiritual truths. Like natural birth, spiritual birth is not something that happens gradually over a period of time. The "gestation period" or "Labor" may be difficult or painful, but the birth itself doesn't take that long. And it doesn't happen in a way that makes a person confused as to *when* it happened. When you are born again, you know it! Your life changes. You go from darkness to light. There is a significant change.

# The Work of the Holy Spirit at Salvation (continued)

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Spiritual rebirth cannot be explained in terms of human capability or resources. We are drawn by God's Spirit, we believe, and we receive. The work of spiritual birth is a free and mysterious act of divine power.

## John 1:12-13

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—<sup>13</sup> children born \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but \_\_\_\_\_.

## John 3:6-8

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>7</sup> You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'<sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

## He seals us.

### Ephesians 1:13

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were \_\_\_\_\_ in him with a \_\_\_\_\_, the promised Holy Spirit,

"Sealing" speaks of security, ownership, and a guarantee or down-payment. When we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, it signifies that we now belong to God, and because of that, we are guaranteed certain blessings and promises.

## II Corinthians 1:21-22

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He \_\_\_\_\_ us,<sup>22</sup> set his seal of \_\_\_\_\_ on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

## II Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.<sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious \_\_\_\_\_, so that through them you may \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

The Holy Spirit's work in us continues, obstructed only by our stubbornness, until our death or until the return of our Lord Jesus.

# The Continuing Work of the Holy Spirit

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## He fills us.

Jesus fills us with the Spirit initially, but commands us to *keep on* being filled with the Spirit.

### Acts 2:4

All of them were \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_ and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

### Ephesians 5:18

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_,

- makes decisions,

### Acts 15:28

It \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements . . .

- prohibits,

### Acts 16:6

Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been \_\_\_\_\_ by the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ preaching the word in the province of Asia.

- and teaches. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would lead us into all truth (John 14:26).

## He guides us.

The Spirit:

- guides,

### Galatians 5:16

So I say, walk \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

- directs,

### Acts 8:29

The Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ Philip, “\_\_\_\_\_ to that chariot and \_\_\_\_\_ near it.”

- appoints,

### Acts 13:2

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the \_\_\_\_\_, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

### Luke 12:12

“... for the Holy Spirit will \_\_\_\_\_ you at that time what you should say.”

# The Continuing Work of the Holy Spirit (Continued)

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## He manifests Christ's life in the Church.

The Holy Spirit creates and manifests *in us* both the life of Christ as well as the work of Christ.

- What Christ *is* manifests itself in us when the Spirit encourages the growth of the fruit of the Spirit. These are the characteristics of Jesus Himself.

### Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,<sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

- What Christ *does* is released in us by the Spirit when manifestations of the Spirit begin to flow through us. (We call these manifestations the “gifts” of the Spirit)

### I Corinthians 12:7-11

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.<sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a **message of wisdom**, to another a **message of knowledge** by means of the same Spirit,<sup>9</sup> to another **faith** by the same Spirit, to another **gifts of healing** by that one Spirit,<sup>10</sup> to another **miraculous powers**, to another **prophecy**, to another **distinguishing between spirits**, to another **speaking in different kinds of tongues**, and to still another the **interpretation of tongues**.<sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

- Like the Fruit of the Spirit, these gifts are not to be interpreted in terms of natural human capabilities. They are supernatural abilities operated by the Spirit through us. Their purpose is for the building up (edification) of the Body (the Church). Jesus operated in these gifts, and he told us Himself, “Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.” (John 14:12)

**The Spirit fills us with the joy of Christ** and reveals the things of God to His followers. All that Jesus won for us at the Cross, all that Jesus Christ inherited from His Father — all this, the Spirit makes available to us, His Church.

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For a deeper and more comprehensive teaching about the Holy Spirit, see the Holy Spirit section of our White Book curriculum, called *The Holy Spirit*.

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## **THINGS TO DISCOVER**

How does the work of the Holy Spirit affect your daily life?

How does genetic gifting differ from the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

What would happen to the world if God withdrew His Spirit?

What would happen to you if God withdrew His Spirit from the world?





# Definition of Terms

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<b>Adoption</b>	— to choose or take as one's own; make one's own by selection. The act of receiving into a family one that is not naturally a part of that family.
<b>Atonement</b>	— to avert punishment, especially divine anger, by the payment of a ransom: a life, an animal, or money. "At-one-ment"
<b>Begotten</b>	— to procreate or generate (offspring).
<b>Consecrate</b>	— to set apart to God.
<b>Covenant</b>	— an agreement, usually formal, between two or more persons to do or not do something specified. Biblically - the conditional promises made to humanity by God, as revealed in Scripture.
<b>Cultivate</b>	— to foster growth and development.
<b>Curse</b>	— the evil that comes upon man and creation because of sin.
<b>Dedicate</b>	— to offer to God.
<b>Diversity</b>	— variety, multiformity
<b>Doctrine</b>	— teaching that carries authority
<b>Enmity</b>	— hostility toward another
<b>Eternal</b>	— having no beginning or ending, always existing, lasting forever
<b>Image</b>	— a likeness or reflection
<b>Immanence</b>	— God's intimate relationship with His creation, which He both created and sustains. It means the reachableness of God
<b>Immanent</b>	— remaining within; indwelling; inherent
<b>Incarnation</b>	— invested with flesh, human body, nature, and form. The act of the second person of the Trinity assuming human form in the person of Jesus Christ and is both completely God and completely man.
<b>Inheritance</b>	— a blessing or possession received as a gift, particularly to an heir
<b>Intercession</b>	— the act of mediating or pleading in behalf of another for the purpose of agreement
<b>Keep</b>	— to guard, protect, and watch over

## Definition of Terms, continued

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<b>Kingdom</b>	— 1. (Greek: basileia) rulership or government; refers to God's active rule or government past, present, and future.  2. the domain over which one rules; the extension of the rulership itself.
<b>Man</b>	— unless context obviously indicates otherwise, 'man' refers to humanity in general, both males and females
<b>Mediator</b>	— a person or agent who acts as a 'go-between' to settle disputes and bring about reconciliation; one who stands in an intermediate position
<b>Messiah</b>	— refers to 'The Anointed One' (in Hebrew language; Greek equivalent is 'Christ') the promised and expected deliverer of the Jewish people
<b>Messianic Poems</b>	— a collection of poems in Isaiah, chapters 40-53, that speak of the nature and ministry of the coming Messiah, the Anointed One. Much of the material applies to the Messiah as God's "anointed."
<b>Omnipotent</b>	— having all power, all-powerful
<b>Omni-present</b>	— present everywhere at once
<b>Omniscient</b>	— having all knowledge, all-knowing
<b>Original Sin</b>	— Adam and Eve's initial disobedience to God, the effect of their sin, passed genetically to all descendants
<b>Paracletos</b>	— Greek word used in Scripture translated as 'One called alongside to help'; The Comforter and Helper promised by Jesus
<b>Pentateuch</b>	— the first five books of the Old Testament, collectively regarded as the 'Books of the Law', also referred to as the 'Torah'
<b>Pluralistic</b>	— used in religion to refer to a multitude of different religions or belief systems
<b>Priest</b>	— a man appointed to act for others in matters pertaining to God
<b>Prophecy</b>	— the foretelling or prediction of what is to come. Something that is declared by a prophet, especially a divinely inspired prediction, instruction or exhortation
<b>Prophet</b>	— (Hebrew:Nabi) authorized spokesman, one who speaks for God; a foreteller or 'forth-teller' of God's purpose; one who speaks for God by divine inspiration, a prophetic "voice."
<b>Propitiation</b>	— turning away God's wrath towards us by the sacrificial (atoning) death of Jesus Christ
<b>Reconciliation</b>	— the bringing together of two offended and separated parties, referring to Christ's death that brought together God and people, resulting in our salvation; the act of settling a disagreement and returning to friendship & harmony.

## Definition of Terms, continued

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<b>Redeem</b>	— to buy out of slavery; to ransom or deliver from bondage, both physically and spiritually; to bring good out of bad
<b>Redemption</b>	— the payment of a ransom or sacrifice by which Jesus Christ secured our salvation
<b>Relentless</b>	— unstoppable, incessant, sustained, unbroken, persistent
<b>Restoration</b>	— bringing back a former condition or position
<b>Righteousness</b>	— rightness in relationship to God and man
<b>Sanctuary</b>	— place of God's presence; a holy place; a place of safety
<b>Satan</b>	— evil angel who opposes God's will; thrown out of heaven by God; also known as Lucifer or the devil
<b>Seed</b>	— offspring or descendant; used particularly in Scripture to speak of that Descendant of woman who would defeat the serpent and produce a redeemed race
<b>Self-Centeredness</b>	— sin's pervading effect that shapes people to concentrate first on themselves, ignoring the needs of others
<b>Serpent</b>	— animal used by Satan to tempt Eve; a symbol of Satan himself (see Genesis 3:1-15; John 8:44; Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9)
<b>Servant</b>	— the title of an office, the idea of a subordinant King ruling for the Great King; also (Greek: <i>doulos</i> ) a bond-servant, a slave
<b>Servant-King</b>	— a legal term, signifying the subordinate ruler who rules in covenant relationships with the Supreme Sovereign
<b>Sin</b>	— a violation or transgression of a command; the state of being alienated from God
<b>Sovereign</b>	— one who has supreme power or authority (above all others)
<b>Sovereignty</b>	— the condition of superiority to all rank, powers, or authority; Father's absolute rule in Jesus Christ over all other authorities
<b>Subordinate King</b>	— a legal term, from the Hittite covenantal structure of 2,000 BC, signifying the responsibility and covenantal bond between the Supreme Sovereign and his subordinate rulers
<b>Supreme</b>	— highest in rank or authority
<b>Temptation</b>	— a circumstance that may entice someone into sin

## Definition of Terms, continued

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<b>Total Depravity</b>	— the effect of Original Sin in peoples' psyche and body, permeating every aspect of their being, rendering them unable to submit to God's ways, making them unable to please God. Total depravity does not mean that every person is as bad as he could possibly be. Rather, that the infection has spread irreversibly throughout a person's being
<b>Transcend</b>	— to rise above or go beyond, over pass, exceed
<b>Transcendence</b>	— that which speaks of God's separateness from His creation
<b>Transcendent</b>	— God, by nature, lives apart from His creation. He created it; He is not dependent on it. He transcends the human plane on which we live
<b>Trinity</b>	— the union of three persons in one Godhead (God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit)
<b>Unity</b>	— oneness of mind, feeling, etc., as among a number of persons; harmony, or agreement
<b>Vicarious</b>	— substitutionary
<b>Vicarious Atonement</b>	— substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ to satisfy the penalty of sins which separate mankind from God, an act to make reconciliation possible
<b>Willfulness</b>	— the effect of sin in one's heart that makes us automatically choose our own self-developed pathways, ignoring God's gracious purposes and help
<b>Word</b>	— the designation of Jesus of Nazareth as the giver and expression of God's teachings, both in an eternal and temporal sense

# TEST

## *Discovery Series, Section 1: Discovering God*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: \_\_\_\_\_  
2 points each

**THIS IS AN OPEN-BOOK TEST. You will need a score of 80% to receive a certificate of completion.**

**INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the correct answer in each of the following multiple choice questions.**

1. The Gospels show Jesus entering the lives of people and inviting them to follow Him . . .
  - a. To a local church or synagogue.
  - b. From wherever they were at the time.
  - c. After they got everything in their lives settled.
  - d. All of the above.
2. When we say that God is sovereign, we mean that . . .
  - a. He is the One who has ultimate authority to rule.
  - b. He created all things.
  - c. He sustains all things.
  - d. All of the above.
3. The Unity between The Father, the son, & the Holy Spirit
  - a. Is only useful when necessary.
  - b. Is not always in play.
  - c. Is perfect.
  - d. All of the above.
4. God, the father . . .
  - a. Was the One who initiated covenant relationships.
  - b. Waited for mankind to repent before doing anything about their broken relationship.
  - c. Is waiting for us to fail so that he can pronounce judgement upon us.
  - d. All of the above.
5. The Lord Jesus Christ . . .
  - a. Lived a completely sinless life on earth.
  - b. Became a man
  - c. Faced temptation in all areas.
  - d. All of the above.
6. Historically, too little attention has been paid to the Holy Spirit, therefore:
  - a. People have been reluctant to delve into learning about him.
  - b. Christian doctrine has been somewhat distorted.
  - c. There has been a lack of power in the life of believers.
  - d. All of the above.
7. Man was created . . .
  - a. As an animal.
  - b. in God's image.
  - c. To evolve into godhood.
  - d. All of the above.
8. Satan's strategy in the garden of Eden
  - a. Was unique to that situation.
  - b. Was the only time he used that method.
  - c. Is the same strategy he uses today.
  - d. None of the above.
9. Because of Sin . . .
  - a. Man lost peace with God
  - b. Man lost peace with man.
  - c. Shame entered man's awareness.
  - d. All of the above.

10. Our knowledge of God's redemptive nature will . . .
- Cause us to love Him more and more.
  - Makes us better than other people.
  - Earn us salvation points.
  - All of the above.
11. "Covenant" means . . .
- To be at peace with communal living.
  - To enforce laws and regulations.
  - To bind together
  - All of the above.
12. When Jesus came to earth as a man,
- It must have been difficult for him.
  - There was no reason for him to face any difficulty.
  - It was all joyful for him.
  - All of the above.
13. The book of Isaiah foretells the coming of this extraordinary . . .
- Messenger.
  - King.
  - Servant.
  - None of the above.
14. Jesus called us all to be . . .
- Prophets.
  - Salt & light in this world.
  - Master builders of the Kingdom of God.
  - All of the above.
15. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ . . .
- Must be repeated again and again.
  - Does not need to be repeated.
  - Has no bearing on our life today.
  - All of the above.
16. Until Christ returns . . .
- We are to simply wait.
  - We, the Church, must continue to express & extend God's Kingdom on earth.
  - We are to make war against the ungodly.
  - All of the above.
17. God views sin as . . .
- Old-fashioned and primitive.
  - Rebellion against Himself.
  - Out of date with scientific data.
  - All of the above.
18. Christ's resurrection was unique because . . .
- He did not die again later.
  - He died again later.
  - He appeared to people.
  - All of the above.
19. When we refer to the "session" of Christ, we mean . . .
- That he had a meeting with the Pharisees.
  - That he will meet with us in the air on the last day.
  - That he is seated at the right hand of the Father.
  - All of the above.
20. The original divine influence at work in the men who wrote the scriptures was . . .
- God the Father
  - The Holy Spirit.
  - Jesus Christ.
  - None of the above.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Circle the correct answer (T for true, F for false) in the following true or false questions:

21. T F It is God's desire to stay hidden from us, so that we cannot know Him.
22. T F God knows everything!
23. T F The power of God is limited.
24. T F When we say that God is a "person", we mean that He is human.
25. T F The Holy Spirit is God.

26. T F God is the perfect Father, and therefore the perfect example of what a father is to be.
27. T F The Son of God was not present when the Father created the universe.
28. T F Jesus was not willing to allow death to stand between Him and His Father's will.
29. T F The Holy Spirit is merely a force, or a feeling.
30. T F The Holy Spirit teaches us, and helps us to know the truth.
31. T F Man is not here for the world, the world is here for man.
32. T F Man is evolving, becoming better and better with the passing of time.
33. T F Satan wants to keep us separate from God.
34. T F Adam blamed God for his fallen state.
35. T F God is sometimes willing to turn our failure into opportunities for good.
36. T F Marriage is a covenant whereby the partners are to lay their lives down for one another.
37. T F Every time a covenant has been violated, it has been man who has violated it.
38. T F In Theology, incarnation is the doctrine that the second person of the Trinity assumed human form in the person of Jesus Christ.
39. T F The leaders of Israel fully understood the servant nature of the Messiah.
40. T F On the road to Emmaus, Jesus gently reproved his friends for not grasping the truth of what prophets had spoken.
41. T F Those who received Christ realized that He was the true Light, the Messiah, the Word.
42. T F God has always spoken.
43. T F The angels in heaven appointed Jesus as High Priest.
44. T F Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God as his central message.
45. T F Jesus faced our temptations, and experienced our relationships.
46. T F Jesus Christ was one of many who were qualified to pay for our sin.
47. T F The death of Christ provided a substitute so that people do not have to die eternally for their sin.
48. T F The resurrection of Christ is the most fundamental doctrine of Christianity.
49. T F One day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ IS the Lord.
50. T F The Bible has withstood the test of time because of the protection of the Holy Spirit.

When you have completed your test, tear it out of the book and turn it in to the office or to your Home Group Leader.  
If you score 80% or above you will receive a certificate of achievement.