

Discovery Series



SECTION TWO



Discovering our Foundations

Hope Christian Fellowship

"Making disciples who live & love like Jesus"

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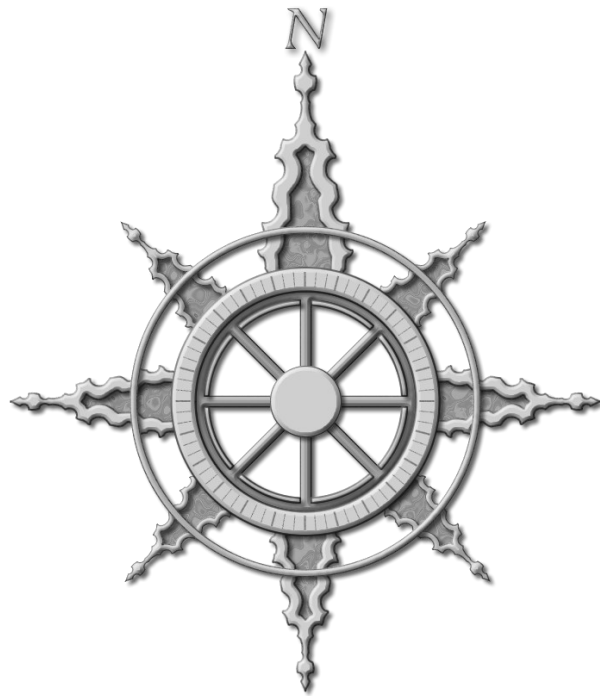
FEATURES OF THIS WORKBOOK

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.

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The Bible



Memory verse: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (II Tim 3:16-17)

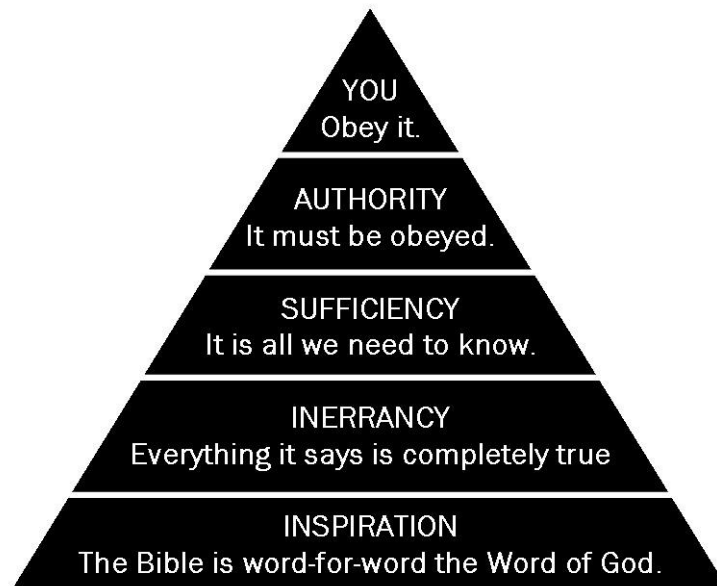
The Bible is not simply a treasured book of great literature. The Bible is God's word to mankind and is therefore both trustworthy and the last court of appeal on any issue of spiritual importance. Because of the Bible's origin from God and truthfulness it is also a life-changing book. As King David wrote, "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes" (Ps 19:7-8).

Let's take a look at how we relied on the Bible. We read in Acts 17:19 that the Thessalonians rejected his message, a riot (Acts 17:5) and he had to leave town (Acts 17:14). Paul left Thessalonica, went to Berea and preached there (Acts 17:10). Read Acts 17:11 carefully. What two reasons are given for saying "the Bereans

were of more noble character than the Thessalonians?"

- 1) They _____ Paul's message with great _____.
- 2) and _____ the Scriptures _____ to see if what Paul said was true.

This is very important. The Bereans did not receive just any message that came along, but checked the message out with the Scriptures (the Bible). Nor did they simply read the Bible every day, they actually embraced what they learned. You too must seek to confirm everything you hear yourself and then obey



Scriptures to answer our questions about God and our relationship with Him. What exactly is the Bible? How does it play in our lives? To answer these spiritual questions we will look at what the Bible says about itself in four important areas: its inspiration, inerrancy, sufficiency and authority.

First, turn to 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and read this passage carefully. Here the apostle Paul is teaching us that the Bible (or Scriptures) is inspired by God or God-breathed. Take careful note of two things Paul says are God-breathed or inspired. He says "All Scripture is God-breathed." Notice here it is the actual Scriptures themselves, the words of the Bible, are inspired (God-breathed) and not simply the authors. God gave us the precise wording of the Bible in its original Hebrew or Greek, not just the main ideas. Paul also says "All Scripture is God-breathed." It is not just portions of the Bible that are inspired but all of it. We therefore say the Bible is the word of God! This testimony runs throughout the whole Bible as you can see below.

Exodus 34:27

The Lord said to Moses, "Write down these _____ . . ."

II Samuel 23:2

(David wrote) "The Spirit of the Lord through me; His _____ was on my tongue."

Jeremiah 26:2

This is what the Lord says: ". . . Tell them _____ I command you, do not _____ a _____."

John 12:49

(Jesus said,) "For I did not speak _____, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.

I Corinthians 14:37

(The apostle Paul claimed) ". . . that what I am _____ to you is the Lord's _____."

Revelation 2:18

(John wrote,) ". . . these are the _____ of the Son of God."

The fact that the Bible is word-for-word the word of God is not only taught by the Scriptures, but it is also assumed in the way Jesus Himself interpreted it and taught from it. Look up and read the following two passages in Matthew. In each case Jesus Christ's reasoning from the Old Testament depended on a **single word's tense or meaning** within the text.

- If you read the passage, **Matthew 22:23-33**, you will see in verse 32 Jesus argued that it says, "I **am** the God of," not "I **was** the God of," depending only on one word's tense.
- And in the passage, **Matthew 22:41-46**, Christ's argument rests wholly on David calling Him, "**Lord**."

Now to say the entire Bible is equally inspired word-for-word does not necessarily mean we always see it as of equal value or interest to us. It simply means that word-for-word it all came from God, not just the parts I prefer. It's like eating an apple. I may not like to eat the seeds, and I may not prefer to eat the skin. But all of it makes up the apple, and all of it is important, and all of it is useful. So also **all** the Bible is God's word, important and useful.

II Timothy 3:16-17

_____ Scripture is God-breathed and is _____ useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The Bible is word-for-word the word of God. Therefore it is completely true or without any errors. This is what we mean by "inerrancy". Think about it. If God knows everything (I John 3:20) and cannot lie (Heb 6:18). And if the Bible's words are God's words, then there cannot be any mistakes in the Bible. Otherwise, God would either have to be wrong Himself or lying to us.

While this line of reasoning is undeniable, the Bible does not leave us to make our own conclusions about its truthfulness. Read the following verses and fill in the blanks. The idea of infallibility or inerrancy is clearly the Bible's own teaching about itself.

Matthew 5:18

". . . not the _____ letter, not the _____ stroke of the pen, will by any means disappear from the Law."

In other words, the Bible must be fulfilled in the smallest detail. And this is Jesus our Lord speaking, not just anyone!

Luke 1:1-4

Many have undertaken to draw up an account . . . ⁴ so that you may know the _____ of the things you have been taught."

Notice that the whole purpose of Luke writing his gospel was so the reader could know for sure the things he is taught are true.

John 10:34-36

Jesus answered them, ". . . ³⁵ . . . and Scripture cannot be _____."

Again this is Jesus Christ speaking, not just someone's opinion. Every teaching in the Bible is true, every command must be obeyed, every prophecy must be fulfilled.

John 17:17

(Jesus also prayed to the Father,) "Sanctify them by the truth; your _____ is _____."

God's word can only be truth if it is free from errors. Remember in school when "true or false" questions on tests were false if any part of them were wrong? (See I John 2:21)

II Pet 1:19

We also have the prophetic message as something completely _____ . . .

More certain than what? Read II Peter 1:16-18. Peter says the word of the prophets is more certain than his own eyewitness experience of Jesus Christ! That's really sure!

Now there are places where it **appears** as though the Bible contradicts itself or known scientific and historical facts. But there are absolutely no contradictions in the Bible at all when we rightly interpret two seemingly conflicting Bible passages. An apparent contradiction only means we have misunderstood one or both of the passages. And who is to say we always have scientific and historical facts right? Scientific theories constantly change. And as we learn more and more about what really happened in history we find the Bible is confirmed over and over again.

Now the fact that the Bible doesn't have any mistakes is not simply an "academic" truth. It is of immense practical importance. Only if it is true.

Do you want to trust in Christ for eternal life only to find out this was a mistake? Do you want to do right by obeying a command in the Bible only to find out later you were wrong to do what you did? Of course not. We need a Bible that is true throughout to have any real hope of pleasing God.

There is still more you need to know about your Bible. **Not only is it God's word, not only is it true, but it contains everything you need to know about God and your relationship with Him.** The fact that it is everything we need to know is summed up by the word "sufficient" and is clearly taught by Paul the apostle in II Tim 3:15-17.

II Timothy 3:15

The Scriptures "are _____ to make you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ."

That is, the Bible tells us everything we need to know to be saved.

II Timothy 3:16

All Scripture . . . is _____ for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

It tells us what we need to know about doctrine and right living.

II Timothy 3:17

So that you "may be _____ equipped for _____ good work."

Anything God will ever want you to do to obey and please Him is included within the Bible.

So the Bible tells us everything we need to know to be saved, to teach the truth about God and to do the right things for God. Notice also that the Bible tells us over and over again never to add to it or take away from it:

Deuteronomy 4:2

Do not _____ to what I _____ you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord.

Proverbs 30:6

Do not _____ to His _____, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Revelation 22:18

. . . If anyone _____ anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book."

There are basically three reasons why we should never add anything to the Bible. First, **since the Bible is God's word, only God has the right to add to it.** Second, since the Bible tells us everything we need to know for Christianity, God has no need to add to it Himself.

Third, no man is able to discover a new truth about God with any degree of certainty apart from the Bible. **Beware of anyone who tries to tell you that you have to believe something or do something that is not in the Bible.** (read Col 2:8 and 2:18-19) Neither human experience nor human reason can tell us about the things of God. Yet God has taken the initiative and shown us spiritual truth by inspiring the Scriptures. "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him - but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit." (I Cor 2:9-10)

Now when we say the Bible tells us everything we need to know, we need to realize **some things are stated directly and some indirectly.** A good textbook on mathematics, for instance, may not give answers to *every* math problem. Yet it does fully define the rules and principles by which math problems may be solved. The Bible likewise contains all we need for our relationship with God even if it does not provide **direct** answers for every problem or question we face. But even when we face circumstances that are not addressed directly, we can still draw valid conclusions and gain wisdom based upon what Scripture does say.

This leads us to the final point which needs to be made about the Bible: **The Bible alone is *authoritative* meaning that it, and only it, must be completely believed and obeyed.** We do not have any excuses in this matter. Since the entire Bible is God's word we cannot pick and choose what we want to obey. Since it is all true we cannot neglect a portion of it by raising doubts about its reliability. **Since it contains all we need for our Christian walks we cannot appeal to something or someone besides the Bible as our final authority on some issue.** We cannot argue with any part of the Bible any more than we can argue with God Himself! God has "laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed." (Ps 119:4) This is why our discipleship to Jesus Christ is based upon and measured by our obedience to His commands. (Matt 28:18-20)

This may seem overwhelming. But **God does not impose rules on us to weigh us down.** His commands are for our own good (Deut 10:12-13). "And His commands are not burdensome" (I John 5:3). He desires us to believe His word and obey His commands so we will prosper in our relationship with Him and with other people. Notice that our successes and failures in serving the Lord depend upon our obedience to His commands:

What did the Lord tell Joshua would be the result if he was careful to do everything written in His Word (the Law)?

Joshua 1:8

. . . Then you will be _____
and _____.

What did Jesus say about a person who hears His words and puts them into practice?

Matthew 7:24-25

(he/she is) . . . like a _____ man
who built his house on the _____.
²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose,
and the winds blew and beat against that

house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

What did Jesus say about a person who hears his words and does not put them into practice?

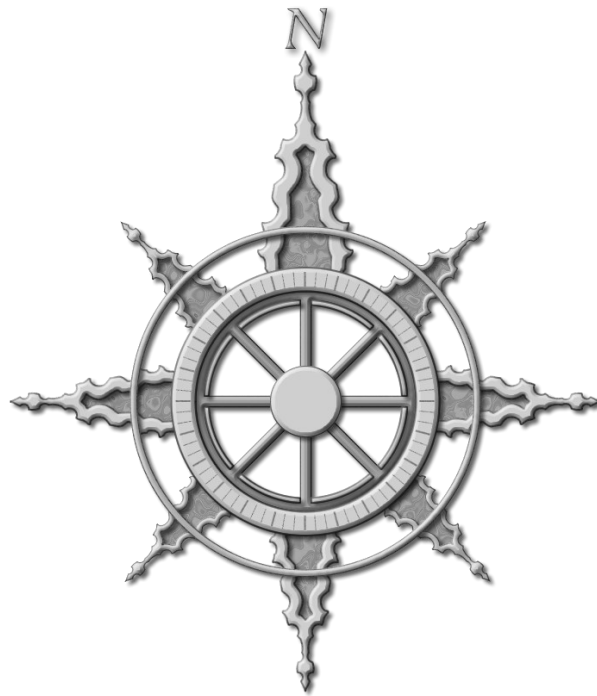
Matthew 7:26-27

(he/she is). . . like a _____
man who built his house upon the
_____.²⁷ The rain came down,
the streams rose, and the winds blew and
beat against that house, and it fell with a
great crash."

You now have four responsibilities which you should carefully consider:

- 1) **You must consistently read the Bible so you know what it says.** This is why it is so important for you to keep up with the weekly Bible Survey reading. Are you willing to read your Bible? Yes _____ No _____
- 2) **You must believe what the Bible teaches is true.** Are you willing to accept what your Bible says is true even when it seems to go against your own reasoning, experience or observation? Yes _____ No _____
- 3) **You must put what you believe to be true into practice by doing it.** Are you ready to obey commands in the Bible as the Holy Spirit shows you where you are presently disobedient or lacking? Yes _____ No _____
- 4) **You must be willing to teach the things you learn from the Bible to others.** Are you ready to be equipped by more mature Christians so you will be able to disciple other people with God's word? Yes _____ No _____

The Trinity



Memory verse: "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." (Matt 28:19)

The most important theme which runs through the Bible is God Himself. As we learned in the previous Discovery Series section, *Discovering God*— He is all powerful (Isa 43:13). He is all knowing (I John 3:20). He is always present everywhere (Ps 139:7-8). He is eternal without beginning or end (Ps 90:2), and so on.

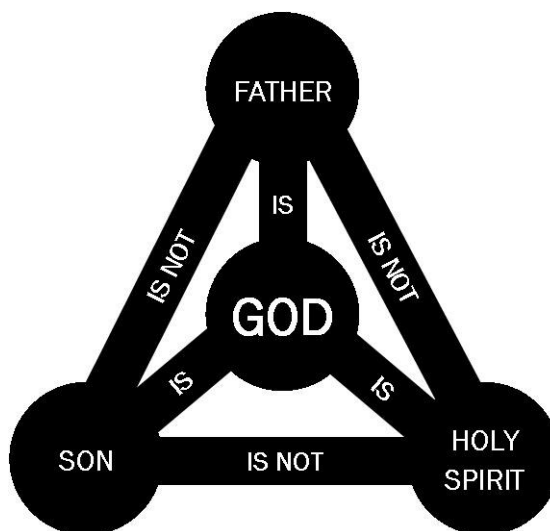
At this point we want re-focus our attention on the truth that **God is a Trinity**. The word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible. But the idea is entirely Biblical and describes three essential truths about God that are each true at the same time:

- 1) There is **one and only one God** who is indivisible and in no way can be separated into different parts. (There are not three Gods.)
- 2) There are three persons **who are co-equally God**: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (None of the three is "less God" than the others.)
- 3) There are **three distinct divine persons** who are not one in the same person. (There is not just one person in God.)

These three truths are summarized in the diagram to your right. There is only one God. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. But the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father. This is the doctrine of the Trinity.

These three truths are also implied in the now familiar passage on discipleship. Turn to and read Matthew 28:19 once again. This verse implies all three essential truths of the Trinity. Notice, first of all, we are to baptize disciples in a singular name (not names) indicating God is one. We also have all three persons (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) mentioned together indicating their **co-equality as God**. Finally, the three persons are distinguished from each other in spite of their unity. It says, "the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Clearly these three persons are not one in the same person.

If this seems confusing to you, don't worry about it. I trust you will grasp the meaning of the Trinity and its importance as we continue further with this study. Therefore we will first look at what the Bible has to say about each of these three truths concerning the Trinity and conclude with some observations on what it means and why it matters.



There are many passages in the Bible that show there is only one God. Consider Deuteronomy 6:4-5: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Only if there is one Lord can a disciple follow one master. So the fact that there is one God is a revealed truth as well as a practical necessity for spiritual fidelity.

Let's take a look at a few verses in the New Testament that say there is only one God:

John 17:3

(Jesus said eternal life is knowing) "... The _____ true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

I Corinthians 8:6

"Yet for us there is but _____ God, the Father, from whom all things come . . . and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come."

I Timothy 2:5

"For there is _____ God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

Do you see something a little out of the ordinary in these three verses? Each verse asserts there is one God, but at the same time seems to make Jesus Christ equal with God. In John 17:3, eternal life is equally dependent on knowing God and Jesus Christ. In I Cor 8:6 the Father is God. But Jesus is Lord. Must not the Father who is God also be Lord? And if this is so, doesn't this mean Jesus is God by the same logic? Moreover, all created things came from the Father but through Jesus Christ. So Jesus cannot be a created being. Finally, I Tim 2:5 states there is one God and the Jesus is a man. But it also

says Jesus is the mediator between God and men. To me a mediator between two parties, one must have something in common with each party. So even I Tim 2:5 implies Jesus Christ is somehow related to God.

Here we have three claims that there is one God that also hint there is more to it than this. There are personal distinctions in God which we must explore by studying other parts of the Bible.

Yet before we go on to study these divine persons we should pause to consider what we mean by saying there is only one God. While we will see there are three **distinct** persons in the Trinity there are not three **separate** persons! To say there is only one God means, among other things, that **God is indivisible**. There is no way you separate Him into different parts or divide the three persons like you can with men. Three men may share the same human nature, but they are still three men. You can separate them or even kill one without injuring the other two. But the three persons of the Trinity share a common divine nature that cannot be so divided. They cannot be separated and remain one and only one God. Several men may also have the same will concerning a matter. But they might change their minds and disagree in the future. But the will of God is such

that the three persons cannot disagree. They not only have the same will concerning all things now and forevermore, but it can be no other way. They are three persons irrevocably and unchangeably united in one God.



The Father is God:

The Father is understood to be God throughout the Bible. Here, simply note some places where He is called God, knows all things (a unique characteristic of God) and forgives sin (a unique action of God).

John 20:17
(Jesus Christ called the Father,) ". . .
_____ God and _____ God."

I Peter 1:2
Here "the _____
of God the Father" is due to the fact
that God knows everything (Heb 4:13, I
John 3:20).

Matt 6:14
(As God,) ". . . your heavenly Father
will also _____ you."

The Son is God:

Read John 1:1-4. The fact that "the Word" in this passage is the Son, Jesus Christ, is evident since this "word became flesh and made His dwelling among us" (Jn 1:14). But notice in verse 1 the Word is not only "with God" showing He is distinct from the Father, but also "was God"! He was from the beginning (verse 2), meaning there was never a time when He did not exist. "Through Him all things were made" (verse 3) so He is the Creator. We can also find places in the Bible where Jesus is called God, knows all things and forgives sin just like God the Father:

John 20:28
Thomas said to him (Jesus), "My
_____ and my _____."

Jesus is also referred to as God in Romans 9:5 and Titus 2:13.

In John 21:17, Peter declared, "Lord, you know all things . . ."

Mark 2:5
. . He (Jesus) said to the paralyzed man,
"Son, your sins are _____."

And then in verse 7, the Pharisees accused him:

Mark 2:7
Mark 2:7 "Why does this fellow talk like
that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive
sins but _____?"

The Holy Spirit is God:

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. The fact that the Holy Spirit is a real person and not just a force from God is known since He teaches (John 14:26), he reasons (Acts 15:28), lives (Rom 8:9), wills (I Cor 12:11), and fellowships with us (II Cor 13:14). These are all personal traits and functions. The Holy Spirit is also God since He was involved in creation (Gen 1:2), is everywhere (Ps 139:7-8), can be blasphemed (Matt 12:31-32), and is eternal (Heb 9:14). These things can only be said of someone who is God. We can find places in the Bible where the Spirit is called God and knows all things just like God the Father and God the Son:

In Acts 5 verse 3, Peter said Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit, and then in verse 7 he says Ananias had lied to God. They are one.

I Corinthians 2:11
. . no one knows the _____
of God except the Spirit of God."

The Spirit knows the same things God knows, because he is God

Three Persons

There are Three Persons who are God

We have seen there is only one God and the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are each God. Could it be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are simply names or titles for the same person acting or appearing in different ways at different times? This explanation would make our understanding of the Trinity a lot easier, but it would also be totally wrong. **There are numerous places in the Bible where the three are clearly different persons.**

When Jesus was baptized, we see the three persons of the Trinity manifested at the same time.

Mark 1:10-11

Just as _____ was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the _____ descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a _____ came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

So, we see:

- 1) The voice of the Father coming from heaven.
- 2) The Son Himself being baptized by John on earth.
- 3) The Holy Spirit coming down upon Him like a dove.

This event was not intended to show Jesus Christ is a great ventriloquist who can throw His voice from heaven. It is intended to show He is the Son (one person) of the Father (another person) and **anointed** by the Holy Spirit.

John 15:26

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

In this verse, Jesus refers to each person of the Trinity two times

- 1) The Father is identified as "the Father" both times.

- 2) The Son, Jesus, refers to Himself as. "I," and "me."
- 3) The Spirit is called the "Advocate" and the "Spirit of Truth."

If this verse was understood to refer to only one person it would read, "When I come, whom I will send to you from myself, I who go out from myself, I will testify about me." Obviously this would be nonsense.

Hebrews 9:14

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

The death Jesus died for our sins involved all three persons of the Trinity:

- 1) Christ offered Himself to God the Father.
- 2) Christ offered himself unblemished on the cross.
- 3) Christ offered Himself through the eternal Spirit.

Once again this verse would not make sense if the Father, the Son and the Spirit were one person: "who through Himself offered Himself unblemished to Himself."

From these and other Scriptures it is clear there are **three distinct persons** who are God. Some have assumed since the Father sends the Son and the Spirit on their missions (John 15:26) that they are inferior to the Father. But being sent to do something does not imply inferiority. People who work together may have different roles or different tasks to accomplish, but each role and task are important. So also Jesus and the Spirit were sent on great missions with eternal consequences. But this does not make them less than God the Father.

The Trinity means there are three co-equal persons in one God. But isn't this self-contradictory? Not at all. Then how can one God be three persons without being a split personality or three gods? The simple answer is God is one in one sense and three in another sense. To explore the ways in which God is three and one would involve a level of theology beyond the intent of this workbook. But the Trinity is logically consistent.

You may notice we have not attempted to provide any illustration of the Trinity. The reason for this is every natural illustration fails to properly describe at least one of the three aspects of the Trinity. Illustrations are great for showing the similarity between two things in one respect. But here we need to show three things at the same time. And there is nothing in the natural realm to compare to three all-knowing, thinking persons who are one God yet distinct at the same time.

Now why do you suppose it is critical to know about the Trinity? If the Trinity is seemingly (but not really) contradictory and if it cannot be adequately illustrated by something around us, why should we worry about it? Indeed, why should such a "complicated" doctrine be the second thing we teach you in this workbook? The reason is **everything else in Christianity depends on the Trinity**. Our understanding of who Jesus is, what He did on the cross, His resurrection, salvation, even our water baptism, prayer and worship are all rightly understood only from the standpoint of the Trinity.

Jesus Christ:

Luke 1:35

(Speaking to Mary) The angel answered, "The _____ will come on you, and the power of the _____ will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the _____ of _____.

The Cross:

Hebrews 9:14

How much more, then, will the blood of _____, who through the eternal _____ offered himself unblemished to _____, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Resurrection:

Romans 8:11

And if the _____ of _____ who raised _____ from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Salvation:

1 Peter 1:2

. . . who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the _____, through the sanctifying work of the _____, to be obedient to _____ Christ . . .

Baptism:

Matthew 28:19

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the _____ and of the _____ and of the Holy _____ . . .

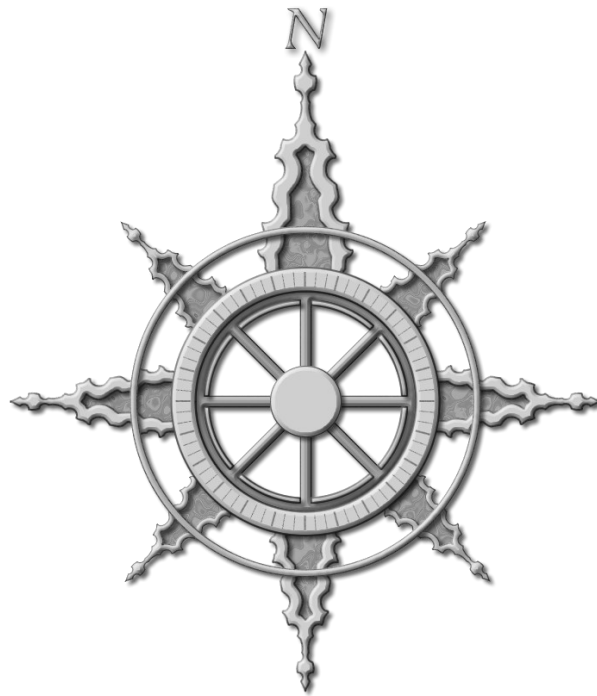
Prayer & Worship:

Ephesians 2:18

For through _____ (Jesus Christ) we both have access to the _____ by one _____.

You see, if your faith and hope are in Jesus Christ, if you are a Christian, if you possess eternal life, then the Trinity cannot be a mere academic fact for you. **The Trinity is truth you have come to live by!** It is truth without which your salvation would be absolutely impossible.

Created in God's Image



Created

What we Mean by the Word "Creation"

Memory Verse: "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (Heb 11:3)

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? This is a question the theory of evolution cannot answer. But a Bible-believer can answer it very easily. The chicken came first and then the egg because Genesis 1 tells us God created chickens (birds) not eggs. Actually, the theory of evolution makes a lot of simple issues very complicated, confusing, or even self-contradictory. However, the Bible's view that God created all things simplifies our understanding of where everything came from and how we got here. All we need to assume in order to make sense of the world being created is that there really is a personal, all-powerful God.

Genesis 1:1

"In the _____ God
_____ the heavens and
the earth."

God caused the universe to exist in the beginning and the Hebrew word "create" means to make out of nothing.

Genesis 1:3

"And God _____, 'Let there be
light,' and there _light."

Notice all God had to do was say it and light sprang into existence. (See also verses 6, 9, 14, 20, 24.)

John 1:3

"Through Him _____ things were
made; without Him
_____ was made that has
been made." The Lord made everything!

Colossians 1:16

"For by Him _things were created; things
in _____ and on _____,
_____ and
_____, whether
thrones or powers or rulers or authori-
ties; _____ things were created
by and for Him."

This doesn't leave anything out does it?

Hebrews 11:3

By _____ we understand that
the _____ was
formed at God's _____,
so that what is seen was _____ made
out of what was _____

Hebrews 11:3 speaks of the four essential things you must know about God's act of creation:

- 1) "By faith we understand. . ." The fact that God created the world can only be known for sure because God has revealed it to us in His word and we believe Him. If God created everything, then no one was around to see it happen and science is based on observation.
- 2) "That the universe was formed. . ." God created all things not just some things or most things as we saw in John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16 above. Nothing exists on its own. Everything exists because God wants it to exist and is therefore subject to the will of God.
- 3) "At God's command, so that . . ." God spoke and it happened as we saw already in Genesis 1. God did not exercise any physical effort in making in world.
- 4) "What is seen was not made out of what was visible." God did not make the universe from something else. He did not fashion it from pre-existing material. He brought all things into existence out of nothing as John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16 imply.

Scientists working in the field of research and development can tell you in no uncertain terms that the theory of evolution doesn't have a sound scientific basis. It is self-contradictory and violates well-established laws of science. But you do not need to a scientist to see the flaws in this unbiblical theory. Let's just take a look at some of the assumptions and assertions of evolution and examine them from the standpoint of common sense:

Evolution cannot explain our ultimate origin.

Everything supposedly developed from lower states over a long time. But where did the matter of the universe come from? Evolution has no explanation for this. Even if the time is billions of years, at some point things had to "appear" on the scene and only creation by God explains this.

Evolution assumes things get better with time.

Evolution has to assume things have been around for billions of years to make it plausible for them to gradually develop from lower states. But look around you. Apart from outside intervention, what happens to things if they are left alone over a long time? Cars, homes, indeed all things fall apart and deteriorate with time unless we fix them. If you are a parent you have seen what your small child has done to his or her room when left by himself. Time by itself does not bring order but disorder.

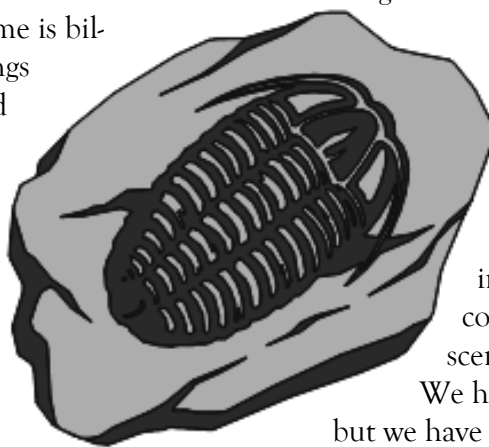
Evolution confuses itself with survival of the fittest.

In nature the fittest creatures tend to survive. But this is not evolution. All the recorded cases of one animal emerging as dominant over another in a

change of environment have not been due to the fact that a species changed or mutated itself but because a minority species became the fittest and multiplied into a majority under favorable conditions.

Evolution cannot explain how new features develop gradually.

Evolution assumes an arm or a wing developed gradually from a mutation causing first a bump before the appendage became useful. But such a gradually developing member would, at first, be anything but useful. It would be a weakness, not a strength, and the mutated creature would become extinct before it survived millions of years of progress to its new form.



Evolution requires new species to emerge, but extinction is the rule.

Evolution supposes ever-improving species of animals are continually emerging on the world scene. In fact the opposite is the case. We have seen no new species emerge, but we have seen many become extinct!

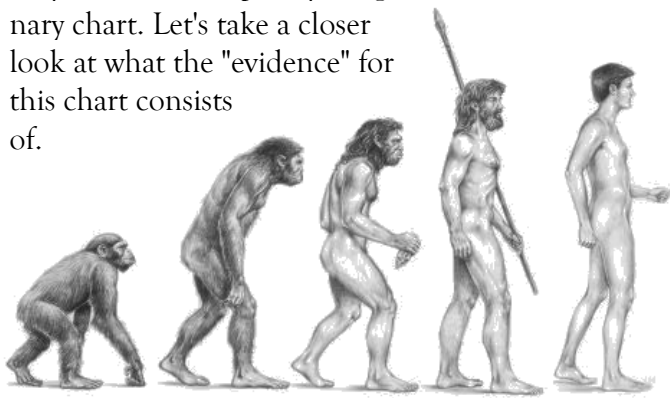
Evolution assumes common features imply common ancestors.

That men, apes and dogs all have legs does not imply they have the same ancestors as evolution supposes. Such common features are simply due to the fact that when God made different creatures He made them with similar features if He desired them to do similar things (like walking).

Man's Origin

Evolution is an Unfounded Theory

If the theory of evolution does not make sense, then what about all the fossil evidence for evolution? Well, what about it? The fact of the matter is the fossil "evidence" is very slim and, when examined closely, is really non-existent. You may have seen evolutionary charts like the one shown below in modern school textbooks. Did you know the supposed fossil evidence for this chart could not fill a single coffin? For all the supposed millions of years of human development, evolutionists only have a handful of fossilized bones from which they fabricate this purely imaginary chart. Let's take a closer look at what the "evidence" for this chart consists of.



COMMON ANCESTOR: There are no bones or fossils for this creature. It is only assumed, based on evolution, that such a common ancestor had to exist.

RAMAPITHECUS was reconstructed from a single **two-inch jawbone** found in India. It is absurd that an entire "ape man" can be derived from one bone fragment, especially since the jaw is similar to some baboons living today!

AUSTALOPITHECUS was merely an ape fossil **with man-made tools** found nearby. Does the fact that tools were nearby mean they were the ape's tools? I suppose if we found rusted plow blades and barbed wire from a fence in the same field as cow bones we would conclude the cows were farmers!

HOMO HABILIS "is essentially **human in every way**" according to Richard Leaky, a leading evolutionist. A true human being is no "missing link".

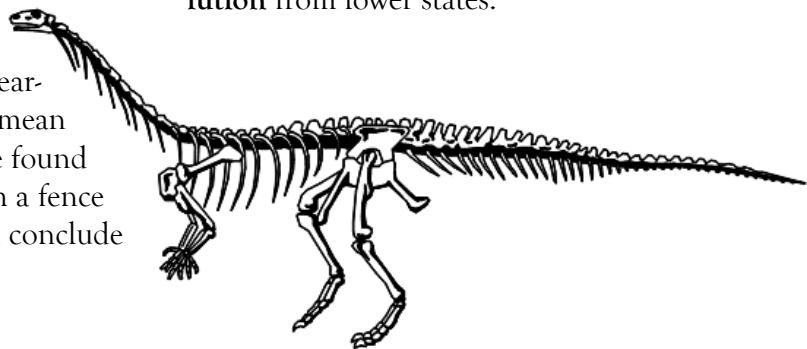
PEKING MAN was reconstructed from several **broken skulls and three teeth** found in China in the 1920's. But the fossils were lost during World War II. Not only is reconstruction of a whole "man" from such slim evidence impossible, but the fossils are not available now for independent study.

JAVA MAN consists of **one ape skull cap and a human leg bone**. The skullcap and the leg bone were not attached, but two human skulls were later found at the same stratum at the dig site! Why should the ape skull go with the leg?

CRO-MAGNON MAN was fully human and was only placed on the chart because his bones were **found in a cave**. Have you ever explored a cave for yourself? Heaven forbid you should ever perish in a cave because if an evolutionist found your remains he will conclude you were a "missing link".

NEANDERTHAL was later found to be simply a man whose bone structure was deformed by **extreme age and arthritis**. At this writing, my grandmother is 100 years old. Her mind is sharp but her physique is not the norm for men.

Such is the status of the "evidence" for **man's evolution** from lower states.



Man is not an animal evolved from lower forms of life. The Bible says man was created in the image of God (Gen 1:26). You were made in the image of God. What exactly is the image of God? Many people have been confused by the term "image" because they think of a mirror image and conclude that man looks like God. But this is a mistake. The image of God is not physical appearance. God has no physical body for us to look like.

John 4:24

God is _____ . . .

God does not have a physical body and He is not limited to one location (Psalm 139:7-8).

John 1:14

The Word became _____.

Clearly Jesus, who is God, was not physical flesh before He became a man.

Romans 8:11

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is _____
_____ you . . .

God the Holy Spirit dwells within us all because He has no isolated body.

If you would take a moment to read Genesis 1:26 you will find two words are used which mean the same thing. **Man was made in God's likeness as well as His image.** So when we say man was created in the image of God we meant the he has characteristics like God, not that he looks like God. If you would turn to the New Testament you will see how man is like God.

Ephesians 4:23-24

(We were) "created to be _____
God in true righteousness and holiness."

The image of God involves a moral capacity like God to know right from wrong. As sinners we do not do the right things, but we have the capacity

to be moral as we are "made new in the attitude of our minds" by the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 3:10

(Paul also says we are) ". . . being renewed in _____ in the image of its Creator."

The image of God entails a mental capacity to know things such as God and truth.

Actually, the ability to know God and truth is the reason why we can make moral judgments at all. **So the image of God is basically the power of reason man possesses and animals do not.** Of course, our knowledge will always be limited compared to God's and we will never be God. To say we are like God does not mean we are God any more than a mirror you look into is you. A couple more observations are important at this point.

According to **I Corinthians 2:11**, A man's thoughts occur in his spirit, not his body just like God's thoughts are known by His Spirit.

So a man's spirit is the "location" of the image of God and reason.

James 3:9-10

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's _____.¹⁰ . . . My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

So—we are warned that we should not curse men, **because** they have been made in God's likeness. It does not specify "Christian" man. **All** men have the likeness of God, even though sin obscures this image like fog blurs and distorts a mirror image. But the image is still there. Even sinful man has the ability to think even if he does not use it for holy purposes.

All men are made in the image of God. So every human being is of immense value to God.

So What?

Why Our Creation Matters to Our Faith

Perhaps the fact that we are created in God's image seems somewhat irrelevant to you. But to deny it and believe in evolution does much more damage to our faith than simply contradicting the Bible's truthfulness. **It the basis for our moral responsibility to God, the reason for our sinfulness before God and the precedent for our reconciliation with God.**

Romans 9:19-20

"Shall what is _____ say to him who _____ it, 'Why did you make me this way?'"

Since God created man we are morally responsible to obey God. God would have no right to tell us what to do if we existed by accident or on our own.

Romans 5:12-14

"Sin entered the world through _____ and death through sin . . . "

Since God created one couple (Adam and Eve) and everyone has descended from them, everyone has inherited sin and needs a Savior. According to evolution, we might not all be sinners because some of us might have evolved from different ancestors who did not sin.

Romans 5:18-19

"For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made _____, so also through the obedience of the one man the many were made _____ ."

Since mankind fell as a result of one man's sin, one Savior's death can save us all. We have one Savior because we have only one ancestor.

Also, the fact that man is made in the image of God is a central truth:

John 1:14

"The Word became _____."

The reason Jesus could become a man and still be God is because man is made in God's image. God and man have something in common. They aren't opposites.

I John 1:3

" . . . and our _____ is with the _____."

The reason we can have a personal relationship with God is that we are made in His image. Only rational beings who can know right from wrong can have any fellowship with a Holy God.

Colossians 1:16

". . . And all things were created _____ Him and _____ Him."

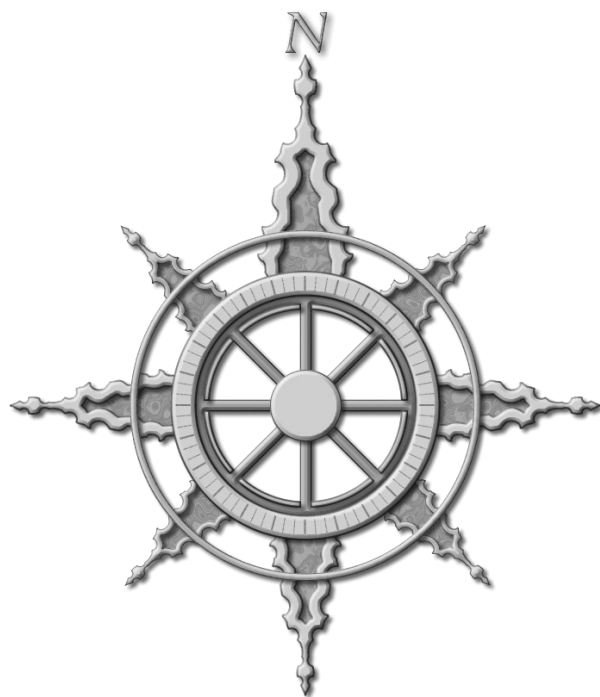
Not only did God create everything, but everything was made for Him. You were not only made for fellowship with God but for His purpose and glory! You are here for a reason (See Eph 2:10).

According to evolution you are an accident, a mere product of chance. According to evolution you are worthless, nothing more than dust in the wind. According to evolution you are your own master for now, but will ultimately be mastered by death and extinction.

Fortunately, evolution is wrong and the Bible is right. You are not an accident, you were made by God! You are not worthless, you are made in the image of God! You are not your own master, you belong to God forever!

Please resolve this issue in your heart now and renounce forever and belief in evolution. It is an inconsistent theory. It is an unfounded theory. And, most of all, it is an unbiblical theory.

Sin



Memory verse: "The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thought of his heart was only evil all the time." (Gen 6:5)

"Sin" is such a deceptively small word. It is only three letters long and most people do not think it is a very significant word. Sure, they will admit they have done some things wrong. They may even agree they have sinned a few times. But few will go so far as to say they are sinful. They will not admit to being full of sin. But this is precisely what must be seen in order to fully grasp the crisis we are in before God. **Sin may be a short word, but it is a powerful force that influences and controls every part of an unbeliever's life.**

To understand the depth of sin, we'll review how mankind became sinful. God created Adam and Eve from whom we have all descended (Genesis 2 & 3). This is not a fable or myth. It is factual history.

The Demand:

God created Adam and Eve and thus had the right to tell them what to do. He only gave them one command. This was not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. **God wanted them to depend on His will and wisdom rather than on their own will and wisdom.** He enforced the command with a promised penalty for violating it.

Genesis 2:7

The LORD God _____ the man from the dust of the ground . . .

Genesis 2:21-22

The LORD God _____ a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man . . .

Genesis 2:16-17

God commanded the man . . . ¹⁷ you must not eat from the tree of the _____ of good and evil, for . . ."

The Penalty:

Genesis 2:17

. . . when you eat of it you will certainly _____."

The Deception:

The serpent was crafty (Gen 3:1) and tempted Eve by questioning God's word, God's judgement and God's motives. In effect He said God's command was unclear, His penalty is uncertain and He cannot be trusted to do the best for us. He still does this today.

- He questioned God's word:
Genesis 3:1
"Did God _____ say. . . ?"
- He denied God's penalty:
Genesis 3:4
"You will not certainly _____."
- He questioned God's motives:
Genesis 3:5
"God knows that when you eat . . . you will be like _____ . . ."

Disobedience and Death:

When Eve and Adam disobeyed by eating the fruit (Gen 3:6-7), **they immediately died spiritually by being separated from God and also lost their immortality leading eventually to their physical death.**

- Their spiritual death:
Genesis 3:8-9
". . . and they _____ from the LORD God . . ."
- Their physical death:
Genesis 3:22
". . . He must not be allowed to . . . _____ forever."



All of us descended from Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and became sinful. As a result, all mankind – including you and me – were born sinful. We inherited the tendency to do wrong from our first parents. The fact is, all creatures reproduce "after their own kind" (Gen 1:11, 21, 24). Roses produce roses. Fish produce fish. Dogs produce dogs. Sinners produce sinners. **There is no getting around it, we are sinners from birth.**

Psalm 51:5

David said, "Surely I was _____ sinful at _____, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

Psalm 58:3

"Even from _____ the wicked go _____; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies."

Proverbs 22:15

"Folly is _____ in the heart of a _____."

In the Old Testament "folly" means moral perversion.

Romans 5:12

"Sin entered the world through one _____, and death through sin."

We all sin and die because of Adam.

Romans 5:19

"Through the disobedience of the one man the _____ were made sinners."

Men are sinners because they came from Adam.

It is important to realize **we are not sinners because we sin**, but **we sin because we are sinners**. It's automatic.

Think of our babies. They are born, they grow and suddenly one day they disobey their parents. One day they tell their first lie. No one has to teach them how to disobey. No one has to teach them how to lie. It comes naturally – because they have a sinful nature. If children are not trained to do right, they will do wrong, and they become skilled at wrongdoing. Even when we do good, often it is for selfish reasons – there is corruption even in the good things we do. **We need God, we need a Savior!**

Sins and Sin

Sins are the Result of Sin

To understand how extensive and powerful sin is in our lives we must consider the difference between "sin" and "sins". Did you know they are two different things? Certainly the one is result of the other, but they are very different beasts.

What are sins?

The word "sin" means "missing the mark" in Hebrew. Particular sins are motives and actions that are against the will of God. They are isolated events within our lives that "miss the mark" of God's commands. We will see in a moment that sins are manifestations of sin, but for now it is important to realize that sins are specifically against the will of God.

I John 4:16

"... God is _____."

For this reason God wills love and hatred is sinful (I John 3:15) because it is contrary to His will.

John 17:17

... your (God's) word is _____.

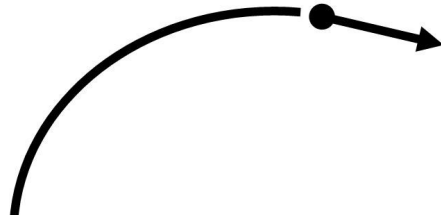
As a matter of fact God cannot lie (Heb 6:18), therefore all deception and lies are sin.

II Timothy 2:13

"... he (Christ) remains faithful, for he cannot _____ himself."

He is faithful to all of His commitments so any kind of disloyalty is sinful.

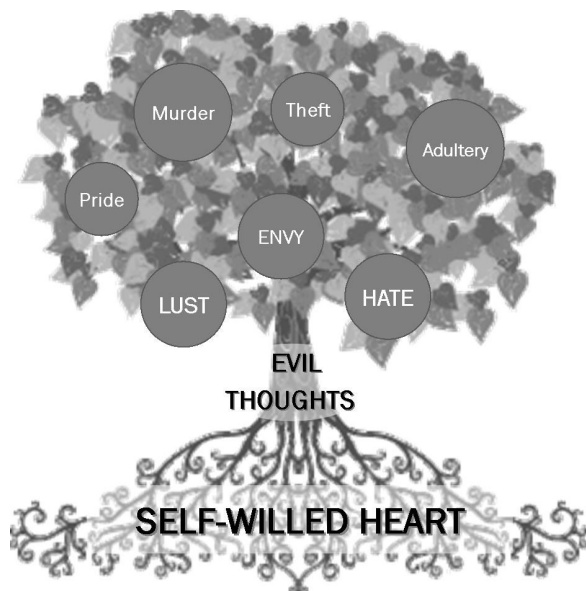
You see, sins are sins because they are the opposite of what God is by nature and what He wills and commands man to do.



What is sin?

When we speak of "sin" we are not necessarily talking about a specific evil act. We are talking about the power that drives us to do evil. Ultimately, we are driven by our own will and desires. So "sin" or our "sinful nature" is basically our commitment to following our own will rather than God's. Paul makes this distinction between the "flesh" and the Spirit (Gal 5:17); sins are disobedient ac-

Read Mark 7:21-23. When our hearts are determined to do their own thing instead of what God wants, all kinds of evil thoughts are produced which branch off into the motives of envy, greed, lust, hate and so forth. These produce the fruit of particular sins (James 1:14-15). The branch of lust produces the fruit of adultery and sexual immorality (Matt 5:27-30). Hate produces murder (I John 3:15). Some people are not as "fruitful" at sin as others. Though they are evil they can outwardly do good things (Matt 7:11). Some people may even prune some of their own branches. But no one can uproot themselves! This is our basic problem as sinners. By nature we are rooted in sin and are absolutely incapable of producing anything good.



Bondage

All Men are Fully Dominated by Sin

Men are not simply sinners who have done a few sins. Men are sinful. We are dominated by sin and cannot do anything but sin.

Genesis 6:5

The LORD saw how great _____ wickedness on the earth had become. . .

It does not say only certain men were wicked. The word "man" is singular. It is talking about mankind as a race. All men are sinful.

Genesis 6:5

. . . and that _____ inclination of the _____ of his heart. . .

Sin is a matter of the heart, not just actions. Whether or not our actions are bad is beside the point. If we do good things with selfish or wrong motives we are still sinful. If we do good things to please ourselves rather than to please God we are wicked.

Genesis 6:5

. . . was _____ evil _____ the time.

We are not sometimes sinful or partly sinful but totally sinful. Amazing, isn't it?

This was enough for God to grieve that He made man (Gen 6:6) and to decide to wipe mankind from the earth with a flood (Gen 6:7). Note that Noah was no exception to this rule. "Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD" (Gen 6:8). It was not that Noah did not sin, for we see even after the flood his family was inclined to evil (Gen 8:21). But Noah found God's favor (that is, His grace). The fact that all unsaved men and women are only sinful and cannot do good is clear throughout Scripture.

Psalms 53:3

. . . there is _____ one who does good, not _____.

Ecclesiastes 7:20

Indeed, there is no one on earth who is _____, no one who does what is right and never sins.

Jeremiah 13:23b

Neither can you do good who are _____ to doing evil.

John 15:4b

Neither can you _____ unless you remain in me (Christ).

Romans 8:7

The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor _____ do so.

Does this go against everything you believe? **Do you think people are basically good?** Think about it. Selfishness is a sin and we recognize everyone as selfish. What would you think about a stranger on the street who would offer you a \$100 bill? You would assume there was a catch, that he had a selfish motive. What would you think if you were alone in an elevator and a stranger stood right next to you instead of in the other corner? You might fear for your life! If someone close to you showers you with compliments for no apparent reason, do you assume he is blessing you or do you wonder if he has a hidden agenda? Are you selfish?

A bird with broken wings has the freedom to flounder in any direction but cannot fly. So also sinful man is free to do everything but the right thing. If someone wrongs you, for instance, you may want to retaliate, or you may decide to just forget it and move on with your life. But **apart from Christ you cannot truly love him and this is precisely what God requires us to do.**

The prophet Isaiah pronounced six different woes on the people of Israel who constantly sinned (Isa 5:8, 11, 18, 20, 21, 22). But Isaiah 6:1-4 he saw a vision from God, he could do nothing but cry out, "woe to me! I am ruined!" Indeed, the power of sin within us is great and brings ruin upon the best of us. And this ruin is complete. **Our sin is utterly revolting to God.** God help us!

Our sins separate us from God:

If you try to call someone on the telephone it doesn't matter whether the phone line is cut off once or a thousand times. Either way you are completely cut off. So it doesn't matter whether we've sinned once or a thousand times. Either way we are totally cut off from God.

Isaiah 59:2

Your _____ have _____ you from your God. Your _____ have hidden His face from you.

Psalm 5:4

... With you _____ people are not welcome.

Psalm 5:5

... You _____ all who do _____.

Our sin separates us from God:

Actually our situation is worse than having a phone line cut off. In reality an unbeliever has no phone line at all! There is nothing in his life even to patch up to "reconnect" him with God. It is as if you hate it when someone scratches their fingernails across a chalk board and that is all a stranger ever does. You would be driven away.

Genesis 6:5

The Lord saw how _____ the wickedness of the human race had become ...

Genesis 6:6

the Lord _____ that he had made human beings on the earth.

Genesis 6:7

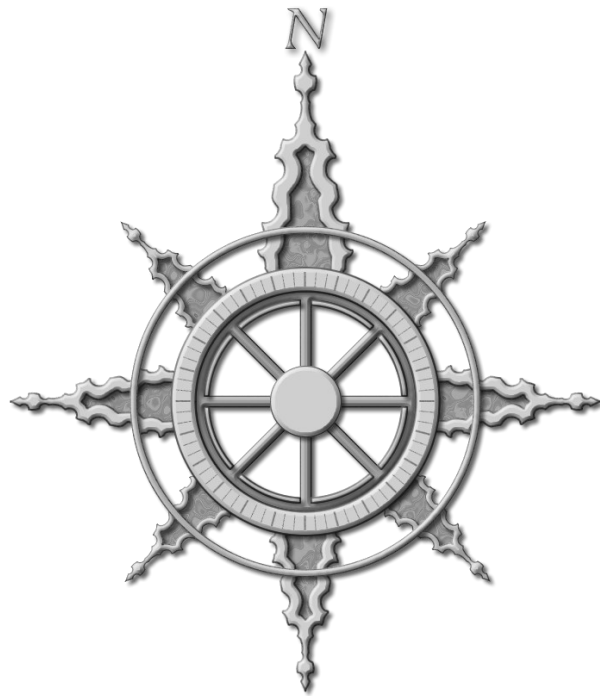
So the Lord said, "I will _____ from the face of the earth the human race . . . "

Along with the capacity of sin, the self-willed person also has the ability to **conceal** sin and to **rationalize** sin. We convince ourselves we are O.K. because we do not do very much that is really bad. But we fail to realize whatever we do, good or bad, it is because **we are committed to our own will and not that of God.** We need a change of heart to even recognize the extent to which sin has enslaved us.

Only then can we:

- 1) See our own **need** for Jesus. The Old Testament was given for this very reason (Gal 3:24). It shows how much we disobey and how impossible it is for us to save ourselves so we will rely on God's grace in Christ.
- 2) **Fully devote ourselves to Jesus.** Jesus said, "he who has been forgiven little loves little" (Luke 7:47). But we were forgiven very very much!
- 3) **See others'** need for Jesus. Only when we see how lost and blind unbelievers are will we fear for their souls, tell them the gospel and pray fervently that God would show them their total bondage in sin.

Heaven & Hell



After Death

Our Bodily Death Does Not End Our Existence

Memory verses: "He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power." (II Thes 1:8-9)

If we are separated from God by sin, what kind of existence awaits us beyond the grave? Most people believe in some kind of life after death, but few face up to this problem. **The fact is, if we are separated from God in this life, then we will continue to be separated from Him in the next life.** Since God dwells in heaven, this means those who die in sin go to hell. Hell is the destiny of anyone apart from faith in Jesus Christ. "Whoever condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son" (John 3:18). In light of this, the Bible clearly denies three popular ideas about life after death.

There is no universal salvation; Everyone will not ultimately be saved:

Matthew 7:13

... broad is the road that leads to _____ and _____ enter through it.

Jesus is saying here that many people will perish in hell.

Matthew 7:14

Small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and _____ a _____ find it.

The sad fact is – most people will not receive eternal life.

There is no reincarnation; We have only one chance at life – this one!

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is _____."

Notice the wages or payment for sin is not another

life. **This current life is our only chance!**

Hebrews 9:27

... People are destined to die _____ . . .

Again this clearly shows there is no reincarnation after we die and are judged.

There is no annihilation; Unbelievers do not cease to exist when they die.

II Thessalonians 1:9

They will be punished with _____ destruction and _____ from the presence of the Lord.

Paul defines the destruction of the wicked as separation from God not extinction.

Jude 7

... suffer the punishment of _____ fire.

Note this punishment never ends and extinction would be a relief from suffering not punishment (compare with Matt 25:46)

Revelation 20:10

They will be _____ day and night for ever and ever.

This speaks of Satan and antichrist but indicates the nature of eternal punishment for every unbeliever (compare with Matt 25:41).

So what is life after death like? The focus of this study will be on hell. This emphasis is not intended to diminish the importance of heaven, but our understanding of heaven will be clearer once we grasp the meaning of hell. Also, it is true as believers in Jesus we have no reason to fear hell ourselves. But it is critical we understand the reality and seriousness of hell to motivate us to reach the lost with the gospel and so we are prepared to explain to unbelievers their impending peril in hell.

As we begin to consider hell, we must clarify that it is difficult to study hell in most English translation of the Bible. The problem is there are two main Greek words with different meanings that are both translated as "hell." This is unfortunate and brings some confusion to the reader. But we will point out the different words as we continue with our study so you will not need to read or know Greek to get the meaning.

The first word used for "hell" in most translations of the New Testament is "Hades." **"Hades" literally means "unseen" and refers to the unseen place of the departed.** It is the state of a sinful soul after it is separated from the body at death. **Nowhere does the Bible say hades is eternal.** It is a temporary state of the soul that is entered at death but which ends with the resurrection of the wicked (John 5:29, Acts 24:15). After this resurrection, "Hades" itself is thrown into the "lake of fire" (Rev 20:14).

Read Luke 16:19-31 where Jesus Christ describes what Hades is like.

Luke 16:22

The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side (Hades). The rich man also _____ and was buried.

An unbeliever's soul goes to Hades immediately upon his or her bodily death.

Luke 16:23

In Hades, where he was in _____.

Hades is a state of conscious suffering for the soul of the departed.

Luke 16:24

"... I am in _____ in this _____."

Again this emphasizes Hades is a state of real suffering rather than merely a place of neutral confinement away from God and heaven.

Luke 16:25

"... In your lifetime you received your _____ things while Lazarus received bad things."

The rich man had not committed any great sins like rape or murder. He was guilty of what we call "sins of omission" by not helping the poor. Please remember, many people think they are O.K. with God yet are going to hell because of what they have not done.

Luke 16:26

"... Nor can anyone _____ from there to us."

Going to Hades is irreversible. Once a person is there he or she gets no second chance.

Luke 16:31

"... If they do not _____ to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced . . ."

People are condemned because they refuse to believe and submit to God's will as revealed in the Scriptures.

Hades is not a permanent state of affairs. It exists now during the church age as a temporary "holding cell" for sinners who died before the final judgment.

Matthew 16:18

"I will build my church and the gates of _____ will not overcome it."

Hades exists during this present church age.

Revelation 20:13-14

Then death and Hades were thrown into the _____ of _____.

After the wicked are raised, Hades will be destroyed, and then there will be final judgment and those who hadn't trusted in Christ will suffer both physically and spiritually forever.

Gehenna

The Final Place of Punishment

"Gehenna" is the second word translated as "hell" and was the name of Jerusalem's garbage dump. It was constantly smoldering from the burning trash and provided a vivid picture of suffering in eternal fire. **Gehenna is not just a state of the soul but also of the body.**

Throughout the Bible the torment in Gehenna is depicted as physical. It is also everlasting. **There is no end to the suffering of a person in Gehenna's fire.** So after the final judgment a sinner's suffering will increase in two ways compared to his existence in Hades. First, a physical dimension is added to his spiritual suffering since he is in a body. Second, his torment is eternal.

Read **Matthew 13:37-43**:

When does Jesus Christ say these events will take place?

(See also II Thessalonians 1:7)

Who does Jesus Christ say will be "weeded out" of His kingdom?

(See also II Thessalonians 1:8)

What kind of place does Jesus say they will be thrown into?

(See also II Thessalonians 1:9)

Read **Matthew 25:31-46**:

When does Jesus Christ say these events will take place?

What kind of sins will condemn people to eternal punishment?

(Recall Luke 16:25)

What kind of punishment does Jesus say awaits those accursed?

(Compare to Jude 7)

Read **Mark 9:42-50**:

Does this say when someone dies they immediately go to hell (Gehenna)?

With what bodily parts are people said to enter hell or Gehenna with?

(Compare Matthew 10:28)

How do we know from this punishment in hell (Gehenna) is eternal ?

Clearly the punishment in Gehenna is in the future, physical, and endless.

Those who die without Jesus Christ do not go to heaven. They are not reincarnated. They do not cease to exist. At first, their souls go to Hades where they suffer spiritually in lonely isolation until they are raised from the dead at the resurrection of the wicked. At this time they face judgment and are condemned to everlasting physical and spiritual torment in Gehenna (also called the lake of fire and the fiery furnace). Unbelievers are often turned off by all this. How can a God of love doom people forever? How can a just God condemn people to hell because of a few sins? No doubt you have heard similar objections or have raised these kinds of questions yourself. We encourage you to ponder several thoughts:

Denying it will not make hell go away. People refuse to believe in hell because they do not want to believe in it. It is too awful a thought. But our liking or disliking something does not make it real or unreal. We must deal with things as they really are, not as we would like them to be.

The Bible is our only window to the afterlife. There is no way of knowing what happens to us after death except by God telling us. The Bible tells us about both heaven and hell. To be consistent, if we want to have hope in heaven based on the Bible we must also face the reality of hell's existence.

We are not God and cannot pass judgment on His justice. Who are we to tell God what He can and can't do? God created us and can do as He pleases. Also, we are tainted with sin and cannot presume to know what is our just penalty any more than a murderer can render a just judgment against himself.

Extinction would not really be a punishment. Some people would prefer personal extinction to hell. But that's the whole point. Ceasing to exist

would not be a punishment. For many it would be a relief from suffering and a desired end to their life-long struggle against the will of God.

God does not send "people" to hell. Talking about "people" going to hell clouds the issue. God condemns sinners. Moreover, it is not true unbelievers go to hell because of a few sins. As we saw last week, **the root problem with sin is continuous, self-willed resistance to God's will. Men are condemned for their total rebellion, not a few isolated sins.**

The coming of Christ to save depends on it. Consider a hero who jumps into a river rushing towards a deadly waterfall. If he dives in to save a young woman who is floundering in the water and can't swim, then his act is a meaningful act of love and courage whether or not he is successful in saving her. But if the woman is standing safely on the bank and the man throws himself into the rapids to "prove his love" for her, then the feat is only an act of stupidity. The woman's peril or safety makes the difference between heroism and foolishness. So also sinful man's perilous destiny in hell makes the difference between the crucified and risen Christ being a genuine and faithful Savior or a hopeless and foolish romantic.

Jesus Christ taught us about hell. You might have noticed most of the clear teaching on hell in the Bible was given by Jesus Himself. This is not just because He is in the best position to know. Being the one who laid down His life for our sins, He is in the best position to let us know about hell without coming across as insensitive, uncaring or condemning.



"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 6:23). Here Paul the apostle teaches us that having eternal life is possible. **We do not have to go to hell.** But to gain eternal life we must receive it as a gift of God and this gift can only be received in Jesus Christ. In weeks to come we will take a look at how we receive this gift and what it means to be "in Christ". But for now take heart! If you believe in Jesus you have passed from death to life!



What is eternal life? Jesus defined eternal life this way: "This is eternal life: That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ depends on our relationship to Jesus Christ just as Paul said in Romans

6:23. But it also shows us it is something we possess now because we know God now. We have eternal life **now**. We will have it when we die. We will have it forever. It is **eternal** life. No one can take it from you.

Just as there are two phases to hell, there are two phases to heaven. **At death, the Christian's soul goes immediately to heaven to be with Jesus.** While he was hanging on the cross, Jesus spoke to the repentant thief next to him:

Luke 23:43

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, _____ you will be with me in paradise."

At death our soul at once goes to be with Jesus Christ in heaven and this is described as paradise. Sounds pretty good to me.

II Corinthians 5:8

We . . . would prefer to be away from the body and at _____ with the Lord.

When Christians die, their souls leave their bodies and they go to live with the Lord. The apostle Paul, speaking about facing persecution and possible death said:

Philippians 1:23

"I desire to _____ and be with Christ, which is better by far."

Again we see when we die we go to be with Christ in heaven which is a much improved situation.

When Jesus comes back, He will raise the dead in Christ to be with Him physically forever. We will deal with the resurrection in more detail later on. But for now just take note of the fact that we will live forever.

I Thessalonians 4:16-17

For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven . . . and the dead _____ will rise first. . . ¹⁷ . . . and so we will be with the Lord _____.

So what do you suppose heaven is like? What do you think our rewards will be? I do not care to speculate beyond what Scripture says. But there is one thing I am sure of: We will be with **Jesus Christ** forever and He is a magnificent reward all by Himself!

Genesis 15:1

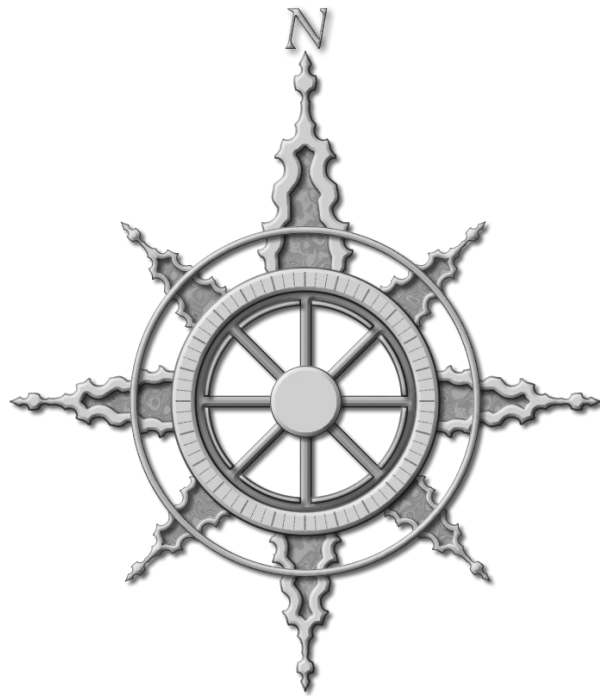
". . . I (the Lord) am your shield, your very great _____."

Psalms 16:11

. . . You will fill me with joy in your _____, with eternal _____ at your right hand."

What more could any Christian want than God Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ



Who is Jesus?

Just Who is This Savior of Ours?

Memory Verses: "Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness." (Php 2:6-7)

You and I were obviously born into a sorry state. We were sinners deserving of hell and had no means within us of "straightening out" our lives to please God. But God still loved us and provided a means for us to be saved from hell and redeemed from the power of sin (Rom 5:6-8). **God's answer was to send His Son, Jesus Christ** (John 3:16).

This Jesus led an extraordinary, even a supernatural life. He was born of a virgin (Matt 1:21). He spoke by His own authority (Matt 5:27-28). He claimed to be the one who would judge us (Matt 7:21-23). He demanded our full obedience (Matt 8:26). He forgave sins (Matt 9:2-3). He walked on water (Matt 14:25). No doubt people asked, "Who does he think he is? Does he really think he is God?" Suspense about Jesus was building.

Read **Matthew 16:13-18**. Jesus discerned the speculation and asked His disciples a loaded question.



- 1) Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do _____ say the Son of Man is?"
- 2) They replied, "_____ say John the Baptist; _____ say Elijah; and still _____, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." There were a lot of bizarre ideas among the people as to who Jesus really was.
- 3) Then Jesus asked, "But what about _____? Who do _____ say I am?" Jesus was really interested in what His disciples thought about Him and asked this very pointed question.
- 4) Peter answered, "You are the _____, the _____ of the living _____!" This was a bold answer. "Christ" means "Messiah" or the Anointed One Israel was waiting for to save them. And Jesus was not simply a man chosen by God but the very Son of God himself.
- 5) Peter's answer was right. Jesus not only did not correct him but said "this was not revealed to you by man but by my Father in heaven." The truth which Peter had confessed was something he understood because the Father revealed it to him.
- 6) "On this rock I will _____ my _____ and the gates of _____ will not overcome it." Peter's statement is also a foundational truth. The revelation of who and what Jesus is, is what the whole church is built upon and the thing against which hell itself cannot win. Jesus is the Christ, the Savior, precisely because He is God Himself.

In this lesson we are going to take a close look at who Jesus Christ is. We will see He has existed as God. We will see He became a man and led a sinless life. But most importantly, we will see He is both God and man at the same time, qualifying Him to be the one and only mediator between God and men (I Tim 2:5).

We have already learned that Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity. He was always existed as God (John 1:1-3). But about 2000 years ago he "became flesh" (John 1:14). What we want to show you now is that Jesus was God during His earthly ministry as a man. He did not cease to be God when He was born but was, is, and always will be truly and fully God.

Jesus used His own supernatural power as God and did not only pray to God.

Matthew 8:2-3

A man with leprosy came . . . And said, "Lord, if _____ willing, you can make me clean."

And Jesus healed him. Notice it did not depend on someone else's will, but on **Christ's will** as God.

In **John 2:1-11**, we read the story of Jesus changing water into wine. It says, "he revealed His glory," showing his own power through this miracle, and his disciples believed in him. (see also Matt 4:3-4, Matt 28:18).

Jesus was always present everywhere during and after His earthly ministry.

Matthew 18:20

Jesus claimed, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I _____ them."

Notice he spoke in the present tense. He was a man but could be present anywhere, as he promised . . .

Matthew 28:20

". . . And surely I am _____ you _____, to the very end of the age."

Even though Jesus is bodily in heaven, He is still spiritually with us wherever we are.

Jesus accepted worship from men during and after His earthly ministry.

Matthew 14:33

Then those who were in the boat _____ Him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." (See also John 9:37-38).

Matthew 28:17

When they saw Him, they _____ Him . . . (see also Luke 24:52).

Jesus knew and knows all things during and after His earthly ministry.

John 16:30

Now we can see that you know _____ things . . . This makes us believe that you came from God. (See Matt 11:27).

John 21:17

Peter told Jesus Christ, "Lord, you _____ all things . . ."

Jesus Christ was and is addressed as God.

John 20:28

Thomas said to him, "My _____ and my _____!"

Romans 9:5

. . . the Messiah, who is _____ over all, forever praised!"

Titus 2:13

. . . Our great _____ and Savior, Jesus Christ.

II Peter 1:1

. . . our _____ and Savior, Jesus Christ.

You see, Jesus was not simply a great teacher or prophet. He is much more than that. He is God Himself, really God. Your true Lord and Master.

Jesus was human as well as divine. We must realize He really was born of a virgin. To be the Son of God He needed a divine parent. To be the Son of man He needed a human parent. The virgin birth by the Holy Spirit was critical to His becoming a man while being God (Matt 1:18-22, Luke 1:34-35). After this miraculous conception, Jesus led a human life. He was born the normal way (Luke 2:6). He grew up as a child (Luke 2:40). He was tempted (Luke 4:2). He got hungry when He didn't eat (Luke 4:2). He slept (Luke 8:23). He wept (Luke 19:41). We must do away with the idea that Jesus walked around with a glow on His face or staring off into outer space. He was a "regular guy" in appearance and lifestyle.

We must also do away with any idea that Jesus was only partly human or lacked any essential characteristic of mankind. **He was a human as you are.**

Jesus had human flesh; He was not a phantom or ghost.

Luke 24:39

"... a ghost does not have _____ and _____, as you see I have." (See also I John 4:1-2 and II John 7)

John 1:14

The Word became _____ and made His dwelling among us.

Jesus had a human soul and spirit; He was not simply God in an empty body.

John 12:27

"Now my _____ is troubled." (See also Matt 26:38_

John 13:21

... Jesus was troubled in _____ . . ." (See also Matt 27:50)

Jesus was really and fully a man; He was not partly or sort of a man.

Acts 2:22

... Jesus of Nazareth was a _____ accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs. . . ." (See John 1:30, I Tim 2:5)

Acts 17:31

... He (God) will judge the world with justice by the _____ he has appointed.

Unbelievers often say it is impossible for Jesus to be God and man at the same time. They say the two are mutually exclusive and totally incompatible. But it is amazing people say such things as though they know for sure what God is like. Have they seen God? **We only know what God is like by revelation and Jesus is this revelation** (John 1:18, 14:7). So such skeptics get the cart before the horse. We do not deny God became a man because we know what God is like beforehand. **Rather we know what God is like because He became a man and showed Himself to us.**

How is it Jesus is both God and man at the same time? First, we are created in the image of God so there is an inherent compatibility between God and man. Jesus did not become something opposite of Himself but something like Himself when He became a man. Also, we must distinguish between the possession of and the use of a power or ability. Just because we know how to do algebraic equations doesn't mean we use that knowledge. Most people will tell you that algebra rarely even crosses their minds after they graduate from school. Similarly, Christ's knowledge and power need not always be used even if they were available to Him.

Jesus Christ is really God and really a man. He was not God in a body without a human soul. He was not partly human. He was as much of a man as Adam was before Adam sinned and as human as you and I are, yet without sin.

II Corinthians 5:21

God made him who had _____
to be sin for us.

Hebrews 9:14

... Christ ... offered Himself
_____ to God ...

I Peter 1:19

Christ, a lamb without _____
or _____."

I Peter 2:22

He committed _____ sin and no deceit
was found in His mouth.

I John 3:5

"... in him is _____."

This qualification — Jesus is without sin — is necessary to explore. We *must* realize sin is not essential to human nature. Adam was without sin before he and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. Sin is only essential to fallen human nature as it has been inherited from Adam. (Note Jesus did not inherit this sin because He was born of a virgin and had no human father.) So to say Jesus is without sin does not mean He is any less human.

But sinlessness is essential to divine nature and Jesus was and is divine as well as human. Sinlessness is required for Jesus to be our Savior. He could not demand our supreme allegiance and be our perfect example if He fell into sin himself. Thank God for the sinless sin-bearer!

Now it is very clear Jesus never sinned. Does this also mean he was never tempted? Absolutely not!

It is not a sin to be tempted. It is only a sin to give in to temptation (see James 1:13-15). Moreover, part of the reason Jesus became a man in the first place was to endure what we endure so He could sympathize with us in our times of need.

Hebrews 2:18

Because He Himself _____
when He was _____,
he is able to help those who are being
tempted.

Hebrews 4:15

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 was without sin.

You see, Jesus knows how you feel. He can relate to you. He was tempted every way you are (Heb 4:15). **Some people think Jesus Christ is aloof and unapproachable because he never sinned. On the contrary, exactly because He never gave in to temptation, He endured an intensity of temptation we could never imagine.** He suffered temptation all His life while we continually give in to it. It is as though He hungered without ever eating while we eat our fill every day. He knows what it's like more than you do! And when Jesus ascended into heaven this understanding turned into sympathy and compassion for His people when they suffer temptation. "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need:" (Heb 4:16).

As we have seen, Jesus Christ is at once the sinless Son of God and the tempted Son of Man. Along with what Jesus did in His death and resurrection there is nothing more central to Christianity than truths such as these. After all, that is why we call our faith Christianity. **Jesus Christ is Christianity.** He is our Savior. He is our model. He is our Lord. Anything is Christian is of Christ. "It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom form God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption" (I Cor 1:30). Thank you Jesus!

Just how central is Christ's being God and man to our faith?

- 1) If He was not God, He would have been a mere man, subject to sin and unable to die for our sins because of His own guilt.
- 2) Yet if He was not a man, He could not have died as a substitute in the place of other men. Nor, for that matter, could He have even died.
- 3) If He was not God, He could not demand our full devotion and obedience as our Lord, nor could He be very helpful when we need God's help.
- 4) Yet if He was not man, He could not have been tempted and sympathized with our weaknesses in our time of need.
- 5) If He was not both God and man, there is no way He could be the one and only mediator between God and man (I Tim 2:5).

Christ's deity and humanity are the very basis of our faith, grounds for our hope and objects of our love. In light of all this, read Paul's lofty description of who and what Jesus Christ is in Colossians 1:15-20.

Colossians 1:15

The Son is the _____ of the invisible God . . ." (See Heb 1:3)

Colossians 1:16

For in Him _____ things were _____ . (See John 1:3)

"All things were created _____ him and _____ Him."

This means you! YOU were created by Him and for Him!

Colossians 1:17

And in Him _____ things hold together."

This includes you!

Colossians 1:18

He is the _____ of the body, the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead.

He is the head, which means he is in charge, he has authority. **Jesus is risen! We have a living Lord to lead and help us.**

Colossians 1:19-20

God was pleased to have _____ His _____ dwell in Him.

²⁰ And through Him to _____ to Himself all things . . . by making peace through His blood, _____ on the cross."

Bow down and worship Jesus Christ; He is worthy! Thank Him; He has given you life itself! Love Him with all your heart; He loved you enough to die for you! Willingly follow and obey Him; He made you for this very purpose! Jesus is eternal life (John 17:3). We have Him forever and ever.

Atonement



Substitution

Memory verses: "God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood. He did this to demonstrate His justice, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished -- He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus." (Rom 3:25-26)

Atonement literally means "at-one-ment" or reconciliation. This was God's intention for sending Jesus Christ to die on the cross (Rom 3:25-26, Col 1:19-20). His aim was to do what was necessary to bring sinners back to Himself in right standing. In so doing, Jesus Christ was sacrificed in our place, bearing the penalty of death for sin, so we would not have to bear the penalty ourselves. This is what we mean by "substitution". Jesus died for us, instead of us, in our place, as a perfect substitute.

Matthew 20:28

The Son of Man came . . . to give His life as a _____ for many.

This "for" in Greek literally means "instead of" or "in place of". Jesus Christ's main reason for becoming a man was to die in our place so we could live.

I Corinthians 15:3

. . . Christ died for _____ sins according to the Scriptures.

Jesus did not die for His own sins, because He had none. He died for ours.

I Peter 2:24

He Himself _____ our _____ in his body on the cross so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness . . .

Jesus took our place, bearing the punishment of death for sin in His body, so we could live righteously for God.

I Peter 3:18

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous _____ the unrighteous, to _____ you _____ God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

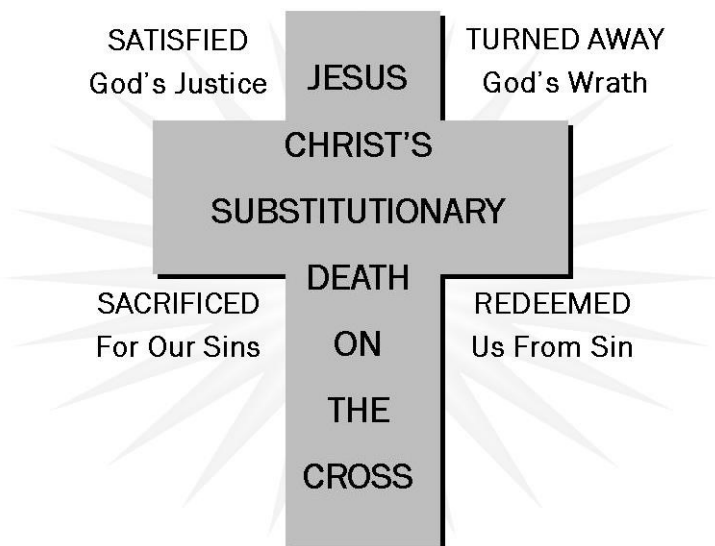
The righteous one, Jesus Christ, was substituted in the place of the wicked, you and me, so we could come to God and be forgiven.

GODWARD ATONEMENT:

There are two aspects to this substitutionary atonement. First and foremost the Lord's death satisfied God's justice and turned away God's wrath to reconcile sinners to God.

MANWARD ATONEMENT:

By virtue of this Godward atonement, Christ's death also sacrificed for our sins so we could be forgiven, and redeemed us from bondage to sin so we would not have to live in sin any longer. Christ's death had positive effects on sinful man because it satisfied God.



We have said that Christ's death first of all satisfied God's justice. What justice do we mean? Well, God had a "dilemma". On the one hand, His holiness and righteousness demanded sin be punished with death (Ezek 18:4, II Thes 1:6). On the other hand, God is love and wanted to forgive men for their sins (I John 4:16). "The Lord is righteous in all His ways and loving toward all He has made" (Ps 145:17). How could God remain fully righteous and condemn sin while also remaining loving to His creatures?

God's answer to this apparent "dilemma", was to send His Son, Jesus, to die as a substitute in man's place. Read **Romans 3:25-26** carefully. The purpose of Christ's death was to allow God to justify sinners (declare them righteous) while never compromising His own righteousness and justice.

- 1) "God presented him as a _____ of _____." God was the one who sin Jesus. The crucifixion was God's idea and His initiative.
- 2) ". . . To be received by _____ ." It is only through faith in what Jesus did that we receive any benefit from the cross (John 3:16).
- 3) "He did this to _____ His _____ ." The whole point of Jesus Christ's death on the cross was to maintain God's justice.
- 4) "He had left the sins committed _____ unpunished." This refers to the Old Testament saints who looked forward to Messiah as Savior.
- 5) "He did it to _____ His _____ at the present time." Again we see maintaining justice is the goal of the Atonement.
- 6) "So as to be _____ and the one who _____ . . ." The cross allowed God to forgive sin while still being just in His judgement of sin.
- 7) ". . . those who have _____ in _____ ." Again we see Christ's death only benefits those who have faith in Jesus, not unbelievers.

Of course, unbelievers totally reject the idea of substitution. How can it be just to execute an innocent man and on that basis acquit a guilty criminal? How can one person's crime or sin be transferred to another? Is this justice? In Christ's case it is. First, He was a voluntary substitute and was not forced into it. Second, God justifies us by uniting us to Jesus Christ through faith and by the Holy Spirit. Believers have therefore been crucified with Christ by virtue of their association with him (Rom 6:1-11). Jesus did not die as a substitute for those separate from Him but for those who are "in" Him. Third, Jesus did not take upon Himself any moral defects by His substitution but only bore the responsibility and punishment for sin. He offered Himself unblemished to God on the cross (Heb 9:14).

Think of a cosigner for a loan. If the person who took out the loan defaults, the cosigner pays. He is substituted for the loan recipient and bears his obligation. This arrangement is voluntary. It is by virtue of an association of faith and trust between them. It is only the obligation that is paid by the cosigner and he is not himself morally at fault. When he pays, the person who defaulted is released of his blame and goes away debt free because the debt has been satisfied. Justice has been done.

Propitiation

Jesus Turned Away God's Wrath

We have explained how **Christ's substitutionary death turned aside God's wrath**. Remember unbelievers are sinful by nature. They are in self-willed rebellion against the will of God and their actions are opposed to God's will. This angers God whose wrath burns against mankind, finally condemning them forever in hell if their rebellion persists to their death. "We were by nature objects of wrath" (Eph 2:3). God is angry with sinners and this wrath must be turned aside or dissipated for God and man to be reconciled. "Propitiation" means to turn aside or appease someone's anger.

Jesus turned God's wrath away from us by satisfying God's justice. We say Romans 3:25-26 speaks of this satisfaction. But it also speaks of turning away God's wrath. It says, "God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement." But this is an inaccurate translation. While it is true Christ's death was a sacrifice and an atonement, this is not what the Greek in Romans 3:25 really means. It means "pro-pitiation" or "turned away God's wrath." Jesus satisfied God's justice and thus turned His wrath from us.

John 3:36

. . . Whoever rejects the Son . . . God's _____ remains on him.

It is only through faith in Jesus Christ that we are spared from God's wrath. God's wrath rests upon all unbelievers

Romans 5:9

"Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be _____ from God's _____ through Him!"

His blood (Christ's death) removed God's anger from us.

I Thessalonians 1:10

. . . Jesus, who _____ us from the coming _____.

I John 2:2

He is the _____
_____ for our sins . . .

I John 4:10

God . . . loved us and sent His Son as an _____
_____ for our sins."

Like Romans 3:25, these should be translated "He is the propitiation for our sins turning aside God's wrath."

Let's return to our illustration about the loan co-signer. Suppose the borrower doesn't make his payments. A month passes by and he gets a late notice in the mail. Two or three months pass and the banker hires a bill collector to get the money. Then he threatens to foreclose on the house or car purchased with the loan. The banker's irritation with the borrower is building, but of course the borrower cannot pay. The banker's anger grows and the borrower's despair multiples. The borrower's entire financial situation is about to collapse into bankruptcy when someone else steps in to pay the debt. Immediately the borrower's obligations are satisfied and the banker's anger subsides. This is what Christ's death did for our sins.

Most people are unwilling to depend on Jesus. They want to go their own way and trust in God's mercy apart from Christ. But the mere mercy of God is not sufficient for forgiveness. In fact, those who rely only on God's mercy actually depend on His justice since they believe it would be wrong for God to eternally condemn them for sin. Yet if we find ourselves depending on God's justice apart from the work of Jesus Christ, woe to us! For we are sinners in open and willful revolt against a holy and righteous God. If we face His judgement in our terms then we are justly assured the full measure of His wrath and guaranteed our rightful place in hell.

So much for the Godward effects of the Atonement. There is also a manward side of it. That is, what Jesus Christ did on the cross has an impact on the lives of believers as well as on God's attitude toward us.

One thing Christ's death did was to serve as a sacrifice for our sins. **His substitutionary death "cleared our slate" and opened the way for us to be forgiven for every actual sin we have ever or will ever commit.**

John 1:29

John saw Jesus . . . And said, "Look, the Lamb of God who _____
_____ the _____ of the world."

In Christ, we are no longer guilty of our sins.

Acts 3:19

Repent then, and turn to God, so that your _____ may be _____
_____ . . ."

Our sins are totally done away with by God.

I Corinthians 15:3

. . . Christ died for _____
according to the Scriptures."

It is specifically Christ's death which deals with our sins.

Hebrews 1:3

He (Christ) had provided
_____ for _____ . . .

His death purged the guilt of all sins from believers.

Hebrews 9:26

. . . he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with _____ by the sacrifice of Himself.

I John 1:7

. . . And the blood of Jesus, His Son,
_____ us from all sin."

Again we see His blood or death did away with our sins.

It wouldn't do much good for Jesus to satisfy God's justice with respect to sin if this did not also lead to our forgiveness would it? As we place our faith in Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross God's justice is satisfied (Rom 3:26), God's wrath is turned away from us (Rom 3:25), and we are totally forgiven for every sin we have committed! Praise God He has chosen to show us grace and clear us so completely.

Now we must be clear – **what we are talking about here is forgiveness for our sins, not any change in our sinful nature.** We are showing that Christ's death means people who believe in Jesus are forgiven of every evil action they have done. But what about the fact that we are sinful? What about our self-willed nature? Does Christ's death deal with the root problem of mankind as well as its fruit?

To understand the difference between these two problems, think about a convicted criminal. Let's say a man robs a bank and is sentenced to twenty years in prison. At the end of his jail term he is released because his "debt to society" has been satisfied. In effect he has been forgiven for this particular bank robbery. But has his heart been changed? Will he lead the life of a law abiding citizen? In most cases he will not. Prison satisfies the penalty for a crime but often hardens criminals.

So also God's forgiveness of sins does not necessarily change or sinful natures in itself. But do not despair. God has not forgotten you or left anything undone. **Jesus Christ's substitutionary death provided for the sins we committed, and also redeemed us from the ongoing power of sin.**

Redemption

Jesus Freed us From Bondage to Sin

"Redemption" and "ransom" mean to buy someone back out of captivity or slavery. Christ's redemption (Rom 3:24) set us free from the power of sin (Rom 6:6-7). When we have faith in the death of Christ we are not only forgiven of particular sins but also released from the bondage to sin. We do not have to sin any longer! Sin no longer rules us.

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have _____ through His blood, the _____ of sins . . .

The Greek word used here for "forgiveness" has to do with the "freedom" and "release" of prisoners as in Luke 4:18.

Hebrews 9:15

. . . he has died as a _____ to set them _____ from the sins committed under the first covenant.

You see, we are not only forgiven of sins but set free from their control as well!

I should clarify the nature of this "ransom." Some people assume Christ's death was a ransom to Satan. But this is not so. In the context of Heb 9:15 it is very clear Christ offered Himself to God (Heb 9:14). No mention is made of Satan here or anywhere else ransom is mentioned. The term "ransom" only indicates the sacrifice was costly, not that it was a satanic payoff. It is true the devil has power over unbelievers (Acts 10:38, Heb 2:14). But the devil has no rightful ownership of them.

Read **Titus 2:11-14** and consider what it says about redemption in verse 14:

1) "Who _____ himself _____ us." This refers to Christ's substitution.

2) "To _____ us from _____ wickedness." Part of what Jesus Christ's death accomplished was to release believers entirely from wickedness.

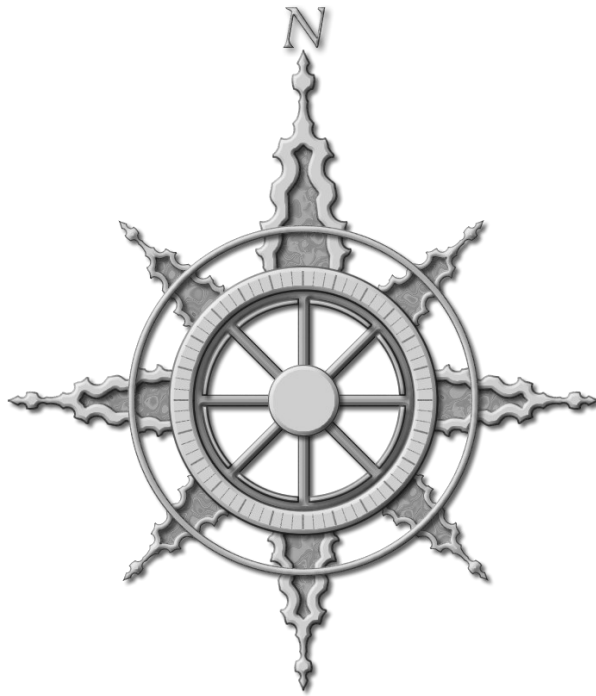
3) "And to _____ for Himself a people that are His _____." Christ's death bought us out of slavery to sin. But we must realize this also means we were bought and are now His property. "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body" (I Cor 6:19-20). Freedom from sin means obedience to Christ.

4) "_____ to do what is good." As we are redeemed from sin we begin a new life where we can actually do good deeds because we want to, not because we have to. God makes us willing to do His will (Php 2:13).

There you have it. Jesus died in your place to satisfy God's justice, turn God's wrath away from you, forgive your sins, and even to set you free from slavery to sin . . . if you believe. Part of the beauty of God's gift in the Atonement is so much is wrapped up in it! The death and resurrection of Jesus constitute a finished work providing all you need for salvation. He has left nothing undone. Nothing stands in your way.

What are you going to do with it? If you are not a Christian, I urge you to come to Christ in faith and repentance to receive eternal life. If you have already trusted in Jesus as your Savior, then you must renounce any remaining sinful ways forever and walk in obedience to Him. **Christ has delivered you from death and sin and claims you as His**, all His, and only devotion and will be pleased with nothing less.

The Resurrection



Fundamental

Christ's Resurrection is as Vital as His Death

Memory verses: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men." (I Cor 15:17-19)

Which is more important: Christ's death or His resurrection? If you answer "His death," you would be mistaken because a dead Savior does us no good unless He is alive to help us. If you answer "His resurrection," you would be mistaken because a risen Lord does us no good unless He did something about our sins. **You see, Christ's death and resurrection are equally important. Both are essential for our salvation. You cannot have one without the other.**

Matthew 16:21

. . . Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He _____ . . . be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

The death and resurrection of Christ were both equally necessary.

Hebrews 13:20

(God). . . through the _____ of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus.

The resurrection could not have happened without Christ shedding blood first.

Acts 2:24

. . . it was _____ for death to keep its hold on Him.

Christ could not have died without being raised from the dead since, as God, He is the master of both life and death.

I Corinthians 15:3-4

That Christ _____ for our sins . . . that He was _____ on the third day according to the Scriptures.

His death and resurrection together are what we believe in to be saved.

Christ's death and resurrection are two aspects of one redemptive event; two sides of the same coin. Read I Cor 15:15-19. Look at what Paul says is at stake if we deny Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

I Corinthians 15:15

We are then found to be _____ witnesses.

If the apostles cannot be trusted in what they say about Jesus being raised, then the whole Bible is brought into question.

I Corinthians 15:17

If Christ has not been raised, your faith is _____. You are still in your _____.

Our faith rests in the gospel of Christ's death and resurrection. If He was not raised, our faith is in nothing. If we can only be saved by faith and our faith is misplaced, then we are not saved.

I Corinthians 15:18

Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are _____.

If Jesus was not raised from the dead, we cannot expect anyone else to be raised including our deceased loved ones.

I Corinthians 15:19

If _____ for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be _____.

If our faith and hope rest on the risen Christ, and if Christ was not really raised, then we are foolish and our lives are meaningless.

What was the nature of Jesus Christ's resurrection? Paul wrote the body "is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor 15:44). The "natural body" before the resurrection is perishable and subject to death. After resurrection, Paul calls it a "spiritual body". Since it is a "spiritual body" and not simply a "spirit" it is clear the body is raised physically. Before and after the resurrection it is still a body that can be seen and touched. But there is also a supernatural change to the body as indicated by the word "spiritual". So resurrection involves the reviewed life of the body as well as a supernatural change to that body.

Let's take a closer look at what the Bible teaches about Jesus Christ's bodily resurrection.

Mark 16:6

. . . He has risen! He is _____.

His tomb was empty so it was His body that rose from the dead (See also Matt 28:6).

Luke 24:39

". . . Look at my _____ and my _____ . It is I Myself!
_____ Me and see. A ghost does not have _____ and _____, as you see I have."

Jesus showed His scars to His disciples proving it was the same body (John 20:27). The risen Jesus **could be touched** by His disciples (See also John 20:17). Jesus denied being a phantom and had bodily parts.

Luke 24:42-43

. . . ⁴³ and he took it (the fish) and _____ in their presence.

The risen Jesus could consume real food (See also Acts 1:4).

Acts 2:31

. . . Nor did His body see

_____."

Christ's body did not decompose in His tomb because His body was raised to life.

I Cor 15:5

Jesus Christ "appeared to Peter, and then to the _____."

Several people saw Him at one time. These were witnesses of a factual occurrence.

I Corinthians 15:6

After that He appeared to more than _____ brothers and sisters at the same time.

His appearances were not visions or hallucinations since many people saw Him simultaneously.

Clearly the resurrection meant that Christ came to life in His body.

Sometimes Jesus was not immediately recognized by His disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:16, John 21:4). But this does not mean He looked like a different person or appeared as a spirit. In Luke 24:16 the two disciples were "kept from recognizing Him." In John 21:4 Jesus was not recognized at first because it was dark outside and He was far away from the disciples who were in the boat.

Likewise, the fact that Jesus could disappear (Luke 24:31) and could enter locked rooms (John 20:19) after His resurrection does not necessarily mean He was only a spirit. This can be attributed to supernatural changes to His body as a result of His resurrection rather than to a lack of a body.

Changed

Christ Was Raised from the Dead Imperishable

We said resurrection means the renewed life of a body. A person's soul survives death and is reunited with its body at resurrection. We have also said resurrection means a transformation of the body. Christ's existence after His resurrection was not the same as it was before. He was raised from the dead imperishable and could no longer die.

Jesus was not confined by physical barriers after His resurrection.

John 20:19

. . . with the _____
_____ for fear of the Jewish
leaders, Jesus _____ and stood
among them and said, 'Peace be with
you!'"

As God, Jesus was spiritually unlimited even before His resurrection (Matt 18:20). But afterwards, even His body was not confined by material obstacles (see also Luke 24:31).

Jesus was openly disclosed as God by His resurrection.

Romans 1:4

And who through the Spirit of holiness was _____ the Son of God in power His resurrection from the dead. . .

Jesus was always really God (John 1:1). Although His resurrection did not make Him God, it did display and verify His deity to the world.

Jesus could no longer die after His resurrection.

Romans 6:9

For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He _____ die again; death no longer has _____ over Him."

Jesus subdued death itself by His resurrection and was raised to an imperishable state never threatened by death.

Jesus subdued death itself by His resurrection.

Romans 14:9

For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that He might be the _____ of _____ the dead and the living.

The risen Jesus Christ is truly Lord of all (Matt 28:18). He mastered both life and death by His resurrection.

Jesus proved His authority by His resurrection.

John 2:18

What _____ sign can you show us to prove your _____ to do all this?

On several occasions Pharisees challenged Christ by asking Him to prove His authority with a miraculous sign (Matt 12:38-40, 16:1-6). In each case Jesus predicted His resurrection as proof enough.

John 2:19

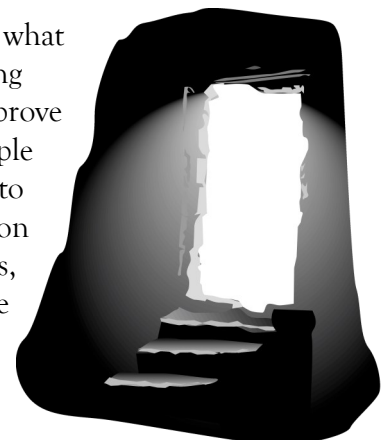
Jesus answered them, " _____ this _____, and I will _____ it again in three days."

The people misunderstood Jesus to mean the Jewish temple building (John 2:20).

John 2:21

But the temple He had spoken about was _____."

His resurrection was what Jesus was really talking about as the sign to prove His authority. If people were not willing to accept His resurrection as proof of who He is, then they would have rejected any other miracles by Jesus as well.



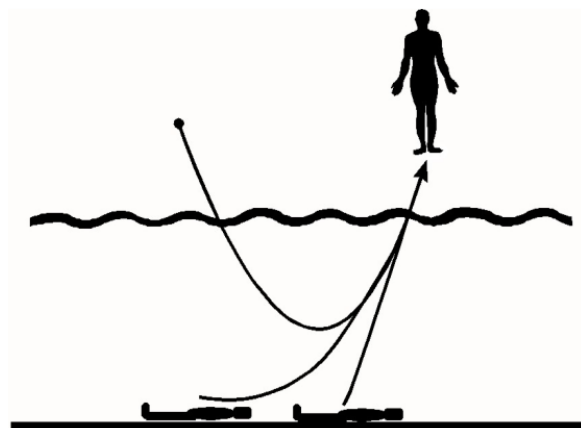
Jesus is called the "first fruits" of the dead (I Cor 15:20, 23). What is meant by this? In the Old Testament, first fruits were the initial harvest of crops from the land in spring. This harvest was first in the sense that it preceded the rest of the crop in the fall. But first fruits were also viewed as an assurance from God of the fall's crop. Therefore, to say Jesus is the first fruits of the resurrection means **His resurrection is first and precedes everyone else's. It also means there is a connection between Christ's resurrection and ours.**

If Christ's was the first resurrection, than what about people who were miraculously raised from the dead before Christ's resurrection (II Kings 4:34-35, Matt 8:23-26, Luke 7:14-15)? All these were cases of someone **temporarily** coming back to life. They were still subject to physical death and died at the end of a normal life span. But as we have already seen, Jesus was raised **permanently**. He was raised **imperishable**. So He was the first fruits of permanent resurrection to a glorified life. These others were raised back into a worldly existence only to die again.

What about the connection between Christ's resurrection and ours implied by calling His the first fruits of the dead? To answer this we must get a little ahead of ourselves and see what it means to be "in: Christ. When a person is born again he or she receives the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:9). "And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you" (Rom 8:11). The Bible also speaks of the church as being like a body (I Cor 12:27) and Jesus being the head (Col 1:18). Have you ever seen a head go someplace were the body didn't follow? Not if the two are alive and joined together.

Suppose several people drown at the bottom of a lake after their boat sinks. To bring them up a diver must first go under the water himself to attach ropes to the victims. As he comes out of the water, the rope will eventually pull the victims out as well. The raising of the victims depends directly on their being connected to someone who enters their predicament and then rises above it.

Now Christ offered Himself on the cross through the Spirit (Heb 9:14) and was raised by the Spirit (I Pet 3:18). As we too are united with Him by the Holy Spirit we are raised up, first spiritually and then bodily, because of His resurrection. "If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection" (Rom 6:5). You may say you do not see how you are united with Jesus. But you cannot see the Holy Spirit, and He is a stronger bond to Christ than any rope or merely physical connection. And He does not simply recover dead bodies, He gives them new life by the Holy Spirit!



Results

Christ Accomplished Three Things When He Was Raised

There are three effects of the resurrection on believers. Generally, Christians only think about the third effect, hope for eternal life. But this hope is based upon two even more important effects: our salvation and our resurrection being caused by, or included in the resurrection of Jesus.

Christ's resurrection secured the salvation of believers:

Paul wrote, "He was delivered over death for our sins and was raised to life for our **justification**" (Rom 4:25). This shows our salvation directly depends on Christ's resurrection. Read Ephesians 2:1-6.

Ephesians 2:1

As for you, you were _____ in your transgressions and sins.

We were spiritually dead before our salvation.

Ephesians 2:4-5

. . . God who is rich in mercy, made us _____ with Christ.

This is the spiritual life we received when we were saved.

Ephesians 2:6

And God raised us up _____ Christ and seated us _____ Him in the heavenly realms _____ Christ Jesus.

Our spiritual life or salvation depends on being in Christ and therefore being raised along with Christ (compare with Col 1:10-11).

Christ's resurrection secured the resurrection of believers:

Paul also wrote, "We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him" (I Thes 4:14). Here we see the future, bodily resurrection of those in Christ is a direct result of Christ's resurrection. Read I Cor 15:20-23.

I Corinthians 15:20

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the _____ of those who have fallen asleep."

He is first of many more.

I Corinthians 15:21

For since death came through a _____, the resurrection of the dead also comes through a _____.

Our resurrection as Christians will happen only because Jesus Christ was raised.

I Corinthians 15:22

For as _____ Adam all die, so _____ Christ all will be made alive.

Everyone "in" Adam is condemned to death for sin. Everyone (and only those) "in Christ will be made alive referring to the resurrection of the just to eternal life.

I Corinthians 15:23

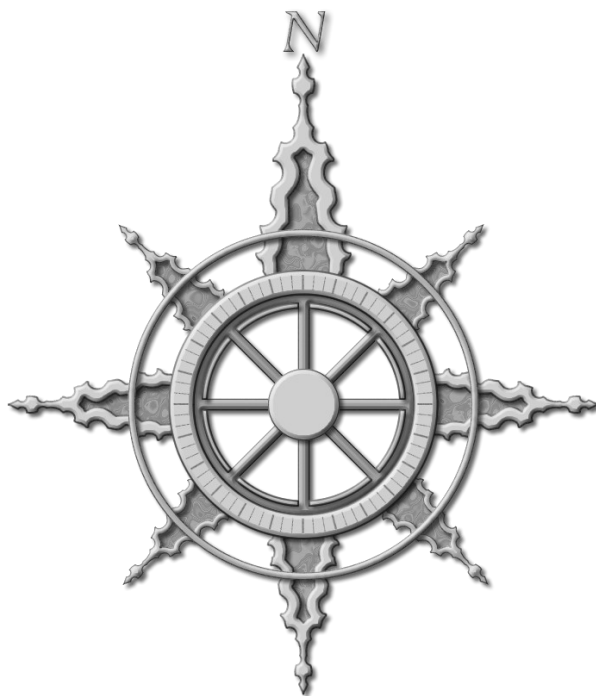
But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when He comes, those who _____ to Him.

Only those who **belong** to the risen Lord will be raised to eternal life. Do you belong to Him?

Christ's resurrection gives us hope for eternal life:

Peter wrote, "He has given us **new** life into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet 1:3). So Christ's resurrection gives us hope beyond the grave. But this is only a valid hope if we are **born again** and this, in turn, depends on our being **in Christ** who was raised. The fact that Christ was raised from the dead only gives us hope for eternal life because it also did something to save us from death.

Faith & Repentance



Memory verses: "By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (I Cor 15:2-4)

The Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, became a man. He died on a cross in our place and was raised from the dead on the third day. Together His death and resurrection make a finished work of redemption to save us. But for us to benefit from this redemptive work we must believe in it. **Christ's death is sufficient for anyone's forgiveness, but is effective and actually brings God's forgiveness only to those who believe.**

John 3:16

. . . That whoever _____ in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Eternal life is only promised to believers.

John 3:18

Whoever _____ in Him is not condemned, but whoever does _____ believe stands condemned already.

Those who do not believe in Jesus are definitely excluded from eternal life.

John 3:36

Whoever _____ in the Son has eternal life, but whoever _____ the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on them.

Romans 3:22

This righteousness is given through _____ in Jesus Christ to all who _____.

Faith is specifically the means through which we are declared righteous by God.

Romans 3:25

God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement through the shedding of His blood—to be received by _____.

Faith is specifically the means by which we benefit from Christ's atoning death on the cross.

Romans 3:26

He did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have _____ in Jesus.

Faith is specifically the **qualification** people need in order to be justified by God.

These examples could be multiplied many times over. The Bible is clear that through faith and only through faith can a man profit from the cross.

Suppose a criminal is locked up in a jail cell and the prison catches on fire. He is bound within the bars of his cell and cannot escape on his own. He is also doomed to burn to death if he does not escape. Along comes the jailer who unlocks the cell door and is himself overcome by the smoke. Now did the jailer do anything decisive to save the criminal by laying down his own life? Of course he did. He unlocked the door. But will the criminal be spared if he does not himself walk through the opened cell door to safety? Of course not. So also Christ decisively died for our sins so we could be saved provided we receive what He did by faith.

Actually, this analogy is incomplete. We should also assume the prisoner is blind and unaware of both his fiery predicament and the way of escape. If the jailer also gave sight (faith) to the blind prisoner so he perceived his peril and the open door we would be closer to the truth.

Faith is widely misunderstood. Some people think faith is an opinion. Some think faith is blind to the facts. Some think faith is emotional rather than intellectual. All of these concepts are unbiblical. Faith is certainty that a testimony is true. (Note: faith and belief are the same.)

Faith is absolutely certain. If you hold something to be an opinion or only probably true, then it is not faith. If it's faith, we know it.

Mark 11:23

. . . and does _____ doubt in their heart but believes . . .

If one has true faith, there is no room at all for any uncertainty.

Heb 11:1

Now faith is being _____ of what we hope for and _____ of what we do not see.

Faith is confidence in a known fact.

Faith is knowledge of truths. If something is false and you hold it to be true with confidence, this is not faith but foolishness. An American man who is convinced he is the Queen of England is insane not faithful.

I Timothy 4:3

. . . those who _____ and who know the _____.

Belief involves knowledge not emotion and rests on truths not lies.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must _____ that he _____ and that he rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

Here are examples of two truths we must believe to please God.

1) **Faith is knowledge by testimony.** Faith rests in truths revealed to us by God because they are unattainable by sight or reason used independent of God's revelation. It is not that the things we believe contradict what we see or are unreasonable. It is just that what we believe cannot be seen or concluded from what we see.

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is confidence in what we _____ for and assurance about what we do not _____.

II Corinthians 5:7

We live by faith, not by _____.

Seeing is not believing.

I Corinthians 2:9-10

What no eye has _____, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived . . . ¹⁰ these are the things God has _____ to us by His Spirit

2) **Faith is given to us by God.** If we know something to be true with certainty even though we cannot see it or deduce it, then that kind of assurance must be a gift of God.

I Corinthians 12:8-9

To one there is _____ through the _____ . . . faith.

I Timothy 1:14

The grace of our Lord was _____ on me abundantly, along with the _____ and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Faith is clearly a gift of God (see I Pet 1:21, II Pet 1:1).

All men have faith. We often accept the testimony of friends and experts without seeing the thing ourselves. Most men even have religious faith. They believe God exists and their soul survives death. But few men have saving faith. So what truths must we believe to be saved?

Is saving faith "faith in faith?" No. Some people think it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you believe. Faith can not be in itself any more than lightning can strike itself. Lightning must strike an object. **Faith is in truth.**

Is saving faith stronger than common faith? No. Jesus said "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move" (Mat 17:20) **the effectiveness of faith does not lie in the strength of the faith but in the truth believed.**

Saving faith is in the three great truths of the gospel. We believe Jesus did something decisive about our sin. Read I Corinthians 15:1-5.

I Corinthians 15:2

By this gospel _____ are _____ . . . Otherwise, you have believed in _____ .

Faith in these truths together is **enough** for salvation. Nothing else is needed. These truths are each **necessary** for salvation. Without them we are lost.

I Corinthians 15:3

That _____ died for our _____...

Saving faith is not just anyone who claims to be a savior, but in Jesus who is both God and man. We must believe Christ did something by his death to justify God's forgiveness of sins.

I Corinthians 15:4

. . . that He was _____ on the third day . . .

We must believe Christ is alive today and lord of all to trust in Him.

You see, faith is not just in God (Jas 2:19) or any "Christ" (II Cor 11:14), but in the **biblical** Christ. A jailer once asked how to be saved,

Acts 16:31

(Paul answered), " _____ the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved . . ."

Did he leave it without any explanation?
– No!

Acts 16:32

Then they _____ the _____ of the _____ to Him.

We must tell people things about Jesus from the Bible before they can believe in the real Jesus as their savior.

It is true that ultimately **we have faith in Jesus Christ himself** (John 3:16). But to have faith in someone we must first believe certain things about him are true (Heb 11:6). For example I would not trust a doctor to perform heart surgery on me unless I believe he knows what is wrong, is honest in his prognosis and is skillful in surgical ability. I must believe all three of these things before I allow him to cut into my chest. Similarly, we must know Christ is both God and man, has died for our sins and rose from the dead before we can truly entrust our hearts to him as Lord of our lives. Believing any thing less than this is useless for our salvation, as Paul says in I Corinthians 15:2

Repentance is . . .

What Repentance Is and Where It Is From

"Unless you repent, you too will perish" (Luke 13:3). Wait a minute! So far we have only been talking about faith. Indeed the Bible says we are saved by faith alone apart from good works (Rom 3:28, Eph 2:8-9). Than how can it be we must repent? Isn't repentance a good work? No, it is not. Isn't repentance something extra beyond mere faith? Not at all.

Faith and repentance are really two aspects of the same thing when they are properly understood. On one hand we have seen that faith is being of the truth. So **to come to faith is to change your mind about something being true.** On the other hand the Greek word for repentance literally means a "change your mind". We usually speak of repenting from sin, but any change of mind is a form of repentance. Now if we come to faith, then we have already repented of something. Look at these examples where faith and repentance went hand-in-hand with each other.

Matthew 21:32

. . . even after you saw this, you did not _____ and _____ Him.

Mark 1:15

. . . _____ and believe the good news!

Acts 20:21

I have declared . . . that they must turn to God in _____ and have _____ in our Lord Jesus."

You cannot really turn God in repentance without faith in Jesus (John 14:6), nor can you have faith in Jesus without repenting and turning to God. The two go hand in hand. True faith and repentance are so intertwined that they cannot be separated. Both are gracious gifts of God. Both lead directly to salvation. Both spontaneously produce good deeds.

- FAITH -

"The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the **faith** and love that are in Christ Jesus." (I Tim 1:14)

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through **faith**." (Eph 2:8)

"I will show you my **faith** by my deeds." (James 2:18)

see also I Thess 1:3

- REPENTANCE -

"Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth. (II Tim 2:25)

"Godly sorrow brings **repentance** that leads to salvation . . ." (II Cor 7:10)

"They should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their **repentance** by their deeds." (Acts 26:20)

To illustrate the connection between faith, repentance and good works, let's consider the stock market. Suppose you miraculously come into the possession of a newspaper dated one month from today. From it you learn with certainty (true belief) that a particular stock will triple in value during this time. If you are sure this will be the case,

then you cannot possibly fail to decide to invest any savings you have in the stock and then follow through by making the actual investment. So also authentic faith in Jesus Christ brings a decision to change our mind about our behavior (repentance) which leads us to follow through with good works.

Repentance Of . . .

What We Must Repent Of To Be Saved

If we must repent or perish, what must we repent of? That is, what must we change our mind about? Before we answer this question, we must realize we change our mind from one thing and to another. Paul says we must "put off" certain sins by "putting on" certain good works. You cannot simply turn

away from an evil act. You must either replace it with something good or you will slip back into sin. **Repentance is always a change of mind from one thing to another.** Read Ephesians 4:25-31. Both spontaneously produce good deeds.

<u>PUT OFF</u>	<u>PUT ON</u>
Eph 4:25 _____	Eph 4:25 _____
Eph 4:2 _____	Eph 4:2 _____
Eph 4:29 _____	Eph 4:29 _____
Eph 4:31 _____	Eph 4:31 _____

Now the repentance that brings salvation is not turning away from this or that particular sin although this will certainly occur. True repentance is changing our minds about who is in charge. **It is turning away from our own will and to the will of God totally.** Remember that the root problem of sin is we are self-willed. God is not impressed when we renounce a sin here and there while remaining in fundamental rebellion against His will.

Acts 3:19

Peter preached, "Repent, then, and _____ to _____ . . ."

Acts 20:21

. . . they must _____ to _____ in repentance."

Acts 26:20

. . . I preached that they should repent and _____ to _____ . . .

We have seen faith is certainty of the truth and saving faith is faith in the gospel. We have also seen repentance is not a work independent of faith but a change of mind from our will to God's will caused by faith. But many people say they have faith and may even think they have faith without really being saved. How can you know for sure you have genuine faith? The answer is to examine yourself in three ways.

I John 5:13

"I write these things to you who believe . . . so that you may _____ that you have eternal life."

1) Saving faith will give you full assurance of your salvation. You will not doubt it.

Acts 20:21

I have declared . . . that they must turn to God in repentance and have _____ in our Lord Jesus."

2) Saving faith will cause you to **want** to seek God's will.

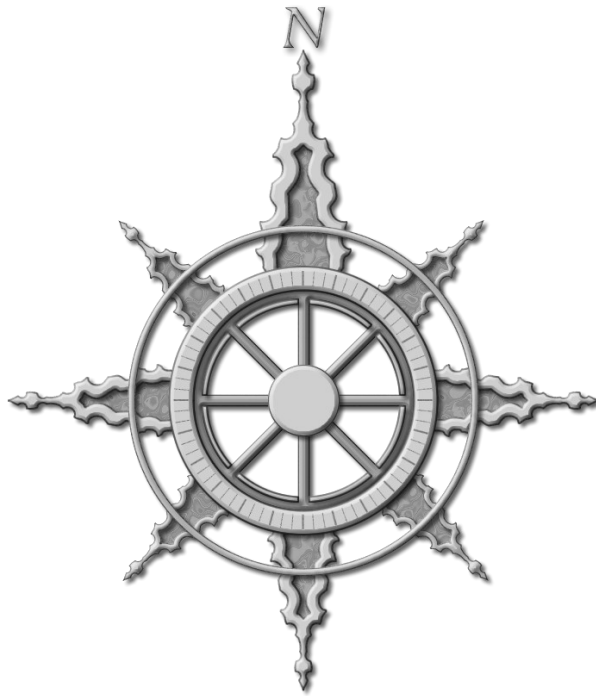
I Thessalonians 1:3

We continually remember . . . your _____ produced by faith.

3) Saving faith will always result in good works. (Eph 2:8-10)

Examine yourself. Do you genuinely believe the gospel (I Cor 15:1-5)? If you do, you are already saved from hell, redeemed from the power of sin, and have found peace with your God (Rom 5:1). If you do not have such faith, ask the Lord to "help me overcome my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). He will.

Salvation



Memory verses: "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." (Rom 3:22-24)

If you have faith and repentance, you have received salvation. But what do we mean by "salvation"? Fundamentally, salvation is being "in Christ" (II Tim 2:10). We become one with Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit unites us to and in Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form _____

We were plunged into or merged with the body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:27

Now you are the _____ of _____ . . .

We are now "in" Him.

Every spiritual blessing is had only "in Christ."

Ephesians 1:3

Praise be to God . . . Who has blessed us . . . with _____ spiritual blessing in Christ.

We have nothing without Him.

Ephesians 1:4

For he chose us in Him. . . to be _____ and _____ in His sight.

We are holy (sanctified) and blameless (justified).

Ephesians 1:5

He predestined us for _____ to _____ through Jesus Christ . . .

We are now related to the Father as sons.

Ephesians 1:6

. . . His glorious _____, which He has freely given us in the One He loves.

We have the grace (unmerited favor) of God.

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the _____ of sins.

We are freed from sin and forgiven.

You see, there are many aspects to salvation. But all of them depend on our being united with Christ through the Holy Spirit. We will take a closer look at four of the most prominent aspects of this salvation to see just how rich the Lord's grace is towards us, His people.

Romans 6:11

. . . count yourselves dead to sin but _____ to _____ in Christ Jesus.

As Christians, we have received new life and are new creations (II Cor 5:17) because we are in Christ.

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now _____ for those who are in Christ Jesus.

We are not condemned, but rather are justified before God (Rom 3:24) because we are in Christ.

I Corinthians 1:2

. . .to those _____ in Christ Jesus and _____ to be his holy people.

We are sanctified (set apart for God) and become holy because we are in Christ who is holiness (I Cor 1:30).

I Thessalonians 4:16

. . . And the _____ in Christ will _____ first.

Some day we will be raised from the dead and glorified by God because we are in Christ (I Cor 15:22).

An unbeliever is in bondage to sin and therefore the Bible pictures him as unable to grasp the things of the Holy Spirit, as blind to the truth of the gospel, and as spiritually dead.

I Corinthians 2:14

The person without the Spirit does not _____ the things that come from the Spirit of God, but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned _____ through the Spirit.

II Corinthians 4:4

The god of this age (the devil) has _____ the minds of unbelievers, so that they _____ see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:1

As for you, you were _____ in your transgressions and sins.

As unbelievers, we just didn't "see it" when we heard the gospel. The reason for this is we really were **dead** in sin before we got saved. We were oblivious to the truth because of our preoccupation with sin (doing our own thing).

Think about how powerfully attention to one thing blinds us to another. There is a woman I know who gets so engrossed while working on her computer that one of her children crawled underneath her desk and tied her shoelaces together and she was totally unaware of it! Is it any wonder that a person committed to his own will and conditioned by the ways of the world **cannot** hear the gospel and **cannot** see the truth?

God's solution to our blindness is to give us new birth. The Spirit makes us alive (Eph 2:4-5) as new creations (II Cor 5:17) so we can see what could not be seen before. Jesus explained being born again in John 3:1-8.

John 3:3

. . . no one can _____ the kingdom of God unless he is born again.

The kingdom of God is doing His will (Mat 6:10). We cannot perceive or do His will unless we are born again.

John 3:5

No one can _____ the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and of the Spirit.

We simply cannot turn away from our self-will to the will of God without being born again.

John 3:6

Flesh gives birth to flesh but the _____ gives _____ to spirit.

We were spiritually dead (Eph 2:1) and only the Holy Spirit can make our spirits alive through new birth.

John 3:8

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 _____ of the _____."

By the way, some people think new birth is always a dynamic and emotional conversion experience. But the "wind" of the Holy Spirit may be a "breeze" or a "tornado". And emotional experiences can be generated without the Holy Spirit. **So the sign of new birth is not necessarily a radical or emotional experience. But it is demonstrated through faith and repentance. Its evidence is that we seek God's will above our own.**

The Greek words for righteousness and justification are related. Now "righteousness" can either mean we do right or our relationship to God is right. None of us do right apart from Christ, so "justification" refers to our right standing with God. Note also —justification is opposite to condemnation: "It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns?" (Rom 8:33-34) Justifying someone does not make him righteous any more than condemning a criminal makes him guilty. Both are verdicts based on what the person already is. Therefore, justification does not make us righteous or change our nature. Instead, it is God's declaration that we are right with Him. New birth changes us inwardly; justification changes our status with God in light of our new birth. Now with these thoughts in mind, read Romans 3:20-31 and consider what Paul the apostle had to say about our justification

Romans 3:20

... through the law we become _____ of sin.

The Greek word used here does not simply mean the knowledge that we have sinned, but the **full** knowledge of sin. Only by revelation from God do we see the full extent and consequences of our sin. The purpose of the Old Testament is to show us how sinful we really are (Rom 7:7) so we will turn to and trust Jesus Christ (Gal 3:24).

Romans 3:21

... _____ from the law the righteousness of God has been made known ...

Our righteousness is of God. It is His righteousness He gives us! Therefore we cannot surpass God's righteousness (see Rom 3:28, Eph 2:8-10).

Romans 3:22

This righteousness is given _____ faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

Faith is the means of our salvation not its basis. We are not saved by faith but by Jesus Christ through faith. A patient is saved by a doctor through surgery, not by surgery without a doctor. A drowning victim is saved by a lifeguard through mouth-to-mouth resuscitation not by resuscitation alone.

Romans 3:22

... There is no _____ between Jew and Gentile.

This refers back to Paul's earlier statements that "Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin" (Rom 3:9). Salvation of the Old Testament Jew was through faith just as much as it is for us (Gen 15:6, Hab 2:4, Rom 4:3, Heb 4:2).

Romans 3:23

For _____ have _____ and fall short of the glory of God.

The Jew and Gentile, indeed everyone, is in the same boat before God.

Romans 3:24

And all are justified _____ by His _____.

We are declared righteous in God's sight because and only because of His grace (undeserved favor) towards us. It is a free gift (Rom 6:23).

Romans 3:24

... through the _____ that came by Christ Jesus.

God's gift of justification is based on the atoning work of Christ alone (Rom 3:25), not on anything we do (Rom 3:28). Only on these terms does God remain just while justifying sinners (Rom 3:26).

Again this depends on our being in Jesus Christ (Rom 5:12-21).

New birth changes our perception of the truth and our perspective on sin. Justification changes our status with God by declaring us righteous. A third aspect of salvation is sanctification which changes our behavior. While new birth and justification are single events at the beginning of our Christian lives, sanctification is a lifelong process for Christians.

The words "sanctified" and "holy" (both the same Greek word) mean to be "set apart." In one sense we are already sanctified (I Cor 1:2) and are already holy (Heb 10:10) because through salvation we have been set apart as God's possession. And yet we are being sanctified in the sense that we are being changed to be more like Jesus. We are in the process of being sanctified: "through and through" by God (I Thes 5:23) and "being made holy" (Heb 10:14) because as Christians we are predestined to be "conformed to the likeness of His Son" (Rom 8:29). Sanctification is like becoming a soldier. When a man "signs up" with the army he is already "set apart" as a soldier even if he looks, thinks and acts like a civilian. But through a process of basic training, he begins to think and act like a warrior.

I Peter 1:2

. . . Through the _____
work of the Spirit, to be
_____.

The Holy Spirit is the one who makes us holy
(Rom 15:16, I Cor 6:11, II Thes 2:13).

I Peter 1:14

. . . do not conform to the evil
_____ you had . . .

Holiness has as much to do with our motives as our actions. Many people do good things like giving, praying and fasting, but for the wrong reasons (Mat 6:2, 5, 16). Holiness is not a list of dos and don'ts. **Holiness is doing the right things for the right reasons;** it is obeying God to glorify God.

I Peter 1:15

But just as he who called you is holy, so be _____ in all you do.

The ultimate goal of sanctification is that we would be just as holy as the Lord Jesus Christ is (compare Mat 5:48, I John 3:1-3).

Notice we are to be holy in what we do, not do holy things. Again, holiness is doing the right things for the right reason. And we are to do everything for the right reason of glorifying God.

I Peter 1:16

For as it is written, "Be holy, _____
I am holy."

Our ability and motivation to be holy both lie in the holiness of God. We are able to be holy because we are united with Christ (Rom 6:3-5) who has freed us from sin (Rom 6:6-7, 22). We want to be holy because we seek to be like our Master (Rom 6:11-14).

The fact that holiness is doing the right things for the right reasons is simple in principle but it can be difficult in practice. Who can change his own will and desires? This is why sanctification is a work of the Holy Spirit. Only He can change our hearts, "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose" (Php 2:13). Nevertheless, we must place ourselves so He can do His work. We become like those we spend much time with. Husbands and wives, fathers and sons, and very close friends often grow to think alike and have similar mannerisms because of the time they spend together. So also, we are sanctified as we spend time with Jesus through God's word (John 17:17, ,II Pet 1:3-5) and prayer (Mark 14:38).

God begins His work in us when we are born again. He continues it through our lives by sanctification. He finishes it with glorification:

Romans 8:17

... we share in His suffering in order that we may also share in His _____."

This includes His moral perfection (Heb 12:23).

Romans 8:18

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the _____ that will be revealed in us.

So, hang in there! Don't give up – ever.

Romans 8:30

... those He predestined ... He also justified; those He justified, He also _____."

Ultimately, we'll be like Jesus (Rom 8:29).

Philippians 3:21

(Jesus) ... will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be _____ His _____ body.

Our bodies will be raised to be like His.

Colossians 3:4

When Christ, who is your life, appears, they you will also appear with Him in _____.

This is describing what will happen when He returns (I Pet 1:7-8).

Think about your favorite athletic team. What if they won the world championship and you were there? Wouldn't you rejoice? Wouldn't you be excited? Now what if the captain of the team came and pulled you out of the crowd onto the field and publicly proclaimed you won with him? And what if the captain was God Himself, Jesus Christ, the field was the whole world and the victory was the total devastation of sin and death? And what

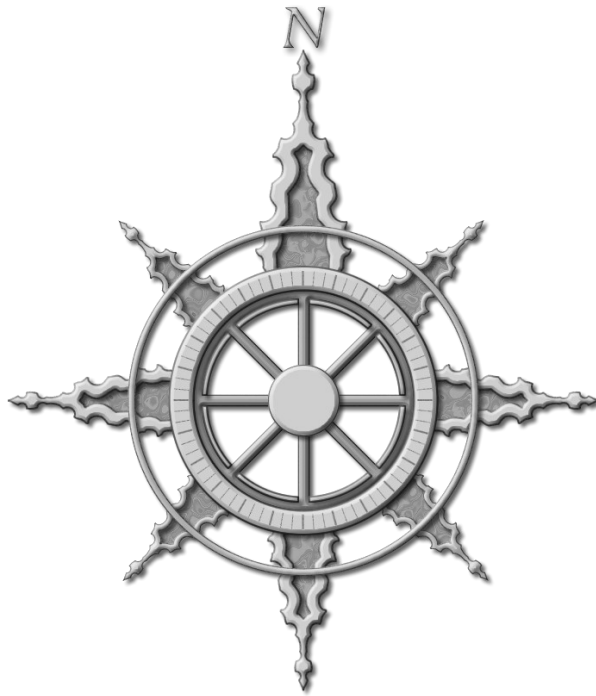
if what He said was reality? Think on these things and you will have a taste of the glory to come. In the end, we will stand sinless and incorruptible with Jesus Christ in all of His glory.

Now that we have progressed through the plan of salvation, let's review what we have covered. You will see salvation is all of God.

- 1) The Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Rom 1:4).
- 2) Christ offered Himself on a cross to God (Heb 9:14).
- 3) Christ was raised from the dead by God (Rom 8:11).
- 4) We received our faith in Christ from God (I Tim 1:14).
- 5) We were granted our repentance from God (II Tim 2:25).
- 6) We are indwelt by the Spirit who is God (Rom 8:9).
- 7) We were regenerated or born again by God (Titus 3:5-6).
- 8) We were justified through faith by God (Rom 3:26).
- 9) We are sanctified and made holy by God (I Cor 6:11).
- 10) In the end, we will be glorified by God (Rom 8:30).

You see, salvation is all of God! There is nothing for us to do but receive it. So far, we have not talked much about the word "grace." Grace is God's unmerited favor toward sinners. It is His intention to save us and do us good although we in no way deserve it. Some people find it hard to fathom grace. But if you grasp what was said above, you understand God's grace. Salvation is freely given (Rom 3:24). It is a gracious gift of God (Rom 6:23). "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works." If we could receive grace by doing works, grace would no longer be grace. (Rom 11:6). We cannot earn it. We cannot add to it. We cannot help God do it. We can only receive it by faith and praise God for it. "For in the gospel a righteousness of God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last" (Rom 1:17).

Jesus is the Only Way



Memory verse: "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." (John 3:18)

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). This is perhaps the most familiar and popular verse in the Bible. Even unbelievers like this verse. They think, "How nice it is of God to love us and give us eternal life." Then they go about their business without regard for God's judgment. But I would warn them John 3:16 only promises eternal life to those who **believe** and such belief includes repentance.

"For God did not send His Son to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him" (John 3:17). Again this sounds great to the unbeliever. But think about it. God did not send His Son to condemn the world. So it was already condemned without Him. Moreover, it is only "through Him" we are saved. So again I would warn the unbeliever against complacency. He must repent and believe if he is to have any hope of avoiding condemnation.

"Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only son" (John 3:18). Now we have come to the heart of the matter. The immediate context of John 3:16 leaves no room for doubt. It declares in no uncertain terms —Jesus Christ is not a savior but the *only* Savior. Anyone and everyone who dies without faith in Jesus perishes.

Now this is a very controversial issue, but it is a matter of life and death. Why cause trouble? Why upset people? Why risk our jobs, our friendships or even our lives for the gospel by being so "narrow minded"? To tell people their religious efforts are worthless to God and their religion is futile will offend them. They are angered and insulted by the notion that Jesus is the only way of Salvation. But in spite of this, it is absolutely necessary that we, as believers in Jesus Christ, have a firm conviction that He is the only way of salvation.

- 1) Only if we realize that Jesus alone can save will we be adequately motivated to share the gospel with others. There is little reason to interrupt our comfortable lives if people might be saved without Him.
- 2) Only if we realize that Jesus alone can save will we be willing to take risks in sharing the gospel. No one will risk friendships, their status or their lives for a gospel that is merely optional or helpful.
- 3) Only if we realize that Jesus alone can save will we be sharing the right gospel. Paul condemned those who preached "another" gospel (Gal 1:8-9). Do you want to risk preaching a distorted or false gospel?
- 4) Only if we realize that Jesus alone can save will we be sharing a convincing gospel. If we are not convinced the gospel is the only way to go, we will never convince others it is a way to go at all. They will think their way of being saved will work and we will not challenge their hope by offering another way to go to heaven.

The whole New Testament is clear that salvation is in Jesus and *only* in Jesus. No other religion, no other spiritual leader, no other "god" can save anyone. Look at what Jesus, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, and John the Apostle said about this:

The Lord Jesus Christ:

Matthew 10:32-33

Whoever acknowledges Me before others, I will also acknowledge before my father in heaven. But _____ disowns Me before others, I will _____ before my father in heaven.

Mark 8:38

If _____ is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the son of man will be _____ of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.

Luke 11:23

Whoever is not with me _____, and whoever does not gather with Me, scatters.

There is no "neutral" ground.

John 14:6

I am the way, the truth, and the life. _____ comes to the father _____.

John the Baptist:

John 3:36

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but _____ rejects the Son _____ see _____, for Gods wrath remains on him.

Gods wrath is on everyone who is apart from Christ.

Peter the Apostle:

Acts 4:12

Salvation is found in _____, for there is _____ name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

In context Peter is talking about healing (Acts 4:10). Whether its healing or salvation its only in Jesus.

Paul the Apostle:

Galatians 1:8-9

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel _____ the one we preached to you, let him be _____! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching a gospel _____ what you accepted, let him be _____!

Paul repeated himself to stress this point of eternal importance. And in context Paul is condemning those who add circumcision to the gospel of faith in Jesus. Think of the condemnation that awaits those who do not preach Jesus Christ at all!

I Timothy 2:5

For there is one God and _____ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

One mediator means one Savior – only one who can mediate between God & man. It's Jesus Himself, not a priest, not the pope. No human being is qualified.

John the Apostle:

I John 5:5

Who is he that overcomes the world? _____ who believes that Jesus _____ the _____ of _____."

One Gospel

The Gospel Requires There is Only One Way

Actually, if you have doubts whether or not faith in Jesus Christ is the only way to be saved, then you probably have misunderstood most of the material we have already covered. By nature of the case, the gospel is either the only way of salvation or else it is totally false. Let's return to I Corinthians 15:1-5 where Paul describes the gospel.

I Corinthians 15:2

By _____ you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have _____."

Apart from this gospel any faith we have is futile and worthless. It cannot save us. Only *this* gospel can save us.

I Corinthians 15:3

For what I received I passed on to you as of _____ importance. That _____ for our _____, according to the Scriptures.

The gospel is of supreme and ultimate urgency.

Let's take a closer look at these three things:

"Christ . . . "

The gospel declares that God became a man who is Christ. Now if He is God, then it is blasphemy to elevate anyone else to His level as providing another way to be saved. But if He is not God, then it is blasphemy to say Christ is a savior because He would be an idolatrous false teacher.

Mark 2:7

Why does this fellow talk like that? He's _____! Who can forgive sins _____? _____?

". . . died . . . "

The gospel declares Jesus Christ died on a cross. Now the very fact that the Son of God should die a violent death as a substitute for sinners demonstrates we need a Savior. If there was a way to be saved apart from Christ, there would be no need for Him to become a man and die.

Galatians 2:21

I do not _____ the grace of God, for **IF** righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ _____.

". . . for our sins . . . "

The gospel declares we were sinners in bondage of sin. If all men are sinful and incapable of pleasing God, then how can any of them do anything to save themselves or anyone else? To suppose men may be saved apart from Christ denies we are sinners deserving of hell.

I John 1:10

If we claim we have _____, we make Him out to be a _____ and His word is not in us.

You see, the question is not so much whether or not the gospel is the only way to be saved. The question is whether or not the gospel is true. If God became a man to die for the sins of those who could not save themselves, then by nature of the case this gospel is the only way.

Unbelievers object, saying that one way of salvation is unfair. In one sense, whether or not it is fair is beside the point! If it is true we must accept it or suffer the consequences. Nevertheless, God's ways are just.

Is the "one gospel" standard too exclusive of unbelievers? No way! The gospel does exclude those who do not believe in Jesus, but it does not exclude any type of person from belief. Jesus Christ is an "equal opportunity" Savior. He does not discriminate on the basis of nationality, social status, or sex.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither _____ nor _____, _____ nor _____, for you are all one in Christ."

Suppose you gave a public invitation for people to come to your house for free pizza. If someone knocked on your front door at the appointed time you would let him in. If someone tried to break in through a window you would call the police. Attempting to enter a house on your terms rather than the owner's is wrong and dangerous. You might be shot! So also trying to get into heaven on our terms rather than God's is wrong, and dangerous.

Is the "one gospel" standard too insensitive to those who haven't heard? No. One cannot be saved without believing the gospel, but no one is truly ignorant.

Romans 1:20

Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — His eternal power and divine nature — have been _____, being _____ from what has been made, so that men are _____."

(Read also Romans 2:14-15)

People who have never heard the gospel have no excuses. They know God exists and they know they have sinned. Yet they continue to reject God's will. Now if someone open to the gospel, God is aware of this and will send a messenger as He sent Jonah to Nineveh (Jonah 3:1-5) and Peter to Cornelius (Acts 10:1-6). And by the way, people raising this objection are not themselves ignorant of the gospel, they are merely making excuses.

Is the "one gospel" standard too complicated to understand? Not at all. The Bible does not say we need to understand deep theology to be saved. Nor do we need to know how salvation works. We must believe that (not how) "Christ died for our sins . . . and was raised on the third day" (I Cor 15:3-4).

I Corinthians 1:26

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. _____ of you were _____ by human standards . . .

You see, believing in the gospel is more a matter of the will than a matter of intelligence. The gospel is not hard to understand. It is hard to swallow because sinners are proud and confident of their own self righteousness. If anyone recognizes the extent of their sin, they will gladly lay hold of the gospel in simple faith knowing it to be their only hope.

Is the one gospel too intolerant of other religions? It is true Christians exclude other ways of salvation and are openly opposed to false religions. But this is motivated by love of people who are headed to hell. If we sincerely desire the salvation of another person's soul for his own good, then our "intolerance" of his false religion is a holy, noble thing.

Clearly, because of our sin, we should be grateful that God has offered us ANY way of reconciliation instead of questioning the way He has provided it!

We have sinned. We love to sin. We are sinful. Anyone who realizes this will not be shocked there is only one way of salvation. They will be amazed there is any salvation at all! We have shown salvation through faith in Jesus is fair by virtue of His death. We have also shown that limiting salvation to faith in Jesus is fair. Now I want to show you that one way of salvation is only fair and other ways would be unjust.

First, let's recognize that all other religions are based, one way or another, on human works. Whether by religious rituals, good deeds, personal affliction or moral purity, they are all based on what man does to get right with God rather than on what God has done to make man right with Him. We are faced with a choice between human **works** and divine **grace** which are mutually exclusive of each other you cannot be **given** something thing you have **earned**.

Romans 4:4

Now to the one who _____, wages are not credited to him as a _____, but as an obligation.

Romans 11:6

And if by _____, then it cannot be based on _____, if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Ephesians 2:8-9

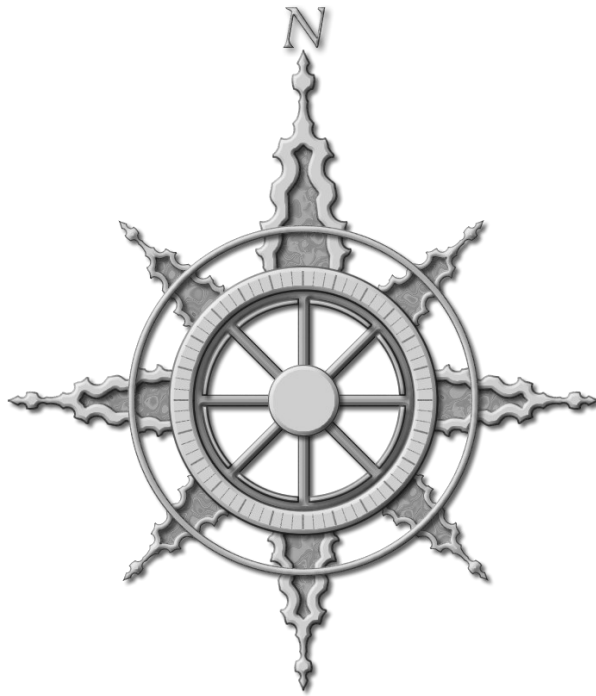
For it is by _____ you have been saved, through faith.....not by _____, so that no one can boast.

Now, it is fair for someone who is saved by his own efforts for God to save others by grace? Imagine any contest where a reward is offered for successfully doing something: climbing a mountain, solving a riddle, or some other task. The one who

offers the reward is obligated to give it to anyone who does the task (by effort). The one who offers the reward may also, out of generosity (by grace), give the prize to those who tried and failed if the task was too difficult for any of them to complete. But if someone did complete the task was too difficult for any of them to complete. But if someone did complete the task by his own ability, could the judge justly also give the reward to those who failed? If he did give the reward to both the winners and the losers, the winners would surely cry "Foul!" The winners would hold both the judge and the losers in contempt because the winners would have struggled and strived in vain. So you see, a contest can be won either of two ways: by the efforts of the contestants or by the generosity of the judge. But a contest cannot be won both ways. Effort and generosity are mutually exclusive. Human effort and God's grace are likewise mutually exclusive. So if we admit any possibility for salvation by human merits, we nullify and justified hope for our salvation by grace.

I realize this is a sobering subject to many people. For them, the idea that Jesus is the only way is psychologically unbearable because it means the certain misery of loved ones who have died without Christ. I also have unsaved friends and relatives I dearly love. A few have died. The exclusiveness of the gospel was one of the excuses I used for a while not to get saved myself because I could not bear the thought of their condemnation. But what really matters is the truth; what's done is done. We do our lost loved ones who are living no good by denying the truth in order to comfort ourselves concerning the dead. We must face the truth squarely and seek to persuade those we love with the gospel so they too may be blessed with eternal life. Begin to pray for them. Look for opportunities to witness to them. And praise God for your own salvation!

Water Baptism



Memory verses: "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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Mat 28:19-20)

In Hebrews 6:1-3 we are told of several "elementary teachings about Christ". By "elementary" we do not necessarily mean "easy". Instead, we mean that these teachings are basic and fundamental to the Christian faith. After the basic truths of repentance and faith, we are told of "instruction about baptisms." Notice the word "baptisms" is plural. There are different kinds of baptism taught in the Bible. What are these forms of baptism? We will look at three kinds. You will notice each of them has a different agent (the one who does the baptizing) and each one had a different medium (the thing baptized in).

Baptism by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized by one _____ so as to form one _____ – whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

When we get saved, the Holy Spirit places us in the body of Christ (the church) by joining us to Jesus Christ. We have already discussed the implications of being "in Christ" when we studied salvation.

Sometimes Paul calls this event a "baptism" because we are plunged into Christ. When he speaks of "one baptism" in Ephesians 4:5 He is not contradicting Hebrews 6:2 which speaks of several baptisms. He is simply saying that when we are saved we are all baptized by the same Spirit into the same body so we have unity.

Baptism by another believer in water.

Acts 1:5

For _____ baptized with _____, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

After we get saved we are also baptized by another Christian in water. By our immersion under water in baptism we identify ourselves with Christ by a public re-enactment of his death (going down), burial (under water) and resurrection (coming back up). In this chapter we will study water baptism.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Mark 1:8

I baptize you with water, but _____ (Jesus Christ) will baptize you with the _____ .

After we get saved we can also be baptized by Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit which is different from water baptism. We will study this later on.

Now these are three different but related baptisms. You cannot be water baptized properly or baptized in the Holy Spirit at all until you are in Christ. (You probably came to believe in God, Jesus and the Bible in three different times. Yet you could not have believed Jesus is God and the Bible is God's word without first believing in God. So also baptism in water and in the Holy Spirit follow being baptized in the body of Christ.)



Take a close look at this week's memory verse to see what Jesus said about water baptism. Read Matthew 28:19-20. We can draw out several very important points from this text:

Matthew 28:19-20

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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

- Notice we are to baptize **disciples**, not infants. Neither are we to baptize children of believers unless they are believers themselves.
- We are to **baptize** disciples. This word in Greek means "to plunge into, immerse, merge or join with.": It does not mean to sprinkle or pour.
- Christ stipulated very clearly we are to baptize in a specific name, the Name of God — the **Father, the Son & the Holy Spirit**. We do not baptize people to follow us but to follow God.

While there is significance to water baptism, the main and overriding reason why we should be baptized is because Jesus Christ commanded it, therefore, we are **teaching them to obey**.

Now let's take a closer look at each of these points. First we will examine the fact that only believers in Jesus Christ should be baptized and not infants. Matthew 28:19 is quite clear on this, but what of the rest of the Bible? Is there any place which shows we should baptize babies? No!

Acts 2:38

Peter said, "_____ and be baptized, every one of you . . ."

Acts 2:41

Those who _____ His _____ were baptized.

Acts 8:12

But when they _____ Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 10:47

Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water? They have _____ the _____ just as we have."

Acts 19:5

On _____, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

In the Bible, people always responded in faith and repentance before they were baptized because baptism is a public profession of faith. Some people point to two other passages in Acts where whole households or families were baptized to justify infant baptism. For example, in Acts 16:14 the Lord opened the heart of a woman named Lydia to respond to the gospel. Then in Acts 16:15 it says "she and the members of her household were baptized." Does this prove infants were baptized? Not at all. It simply implies her whole family became Christians and there is no reason to suppose any family members were too young to believe. Acts 16:29-34 is even more to the point. After the jailer believed in Christ (verses 29-31) it says "he and all his family were baptized" (verse 33). Does this mean infants were baptized? Again it does not. In verse 34 it says "he and his whole family" had come to believe in God.

We concluded from Matthew 28:19 that baptism is for believers not babies. We also concluded from the meaning of the word "baptism" that it should be by immersion in water. But we should not be content with the common meaning of a word without finding out how the Bible uses and defines that word. Does the Bible imply baptism is by immersion or by sprinkling? Let's see:

People were baptized in rivers:

Matthew 3:6

Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him _____ the _____.

The natural meaning of this is that these people were immersed *in* the river, not sprinkled *from* the river. There would be no need to be near or in a river if the people were only sprinkled.

Matthew 3:16

As soon as Jesus was baptized he went _____ of the _____.

This refers to Jesus coming out of the river **after** he was baptized not **as** he was baptized. But why would he have to wade into the river at all to be sprinkled?

People were baptized in much water:

John 3:23

Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim because there was _____ of _____.

Once again, this does not explicitly say John baptized by immersion. He would not need a lot of water if he merely sprinkled people. But he would need much water to immerse them.

People were baptized in water not just with water:

Acts 8:38

Then both Philip and the eunuch went down _____ the _____ and Philip baptized him.

Like Matthew 3:16 this refers to both men going in the water by wading into it rather than both being baptized in it. But why bother going into the water if baptism is by sprinkling? Why couldn't they simply stand beside the water or baptize from a well?

Acts 8:39

When they came _____ of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away.

The common meaning of the Greek word for baptism is immersion. Over and over again we see the Bible implies people were baptized by putting them *into* water rather than sprinkling or pouring water *on* them. Nowhere does the Bible imply baptism by sprinkling.

Perhaps you were baptized by sprinkling when you were a baby. But this does not fulfill Christ's command to be baptized. Jesus commanded believers to be baptized by immersion. So if you are a new Christian, you must be baptized by immersion whether or not you were baptized as a baby.

Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mat 28:19). But the apostles baptized the first Christians in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of _____.'

"Lord" is named in verse 36.

Acts 8:16

Because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the _____.

"Christ" was already named verse 12.

Acts 10:48

So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of _____.

"Lord" was already named in verse 36.

Acts 19:5

On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the _____.

Did the apostles disobey Christ's command by baptizing in His name instead of in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? Some people say they did. But the Bible is infallible and cannot contradict itself (Mat 5:18, Luke 1:3-4, John 10:35). Others say Jesus Christ is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and deny the Trinity. But we have shown there are not one but three distinct persons in the Trinity (Mat 3:16, John 15:26, Heb 9:14). So how do we explain the apostle's practice?

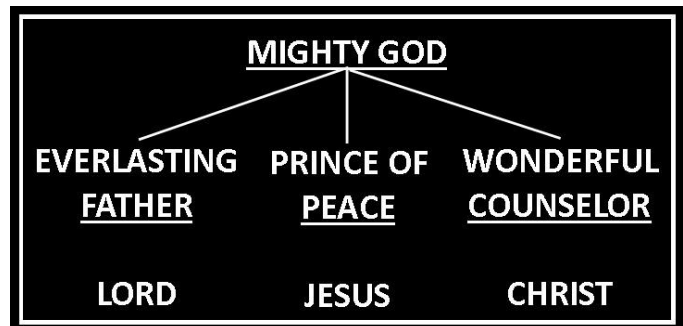
The reason they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is that this name corresponds to the

name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Notice I did not say Jesus is the Father or the Holy Spirit, but that His name is the same as theirs.

Isaiah 9:6

For to us a child is born ,to us a son is given . . . And He will _____ Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Obviously this prophecy applies four titles to Christ. But it does not say, "he will be" these things. It says, "he will be called" by these titles. If we rearrange the order, we see the four titles refer to the Trinity as shown at the right. (See John 14:26-27 where Jesus gives peace and the Spirit is called Counselor).



Now "Lord" is a name that equally applies to the Father (Matt 11:25) and the Son (Rom 10:9). "Jesus" applies only to the Son (I John 5:5) "Christ", which means "Anointed One", applies to both the Son who is anointed (Acts 2:36) and the Holy Spirit whom he is anointed with (Acts 10:38). So "the Lord Jesus Christ" is the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Consider my name: Joel Robert Parkinson. Joel was my grandpa's name. Robert is my dad's name. Parkinson is the family name. I have the names of my father and grandfather without being them. So also Jesus has the names of the Father and the Holy Spirit without being them.

New Christians should be baptized by full immersion in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit which name is the Lord Jesus Christ. But why should Christians be baptized? What significance does baptism have? Water baptism is a reenactment of Christ's death, burial and resurrections by which we identify ourselves as with Christ.

Water baptism does not save us.

We are saved by grace through faith alone, not by works (Eph 2:8-9). Moreover, Jesus promised the thief who repented on the cross he would be with Him in paradise even though the thief had no opportunity to be baptized (Luke 23:40-43). This clearly excludes any ceremony like water baptism from playing a role in salvation.

Many Scriptures used by people to teach that water baptism is necessary for salvation do not speak of baptism at all (John 3:3-5, Eph 5:25-27, Titus 3:5). In both Mark 16 and Acts 2, the references to baptism are declared as an obligation for Christians but not as necessary to *become* Christians.

Mark 16:15-16

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶ Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does _____ will be condemned.

This does not say faith and water baptism are both necessary for us to be saved. It only says those who do so will be saved. Unbelief alone will

condemn and faith alone can save.

Acts 2:38

Repent and _____, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Peter was answering the question, "What shall we do?" not "What shall we do to be saved?" This does not require both repentance and baptism for forgiveness, but requires them both as proper responses to the gospel.

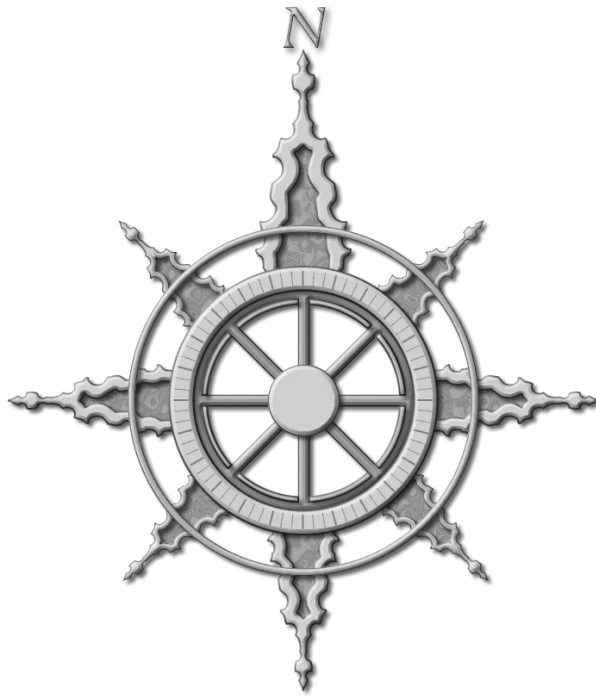
Water baptism identifies us with Christ.

In ancient times, being baptized in someone's name meant you were publicly committing yourself to follow Him as your mentor or master. So Jesus Christ commands us to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (which name corresponds to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ) to publicly show we are committed to following Him. As we are submerged in and brought up out of the water, we show our faith in Jesus Christ and affirm we are with Him by signifying His death, burial and resurrection.

Why be water baptized? To show the world you are with Christ. Perhaps you do not want to be baptized. But in a sense your opinion doesn't matter. Jesus Christ commanded you to be baptized in His Great Commission (Matt 28:19). If you truly know and love Him, you will obey Him (I John 2:3, 5:3). So the question is not, "Do you want to get baptized?" The question is, "When will you get baptized?" As a disciple you must obey your Master.



Baptism in the Spirit



Three Things

Three Things Baptism in the Holy Spirit is NOT

Memory verse: "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." (Acts 1:8)

John the Baptist said, "I baptize you with water, but (Christ) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8). What is this baptism "with the Holy Spirit?" Clearly John was not talking about water baptism because he says it is something done by Christ Himself, not by mere men. Was John born again, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and baptized into the body of Christ. These three things all happen together. But none of them are the same thing as baptism in the Holy Spirit.



Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not being born again.

Many people confuse being born of the Spirit and being baptized in the Spirit. But they are not the same thing. The fact that both involve the Holy Spirit does not mean they are the same event.

John 3:8

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it is going. So it is with everyone _____ of the _____.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

As we will see later on, baptism in the Holy Spirit generally happens after a person becomes a Christian. But you cannot be a Christian without the Holy Spirit living within you. Therefore, when we talk about baptism in the Holy Spirit we are talking about something different than the Spirit coming to live inside of us.

Romans 8:9

You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the _____ of God _____ in you. And if anyone does not _____ the _____ of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not our baptism into the body of Christ.

We have already studied what happens when we are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ at salvation. But this is not the same thing as baptism in or with the Holy Spirit. When we are saved the Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ. Sometime later, Christ baptizes us in the Holy Spirit (recall Mark 1:8).

1 Corinthians 12:13

For we were all baptized _____ one _____ so as to form one _____ – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

So what exactly is baptism in the Holy Spirit? **It is a supernatural empowering by the Holy Spirit** for ministry which usually takes place after becoming a Christian and is generally accompanied by speaking in tongues. Now, we've discussed what baptism in the Spirit *is not*. On the next page, we'll discuss what the baptism in the Holy Spirit *is*.

Afterwards

Baptism in the Holy Spirit Follows Salvation

Baptism in the Holy Spirit usually occurs after conversion. In Acts 10:44-45 Cornelius was an exception since he was saved and baptized in the Spirit at virtually the same time. But it never happens before conversion.

Jesus Christ was born of the Holy Spirit before He was anointed by Him.

Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was never born again because His natural birth was His spiritual birth as well. Yet He also had a visible anointing by the Holy Spirit later on in His life.

Luke 1:35

The _____ will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. _____ the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

Luke 3:21-22

. . . Jesus was baptized too . . . And the _____ descended on Him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

The Twelve Apostles received the Spirit before they were baptized with Him.

When Jesus Christ first appeared to the twelve apostles after His resurrection, He gave them the Holy Spirit. Yet He also told them later on they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

John 20:22

And with that He _____ on them and said, "_____ the Holy Spirit."

Here the apostles had the Spirit living in them.

Acts 1:5

For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be _____ the Holy Spirit.

This promise was later fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4 ten days after Christ's ascension.

The people of Samaria believed the gospel before the Spirit came upon them.

When Philip preached the gospel to the people of Samaria, they believed it and were baptized as Christians. Yet it was not until Peter and John arrived sometime later that the Holy Spirit came upon them.

Acts 8:12

But when they _____ Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were _____ . . .

Clearly these were already Christians.

Acts 8:15-16

When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might _____ the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet _____ any of them. (See also Acts 8:17)

Some men at Ephesus were believers before they were baptized in the Spirit.

When Paul came to the city of Ephesus, he found twelve men who were called disciples (Acts 19:1), who believed (Acts 19:2) and whom Paul baptized (Acts 19:5). Yet the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon them.

Acts 19:6

When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit _____ them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Tongues

It is Evidenced by Speaking in Tongues

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is generally accompanied by or evidenced by speaking in tongues. The Samaritans might be an exception in Acts 8:14-19 since it does not say what manifestation of the Spirit occurred.

Acts 2:4

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to _____ in other _____ as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 10:45-46

... the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them _____ in _____ and praising God.

"Speaking in tongues" means to speak in an unlearned and unknown language. So when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to speak and pray in a spiritual language we do not understand.

I Corinthians 14:2

For anyone who speaks in a tongue _____ speak to people but to God. Indeed, _____ them; they utter _____ by the Spirit.

Only God understands tongues.

I Corinthians 14:14

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my _____ is _____.

So, with our minds, we don't understand what we are saying.

Does this sound weird to you? Why should the Holy Spirit want us to speak in words we do not even understand? Read Romans 8:26-29.

Romans 8:26

... we do not know what we are to _____ for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us through _____ groans."

Often we are at a loss what to pray for since we do not know what God's will is in a situation. But when we pray in tongues we let the Holy Spirit pray for and through us. The fact that we don't understand it doesn't mean it is ineffective because God does understand it.

Romans 8:27

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in _____ with the _____ of God.

The Holy Spirit cannot "miss" the will of God. Therefore, His prayers are always, always answered.

Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works _____ of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

We do not understand it, but as we pray in tongues we know good things, not bad, will be the result.

Romans 8:29

For those God foreknew He also predestined to be _____ to the _____ of His Son."

Ultimately, the Spirit's purpose is that we would be made like Jesus Christ.

Praying in the Spirit is just another way of saying "praying in tongues" (I Cor 14:14).

The Spirit *Within* & the Spirit *Upon*

When a person becomes born-again, that person receives the Holy Spirit within.

Romans 8:9

You, however, are . . . in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives _____ you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.

Every Christian has the Spirit dwelling within, which is synonymous with having a “new life” or being “born again.”

- All Christians can achieve victory by yielding to the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- All Christian can and should produce the fruit of the spirit in their lives.
- All Christians can have revelation from the Word of God and a degree of understanding of the things of God.
- All Christians can experience great joy when they are born again.

However, it is obvious from scripture that Christians who already had the Holy Spirit dwelling **within** them were also later **baptized in** the Holy Spirit as well.

After a Christian is baptized in the Holy Spirit, he will have the Spirit both within him and upon him.

Joel 2:28

And afterward, I will _____ my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

Acts 10:44

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit _____ all who heard the message.

Spiritual Edification

The word “edification” means “improvement.” or “building-up.” There is an element of the baptism in the Spirit that improves us and builds us up! It is for our benefit

1 Corinthians 14:4

Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies _____ . . .

Jude 1:20

But you, dear friends, by building _____ up . . . and _____ in the Holy Spirit,

However important this benefit is to us, the *primary purpose* of the baptism in the Spirit is for others.

Power from On High

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

You see, baptism in the Holy Spirit **empowers** Christians to be more effective **witnesses** for Jesus Christ! It is primarily intended to benefit the lost people around you.

It is normal for all born again, Spirit-filled Christians to later be baptized in the Holy Spirit, where the Holy Spirit comes **upon** them so they can more effectively do His will.

Consider these important truths by asking yourself these questions:

- Have I received the Holy Spirit within since I became a Christian?
- Has the Holy Spirit come upon me since I have received the Holy Spirit within me?

Baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs after conversion, is often confirmed by speaking in tongues, and is intended to empower us as witnesses for Jesus Christ. But how do we received baptism in the Holy Spirit? First you must be convinced it is something God wants you to have. Remember the Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to go make disciples (Matt 28:19). This is every Christian's responsibility, so every believer needs to power of the Holy Spirit.

We need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit as witnesses for Christ.

Acts 1:8

But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

We need the power of the Holy Spirit to go out and make disciples.

The Lord does not withhold the Holy Spirit from any Christian.

Acts 2:18

Even on my _____, both _____ and _____, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

God endows any believer with the Spirit regardless of status, gender or age (Acts 2:17).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift for every Christian.

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the _____ of the Holy Spirit."

It is not reserved for "super-Christians," nor for holy believers. It is an unearned gift for any and every Christian.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a thing of the past.

Acts 2:39

The _____ is for you and your children and for _____ who are far off – for _____ whom the Lord our God will call.

Are you called? Does God want you to witness? If so, then God promises you the Spirit to empower you for the task.

There is no "secret" or "skill" to being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Luke 11:13

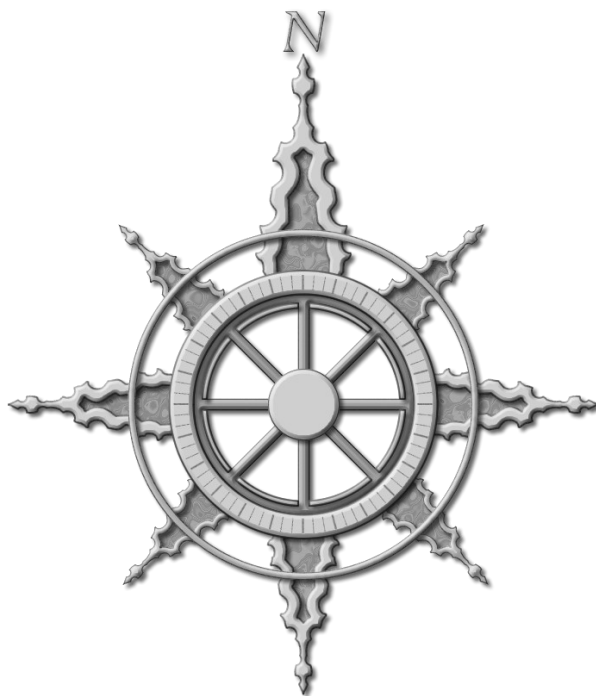
If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much _____ will your Father in heaven _____ the Holy Spirit to those who _____ Him!

To receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit:

- First, you must be born-again.
- Second, simply believe God *wants* to give it to you. He wants to give you "power" to make you an effective witness for Christ!
- Third, surrender your life to Him (Rom 12:1), and ask for it in prayer.
- Third, after you ask for it, be willing to obey.

Paul says "the spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets" (I Cor 14:32). What He means is the Holy Spirit does not overpower us to prophesy or speak in tongues (Acts 2:4), but we still have control over moving our lips. When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit you will sense He is prompting you to say words you do not understand. Yet realize it's up to you to move your tongue and mouth.

The Second Coming



The End

This Present Age Will Come To An End

Memory verses: "For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever." (I Thess 4:16-17)

We have already mentioned the second coming and the end of the age in several of our studies. We touched on judgment when we studied heaven and hell. We mentioned our resurrection when we covered Christ's resurrection and when we studied glorification. But now we will look ahead specifically to the end of the age. What exactly is the end of the age? The end of the age is when Jesus will come back to earth to overthrow His enemies and to bring everything under His control (Eph 1:10, Php 3:21). It is called the end because He will bring several things to an end when He comes:

The end of sin and evil.

Matthew 13:40-41

... so it will be at the _____ of the _____. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His Kingdom _____ that causes _____ and all who do evil."

Nothing will be left that can sin at all.

The end of unbelievers.

II Thessalonians 1:7-8

This will happen _____ the Lord Jesus is revealed _____ in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do _____ the _____ of our Lord Jesus.

Unbelievers will perish.

II Thessalonians 1:9

They will be punished with _____

and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power...

They will be separated from God forever.

The end of the antichrist.

II Thessalonians 2:8

And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will _____ with the breath of His mouth and _____ by the splendor of His _____."

The end of the world as we know it.

II Peter 3:10

"But the day of Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will _____ with a roar; the elements will be _____ by Fire, and the earth and everything in it will be _____."

The world will be totally made over.

But what about us? Do we need to fear the end of the age? Not at all. For unbelievers this will be a time of great upheaval and loss. For us it will be the most glorious event ever to happen. Jesus is coming to bring an end to worldly things, but to give His people a new beginning!

Second Coming

What is your hope? A healthy life? Getting rich? Finding pleasure? If these are your highest hopes, then you are very short sighted. There is more to life! Paul looked to the resurrection as His hope (Acts 23:6) and calls Christ's second coming "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). Read about the second coming and our resurrection in I Thessalonians 4:13 - 5:3.

I Thessalonians 4:13

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have _____.

Paul is lifting our attention to our future hope.

I Thessalonians 4:14

We believe that Jesus died and rose again and _____ we believe that God will Jesus those who have fallen asleep _____."

Our resurrection depends on Christ's.

I Thessalonians 4:15

According to the _____, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have _____.

The second coming is no fable but God's own word!

I Thessalonians 4:16

For the Lord _____ will _____ from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Here we should notice three important things:

- 1) Jesus Christ Himself will come back bodily (Matt 24:30).
- 2) His coming will be obvious, not a secret (Matt 24:27).
- 3) The dead in Christ will be raised back to life by Him.

I Thessalonians 4:18

Therefore encourage each other _____.

When you are at a loss how to encourage another believer, raise his thoughts to the hope of his resurrection with Christ.

I Thessalonians 5:1-2

Now, brothers, about _____ and _____ we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come _____ a _____ in the night.

There is no way of knowing when Christ will come (Matt 24:36-44).

I Thessalonians 5:3

While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them _____.

The second coming will be abrupt, surprising and final for the world (II Pet 3:10).

The main things you need to remember about the second coming of Jesus is we don't know when it will happen, but when it does happen, it will be as obvious as a lightning bolt to everyone on the face of the earth. Christians will rejoice at His coming while the lost will be destroyed.

Resurrection

Jesus Will Raise Us From the Dead

What about our resurrection from the dead?
What will it be like? Read Philippians 3:20-21.

Philippians 3:20

But our citizenship is in _____.
And we eagerly await a Savior _____,
_____, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Once again, we see our resurrection happens at
the second coming.

Philippians 3:21

Who by the power that enables him to
bring _____ under
_____, will trans-
form our lowly bodies so that they will
be _____. His _____
body.

When Jesus returns:

- 1) He will **subdue all things**; even His enemies
will openly confess to His face that He is Lord
(Php 2:9-11).
- 2) He will **transform our lowly bodies** by raising
us to be imperishable or by changing those
who are still alive.
- 3) Our bodies will be raised just like Christ was
raised.

Turn to and read I Corinthians 15:42-44 to see
more about what our resurrection will involve.

I Corinthians 15:42

So it will be with the resurrection of the
dead. The body that is sown is perish-
able, it is raised _____.

We will not be subject to death, sickness or any of
the other disabilities we are currently plagued
with.

I Corinthians 15:43

It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in
_____; it is sown in weakness, it is
raised in _____.

We will be glorified with Christ and bestowed
more honor than the greatest earthly king or pres-
ident (I Pet 1:7).

I Corinthians 15:44

It is sown a natural body, it is raised a
_____ body.

The contrast here is between a body subject to our
soul and partly led by the Spirit with a body led
perfectly by the Spirit. After we are raised we will
not be able to sin.

You see, eternal life is not merely the survival of
our soul after we die. When Jesus comes, we will
be **physically** restored to life. We will be reunited
with and embrace our loved ones in Christ. We
will **see** Jesus in all His glory **with our very own
eyes**. We will be freed from even the ability to sin
just as we have already been freed from bondage
to it. The resurrection is also the time of our judg-
ment and or receiving our rewards.

Daniel 12:13

. . . you will rise to receive your

_____.

Luke 14:14

. . . you will be _____ at
the resurrection of the righteous.

Our hope in resurrection should straighten us
out. When you mow your yard, you have probably
noticed the paths are crooked when you watch
where you are mowing instead of where you are
going. But if you look ahead your paths become
straighter. Our lives also straighten out as we set
our sights upon Christ's return and our resurrec-
tion instead of our problems.

Judgment

Jesus Will Demand an Accounting from Us

When Jesus Christ returns and raises us from the dead, He will judge His people for everything they have done and didn't do, both good and bad.

Ecclesiastes 12:14

For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is _____ or _____.

II Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each of us may receive what is due us for the _____ while in the body, whether _____ or _____.

It is not just that what we do will be judged, but everything we say as well. Christ will judge us for lies, broken promises, insults, gossip, and even for things we teach others that are not true. So guard your mouth!

Matthew 12:36

But I tell you that men will have to give an account on the day of judgment for every _____ they have spoken.

We are responsible for whatever we say.

James 3:1

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we _____ will be judged more strictly.

We are responsible for whatever we teach.

Nor still will God's judgment end with our deeds and words. He will even reveal the deepest thoughts of our hearts and judge us based on our motives and reasons for what we did and said. Remember—holiness is doing the right things for the right reasons. If we do good things for selfish or arrogant reasons, we have lost our reward (Matt 6:1-18).

I Corinthians 4:5

. . . wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will _____ the _____ of men's hearts. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

Be sure you serve Jesus and others with pure motives.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the _____ and _____ of the heart.

Guard your thoughts carefully.

Finally, this judgment of our deeds, words and thoughts will not be laid out before us as we stand there silently. Our judgment will be a very public thing and we will be required to give an accounting of our lives.

Hebrews 4:13

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must _____.

Romans 14:10 & 12

. . . For we will all stand before God's judgement seat. . . so then, each of us will _____ an _____ of _____ to God.

Never forget you must answer to God for your life.

We will not be able to "take the fifth amendment" and remain silent. We will not be able to "plead insanity." God will know everything about our lives, good and bad, and demand an explanation for our disobedience.

Our judgment will be a serious, but different from the judgment of unbelievers. We are saved by grace if we have faith in Jesus Christ and therefore do not need to fear condemnation forever in hell (John 3:16-18). But "If anyone's name was not found in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Rev 20:15). This sober truth should compel us to obey the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20). Knowing the fate of unbelievers should cause us to fear for their souls and do everything possible to persuade them of the truth. Take a look at what Paul had to say about how the knowledge of impending judgment affected him in II Cor 5:10-21.

II Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the _____ of _____, that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

II Corinthians 5:11

Since then we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to _____ others.

II Corinthians 5:18

All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and _____ the ministry of _____.

Paul's reasoning is that we know at our judgment Jesus Christ will hold us accountable for sharing the gospel with the lost. We also know apart from faith in the gospel, people will be eternally condemned at their judgment. Therefore the fact of God's judgment is something that should drive us to persuade others of the truth of the gospel in the hope that they may be reconciled to God.

This is an awesome task! You are called to reach lost people for Christ and then ground them in the faith through discipleship. Now that you have completed *Discovering Our Foundations*, you have taken another step towards fulfilling this calling. Congratulations! But you have only taken the first step. Until you are **making** disciples, you have not yet "arrived".

Doctrine is sort of like a road map. We would be lost without it and it leads us to a desired destination. It lays out the facts to help you get somewhere or do something. Hopefully you see your destination is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ and your task is to make disciples of others (Matt 28:19-20). Having covered these foundational truths, what steps should you take next to put them into practice? You should:

- 1) **Learn from someone** how to share your faith from someone to equip you for evangelism.
- 2) **Teach someone else** these foundational truths and help to disciple them.

These are both manageable steps for you to take. They do not require you to know anything beyond what you have already learned. They do not require any special gifting or ability. Every Christian can do them. You have the truth of God's word and the help of the Holy Spirit. So take a step of faith and begin to help someone else in their first steps as a Christian! Be a disciple by discipling others. I pray the Lord will richly bless you with understanding of the truths covered in this workbook, with the privilege of leading others to Christ and with the honor of seeing them grow in the faith as you help them along. This is your calling. Do it!

TEST

Discovering Our Foundations

Name: _____ Score: _____
2 points each

INSTRUCTIONS:

THIS IS AN OPEN-BOOK TEST

Circle the correct answer in each of the following multiple choice questions.

1. What portions of the Bible are inspired by God?
 - a. The Old Testament
 - b. The New Testament and parts of the Old Testament.
 - c. Psalms and Proverbs
 - d. All of the above.
2. The Bible is
 - a. A treasured book of great literature.
 - b. God's word to mankind.
 - c. A gathering of writings of the wisest men who ever lived.
 - d. A group of myths and fairy tales.
3. Which of the following are truly God?
 - a. The Father and the Son
 - b. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
 - c. The Son and the Holy Spirit.
 - d. None of the above.
4. Which came first – the chicken or the egg?
 - a. The chicken.
 - b. Neither.
 - c. The egg.
 - d. Both.
5. Which of the following fossil evidence gives proof for the theory of evolution?
 - a. The Ramapithecus and the Peking Man.
 - b. The Cro-magnon Man and the Australopithecus.
 - c. Java Man and the Neanderthal.
 - d. None of the above.
6. God wants us to depend on
 - a. Our own will and wisdom.
 - b. His will and wisdom
 - c. Our knowledge and education.
 - d. Prophets and prophetesses.
7. "Sin" and "our sinful nature" are terms that basically mean:
 - a. Our commitment to follow our own will.
 - b. Specific individual evil acts that we do.
 - c. We always fall short of perfection.
8. Those who die without Jesus Christ
 - a. Do not go to Heaven.
 - b. Wait in Heaven until the coming of Christ.
 - c. Get to sit in judgment on those who are still living.
9. Those who die in Christ
 - a. Go at once to be with Jesus in Heaven
 - b. Wait in Limbo until Jesus comes back.
 - c. Are reunited with their deceased spouses when they meet in Heaven.
10. Jesus is
 - a. God Himself, — really God.
 - b. The only man who ever remained sinless.
 - c. All of the above.
11. The word *atonement* literally means
 - a. Sacrifice.
 - b. Reconciliation
 - c. Satisfaction.

12. After Jesus was raised from the dead
 - a. He could never die again.
 - b. He could die again later.
 - c. His body was anchoring Him to the earth because of something He had forgotten to do.
13. The Greek word for *repentance* means
 - a. To stop doing evil things.
 - b. To change your mind.
 - c. To walk the opposite way.
14. True Repentance is
 - a. Changing your mind about who is in charge.
 - b. A change in our lifestyle.
 - c. Not doing evil things.
15. When God gives us new birth (salvation) we can
 - a. See what could not be seen before.
 - b. Spend the rest of our lives living any way we want, because we are saved.
 - c. Speak in tongues.
16. We become like those we
 - a. Read about.
 - b. Pray to.
 - c. Spend a lot of time with.
17. Why should we risk trouble by declaring that Jesus is the *only* way of salvation?
 - a. So we can show people we are right.
 - b. Because it is a matter of life and death.
 - c. To stir people up so they will think and talk about us with others.
18. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Is for the sole purpose of speaking in tongues.
 - b. Is for the purpose of showing who is spiritual and who is not.
 - c. Is for the purpose of empowering us to be witnesses.
19. Holiness is
 - a. Obeying a list of do-s and don'ts so we don't upset anyone else.
 - b. Doing the right thing for the right reasons — for the glory of God.
 - c. Always giving the most money so we can feel good about ourselves.
20. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is generally accompanied by
 - a. Speaking in other languages (tongues).
 - b. Fire burning on our heads.
 - c. The gift of healing.

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the correct answer (T for true, F for false) in the following true or false questions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>21. T F You should beware of anyone who tries to tell you that you have to believe something or do something that is not in the Bible.</p> <p>22. T F Everything in the Bible is stated directly.</p> <p>23. T F Everything in the Bible is stated indirectly or figuratively.</p> <p>24. T F All scripture is “God-breathed” or inspired by God.</p> <p>25. T F Everything else in Christianity depends upon the Trinity.</p> | <p>26. T F Evolution explains how we were created and how different species get better over long periods of time.</p> <p>27. T F The universe was formed by God’s command.</p> <p>28. T F Our knowledge will always be limited compared to God’s knowledge.</p> <p>29. T F According to evolution, you are an accident, a mere product of chance, worthless, nothing more than dust in the wind.</p> |
|---|--|

- | | | | |
|---------|---|---------|---|
| 30. T F | Sinful man is free to do anything but the right thing. | 40. T F | Jesus turned God's wrath away from us by satisfying God's justice. |
| 31. T F | Along with the capacity to sin, the self-willed person also has the ability to conceal sin and rationalize sin. | 41. T F | Jesus's resurrection is just as important as His death. |
| 32. T F | Our motives don't matter as long as we do good deeds. | 42. T F | Jesus Christ commanded us to go and make disciples. |
| 33. T F | Ultimately, everyone will be saved. | 43. T F | Faith is an opinion. |
| 34. T F | We are not sinners because we sin. We sin because we are sinners. | 44. T F | Christ's death is more important than His resurrection. |
| 35. T F | When an unbeliever dies, he just ceases to exist. | 45. T F | Christ's resurrection is more important than His death. |
| 36. T F | When Jesus Christ was here on earth, He was like a ghost. | 46. T F | Christians do not need to be baptized in water. |
| 37. T F | Jesus can relate to us because He knows how we feel. | 47. T F | We are saved by grace alone — not by our good deeds. |
| 38. T F | God's forgiveness of sins does not necessarily change our sinful nature. | 48. T F | Praying "in the Spirit" is also called, "speaking in tongues." |
| 39. T F | By offering himself, Jesus paid a ransom to Satan for our sake. | 49. T F | When Jesus comes back it will be the end of sin and evil. |
| | | 50. T F | The exact date and time of the second coming of Christ can be found by reading the Bible. |

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.