

STEPS OF FAITH

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Instructor's Manual

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STEPS OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION

In the beginning, God created the earth and mankind (Genesis 1,3). Initially, God directed those who loved Him through the family head. This era is called the "Patriarchal period." Adam (Gen. 2-4), Seth (Gen. 4:26), Noah (Gen. 5:32-9:29), and Abraham (Gen. 12:1-4) were four family heads who lived during this period.

Later, during the Mosaic or Jewish age, God spoke through prophets or teachers like Moses (Exodus 2-Deuteronomy 34), David (I Samuel 6-I Kings 2), Daniel (the book of Daniel), Isaiah (II Kings 19, 20; the book of Isaiah) and others.

Now in this last age, God speaks to us through His Son (Hebrews 1:1-2) and the Holy Spirit as recorded by the New Testament writers (John 16:13-15; II Timothy 3:16). God collected His Words in a book called the Bible so that we could have access to it. Thus, when we study the Bible, it is God who is teaching us what He wants us to know (Hebrews 10:16).

God tells us that, in a sense, we are like Him (Genesis 1:26), for He provides us an eternal spirit that continues to live after the body goes to the grave. God has prepared a home in Heaven for this spirit (John 14:2) because He loves us (John 3:16). This home is free from sorrow, death, and sin (Revelation 21:3-8). In fact, God's eyes are so pure that He cannot even look at sin (Habakkuk 1:13). Unfortunately, all accountable people have sinned (Romans 3:23). Since God is not willing that anyone should be lost (I Timothy 2:4), He sent His beloved Son to deal with sin (Hebrews 2:9-10; Galatians 3:26-27) and to provide the way to Heaven (John 14:6). Then God provided the church to tell the world that Heaven awaits a prepared people (Ephesians 3:9-11).

Now about 2000 years after Jesus' death, there are hundreds of religions in the world and numerous variations of these religions. "Christianity" has over 1,000 denominations or divisions, that claim to love God. Some denominations even claim they are the original New Testament church founded by Jesus through His apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2). Yet these divisions teach doctrines that agree with neither one another nor the Word of God. If the purpose of our worship is to please ourselves, or to make us feel good, then we would be at liberty to select the denomination or division that suits us. However, since the church belongs to God (Ephesians 5:23-24; I Timothy 3:15), we must use God's Word to understand what He expects from it. God provided in the Bible the information necessary to evaluate denominations. Since many of these denominations do not agree in doctrine, it is impossible that all of them are acceptable to God for God is not the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). It is even possible that none of them are acceptable to God if none of them follow His design.

People who expect a home in Heaven with God must study the Bible and follow His plan for salvation contained in it. God warns us that "there is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death" (Proverbs 16:25). God is the One who can direct our way to Heaven (I Thessalonians 3:11; Jeremiah 10:23).

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This study guides students who are earnestly trying to please God to seek answers in the Bible. Although the exercises are based on the King James Version of the Bible, the New American Standard or the New King James Version are acceptable alternatives to the King James Version and may be easier to read. Other versions are not recommended for use in this study but may be considered as commentaries. Completion of the exercises should take about 45 sessions. However, since the study is designed to encourage participation, students may take longer to complete it.

Multiple verses are given in response to questions, for it is written "...that in the mouth of two or three witnesses all things are established" (Matt. 18:16). All verses listed should be read because they add to our understanding of God's Word and frequently provide additional information needed for a complete understanding of the subject. Students are also urged to purchase a concordance such as Strong's or Young's, and learn to use these books to search for other scriptures that may shed new information on topics introduced in this study.

To shorten this paper, many of the names of the books in the Bible are abbreviated. The first three or four letters in the name of the book serve as the abbreviation for the name of the book.

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The Concept of the Godhead Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: The Bible teaches that God is one (Mk. 12:29). However, we must also realize that the term *God* identifies three Divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We must not become confused and regard Them as three gods. All are God, or divine. The New Testament identifies these three Divine Persons as the one Godhead.

God identifies Himself by various names in the Old Testament. These names will be discussed later but one name is important in this chapter. That is the name *ELOHIM* (Gen. 1:1-11, 29, 31; Ex. 2:24,25; Lev. 2:13; Num. 6:7; Deut. 1:6; Josh. 1:9; Judges 1:7; Ruth 2:12; I Sam. 1:17; II Sam 2:27; and many other references in these books and in most of the others in the Old Testament.)

According to Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, *ELOHIM* is a plural term (p. 412) that may refer to the Godhead or could be used to signify the awesome power of God. Jesus alluded to this relationship when He said, "For David himself said by the Holy Spirit (1), The Lord (2) said to my Lord (3), Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Mark 12:36).

Until we pass from this life, we will not fully understand all that this term *Godhead*, means; however, we can recognize some concepts that the Bible teaches.

- I. In Gen.1:26, God said, "Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness..." This verse indicates that more than one being is covered by the name "God."
- II. After reading Matt.3:16-17, list all three members of the Godhead and how each One was manifested.

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Number	Part of the Godhead Represented	How the Representation Occurred
1	<i>Jesus</i>	<i>His baptism</i>
2	<i>Spirit of God or Holy Spirit</i>	<i>A dove</i>
3	<i>God</i>	<i>A voice came from heaven</i>

- III. In Romans 1:20, the word translated as *divinity* by some translators, is rendered *Godhead* in the King James version of the Bible. Paul reveals that "...the invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made...." In other words, nature reveals the Godhead.
- IV. In I Cor. 8:6, Paul mentions two members of the Godhead: the "one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him."
- V. In Eph. 4:5-7, Paul mentions the three members of the Godhead: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."
- VI. "For in Him (Christ) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). Whatever we need to know about God or the Holy Spirit was revealed in Christ.
- VII. Paul tells the Corinthians that God (the Father) established us in Christ, sealed us and the Father has given us the earnest of the Spirit (II Cor. 1:21-22).
- VIII. In Eph.3:16-21, we read a powerful promise from God that involves the Godhead. The Spirit strengthens the inner man that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, we may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, length,

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depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fullness of God.

Compare this to VI above. The Holy Spirit through Paul was not saying that we will have equality with Christ. But we can understand the love that motivated Jesus to leave Heaven and come to earth so that after we die we might leave earth and go Home to God.

God, the Father Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION: God is manifested in three ways: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The three together or separately are called God; yet God is one (I John 5:7). The relationship of the three may well be more complex than we can understand this side of Heaven. However, scriptures suggest that although each person in the Godhead is unique, the three share one motivation and function in complete agreement. The Scriptures have much to say about each person. The revelation of the Father comes from God the Father, and from the Son through the Holy Spirit to prophets and inspired men whose words are preserved for our edification and sanctification.

I. Nature of God revealed in the Old Testament.

- A. God's ways and man's ways are quite (similar different) (Is. 55:8-9).
(Cross out the incorrect choice.)
- B. As we live, we learn and we change to accommodate the new understanding; however, God does not change (Mal. 3:6; Rom. 11:29; James 1:17).
- C. List five characteristics of God mentioned by the Psalmist in Ps. 86:15.
1. Full of compassion 3. Long-suffering 5. Truthful
2. Gracious 4. Merciful
- D. List three characteristics of God mentioned in Psalms 86:5.
1. Good 3. Plenteous in mercy
2. Ready to forgive
- E. Does God count time as we do? For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night (Ps. 90:4).

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- F. God is eternal (Deut.33:27).
1. Abraham recognized that the Lord is the everlasting God (Gen. 21:33).
 2. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting (Ps. 41:13).
- G. God says that He is a jealous God (Exod. 20:5;34:14; Deut. 4:24; Ezek. 39:25).
- H. "...God knows the secrets of the heart (Ps. 44:21).
- I. "The Lord God (is) merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth" (Exod. 34:6-7).
- J. "God is merciful forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin ..." (Exod. 34:6-7; Matt. 6:14).
- K. List 6 revelations of God's power that Daniel provides (Dan. 2:20-23).
1. God changes the times and seasons
 2. God removes kings and sets up kings
 3. God gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding
 4. God reveals the deep and secret things
 5. God knows what is in the darkness
 6. The light dwells with God.
- L. Where can a sinner hide from God? (Ps. 139:7-13) No place
- M. God hates seven things (Pro. 6:16-19):
1. A proud look
 2. A lying tongue
 3. Hands that shed innocent blood
 4. A heart that devises wicked imaginations
 5. Feet that are swift to run after mischief
 6. A false witness that speaks lies
 7. A person who sows discord among the brethren.
- II. Nature of God revealed in the New Testament.
- A. God is a loving God (I John 4:7); in fact, God is love (I John 4:16).

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- B. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).
- C. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If you loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I (John 14:28). God the Father is not the same as Jesus. *Since God the Father is greater than Jesus, the Father and Jesus must be two individuals.*
- D. God is omnipotent (Rev. 19:6).
- E. God knows the future; in other words, God has foreknowledge (Acts 2:23; I Pet.1:2).
- F. "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him" (Matt. 6:8, 32).
- G. "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26).
- H. "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36).
- I. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work (John 5:17). *We learn that even God works.*
- J. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5). God is also called the Father of lights (James 1:17), and Christians are children of light (Eph. 5:8).
- K. God is without iniquity (Deut. 32:4).
- L. The Lord is a God of knowledge (I Sam. 2:3).
- M. We know that God is angry with the wicked every day (Ps. 7:11).
- N. We are told that God is a consuming fire (Deut. 4:24)
- III. Personal characteristics of God. No one has seen God except Jesus (John 6:46).
- A. Moses saw the back of His "goodness," but not the face of God (Exod.

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33:17-23). All we know of God's appearance is what God or Jesus tells us.

B. Jesus said that He and the Father are one (John 10:30). *That doesn't necessarily mean they look identical, but that they are one in spirit and in intent.*

C. Philip asked Jesus to show them (the apostles) the Father. Jesus said he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father (John 14:7-8). *The Son is a true reflection of God. All the apostles needed to know of God could be seen in Christ. We recognize people by how they look, but the appearance of someone isn't who they are. We only understand people by what they do and how they do it. Christ did all things well and He perfectly represented God to a disbelieving world.*

D. The Lord is an everlasting light (Is. 60:20; Hab. 3:3-4).

E. The voice of God sounds like mighty water to some people, and thunder to others (Rev. 19:6).

IV. Two things God that cannot do:

A. God cannot change (Ps. 15:4; Mal. 3:6).

B. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

V. God's relationship to those who love Him.

A. Israel is like a virgin who God loves with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3-4).

B. Jeremiah records that God said: "I am like a father to Israel and Ephraim is my firstborn" (Jer. 31:9). (According to Guthrie, Motyer, Stibbs and Wiseman, Ephraim in this place is another name for Northern Israel, p. 644).

C. God was like a husband to Israel when He brought them out of Egypt (Jer. 31:32).

E. In the Old Testament, God is recognized as the Father of Israelites (Is. 64:8) and all believers (Is. 63:16).

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F. Holy and reverend is His name (Ps. 111:9).

VI. Names for God the Father

A. God is called the Father of Spirits (Heb. 12:9).

B. God is also called the Father of lights (Jas. 1:17).

C. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven (Matt. 23:9).

D. God's name is Jehovah (Ps. 83:18).

Jesus, the Messiah Part I Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION: A study of the church described in the New Testament is incomplete unless a study of its Founder is included. This exercise compares the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah with the life of Jesus to prove that He was indeed the One promised from the beginning of the world. Jesus' Messiah-ship is validated by the fulfillment of prophecy and also by God, the Father, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17), as well as the numerous miracles Jesus performed (John 5:36).

I. Prophecy and fulfillment:

A. Early life:

1. The Messiah would be made of the seed of woman (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 53:10-11; Gal. 4:4).

2. "In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22:18; Acts 3:25-26).

3. When Jesus was to come:

a. Daniel 9:24-27 is the prophecy of the 70 sevens. The term translated "week" is more accurately translated "seven." The number in this passage is probably 70 x 7 years. However, correlation with an exact period of time is not necessary for 7 as used in the Old Testament often stands for "completeness." In the New Testament, this thought is conveyed by the word "fullness" in Galatians 4:4.

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(1). What great city would be rebuilt before the Messiah arrived (Dan. 9:25)?

Jerusalem

(2). What would happen to the Messiah (Dan. 9:26)?

He would be cut off or killed

(3). After the Messiah completed His work, who would come and what would he do to the city (Dan. 9:26)? (Over)

Ans. The people of the prince would come and destroy the city. (In A.D. 70, Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem).

(4). What would cease after that time (Dan. 9:27)?

sacrifice and offering

b. Jesus walked the streets of a city rebuilt near the end of Old Testament times.

What was this city called (John 5:1; Matt. 11:11)?

Jerusalem

This city was destroyed in A.D.70 by Roman armies.

c. What happened to Jesus about thirty years before the city was destroyed (Matt. 27:35)?

He was crucified.

d. That Jesus was crucified was not unusual in that day, but what followed His death was. Explain (Matt. 28:9-20)? Ans. Many people were killed in this manner in Jesus' day. Jesus' death was different for a number of reasons. First, there was an eclipse when Jesus died. Second, there was an earthquake and a number of dead saints arose and walked the streets again. Third, the Temple curtain was split from the top to the bottom. Fourth three days after Jesus died, He was up and walking around, eating and drinking. He was seen by more than a hundred people.

4. Isaiah prophesied that a virgin was to bear a child (Isa. 7:14).

5. An angel identified Mary as that virgin (Matt. 1, esp. vs.18,23).

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6. The Messiah was to come from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10; Matt. 12:2; Luke 3:33; Rev. 5:5). (Note: some students are confused because Levi is mentioned several times in Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:24, 29), but every Levi isn't Jacob's son, Levi (Gen. 46:11-12; Exo. 1:1-2). Moses and Aaron were of the tribe of Levi (Exo. 2:1+). Christ was not part of the tribe of Levi (Heb. 7:5-14.)
 7. The Messiah was to be born of the house of David (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 23:5; II Sam. 7:12-16).
 8. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah (Luke 3:33) and the house of David (Matt.1:1; Luke 3:33; Rev. 5:5).
 9. Where was the Messiah to be born (Micah 5:1-2)? Bethlehem
 10. Where was Jesus born (Luke 2:4; Matt. 2:1)? Bethlehem
 11. The Messiah would be called Immanuel (Isa. 7:14); Jesus was called Immanuel (Matt. 1:23) which means God with us (Matt. 1:23).
- B. Work of the Messiah:
1. According to Isa.9:1-2, where was the Messiah to teach and work?
Ans. He taught and worked in the land between the River and the sea that lay in darkness. The Messiah was to be seen as a great light by those who live in the shadow of death.
 2. Jesus taught in many cities. Among these cities were: Capernaum (Matt. 4:13-16; Mark 2:1), Jericho (Luke 19:1), Jerusalem (Luke 19: 28), Cana of Galilee (John 4:46), and Bethany (John 11:1,5,6,11,18).
 3. These cities lay between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. (Hint: check a map of the Bible lands and compare it with B2).
 4. Jesus came as a light that shines in darkness (John 1:5; 9:5).
 5. The Messiah was to be a prophet like Moses (Deut. 1:1; 18:15).
 6. Jesus was a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15; John 1:45; 6:14).

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7. Jesus was a priest after the order of Melchizedek rather than Levi (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:5-10; Gen. 14:18-20).
8. First Kings chapters 1 and 2 tell the story of King David's death. David promised his throne to his son Solomon (I Kings 1:17); however, another son, Adonijah, usurped Solomon's right to reign. Adonijah sat down on the throne and proclaimed that he was David's successor (I Kings 1:18). David had Solomon anointed as king (v.39), placed Solomon on his mule and had him proclaimed king (vs. 33, 40). Solomon was then said to be sitting on David's throne (v.48). Therefore, this phrase "to sit on David's throne" must mean possessing David's authority as the king who ruled over the children of Israel, God's people, in Old Testament times.
 - a. The Messiah was to sit on David's throne (Isa. 9:6,7).
 - b. Jesus was raised to sit on David's throne (Luke 1:32; Acts 2:29-30).
9. The Messiah was to purify the house of God (Psa. 69:9).
Jesus cleansed the Temple when He started His work (John 2:14-17). At the conclusion of His work, He again cleansed the Temple (Matt. 21:9-14).
10. What would the Messiah do when He came to earth, according to prophecy (Zech. 6:13)?
Ans. The Prophet said the Messiah would build the temple of the Lord, bear the glory, and sit and rule upon His throne.

Jesus, the Messiah

Part II

Chapter 4

INTRODUCTION: Jesus not only claimed to be the Messiah (John 4:25-26), but also He claimed equality with God the Father (John 8:44, 58; Exodus 3:14). In addition, the Bible records that God the Father, calls Jesus "God" meaning that Jesus is divine (Heb. 1:6-8).

I. Prophecy and fulfillment: the Messiah's trial and death:

- A. The Messiah's own people would reject Him (Psa. 22:7-8; 118:22).
Jesus was rejected by His people (Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:10-11).

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B. One who was like a rejected stone would be made a chief corner stone (Psa.118:22). Who was this "stone" (Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:10-11)?

Jesus

C. At the end of His time on earth, the Messiah would enter Jerusalem riding on a colt of a donkey (Isa. 62:11; Zech. 9:9). Jesus entered Jerusalem mounted on the colt of a donkey (Matt.21:2-7; Luke 19:30-35; John 12:14-16).

D. The Messiah was to be betrayed by a friend for how much money (Zech.11:12-13)? 30 pieces of silver.

What happened to Jesus (Matt. 26:15; Mark 14:10)?

Ans. He was betrayed by Judas Iscariot for 30 pieces of silver.

E. What did the prophet say would happen to the money received by the betrayer (Zech.11:13)?

Ans. He would throw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.

What became of the money Judas received (Matt. 27:5-10; Acts 1:15-19)?

Ans. The chief priests bought a potter's field to bury strangers in.

F. The Messiah was to be wounded, bruised, and chastised (Isa. 53:5). All these things happened to Jesus (Matt. 27:46; John 19:1-3)?

G. The Messiah was to bear mankind's griefs (Isa. 53:4-6; Dan. 9:26). Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons (Matt. 8:16-17).

H. The Messiah was to die among the wicked (Isa. 53:9-12). Jesus was crucified between two thieves (Matt. 27:38).

I. The Messiah would be pierced in the hands and feet (Psa. 22:16; Zech. 12:10). Jesus' hands and feet were pierced (John 20:27)?

J. The inspired word foretold that God would forsake the Messiah (Psa.22:1). When Jesus took the sins of the world on His shoulders, what did God, the Father, do (Hab. 1:13; Matt. 27:46)?

Ans. He forsook Jesus.

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- K. The Messiah would be despised by men (Psa.22:1-8; Isa.53:3). Jesus was also despised by men (Mark 15:7-20; Acts 4:10-12).
- L. The ancient ones said that people would give the Messiah gall and vinegar to drink (Psa. 69:21). Did Jesus fulfill this prophecy (Matt. 27:34,48)?
Yes No
- M. People would cast lots for His garments (Psa. 22:12-19). While Jesus hung on the cross, soldiers cast lots for His garments (Mark 15:24).
- N. While on the cross what did Jesus say (Matt. 27:46)?
Ans. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
David foretold that the Messiah would say: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Psa. 22:1).
- O. The Messiah was like the sacrificial lamb in that none of His bones were broken (Exo.12:46; Psa. 34:20). The bones of the other people crucified with Jesus were broken, but were Jesus' bones left whole (John 19; esp., vs. 34-37)?
- P. The Messiah would be raised from the dead (Psa.16:9-10; Isa. 53:9). Jesus was raised from the dead three days after dying (John 2:19-21; 20:11-17; Acts 13:30-37; I Cor.15:3-9).
- Q. The Messiah was to ascend to Heaven (Psa.68:18). The Apostles saw Jesus ascend to Heaven (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9; Eph.4:7-8).

Many other verses in the Old Testament describe Jesus' life, His reign, and the church. These passages were selected because they pinpoint events that are familiar to most of us. Sections II and III below provide testimony from actual witnesses that Jesus was both Christ, or Messiah, and God.

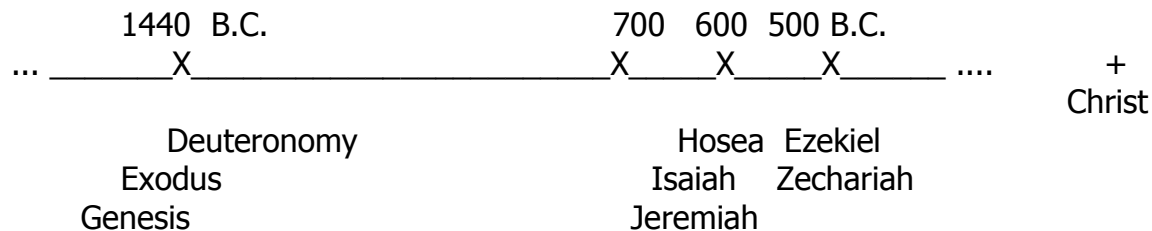
II. Jesus is the Messiah!

- A. God said to listen to My Beloved Son (Matt. 17:5).
- B. Christ is a name that means Messiah or Anointed One (John 4:25).
- C. Jesus said He was the Messiah (John 4:25-26).
- D. Andrew told Peter that Jesus was the Messiah (John 1:40-41).

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- E. Peter said that Jesus was the Christ (Matt. 16:18).
- III. As a member of the Godhead, Jesus is "God," or divine!
- A. God told the prophets that Christ was His Son (II Sam. 7:12-16).
- B. Jesus said He was equal with God (John 5:18; 10:30; Phil. 2:6).
- C. God said Jesus was "God" (Heb. 1:8).
- D. Who sent Jesus into the world? the Lord God and His Spirit (Isa. 48:16; John 3:16).
- E. This Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, said, "... I am the Lord your God..." (Isa. 48:17).
- F. Jesus said, "...Before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58; Isa.48:16-17; Exo.3:14).
- G. The Godhead mentioned in Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20, and Colossians 2:9, consists of three separate divine individuals who are the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; Heb. 1:1,2; John 14:26).
- H. The passages in III F, together with the fact that Jesus is "God" or divine and was "God," or divine in the days of the Old Testament (John 17:5) indicate that Jesus was the one speaking to Moses.

Many passages in this lesson are taken from Bible books written centuries before Jesus' birth. The time line below indicates approximately when the Old Testament books were written (The New Bible Commentary, Revised, edited by D. Guthrie and J.A. Motyer, Eerdmans Publishing Co.,1973).



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The Holy Spirit Chapter 5

INTRODUCTION: The Holy Scriptures define the Godhead or Divinity as three individuals: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Most people know more about the Father and Son than the third member. Although much is written about this member in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is the most mysterious member of the Godhead. The very name suggests ghosts and other wispy creatures more fantasy than reality.

The Holy Spirit is not fantasy but most people know little about the Spirit. Although being male or female on earth is important for marriage and the subsequent growth of the population, in Heaven, the inspired writers say that there shall be no marriage (Mark 20:27-35). Heaven's population is not increased by procreation; still the members of the Godhead are identified by *exclusively* male names, such as Father and Jesus, the son, *except* the Holy Spirit. The word *spirit* in the Greek New Testament is neuter, neither male nor female, so the pronoun *it* is often used to refer to the Holy Spirit in some of our English King James translations (Rom.8:16; I Peter 1:11). However, many are uncomfortable with a neutral being.

Another reason people fail to recognize the individuality of the Holy Spirit is that no recorded statement is attributed to the Spirit in any biblical conversation. We know that Paul reported the Spirit forbade him to travel to Asia (Acts 16:6), but the words used by the Spirit were not recorded. Although the Spirit of Truth came and guided us into all truth through the scripture, the Spirit did not speak of Himself (John 16:13).

For these and perhaps other reasons, some people have considered the Holy Spirit to be an impersonal or even an inanimate force. The group known as "Jehovah's Witnesses" refers to the Holy Spirit as simply *God's active force*. But the Holy Spirit is much more than some unseen power, some supernatural counterpart to electricity or magnetism. The Bible has at least 90 references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and over 263 in the New Testament.

I. Descriptive names for the Spirit:

- A. The Spirit is called the Comforter (John 14:6; 15:26; 16:7).
- B. John calls the Spirit Advocate (I John 2:1).
- C. Luke calls the Holy Spirit Helper and records that the Holy Spirit comforts God's people (Acts 9:13).
- D. Paul calls Him the Holy Ghost and said He forbade them to enter Asia (Acts 16:6). According to Goebel Music, in 1611, when the King

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James Version was written, this term meant *Holy Guest* (Wendell Winkler, p. 15).

- E. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of God (Romans 8:9).
 - F. The Spirit is called the Spirit of promise (Eph. 1:13).
 - G. The Spirit is called the Spirit of truth (John 14:17).
 - H. The Spirit is called the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2)
 - I. The Spirit is called the Spirit of grace (Heb. 10:29).
 - J. The Spirit is known as the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel and power, knowledge, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2). These names reveal the characteristics of the Holy Spirit.
- II. The Holy Spirit is revealed to be a separate being by the way men in the Bible have responded to the Spirit and the way the Spirit responded to humanity.
- A. In Bible times, people resisted the Spirit (Acts 7:51).
 - B. People even lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3).
 - C. People are commanded to avoid blaspheming the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:31-32).
 - D. People can also insult the Holy Spirit (Heb.10:29).
- III. The Holy Spirit is revealed to be a separate being by the way the Spirit responded to humanity.
- A. The Holy Spirit strives with man through God's revealed will (Gen. 6:3).
 - B. The Holy Spirit loves us (Rom. 15:30).
 - C. What we do may worry or vex the Spirit (Isaiah 63:10).
 - D. The Spirit may be grieved by what we say or do (Eph. 4:30).
 - E. The Spirit hears and heard what men said (John 16:13).

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- F. He showed things to the apostles (John 16:13).
- G. The Spirit searches out the secret things of God (I Cor. 2: 10).
- H. The Spirit reveals what we should know (I Cor.2:10+, II Cor. 13:14).
- I. The Holy Spirit spoke or declared and otherwise showed God's truth to the apostles (Matt. 10:30; John 16:13; I Tim. 4:1).
- J. Paul mentions that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us before God the Father (Rom. 8:26-27).
- K. The Spirit has a law that makes us free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).
- L. The Spirit inspired or moved men (II Pet. 1:21).
- M. The Spirit teaches (John 14:26; I Cor. 2:13-14).
- N. When Christians obey the Bible, the Spirit leads Christians (Rom.8:14).
- O. In addition, the Spirit testifies of Jesus (John 15:26).
- P. The Spirit helps us (Rom.8:27).

IV. Characteristics of the Spirit

- A. The Spirit is eternal like the other members of the Godhead (Heb.9:14).
 - B. The Spirit is omniscient or searches all things (I Cor.2:10).
 - C. The Spirit is omnipresent (Ps.139:7-12). Since the Holy Spirit is God, as deity, He shares the characteristics of the Godhead.
- V. Jesus recognizes the Holy Spirit as God when He said: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). Note also, Jesus did not say "names" as if there were three, but "name", singular, for God is one.

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VI. The Holy Spirit takes His place along with the Father and Son as a member of the Godhead (Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22; Romans 15:30).

All of these interactions suggest that the Spirit is certainly a being with feelings and with significant authority.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit Chapter 6

INTRODUCTION: Obedient believers are provided the hope of eternity in Heaven removed from the difficulties of this life. But that is not all that is given to Christians. They are provided special benefits that come from their close relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One of these benefits is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Some people admit that the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians but they say that the Spirit is essentially the Word. This view contradicts John 1:14 where we find that Jesus is the Word. It also contradicts I John 1:7 where John says that: "*for there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost and these three are one.*" The ASV omits this verse and substitutes: "*And it is the spirit that beareth witness because the spirit is truth.*"

Others say that when we study the Bible, commit its precepts to memory and let them shape our lives, we become vessels of the Spirit. Still others disagree and proclaim that if the Spirit truly dwells within the Christian, we must have evidence to validate the assertion. Let's examine what the Bible says about this controversial topic, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

I. Inspired writers speak about God, the Son and the Spirit dwelling in Christians.

A. Indwelling of God:

1. "...and he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him" (I John 3:24).
2. John wrote that "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us" (I John 4:12).
3. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us (I John 4:12).

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B. Indwelling of Christ

1. "Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates" (II Cor.13:5).
2. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph.3:17)
3. Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory... (Col. 1:26-28).
4. Paul wrote to the Ephesians that he bowed his knees unto the Father that He would grant them to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man (part of Eph. 3:14-15) that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love may be abler to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:17-19).
5. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27).
6. Paul wrote in Eph. 3:17 "...that Christ may dwell in your heart through faith.
7. How does faith come?
Ans: "So, then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).
8. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). It seems if we are in Christ, Christ is in us.
9. How do we get into Christ? For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3).

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C. The indwelling of the Spirit

1. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His, but if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you (Rom. 8:9-10).
2. Paul wrote: "Know ye not that ye (= you all) are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Cor. 3:16).
3. Then again: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own? (I Cor. 6:19).

D. How does the Spirit dwell in believers?

Ans. In Galatians 4:6, we discover, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father."

E. What evidence do we have that the Spirit dwells in the Christian (Prov. 20:11; Matt. 7:20; Gal. 5:22-23)? (Please read all three references).

Answer: Even a child is known by his deeds (Proverbs 20:11). We are known by our fruits (Matt. 7:20). The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Gal. 5:22-23). If we have the Spirit, we will manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our daily lives.

F. As Christians feed on the Word of God, read the Word, they are strengthened by the Spirit (Eph. 3:16; Acts 20:32) and they grow (I Pet.2:2).

G. After they obey God, Christians are led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14).

H. How does the Spirit lead Christians? Answer: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterward receive me into glory" (Ps. 73:24; John 16:13).

I. Where does the Christian find this counsel (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:2, 8; II Pet. 1:1; Rom. 1:15-16; Rev. 1:1-3)?

Ans. The apostles, such as John, Paul and Peter taught believers about Christ. We have their teaching written down in the Bible.

III. Work of the Spirit

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- A. In I Cor. 2:10-12, we see that the Spirit revealed the things of God to us through the apostles.
- B. When we pray, the Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God (Rom. 8:26-27)
- C. Through Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles have access by one Spirit unto the Father (Eph. 2:13, 18).
- D. God hath also sealed obedient believers and given the earnest of the Spirit (II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 4:30).
- E. Christians are built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:22).
- F. If we are led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18,25), we will walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).
- G. Those in whom the Spirit dwells will display characteristics known as the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23; Matt. 7:19-20).
Ans. The "fruit of the Spirit" includes: love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

The Gifts from the Holy Spirit Chapter 7

INTRODUCTION: When the Bible says people in New Testament time were given a "gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38), it could mean that the Holy Spirit is the gift, or it may mean that the Holy Spirit gave a gift.

Paul tells us that during New Testament times, special gifts from the Holy Spirit were given to Christians (I Cor. 12:1-11). These special gifts included the gift of prophecy (I Cor. 13:9), healing (I Cor. 12:9), tongues (Acts 2:3-4), wisdom (I Cor. 12:8), knowledge (I Cor. 12:8) and faith (I Cor. 12:9).

Today, when we speak with religious people who are not members of the church of Christ, we immediately discover that many believe these miraculous gifts are still available. Some even claim to have these powers today. How nice it would be if someone on earth could actually miraculously heal those who have plagues such as cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's and multiple sclerosis. Unfortunately, these diseases still trouble us because miracles were never about simply healing the ill. Rather, each of the gifts had a spiritual reason for existing.

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- I. A number of Old Testament people had spiritual gifts. Some of these include...
- A. The first person who had a spiritual gift was the prophet Enoch a man who did not die (Gen. 5:21-24). This was the man in Seth's lineage (Gen. 5:7, 10, 12, 15, 18), not the Enoch who was the son of Cain (Gen 4:17, Jude 14,15).
 - B. Joseph had the gift of prophecy (Gen. 40:8-23).
 - C. In Genesis 49:1-27, Jacob seemed to have the gift of prophecy as well.
 - D. The next person who had special powers was Moses (Exodus 4:10-17).
 - E. Joshua also had special powers (Joshua 3:9-13, 18).
 - F. Elijah, another man who did not die (II Kings 2-14), performed miracles.
List three:
 - 1. I Kings 17: 10-15 Miracle of food
 - 2. I Kings 17:17-23 He raised a child who had died.
 - 3. II Kings 1:8-15 He commanded fire to come down and consume his enemies.
 - G. Deborah was a prophetess (Judges 4:4).
 - G. Samson had super strength given by the Spirit (Judges 13:25; 14:19).
 - H. Eli was a prophet who failed to discipline his children (I Sam. 2:12, 30-36).
 - I. Samuel became a prophet as a youth (I Samuel 3:4-18).
 - J. Saul was a king and a prophet (I Sam. 9:27; 10:6,20-24).
 - K. Next we read about a boy, David who also became a prophet and a king (I Sam. 16:13; 23:1-2).
 - L. Elijah was the second prophet who did not die (II Kings 2:1-12).
 - M. Elisha did many miracles including multiplying a widow's oil, raising her dead son, and healing a man with leprosy (II Kings 4:1-15, 32-37).

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N. No study of the Old Testament would be complete without mentioning the prophets Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1-5), Ezekiel (Eze. 1:3), Daniel (Dan. 1:17), and Isaiah (Isaiah chapters 1-2).

O. No study of the Old Testament would be complete without mentioning the prophets Jeremiah (Jer. 1:1-5), Ezekiel (Eze. 1:3), Daniel (Dan. 1:17), and Isaiah (Isaiah chapters 1, 2).

II. Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament.

A. God gave Jesus special powers while He was on earth.

1. We know that Christ had the Spirit without measure (Isaiah 11:1-2; John 3:34; Acts 10:38).
2. List fifteen powers that Jesus had which prove Jesus had “the Spirit without measure” while on earth. They are divided into three groups.
 - a. Power over human life: Jesus could...
 - (1). Heal those who were ill (Matt. 8:5-13;14-15; 9:2-8,35; Mark 3:10; Luke 4:38-40; 5:18-26).
 - (2). Give life back to those who had died (Matt. 9:23-25; Luke 7:14-16; Luke 8:47-56).
 - (3). Heal the crippled man (John 5:5-16).
 - (4). Heal the blind (Matt. 9:27-31).
 - (5). Heal the dumb (Matt. 12:22).
 - (6). Know the heart (John 1:47-49).
 - (7). Know the thoughts of people (Matt. 12:25; Luke 5:22; 11:17).
 - b. Power over nature: Jesus...
 - (1). Fed five thousand with five loaves and two fishes (Matt. 14:15-21; John 6:1-14).
 - (2). Fed four thousand with seven loaves and a few little fishes (Matt. 15:29-38; Mark 8:1-9).
 - (3). Stilled the storm on a lake (Luke 8:22-25).
 - (4). Walked on water (John 6:15-21).
 - (5). Knew the future (Matt.17:22-23; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 52-13; 21:5-32; John 2:19-21).
 - (6). Passed His powers to others (Matt.10:1-5; Mark 6:7; Luke 10:1-12).
 - (7). Even touching His clothing could heal people (Mark 6:56).

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- c. Jesus has power over Satan
 - (1). Jesus cast out a deaf and dumb spirit (Mark 9:14-29).
 - (2). Cast out unclean spirits (Matt.9:32-33; Mark 1:24-26; Luke 8:26-37).

- B. The Spirit gave other people special powers though not to the same extent as Jesus had.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit gave gifts to the apostles (Acts 2:3-4). The apostles represent the nation of Israel.

 - 2. List 8 of the gifts given to people in New Testament time by the Holy Spirit (Acts 3:1-7; 19:12).
 - a. Word of wisdom (I Cor. 12:8)
 - b. The word of knowledge (I Cor. 12:8)
 - c. Faith (I Cor. 12:9)
 - d. Working of miracles (I Cor. 12:10)
 - e. Prophecy (I Cor. 12:10)
 - f. Discerning of spirits (I Cor. 12:10)
 - g. Gift of tongues (languages) (I Cor. 12:10)
 - h. Interpretation of tongues (I Cor. 12:10)
 - i. Gift of healing (I Cor. 12:9)

- C. Those who speak a "tongue" are speaking a foreign language known to others (Acts 2:4, 8, 11).

- D. The apostles, Jewish men, received gifts at Pentecost or Feast of Weeks (Feast name is needed.) (Acts 1:26-Acts 2:1).

- E. The Holy Spirit also gave gifts to the Gentiles when those at the house of Cornelius received gifts (Acts 10:44-49; 11:15-17). Thus all received the gifts, Jews and Gentiles.

- F. We know the Spirit gave miraculous gifts to some members of the early Church through the hands of the apostles (Acts 19:5-6; II Tim. 1:6; I Cor. 12:4-14,28).

III. The Apostles gave Christians Special Powers

- A. Why were special gifts given to early Christians (Mark 16:20; I Cor.2:9-13; 14:4,31; Heb. 2:3-4)? Give four reasons.
 - 1. Gifts were given to confirm the Word of God,
 - 2. to edify the church,

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3. to impart truth, and
4. to comfort the church.

- B. Paul could pass along gifts from the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:5-6) because along with the twelve, or thirteen if we count Matthias (Acts 1:22-26), Paul was an apostle (Gal. 1:15-24; Acts 9:1-5; Gal. 2:7).
- C. The immediate source of Paul's gifts: Study the following references and check the one that seems most likely:
1. Ananias (Acts 9:1-19) Ananias laid his hands on Paul (called Saul) and told him that he was sent to Paul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. The Bible does not actually say that Ananias had anything to do with Paul's baptism in the Holy Spirit. Ananias also gave Paul a message from God. Ananias was not an apostle so he could not pass on gifts.
 2. Apostles (Acts 8:15-17). But Paul did not meet with the apostles for about three years (Gal. 1:16-19). In addition, those to whom the apostles gave the gifts could not pass them on (Acts 8:15-17). Paul could pass along gifts to others.
 3. Christ (Matt. 3:11). Paul was with Christ after Jesus' resurrection and ascension (Gal. 1:13-18). Christ and the Holy Spirit gave gifts to the Apostles (Mark 6:7; Luke 9:1-2, 6; 10:1, 9, 17-18).
 4. The Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4). Since those to whom the apostles gave the gifts could not pass them on, Paul must have received his gift directly from Holy Spirit sent by Christ like the other apostles. For this reason, both Christ and the Holy Spirit are true.
- D. Spiritual gifts were controlled by the person who had the gift (I Cor. 14:32).
- E. People in the early church taught what the Spirit moved them to teach in a language that could be interpreted or translated and understood by those present (I Cor. 14:23,26-29).
- F. How long were special gifts intended to last (I Cor. 13:8-10; Eph. 4:12-13)?
Ans. They were supposed to end when that which is perfect comes.
- G. What does "that which is perfect" most likely refer to (Ps. 19:7; I Pet. 1:3, 18-20)?

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Ans. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul, the Bible.

According to Young's Analytical Concordance, the word for "perfect" in Koine Greek is *teleios* which means end, complete, or perfect. According to Rubel Shelly in Winkler's book, *What do You Know about the Holy Spirit?* this form of *telos* is not applied to people; it is applied to things (p. 228). We know the Old Law was perfect. However, since people did not live up to its code, most likely, the phrase does not refer to the Law of Moses. When the Bible was fully revealed, the Law of the Lord was complete and perfectly able to accomplish the wonderful purpose of God: namely, the salvation of the human soul. Peter writes that "According as His divine power hath given unto us *all things* that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Pet.1:3-4). These things are recorded for us in the perfect Word of God.

At the end of the first century A.D., when the Peshitta version of the Bible was compiled, the Bible was *almost* complete; however, John's writings were not included because they were not yet available. After John returned from exile on the island of Patmos, and after his letters were circulated among Churches, John's writings were added to the Bible. Soon after that, the Bible as we know it was complete. Thus, with the complete revelation of the will of God, that which is perfect had arrived; then the reason for the gifts was over.

So, a very long time ago, these special gifts became obsolete because the Word was complete. In other words, anyone since then who studies the Holy Bible can understand all that he or she must do to please the heavenly Father and attain Heaven. Unfortunately, that does not mean all governments allow people to read the Bible.

Although not everyone agrees that I Corinthians 13:10, refers to the duration of spiritual gifts, the passing of gifts to others ended when the last Apostle died; that was probably John. When the last person who received the gifts died, gifts ended.

The Church Chapter 8

INTRODUCTION: Many people feel the need to worship God. Christians recognize the need to worship God in the company of an assembly of believers. Jesus Himself said that believers must worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). The only church we can be certain is acceptable to God is the one Jesus founded (I Cor. 3:11) and it was purchased with His blood (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 1:19). It would be impossible to separate His church from the thousands of impostors without a blueprint of God's design for it.

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This lesson and the next several lessons will help the student develop a Bible-based view of God's church as it existed in New Testament days.

I. What is the church?

A. Is the church a building made with human hands (Acts 5:11; 11:22; 17:24)?
no Based on these scriptures, how do you know that it is not a building?

Ans. A building cannot do what is described in these verses.

B. Brief Greek lesson: *EKKLESIA* meaning "called out" is translated "church" in the New Testament (Gal. 1:1-3) (W.E. Vine, p. 86).

C. How is the word "church" used in the New Testament?

1. Church = the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; Col. 1:18).

2. Church = those who believe in Jesus as the Messiah and obey His Words (Acts 5:14; Mark 16:15-16; Heb. 5:8-9; John 14:15).

D. What is the church called out of?

1. Out of darkness into light (I Pet. 2:9).

2. Out of bondage into freedom (John 8:32-34).

II. Nature of the calling:

A. Who does the calling (I Pet. 5:10; II Tim. 1:7-9)? God

B. How are we called (Rom. 1:16; II Thess. 2:13-14)? By the gospel of Christ

C. We are called into one body (Col. 3:15)

D. The calling is holy (II Tim. 1:9).

E. We are called to be holy (I Pet. 1:14-16; Heb. 3:1).

F. How can those who are called and obey the calling still be lost?

Ans. Everyone has free will; so after obeying, anyone can change his or her mind or they can be tempted by challenges to their faith.

G. Paul's calling:

1. Paul was specifically called by Jesus to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:10-16; I Cor. 15:7-9; Acts 26:16-18).

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2. At what point was Paul saved (Acts 9:6; 22:12-16; II Pet. 1:10; Heb. 6:4-6; Jam. 5:19-20)? Circle the correct answer.

Ans. Paul was saved when

- a. God chose him
- b. Paul prayed to God
- c. Ananias preached to him
- d. Paul was baptized and obeyed God

3. The phrase "calling on name of the Lord _" in Joel 2:32 and in I Cor.1:2, refers to calling on His name when an obedient person is baptized to be saved (Acts 2:16-21,38). Can anyone be saved by just calling on the Lord without obeying The Lord (Matt.7:21; Luke 6:45)? Explain.

Ans. Not unless they do it in the way the Bible says to do it.

4. Likewise like Paul, we are saved when we obey the word of God (Acts 15:16-17).

III. Discuss the following commonly believed sayings in light of the scriptures:

A. "The Holy Spirit draws selected people to Christ apart from the Word of God, the Bible." Is this true or false?

Before you answer, consider Acts 10:34; and Rom. 2:11 and other verses in the Bible. Always avoid the "I think's" because we will be judged by the Word of God, not some person's opinion (John 12:48).

False

B. "Paul was saved on the road to Damascus." True or false - circle one.

Why? Which Bible verses support your position (a good concordance, such as Young's or Strong's, helps Bible students locate verses).

False (Acts 22:16; 9:18) Paul was still in his sins.

B. When some people say, "I want to be saved like Paul," they imply that Paul was saved when Jesus appeared to him. Why is that an error?

Ans. Jesus appeared to Paul to appoint him later as an apostle but first Paul had to be baptized in order to be saved (Acts 22:16).

D. Can we be "saved like Paul" if we do the things Paul did? Explain.

Ans. Yes. We must believe, repent, confess faith in Christ, be baptized, and obey God in order to be saved.

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The Church: the Fulfillment of Prophecy

Part I

Chapter 9

INTRODUCTION: To correctly identify the Lord's church, we must discover when and where it began. A church established in another time or at another place could then be eliminated as the Lord's church. After that, we must examine the manner in which the Lord's church conducted its service, and the duties of the members to God, fellow members, and to the world. Once we understand these things, we are able to compare various religious groups that claim allegiance to Christ with the Bible standard, the only acceptable standard, to discover the Lord's church.

I. "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4). God set the stage of the world for the arrival of His Son and for His Son's church.

A. Historical setting:

1. The world had a language generally understood by the civilized people
- Koine Greek.
2. A system of writing had developed.
3. Good roads were available with better protection for travelers than found in earlier times.
4. A strong central government existed capable of:
 - a. Enforcing a degree of peace;
 - b. Permitting religious freedom for several years.
5. Populations enjoyed sufficient prosperity so that they had time to study and evaluate new ideas.
6. Paganism rampant. In paganism, gods are given the weaknesses of mankind; whereas, in Christianity, mankind is challenged to strive to attain the perfection of God.

B. Workers who prepared the world for God's kingdom:

1. John the Baptist went in the spirit and power of Elias to make ready a people prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17; Mark 1:2-3).
2. John preached repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3:2).

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3. God sent John the Baptizer. How does he compare to Jesus (John 3:30)? Ans. John the Baptist prepared people for the coming of Jesus but Jesus is greater than John.
 4. Was John the baptizer in the kingdom? (Matt. 11:11) Explain. Ans. No, while John was on Earth, he was not in the kingdom. John died before Jesus established the kingdom.
 5. Was John the Baptizer a Christian? No Why or why not? Ans. He was the forerunner of Christ who prepared people for Him. People did not become Christians until the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). John like Jesus was Jewish.
 6. Did John, an apostle of Christ, or John the Baptizer write the book of John (Matt. 4:21; Luke 1:12-80, esp., vs. 63,67,76,77; Matt. 14:1:1-12)?
Ans. The apostle John wrote the book of John.
 7. Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 4:17).
 8. Jesus promised to build His church (Matt. 16:18).
 9. The kingdom would come with power while some people listening to Jesus were still alive (Mark 9:1).
 10. Christ told His apostles to preach the kingdom of heaven was at hand (Matt. 10:7).
 11. At the resurrection of Jesus the disciples still did not really understand the nature of the kingdom (Luke 19:11;22:18; Mark 15:43).
- C. If the church was established before Christ's death, then it was established:
1. Before Christ could be preached (Matt. 16:21);
 2. Under subjection to the law of Moses since it was still in effect (Rom. 7:4; Heb. 10:1,8-12,15-20);
 3. Before repentance and remission of sins could be preached in His name (Luke 24:46-49);
 4. Christ was its Head (Eph. 1:20-22);
 5. Christ was reigning on His throne (Acts 2:30-31; I Pet. 3:22);

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6. Christ became High Priest (Heb.8:4;2:14,17-18);
7. Christ became the Mediator of a new covenant (Heb. 9:15-17).
8. Therefore, the kingdom was not established during the earthly life of Jesus.
9. Could Jesus have been a Christian? No Why or why not?
Ans. People did not become Christians until Pentecost by that time Jesus had ascended into Heaven (Acts 1, 2).

II. The church, or kingdom, was established and ready for citizens after what happened?

Jesus' resurrection (Acts 1, esp. vs. 1).

A. The Lord's kingdom was to start in what city (Isa. 2:2)? Jerusalem

B. The law was to go forth from what city (Isa.2:2; Luke 24:47)? Jerusalem

C. Fulfillment of prophecy:

1. On Pentecost, the law went forth from Jerusalem (Acts 2:37,38).

2. On what day was the kingdom prepared for citizens? (Acts 2:1-4).
Ans. Pentecost

3. In what city did the first citizens enter the kingdom when it was preached? (Acts 2:5) Ans. Jerusalem

D. Christ said the kingdom would come with power (Mark 9:1).

1. The power was to come with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

2. On what day did the Holy Spirit come upon the apostles? Pentecost
(Acts 1:26; 2:1-4).

E. Following Pentecost, the church or the kingdom is in existence. Confirm or deny this statement after studying the following references: Acts 2:47; 5:21; 8:1; 11:22; 13:1; 14:27; Hebrews 12:28; Col.1:13; Revelation 1:9. Explain.
Ans. Confirmed. Following Pentecost, the church or kingdom is spoken about as if it were in existence.

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III. Questions to consider:

- A. What do "Peter" and "rock" mean in Koine Greek in Matthew 16:18
(Look up the Greek words used and their meanings in a Greek lexicon)?
Ans. Peter means a little pebble; rock means a boulder
- B. When and where was repentance and remission of sins first preached in
Jesus' name? (Acts 2)
At Pentecost in Jerusalem
- C. How was remission from sins obtained?
By faith, repentance, confessing Jesus is Christ and baptism (Acts 2:36-38).

The Church: the Fulfillment of Prophecy Part II Chapter 10

INTRODUCTION: We know that the Bible came from God. First, it claims to come from God (II Pet. 1:20-21). Another important reason we have this confidence comes from the fulfillment of prophecy. Men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit predicting events that would occur years, even centuries, in the future (II Pet. 1:21). These events were not predicted in general terms; rather, they were predicted so specifically that a student of the Bible could know precisely the course these events would take by reading the writings of God's teachers. We see the division of Israel foretold (I Kings 9:2-78;11:6-13; and 12:20-25). We also see the captivity of Israel foretold (Jer. 25,52). Predictions about Jesus and the church were also mentioned by the Old Testament prophets centuries before they were to occur. Religious Jews of Jesus' day should have been familiar with these prophecies and expected their Messiah. They should have even anticipated the spiritual nature of the kingdom that Jesus, the Messiah, would establish.

- I. Isaiah:
- A. When was the church to be established (Isaiah 2:2-3; Heb. 1:1-2; Acts 2:16-17)?
Ans. in the last days
- B. The Lord's house is like a mountain (Isaiah 2:2). The Lord's house is also called the church, the pillar, and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15).

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- C. Who may enter the church (Isaiah 2:2; Matt. 28:19; Eph. 2:14-16; Acts 10:48)? Whoever will obey God
- D. From what city would the Law (= the Word of the Lord) go forth? (Isaiah 2:3; hint: Zion = Jerusalem) Jerusalem
- II. Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2):
- A. Who was the "head of gold" in the king's dream? (Dan. 2:1, 37-38)
Babylon This kingdom fell in 536 B. C. when Cyrus of Persia and Darius of Media overthrew it.
- B. Cyrus and Darius established the Medo-Persian kingdom. What did God say about its fate (Dan.2:39)? It would fall.
- C. Alexander the Great established the kingdom of bronze. He died in 323 B.C. After conquering the known world, he thought there was nothing left to conquer, and lost the most important battle of his life when he died a drunken man. His kingdom was then divided.
- D. The Roman Empire was represented in the dream as the kingdom of iron (Dan. 2:40).
- E. "In the days of these kings" (Dan. 2:44) refers to the Roman Caesars.
- F. God's kingdom (which is the church discussed in later lessons) was to be established after the Roman Empire began and while it existed. The Roman Empire started about 30 B. C. and fell in about 476 A. D.
- G. If the kingdom that God planned began between these dates in Dan. 2:44, how could a Kingdom (or church) founded during another period of time be God's kingdom?
Ans. It couldn't.
- H. How many kingdoms did God intend to establish (Dan. 2:44)?
One
- I. Jesus was born during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1-2).

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- J. Read Luke 21:31-32; 22:16-19, 29-30. Jesus taught that the kingdom would come during the _____ of some of His followers. (Mark out the wrong choice.)
1. During the lifetime
 2. in a few thousand years after the death
- K. In Colossians 1:13, Paul says that we are translated _____ into the kingdom of God. Logically, a person cannot enter something unless it exists; therefore, the kingdom must have existed in Paul's day

The Church as the Kingdom of God Part I Chapter 11

INTRODUCTION: Premillennialists teach that the kingdom of God has not arrived. Other religious groups teach that the kingdom exists on earth now. There is little agreement among so-called Christians about the kingdom's origin, nature, or its reason for existence. In addition, religious groups are divided over the relationship of the kingdom to the church. It is important to remember that a valid religious teaching never contradicts other teaching found in the Bible. Properly divided, God's Word anticipates and answers all important religious questions.

I. Institutions that Christ built:

- A. What institution did Christ place on earth (Matt. 16:18-19)? He built the church and/or kingdom.
- B. Matthew 16:18-19 state that Jesus gave the "keys of the kingdom" to the apostles.
- C. In Acts 2:37-38, the apostles bound repentance and baptism for remission of sins on people who heard and believed the gospel. They used the keys of the kingdom to open the church (Acts 2:47).
- D. Jesus placed two items of "furniture" prominently in His kingdom, a table and thrones (Luke 22:29-30).

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- E. What elements are placed on the Lord's table (Matt.26:26-29)?
unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine
This reference indicates that these elements are in the kingdom.
- F. When Paul wrote to the church in Corinth (1 Cor.1:2), he placed the same elements Jesus used in the church (I Cor.11:18-29).
- G. Jesus said He would not eat again with the apostles until He ate or drink with them in the kingdom (Luke 22:29-30).
- H. After the resurrection, on what occasions did Jesus eat and drink with the apostles? (Acts 10:41; Luke 24:43; John 21:13-15)
Ans. Jesus ate bread and fish with the apostles on several occasions.
- I. Jesus said we could not enter the kingdom unless we were born of water and the Spirit (John 3:3).
- J. When we enter the church, we are born of the water and the Word of the Spirit (I Pet. 1:23; Rom. 8:26-27).
- K. These references indicate that the kingdom and the church are the same.

The Church as the Kingdom of God Part II Chapter 12

INTRODUCTION: The elements placed in the kingdom of God were also placed in the church. In addition to these elements, a kingdom should have a territory, king, throne, subjects, and a law. If these elements are also common to the church, then we can say the kingdom and church are the same thing.

I. The kingdom:

A. Nature of the kingdom:

1. God promised a kingdom for the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14).
2. The term "Son of Man" refers to Christ (Matt. 26:24).

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3. Where is the territory of Christ's kingdom (John 18:36; Luke 17:20-21)? Ans. The territory is not of this world. It is within the heart of people who obey the gospel and become Christians.
4. Was Jesus expecting or desiring an earthly kingdom (John 6:14-15; 18:36)? Explain.
Ans. No, he is a spiritual King over His spiritual kingdom.
5. When was the kingdom established (Matt. 25:34; Luke 22:15,18; 24:30; Heb. 4:3)?
Ans. The kingdom was established from the foundation of the world. It was in God's mind before then.
6. When was the kingdom ready for people to enter (Mark 9:1; Matt. 16:16-19)? Ans. On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)

B. The King:

1. Who is the King of this kingdom (Zech. 9:9; 14:9; Matt. 2:2; Acts 32-36; I Pet.3:22)? Jesus
2. How much authority does this King possess (Matt. 28:18)?
Ans. He has all authority
3. How long will He reign (Dan. 7:13-14; Luke 1:33; I Cor. 15:24-28)?
Ans. As long as time exists. We don't know what will happen when He delivers the Kingdom up to the Father. Then they may reign together, the Father might reign, or they may have an arrangement that they have not disclosed to us.

C. Christ's throne:

1. God called Jesus "God" and said that His throne would last forever (Heb. 1:8).
2. God said that a descendent of Coniah could never sit on David's throne and prosper (Jer.22:30; 36:30-31).
3. This must have been the literal throne of David. We know from exercise 1, part I, B, 8, that the phrase "throne of David" can also refer to the position of monarch and the authority that accompanies such a duty.
4. Jeconiah is the other name for Coniah (I Chron. 3:16).

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5. Although Jeconiah was in the lineage of Jesus, we know that Jesus sits on David's throne (Matt. 1:11; Acts 2:29-32). So "throne" must signify the position and authority rather than the seat David occupied.
6. When did Jesus assume this prominent position (Isaiah 11:1,2,10; Rom. 15:8,12; John 2:19-21; Matt. 28:5-6)?
When He was raised from the dead and ascended into Heaven.

D. Territory of the kingdom:

1. A king normally resides in the territory he rules. If that is true in Christ's kingdom, then where is its territory (Eph. 3:17)?
Ans. In the hearts of Christians
2. Who shall inherit the kingdom of Christ (Dan. 7:22,27; Matt. 25:31-40)?
Christians

E. Subjects of the kingdom:

1. Who are the subjects of the kingdom (Matt. 12:50; Rev. 22:7)?
Christians
2. How do we enter this kingdom and become citizens (John 3:3,5; Acts 2:38)?
By being born again – repentance and baptism
3. How can citizens achieve a place of prominence in Christ's kingdom (Matt. 20:20-28)? By serving

F. The law of the kingdom:

1. How do we know this kingdom has a law (John 14:15, 21; 15:10)?
Ans. Jesus said if you love me you will keep my commandments. His commands are the law.
2. It is called the law of faith (Rom. 3:27).
3. Citizens are justified by their obedience to this law (Rom. 1:5; 2:13).
4. Who foretold by this law (Micah 4:1-2)? The prophets
5. From what city was the law was to go forth (Micah 4:2)? Zion

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6. What is the other name of this city (Micah 4:8)? Ans. Jerusalem
7. What law went out from this city (Acts 2:37-39)? The law of Christ, the gospel.
8. What additional commandment did Christ give us (John 13:34)?
to love one another as He loved His apostles
9. In what way was this commandment new (John 15:13; I John 3:16)?
In the way that Jesus applied it. He was willing to die for His followers.
10. What kind of attitude must a believer have to enter the kingdom (Mark 10:15; Acts 2:37)?
A child-like attitude of obedience
11. Do citizens of this kingdom behave like everyone else? Explain. (I Cor. 10:5-10; I Tim. 2:9; Tit.2:14; I Pet. 2:9; Heb. 4:12)

Explain: No, they don't dress, think, speak, or act like people of the world.

G. The kingdom is here!

1. Just before His crucifixion, Jesus promised He would not eat or drink with His apostles until He did so in the kingdom (Mark 14:25; Luke 22:16-18).
2. After Jesus was crucified and raised, did He eat and drink with the Apostles (Luke 24:36-43; John 21:1-15; Acts 10:37-41)? Explain: Ans. Yes, Jesus both ate and drank with the apostles on several occasions.
3. We must conclude that the kingdom was on earth before Jesus' final ascension into Heaven as recorded in Mark 16, Luke 24, John 21, and Acts 1, but it was not ready for citizens until the Apostles used the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19) to open it in Acts 2. It is important to note that the Greek word translated "you" is more accurately translated "you all" so that all the Apostles were included in the promise, not just Peter as is commonly believed.

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The Church as the Family of God Chapter 13

INTRODUCTION: We could not have imagined the great love God has for us until His Son left Heaven to suffer on earth and die for us. Through the death of Jesus, we can be reunited with God and reclaim what was lost in Eden. The Godhead has provided the church to proclaim and show the love of God to mankind, and to point the way to Heaven for all who will listen and obey. To help us understand this love, God gave us families. Parents love their children; children love parents; grandparents love parents and children and receive love back. This doesn't even consider that those able provide food, shelter, clothing and other necessities for those they love. God provides a way for people to become His children. As a loving parent, God has made special provisions for His children as well. This Heavenly Father is an all-knowing, all-powerful ruler of the universe.

- I. The church is God's family:
 - A. In Bible times, the term *house* did not only mean the building where a family lives. It was often a substitute for the word family (Josh. 24:15; Luke 1:27; Heb. 11:7; Acts 10:2).
 - B. The church is the house or family of God. (I Tim. 3:15)
 - C. God is the Father (Eph. 3:14; Matt. 23:9; I Cor. 8:6).
 - D. Christ is the Son (Heb. 3:6; I John 4:9).
 - E. Christians are the children of God (I John 3:1; John 1:21).
 1. Sons of God (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 3:26;4:7).
 2. Heirs of God (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:7).
- II. Blessings of being an heir and of adoption (Gal. 3:29):
 - A. The privilege to pray to God our Father (Matt. 6:9).
 - B. God's love is freely given to His children (I John 3:1).
 - C. Christ is our High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16; 10:21; I John 2:1).
 - D. The Holy Spirit leads us and helps our infirmities (Rom. 8:26, 14; Gal. 5:16; 4:6).

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- E. Who provides Fatherly provisions for Christians (Rom. 8:32; Jam. 1:17; Matt. 6:8, 33-34; 7:7-11)? God
- F. Christians have the blessing of God's peace (Phil.4:5,7).
- G. "... An inheritance incorruptible... reserved in Heaven for you" (I Pet.1:4).

III. Obligations of family membership:

- A. Separation from the world (II Cor. 6:17,18; 7:1; I John 2:15-17; Jam. 4:4).
- B. God requires love for and obedience to Him (I John 5:3; I Pet.1:14; Eph. 5:6; Rom. 6:16-18,12,13; Matt. 7:21).
- C. We must love the brethren (I John 4:20-21; John 13:34-35).
- D. Whose name should God's children wear (Acts 11:26; I Pet.4:16)?
Ans. Christ's name

IV. How do we become God's children? (I John 5:1-3)

- A. God's Word must be planted (Luke 8:11). That occurs when one hears (Rom. 10:14) the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16).
- B. Faith (Heb. 11:6; Gal. 3:26).
- C. Repentance (Acts 17:30; 2:38).
- D. Confession of faith (Rom. 10:9-10; 8:37).
- E. Baptism (Matt 28:19; Rom. 6:3-7; Gal. 3:27; Acts 2:38).
- F. When we have done these things we are in Christ and become a new creature (II Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:3,4ff), ready to accept the blessings of an heir and the responsibilities that are part of being a member of the family of God.

- V. Consider and discuss the following. When possible, use a concordance to give the book, chapter, and verse that validates your answer.

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- A. How can we be in the world but not of the world (John 17:16)?
By not living an ungodly lifestyle (Rom. 12:1-2).
- B. How many families has the Heavenly Father established? One (Eph.3:15)
- C. As far as we know, only God's children are heirs of the Father (Eph. 1: 5-10).
- D. How many churches are in the family? One universal church (Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23)
- E. As members of the family, what characteristic(s) set Christians apart from the world?
Ans. They place things of God ahead of mundane affairs. Specifically, Christians do not lie, steal, or use the name of God inappropriately. They enjoy doing what God wants us to do, they are kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another and they are faithful to their spouse. A good description is in Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1-33 Col. 3:1-17.
- F. How can love be expressed in the family? By word and by deed (1 Jn. 3:18).
- G. Do we love those out of the family the same as we love family members? No. It is a different kind of love.
- H. How should we show our regard for those out of the family? Love them enough to tell them about Jesus' provisions (Matt. 5:43-48; Rom. 10:1, 16).
- VI. Questions for discussion:
- A. Can we love those outside of the family the same as we love family members? Apply this to the church.
- B. What are four causes of trouble in the family of God? (Read the books of Corinthians for numerous examples.)
- C. How can we avoid these problems or solve them after they surface?

The Church as the Body of Christ Chapter 14

INTRODUCTION: Some people tell us that we can be saved in the church or out of it; in other words, it does not matter if we are part of a church, Christ's church, or even if we attend worship service. God tells us through the apostle Paul that the church is the

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body of Christ (Col. 1:18). Logically, if we can be saved out of the church as some people say, then we can be saved out of Christ. However, God says that salvation is in Christ (II Tim. 2:10). We can resolve the conflict if we remember that we are justified by faith in God (Gal. 2:16); we are not justified by faith in the wisdom of the world (I Cor. 2:12-13; 3:19). We must study to avoid being led astray (II Tim. 2:15).

I. The church as a singularity:

- A. There is one body (Rom. 12:4; Eph. 4:4; Col. 1:18).
- B. The body has many members (Rom. 12:4-5; I Cor. 12:12,20,27).
- C. Christ's body is His church (Eph. 1:22-23).
- D. Jews and Gentiles are reconciled in one body (Eph. 2:16).
- E. There is one body (Rom. 12:4). That body is the church (Eph. 1:23); so there is only one church.

II. Who is the head of the body (Eph. 5:23-25)? Christ

- A. The saved are in the body (Eph. 5:23; Acts 2:47).
- B. We are reconciled to God through Christ in His body (II Cor. 5:18; Eph. 2:16).
- C. Salvation and eternal life are in Christ (II Tim. 2:10; I John 5:11).
- D. We glorify God in the church (Eph. 3:20-21).
- E. Christ is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23).

III. Obligations of membership:

- A. We must strive for unity and care in the body (I Cor. 12:24-25).
- B. Suffer and rejoice for each other (I Cor. 12:25-27).
- C. We must be united (I Cor. 12:14-19).

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The Church as the Bride of Christ Chapter 15

INTRODUCTION: In the Old Testament, the Spirit inspired Isaiah to compare the Lord's people to a bride (Isaiah 49:18-22). Here the Spirit compared the church to a bride and Christ to a bridegroom. God's love for the children of Abraham (Jer. 31:2-4) and for the church (Eph. 5:25; Rev. 1:5-6) illustrates His patience and leadership, and confirms the deity of Christ. This love carried Jesus from heaven to earth where those He came to save killed Him. Yet by His death and His resurrection, Christ opened the door of salvation for His beloved bride and displayed the great love wherewith God loves us.

- I. The inspired writers of the Old Testament used the description of the bride and a marriage to describe the relationship between God and His chosen people.
 - A. The Spirit asks a "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?" Then He says "Yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jer. 2:32).
 - B. In Jer.3, Judah and Israel, the divided Kingdom, was likened to a wife who had become a harlot (Jer. 3:1).
 - C. What did Judah and Israel do that angered the Lord (Jer. 5:25,31; 19:4, 5;29:21-23)?
Ans.: The people sinned. They worshipped other gods and offered their children as burnt offerings to those gods. Their prophets prophesied falsely, the priests ruled improperly, and the people loved to have it so.
 - D. The Lord hates divorce (= putting away) (Mal. 2:16); yet He divorced Judah and Israel (Jer. 3:8).
 - E. Why did God want to divorce His people (Jer. 3:13)? Ans. They transgressed God's law and would not repent.
During Jeremiah's time, Babylon conquered the Lord's people and carried them off to slavery. Later, Syria defeated Babylon. Before the captivity, Jeremiah had prophesied the return of the captives to Israel (Jer. 25:12). When Cyrus came to power, he allowed the Hebrews to begin returning to their land.
 - F. After the people returned from slavery, they did better for a while; what happened after that (Ezra 10:10-12; Mal. 1:6-10; 3:7) Ans. They intermarried with the local people and began worshipping their gods.

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- II. In the New Testament, God loved his followers as a bridegroom loves his bride.
- A. Matthew records Jesus as comparing Himself to a bridegroom (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:34).
 - B. In the parables of the kingdom spoken by Christ just before His death, Jesus likened himself to a bridegroom (Matt. 25:5).
 - C. The virgins may represent those who care for the bridegroom (Matt. 25:1).
 - D. We are told that when the bridegroom arrived, some were prepared and some were not (Matt. 25). Which group knew when the bridegroom would arrive (Matt. 25:13)? Ans. Neither group knew when the bridegroom would arrive.
 - E. When will Christ come (Matt. 24:36)? Ans. God knows but Jesus didn't know and we do not know.
 - F. John speaks of Christ as the bridegroom and says that he has a bride (John 3:29).
 - G. John tells us in Revelation 21:2 that he saw the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. In Rev. 21:9-10, he tells us what that bride was the church.
 - H. John tells us that the Lamb's (= Jesus') wife prepared herself by dressing in fine linen (Rev. 19:6-8). That "linen" is actually the righteousness of the saints (Rev. 19:8).
 - I. The Spirit and the bride invite all who will to come and drink of the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17).
- III. Application of the description. Discuss.
- A. What did God expect from those who were His people in Old Testament times? Ans. He expected them to obey His laws and love Him.
 - B. If we can assume the bride is the church and the Bridegroom is Jesus Christ, what words of caution do the scriptures offer Christians (Consider Matt. 25)? Ans. Those who love Christ must be prepared for the coming of the Savior. Those who are not prepared will not receive the promise.

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- C. Discuss what similarities exist between what the Lord required under the Law of Moses and under Christ's law. Ans. Under both laws, stealing, killing, fornication, disrespecting God's name, and disobeying God's laws were forbidden. Under both eating blood was also forbidden.
- D. The apostle Paul identifies the bride as a virgin espoused to Christ by the word "you" (II Cor. 11:2). The "you" refers to the church that Paul had addressed in the first verse of the book (II Cor. 1:1). The apostle John is using figurative language to tell us about the church or Heaven in Revelation 21 and 22:1-5.

Complete the following chart and decide for yourself if these chapters describe the church or Heaven or both.

Evidence that Suggests Revelation 21 and 22 Refers to the Church		
Common Element/Location	Comparable Reference	Revelation Reference
Bride = Church	II Cor. 1:1; 11:2	Rev. 21:2,9
No sun	Isa. 60:19 (describes the church established by Christ)	Rev. 21:23
Nations walk in the light and kings of earth bring their glory and honor to it	Isa. 60:3,5; 66:12	Rev. 21:26

The Purpose of the Church Chapter 16

INTRODUCTION: God had a plan for the church from the beginning of the world; He had a reason for building it (Eph. 3:9-12). Human traditions must not subvert the purpose of the church. The church was not established to:

1. Be an entertainment center for the young or elderly,
2. Run the government or a business,
3. Function as a health or welfare agency in the physical sense.

Rather, the church has its God-given work: preaching the gospel to the lost world (Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Thess. 1:8), spiritual edification of the members (Eph. 4:16) and benevolence (Gal. 6:10).

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I. Preaching the gospel to bring the lost to Christ:

A. At the Final Judgment, what will happen to those whose names are not found in God's book of life (Luke 13:26-28; Rev. 22:12-15)?

Ans. They will be condemned.

B. The great commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:14-16):

1. The great commission was given to the apostles (Matt. 28:16).

2. Who must be taught? All nations

3. Who gave the great commission? Jesus

4. The church should teach the same things that the apostles taught (Gal. 1:7-9)?

C. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:14-15).

D. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

E. "The gospel is the power of God to salvation" (Rom. 1:16).

1. The Corinthians were saved by obedience to the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4).

2. Cornelius needed words spoken to him to be saved (Acts 11:14).

3. People are begotten or born again by the gospel (I Cor. 4:15; I Pet. 1:23).

4. Jesus told Saul of Tarsus to go to Damascus and there it would be told him what he must do to be saved (Acts 9:6-8).

II. Edification:

A. What does "edification" mean? To build up, instruct, or to encourage

B. In what ways are Christians instructed to grow, or mature?

1. (II Pet. 3:18) grace and knowledge

2. (II Thess. 1:3) faith and love

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3. (Phil. 1:9) knowledge and all discernment
4. (James 4:7; I Pet. 5:8-10) in their ability to resist Satan
5. (Rom. 12:12 read this entire chapter, it is great!) joy, patience, and steadfastness

C. Admonitions:

1. Define "admonition" to instruct or to warn
2. "Be rooted and built up in the faith" (Col. 2:6-7).
3. "Seek those things which are above ..." (Col. 3:1).
4. "... Desire the sincere milk of the word so that we can grow" (I Pet. 2:1-2).
5. "Be strong in the Lord" (Eph. 6:10).
6. List five duties of a Christian (I Cor. 16:13-14).
 - a. Watch
 - b. Stand fast in the faith
 - c. Be brave
 - d. Be strong
 - e. Let all be done with love

D. What seven things hinder spiritual growth?

1. (II Thess. 2:2-12) False teachers and false doctrines; wrong attitudes toward the truth of God's Word
2. (I Tim. 6:9-11) Love of money
3. (I Pet. 2:1-2) Malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, evil speaking

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4. (Rom. 10:1-3) Zeal without knowledge
5. (Prov. 16:18) Pride or a haughty spirit
6. (Heb. 5:11) Dullness of hearing
7. (II Tim. 2:23) Foolish and ignorant disputes

E. What seven things promote spiritual growth?

1. (Tit. 2:1) Sound doctrine
2. (Heb. 2:1-3) Giving heed to the truth of God's Word
3. (Jam. 1:22-25) Being a hearer and doer of God's Word
4. (I Tim. 5:6-10) Doing good works
5. (Heb. 4:14-16) Prayer
6. (Phil. 2:1-4) Unity and humility
7. (Heb. 13:7-17) Submitting to elders and following their example

III. Discussion questions:

- A. A child grows up, reaches maturity then he or she doesn't normally grow any longer. Can the same be said of a Christian? Why or why not?

Ans. No, a Christian continues to grow and mature as long as he or she lives. We never learn everything there is to know about God's will, but we can learn enough to teach and to attain heaven by the grace of God if we are steadfast in the faith.

- B. Compare and contrast the responsibility of the Church and the responsibility of the Christian in an individual's spiritual growth.

Ans. The church has an obligation to teach the entire truth found in God's word. The individual has an obligation to study to be approved by God. We should be lifetime learners rightly dividing the word and able to instruct those interested and diligent to oppose error.

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The Power of Faith Chapter 17

INTRODUCTION: Without faith, a Christian's way of life is reduced to an assemblage of philosophical principles and Heaven moves beyond the reach of humanity. However, faith and love elevate the doctrine of Christ above all earthly philosophies and brings us to the very door of Heaven. Saving faith is not just belief in the existence of God, the Father, or Jesus, His only begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit. James 2:19 tells us that although the devils believe and even tremble, their belief does not motivate them to participate in the steps of faith (Jam. 2; Tit. 1:16). For this reason their faith is dead (Jam. 2:26) and unprofitable for salvation. If our faith is a living faith, it must be a working faith; it motivates us to obey God. Some religious groups have erred from the Bible, falling into Satan's trap, by separating faith and work. Faith that is not strong enough to work is not strong enough to carry anyone to Heaven (Phil. 2:12).

- I. Faith is a trusting, confident belief that God will fulfill all He has promised if we obey His word.
 - A. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).
 - B. Why were the gospel of Christ and the miracles of Jesus recorded for us? (John 20:30-31) So that we can believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God
 - C. After reading Hebrews 11 and I John 5:1-3, one could say that love, faith, and obedience must go hand in hand. Can one of these three be separated from the other two and justify anyone? Explain:
Ans. No, love, faith and obedience are linked by works. Love demonstrates our faith and our obedience. Faith moves us to obey God. Love constrains us to obey the One we believe in. These three are united.
 - D. Enoch pleased God (Heb. 11:5). How did Enoch do this (Gen. 5:24; Jude 14)? By faith Where did Enoch probably go when God took him (Luke 23:43)? To Paradise
- II. How faith comes:
 - A. Faith does not come through a miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of selected men and women. If it did, God would be a respector of persons (Acts 10:34).

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B. Bible evidence for the origin of faith:

1. "These things are written that ye might believe " (John 20:30-31).
2. We believe in Christ through the words of the apostles (John 17:20).
3. Faith comes from hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17).
4. Preaching the word of God produced faith (Acts 8:12).
5. Words were spoken to Cornelius before he was saved (Acts 10; 11; esp. 11:13-14).
6. The devil realizes that the word of God is the basis of faith; therefore, he tries to steal it from the heart (Luke 8:11-12).

III. Faith is important:

- A. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).
- B. Without faith in Christ we will die in our sins (John 8:24).
- C. Man's heart is purified by faith (Acts 15:9).
- D. Man is justified by faith (Rom. 5:1).
- E. Christians walk by faith (II Cor. 5:7).
- F. Christians live by faith in Christ (Gal. 2:20).

IV. Confession of faith in Christ precedes baptism.

- A. Why must we believe in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10; John 12:42-43)?

Ans. The Old Testament points toward the coming of the Messiah. The New Testament points back to the Messiah, Christ. If we do not believe Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecy, God's son, nothing we can do will save us eternally for Jesus is the only way we can come to the Father, His blood covers our sins and His death opened the door of Heaven to all obedient believers.

- B. When we confess our belief in Christ, what will He do for us (Matt. 10:32-33)? Confess us before God in Heaven

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C. The Ethiopian eunuch confessed (faith in Christ, his sins) to Phillip before he was baptized (Acts 8:36-39). (Circle the correct answer.)

V. Questions for consideration:

A. Why doesn't faith alone save anyone eternally? (Jam. 2:24) Ans. Our faith must motivate us to obey Christ. The devils believe in Christ and proclaim Him but they won't obey Him.

B. Name 5 things that justify us.

1. Rom. 3:24 grace

2. Rom. 5:1 faith

3. James 2:24 works

4. Rom. 5:9 the blood of Jesus

5. Acts 13:39 faith

C. Consider Abraham. Was he justified by faith (Rom. 4; Heb. 11), or by works (Jam. 2)? Is God contradicting Himself in His word? (Hint: see II above). Explain.

Ans. Abraham was justified by faith and works. He believed and obeyed God. He was not justified by the Law of Moses, but by an obedient faith in God. No, God does not contradict Himself in His Word.

D. How are we "obedient to the faith" (Rom. 1:5)?

(Hint: consider Rom. 1:16). Romans is more easily understood if the student remembers that the first eleven chapters of this wonderful book compare and contrast the Law of Moses, the Jewish system, with the Law of Christ, the system of faith, and establish that all, Jew and Gentile, need grace found in the Law of Christ. Gal. 2:21; 3:12-14 is a good commentary on the first part of Romans.)

Ans. We are obedient to the faith when we accept God's grace and obey His commands.

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The Good Confession Chapter 18

INTRODUCTION: In the plan of salvation, Christ is elevated to His rightful position in the life of the believer. Hearing produces belief which motivates us to confess the name of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, our Savior, in a public manner. We are not confessing sins generally or specifically. Instead, we are honoring Jesus and proclaiming His sovereignty in our life. We are publicly recognizing that Christ died for our sins. We were bought, ransomed from sin at a terrible cost! Our confession prepares us to fulfill the next step; we must apply His death to our sin in baptism (Rev. 1:5).

I. Commands and a promise:

- A. What are we to confess at the time of our baptism? (Matt. 10:32)
(Check one)
1. Belief in Jesus (I John 4:15; Rom. 10:10). Yes
 2. Our sins (I John 1:9). No, but they are acknowledged in the act of repentance.
- B. If we confess the name of Christ, what promise do we have (Luke 12:8-9; Rev. 3:5)? Ans. That Christ will confess us to God.
- C. If we do not choose to confess Christ while alive, what does the Bible guarantee (John 12:42-43; Phil. 2:9-11, I John 4:3; II John 7)?
Ans. God will not approve of us. We will all confess Christ in the end. For some, it will be bring delight; for others, it will bring remorse.

II. Questions to consider:

- A. Is the confession of our belief, our confidence, in Jesus limited to a single act done prior to baptism, or is it a daily confession as well?
Ans. No, it is not limited to a single act, but is done daily.
- B. After death, at Judgment, what will all do (Rom. 14:11-12; Phil. 2:10-11)?
Give account of ourselves to God and confess Christ.
- C. Will this good confession that sinners make at Judgment after they have died save them (Rom. 14:11)? No Why or why not?
Ans. Because they chose not to confess Christ in their lives nor were they baptized. They face God in their sins.

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The Importance of Repentance Chapter 19

INTRODUCTION: Repentance is a change of will caused by sorrow for one's sin. This change of will produces a change of life. Repentance begins after hearing the gospel and believing in Jesus Christ, but the reformation of a life that conforms it to the spiritual values of God takes time to accomplish completely. It is a maturing process. God helps us mature through the Holy Spirit given at baptism (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit works through the Bible to produce faith (Rom. 10:17); faith produces works (Gal. 5:6). Christ died for our sins (I Cor. 15:3). Thus, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and each one of us work together toward our salvation. We are privileged to be co-workers together with the Godhead. That is an honor that the ancients could not have imagined (I Pet. 1:8-12). Repentance is not sorrow for sin (II Cor. 7:10). Sorrow for sin precedes repentance. Reformation of one's life is the result of repentance (Matt. 3:7-8; Luke 3:7-14).

I. Repentance is a command:

- A. Jesus taught us to repent (Matt. 4:17; Luke 13:3).
- B. Repentance and remission of sins are preached in the name of Jesus (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:38).
- C. God commands all men to repent (Acts 17:30).
- D. Repentance is necessary for remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19).
- E. Why should we repent (Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:5-11)?
Ans. It prepares us for faithful service to God in life and for the Final Judgment Day.

II. Examples of people who repented:

- A. The people of Nineveh (Matt.12:41; Jonah 3:10).
- B. The thief who repented (Luke 23:39-43; John 21:15-17).
- C. The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-24).
- D. The Jews who heard Peter and the other apostles preach on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

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III. Questions for discussion:

- A. Suppose a man stole your television, then later came and said he was sorry. He asked for your forgiveness, but he kept your television. What would this thief need to do if he really repented?

Ans. The thief would need to return what he stole or pay the amount it would take to purchase a new item.

- B. Suppose a young person became addicted to illegal drugs. Soon after that, he learned about God's love and had the courage to become a Christian.

1. Is he still addicted to drugs or did baptism erase the addiction? Ans. He is still addicted.

2. Can he still use drugs or will he sin against God's law if he does? (Consider: John 8:34; I Cor. 16:15; Rom. 6:16; 16:13.)

Ans. He cannot use illegal drugs.

3. Is the body the temple of God (Find the book chapter and verse; hint: Paul wrote it to the church at Corinth)?

Ans. 1 Cor. 6:19-20

3. Can a Christian continue to damage the temple of God and remain in God's favor? Why or why not? Ans. No, damaging the temple of God shows disrespect to God.

4. After he is baptized, what must the youth do to remain in favor with God?
Stop his addiction to drugs

5. If we are sick, why is it not wrong to take medication to regain health?

Ans. We are trying to regain normal health or preserve life.

6. Alcohol and tobacco are both drugs.

7. How can a Christian recognize the difference between use and abuse?

Ans. Use helps heal us; whereas, abuse hurts or damages our body, the Temple of God.

8. Although God is able to forgive past sins, we must still suffer the consequences of our sin. Does this fact negate God's love? Explain.

Ans. No, God still loves us but we must pay the consequences for our sins.

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Baptism: An End and a Beginning Chapter 20

INTRODUCTION: Baptism is the final step in the birth of a child into the family of God; here we become children of God (Rom. 8:14-16). Also, in baptism, we participate in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12). After we are baptized, God expects us to live a life of faithful service to God. If we are faithful children of God, after we die, we will ultimately join God the Father in Heaven. Then we can rejoice being at home in the presence of the love of God, since our trials on earth are over and our battles won.

I. What is baptism?

A. The Bible teaches:

1. Brief Greek lesson: *BAPTIZO* (translated baptize) means to dip, immerse, or submerge according to W. E. Vine (p. 98).
2. Baptism is a burial in water (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12).
3. When Phillip baptized the eunuch, both went down into the water (Acts 8:38-39).

B. People say one may be baptized by sprinkling, pouring or by immersion.

1. In A.D. 251, Noatian was "baptized" when someone poured water on him (*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. vol.1, pp. 288-289). It was the first recorded unscriptural baptism.
2. In A.D.1311, the Council of Reveena said that it was acceptable to substitute sprinkling and pouring for immersion (Thomas, Leslie G., *Restoration Handbook*, p. 36).

C. What does God say when people change His commands (Deut. 12:32; Matt.15: 8-9; Jude 3; Rev. 22:19)? Ans. He is not pleased with it.

II. Who may be baptized?

A. What God says:

1. Hearing the gospel, or teaching precedes baptism (Matt. 28:19).
2. Belief precedes baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12).

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3. Repentance precedes baptism (Acts 2:38).
4. Confession of faith in Christ precedes baptism (Acts 8:36-38; Rom. 10:9).
5. Infants and small children do not need baptism because they can not believe, repent or confess faith in Christ.
They are safe in the love of God because they have not sinned; they do not know to do good or evil (Isa.7:14-16;59:2; Ezek.18:1-4, 20; Luke 18:16).

III. The purpose of baptism according to God:

- A. Baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
- B. We are baptized:
 1. To be saved (Mark 16:16),
 2. To put on Christ (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3,4).
 3. To enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3,5).
 4. Into Christ's death (Rom.6:3).
 5. To wash away sins (Acts 22:16).
 6. To be raised with Christ (Col.2:12).
 7. To participate in the newness of life in Christ (Rom.6:4; II Cor.5:17; Col.3:1-4).
 8. To obey the command of the Lord (Acts 10:48; Heb.5:8-9; Matt.28:19; Mark 16:15-16; Rev.22:14).

IV. What uninspired people say:

- A. Origen said infants need baptism (Wall, William. *History of Infant Baptism*, vol. 1, pp. 205, 206).
- B. The idea that sin is inherited is based on the false assumptions that are still common today (Tolle, James. *The One Baptism*, p. 37). It may also come from a misunderstanding of Romans 5:12-17 and Psalms 51:5 that comes from missing Ezek.18:4. This philosophy says that:

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1. Physical birth is sinful (Remember, Jesus was also born; yet He was without sin, Heb. 4:15).
2. Water baptism eliminates the "sin" of birth and the "original inherited" sin of Adam. If "original inherited sin" were a true doctrine, then since Jesus was born of Mary, He would have inherited sin through Mary and could not have been sinless. The Catholics proposed the idea of "immaculate conception" so Mary would not pass on the "inherited sin" to Jesus.
3. However, according to Eccl. 7:29; Isa. 59:1-2; Zech. 12:1; and Eze. 18:20, the concept of inherited sin is an error. When John baptized Jesus, Jesus was not dealing with His sin or Adams' sin, rather He was "fulfilling all righteousness" (Matt. 3:13-17). Jesus knew no sin (Isai. 53:5; II Cor. 5:20-21; Heb. 9:13-15); therefore, He could be the perfect sacrifice (I Peter 2:22-24; I John 3:4).

C. Man teaches:

1. Baptism is not necessary for salvation.
2. Small children must be baptized for original or inborn sin.
3. We may be baptized for people who died out of Christ (This strange doctrine comes from a misunderstanding of I Cor. 15:29. This problem is considered in the appendix).
4. Baptism is not necessary for salvation but is necessary for obedience (This brings up the obvious question: is obedience necessary for salvation; conversely, if we are not obedient, can we be saved? Very illogical!).

V. Questions for thought

- A. Will baptism alone save anyone? No Why or why not?
Ans. The Bible teaches that there are also other things we must do to be saved (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 10:9-10).
- B. What kind of baptism is mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 4:5? Ans. The one baptism here is the baptism of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) because that was the only baptism in effect at that time.
- C. Explain I Peter 3:21. Ans. When combined with other essential steps, baptism saves us.

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D. In baptism, we contact what event that was unique in the history of the universe (Rom. 6: 1-5; Rev. 1:5)?

Ans. The death of Christ.

E. What effect does baptism have on sins (Rev 1:5)?

Ans. Baptism washes sin away.

Church Activities: Prayer Chapter 21

INTRODUCTION: We are led to believe that trips, games and secular fun should be considered church activities. The Bible teaches us to love one another (I John 3:23) and enjoy friendship with other Christians (Romans 12:10); however, the most precious activity we share is our fellowship with the family of God in the faith. Specifically, this fellowship occurs during worship. The purpose of worship is not only to exalt God, but also to strengthen Christians and draw them into a deeper partnership with the Godhead. In the past, God has found the worship offered by believers unacceptable because they did not worship properly (Lev. 10:1-7; Amos 5:21-22; John 4:23-24). What is done in worship and how it is done is very important to God.

Today, we are able to recognize the church of the Bible by the elements of worship and by the attitudes displayed by the worshipers. The next five lessons will analyze scriptural worship and what it involves. Prayer, the first element, opens the door to the greatest power the Earth, or the Universe, will ever know; but it is a power that most Christians do not fully utilize.

I. Prayer was not intended to:

- A. Be an emergency cord pulled only in time of trouble,
- B. Inform God or scorn men (Luke 18:10-14),
- C. Serve selfish desires (James 4:3),
- D. Instruct the Lord (Exodus 32:31-33),
- E. Nullify or circumvent God's commands.

II. Prayer is made of words that we address to God the Father (Matt. 6:9).

A. What must our attitude be when we pray?

1. We must ask in faith (Jam. 1:6; Matt. 21:22).

2. We must be righteous (I Pet. 3:12).

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3. All prayers must be asked according to God's will (I John 3:22; 5:14; Luke 22:42).
 4. We must ask in the name of the Lord (John 15:16).
 5. We must have the right attitude for prayer (Jam. 4:3; I Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17).
 6. We must have a forgiving spirit (Matt. 6:14,15).
 7. We must understand what we are saying (I Cor. 14:15).
 8. We must always pray in the name of Jesus (John 14:13; Col. 3:17; Rom. 1:8).
- B. We may pray for specific things then work for them. Things prayed for:
1. Daily bread (Matt. 6:11; Gen. 3:19),
 2. All men, for kings, and all who are in authority (I Tim. 2:1-2),
 3. Wisdom (Jam. 1:5, 6),
 4. For forgiveness of sins (I John 1:9; 2:1-2; Matt. 6:12),
 5. For our enemies (Matt. 5:44),
 6. For the sick (Jam. 5:14),
 7. For rulers and those in authority that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life (I Tim. 2:1, 2),
 8. Relative to temptation:
 - a. Watch and pray lest we enter into temptation (Matt. 26:41),
 - b. Endure in time of temptation (I Cor. 10:13),
 - c. Deliverance from temptation (Matt. 6:13; II Pet. 2:9).
 9. Pray for the harvest (Matt. 9:38; John 4:35),
 10. Preaching of the gospel (II Thess. 3:1-2; Eph. 6:19-20).

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III. Role of the Godhead in prayer:

- A. What is the role of God (Rom. 8:14, 15; Eph. 4:6; Matt. 6:5-8)?
Ans. He hears the prayers of His children and answers according to His will.
- B. Jesus is our Advocate with the Father (I John 2:1-2; Heb. 4:14-16; Rom. 8:34).
- C. The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities (Rom. 8:26; John 1:20).

IV. List four acceptable positions for one who is praying. (Consider: I Kings 8:22-23; Psa.92:6; Matt.26:39; Acts 20:36; I Tim.2:8)?

Ans. Sitting, laying down, lifting holy hands, standing. It's the disposition of the heart, not the position of the body that's important.

V. We have a direct command to pray.

- A. "pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17,18).
- B. Men ought always to pray and not to faint (Luke 18:1).

VI. We have approved examples of people praying:

- A. Jesus prayed (Luke 3:21; 6:12; 23:34; Matt. 14:23; 26:34-44; Mark 1:35; John 17).
- B. The church prayed (Acts 12:5).
- C. The elders and other Christians are commanded to pray for the sick (James 5:14).
- D. Pray for one another (James 5:16)

VII. How should we pray?

- A. Why shouldn't we pray to impress people? (Matt. 6:5-6) Ans. Our prayers are directed to God, not people. If we want to pray and impress people we may do that but it might be all our prayers accomplish.

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- B. Some people say that Christians need a "prayer partner." God supplied us with two. Who are they (Rom. 8:26,34)? Ans. Holy Spirit and Jesus

VIII. God gives two promises:

- A. He promised us eternal life (I John 2:25). God has kept this promise. We have eternal life in promise, but where we spend eternity is another matter.
- B. God will do what we ask if we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight (I John 3:22). However, we must ask properly (James 4:3), and ask without doubting (James 1:6).

Church Activities: The Lord's Supper Chapter 22

INTRODUCTION: Many religious groups celebrate the Lord's Supper. Some use bread and water; others, wine and unleavened bread; still others use grape juice and unleavened bread. Some teach that the bread changes to the literal body of Christ and the fruit of the vine becomes His blood (Albert Barnes, *Notes on the New Testament, Matt.-Mark*, 1982, pp. 282-283). The religious world is confused about this simple, loving rite. For those who seek to do God's will, the Holy Bible is the written standard that explains what the early church ate and drank when celebrating the Lord's Supper, when they participated in this act, and why it was done.

I. Origin of the Lord's Supper:

- A. Who instituted the Lord's Supper (Matt. 25:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-26)? Jesus
- B. When was it instituted? (I Cor. 11:23) Ans. On the night Jesus was betrayed
- C. According to the theory of "transubstantiation," sacramental bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ in a miraculous way while keeping only the appearances of bread and wine (Merriam Webster's *Deluxe Dictionary*, Tenth Collegiate ed. 1998). Jesus said in Matt. 26:27-29 that the fruit of the vine was His blood shed for the remission of sins. Did the liquid in the cup literally become the blood or was this change in the spiritual sense (Matt. 26:29)? Ans. The change was in a symbolic or spiritual sense.
Occasionally, Jesus used a physical item to serve as a symbol for something spiritual as in John 10:9 when He said He was a door.

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II. The elements of the Lord's supper:

- A. Jesus' body is symbolized by the unleavened bread (Matt. 26:26).
- B. The fruit of the vine represents His blood (Matt. 26:28).
- C. There is no record of other elements being substituted by Christ's authority; in fact, Paul says that "...as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until He comes (II Cor. 11:26). Failure to use these elements fails to show the Lord's death.
- D. According to *Young's Analytical Concordance* (1970), the Greek term *oinos* was used for fermented wine as well as for grape juice that is unfermented in John 2:3-10, Luke 1:15, Eph.5:18 and I Tim.3:8 and others. However, the term used by Jesus for the drink at the Lord's table was *gennena*, which means "produce" according to Young. Thus, although we are commanded to use the "produce of the vine" by Jesus, based on these references many believe that local congregations may decide if fermented or unfermented grape juice is best depending on which one was available, the culture, and current medical opinion. Let's examine the matter further:
- E. The wine and bread were part of the Jewish rite called the Passover (Exo. 12:6,18; Matt. 26:17-28).
- F. At that time all leaven had to be removed from the house (Exo. 12:18-20).
- G. Leaven is the result of the fermentation of yeast (Merriam Webster's Deluxe Dictionary); essentially the same process produces wine, fermented grape juice. If this is true, in light of Exodus 12:20, what type of "wine" should be used?
Ans. Grape juice
- H. In addition to this inference, we are told that God condemns drunkenness (Prov. 23:21; I Cor. 5:11; 6:9-11).
- G. Some brethren believe that the entire congregation should drink from one cup. However, Jesus Christ authorized dividing the fruit of the vine (Luke 22:16-22, esp. 17).

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F. What kind of bread was used:

1. What were the apostles and Jesus celebrating in the upper room (Mark 14:1)? Ans. The Passover, or Feast of Unleavened Bread.
2. During this feast, what kind of bread was used (Mark 14:1; Exo. 13:3-7)?
Unleavened

III. Purpose:

- A. We do it to show Jesus' death (I Cor. 11:24).
- B. The Lord's Supper is also celebrated in expectation of Jesus' return (Matt. 26:26-29); I Cor. 11:26).
- C. What words of caution do the scriptures offer Christians (I Cor. 11:28-29)? Ans. We must take the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner discerning the body of Christ, or risk eating and drinking damnation to ourselves.
- D. The Lord's supper proclaims a New Testament or new covenant (Matt. 26:28; I Cor. 11:25).

IV. When the Lord's Supper was observed:

- A. What day of our week was the Jewish Sabbath day (= seventh day) (Exo. 20:10)? Saturday (check a dictionary.) It lasted from Friday evening until Saturday evening. Therefore, the next day which is Sunday is the first day of the week.
- B. Paul, an apostle, said to do it on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).
- C. How long should we continue to observe the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:26; Acts 20:7)? Until Jesus returns
- D. How frequently should we take the Lord's Supper? (Acts 2:42; 20:7)?
Ans. Weekly

V. Who may partake?

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- A. They that were Jewish Christians including the apostles (Acts 2:42).
- B. The disciples gathered to break bread and listen to Paul (Acts 20:7).

VII. Terms used to designate the Lord's Supper:

A. Scriptural terms:

- 1. Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:20)
- 2. Break bread (Acts 2:42; 20:7)
- 3. Communion (I Cor.10:16)
- 4. The Lord's table (I Cor.10:21; Luke 22:29-30)

B. Unscriptural terms:

- 1. "Eucharist" according to Webster means gratitude. It comes from a Greek word that means "giving thanks." Such a term may express our emotion for the sacrifice Jesus Christ made, but it is better to call something biblical by the name God gave it through the Holy Spirit to the inspired authors of the Bible than to make up our own names.
- 2. "Sacrament" comes from a Latin word meaning "Oath of allegiance" according to Webster. Christ said the Lord's Supper showed His death until He returns. It is not an "oath," but a symbol. Our "oath," our joining with God, occurs during the first steps of faith that include baptism into Christ when we put on Christ, and culminates with a life that is lived in Christ.

VIII. Discuss:

A. Why should we use biblical terms for biblical acts and events?

Ans. It helps identify what we do in religion. It also affirms that what we do is similar to what was done by early Christians.

B. Why doesn't the Lord's Supper include the offering?

Ans. This rite was established by the Lord and Jesus said it included unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. We're also commanded to lay by in store on the first day of the week. Jesus did not specify when during worship these two events, the Lord's Supper and the giving, were to be done; so elders are free to say they can be handled as seems convenient. Most elders feel that giving should be handled after the Lord's Supper.

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- C. What is more important, the order of the bread and fruit of the vine, or the attitude of the disciples of Christ when they partake (Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:16-19)?

Ans. The attitude of the disciples of Christ.

Church Activities: Music

Part I

Chapter 23

INTRODUCTION: Religious groups generally agree that worship should include some form of music. The type of music, vocal, mechanical or a combination of the two is more controversial. Fortunately, a standard of authority is available to guide individuals who are seeking to do God's will, the Word of God.

- I. Is some form of music necessary to worship God?

- A. We should sing with our lips (Heb. 13:15) making melody in our heart (Eph. 5:19).
- B. Paul wrote to the church at Colossae saying that Christians should teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).

- II. Attitude:

- A. How must we worship God (John. 4:23-24)? We must worship God in spirit and in truth.
- B. When we sing, we are offering a sacrifice of praise to God (Heb. 13:15).
- C. In the past, God's people offered sacrifices of inferior quality to God (Mal. 1:7-14). How did God feel about such offerings (Mal. 1:10)?
Ans. God will accept nothing less than our best.
- D. How must we sing for it to be acceptable to God (I Cor.1 4:15)?
With the spirit and with the understanding
- E. Some people say, "I can't carry a tune, so I don't sing." Read Psalm 66:1 and following. How could you answer such a person?
Ans. God would not command us to do something He knew that we could not do. Ps. 66:1 is also a good answer. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord...

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III. Brief Greek lesson:

A. *Psallo*:

1. According to M. C. Kurfees, 1975, *Instrumental Music in Worship*, p. 16, *psallo* has had different meanings through time. For instance, this word has been used to mean:
 - a. To pluck hair,
 - b. To twang a bowstring,
 - c. To twitch a carpenter's line,
 - d. To touch the chords of a musical instrument in a way to produce music,
 - e. To sing, to touch the chords of the human heart, to celebrate with human praise.
2. The New Testament was written in Koine (pronounced Koin-a) Greek, a form of Greek spoken for a very short time. During this time, *psallo* meant only 1e above, not 1a-d.

B. In Ephesians 5:19, a form of *psallo* completes the thought of the verse.

IV. In light of this information, should we use an instrument of music when we sing in worship to God?

- A. Yes, as long as that instrument is designated by God. We sing with our voice and make melody with our heart (Eph. 5:19). The instrument we are commanded to use is our heart.
- B. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, were priests (Ex.28:1). They made an unacceptable offering to God, one He had not commanded. What did God think of their offering? (Lev. 10:1-3) Ans. God was so angry that he killed them.

What does this event tell us about our offering of worship to God (I Cor. 4:6; II John 9)?

Ans. We should only offer worship to God that is in compliance with His authority.

- C. God said we should sing and make music with the heart (Eph. 5:19). Why can't we add another instrument to the service and still please God? Ans. We must worship as God commanded for our worship to please God.

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- D. Mechanical instruments were not used until Pope Vitalian introduced organs in some Catholic Churches of Western Europe around A.D. 670 (*The American Encyclopedia*, vol. 12, pp. 6-88).

Church Activities: Music Part II Chapter 24

INTRODUCTION: Music is a very important part of worship but religious groups that claim to be Christian disagree on many aspects of music in worship such as whether music should be only vocal, vocal and instrumental or primarily instrumental. For our worship be acceptable to God, we must return to the Bible as our source of authority.

I. The purpose of music:

- A. We are to teach and admonish one another with psalms hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord (Col. 3:16).
- B. We should offer a sacrifice of praise to God with the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name (Heb. 13:15).

II. Considerations:

- A. God has provided us all that pertains to life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3).
- B. Some say that mechanical music adds to our faith. What is the biblical view? (Rom. 10:17) ?
Ans. Faith comes by hearing the word of God. We need to honor God by studying to see what He says is acceptable. When we obey God our faith will grow.

III. Discussion questions:

- A. Can we have mechanical instruments of music in our homes? Yes ___ Why?
Ans. God has not legislated what music instruments are in our homes.
- B. Why shouldn't we play religious music on mechanical instruments for our entertainment and worship? Ans. When we say don't use mechanical instruments in worship then play church songs at home on instruments, we set a confusing standard for those of the world.

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C. Should we listen to religious, a cappella music, on a recorder or CD player, television or radio? (Recall: a cappella is a Latin term that means in the style of the church, in other words, without instruments.)
 Ans. It is permissible, but if someone chooses not to, that is okay too.

D. If we feel a particular way is right, but there is no Bible command, inference or Biblical example of this, should we make it a test of fellowship? No. Who is becoming the judge of the faith of others in such a situation? The person who practices his opinion and expects others to follow his example.

VIII. Finally, let's compare man's thoughts with God's commands: (Over)

Man says:	God says:
Musical instruments were used in the Old Testament time (Amos 5:23).	Animal sacrifices were also used then (Exo. 29). Now hear Jesus (Matt. 17:5).
Harp is in Heaven, shouldn't they be used in the Church?	Incense is mentioned in Rev. 5:8, but God did not command the use of incense in worship and there is no example of the church using incense nor are we commanded to use incense (or musical instruments) in the New Testament.
Musical instruments make the singing sound better.	Our worship should please God, not humanity (Gal. 1:10).
The Bible does not say not to use mechanical instruments.	When God tells us what to use or do that excludes everything else. God told Noah to use gopher wood; He did not need to say "do not use oak or pine". Noah knew what God required.
Isn't a pitch pipe, or tuning fork the same thing as an instrument?	A pitch pipe or tuning fork sets the pitch for a song leader, it is not part of the worship, nor does it accompany any part of the worship service.

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The Grace of Giving Chapter 25

INTRODUCTION: Giving is one way we are able to share our blessings with others. God loves us so much that He sent His beloved Son to die for us in order that we might live eternally with Him. Also, we can be assured that Jesus loves us because He gave up His glory to suffer humiliation, pain and death and open Heaven's door for us. Such love constrains us to share whatever we have with the Lord and with others. By giving, we provide the world with an example of our love for the brethren, and prove that our emphasis is not on earthly riches but spiritual wealth. Our generosity is a very important measure of our love. One old preacher, perhaps Brother Keeble, said "If you give 'til it hurts, you haven't been givin' enough. We gotta give 'til it feels good!"

I. The Lord cares about:

A. The giver's attitude:

1. I must not love money (I Tim. 6:10).
2. I must not covet (Col. 3:5).
3. I must not trust in uncertain riches (I Tim. 6: 17-19).

B. What God wants us to do with material possessions:

1. Christians are to support the work of the church (Eph. 4:28; II Cor. 9:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).
2. Christians are to support their family (I Tim. 5:8).
3. They are also to support their government (Rom. 13:6-7; Matt. 17:24-27).

II. We can rob God!

- A. How did God's people of old do this to God (Mal. 3:8)? Ans. By withholding their tithes and by offering inferior sacrifices.
- B. Why was God upset (Mal. 3:9)? Ans. God said they had robbed Him.
- C. If they repented and obeyed God, He promised to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that could not be held (Mal. 3:10).

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D. If we find that we are having trouble giving, maybe we too have tried to rob God (Mal. 3:8; Luke 6:38).

III. Authority for giving:

A. Direct command:

1. When are we to give money (I Cor. 16:2)?
On the first day of the week
2. How much are we to give (I Cor. 16:2)?
As we have prospered – no set monetary amount.

B. Approved examples of individuals sharing or giving:

1. The Macedonian churches gave liberally to the poor saints at Jerusalem (II Cor. 8:1-2; I Cor. 16:1,3).
2. Lydia supported Paul and those working with him as he preached the gospel (Acts 16:15).
3. Dorcas made clothing for widows (Acts 9:39-42).
4. What did Paul give to God (generalize) (II Cor. 11:23-42)?
His life
5. Stephen gave his spirit to God (Acts 7:59).

IV. Motives for giving:

A. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

B. Giving does certain things for us:

1. It makes us more like God (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
2. It shows we love God and the brethren (I Cor. 16:1-2; I John 5:2-3).

C. We are ordered or commanded to give (I Cor. 16:1-2).

D. If we give, it shall be given to us, not sparingly but abundantly (Luke 6:38; II Cor. 9:6).

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V. What should we give?

- A. The necessities of life such as food clothing and shelter (Matt. 10:42; Jam. 2:15-16,17; Luke 3:11; Matt. 25:35-46).
- B. Attention that shows love and concern for others (Matt.25:35-40):
 - 1. "I was a stranger and you took me in..."
 - 2. "...I was sick and you visited me..."
 - 3. "...I was in prison and you visited me..."
- C. We should be like the Christians in Macedonia who gave themselves first to Christ (II Cor. 8:1,3,5).
- D. We should lay by as "we have prospered" (I Cor. 16:2). We are prospered through the accumulation of money in this culture; therefore, we lay by money for the Lord's work. However, we should be prepared to help all, especially the household of God, as we are able through money, food, visits or whatever way is available to us (Gal. 6:10).

VI. We are caretakers of another's possessions.

- A. Who owns everything (Exo. 19:5; Ps. 24:1; 50:10; I Cor. 10:26)?
Ans. God
- B. We are stewards of His possessions (I Pet. 4:8-10).
- C. Early Christians regarded giving as a grace (II Cor. 8:4-7).

VII. There are, at least, three reasons for working:

- A. To support ourselves (Acts 20; II Thess. 3:7-11; I Tim. 5:3-11),
- B. To support the poor (Lev. 19:9; Mark 14:7; Eph.4:28),
- C. To support the preaching of the gospel (I Cor. 9:14; Phil. 1:5; 4:10-20; Gal.6:6).

VIII. Discussion Questions:

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- A. We have been discussing the giving of money. What else should we give? Time, talents, etc.
- B. Historically, Christians have shown a reluctance to pay their preachers. Why? Christians were poor themselves, or they were materialistic, or apathetic, etc. What should be our attitude? The priests of the Old Testament were supported by offerings. We should be willing to support those who instruct us in the word of God. Besides that, Paul says preachers should be paid (I Cor. 9:9-14+).

Church Activities: Teaching Chapter 26

INTRODUCTION: The religious world believes in teaching people. The subjects taught and the authority honored by the teaching are two areas of very little accord. Fortunately, the Lord has provided information about what should be taught, when to teach, and who should be taught. Initially, we understand from previous lessons that the church is a group of individuals who love and obey Christ. In order to discover what the early church was commanded to teach, it is necessary to study the Word of God. Here we see what these workers were told to teach and how they fulfilled their instructions.

- I. What should be taught by members of the church?
 - A. Jesus commanded the apostles to teach people to observe "_all things that I _have_ _commanded_ _you_" (Matt. 28:20).
 - B. In Acts 2, Peter and the other apostles taught about Christ and Him crucified (Acts 2:22-36; I Cor. 1:23).
 - C. Again, in Acts 3:12-26, what was Peter's message? (Acts 4:2)
Ans. Christ and Him crucified.
 - D. When the apostles were thrown into prison, an angel of the Lord set them free and told them to speak to the people..."all the words of this life." (Acts 5:20).

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- E. Stephen recounted how God dealt with His people and the way His people reacted to Him and His Son. Was Stephen's lesson entirely positive and inoffensive, or was he firm and to the point with his teaching (Acts 7:51-53)?
Ans. He was firm and to the point in his teaching.

What happened to Stephen (Acts 7:54-60)?

Ans. He was stoned to death.

Was Stephen wrong to upset these people (Acts 7:54+)? No

- F. What did Phillip preach (Acts 8:35)? Jesus
How do we know that Phillip spoke about what was necessary for salvation? (Acts 8:36-39)
Ans. Because he baptized the eunuch after he preached Jesus to him.

- G. After Saul was converted, what did he preach? (Acts 9:20)
Ans. That Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God.

- H. We are told by the inspired writers that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17).

- I. Paul encourages Titus to speak things that characterize sound doctrine. (Tit. 2:1).

- J. Finally, Paul encourages Titus to speaks, exhort and rebuke with all authority (Tit. 2:15).

II. Who are we to teach?

- A. Who were the apostles commanded to teach (Matt. 28:19)?
Ans. All nations

- B. In Acts 2, what group of people were taught the word of God (Acts 2:5)? Jews
What group of people were taught the gospel in Acts 10 (Acts 10:45)? Gentiles
(These two groups represent the two divisions of all the people on earth.)

III. List five places where people taught the gospel? (Acts 8:27-39; Acts 10:22-23; 16: 13-15; 3: 2-6)

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Ans. Others taught while traveling, in someone's home, by a river, in public, and at a gate. We can teach anyplace people are willing to listen.

IV. Some people say Bible classes are unscriptural because it is "wrong" to have more than one person at a time teaching. Read Acts 1:26; 2:1,4,6,7 (12 apostles spoke at once in many languages on Pentecost; Peter's words are recorded) and read Acts 5:25, then affirm or deny the teaching above. We are permitted to teach the Bible to any person or to any group of people.

V. Discuss:

A. How important is human philosophy in the teaching God's Word?

Consider Acts 17:22-34 (esp. 28); I Cor. 1:20-21; 2:13; I Pet. 4:11.

Ans. Not important at all.

B. What kind of generally accepted philosophical statement be used as a point of agreement to start a religious discussion?

Ans. Yes, Acts 17:28. In general, we can find a point of agreement and start there.

C. Name three other ways a religious discussion might be initiated with a person.

By asking questions

By observing the design of God's creation

By speaking about the conditions of the day

By studying the Bible in a restaurant

By silently asking God's blessings on the food in a public place.

Church Activities: Benevolence Chapter 27

INTRODUCTION: Most religious people, those who believe they are Christians as well as some who do not, feel that people with the ability to help others in need should do

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what they can. Difficult circumstances, natural disasters, and wars provide abundant opportunities for all to show benevolence.

I. We see benevolence under the Law of Moses.

- A. A field should lie fallow on the seventh year and the grains that came up should be available to the poor for food (Ex. 23:10-11).
- B. When the Israelites harvested the fields, they were also supposed to leave the corners unharvested for the poor (Lev. 19:10; 23:22).
- C. God gave the people a promise and a warning: He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack ; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many curses (Prov. 28:27).

II. In the New Testament we read more about what God commanded.

- A. In Matthew 19:16-21 and Mark 10:17-23, what did the young man want?
Ans. Eternal life
- B. In Matt. 19:21, the young man obeyed the Law of Moses, but Jesus said he needed to do more. What two things did Jesus tell the wealthy young man to do.
 - 1. Give to the poor.
 - 2. Follow Him
- C. Luke recorded Jesus saying: "Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).
- D. In Acts 6, we see the Jewish widows from Greece are in the church, but in the course of events, they felt they were neglected in daily ministrations (Acts 6:1).
- E. The apostles selected seven men of good reputation who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom to see that the widows were not in need (Acts 6:3).
- F. What three things happened after this problem was solved (Acts 6:7)?
 - 1. The Word of God increased,

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2. The number of disciples multiplied
3. A great company of priests were obedient to the faith.

(These three blessings may not have happened as a direct result of caring for the widows; however, since this verse follows the verses telling about the change in how those in need were helped, benevolence to the widows may have had a bearing.)

- G. In II Corinthians 9: 6, Paul said that He which seweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

- III. Paul was concerned about the saints who were in need (Rom. 12:13)
1. Paul collected money from Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of saints in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26).
 2. Paul also urged the saints at Corinth to help the needy saints at Jerusalem (II Cor. 1:1; 9:1-15).
 3. According to Paul, what is more important than generosity? (I Cor. 13:3) Love
 4. In Galatians 6:10, Paul urges the Christians who have the opportunity to do good especially to those of the faith.

IV. Benevolent work:

- A. Give two reasons Christians are commanded to work (Eph. 4:28; II Thess. 3:10).
1. To give to those in need
 2. For self-preservation and to maintain one's family.
- B. What is considered "pure religion" (Jam. 1:27)?
Ans. To visit the orphans and widows in their afflictions and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.
("Visit" here means more than just to stop by and say hello. It means to help them in their affliction.)
- C. How did the early church conduct benevolent work (Acts 2:45;4:34,35; 11:27-30; Rom.15:25-28; II Cor.8:1-5,9)?

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Ans. They took care of needy saints within a local church and they also sent relief to needy local churches.

- D. Give book, chapter, and verse in the Bible that authorizes the church to use the service of a benevolent society or missionary society to do its work.

Ans. _____ (Hint: don't be surprised if you cannot find one. It is not authorized.)

- E. If it is not authorized, why do we find churches using societies?

Ans. Because they want to be like man-made denominations or because they are not content with what the Bible says concerning the all-sufficiency of the local church to People aren't content to allow God to lead them. _____

- F. What will happen to those who alter God's arrangement, or legislate in areas where we have direct commands or apostolic examples that indicate how duties, etc., should be performed (Matt. 15:9; Deut. 4:12; Rev. 22:18)?

Ans. People who teach what God did not say worship in vain. God also said if anyone adds to God's word, He will add to him the plagues written in the Bible.

- G. What is the greatest gift we can give those who aren't Christians? (Eph. 3:8)

Ans. The gospel is the greatest gift God gave us and it is the greatest gift we can pass along.

Government of the Church Chapter 28

INTRODUCTION: A religious body may consist of two or three people, hundreds, thousands or even millions of members who share the same or similar beliefs. Large groups are divided into smaller groups or congregations for practical reasons. Some type of government is necessary for such an organization to function efficiently. The religious world recognized this need and has devised many different plans to meet it. Those who intend to follow Christ use the simple plan God specified in His Word.

I. Church organization:

- A. The prophet of old said that the government would rest on the Messiah's _____ shoulder _____ (Isa. 9:6). The term for *government* comes

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from the Hebrew word *misrah* meaning *princely power* according to Young's Analytical Concordance. Jesus Christ is the head of the church and must have preeminence in all matters (Eph. 1:15-23; 5:23; Col. 1:17-18).

- C. The apostles and prophets form the foundation of the church with Christ as the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20).
- D. After the foundation was laid, local congregations were guided by elders (Acts 14:23; I Tim. 3:1-7) who worked under the authority of Christ.

II. Discuss:

- A. Since Christ established no centralized earthly headquarters for His church, apparently, certain dangers may be inherent in such a system. What dangers could you perceive? Consider: Titus 1:10-14; II John 9; III John 9-11.
 Ans. One-man rule in a local church or one elder or eldership ruling over many local churches. Both lead to apostasy.
- B. How does congregational autonomy solve these problems? It prevents apostasy from occurring on a wider scale.
- C. Study Acts 10 and find examples to complete the following chart:

Source of Authority	Examples from Acts 10
Direct Command	vs. 5; 13; 15;
Approved Apostolic Example	God showed He approved of what Peter did by validating it with a miracle (vs. 44-45).
Necessary Inference	Peter saw the unclean animals in the sheet (11-16) and inferred they represented all people who weren't Jewish(vs.34-36).

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The Role of Elders in the Church

Part I

Chapter 29

INTRODUCTION: Christ is Head of the church (Eph. 5:23). After He ascended into Heaven, the Holy Spirit spoke through the apostles (Acts 1:2). The words of Christ and the apostles were recorded to build us up in the faith (Acts 20:32) and to lead us in the way of all truth (John 16:13; 17:17; I Tim. 2:4). In areas where the church was given no specific direction, God commanded that elders oversee each congregation (Tit.1:5). These men are accountable before God for the spiritual well-being of the body (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17).

- I. Quick Greek lesson from Young's Analytical Concordance concerning the words translated from Koine Greek to our word "elder".

A. *Episkopoi*

1. Translation: bishop, overseer, one who guards or superintends.
2. Selected references where this word or a form of this word was used: Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:7.

B. *Presbuteroi*

1. Translation: presbyter, elder, one advanced in experience or age.
2. Selected references: Acts 14:23; I Tim. 5:1, 17; Titus 1:5; I Pet. 5:1.

C. *Poimeon*

1. Translation: pastor, shepherd
2. Selected references: Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 2:25; Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2.

D. *Proistamenos*

1. Translations: rule over; to lead, command
2. Selected references: I Tim. 5:17; Rom. 12:8; I Thess. 5:12.

E. *Hegoumenoi*

1. Translation: to lead, direct, rule
2. Selected references: Heb. 13:7, 17, 24.

- F. By combining the meanings of the words translated as elder, we gain insight into the duties God assigned to an elder, as well as an understanding of certain words that are often abused by well-meaning but uninformed members of the religious community. For instance, from the information above, elder = bishop = pastor; thus, a pastor is not necessarily a preacher, unless a local preacher is also an elder.

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II. The eldership:

- A. Why can't a local congregation scripturally organized with only one elder (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; Acts 20:17)?

Ans. We see that elders were appointed in every church as soon as qualified men were available. No church having one elder is mentioned.

- B. The Lord commanded through the apostle Paul that only men with certain attributes can qualify to hold the position of elder. Definitions of terms used by the inspired writer are given below. Supply the Bible term from I Tim. 3: 2-7 that best corresponds to the following definitions.

1. Wants to work = desire
2. Nothing can be proved against him = blameless
3. A man who is the husband of one wife
4. Watchful = sober
5. Able to exercise good judgment under trying circumstances, not easily swayed, self-controlled, cool headed = temperate
6. Conducts self so that his actions speak well of him = good behavior
7. Hospitable, helpful = hospitable
8. Capable of imparting Bible truth and relating it to human problems = apt to teach or skilled in teaching
9. Not a drunkard = not given to wine
10. Not contentious, quarrelsome = not violent
11. Not seeking dishonest gain = not greedy for money
12. Steadfast, faithful, long suffering = gentle
13. Not abusive nor insulting = not quarrelsome
14. Not overly concerned with material things = not covetous

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15. One that rules well his own house
16. Not a new convert = not a novice
17. Having a good reputation = a good testimony among those who are outside

C. Other qualifications of elders are found in Titus 1:6-9. Definitions are supplied. Give the word used in the Bible.

1. No provable impure motives = blameless
2. Not a polygamist = the husband of one wife
3. Having faithful children
4. Not stubborn = not self-willed
5. Not irritable = not quick tempered
6. Not a drunk = not given to wine
7. Not ready to come to blows = not violent
8. Not covetous = not greedy for money
9. Devoted to people who are Christians = hospitable
10. Exercises good judgment = sober-minded
11. Rendering to each his due = just
12. Undefined by walking in sin = holy
13. Holding fast the faithful word

III. Discussion questions.

A. Why should an elder have all the characteristics mentioned in Timothy and Titus?

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Ans. An elder should have all the characteristics because the Lord said they were needed and because these characteristics are all necessary to do the tasks that must be done.

- B. If an elder has all the characteristics but something happens and he loses one or more of the characteristics, can the man remain an elder? Why or why not?

Ans. No, because he is no longer qualified. For a man to qualify as an elder, he must possess all the characteristics. He also can not be a "good" man who is not quite qualified and work into the qualifications after being appointed elder. He must have them all to begin with or he isn't qualified to be considered in the first place.

The Role of Elders Part II Chapter 30

INTRODUCTION: Elders must advise the people of God on spiritual matters, including reminding people of their duties before God. Since the spiritual health of each member determines that person's eternal destiny, the elders' obligations and responsibilities are of a very grave nature. Men must prepare for years to assume this work, and all who are Christians must determine to support elders who are working on their behalf.

- I. Appointment of elders in a local congregation: we have neither commands nor examples that fully explain how the early Church appointed elders. However, we have certain guidelines that help us.
- A. The Holy Spirit develops men who are Christians into elders (Acts 20:28).
- B. This is done through man's study of the Word of God (Eph. 6:17; II Tim. 2:15).
- C. Elders are ordained or appointed by members and the preacher(s) (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23).
- D. Selecting elders must:

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1. Be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40).
2. Follow after things which make for peace (Rom. 14:19).

II. Words of caution from inspired writers to elders:

- A. The apostle Paul cautioned elders (Acts 20:30) when he wrote that from the eldership, men would "arise speaking perverse things..."
- B. Why would men do this (Acts 20:30)?
Ans. Some seek to draw away disciples after themselves.
- C. Why would elders do such a terrible thing (Acts 20:30; III John 9)?
Ans. Pride or the desire for preeminence

III. Duties of elders:

- A. "Take heed unto..." (Acts 20:28)
 1. "themselves"
 2. "and to all the flock"
- B. Feed the flock of God (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:2).
- C. Watch for souls (Heb. 13:17).
- D. Exhort and convict the gainsayer (Titus 1:9).
- E. Feed the flock of God among them (I Pet. 5:2-3).
- F. Be examples to the flock (I Pet.5:2-3).
- G. Warn the unruly, comfort the fainthearted, support the weak, be patient toward all men, do not render evil for evil..." (I Thess. 5:14-15).
This command was given to Christians which certainly included the elders.
- H. Visit the sick (James 5:14)
- I. Restore the erring (Gal. 6:1; James 5:19-20)

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IV. Duties of members toward elders:

- A. Heb. 13:17 Submit to them
- B. I Thess. 5:12 Recognize or honor them
- C. "Esteem them highly for their work's sake" (I Thess. 5:13).
- D. Count them worthy of double honor (I Tim. 5:17-18).
- E. Do not receive an accusation against them except at the mouth of two or three witnesses (I Tim. 5:19).
- F. Is it biblical to pay elders? (I Tim. 5:17) Yes

V. Discuss and consider the following:

- A. If an elder moves away, can he remain an elder where he once attended? Why, or why not, from a biblical point of view?
Ans. No, I Pet. 5:2 says that elders are to oversee the flock of God that is among them.
- B. When should a man start preparing to become an elder? Ans. A man should begin preparing when he is a boy. He should study and prepare all his life to be the kind of man who would make a good elder because such a man is also a good Christian and the right kind of husband and father.
- C. If an elder fails to do the work through negligence (i.e., too busy) or health problems, what should he do? Ans. The elder should step down and allow others who are qualified to continue the work.
- D. How long should an elder serve? Ans. He should serve for life as long as he is qualified and his health permits him to carry the responsibilities God assigned.
- E. Why must an elder have every qualification? Ans. God gave these qualifications so we don't have the authority to make changes. Apparently, God expects each elder to be fully qualified to serve.
- F. How many children are enough? (Hint: consider the use of the word "children" in the Bible, i.e. Gen.21:7, recall Sarah had one child.)
Ans. A man must have at least one child to be an elder.

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G. Give two reasons why an elder(s) can't serve over more than one congregation (I Pet. 5:2; Acts 14:23)?

1. God said that elders should serve their congregation, "feed the flock among YOU."
2. We have no authority to alter God's plan.

H. What lesson can elders learn from the Old Testament (Eze.34:1-10)?

Ans. They should learn to take their oversight seriously realizing that they are responsible to God for their actions.

Ans. It cannot function like God wants it to function. It may be unscripturally unorganized which is a departure from God's design for the church. If a congregation is unable to qualify men to handle these duties, it should examine its teaching and preaching program. Perhaps weak teaching and/or preaching is producing weak Christians who are not growing as they should.

The Role of Deacons Chapter 31

INTRODUCTION: The office of deacon in the Lord's church is not as clearly defined in God's Word as the position of elder. We know it was a work of service, for the term "deacon" is translated from the Koine Greek word *diakonos* meaning servant (W. E. Vines, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*). We also know that the Word of God mentions no purely honorary positions in the church; quite the contrary, Christ informed the apostles that whoever desired to be the greatest must be the servant of all (Matt. 10:35-45). We know that deacons in the early church, like the rest of a local congregation, worked under the guidance of the elders (Acts 20:17,28; Heb. 13:17).

I. Qualifications of deacons:

A. Qualifications given to Timothy (I Tim. 3:8-13)

1. Dignified and serious = reverent
2. Not two-faced = double tongued
3. Not covetous = not greedy for money

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4. Not a drunkard = not given to much wine
 5. Does not violate convictions = a pure conscience
 6. Tested by time = tested
 7. Loyal to one wife = husband of one wife
 8. "...Ruling children and house well..." implies that:
 - a. He must have a child
 - b. His children must be obedient and, if they are mature enough, Christians.
 9. Wife should be a reverent woman.
 10. Wife should be not slanderer, temperate, faithful in all things
- B. It is possible that the men selected by the disciples in Acts 6:3 were deacons; if that is so, several additional qualifications may be important:
1. They should have a good reputation from people in and out of the church means full of Spirit and wisdom
 2. Bearing the fruits of the Spirit (see Gal. 5:22-24 for more information) = love, joy, peace, etc.
 3. Men of sound judgment = mature

II. Duties of a deacon:

Although the work of deacons is not as clear-cut as that of elders, we understand that they work under the authority of elders in a local congregation. Possibly they dealt primarily with the physical and financial needs of the congregation; whereas, the elders handled spiritual matters. This point is suggested in Acts 6, and is applicable here only if these men were indeed deacons as is suggested by the context.

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III. Discussion questions about deacons:

- A. In Romans 16:1-2, some translators render "...servant of the church..." as "deaconess." Should women serve as deacons? Remember the silence of the scriptures cannot be taken as a validation for cultural standards. No Use the scriptures that concern qualifications to explain why or why not.

Ans. 1 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Cor. 11:3; 14:34-35

- B. Can a congregation be scripturally organized if for a short time, it has no elders or deacons (Consider Tit. 1:5)? No, not really

- C. What are some inherent dangers for a congregation that can qualify no men to handle these duties?

- D. What part does teaching sound doctrine have in men qualifying for elders and deacons?

Ans. It educates them concerning what God's will is for the organizational structure of a local church.

Evangelists as Servants of God

Part I

Chapter 32

INTRODUCTION: In some denominations, an "evangelist" is endowed with an array of duties, distinctive attire and a special title. Conservative religious groups such as the church of Christ, encourage all male members to teach and preach. Other religious groups are between these extremes. Still other groups propose that women as well as men can be evangelists. Clearly, there is little agreement among various groups; however, if all accepted the same standard of authority, all could speak with the same voice. Only then will the Lord's prayer for unity of those professing to follow Him come to pass (John 17).

I. Names of the one who proclaims God's Word:

A. Names given by God:

1. Evangelist (Acts 21:8) means *bringer of good tidings* according to W. E. Vine (p. 44).

a. Who gave the church evangelists (Eph. 4:7-11)? Jesus

b. Why were these people provided to the church (Eph. 4:12)?

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- (1). Equipping of saints
- (2). Work of ministry
- (3). Edifying of the body of Christ

c. Name two evangelists:

- (1). Timothy (II Tim. 4:5)
- (2). Philip (Acts 21:8)

2. "Preacher" (Rom. 10:14) means proclaimer of the gospel, according to Young's Concordance.

a. How does God feel about preachers (Rom. 10:15)?

Even their feet are beautiful

b. Name five people in the Bible who preached:

- (1). John the Baptist (Mark 1:4)
- (2). Jesus (Matt. 4:17)
- (3). Paul (I Tim. 2:7)
- (4). Timothy (II Tim. 4:2)
- (5). Philip (Acts 8:5)

3. "Minister" (II Cor. 3:6) means "servant," esp. in the service of God:

a. Paul was a minister (Eph. 3:7).

b. Paul encouraged Timothy to be a good minister of Jesus Christ (I Tim. 4:6).

c. The prophet Isaiah wrote concerning the time of Jesus over 700 years before it happened. He foretold that the people of God would all be priests of the Lord and that men would call them the servants of our God (Isa. 61:6).

4. According to God's Word, a preacher, an evangelist and a minister are all names for the one who carries the gospel of Christ to the world.

B. Some scriptural names that currently are used in an unscriptural manner include:

1. "Father"

a. Who is our Father in a spiritual or religious sense (I Pet. 1:3)?

God

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- b. Why is it unscriptural to call another individual our spiritual Father? (Matt. 23:9; II Cor. 6:18)? Ans. Jesus told us to call no one on Earth our spiritual Father. God is our Father. Calling another man our spiritual Father dishonors God.
 - c. Why can't we call a Catholic priest "Father"? (Matt. 23:9, II Cor. 6:18; I Pet. 1:3; I John 2:13) Ans. Doing this might please the priest but it would displease Jesus Christ. Shall we please God or man?
 - d. Sometimes people try to justify a behavior by saying that "everyone does it." Why is this a dangerous practice in religion? Ans. If God tells us not to do something, doing it is sinful or evil; we must not follow a multitude to do evil. If everyone does something God said to not do, the act does not become right. Also, everyone isn't going to heaven; if we follow the wrong group, we'll end up where they do (Matt. 7:14)
 - e. Why is it acceptable to call a "Dad", Father? (I John 2:13) Ans. Our dad isn't our spiritual Father; he is our physical father, our sire.
2. "Potentate"
- a. Who may be called a "Potentate" (I Tim. 6:14-15)? Jesus
 - b. He is called the blessed and only Potentate.
3. "Master"
- a. Who is our Master in a spiritual sense (Matt. 6:14-15)? Ans. God
 - b. Who can someone call a "master" in a physical sense (Eph. 6:5)?
Ans. In Jesus' day, more than a million slaves existed. Most of these had a master in a physical sense. However we must recognize God as our spiritual Master.
4. "Lord"
- a. Who is our Lord (Acts 2:36; Rom. 1:3,4; Phil. 2:11; Luke 6:45)?
Ans. Jesus
 - b. How many Lords do we have (Eph. 4:5)? Ans. One

II. Qualifications for an evangelist:

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- A. May women and men both preach the word of God in a public worship assembly? (I Cor. 14:34-35; I Tim. 2:11-12) No Who has God told to do this work? Only men
- B. Timothy was instructed to teach men who could in turn teach others (II Tim. 2:2).
- C. The servant of Jesus must not quarrel; but be gentle to all able to teach, patient, instructing people in opposition (II Tim. 2:24-25).
- D. He should be an example to the believers (I Tim. 4:12).
- E. He must study to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15).
- F. A preacher must be willing to do the work of an evangelist, fulfill his ministry (II Tim. 4:5).

VI. Discussion Questions:

- A. Why do Christians abuse a preacher who is teaching the truth? How does God feel about that? Can you give scripture to support your answer?
Ans. When people do not like the message, sometimes they attack the messenger. God is not pleased to see preachers abused – 2 Tim. 4:3-4.
- B. Why isn't "Reverend" a good title for a preacher (Psa. 111:2, 9)?
Ans. This is a name for God.
- C. Some national governments have individuals they have endowed with hereditary honor and privileges, not religious authority. Agree or disagree that it is unscriptural for these people to be called "Lord." Explain using scripture if possible.
Ans. We have one Lord and the safest option is to reserve that name for God or Christ lest others be led astray by our use of the name. However, if we lived in a society where the habit was to call political figures "lord" and this was understood to not include religious connotations then each person would need to decide how he or she felt. (You might read I Tim. 6:15.) If it did include religious connotations, or might include them, it could not be done.

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Evangelists as Servants of God

Part II

Chapter 33

INTRODUCTION: The work of an evangelist is determined in two ways: first, we can study the Scriptures to see what early day evangelists did; second, we can read the instructions given to evangelists by the Holy Spirit through the inspired writers. However, today, some preachers do things unauthorized by God. In addition, historically, some churches have been remiss in paying their preachers. The Bible addresses this matter as well.

- I. We have no Bible record of evangelists doing certain activities:
 - A. Entertaining congregations by preaching techniques,
 - B. Ruling the congregation,
 - C. Tickling the ears of weak members (Gal. 1:10; II Tim. 4:3; Is. 30:8-11).

- II. An evangelist has numerous responsibilities:
 - A. They must preach _____ the word (II Tim. 4:2).

 - B. They are obligated to preach _____ Christ _____ (I Cor. 2:1-5; Acts 8:5, 35).
 - C. They are commanded to:
 1. rebuke _____ (Titus 1:13)
 2. preach _____ (II Tim. 4:2)
 3. convince, rebuke, and exhort _____ with all longsuffering _____ and _____ doctrine _____ (II Tim. 4:2)

 - D. Warn against false _____ teachers _____ (I Tim. 1:3; 4:1-6)

 - E. Declare the whole counsel _____ of God (Acts 20:27).

 - F. The evangelist must charge some that they teach _____ no _____ other _____ doctrine _____ (I Tim. 1:3).

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G. Hold fast the form of sound words (II Tim. 1:13).

III. An evangelist has certain obligations to do a good job.

A. He must earnestly contend for the faith (Jude 3).

B. He is expected to be gentle and patient (II Tim. 2:24).

C. He must teach in humility (II Tim. 2:25).

D. He must work with all longsuffering (2 Tim. 4:2).

E. He must do nothing by partiality (I Tim. 5:21).

F. He should fight a good warfare (I Tim. 1:18; 6:12).

G. He must maintain the faith and have a good conscience (I Tim. 1:19).

H. He should be free from flattery and covetousness (I Thess. 2:5).

I. He should not seek glory from men (I Thess. 2:6).

IV. Financial support of the evangelist:

A. Those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel (I Cor. 9:14).

B. Let those who are taught the word communicate to the teacher all good things (Gal. 6:6).

C. Give three reasons for supporting preachers (I Cor. 9:7).

1. example of a soldier who is supported by the government

2. example of a vine grower who eats the fruit of his labor

3. example of a tender of a flock who drinks the milk of the flock

V. An evangelist has two goals when teaching others about Christ:

A. (I Tim. 4:16) save himself

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B. (I Tim. 4:16) save those who hear him

VI. Discussion questions:

A. How should members of the church treat their preacher?

Ans. Fairly, compassionately, and respectfully as they would another fellow Christian

B. Would you encourage your son to become a preacher? Why or why not?

Ans. Yes, because the world has a great need for men to preach the gospel of Christ.

C. Why should a preacher be able to suffer affliction? Ans. Because

suffering for the sake of righteousness comes with the task of preaching the gospel of Christ.

Members as Servants of God

Part I

Chapter 34

INTRODUCTION: Members of the early church were united by a common belief and a common goal. They believed Jesus was the Messiah that God promised (John 4:25-26), and earnestly desired to spend eternity with God, the Father, in Heaven (Matt. 5:12; Titus 1:1-2; I Pet. 1:4). To prepare a new member of the body for Heaven, the Holy Spirit works in conjunction with and through the Word of God to bring a new babe in Christ to spiritual maturity (Rom. 8:14, 16-17; 1:17; Eph. 6:17). The member's love of God, especially Christ, enables the Spirit to perfect His work (Eph. 3:16-19; I John 2:5). The fruit of the Spirit serves as evidence of God's power in the lives of members of the church (Gal. 5:22-23). This fruit of the Spirit also may be regarded as sign posts that reappear to guide the maturing Christian toward that Heavenly goal.

I. Christians have a precious hope in Christ:

A. Jesus said that in His Father's house are many mansions (John 14:2).

B. Jesus has prepared a place for us to be with Him in His Father's house (John 14:3).

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- C. We know that when our body dies, we have another " tent " that was not made with hands which is a heavenly body (II Cor. 5:1-4).
- D. We know that when we persevere in the face of problems, we have a great reward in Heaven (Matt. 5:10-12; 10:42; Rev. 22:12).
- II. Christians have the gift of the Holy Spirit (= gift of the Holy Ghost).
- A. When does the Spirit come to us (Acts 2:38)? Ans. At repentance and baptism in the name of Christ for the remission of sins .
- B. After that time, the Christian has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him (I Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20; I John 4:13; Rom. 8:11).
- C. What does the Holy Spirit do for Christians?
1. Gives us the love of God (Rom.5:5).
 2. The Holy Spirit represents a guarantee that we belong to God and have a home with Him (II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14).
 3. The Spirit leads us by the Word of God (Rom. 8:14; Eph. 6:17).
 4. The Spirit testifies as a witness with our spirit that we are children of God and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17; I John 5:6-7).
 5. The Spirit makes intercession on our behalf to God according to God's will (Rom. 8:26-27).
- D. Why does the Spirit help us (Gal. 4:6)? because Christians are sons of God.
- III. "...By their fruits you shall know them" (Matt. 7:20) suggests that certain changes of character and attitude occur as members become more mature. These changes are evidence that the Spirit is working to accomplish the will of God. The Spirit works through the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
- A. List the characteristics that represent evidence of the active influence of the Spirit in a Christian's life (Gal. 5:22-23):
1. love
 2. goodness

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3. joy
4. peace
5. longsuffering
6. kindness
7. faithfulness
8. gentleness
9. self-control

B. We are encouraged to be partakers of the divine nature (II Pet. 1:4).

C. Christians should give all diligence to do certain things (II Pet. 1:5).
What should they add to their faith to mature in a manner acceptable to God (II Pet. 1:5-7)?

1. virtue
2. knowledge
3. perseverance
4. godliness
5. self-control
6. brotherly kindness
7. love

D. If Christians do these things, they shall be neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord (II Pet.1:8).

E. If Christians fail do the things in II Peter 1, what is likely to happen? (II Pet. 1:10; 2:14-15; 20; I cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; Heb. 6:6; 10:38-39)
Ans. They may fall from grace and lose their salvation.

F. What causes a child of God to Christians fall from grace, and be separated from the blessings of God? (James 1:12-15; Isa. 59:1-2)
Ans. Our sins separate us from God. We can't walk in sin and walk with God.

G. A child of God puts the things of God ahead of the things of this world; whereas, the child of the world places his emphasis on worldly things and considers spiritual things of little importance (James 1:27; I John 2:15,17; Eccl.12:13-14).

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Members as Servants of God

Part II

Chapter 35

INTRODUCTION: Some people feel that any church we attend should please God as long as the worshipper feels good about where he or she worships and as long as the worshipper enjoys the service. We need to see what the Bible says about the acceptable names of God's worshippers. In addition, this lesson briefly examines Peter's statement that judgment begins at the house of God (I Pet 4:17).

I. Members are called by many names:

- A. In I Peter 2:5,9 members of the Lord's church are called priests, a chosen generation, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.
- B. I Peter 1:15-16, says that these people are holy.
- C. Believers were called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26).
- D. Paul, the inspired writer, says they are members of the body which is the church (I Cor. 1:12; Eph. 4:4; Col. 1:18).
- E. In II Corinthians 6:1, they are called workers.
- F. Inspired by God, Paul calls them saints in Romans 1:7.
- G. John calls believers brethren (I John 3:13).
- H. Members are also called children of God (I John 3:1-2), children of light (John 12:36; I John 1:5), and children of God (Rom. 8:16).
- I. In the Bible, what are members of the Lord's church called? Circle one: Baptists, Methodists, Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons, Christians (Acts 11:26)
- J. Why is a name important (Acts 4:12)? Ans. There is salvation under no other name.

II. The eternal difficulty

- A. What is the tendency of humans (Rom. 3:23)?
Ans. They sin.

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- B. What is God's nature (Habb. 1:12-13)?
Ans. He cannot look on wickedness with approval.
- C. Conclusion: only sinless people can get to heaven. Who devised the plan to solve this problem (Rom. 3:23-26)? God
- D. What did Christ do for us (Rom. 5:8-11)?
Ans. He died on the cross for our sins.
- E. When we are baptized, as a part of the steps of salvation, we are freed from sin (Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3-8; Rev. 1:5).
- F. What else must be done to become a Christian (Matt. 10:32; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38)? Ans. Faith, repentance, and confession of faith in Christ
- G. Those who are Christians will have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 21:22-27).

III. Those outside of Christ:

- A. What will happen to those whose names are not in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 20:12-15; consider Ex. 32:32)?
They will be judged and sentenced to eternal punishment.
- B. What type of people will be there (Eph. 5:3-7; I Tim. 1:9-10; Rev. 21:8)?
All kinds of wicked people.
- C. Who else will be there (Rev. 20:10)? the devil, the beast, and the false prophet will be in hell.
- D. All baptized believers will go to heaven. Agree or disagree and explain based on Matt. 13:41-43; II Pet. 3:17 and other scriptures. Explain.

Ans. All obedient baptized believers will go to heaven.
- E. What are three reasons people will be lost (II Pet. 2, esp. vs. 1-3, 12-22)?
1. taught destructive heresies
2. covetous
3. wicked in other ways, love the world more than God

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F. How does the Lord feel about those who miss heaven (II Pet. 3:9, 10-13, v. 13 prob. spiritual; see Rev. 21:1 27)?

Ans. He does not want anyone to miss heaven.

Duties of Christians - Men and Women Chapter 36

INTRODUCTION: In His wisdom, God recognized that organizations function best when each person understands and fulfills his or her role in that organization. The church, the called out of God, is no different. What is different is where this organization functions. We live in a republic where the changing whims of the society play a role in government and in the laws. The church is within the kingdom of God, not the republic of God. In this kingdom, the government and laws are under the sole direction of one individual, the King. The laws of God, our King, may conflict with social norms or even laws of the land where we live. However, if we are loyal to our King, we will accept and obey God's laws (Acts 5:29).

Although God does not force us to accept our assigned roles, He does require it. Likewise, no one has the right to force someone to accept his or her role; rather every Christian disciplines himself or herself as part of his or her subjection to God's authority. Parents teach their children God's will. That does not mean that all men or women are entirely comfortable with their role as God defines it. Our genetic heritage and the society in which we mature exert and influence our desires. Some men enjoy a public position in leadership; others find it intimidating. Some women would like a public leadership position; others find fulfillment in a support position. However, with patience and God's help, all can find a place where we can serve God and the human family, as well as grow in our faith.

I. Duties of Christian men:

A. The first duty of Christian men is to obey God (Heb. 5:9).

B. The first requirement for a bishop (or elder) is that the candidate must be a man; the second is that he desires a good work (I Tim. 3:1).

C. A deacon must be the husband of one wife (I Tim. 3:12).

D. In Acts 6, a problem arose among members of the church. Grecians murmured against Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily

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ministration so the apostles asked the disciples to select seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom to see to this. These may be the first deacons. If so, all were men (Acts 6:1-3).

E. This suggests that both elders and deacons should be men.

F. Who leads in prayers everywhere (I Tim. 2:8)? Men

G. List ten preachers mentioned in the New Testament.

1. Peter (Acts 2)
2. Stephen (Acts 6:8-10)
3. Philip (Acts 8:35)
4. Saul or Paul (Acts 9:22)
5. Apollos (Acts 18:24)
6. Timothy (I Tim. 4:16)
7. Titus (Tit. 2:1)
8. The apostles (I John 4:6)
9. Jude (Jude 3)
10. Paul (Acts 18:1)

H. No female preachers are mentioned in the New Testament. No command, example, or inference exists that women preached in the early church.

II. Duties of Christian women: we have shown that men served as elders, deacons and preachers in the early church.

A. Some translations of Romans 16:1, lead us to believe Phoebe was a deaconess.

Brief Greek Lesson: According to W. E. Vine (pp. 272-273), the term *deacon* is translated from *DIAKONOS* meaning a servant, as opposed to *DOULOS* meaning a slave. In Matt. 20:26, when Jesus tells the disciples that if they want to be great, they must become a minister, or servant, a form of *DIAKONOS* is used (Vine, p. 273). Apparently, Phoebe like Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43) helped people by tending their physical needs and by making their life more comfortable as Jesus directed. It is unnecessary to assume that Phoebe was a deaconess with the same duties as a male deacon, and this assumption is not supported by any other scripture.

B. In Gen. 2:21-24, God created woman from the man. There is no evidence the two were unequal in a religious sense.

C. In Gen. 3:1-6, the serpent tempted Eve to sin and Eve tempted Adam.

D. God punished all three for breaking His command (Gen. 3:12-16).

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- E. To the woman, God said that He would greatly multiply her sorrow and in sorrow, she would bring forth children, her desire would be to her husband, and he shall rule over thee (Gen 3:16).
- F. Because Eve tempted Adam to disobey God by placing worldly desires ahead of God's command, women would no longer have authority over adult men in religious matters (I Cor. 11:3-9).
- G. Women can teach women and children (Tit. 2:4-5; II Tim.1:5).
- H. Paul by inspiration says that he does not allow women to teach men or to usurp authority over them and ties it back to Adam and Eve (I Tim. 2:11-13).
- I. Dorcas was a good example of a Christian woman. She performed many good works. What did she do (Acts 9:36-41)?
Ans. She made tunics and garments for people to wear
- J. In Proverbs 31:10-31, the inspired writer describes and commends what one woman did for her family.
- K. Paul entered into the house of Philip with those who traveled with him to Jerusalem. Philip's young daughters prophesied but Agabab came from Judaea to deliver a warning to Paul from the Holy Spirit. Possibly these young daughters were teachers; whereas, the prophet from Judaea was a foreteller of events (Acts 21:9-11).
- L. Women may not publicly teach a mixed class of adults, but women as well as men should study so they can give an answer to those who ask about their hope (I Tim. 2; I Pet. 3:15).
- III. In the Old Testament and in New Testament times, God seemed to expect women to avoid the limelight in religious matters and to accept a support position (I Cor. 14:34). Any military leader will affirm that without proper support a military operation is likely to fail. Support is a very important position. Let's examine some instances where support was important.
- A. God selected the tribe of Levi to serve Him and serve in the tabernacle under the old law. Of this tribe, God designated Aaron and his sons to be priests. The other males in this tribe supported the priests and the tabernacle (Num. 18:2-7).

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- B. Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna and many others ministered unto Jesus of their substance (Luke 8:3). These women made Jesus' earthly life more pleasant.
- C. Phoebe, a business woman, assisted Paul and others enough to deserve a commendation from Paul (Romans 16:1-2).

III. Discussion questions:

- A. Generally, we believe women can teach young children. However, in our society, sometimes children as young as five are called "men;" at other times, children as old as seventeen or eighteen are called young boys. At what point do boys become men? Consider that in Num. 4:39, men above thirty years old were counted as men. Also, at twelve years old, Jesus went with his parents and was subject to them (Luke 2:51). They counted him as a child. He began preaching when He was about 30 years old. In the Old Testament, boys become men when...
- _____ 1. When they reach puberty.
_____ 2. When they are able to support a family and are on their own.
 X 3. When they are thirty years old.
_____ 4. Other suggestions.
- B. List seven things women can do today in the church for members without violating God's word.
- Show hospitality
Visit the sick
Teach a women's Bible class
Teach a children's Bible class
Teach the Bible to a non Christian man in a humble, submissive way
Financially support a preacher or an elder on an individual basis
Encourage the weak and edify other Christians
- C. Sometimes we hear that women cannot teach men religious matters. Read Acts 18:24-28. Here Priscilla and her husband Aquila helped a preacher, Apollos (Acts 18:24), reach a more complete understanding of God's word.

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Church Discipline Chapter 37

INTRODUCTION: Those who believe in God are faced with many temptations. In the past, God expected His people to follow His directions. When they did not do so, He punished them. Today, God still expects His people to obey His commands. We can still expect God's wrath when we ignore His will to do what seems right to us. When that happens, elders have an obligation to remind Christians to submit to God's authority. Fellow Christians also have an obligation to warn one another of danger. That is church discipline. When we choose to ignore elders and members who care for our soul, the elders must purge the church of our sin. This is also part of church discipline.

- I. Throughout the Bible, we read of God-fearing people who sinned and fell from favor with their Maker.
 - A. What statement in Genesis 3:8 suggests that Adam and Eve were on familiar terms with the Lord?
Ans. They recognized the sound of God walking in the garden which suggests that it had happened at other times.
 - B. What did they do that provoked the Lord's wrath (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-3)?
Ans. God gave them one law and they broke it.
 - C. What did the Lord do that suggested He expected animal sacrifice to answer for people's sins (Gen. 3:7, 10, 21)?
Ans. God made coverings for Adam and Eve out of animal skins. This meant that one or more animals lost their lives because people sinned.
 - D. What did Cain do that suggests he wanted to please God (Gen. 4:1-3)?
Ans. He offered a sacrifice.
 - E. How did Abel provoke Cain (Gen. 4:4)? Ans. He offered a more acceptable sacrifice.
 - F. What did Cain do to Abel (Gen. 4:5-8)? Ans. Cain killed Abel.
 - G. Eli, a priest of Israel, spoke for God to the descendants of Israel (I Sam. 1:9, 17).
 - H. What did Eli do that displeased God (I Sam. 2:12, 22-24, 30-31; 3:13)?
Ans. He failed to discipline his sons.

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- I. What did God promise to do (I Sam. 4:11-18)? Ans. God said He would punish Eli because he failed to discipline his sons.
- J. How did David please God (I Sam. 30:8; 2:1)? Ans. When David had a problem, he went to God in prayer and asked how to solve the problem.
- K. What did David do that alienated him from God (II Sam. 11)?
Ans. David committed fornication with a married woman, Bathsheba, and placed her husband, Uriah, where he would be killed.
- L. What did David do when Nathan confronted him with the transgression (II Sam. 12:1-14)?
Ans. David repented.
- M. What immediate consequences did David suffer because of his sin (II Sam. 12:15-23)?
Ans. He lost the child conceived as a result of the fornication.
- N. After the days of David and Solomon, Israel divided into Israel and Judah and both eventually left God to worship other gods. How did God feel about this (Jere. 8:12-13)? Ans. God did not like it. God said He would consume the people. That means He intended to punish them.
- II. We have an obligation to stand for the truth.
- A. Why can we judge the behavior of someone (John 7:24; I Cor. 6)?
Ans. We are commanded to do this. But we must expect that we'll also be judged by the same judgment.
- B. Who are the saints to judge (I Cor. 6:2-3)?
1. World
2. Angels
- C. Paul discovered the church at Corinth was keeping company with a fornicator (I Cor. 5). What did Paul tell them to do about this problem (I Cor. 5:13)?
Ans. Paul told them to put away the evil person.
- D. Why can't we accept sinners in the church (I Cor. 6:17-19)? Ans. The church is described as the bride of Christ. If the body is contaminated with sin, Christ, the husband, is also contaminated. For when two are joined together they become one flesh. Christ is God (Heb. 1:8) and God can not sin (II Cor. 5:21).

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Another way to look at this: The church is also described the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:27) and Christ can not sin (I Cor. 5:11-13; 6:15-17; I Pet. 2:22).

- E. Paul urges the Corinthian Christians and us as well to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobate " (II Cor. 13:5)?
- F. Why can't we be in Christ when we try to follow the Ten Commandments (Gal. 2:15-21; 5:3-4; 5:3-6; Col. 29-17)?

Ans. We must obey the entire law if we chose to obey the Ten Commandments, that includes the sacrifices etc. However, the Ten Commandments were given to the Hebrews, not to us. When Christ died, they were nailed to the cross; they ended with Jesus death, and resurrection. They are still useful historically, but we are bound by another group of laws, those that Christ instituted. We can't obey both; Christ's laws are the ones that will help us reach Heaven.

- G. What will happen to those that are not in Christ (John 15:6; Heb. 4:11; II Pet. 2:15; 3:17)?

Ans. They will have no part in Heaven.

- II. How should the church deal with those who commit sin in the congregation?

- A. Why do we need to adhere to biblical instructions regarding discipline of

erring members (II Thess. 2:15)? Ans. God knows what is best and God expects erring members to be disciplined. He loves them and wants them in Heaven too. We also have an obligation to keep the church pure.

- B. We have an instruction for handling personal offenses between two members (Matt. 18:15+). These steps provide guidelines that many have used successfully. List the steps.

1. Identify the sin or offense and try to speak to the person who has a difference with you or with God's word
2. If the person will not hear you, take two others with you and speak with him.

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3. If this does not bring about a correction, take the matter to the church. This should be done in love. It should be done when the matter is likely to cause someone to lose his or her soul.
- C. What else must be done (Rom. 16:17-18, II Thess. 3:6, 11, 14-15)?
Ans. Mark those who cause divisions, those who will not follow the scripture. "Mark" means to mean publicly denounce.
- D. What should we do for the sinner (Luke 17:3; Gal. 6:1)?
Ans. Restore them when they repent realizing any of us can be tempted and sin.
- E. Why must a church deal with sinners in it (I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 5:19-20; James 5:19-20)?
1. To save his or her soul from hell.
 2. That others may fear; may learn to respect God's word.
 3. Save a soul and cover a multitude of sins.
- IV. The extent of God's authority.
- A. Before an elder is accused of sin, what is necessary (I Tim. 5:19-20)?
Ans. A two or three witnesses must testify against him.
- B. Paul called Peter, an apostle, to task in a public manner for behaving improperly toward the Gentile Christians (Gal. 2:11-21).
- V. Discussion Questions:
- A. Why don't people who sin appreciate having that sin pointed out?
Ans. No one wants to be wrong. Having David's and Peter's attitude of repentance is hard for people. Sin is very deceptive, we want what we do to be right; we are ruled by our emotion not God's word. Learning to discipline one's self and to accept discipline takes maturity, self control, and a humble attitude that says "I want to go to heaven more than I want my way. I appreciate people who have the courage to tell me when I'm on the wrong path."
- B. "Some people become confrontational when told they are wrong. Others drop out of the church altogether. Sometimes entire families stop attending church when one member is disciplined. Therefore, we

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shouldn't do that." Can you find a verse that refutes this logic?

Ans. Acts 5:29

- C. "Churches should not publicly discipline members. It is embarrassing for them and shows a lack of love." Can you refute this logic with the Bible?

Ans. Acts 5:29, James 5:20

Heaven, Home of the Saved Chapter 38

INTRODUCTION: A person's life on earth commonly ends after less than a hundred and thirty years; however, a soul's existence does not end. Since each person has an *eternal* soul, that soul continues to exist some place. Our duty in this life is to determine where that soul will live.

The focus of children's lives is on earthly pleasures: that is normal. However, as they mature, they make many choices. Will they choose to follow God, or be separated from God by their choices? We know that sin-stained souls cannot enter Heaven. The Bible describes an alternative eternal residence for the eternal soul, Hell, or Hades (Luke 16:23).

A Christian mold himself or herself after the pattern of Christ and thereby lifts life's focus from earth's temporal pleasures to Heaven's eternal values. We discipline the mind and the body in hope of an eternal reward.

Some people deny the soul has an afterlife. They do not believe in Heaven or Hell; others like the idea of Heaven, but they don't believe in Hell. Yet the Bible has much to say about both destinations.

I. The Christian's hope

- A. Who prepared a heavenly habitation for the soul (John 14:2; Heb. 11:16)?

Answer: Jesus and God prepared a heavenly place for the soul. Possibly the Spirit also had a part.

- B. How many people will be saved (Matt. 7:14; 8:11-12; Luke 13:23-27; Rev. 7:1-9,14)? Circle the correct answer.

All people 144,000 obedient believers All Jews and Christians

In Matthew 8:11-12, Jesus mentions a multitude shall come from the east and west. Considering that Jesus was speaking with a centurion in Matt., a man who was

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Roman and most likely a Gentile, and considering that He used similar words in Luke 13:28-30, Jesus appears to be saying that many Israelites who believe they are entitled to inherit the Kingdom based on their ancestry will be cast out in favor of those who obey Christ. Obedient believers are those who have been baptized (= "washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb" Rev. 7:14; 1:5.)

In Revelation 7, John mentions that 144,000 of the children of Israel, apparently a symbolic number (12 tribes x 12,000), plus a great multitude who came out of the great tribulation and washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb (v.14) were standing before the throne of God (Rev. 7:9). That sounds like the number of saved will be great but we don't know how many will actually populate Heaven. References in Matt. 7:14; Luke 13:23-27 suggests that when compared to the total number of people who have lived on earth, the number of people saved will not be very large.

- C. Where is the Christian's citizenship (Phil. 3:20)? Ans. The Christian's citizenship is in Heaven.

II. Heavenly identity

- A. What kind of body will those who are saved have when they reach Heaven? (I Cor. 15:49-52; I John 3:2; Phil. 3:20-21)?

Ans. We know that when this body is no longer capable of housing the soul, it shall die. However, the Lord shall raise us up and change our vile body into a new one that is like His glorious body. On Judgment day, all people on earth will not be dead, some will be alive; but all will be changed. They will be provided a glorious body like that of Christ. The dead will rise first with their new body, then those who remain will be changed.

- B. Will we know one another?

1. I John 3:2-3. We will see Jesus.

2. Matt. 5:8. We will see God.

3. Matt. 8:11. We will sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

4. Matt.17:2. Jesus took Peter, James, and John up to a high mountain. Jesus was transfigured there. The three apostles saw two other men, Moses and Elijah speaking with Jesus. These references suggest that we will know one another.

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- C. Moses and Elijah, died centuries before Peter, James and John saw them. There were no cameras. As far as we know, no one sketched a portrait of either of these men. How did the apostles recognize these men (Matt. 17:4)?
 Ans. We do not know. Maybe we will recognize everyone in Heaven, even those we do not have an opportunity to meet because they lived and died long before we were born.
- D. What provision has God made for small children (II Sam. 12:15-22)?
 Ans. God loves everyone regardless of age. Little children have no sin so they are able to go to God without repenting or baptism. They may believe but they have no way to confess Christ if they can't speak. God's grace covers them and if they should die, they go to God.
- E. How long will this inheritance, Heaven, last (I Pet.1:4)?
 Ans. The saved will receive an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled that will never fade. It will last forever.
- F. In Revelation chapters 21 and 22:1-5, John uses figurative language to describe the church, or Heaven, or possibly both. Complete the following charts then decide for yourself if these chapters describe the church, or Heaven, or both.

Evidence that Suggests Revelation 21 and 22 Refers to the Church		
Common Element	Comparable Reference	Revelation Reference
1. Bride = Church	II Cor. 1:1; 11:2	Rev. 21:2,9
2. No sun	Is. 60:19 (describes Church est. by Christ)	Rev. 21:23
3. Nations walk in the light and kings of earth bring their glory and honor to it	Is. 60:3,5; 66:12	Rev. 21:26

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Evidence that Suggests Revelation 21 and 22 Refers to Heaven		
Common Element/Location	Comparable Reference	Revelation Reference
1. Lamb's book of Life	Ex. 32:33; Rev. 20:11-12	Rev. 21:27
2. Tree of life in Paradise	Gen. 2:9; Rev. 2:7	Rev. 22:2,14
3. Throne/ heaven	Acts 7:49	Rev. 22:3
4. River of Life, living water	John 4:10,14; 7:38	Rev. 21:6; Rev. 22:2,14
5. Face of God	Exodus 33:18-20	Rev. 22:4

Sin Separates God from Humanity Chapter 39

INTRODUCTION: In the Garden of Eden, humanity heard the voice of God. The Lord gave the inhabitants two commands: dress the garden and keep it, and do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:15-17). We do not know how many days, years, decades or millennia passed before the serpent spoke to Eve, but the old devil disguised as a serpent persuaded Eve to sin, and she persuaded Adam to follow her example (Gen. 3:1-7). God was walking in the garden in the cool of the day when He noticed that Adam and Eve were hiding. God asked them: "Where are you?" God knew they were not where He had left them, in a proper relationship with their Creator. Neither are we. Paul writes that "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

Although we are not guilty of Adam's sin (Eze. 18:4, 20), after we reach the age of accountability, we each choose to commit our own sins (Rom. 3:10-12, 23).

I. The Sin Problem:

- A. In the beginning, God created men and women (Gen. 1:27).
- B. Which member of the Godhead actually created people (John 1:1-3, 14)?
Ans. Jesus created us.
- C. How does God feel about people (I John 3:1)? Ans. God loves people.
- D. Why did Jesus come to Earth (John 1:29; I John 1:2:1-2; 4:10)?

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Ans. God sent Jesus to the world, but Jesus wanted to take away the sin of the world.

- E. What we do determines if we are all the children of God or the children of the Devil (I John 3:8).
- F. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Eze. 18:4; Rom. 6:23).
- G. Is sin inherited (Ezekiel 28:15)? Explain. Ans. Sin is not inherited but the consequences of sin are often inherited. For instance, a man robs a bank and goes to prison. The man's children grow up without their father and this changes their life.
- H. What is sin (I John 3:4; 5:17)? Answer: All unrighteousness is sin and sin is the transgression of the law.
- I. List behaviors that God calls sin (Rom. 1:27-31; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; I Tim. 1:9-10; Rev. 22:15).
Ans. Homosexuality, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, murder, maliciousness, envy, strife, deceit, malignity; gossiping, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things disobedient to parents, covenant breakers, implacable, unmerciful, those who know what God expects but commit things worthy of death, envy, drunkenness, revellings, liars, adultery, lasciviousness, witchcraft, hatred, perjury.
- J. Why doesn't God classify sins as big and little, or minor and major?
Ans. Any sin separates us from God. From God's view, in that sense, all sin is large or major. However, some sins affect more people so from an earthly sense, these may see like they are bigger or more important.
- K. Why can't a person sin just a little and still go to heaven? Answer: God is so pure that He cannot look on iniquity and evil (Habb. 1:12-13).

II. The Solution to the Sin Problem

- A. What cleanses us from sin? (I John 1:7) Ans. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from our sin.
- B. What part does baptism play in salvation (Acts 2:38; 22:16)?
Ans. Baptism gives remission of sins and at that time we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism washes away sin.

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- C. Where do we contact the blood of Christ (Rom. 6:3-6)?
Ans. When we are baptized, we are baptized into the death of Christ. Christ's blood was shed in His death.
- D. All unrighteousness is sin; and there is a sin that is not unto death (I John 5:17).
- E. What sin is not unto death (I John 1:9)? Ans. A forgiven sin is not unto death.
- D. God makes two promises to Christians:
1. He promised us eternal life (I John 2:25). God has kept this promise. We have eternal life in promise but where we spend eternity is another matter.
 2. God will do what we ask if we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight (I John 3:22). However, we must ask properly (James 4:3).
- E. If the angels who live in heaven can sin as suggested in II Pet 2:4, then perhaps when we get to heaven, we too can sin if that is our choice. (But why would we choose to sin once we get there???)
- F. More likely, God is so pure that He cannot tolerate sin (Hab. 1:13).

Hell, a Place of Torment Chapter 40

INTRODUCTION: A number of Hebrew and Greek words are translated as the word "hell." In Hebrew, the word *Sheol*, translated as Hell, simply means the realm of the dead. In later Jewish literature, such as the book of Enoch 22:1-14, we see the idea of divisions within *Sheol*, one for the righteous and one for the wicked (J. D. Douglas ed. *The New Bible Dictionary*). Deut. 32:22; Job 26:6; Ps. 9:17; Ezek. 31:16; Amos 9:2 are among the references that refer to *Sheol* as Hell.

According to Douglas, *Gehenna*, another Hebrew word comes from the valley of Hinnom where trash, corpses of criminals, and dead animals were burned (p. 527). This valley, located south of Jerusalem, may be identified as either the Wadi al-Rababi or the Kidron Valley (Douglas, p. 527). *Gehenna* is to be the place of punishment for

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sinner (Douglas, p. 518). "Luke 12:47 refers to intensity not duration of punishment" (Douglas, p. 518). In Matt. 5:22,29; 10:28; Mark 9:43; James 3:6 and elsewhere, workers have translated *Gehenna* as hell.

Another word, *Tartaros* is translated as hell. According to Douglas, *Tartaros* is the classical word for a place of eternal punishment but it is for fallen angels (p. 518). *Tartaros* is referenced only once in the Bible. In II Peter 2:4, we see the verb form, *Tartaroo*, translated variously as "cast down to hell" or "to the lower regions" in different versions of the Bible.

Hades, the fourth word translated as "hell." Hades is the underworld or the realm of the dead in the classics (Douglas, p. 518). In Acts 2:27, 31, Peter quotes Ps. 16:10, the apostle applies this verse to the resurrection of Christ from the realm of the dead. In Matt. 16:18, Christ says the gates of *Hades* shall not prevail against His church. He may be reassuring the listeners that His death, called the "gates of *Hades*," will not alter His plan to set up His church. The word *Hades* appears in a number of locations, among these Matt. 11:23; 16:18; Luke 10:15; and Rev. 10:13-14.

From a human view point, we would like everyone to go to heaven. Let's see why that is not possible.

I. The Sin Problem:

- A. What we do determines if we are all the children of God or the children of the Devil (I John 3:8).
- B. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4; Rom. 6:23).
- C. What is sin? (I John 3:4; 5:17) Ans. All unrighteousness is sin and sin is the transgression of the law.
- D. Why can't a person sin just a little and still go to heaven? Answer: God is so pure that He cannot look on iniquity and evil (Habakkuk 1:12-13).
- H. Sinners cannot go to heaven possibly for two reasons:
 1. If the angels who live in heaven can sin as suggested in II Pet. 2:4, perhaps, when we get to heaven, we too can sin if that is our life style of choice (But why would we choose to sin once we got there?).
 2. God is so pure that He cannot tolerate sin close to Him (Hab. 1:13).

II. Hell

A. Origin:

1. "Then shall He (God) say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

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2. "...God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (II Pet. 2:4).

B. Characteristics of Hell

1. The beast, and the false prophet that wrought miracles, them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image these both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone (Rev. 19:20).
2. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:10).

- C. What and who will be cast into this lake of fire along with the devil and his angels (Rev. 20:14-15)?

Ans. And death (thano) and hell (Hades) were cast into the lake of fire (Gehenna). This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

- D. Whose names are not found in the Book of Life? Ans. The fearful, unbelieving abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Rev. 21:8).

- E. Who erases a person's name from the Lord's Book of Life (Ex. 32:33; Rev. 3:5)?

Ans. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."

- F. What other book does the Lord keep (Mal. 3:16)? Ans. The Lord also keeps a Book of Remembrance where the names of those who think on the Lord and fear Him are written.

- G. John refers to several books in Revelation 14:10. We may not know all of the books, but we know two of them. What are they?

Ans. The Book of Life and the Book of Remembrance are two of the books.

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H. If a person's name is written in the Book of Life, he or she will not work an abomination, or tell lies (Rev. 21:27).

III. Who are destined to go to Hell?

- A. Devil and his angels (II Peter 2:4; Jude 6).
- B. Those who disobey God's will (I Tim. 1:9; Rom. 1:30; II Thess. 1:8-9; II Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:16; I Pet. 2:7+; Eph. 5:6; Heb. 2:2).
- C. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:21).
- D. Sin separates people from God and all that God has prepared. Only one act, namely baptism, connects Christ's death on the cross with our sin, and erases our sin (Col. 2:11-13).
- E. When we submit to this act, our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16).
- F. Which can be inherited sin or the consequences (Ezek. 18:20)?

Ans. The consequences of sin are inherited.

(Hint: consider that if a man or woman takes certain drugs then becomes a parent, the child of either may be deformed or otherwise adversely affected by what the parent did. Thus an adult may sin and produce consequences that are long ranging. Would you like to have been the son or daughter of Judas? That doesn't mean you would go to hell, but would life have been pleasant? Likewise, we do not inherit Adam's sin, only the consequence. For once sin entered the world, anyone could sin. Adam and Eve had a family. Cain and Abel were two of their children. God punished Cain for killing Abel, not because Adam sinned. However, because Adam sinned, Cain and Abele did not grow up in Eden. They suffered the consequence of their father's sin.)

F. Where does God's judgment begin (Matt. 8:12; I Pet. 4:17; I Tim. 3:15)?

Ans. Judgment begins at the house of God, the church.

G. Duration of punishment: How long will people remain in hell (Mark 9:43-44 - ASV omits verse v. 44; Jude 7)? Ans. The punishment of sinners is endless.

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IV. Solution to the Sin Problem:

- A. What cleanses us from our sin (I John 1:7)? Ans. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from our sin.
- B. Where do we contact the blood of Christ (Rom. 6:3-6)?
Ans. When we are baptized, we are baptized into the death of Christ. Christ's blood was shed in His death.
- C. What part does baptism play in salvation (Acts 2:38)?
Ans. Baptism gives remission of sins and, at that time, we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

United by Marriage Chapter 41

INTRODUCTION: Inspired writers tell us that God is called the obedient believer's Father (Jer. 31:9; John 8:18). They also compare God's followers to the bride of Christ (Jer. 2:31; Rev. 21:2). Elsewhere, Christ is described as the bridegroom (Is. 61:10; John 3:29). These three concepts are closely related to marriage and the family.

If marriage helps us to understand the relationship expressed between God and faithful followers, between Christ and Israel, and between Christ and the church then any distortion of the concept of marriage mars our understanding of these spiritual relationships. Today, we see society redefining marriage as a union between a male and female, two males, or two females. The role of the father is challenged and the place of children in the marriage is confused.

I. Origin of marriage:

- A. The first time Adam saw Eve, he was inspired to say: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).
- B. Jesus adds: "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:5).
- C. Adam did not marry Ed; Eve did not marry Ami; rather, Adam, a male, married Eve, a female (Gen. 2:24).

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- D. Lamech was the first man recorded to have married more than one wife (Gen. 4:19).

II. Duties of the husband

- A. Describe how much a husband should love his wife (Eph. 5:25).
Ans. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it.
- B. A husband should love his wife as much as he loves his own body (Eph. 5:28).
- C. He that loveth his wife loveth himself (Eph. 5:28).
- D. A husband should love his wife as much as he loves himself (Eph. 5:33; Deut. 24:5).
- E. A man should nourish and cherish his wife like Christ nourishes and cherishes the church (Eph. 5:28-29).
- F. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them (Col. 3:19).
- G. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered (I Pet. 3:7).
- H. In Habakkuk 2:5, God pronounces judgment on the Chaldeans as He inspires the prophet to write: "Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, he is a proud man neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell and is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathereth unto him all nations and heapeth unto him all people." This verse implies that a righteous man will not drink, exhibit a proud attitude, or be unfaithful to his family obligations.
- I. This verse, Habakkuk 2:5, should not be used to excuse a man from doing what he can to provide a living for his family. That would contradict I Tim. 5:8. In this verse, a man is charged with providing for his own, and if he refuses, he has denied the faith and he is worse than an infidel.

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- K. Fathers are instructed to avoid provoking their children to wrath but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).
- L. List four ways fathers can provoke children to wrath. Provide Bible references if possible.
 1. Favoritism (Gen. 37:3-4),
 2. Teasing
 3. Making unreasonable demands on the child beyond the developmental ability of the child
 4. Physical or sexual abuse

(Society is just beginning to realize how important fathers are to families. They balance the family.)

- M. Fathers are urged to chasten their sons while there is hope (Proverbs 19:18).

III. Duties of the wife

- A. In Genesis 3:16, God condemns Eve for breaking His law and tells her that "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." God did not tell men to subject women; women are to voluntarily subject themselves to their husband's authority.
- B. In I Peter 3:1, the apostle wrote "likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word they also may without the word be won by the conversation(behavior) of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear."
- C. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:22-23).
- D. In Eph. 5:33, Paul urges the wife to reverence her husband. Although Paul was speaking about the church's relationship to Christ, he would not have said that if a wife were not also to honor her husband.
- E. In Ephesians 5:24, Paul wrote: "Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."

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- F. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit (or proper) in the Lord (Col. 3:18-19).
- G. That they (aged women) may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed (Tit. 2:4-5). We see that godly married women focus on their home and family. This verse has been taken to mean that a godly married woman cannot work outside her home. That cannot be a correct understanding considering Proverbs 31 and Acts 16:14, 15, 40.
- IV. Marriage partners have a mutual obligation to their spouse.
- A. The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise, also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. With this statement God gives equal sex rights to the two sexes (I Cor. 7:4-5).
- B. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency (I Cor. 7:5). Couples should not be away from one another for lengthy periods of time.
- C. Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge (Heb. 13:4).
- V. What happens to the spouse if one of a married couple dies?
- A. For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband is dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man (Rom. 7:2-4; cf. I Cor. 7:39).

Some men are quick to point out that women have numerous obligations under God's laws but they fail to recognize that men have obligations as well. Some admonitions apply to both men and to women equally though only one sex is mentioned. For instance, women have a right to remarry if their spouse dies; men have an equal right to do this.

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- B. For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven (Mark 12:25).
- VI. The laws of marriage have a spiritual application. Let's consider God's dealings with His people.
- A. The Husband, God, was loyal and fulfilled all obligations, but the wife, Israel, committed fornication (Jer.13:27 [Jerusalem stands for Israel]; Matt. 23:37-39) and was worthy of death under the old law (Lev. 20:10) and worthy of divorce under the New Testament laws (Matt. 5:32).
- B. Then after a time, God used a remnant of the Israel nation to form a nucleus for a new covenant with a new group of people (Heb. 6:10; 10:16; 13:20).
- C. This group included Jews and Gentiles (I Cor. 12:13) who would not be ashamed to call on His name (Rom. 10:11).
- D. Christ is the husband of the new bride, the church (Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 19:7-8; 21:9-10).

Divorce and its Consequences Chapter 42

INTRODUCTION: In our society, almost half of all marriages end in divorce. Researchers hypothesize about what causes divorce and have reached a variety of conclusions. However, the answer is quite simple: couples are not following God's commands. Too often couples leap into marriage with no intention of remaining; neither member is mature enough to make the necessary adjustments that enable a marriage to work; neither partner has a good job; neither schools nor families teach essential life skills; and far too often, couples do not put God first, the spouse second, children third, the parents and families of the couple may interfere and work may supersede duty to the spouse. God, the spouse and children must come before work, contrary to the dictates of many employers. Finally, parents of the newlyweds must support the young couple's decision to set up an independent household. When

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marriage breaks down, divorce often seems to be the only solution. God speaks about this subject just as He has spoken about other aspects of human relations.

I. Divorce or "putting away" under the Law of Moses

- A. Under the old law, "when a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favor in his eyes because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife" (Deut. 24:1-2).
- B. Why did God allow divorce in the old law (Matt. 19:7-8)? Ans: He (Jesus) saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so (cf. Mark 10:2-9).
- C. How does God feel about "putting away" or divorce? Answer: God hates "putting away" (Mal. 2:16).

II. Divorce under the law of Christ

- A. When two people marry, according to Jesus, they are no more two, but one flesh and what God has joined together, let not man put asunder (Matt. 19:6).
- B. If a woman puts away (= divorces) her husband, and marries someone else, she commits adultery (Mark 10:12).
- C. But I (Jesus) say unto you, that whosoever shall puts away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery" (Matt. 5:32; 19:8).
- D. Following the resurrection, are people still married (Matt. 22:30)? Explain. Ans. No, they are like the angels. Apparently, angels are asexual individuals since the reason for sex is primarily procreation and heaven's population is not increased by physical births.

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III. Spiritual application of the concept of divorce and marriage for Israel.

- A. Recall that Israel divided into Israel and Judah (I Kings 11:30-33; 12:26-33). Jer. 3:12-14 Israel, acknowledge thine iniquity and turn, for I am married unto you.
- B. In Jeremiah 3:14, the inspired writer wrote: "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."
- C. God said that His people had committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jer.2: 13). They rejected God.
- D. God had married Israel; therefore, when Israel divided into two, Israel and Judah, God was married to both. Why did God divorce Israel and Judah (Jer.3:8; Hosea 13:2-4)?
Ans. Israel and Judah committed adultery and played the harlot by worshiping other gods. Israel and Judah had left God.
- E. Under what conditions would God accept them back (Zech.3:7)? Ans. If they would walk in God's ways and keep His charge.
- F. The inspired writer said that when God dwells in the midst of the daughter of Zion (=Israel), many nations shall be joined to the Lord and shall be His people (Zech. 2:10-11). When did this come about (Acts 2)?
Ans. It happened at Pentecost.

IV. Spiritual application of the concept of divorce for the church: In previous lessons, we saw that the church is the bride of Christ. Likewise, God was wed to Israel (and Judah), but He divorced them because they committed adultery by worshiping other gods (Jer.3:8) and selected another bride.

- A. Can Christians follow the Law of Moses (Rom. 7:4; Gal. 3:21)? Ans. Ye are dead to the law that ye should be married to Christ.
- B. The first covenant was replaced because the Lord found fault with the Hebrews (Heb. 8:7-8).
- C. Paul tells the church: "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ (II Cor. 11:2).

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V. Discussion Questions

- A. Explain why God allows divorce from a spiritual viewpoint.

Ans. God knew Israel would not live up to the covenant. God warned Israel not to do all that she eventually did (compare Ex. 20:3-17 to the sins listed in Jeremiah and Ezekiel). After they had returned from Babylon, more and more people turned from God. Yet God knew that the nation of Israel would not follow His teachings. Only a minority of individuals (a remnant) would follow. God divorced Israel after she left Him.

Hundreds of years passed then God sent His Son which heralded in a change of covenants. From Abraham, God had built a large nation; from a descendent, Jesus, God planed a new chosen Israel which involved a change of the covenants. The priestly system was changed, the laws were changed, the worship was changed and the relationship between God and the believers was changed. God "divorced" Israel because they refused to accept His leadership. Through Christ, God established a new collection of people, the church, made of people from all nations who would follow Him. This group was the new bride of Christ.

If people could not divorce adulterous spouses, God would not have been able to change the covenants and change the nation He favored without eliminating the concept of the chosen people being like the bride of Christ or God.

- B. What can a man and woman do to prevent divorce and the heartache it brings?

Ans. First, two people should be very careful who they select for their spouse. Both parties should be honest about their goals, hopes, and expectations. They should discuss earning money, i.e. who does it, how many children would be perfect, how children should be educated, public or home schooled, where the family should live, what style of home and furnishings are ideal, the role of television in the home, etc. The more agreement they have, the better chance the couple will have a successful marriage.

After marriage, the bride and groom should nurture their mutual love, respect, and admiration with kindness and patience. They should keep God first, the spouse second, children third, and job fourth. They can think loving thoughts about the other spouse and attribute the best intentions to all behaviors. They can always pray for the spouse and for the family. They can discipline their minds and avoid lustful thoughts and questionable situations that produce lust for anyone who isn't the marriage partner. They can avoid developing friendships with people who do not respect the marriage vows.

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They can share their secrets, their hopes, their interests, and their fears with their spouse. Both parties can try to satisfy the physical needs of the spouse and respect the spouse for the comfort he and she provides. They can hold the Word of God and the name of God in very high respect.

The husband should be willing to die or to live for the wife, to lead the family, teach the children about God and love God. That is what Jesus did. He died for the church and leads her through the Spirit's Word, the Bible. The husband can respect the work of the wife and see it as part of God's plan and thus important. Men can recall that Christ did nothing to harm His bride. He did not try to subject His bride, the church; nor did Christ establish many rules. Gentle love motivated His every action toward the church.

The wife can be gently submissive to the leadership of her husband and teach the children to do the same. She can recognize that children need a united pair of parents to guide them toward maturity. She can discipline the children and help them to learn what they need to develop properly and be successful in life. She can see to the needs of her children. All have different talents and different needs, but both the man and the woman can help the children discover and use their talents to achieve success. She should love her husband and support him.

Children, Blessings from God Chapter 43

INTRODUCTION: Most married couples are thrilled to discover they are expecting their first baby. After the baby comes all is fine until the child is old enough to express an opinion about everything, but too young to understand even the basic consequences of decisions. Then the young parents experience frustration. As the child matures, he or she presents young parents with many difficult problems. Torn between what psychologists feel is the right, what common sense says, and what parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles say, the young couples do not know where to turn for answers.

Many parents overlook the Creator's guidelines for raising children. Later, when the children mature, experiment with drugs and alcohol, leave home, and forget their parent's religious values, the couples wonder what they did wrong as they grieve for their precious children. Quite simply, their children never fully embraced the parent's values to begin with. God, who created children, knows how to raise them.

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I. Children in Old Testament times.

- A. Are children special to God? Ans. "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward (Ps. 127:3).
- B. Is there a time when a child does not know the difference between good and evil (Isa. 7:16)? Explain when this might be.
Ans. Yes No For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.
- C. Even a child is known by his doings (Prov. 20:11).
- D. God warned the prophet Eli that his sinful sons behavior was unacceptable (I Sam. 2:22-25).
- E. Were these "sons" of Eli little children or older youths close to adulthood or possibly adults (I Sam. 2:22)? Check the correct choice.
 1. little children
 X 2. older youths close to adulthood or possibly adults
- E. What effect did Eli's words have on the young men's behavior (I Sam. 2:25)?
Ans. No effect.
- F. Does God expect parents to discipline their children (I Sam. 3:12-13)?
Ans. God told the prophet Eli that He would judge him and his sons because the sons were sinful and Eli would not restrain them.
- G. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul (Prov. 29:17).
- H. The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself brings his mother to shame (Prov. 29:15).
- I. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him (Prov. 22:15).
- J. How should a parent deal with a very difficult child (Prov. 23:13)?
Ans. Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell (Prov. 23:13).

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To some, this verse sounds like God is mandating child abuse, but that interpretation does not agree with other verses. Clearly, the author advocates spanking a child with an instrument if necessary. However, punishment should fit the behavior, the temperament, and the age of the child, not the parents anger or frustration.

In addition, parents should realize that since children are much smaller than adults, furious adults may seriously injure or kill a small youngster if they beat them. That is murder.

K. He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him (Prov.13:24; chasten means to reprove and to instruct).

L. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul (Prov. 29:17).

M. Should a mother threaten disobedient children and let the father carry out discipline when he arrives?

Ans. No, because sentence against an evil work is not executed quickly; therefore, the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil (Ecc. 8:11).

This verse seems to be stating that correction works best if it follows immediately on the heels of the misdeed whether the doer is a child or an adult.

N. Should a parent force a child to follow a parent's choice of employment?

Answer: Train up a child in the way he should go and he will not stray from it (Prov. 22:6). This verse is not a promise that a child raised in the church will never fall. However, a child raised in the church will have a better chance to enter Heaven than one who is not. This verse is primarily about helping a child select a vocation based on his or her natural abilities.

O. A wise son heareth his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke. (Prov. 13:1).

P. Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying (Prov.19:18).

It takes a strong parent to stand firm in the face of a flood of tears. However, a wise parent realizes that if the child is not inconvenienced or discomfited in a "major way," he or she will see no reason to alter unacceptable behavior.

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If the duty of the parent to discipline the child is not established early, kindly, and continued gently, and firmly until the child leaves home, when a child is old enough, he or she will reject the authority of the parent. Today that rejection may come from a four year old. Ever hear, "You can't tell me what to do!"?

- Q. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes (Deut. 6:6-9; 11:18-23).

God admonished the ancient Israelites to constantly instruct their children and themselves in the Law. God clearly wanted them to keep His laws foremost in their lives.

Today, we are challenged by a better covenant (Heb. 8:6). How much more should we study the Word (II Tim. 2:15) and teach it to all willing to listen (Col. 3:16)! In fact, one of the most important responsibilities parents have is the religious education of their children. Although both parents share this duty, prepared fathers should take the lead (Prov. 1:7-8; 3:1-2; 4:1; Eph. 6:4). In addition, challenging Bible classes for all ages taught by well-prepared instructors reinforce parental Bible instruction, but a Bible class cannot substitute for daily parental instruction. A "challenging Bible class" is one that focuses on Bible facts that are geared to a particular age group.

II. In the New Testament time, the Lord encouraged parents who are Christians to establish a sensitive relationship with their children.

- A. Jesus said if anyone caused one of these little ones which believe in Him to stumble, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea (Matt. 18:2-6).

Stumble does not mean to almost fall down, but to err from the truth, to sin (Guthrie, etc. p. 839). False teaching can cause us to do that, but so can abuse when the abuser is supposed to be a member of the church.

A *millstone* was as device used to grind grain such as corn. A small millstone was about 18 inches across and several inches deep. The millstone had a hole in the top for a thick stick. Two women would often sit together. One

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would feed grain through the hole while the other used the stick to move the millstone back and forth on top of another stone. The motion between the stones ground the grain into coarse flour that spilled out onto the ground.

- B. Do children understand things in the same manner as an adult (I Cor. 13:11)?

Ans. No, "when I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

- C. Give two reasons why children should obey their parents: for this is...
1. Well pleasing unto the Lord (Col. 3:20).
 2. Because it is right (Eph. 6:1).

- D. "Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:2-3).

- E. And ye fathers _____ provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

Note who the Lord admonished to nurture and admonish children. That does not exclude women from nurturing or admonishing, but it does place the primary responsibility on the father.

That "wrath" or anger can come from physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. All forms of abuse produce an abiding anger and confusion in children that is rarely resolved without professional assistance. In addition, when fathers are abusive, children wonder if God, their heavenly Father, is also like that. In a sense, to a child, fathers reflect God. Therefore, even with treatment, as they mature, abused children often leave the Lord.

- F. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged (Col. 3:21).

When corrected, children often become angry and defensive. That is not the "anger" intended by Paul. According to *The New Bible Commentary: Revised*, the word "anger" means irritation from the harshness of the father (p. 1152). This anger might also come from teasing fathers. Most children are intimidated by teasing, not amused.

- G. (A bishop is) One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in

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subjection with all gravity... (I Tim. 3:4).

- H. Older women are to teach younger women to love their husbands and to love their children (Tit. 2:9). Children are not always lovable they are human. We may be the children of God but we don't always behave in a lovable manner either.
- I. When writing to Timothy, Paul recalls the unfeigned faith that he recognized in Timothy's grandmother Lois and in his mother, Eunice and in Timothy (Acts 16:1; II Tim. 1:5; 3:15).

These verses suggest that Timothy's mother and grandmother taught him more about God than his father did.

III. Discussion questions.

- A. What are some options for disciplining a willful child?

Ans. Fortunately, a variety of techniques exist for helping a child learn self-control and proper social behavior. Children younger than two years old should be protected and taught that some things they want to do are not allowed. They cannot understand spanking or lengthy explanations. Under no circumstances should a parent shake a child. Diverting their attention with a colorful toy may stop improper behavior.

Very small children, 2-3 years, do not yet have a very clear idea of what is right and wrong or why. The first and second time a child does something wrong, explain briefly that such behavior is unsatisfactory. The next time the child disobeys in a similar manner, a firm "no" and giving the child something else to do works for many children. Time out on a chair or in a corner for a few minutes works well to discipline some children. A swat on the diaper or a well-padded bottom may be needed occasionally with some children.

Older, strong willed children are able to understand why some behavior is wrong so talking to the child may help control some behaviors. Other children may need more harsh discipline to realize that their behavior is wrong, but spanking a child too often makes spanking less of a frightening experience. In other words, spanking loses its effectiveness. Temporarily removing a favorite toy punishes some children; but others have so many toys that one less is not a serious handicap or loss. Older children who disobey should lose privileges such as watching a favorite television program, visiting a friend, etc.

Contrary to popular opinion, children need mom and dad to be parents more than they need their parents as their friends or playmates. Although

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they protest, children expect limits and rules so they can understand what is expected. Limits and rules define acceptable behavior. In addition, feeling respect for and even a little fear of parents and other adults is proper from a biblical viewpoint (Mal. 1:6). This feeling helps children develop respect for authority figures such as God, our Heavenly Father (Prov. 1:7; Ecc. 12:13;) and for the law of the land.

- B. Suppose your teen daughter wants to purchase and wear a skirt or top that reveals too much. How can you persuade her that clothing sends messages (Prov. 7:10; I Tim. 2:9)?

Ans. A harlot is known by her attire. How we dress invites attention, the good or the bad kind. Although children and teens enjoy dressing as if they were older than their age, their taste in clothing is immature and innocent. They are unaware of the messages they send to not-so-innocent adults. Parents and adults must help children by guiding their choices toward modesty.

- C. You discover your teenage son has been looking at web sites that contain violence, nudity, and sex. What do you tell him?

Ans. Consider: I John 3:3; Prov. 23:7; I Cor. 3:20; II Cor. 10:5. No one can satisfy a thirst for violence and porn by watching it. That is like trying to put out a fire by throwing kindling on it. Violence and porn are addictive.

- D. Why are many teens so difficult to guide?

Ans. The teen years are important years because that is when children learn what their future holds. They must learn that adulthood involves responsibilities as well as rewards. During teen years, adolescents develop and strengthen their psychological resources. However, it is also a difficult time for them because their bodies are developing and changing even as their relationship to society is evolving.

When weak families and absentee fathers fail to offer the guidance teens need and want, many turn to gangs and to their peers for guidance. Aggressive, risk taking, domineering individuals are often seen as strong leaders. In gangs and clubs, the more aggressive members vie for positions of preeminence. Intoxicated with power, these youngsters lead the weaker followers into sinful behavior patterns that can be fatal.

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Teens need activity, duties, and responsibilities. They also need strong families where both parents form a united front to lead and direct the teen. They need to work alongside patients, knowledgeable adults who are qualified to guide them. They also need to establish a good relationship with God.

- E. How does God feel about older children mistreating their parents (Levit. 20:9; Deut. 27:16; Prov. 20:11)?

God does not approve. He says they are worthy of death. These scriptures do not mean that today we should kill disobedient children, but it does mean that God expects parents to teach their children to respect their parents. When children accept parental authority, they are better able to respect and submit to the authority of their Heavenly Father as they mature.

Conclusion Chapter 44

CONCLUSION: We have seen what the Bible, God's Word, says about Christ, the church, Christians, relationships and the destiny of mankind. We have also studied about how to become a Christian, a member of Christ's church, and to inherit the blessings reserved for him or her.

Love motivates us to ask non-Christians: Are these promises and blessings for you? Can you espouse this way of life? We have seen that to become a Christian, we must love God. This love prompts us to obey His Word. It is evident from the Bible that we must believe in God and in Christ, confess Christ is the Son of God, repent of our sins, and wash away our sins in the waters of baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Then God adds us to the church of His choice, the one His Son died to save. We become part of the family of God, heirs of the eternal blessings we have in Christ. We understand that we can lose our inheritance if we leave the family or sin without asking for forgiveness. We have seen how the Lord's church is organized.

After we have taken the first steps, our work and trial begins. We will be tested every day. We choose hourly to obey God, to walk in the light, and to seek His truth. As we study the Bible and properly apply it to our lives, we will become more like Christ. After we become Christians, we will also want to help others learn about the promises of Christ and the church Christ purchased so that they might share Heaven with us. We become a new person with new interests, hopes, and expectations.

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Appendix

Baptism for the dead: (I Cor. 15:29)

This passage has puzzled many people. It has caused scholars of one religious group to propose a false doctrine in an effort to explain what it means. A number of ways to understand what the passage is saying exist without resorting to the idea that it teaches we can be baptized for people who have died. To understand any passage, we must consider the entire chapter, including to whom it was written and the circumstances. Below is one way to look at it:

I Cor. 15:1-4. Paul preached that Christ was buried and raised from the dead.

1 Cor. 15:4-11. Many people living at that time saw Christ after He was raised from the dead. Based on their testimony, it is apparent that God has the power to raise people from the dead.

1 Cor. 15:12-24. False teachers were denying the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. These teachers were undermining the teaching of the apostles and they were denying Christ.

1 Cor. 15:25-32. Paul makes his final logical deductions in his argument against these false teachers. Although these teachers were teaching that there was no resurrection of the dead, they were baptizing people for folks who had died out of Christ. This action is absurd, illogical, and false. Paul's argument says in effect, "If you are denying that there is a resurrection and a future life, why are you baptizing people?" According to the logic of these false teachers, there is no way dead people can go to Heaven, since they say there is no resurrection.

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