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# the fundamentals of the faith.

class syllabus | ccc youth group

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*a study for the youth group of christ community church in hopes  
of understanding theology, knowing how to live theology, and  
being equipped to better communicate and teach this theology  
to others.*

long for the pure milk of the word, so that by  
it you may grow in respect to salvation

**—1 Peter 2:2**

# FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH

*a study for the CCC youth group* | by Geoffrey R. Kirkland

## **Overview of the 13 Lessons:**

Lesson 1: Introduction to the Bible

Lesson 2: How to Know the Bible

Lesson 3: God: His Character and Attributes

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Lesson 5: The Work of Christ

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Lesson 7: The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

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Lesson 12: Obedience

Lesson 13: God's Will and Guidance

“Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that  
by it you may grow in respect to salvation.”

—1 Peter 2:2

## Lesson 1: Introduction to the Bible

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### I. What is the Bible?

#### a. The Word of God given to man

The phrase “*Thus says the LORD*” is found 1,900+ times in the Old Testament! This means that God spoke to man, and therefore gave to man His perfect Word!

This means that when the prophet said: “*Thus says the LORD*” he was speaking the word from God Himself to the people! It was an inspired, perfect, and God-given word!

**Exodus 5:1** *And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"*

**Isaiah 44:6** <sup>6</sup> *"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.*

**Ezekiel 2:4** <sup>4</sup> *"I am sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'*

**Deuteronomy 4:1-2** *"Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, is giving you. <sup>2</sup> "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you (compare with Revelation 22:18-19).*

Here Moses is telling the nation of Israel that they are not to add anything to the Word that *God has spoken to them* through Moses! And Revelation 22:18-19 says the *exact same thing*.

***The Bible is THE complete and perfect Word FROM God TO Man.***

**1 Thessalonians 2:13** <sup>13</sup> *For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.*

When Paul spoke the gospel to the Christians in the city of Thessalonika, they received what Paul had to say not as mere words of men, but just as it is, the true Word of God!

**Hebrews 1:1** *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,*

**b. The absolute authority**

**NOTE this:** The Bible is the absolute authority and standard by which the Christian lives his life.

-everything must be compared with the Bible

-everything must be measured by the Bible

**WHY?** Because God has spoken in HIS Word and the only book in the world that contains the words from Almighty God is the **Bible**.

Therefore, it is the absolute authority!

**Hebrews 4:12-13** <sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* <sup>13</sup> *And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*

See how powerful and authoritative God's Word is!

NOTHING in your life is ever hidden from God—not even your thoughts!

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** <sup>16</sup> *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;* <sup>17</sup> *so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

**Mark 1:27** <sup>27</sup> *They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."*

Even when Jesus was living on earth, he would command unclean spirits (=demons) to depart from people and when he commanded, they obeyed! Why? Because God always speaks with authority so that even the strongest of foes (Satan, demons) **must** obey Him!

**c. The standard of holiness**

**If you want to get to heaven by being “good”, then all you have to do is be perfect—absolutely perfect** (no mistakes, no sins—none!).

**Matthew 5:48** <sup>48</sup> "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Isaiah 57:15** <sup>15</sup> For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.

**John 17:17** <sup>17</sup> "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth  
God's Word is **TRUTH**. The point of the verse in John 17 is that the Word that God has given to mankind is the truth and the means by which humans are saved and are sanctified (that means, becoming more Christlike, or more like Jesus).

**John 16:13** <sup>13</sup> "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

**Of course, this is believed by faith:**

**Hebrews 11:1-3** Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the men of old gained approval. <sup>3</sup> By **faith** we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

**And it continues...**

**Hebrews 11:6** <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

d. How we know about many different realities:

i. God (**Theology Proper—the Doctrine of God**)

1. **John 17:3** <sup>3</sup> "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

2. **Hosea 6:3** <sup>3</sup> "So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth."

ii. Man (**Anthropology—the Doctrine of Man**)

1. **Romans 5:12** <sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned—
2. **Genesis 1:27** <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
3. **Psalms 51:5** <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

iii. Others (**Anthropology cont'd—the Doctrine of Man continued**)

1. **Philippians 2:3** but in humility consider others better than yourselves.
2. **Ezekiel 18:20-21** <sup>20</sup> "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself. <sup>21</sup> "But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

iv. Sin (**Hamartiology—the Doctrine of Sin**)

1. **Romans 3:23** all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
2. **Ecclesiastes 7:20** <sup>20</sup> There is not a righteous man on earth who does what is right and never sins.
3. **1 Kings 8:46** for there is no man who does not sin
4. **Psalms 143:2** <sup>2</sup> And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous.
5. **Genesis 6:5** <sup>5</sup> Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
6. **Romans 3:9-19** for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; <sup>10</sup> as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; <sup>11</sup> THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; <sup>12</sup> ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE." <sup>13</sup> "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE, WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS"; <sup>14</sup> "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS"; <sup>15</sup> "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, <sup>16</sup> DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, <sup>17</sup> AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN." <sup>18</sup> "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." <sup>19</sup> Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God;

v. Salvation (**Soteriology—the Doctrine of Salvation**)

**Jesus as Savior:**

1. **Acts 4:12** <sup>12</sup> Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."
2. **Romans 10:13** <sup>13</sup> for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
3. **1 Timothy 2:5** <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

#### **Saved by Grace Alone, Not Works**

4. **Ephesians 2:8-10** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.
5. **2 Timothy 1:9** <sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

#### **The Necessity of a Godly Life Evidencing Salvation**

6. **Matthew 3:8** <sup>8</sup> "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;
7. **John 15:6** <sup>6</sup> "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.
8. **Ephesians 4:1-3** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup> being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
9. **Hebrews 12:14** without holiness no one will see the Lord.
10. **Jude 1:20-21** <sup>20</sup> But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, <sup>21</sup> keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

#### **The Security of the Believer's Salvation**

11. **Jude 1:24** <sup>24</sup> Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,
12. **1 Peter 1:3-5** <sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
13. **Philippians 1:6** <sup>6</sup> For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.
14. **Romans 5:1-2** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

15. **Romans 8:28-30** <sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

vi. End Times

1. **Philippians 1:21** <sup>21</sup> For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
2. **2 Corinthians 5:8** to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.
3. **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** <sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. <sup>15</sup> For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup> For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup> Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup> Therefore comfort one another with these words.
4. **Revelation 3:10** <sup>10</sup> 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.
5. **Matthew 25:46** <sup>46</sup> "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

II. Why are there 66 books in the Bible?

a. The OT

- i. The OT contains 39 books (Genesis—Malachi, English Bible)
- ii. Written from 2000BC (Job) all the way to 400 BC (Malachi)

b. The NT

- i. The NT contains 27 books (Matthew—Revelation)
- ii. Written from Matthew (40AD) all the way to Revelation (95AD)

c. Other books

- i. There were many, **many** other books written in the early periods. Some of these books were written by Jewish scholars, early Christians, and other men who wanted to write books for the Christian community or those who tried to write books arguing against Christianity.
- ii. Examples:

1. 1 and 2 Maccabees



2. Wisdom of Solomon
  3. Tobit
  4. Judith
  5. Gospel of Thomas
- d. **Why the 66 books that WE have in our Bible?**
- i. The early Jewish (OT) and Christian (NT) communities immediately recognized those men who were leaders and divinely appointed by God as those who could write books for the Bible.
    1. Moses—a prophet of God
    2. Joshua—a leader of God’s people
    3. Samuel—a prophet of God
    4. David—a King over Israel
    5. Matthew—a disciple of Jesus
    6. Luke—a historian and acquaintance with Christ’s followers
    7. Paul—an apostle
    8. Peter—an apostle
    9. Jude—the brother of Jesus

**NOTE:** *The ultimate test of why the Bible contains ONLY the 66 books that it has is the testimony of God the Holy Spirit to His own Word in confirming that in the believer’s heart and soul.*

- III. **What are the books of the Bible in the order they’re in?**
- a. Mostly, they are thematically arranged. That means that they are arranged according to theme (see, for example, the Psalms). In the NT, however, it may also be arranged chronologically (Matthew being one of the earliest and Revelation being the latest book written).
  - b. **The OT**
    - i. **Hebrew Bible**
      1. “Tanach”
      2. Torah (“Law”)
      3. Neviim (“Prophets”)
      4. Ketuvim (“Writings”)
    - ii. **English Bible**
      1. Law/Pentateuch
      2. Historical Books
      3. Poetic Books
      4. Prophetic Books
    - iii. *Different order/arrangement of books—but the same books and same words!*
  - c. **The NT**
    - i. **Gospels**

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John give four different accounts (perspectives) of the life, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- ii. **Historical Book (Acts)**
  1. The book of Acts is the “historical book” for the birth, growth, and expansion of the early Christian church.
- iii. **Didactic (=Teaching) Books**
  1. **Soteriological Epistles (Rom, 1, 2 Corinthians, Gal)**
    - a. These four books primarily deal with salvation issues, church ministry, theology, grace, walking in holiness, etc.
  2. **Imprisonment Epistles (Eph, Phil, Col, Philemon)**
    - a. These four “prison epistles” are written by Paul as he is chained to a Roman guard and he encourages different believers/churches to continue fighting for the gospel and keeping the gospel pure by walking in holiness.
  3. **Eschatological Epistles (1, 2 Thess)**
    - a. These two books primarily deal with the end-times—when Christ will come back, what will happen when he does, who will be saved, etc.
  4. **Pastoral Epistles (1, 2 Timothy, Titus)**
    - a. These are letters written to young church leaders (Timothy and Titus) and these books guide as to how to “conduct” church ministry in the local church assembly/gathering.
- iv. **Catholic (=General) Epistles**
  1. **Hebrews, James, Jude, 1, 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John**
    - a. These books primarily deal with Godly Christian living and how to know that one is truly in the faith.
- v. **Apocalyptic (Revelation)**
  1. The theme of Revelation, of course, is the future coming return of Jesus Christ to earth to punish all nonbelievers and to save and deliver those who have trusted in Him. All unbelievers are cast into eternal hell where there is conscious, eternal, and terrifying judgment whereas the believers are ushered immediately into the bliss, joys, and happiness of eternal heaven.

#### IV. Who wrote the Bible?

##### a. **Incorrect Theories**

###### i. **Only God**

1. God sort of used humans as one would write with a typewriter. They just wrote what God told them.

###### ii. **\*\*Only Man** (this is the most popular theory in non-Christian circles today)

1. God had no part in the writing of the Bible. The Bible is merely a bunch of letters and ideas that different people had through the ages and

someone much later compiled them all together and labeled it: “The Bible.”

**b. Correct Belief**

- i. **Dual Authorship (=God + Man)**
- ii. *The human element in Scripture means that an inspired man in perceiving and conveying truth employs his own human mind, his own native language, the common figures of speech, and exhibits his own individual peculiarities, but without misconception and error upon the subject of which he treats because his human mind is actuated and guided by the divine mind (Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, 109).*
- iii. *There is the preparation of the men to write these books to be considered, a preparation physical, intellectual, spiritual, which must have attended them throughout their whole lives, and, indeed, must have had its beginning in their remote ancestors, and the effect of which was to bring the right men to the right places at the right times, with the right endowments, impulses, [and] acquirements, to write just the books which were designed for them (BB Warfield, Inspiration and Authority of the Bible, 155).*
- iv. Of course, it is **NOT** wrong to say that God wrote the Bible, but we must qualify it by saying that **God wrote the Bible by using the personalities of different individuals!**

**2 Peter 1:20-21** <sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men **moved by the Holy Spirit** (lit. “carried along by the Holy Spirit”) spoke from God.

**V. Has the Bible been changed, updated, revised, or altered over the centuries?**

**a. The earliest compositions (=the originals/autographs)**

- i. Part of the Christian affirmation is that the **original manuscripts** (that is, those manuscripts that came from the pen of Moses, Paul, Matthew, John, etc) are totally inerrant (without error), inspired (by God Himself), and infallible (it cannot fail) in **everything it affirms!**
- ii. **Inerrancy** means that when all the facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything that they affirm, whether that has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences (John Feinberg, Meaning of Inerrancy, 294).

**b. Later Editions**

**c. Is the Bible I have today *inspired*?**

- i. The Bible that you hold in your hand **is** inspired—though it is NOT the original copy that Moses, David, or Paul wrote.
- ii. The copies and translations are inspired to the extent that they *reproduce the original*.

**VI. Why is there a Bible?**

- a. For God to communicate with His people
- b. For God to reveal Himself
- c. For God to reveal Salvation
- d. For God to glorify Himself
  - i. **Romans 10:17** <sup>17</sup> *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

**VII. What is the main theme of the Bible?**

- a. Climactic Event in the Bible
  - i. The crucifixion of Christ
- b. Climactic Theme in the Bible
  - i. Redemption – God, because of His grace, delivers His people from sin and transfers them into an eternal covenant with Himself.

**VIII. How do I know the Bible is *the supreme source of truth*?**

- a. The test of time
  - i. The Bible has existed since 2000BC (when Job wrote).
- b. The test of preservation
  - i. The Bible has been preserved *without corruption or decay* since the original writings were written.
- c. The test of authority
  - i. The Bible has *the* ultimate authority and it has since the earliest of times.
- d. The test of canonicity
  - i. The Bible NEVER contradicts itself (though there are paradoxes—two truths that must and can be reconciled) and, therefore, only supports itself in everything that it says and affirms.
- e. The test of archaeology
  - i. The Bible has been supported time and time again by archaeology (compare the recent excavation of King David's Palace in Jerusalem).
- f. The test of fulfilled prophecy
  - i. The Bible contains *hundreds* (literally!) of prophecies that have been *perfectly* fulfilled (Jesus, pagan kings, future kingdoms, Israel restored as a nation).
- g. The test of the Holy Spirit bearing witness to His Word

- i. The Bible is truly affirmed as true in the believer's heart through the person and work of God the Holy Spirit
  - ii. **1 Corinthians 2:14-15** <sup>14</sup> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. <sup>15</sup> But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.
- h. The test of your changed life.**
- i. Note what the Galatians were saying about Paul after he was saved: **Galatians 1:23** "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy."

**Application For This Week (James 1:23–25):**

- € Because God has given YOU His very Word, how do you treat it? Does it collect dust?
- € If you have a Bible at home, why not make a goal for yourself this summer and try to read through an entire book (like Matthew, John, 1 Corinthians, James, etc)!
- € If you knew that **President Obama** wrote you a letter that had a surprise inside, wouldn't you read it with great expectancy? How much **more** should you read the Bible where God declares that you can be saved from eternal punishment?
- € The Bible is God's **love letter** to you that TELLS you how to be saved! **Read the Bible! Memorize it! Speak about it! Share the good news with your friends! And DON'T do things that you KNOW would displease, dishonor, or shame God if HE were standing right next to you—because He is!**
- € At some point this week, share with **just one person** (mom, dad, friend, sibling, Geoff) something that YOU have learned from your own personal Bible reading!

## Lesson 2: How to Know the Bible (i.e. “Bible Interpretation”)

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### I. Introduction to Bible Interpretation

#### a. “Hermeneutics”

##### i. Definition:

*“Hermeneutics determines the **methods, techniques, rules, or principles** which will best serve in getting at the proper interpretation of any part of the Bible” (Jim Rosscup).*

#### b. “Application”

##### i. Definition:

*The Christian asks, "How does it relate to me? To others? To God?"  
Beloved, this concerns living the facts!*

*Here, I bring the truth specifically to focus upon personal behavior so that it is in direct contact with some actual attitude, action, word, or situation in my life or the life of another person.*

### II. Why is Studying the Bible so Important?

#### a. Every believer is (or, ought to be) a student of the Bible!

##### i. We are called to add to our faith **knowledge**

**2 Peter 1:5** <sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

**2 Peter 3:18** grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

**Hosea 6:3** <sup>3</sup> "So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD. His going forth is as certain as the dawn; And He will come to us like the rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth

**Philippians 3:10** <sup>10</sup> that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

**Ephesians 4:13** <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

## ii. The Bible is *THE* source for understanding God

### **Psalm 19:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

<sup>8</sup> The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

<sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;  
The judgments of the LORD are true;  
they are righteous altogether.

**Romans 10:17** <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

## b. Every believer has the Greatest Teacher *living inside of him*

### i. God—the Holy Spirit

**1 John 2:20** <sup>0</sup> But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know.

**John 16:13** <sup>13</sup> "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

**1 John 2:27** <sup>27</sup> As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

**1 Corinthians 2:14** <sup>14</sup> But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

## c. Every believer should strive to interpret God's Word accurately

### i. It takes WORK! ("blood, sweat, toil, and tears!")

**2 Timothy 2:15** <sup>15</sup> Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

## ii. Have a proper respect and reverence when you handle God's Word!

**James 3:1** Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

**Acts 20:36** <sup>36</sup> When he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

### **III. Why is Studying the Bible So Difficult?**

#### **a. Different Genres**

##### **i. Historical**

1. Joshua
2. 1 Kings
3. 2 Kings
4. 1 Chronicles
5. 2 Chronicles

##### **ii. Apocalyptic**

1. Revelation

##### **iii. Prophecy**

1. Isaiah, Joel, Zephaniah

##### **iv. Poetry**

1. Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations

##### **v. Didactic**

1. Romans, Ephesians, Hebrews, Jude

#### **b. Different Cultures and Customs**

- i. Egyptian Culture
- ii. Israelite Culture
- iii. Babylonian Culture

#### **c. Different Worship Practices and Customs**

- i. Polytheistic
- ii. Sacrifice
- iii. Appeasing the wrath of the god(s)

#### **d. Different Time Period**

- i. OT Israel = 3,000 years ago
- ii. OT Egypt = 3,000 years ago
- iii. OT Assyria = 2,700 years ago
- iv. OT Babylon = 2,500 years ago
- v. OT/NT Greece = 2,300 years ago
- vi. NT Rome = 2,000 years ago



**e. Different Languages**

**i. Old Testament**

1. Hebrew
2. Aramaic (Daniel 2-7)

**ii. New Testament**

1. Greek

**f. Hard Sayings**

- i. There are parts of the Bible that are difficult to understand and interpret.
- ii. It takes time and patience to study, and study, and **study**, and **STUDY** a passage and seek to find the accurate interpretation.

**For example: Jesus said:**

**Luke 14:26** <sup>6</sup> "If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple.

**Does Jesus really call me to “hate” my family?**

**1 Corinthians 11:4-6** <sup>4</sup> Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. <sup>5</sup> But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved. <sup>6</sup> For if a woman does not cover her head, let her also have her hair cut off; but if it is disgraceful for a woman to have her hair cut off or her head shaved, let her cover her head.

**Does this mean that every woman must always have her “head covered” when praying?**

**g. Exclusive Viewpoints**

**i. Salvation is only found in Jesus Christ**

**John 14:6** <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

**1 Timothy 2:5-6** <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

**Acts 4:12** <sup>12</sup> "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

**Hebrews 10:14** <sup>14</sup> For by one offering [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

**1 Thessalonians 5:9** <sup>9</sup> For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**2 Timothy 2:10** <sup>10</sup> For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

**ii. Therefore, every other way of salvation is false**

**2 Peter 2:1** But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

**Matthew 7:21** <sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.

**iii. Therefore, if someone tries to go to heaven without believing in Jesus, he will be tormented in hell forever!**

**Jesus said:**

**John 15:6** <sup>6</sup> "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

**h. TIME-CONSUMING!**

- i.** Be patient when studying the Bible!
- ii.** It takes time to understand it.
- iii.** It takes time to know it.
- iv.** It takes time to **apply** it to your life!
- v.** It takes time to know how to counsel others with God's Word!

IV. Should ALL of the Bible be interpreted the SAME Way?

***Yes and NO!***

*So, what does this mean?*

a. Yes

- i. **Because all of God's Word is just that—God's Word!**
- ii. **Therefore**, because every word in the Bible is God's Word, we ought to interpret it as God's **true, authoritative, perfect, inerrant, holy, flawless, faithful and infallible** Word of God!
- iii. We ought to compare Scripture with Scripture.

b. NO

- i. Because there are different genres.
- ii. We don't necessarily read Romans the same way we read Revelation. We don't read Genesis the same way we read Isaiah.
- iii. There are genres that help us determine *how* to interpret Scripture.

Helpful note on HOW to interpret Scripture: "always interpret Scripture in its plain, literal sense and meaning unless it is totally clear from the context that it should be interpreted figuratively or metaphorically."

V. Four tools to help you interpret a Bible passage:

a. Pray!

- i. Ask God to open your eyes and your heart
- ii. Ask God to make the text understandable
- iii. Ask God to help you *apply* the text to your life
- iv. Ask God to give you humility and patience as you study

*"If one were to study the Bible without praying, it would be like traveling to another part of the world without any assistance, aid, guidance, or direction to help arrive safely to the destination."*

*"Not only is it PRIDEFUL to study the Bible without praying and asking for God's help, it is **self-defeating**, because the only one who can help you interpret the Bible correctly is God Himself—Why would you not pray and ask Him to help guide and lead you to the proper understanding and application of a certain passage?"*

b. Observation ("What does the Text Say"?)

*"This has been called "the art of awareness". Here, the Christian must learn to relate to the Scripture and respond to the question, "What does it **say**?" He engages in the fine art of being all eyes and all ears. He is a detective*

*seeking to uncover every clue; he probes deeply into the passage for the what, the who, the when, the why, the where, the how, the so what, and also what does not matter” (Jim Rosscup).*

**i. Read the text**

1. Ask the questions
  - a. What does it say?
  - b. Who was it written to?
  - c. Why was it written?
  - d. Why is this in the place that it is?
2. Pray over the text
  - a. Ask God to give you wisdom and understanding

**Psalm 119:18** <sup>18</sup> *Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.*

3. Reread the text
  - a. Be familiar with it!

**ii. Make notes from the text**

1. Note repeated words
2. Note repeated phrases
3. Note different titles for God (=God, Lord, LORD, King, Sovereign, etc.).
4. Note contrasts
5. Note comparisons
6. Note imperatives
7. Note definite article (“the”) or lack of it.
8. Note the relation of the verse to the main theme/argument of the paragraph, chapter, or section.
9. Note references to chronology
10. Note references in geography

**c. Interpretation (“What does the Text Mean”?)**

*“The Christian responds to the question, “What does it mean?” He comes to this by a proper use of the raw materials of observation--what he has seen. A proper use of these would involve looking at them carefully according to good principles of interpretation, both general and specific”(Jim Rosscup).*

**i. Different Schools (“views”) of interpretation**

1. Allegorical School

The **definition** of the **allegorical method** is as follows: The allegorical method regards the literal, grammatical, historical sense of a passage as a mere vehicle for getting underneath to a hidden meaning thought to be deeper, more profound, and more spiritual.

**These see 144,000 Jews who are saved in Revelation 7 as a figurative number for ALL those who will be saved!**

*But this doesn't work with the context of Revelation 7 (it refers to literal Jewish people who will be saved during the Tribulation period—7,000 from each tribe of Israel!).*

**Critique:** Allegorizing passages has distorted the plain meaning of passages by reading in meanings which have no valid connection with the obvious, literal sense.

**In conclusion**, this is an **INCORRECT** way of interpreting Scripture. Very simply, I may see something *hidden or behind* the text that YOU may not see, and you may see something *hidden or behind* the text that I may not see. **Well, which view is right?** God did NOT speak in HIDDEN truths! His Word is meant to be interpreted and understood!

## 2. Literal School\*\* (correct way of interpreting!)

**Nehemiah 8:3, 8** <sup>3</sup> He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law... <sup>8</sup> They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

When the Scripture speaks of different realities, this camp says that because the Bible says it, it **must** be true:

If it says that Jesus calmed the storm, then he **literally calmed the storm** (Mark 4:37-41)!

## 3. Devotional School

These interpreters read the surface level of the Words and never *dig deep*. They read and study to only get the skim milk diet of the Word of God.

The theology of this camp is “a mile wide and an inch deep.” The T-bone steak meat of theology never enters into this camp—they like the simple theology. They don’t want to go deep into God’s Word!

**Hebrews 5:12-14** <sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. <sup>14</sup> But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

**Hebrews 6:1-2** Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

#### 4. Liberal School

Much of what you would see on the **Historical Channel**, read in secular school books about “creation” or “God” falls into this “school of thought”—liberal thinking.

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**Psalms 33:6** <sup>6</sup> By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.

**Luke 1:31-34** <sup>31</sup> "And behold, **you will conceive** in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; <sup>33</sup> and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?"

There is no way to believe these Scriptures without believing that God can work miracles!

The thinking and thought processes in this camp are in no way grounded in Scripture and belief in God. According to these liberals,

the supernatural, miracles, God, and faith is all **bogus**. According to these interpreters, “everything **must** make sense according to MY intellect and MY rationale.”

## 5. Neo-Orthodox School

This neo-orthodox school of thought says that the Bible **becomes** the Word of God when it speaks to my heart and soul.

It does **not** possess inherent inspiration and authority from God. **BUT**, when it speaks to my heart—that is, when a Bible verse ‘leaps off the page and speaks to my soul’—then it **becomes** inspired by God.

### PROBLEM:

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** <sup>16</sup> All Scripture **is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

**Hebrews 4:12** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God **is living and active** and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

### ii. Cross-Reference (“Scripture Interprets Scripture”)

1. One or more Scripture passages help interpret the right meaning in another text.
2. In other words, if you open your Bible and read:

*Matthew 27:5* went away and hanged himself.

**Then you open to another text and ask “God speak to me...” and you find the next Scripture which says:**

*Luke 10:37* Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."

**How are you to respond to this kind of person who reads and interprets the Scriptures this way??? ☺**

3. Salvation by the grace of God received by faith, **NOT** by works  
**But then you read:**

**James 2:24** <sup>24</sup> You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone.

**\*\*Compare James 2:24 with Eph 2:8-9; Rom 3:19-20; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:5-6; Gal 2:16, 21.**

**4. We shouldn't ever become teachers—James 3:1**

**James 3:1** Let not many of you become teachers,

**\*\*But note that Jesus Himself was a teacher. What does James 3:1 really say? All it means, in context, is that many people ought not to run too quickly to become teachers of the Bible because we who teach will be held to a stricter accountability and a greater judgment!**

**The point here is this: CONTEXT IS KING! (OR, “Kontext is King”)**

**d. Application (“How does the Text Apply to My Life”?)**

“The Christian asks, “How does it relate to me? To others? To God?”  
Beloved, this concerns living the facts!” (Jim Rosscup).

**i. The importance of this step in biblical interpretation**

1. Observation and Interpretation are absolutely worthless if it doesn't **change** the way you live.
2. If your Bible reading does not affect your life, then your Bible reading is useless!

*This is what the Pharisees did! They were experts at knowing the Law, but they certainly didn't live it out to the glory of God!*

**James 1:23-24** <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

**James 1:26-27** <sup>26</sup> If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup> Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of



our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

### 3. Apply the Scriptures to the way you live life:

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7** <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup> "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup> "These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.

#### ii. The practice of application

1. Constantly ask these questions:
  - a. How can I apply this to my life?
  - b. How can I change something in my life?
  - c. What sins do I need to confess to God?
  - d. Is there someone that I need to ask forgiveness from?
  - e. Is there a way that I need to change my thinking?
  - f. How can I STOP putting myself in situations that would tempt me to fall into particular sins?

#### iii. The duration of application

1. **Application will continue AS LONG AS YOU LIVE!**
2. Until you are perfect in heaven—you'll need to constantly apply God's Word to your life!
3. THE GOAL IS CHRISTLIKENESS

**Ephesians 4:13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

#### iv. The power in living out application

1. Comes NOT from you
2. It comes from GOD to help you apply the Word of God to your own life!
3. The Holy Spirit guides into all truth

**John 16:13** "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth;

-----*bible reading plan #1*-----

**Read a chapter of the Bible and then mark it off on this sheet. This way you can keep track of what you've read, see what you still have to read in a certain book, and keep yourself accountable! Try to make it a point to read through an entire book instead of skipping around from random chapters in random books!**

Genesis: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50  
Exodus: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40  
Leviticus: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27  
Numbers: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36  
Deuteronomy: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34  
Joshua: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
Judges: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 Ruth: 1 2 3 4  
1 Samuel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31  
2 Samuel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
1 Kings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22  
2 Kings: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25  
1 Chronicles: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29  
2 Chronicles: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36  
Ezra: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Nehemiah: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Esther: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Job: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42  
Psalms: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150  
Proverbs: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31  
Ecclesiastes: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Song Of Solomon: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
Isaiah 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66  
Jeremiah: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 Lamentations: 1 2 3 4 5  
Ezekiel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48  
Daniel: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Hosea: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14  
Joel: 1 2 3 Amos: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Obadiah: 1 Jonah: 1 2 3 4 Micah: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
Nahum: 1 2 3 Habakkuk: 1 2 3 Zephaniah: 1 2 3 Haggai: 1 2  
Zechariah: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 Malachi: 1 2 3 4  
Matthew: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28  
Mark: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16  
Luke: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24  
John: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21  
Acts: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28  
Romans: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 1 Corinthians: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 2  
Corinthians: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Galatians: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Ephesians: 1 2 3 4 5 6 Philippians: 1 2 3 4  
Colossians: 1 2 3 4 1 Thessalonians: 1 2 3 4 5 2 Thessalonians: 1 2 3 1 Timothy: 1 2 3 4 5 6 2 Timothy: 1 2 3 4  
Titus: 1 2 3 Philemon: 1 Hebrews: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 James: 1 2 3 4 5 1 Peter: 1 2 3 4 5 2  
Peter: 1 2 3 1 John: 1 2 3 4 5 2 John: 1 3 John: 1 Jude: 1  
Revelation: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

The Bible contains 1189 chapters: 929 in the Old Testament and 260 in the New. Reading 3 chapters each day and 5 chapters on Sundays will cover the entire Bible in one year.

**Bible Reading Plan -- 4 Chapters A Day**

***Read the NASB New Testament and Psalms twice and the rest of the Bible once in a year, reading about four chapters each day. Also called the McCheyne plan.***

Monday, January 01, 2007 --- Genesis 1 - Matthew 1 - Ezra 1 - Acts 1  
Tuesday, January 02, 2007 --- Genesis 2 - Matthew 2 - Ezra 2 - Acts 2  
Wednesday, January 03, 2007 --- Genesis 3 - Matthew 3 - Ezra 3 - Acts 3  
Thursday, January 04, 2007 --- Genesis 4 - Matthew 4 - Ezra 4 - Acts 4  
Friday, January 05, 2007 --- Genesis 5 - Matthew 5 - Ezra 5 - Acts 5  
Saturday, January 06, 2007 --- Genesis 6 - Matthew 6 - Ezra 6 - Acts 6  
Sunday, January 07, 2007 --- Genesis 7 - Matthew 7 - Ezra 7 - Acts 7  
Monday, January 08, 2007 --- Genesis 8 - Matthew 8 - Ezra 8 - Acts 8  
Tuesday, January 09, 2007 --- Genesis 9-10 - Matthew 9 - Ezra 9 - Acts 9  
Wednesday, January 10, 2007 --- Genesis 11 - Matthew 10 - Ezra 10 - Acts 10  
Thursday, January 11, 2007 --- Genesis 12 - Matthew 11 - Nehemiah 1 - Acts 11  
Friday, January 12, 2007 --- Genesis 13 - Matthew 12 - Nehemiah 2 - Acts 12  
Saturday, January 13, 2007 --- Genesis 14 - Matthew 13 - Nehemiah 3 - Acts 13  
Sunday, January 14, 2007 --- Genesis 15 - Matthew 14 - Nehemiah 4 - Acts 14  
Monday, January 15, 2007 --- Genesis 16 - Matthew 15 - Nehemiah 5 - Acts 15  
Tuesday, January 16, 2007 --- Genesis 17 - Matthew 16 - Nehemiah 6 - Acts 16  
Wednesday, January 17, 2007 --- Genesis 18 - Matthew 17 - Nehemiah 7 - Acts 17  
Thursday, January 18, 2007 --- Genesis 19 - Matthew 18 - Nehemiah 8 - Acts 18  
Friday, January 19, 2007 --- Genesis 20 - Matthew 19 - Nehemiah 9 - Acts 19  
Saturday, January 20, 2007 --- Genesis 21 - Matthew 20 - Nehemiah 10 - Acts 20  
Sunday, January 21, 2007 --- Genesis 22 - Matthew 21 - Nehemiah 11 - Acts 21  
Monday, January 22, 2007 --- Genesis 23 - Matthew 22 - Nehemiah 12 - Acts 22  
Tuesday, January 23, 2007 --- Genesis 24 - Matthew 23 - Nehemiah 13 - Acts 23  
Wednesday, January 24, 2007 --- Genesis 25 - Matthew 24 - Esther 1 - Acts 24  
Thursday, January 25, 2007 --- Genesis 26 - Matthew 25 - Esther 2 - Acts 25  
Friday, January 26, 2007 --- Genesis 27 - Matthew 26 - Esther 3 - Acts 26  
Saturday, January 27, 2007 --- Genesis 28 - Matthew 27 - Esther 4 - Acts 27  
Sunday, January 28, 2007 --- Genesis 29 - Matthew 28 - Esther 5 - Acts 28  
Monday, January 29, 2007 --- Genesis 30 - Mark 1 - Esther 6 - Romans 1  
Tuesday, January 30, 2007 --- Genesis 31 - Mark 2 - Esther 7 - Romans 2  
Wednesday, January 31, 2007 --- Genesis 32 - Mark 3 - Esther 8 - Romans 3  
  
Thursday, February 01, 2007 --- Genesis 33 - Mark 4 - Esther 9-10 - Romans 4  
Friday, February 02, 2007 --- Genesis 34 - Mark 5 - Job 1 - Romans 5  
Saturday, February 03, 2007 --- Genesis 35-36 - Mark 6 - Job 2 - Romans 6  
Sunday, February 04, 2007 --- Genesis 37 - Mark 7 - Job 3 - Romans 7  
Monday, February 05, 2007 --- Genesis 38 - Mark 8 - Job 4 - Romans 8  
Tuesday, February 06, 2007 --- Genesis 39 - Mark 9 - Job 5 - Romans 9

Wednesday, February 07, 2007 --- Genesis 40 - Mark 10 - Job 6 - Romans 10  
 Thursday, February 08, 2007 --- Genesis 41 - Mark 11 - Job 7 - Romans 11  
 Friday, February 09, 2007 --- Genesis 42 - Mark 12 - Job 8 - Romans 12  
 Saturday, February 10, 2007 --- Genesis 43 - Mark 13 - Job 9 - Romans 13  
 Sunday, February 11, 2007 --- Genesis 44 - Mark 14 - Job 10 - Romans 14  
 Monday, February 12, 2007 --- Genesis 45 - Mark 15 - Job 11 - Romans 15  
 Tuesday, February 13, 2007 --- Genesis 46 - Mark 16 - Job 12 - Romans 16  
 Wednesday, February 14, 2007 --- Genesis 47 - Luke 1:1-38 - Job 13 - 1 Corinthians 1  
 Thursday, February 15, 2007 --- Genesis 48 - Luke 1:39-80 - Job 14 - 1 Corinthians 2  
 Friday, February 16, 2007 --- Genesis 49 - Luke 2 - Job 15 - 1 Corinthians 3  
 Saturday, February 17, 2007 --- Genesis 50 - Luke 3 - Job 16-17 - 1 Corinthians 4  
 Sunday, February 18, 2007 --- Exodus 1 - Luke 4 - Job 18 - 1 Corinthians 5  
 Monday, February 19, 2007 --- Exodus 2 - Luke 5 - Job 19 - 1 Corinthians 6  
 Tuesday, February 20, 2007 --- Exodus 3 - Luke 6 - Job 20 - 1 Corinthians 7  
 Wednesday, February 21, 2007 --- Exodus 4 - Luke 7 - Job 21 - 1 Corinthians 8  
 Thursday, February 22, 2007 --- Exodus 5 - Luke 8 - Job 22 - 1 Corinthians 9  
 Friday, February 23, 2007 --- Exodus 6 - Luke 9 - Job 23 - 1 Corinthians 10  
 Saturday, February 24, 2007 --- Exodus 7 - Luke 10 - Job 24 - 1 Corinthians 11  
 Sunday, February 25, 2007 --- Exodus 8 - Luke 11 - Job 25-26 - 1 Corinthians 12  
 Monday, February 26, 2007 --- Exodus 9 - Luke 12 - Job 27 - 1 Corinthians 13  
 Tuesday, February 27, 2007 --- Exodus 10 - Luke 13 - Job 28 - 1 Corinthians 14  
 Wednesday, February 28, 2007 --- Exodus 11:1-12:20 - Luke 14 - Job 29 - 1 Corinthians 15

Thursday, March 01, 2007 --- Exodus 12:21-50 - Luke 15 - Job 30 - 1 Corinthians 16  
 Friday, March 02, 2007 --- Exodus 13 - Luke 16 - Job 31 - 2 Corinthians 1  
 Saturday, March 03, 2007 --- Exodus 14 - Luke 17 - Job 32 - 2 Corinthians 2  
 Sunday, March 04, 2007 --- Exodus 15 - Luke 18 - Job 33 - 2 Corinthians 3  
 Monday, March 05, 2007 --- Exodus 16 - Luke 19 - Job 34 - 2 Corinthians 4  
 Tuesday, March 06, 2007 --- Exodus 17 - Luke 20 - Job 35 - 2 Corinthians 5  
 Wednesday, March 07, 2007 --- Exodus 18 - Luke 21 - Job 36 - 2 Corinthians 6  
 Thursday, March 08, 2007 --- Exodus 19 - Luke 22 - Job 37 - 2 Corinthians 7  
 Friday, March 09, 2007 --- Exodus 20 - Luke 23 - Job 38 - 2 Corinthians 8  
 Saturday, March 10, 2007 --- Exodus 21 - Luke 24 - Job 39 - 2 Corinthians 9  
 Sunday, March 11, 2007 --- Exodus 22 - John 1 - Job 40 - 2 Corinthians 10  
 Monday, March 12, 2007 --- Exodus 23 - John 2 - Job 41 - 2 Corinthians 11  
 Tuesday, March 13, 2007 --- Exodus 24 - John 3 - Job 42 - 2 Corinthians 12  
 Wednesday, March 14, 2007 --- Exodus 25 - John 4 - Proverbs 1 - 2 Corinthians 13  
 Thursday, March 15, 2007 --- Exodus 26 - John 5 - Proverbs 2 - Galatians 1  
 Friday, March 16, 2007 --- Exodus 27 - John 6 - Proverbs 3 - Galatians 2  
 Saturday, March 17, 2007 --- Exodus 28 - John 7 - Proverbs 4 - Galatians 3  
 Sunday, March 18, 2007 --- Exodus 29 - John 8 - Proverbs 5 - Galatians 4  
 Monday, March 19, 2007 --- Exodus 30 - John 9 - Proverbs 6 - Galatians 5  
 Tuesday, March 20, 2007 --- Exodus 31 - John 10 - Proverbs 7 - Galatians 6  
 Wednesday, March 21, 2007 --- Exodus 32 - John 11 - Proverbs 8 - Ephesians 1

Thursday, March 22, 2007 --- Exodus 33 - John 12 - Proverbs 9 - Ephesians 2  
 Friday, March 23, 2007 --- Exodus 34 - John 13 - Proverbs 10 - Ephesians 3  
 Saturday, March 24, 2007 --- Exodus 35 - John 14 - Proverbs 11 - Ephesians 4  
 Sunday, March 25, 2007 --- Exodus 36 - John 15 - Proverbs 12 - Ephesians 5  
 Monday, March 26, 2007 --- Exodus 37 - John 16 - Proverbs 13 - Ephesians 6  
 Tuesday, March 27, 2007 --- Exodus 38 - John 17 - Proverbs 14 - Philippians 1  
 Wednesday, March 28, 2007 --- Exodus 39 - John 18 - Proverbs 15 - Philippians 2  
 Thursday, March 29, 2007 --- Exodus 40 - John 19 - Proverbs 16 - Philippians 3  
 Friday, March 30, 2007 --- Leviticus 1 - John 20 - Proverbs 17 - Philippians 4  
 Saturday, March 31, 2007 --- Leviticus 2-3 - John 21 - Proverbs 18 - Colossians 1

Sunday, April 01, 2007 --- Leviticus 4 - Psalm 1-2 - Proverbs 19 - Colossians 2  
 Monday, April 02, 2007 --- Leviticus 5 - Psalm 3-4 - Proverbs 20 - Colossians 3  
 Tuesday, April 03, 2007 --- Leviticus 6 - Psalm 5-6 - Proverbs 21 - Colossians 4  
 Wednesday, April 04, 2007 --- Leviticus 7 - Psalm 7-8 - Proverbs 22 - 1 Thessalonians 1  
 Thursday, April 05, 2007 --- Leviticus 8 - Psalm 9 - Proverbs 23 - 1 Thessalonians 2  
 Friday, April 06, 2007 --- Leviticus 9 - Psalm 10 - Proverbs 24 - 1 Thessalonians 3  
 Saturday, April 07, 2007 --- Leviticus 10 - Psalm 11-12 - Proverbs 25 - 1 Thessalonians 4  
 Sunday, April 08, 2007 --- Leviticus 11-12 - Psalm 13-14 - Proverbs 26 - 1 Thessalonians 5  
 Monday, April 09, 2007 --- Leviticus 13 - Psalm 15-16 - Proverbs 27 - 2 Thessalonians 1  
 Tuesday, April 10, 2007 --- Leviticus 14 - Psalm 17 - Proverbs 28 - 2 Thessalonians 2  
 Wednesday, April 11, 2007 --- Leviticus 15 - Psalm 18 - Proverbs 29 - 2 Thessalonians 3  
 Thursday, April 12, 2007 --- Leviticus 16 - Psalm 19 - Proverbs 30 - 1 Timothy 1  
 Friday, April 13, 2007 --- Leviticus 17 - Psalm 20-21 - Proverbs 31 - 1 Timothy 2  
 Saturday, April 14, 2007 --- Leviticus 18 - Psalm 22 - Ecclesiastes 1 - 1 Timothy 3  
 Sunday, April 15, 2007 --- Leviticus 19 - Psalm 23-24 - Ecclesiastes 2 - 1 Timothy 4  
 Monday, April 16, 2007 --- Leviticus 20 - Psalm 25 - Ecclesiastes 3 - 1 Timothy 5  
 Tuesday, April 17, 2007 --- Leviticus 21 - Psalm 26-27 - Ecclesiastes 4 - 1 Timothy 6  
 Wednesday, April 18, 2007 --- Leviticus 22 - Psalm 28-29 - Ecclesiastes 5 - 2 Timothy 1  
 Thursday, April 19, 2007 --- Leviticus 23 - Psalm 30 - Ecclesiastes 6 - 2 Timothy 2  
 Friday, April 20, 2007 --- Leviticus 24 - Psalm 31 - Ecclesiastes 7 - 2 Timothy 3  
 Saturday, April 21, 2007 --- Leviticus 25 - Psalm 32 - Ecclesiastes 8 - 2 Timothy 4  
 Sunday, April 22, 2007 --- Leviticus 26 - Psalm 33 - Ecclesiastes 9 - Titus 1  
 Monday, April 23, 2007 --- Leviticus 27 - Psalm 34 - Ecclesiastes 10 - Titus 2  
 Tuesday, April 24, 2007 --- Numbers 1 - Psalm 35 - Ecclesiastes 11 - Titus 3  
 Wednesday, April 25, 2007 --- Numbers 2 - Psalm 36 - Ecclesiastes 12 - Philemon 1  
 Thursday, April 26, 2007 --- Numbers 3 - Psalm 37 - Song of Solomon 1 - Hebrews 1  
 Friday, April 27, 2007 --- Numbers 4 - Psalm 38 - Song of Solomon 2 - Hebrews 2  
 Saturday, April 28, 2007 --- Numbers 5 - Psalm 39 - Song of Solomon 3 - Hebrews 3  
 Sunday, April 29, 2007 --- Numbers 6 - Psalm 40-41 - Song of Solomon 4 - Hebrews 4  
 Monday, April 30, 2007 --- Numbers 7 - Psalm 42-43 - Song of Solomon 5 - Hebrews 5

Tuesday, May 01, 2007 --- Numbers 8 - Psalm 44 - Song of Solomon 6 - Hebrews 6  
 Wednesday, May 02, 2007 --- Numbers 9 - Psalm 45 - Song of Solomon 7 - Hebrews 7

Thursday, May 03, 2007 --- Numbers 10 - Psalm 46-47 - Song of Solomon 8 - Hebrews 8  
 Friday, May 04, 2007 --- Numbers 11 - Psalm 48 - Isaiah 1 - Hebrews 9  
 Saturday, May 05, 2007 --- Numbers 12-13 - Psalm 49 - Isaiah 2 - Hebrews 10  
 Sunday, May 06, 2007 --- Numbers 14 - Psalm 50 - Isaiah 3-4 - Hebrews 11  
 Monday, May 07, 2007 --- Numbers 15 - Psalm 51 - Isaiah 5 - Hebrews 12  
 Tuesday, May 08, 2007 --- Numbers 16 - Psalm 52-54 - Isaiah 6 - Hebrews 13  
 Wednesday, May 09, 2007 --- Numbers 17-18 - Psalm 55 - Isaiah 7 - James 1  
 Thursday, May 10, 2007 --- Numbers 19 - Psalm 56-57 - Isaiah 8:1-9:7 - James 2  
 Friday, May 11, 2007 --- Numbers 20 - Psalm 58-59 - Isaiah 9:8-10:4 - James 3  
 Saturday, May 12, 2007 --- Numbers 21 - Psalm 60-61 - Isaiah 10:5-34 - James 4  
 Sunday, May 13, 2007 --- Numbers 22 - Psalm 62-63 - Isaiah 11-12 - James 5  
 Monday, May 14, 2007 --- Numbers 23 - Psalm 64-65 - Isaiah 13 - 1 Peter 1  
 Tuesday, May 15, 2007 --- Numbers 24 - Psalm 66-67 - Isaiah 14 - 1 Peter 2  
 Wednesday, May 16, 2007 --- Numbers 25 - Psalm 68 - Isaiah 15 - 1 Peter 3  
 Thursday, May 17, 2007 --- Numbers 26 - Psalm 69 - Isaiah 16 - 1 Peter 4  
 Friday, May 18, 2007 --- Numbers 27 - Psalm 70-71 - Isaiah 17-18 - 1 Peter 5  
 Saturday, May 19, 2007 --- Numbers 28 - Psalm 72 - Isaiah 19-20 - 2 Peter 1  
 Sunday, May 20, 2007 --- Numbers 29 - Psalm 73 - Isaiah 21 - 2 Peter 2  
 Monday, May 21, 2007 --- Numbers 30 - Psalm 74 - Isaiah 22 - 2 Peter 3  
 Tuesday, May 22, 2007 --- Numbers 31 - Psalm 75-76 - Isaiah 23 - 1 John 1  
 Wednesday, May 23, 2007 --- Numbers 32 - Psalm 77 - Isaiah 24 - 1 John 2  
 Thursday, May 24, 2007 --- Numbers 33 - Psalm 78:1-39 - Isaiah 25 - 1 John 3  
 Friday, May 25, 2007 --- Numbers 34 - Psalm 78:40-72 - Isaiah 26 - 1 John 4  
 Saturday, May 26, 2007 --- Numbers 35 - Psalm 79 - Isaiah 27 - 1 John 5  
 Sunday, May 27, 2007 --- Numbers 36 - Psalm 80 - Isaiah 28 - 2 John 1  
 Monday, May 28, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 1 - Psalm 81-82 - Isaiah 29 - 3 John 1  
 Tuesday, May 29, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 2 - Psalm 83-84 - Isaiah 30 - Jude 1  
 Wednesday, May 30, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 3 - Psalm 85 - Isaiah 31 - Revelation 1  
 Thursday, May 31, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 4 - Psalm 86-87 - Isaiah 32 - Revelation 2

Friday, June 01, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 5 - Psalm 88 - Isaiah 33 - Revelation 3  
 Saturday, June 02, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 6 - Psalm 89 - Isaiah 34 - Revelation 4  
 Sunday, June 03, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 7 - Psalm 90 - Isaiah 35 - Revelation 5  
 Monday, June 04, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 8 - Psalm 91 - Isaiah 36 - Revelation 6  
 Tuesday, June 05, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 9 - Psalm 92-93 - Isaiah 37 - Revelation 7  
 Wednesday, June 06, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 10 - Psalm 94 - Isaiah 38 - Revelation 8  
 Thursday, June 07, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 11 - Psalm 95-96 - Isaiah 39 - Revelation 9  
 Friday, June 08, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 12 - Psalm 97-98 - Isaiah 40 - Revelation 10  
 Saturday, June 09, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 13-14 - Psalm 99-101 - Isaiah 41 - Revelation 11  
 Sunday, June 10, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 15 - Psalm 102 - Isaiah 42 - Revelation 12  
 Monday, June 11, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 16 - Psalm 103 - Isaiah 43 - Revelation 13  
 Tuesday, June 12, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 17 - Psalm 104 - Isaiah 44 - Revelation 14  
 Wednesday, June 13, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 18 - Psalm 105 - Isaiah 45 - Revelation 15  
 Thursday, June 14, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 19 - Psalm 106 - Isaiah 46 - Revelation 16

Friday, June 15, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 20 - Psalm 107 - Isaiah 47 - Revelation 17  
 Saturday, June 16, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 21 - Psalm 108-109 - Isaiah 48 - Revelation 18  
 Sunday, June 17, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 22 - Psalm 110-111 - Isaiah 49 - Revelation 19  
 Monday, June 18, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 23 - Psalm 112-113 - Isaiah 50 - Revelation 20  
 Tuesday, June 19, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 24 - Psalm 114-115 - Isaiah 51 - Revelation 21  
 Wednesday, June 20, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 25 - Psalm 116 - Isaiah 52 - Revelation 22  
 Thursday, June 21, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 26 - Psalm 117-118 - Isaiah 53 - Matthew 1  
 Friday, June 22, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 27:1-28:19 - Psalm 119:1-24 - Isaiah 54 - Matthew 2  
 Saturday, June 23, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 28:20-68 - Psalm 119:25-48 - Isaiah 55 - Matthew 3  
 Sunday, June 24, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 29 - Psalm 119:49-72 - Isaiah 56 - Matthew 4  
 Monday, June 25, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 30 - Psalm 119:73-96 - Isaiah 57 - Matthew 5  
 Tuesday, June 26, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 31 - Psalm 119:97-120 - Isaiah 58 - Matthew 6  
 Wednesday, June 27, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 32 - Psalm 119:121-144 - Isaiah 59 - Matthew 7  
 Thursday, June 28, 2007 --- Deuteronomy 33-34 - Psalm 119:145-176 - Isaiah 60 - Matthew 8  
 Friday, June 29, 2007 --- Joshua 1 - Psalm 120-122 - Isaiah 61 - Matthew 9  
 Saturday, June 30, 2007 --- Joshua 2 - Psalm 123-125 - Isaiah 62 - Matthew 10

Sunday, July 01, 2007 --- Joshua 3 - Psalm 126-128 - Isaiah 63 - Matthew 11  
 Monday, July 02, 2007 --- Joshua 4 - Psalm 129-131 - Isaiah 64 - Matthew 12  
 Tuesday, July 03, 2007 --- Joshua 5 - Psalm 132-134 - Isaiah 65 - Matthew 13  
 Wednesday, July 04, 2007 --- Joshua 6 - Psalm 135-136 - Isaiah 66 - Matthew 14  
 Thursday, July 05, 2007 --- Joshua 7 - Psalm 137-138 - Jeremiah 1 - Matthew 15  
 Friday, July 06, 2007 --- Joshua 8 - Psalm 139 - Jeremiah 2 - Matthew 16  
 Saturday, July 07, 2007 --- Joshua 9 - Psalm 140-141 - Jeremiah 3 - Matthew 17  
 Sunday, July 08, 2007 --- Joshua 10 - Psalm 142-143 - Jeremiah 4 - Matthew 18  
 Monday, July 09, 2007 --- Joshua 11 - Psalm 144 - Jeremiah 5 - Matthew 19  
 Tuesday, July 10, 2007 --- Joshua 12-13 - Psalm 145 - Jeremiah 6 - Matthew 20  
 Wednesday, July 11, 2007 --- Joshua 14-15 - Psalm 146-147 - Jeremiah 7 - Matthew 21  
 Thursday, July 12, 2007 --- Joshua 16-17 - Psalm 148 - Jeremiah 8 - Matthew 22  
 Friday, July 13, 2007 --- Joshua 18-19 - Psalm 149-150 - Jeremiah 9 - Matthew 23  
 Saturday, July 14, 2007 --- Joshua 20-21 - Acts 1 - Jeremiah 10 - Matthew 24  
 Sunday, July 15, 2007 --- Joshua 22 - Acts 2 - Jeremiah 11 - Matthew 25  
 Monday, July 16, 2007 --- Joshua 23 - Acts 3 - Jeremiah 12 - Matthew 26  
 Tuesday, July 17, 2007 --- Joshua 24 - Acts 4 - Jeremiah 13 - Matthew 27  
 Wednesday, July 18, 2007 --- Judges 1 - Acts 5 - Jeremiah 14 - Matthew 28  
 Thursday, July 19, 2007 --- Judges 2 - Acts 6 - Jeremiah 15 - Mark 1  
 Friday, July 20, 2007 --- Judges 3 - Acts 7 - Jeremiah 16 - Mark 2  
 Saturday, July 21, 2007 --- Judges 4 - Acts 8 - Jeremiah 17 - Mark 3  
 Sunday, July 22, 2007 --- Judges 5 - Acts 9 - Jeremiah 18 - Mark 4  
 Monday, July 23, 2007 --- Judges 6 - Acts 10 - Jeremiah 19 - Mark 5  
 Tuesday, July 24, 2007 --- Judges 7 - Acts 11 - Jeremiah 20 - Mark 6  
 Wednesday, July 25, 2007 --- Judges 8 - Acts 12 - Jeremiah 21 - Mark 7  
 Thursday, July 26, 2007 --- Judges 9 - Acts 13 - Jeremiah 22 - Mark 8  
 Friday, July 27, 2007 --- Judges 10 - Acts 14 - Jeremiah 23 - Mark 9

Saturday, July 28, 2007 --- Judges 11 - Acts 15 - Jeremiah 24 - Mark 10  
Sunday, July 29, 2007 --- Judges 12 - Acts 16 - Jeremiah 25 - Mark 11  
Monday, July 30, 2007 --- Judges 13 - Acts 17 - Jeremiah 26 - Mark 12  
Tuesday, July 31, 2007 --- Judges 14 - Acts 18 - Jeremiah 27 - Mark 13

Wednesday, August 01, 2007 --- Judges 15 - Acts 19 - Jeremiah 28 - Mark 14  
Thursday, August 02, 2007 --- Judges 16 - Acts 20 - Jeremiah 29 - Mark 15  
Friday, August 03, 2007 --- Judges 17 - Acts 21 - Jeremiah 30-31 - Mark 16  
Saturday, August 04, 2007 --- Judges 18 - Acts 22 - Jeremiah 32 - Psalm 1-2  
Sunday, August 05, 2007 --- Judges 19 - Acts 23 - Jeremiah 33 - Psalm 3-4  
Monday, August 06, 2007 --- Judges 20 - Acts 24 - Jeremiah 34 - Psalm 5-6  
Tuesday, August 07, 2007 --- Judges 21 - Acts 25 - Jeremiah 35 - Psalm 7-8  
Wednesday, August 08, 2007 --- Ruth 1 - Acts 26 - Jeremiah 36,45 - Psalm 9  
Thursday, August 09, 2007 --- Ruth 2 - Acts 27 - Jeremiah 37 - Psalm 10  
Friday, August 10, 2007 --- Ruth 3-4 - Acts 28 - Jeremiah 38 - Psalm 11-12  
Saturday, August 11, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 1 - Romans 1 - Jeremiah 39 - Psalm 13-14  
Sunday, August 12, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 2 - Romans 2 - Jeremiah 40 - Psalm 15-16  
Monday, August 13, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 3 - Romans 3 - Jeremiah 41 - Psalm 17  
Tuesday, August 14, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 4 - Romans 4 - Jeremiah 42 - Psalm 18  
Wednesday, August 15, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 5-6 - Romans 5 - Jeremiah 43 - Psalm 19  
Thursday, August 16, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 7-8 - Romans 6 - Jeremiah 44 - Psalm 20-21  
Friday, August 17, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 9 - Romans 7 - Jeremiah 46 - Psalm 22  
Saturday, August 18, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 10 - Romans 8 - Jeremiah 47 - Psalm 23-24  
Sunday, August 19, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 11 - Romans 9 - Jeremiah 48 - Psalm 25  
Monday, August 20, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 12 - Romans 10 - Jeremiah 49 - Psalm 26-27  
Tuesday, August 21, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 13 - Romans 11 - Jeremiah 50 - Psalm 28-29  
Wednesday, August 22, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 14 - Romans 12 - Jeremiah 51 - Psalm 30  
Thursday, August 23, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 15 - Romans 13 - Jeremiah 52 - Psalm 31  
Friday, August 24, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 16 - Romans 14 - Lamentations 1 - Psalm 32  
Saturday, August 25, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 17 - Romans 15 - Lamentations 2 - Psalm 33  
Sunday, August 26, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 18 - Romans 16 - Lamentations 3 - Psalm 34  
Monday, August 27, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 19 - 1 Corinthians 1 - Lamentations 4 - Psalm 35  
Tuesday, August 28, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 20 - 1 Corinthians 2 - Lamentations 5 - Psalm 36  
Wednesday, August 29, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 21-22 - 1 Corinthians 3 - Ezekiel 1 - Psalm 37  
Thursday, August 30, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 23 - 1 Corinthians 4 - Ezekiel 2 - Psalm 38  
Friday, August 31, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 24 - 1 Corinthians 5 - Ezekiel 3 - Psalm 39

Saturday, September 01, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 25 - 1 Corinthians 6 - Ezekiel 4 - Psalm 40-41  
Sunday, September 02, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 26 - 1 Corinthians 7 - Ezekiel 5 - Psalm 42-43  
Monday, September 03, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 27 - 1 Corinthians 8 - Ezekiel 6 - Psalm 44  
Tuesday, September 04, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 28 - 1 Corinthians 9 - Ezekiel 7 - Psalm 45  
Wednesday, September 05, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 29-30 - 1 Corinthians 10 - Ezekiel 8 - Psalm 46-47  
Thursday, September 06, 2007 --- 1 Samuel 31 - 1 Corinthians 11 - Ezekiel 9 - Psalm 48  
Friday, September 07, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 1 - 1 Corinthians 12 - Ezekiel 10 - Psalm 49



Saturday, September 08, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 2 - 1 Corinthians 13 - Ezekiel 11 - Psalm 50  
 Sunday, September 09, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 3 - 1 Corinthians 14 - Ezekiel 12 - Psalm 51  
 Monday, September 10, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 4-5 - 1 Corinthians 15 - Ezekiel 13 - Psalm 52-54  
 Tuesday, September 11, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 6 - 1 Corinthians 16 - Ezekiel 14 - Psalm 55  
 Wednesday, September 12, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 7 - 2 Corinthians 1 - Ezekiel 15 - Psalm 56-57  
 Thursday, September 13, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 8-9 - 2 Corinthians 2 - Ezekiel 16 - Psalm 58-59  
 Friday, September 14, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 10 - 2 Corinthians 3 - Ezekiel 17 - Psalm 60-61  
 Saturday, September 15, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 11 - 2 Corinthians 4 - Ezekiel 18 - Psalm 62-63  
 Sunday, September 16, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 12 - 2 Corinthians 5 - Ezekiel 19 - Psalm 64-65  
 Monday, September 17, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 13 - 2 Corinthians 6 - Ezekiel 20 - Psalm 66-67  
 Tuesday, September 18, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 14 - 2 Corinthians 7 - Ezekiel 21 - Psalm 68  
 Wednesday, September 19, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 15 - 2 Corinthians 8 - Ezekiel 22 - Psalm 69  
 Thursday, September 20, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 16 - 2 Corinthians 9 - Ezekiel 23 - Psalm 70-71  
 Friday, September 21, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 17 - 2 Corinthians 10 - Ezekiel 24 - Psalm 72  
 Saturday, September 22, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 18 - 2 Corinthians 11 - Ezekiel 25 - Psalm 73  
 Sunday, September 23, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 19 - 2 Corinthians 12 - Ezekiel 26 - Psalm 74  
 Monday, September 24, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 20 - 2 Corinthians 13 - Ezekiel 27 - Psalm 75-76  
 Tuesday, September 25, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 21 - Galatians 1 - Ezekiel 28 - Psalm 77  
 Wednesday, September 26, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 22 - Galatians 2 - Ezekiel 29 - Psalm 78:1-39  
 Thursday, September 27, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 23 - Galatians 3 - Ezekiel 30 - Psalm 78:40-72  
 Friday, September 28, 2007 --- 2 Samuel 24 - Galatians 4 - Ezekiel 31 - Psalm 79  
 Saturday, September 29, 2007 --- 1 Kings 1 - Galatians 5 - Ezekiel 32 - Psalm 80  
 Sunday, September 30, 2007 --- 1 Kings 2 - Galatians 6 - Ezekiel 33 - Psalm 81-82

Monday, October 01, 2007 --- 1 Kings 3 - Ephesians 1 - Ezekiel 34 - Psalm 83-84  
 Tuesday, October 02, 2007 --- 1 Kings 4-5 - Ephesians 2 - Ezekiel 35 - Psalm 85  
 Wednesday, October 03, 2007 --- 1 Kings 6 - Ephesians 3 - Ezekiel 36 - Psalm 86  
 Thursday, October 04, 2007 --- 1 Kings 7 - Ephesians 4 - Ezekiel 37 - Psalm 87-88  
 Friday, October 05, 2007 --- 1 Kings 8 - Ephesians 5 - Ezekiel 38 - Psalm 89  
 Saturday, October 06, 2007 --- 1 Kings 9 - Ephesians 6 - Ezekiel 39 - Psalm 90  
 Sunday, October 07, 2007 --- 1 Kings 10 - Philippians 1 - Ezekiel 40 - Psalm 91  
 Monday, October 08, 2007 --- 1 Kings 11 - Philippians 2 - Ezekiel 41 - Psalm 92-93  
 Tuesday, October 09, 2007 --- 1 Kings 12 - Philippians 3 - Ezekiel 42 - Psalm 94  
 Wednesday, October 10, 2007 --- 1 Kings 13 - Philippians 4 - Ezekiel 43 - Psalm 95-96  
 Thursday, October 11, 2007 --- 1 Kings 14 - Colossians 1 - Ezekiel 44 - Psalm 97-98  
 Friday, October 12, 2007 --- 1 Kings 15 - Colossians 2 - Ezekiel 45 - Psalm 99-101  
 Saturday, October 13, 2007 --- 1 Kings 16 - Colossians 3 - Ezekiel 46 - Psalm 102  
 Sunday, October 14, 2007 --- 1 Kings 17 - Colossians 4 - Ezekiel 47 - Psalm 103  
 Monday, October 15, 2007 --- 1 Kings 18 - 1 Thessalonians 1 - Ezekiel 48 - Psalm 104  
 Tuesday, October 16, 2007 --- 1 Kings 19 - 1 Thessalonians 2 - Daniel 1 - Psalm 105  
 Wednesday, October 17, 2007 --- 1 Kings 20 - 1 Thessalonians 3 - Daniel 2 - Psalm 106  
 Thursday, October 18, 2007 --- 1 Kings 21 - 1 Thessalonians 4 - Daniel 3 - Psalm 107  
 Friday, October 19, 2007 --- 1 Kings 22 - 1 Thessalonians 5 - Daniel 4 - Psalm 108-109  
 Saturday, October 20, 2007 --- 2 Kings 1 - 2 Thessalonians 1 - Daniel 5 - Psalm 110-111

Sunday, October 21, 2007 --- 2 Kings 2 - 2 Thessalonians 2 - Daniel 6 - Psalm 112-113  
Monday, October 22, 2007 --- 2 Kings 3 - 2 Thessalonians 3 - Daniel 7 - Psalm 114-115  
Tuesday, October 23, 2007 --- 2 Kings 4 - 1 Timothy 1 - Daniel 8 - Psalm 116  
Wednesday, October 24, 2007 --- 2 Kings 5 - 1 Timothy 2 - Daniel 9 - Psalm 117-118  
Thursday, October 25, 2007 --- 2 Kings 6 - 1 Timothy 3 - Daniel 10 - Psalm 119:1-24  
Friday, October 26, 2007 --- 2 Kings 7 - 1 Timothy 4 - Daniel 11 - Psalm 119:25-48  
Saturday, October 27, 2007 --- 2 Kings 8 - 1 Timothy 5 - Daniel 12 - Psalm 119:49-72  
Sunday, October 28, 2007 --- 2 Kings 9 - 1 Timothy 6 - Hosea 1 - Psalm 119:73-96  
Monday, October 29, 2007 --- 2 Kings 10-11 - 2 Timothy 1 - Hosea 2 - Psalm 119:97-120  
Tuesday, October 30, 2007 --- 2 Kings 12 - 2 Timothy 2 - Hosea 3-4 - Psalm 119:121-144  
Wednesday, October 31, 2007 --- 2 Kings 13 - 2 Timothy 3 - Hosea 5-6 - Psalm 119:145-176

Thursday, November 01, 2007 --- 2 Kings 14 - 2 Timothy 4 - Hosea 7 - Psalm 120-122  
Friday, November 02, 2007 --- 2 Kings 15 - Titus 1 - Hosea 8 - Psalm 123-125  
Saturday, November 03, 2007 --- 2 Kings 16 - Titus 2 - Hosea 9 - Psalm 126-128  
Sunday, November 04, 2007 --- 2 Kings 17 - Titus 3 - Hosea 10 - Psalm 129-131  
Monday, November 05, 2007 --- 2 Kings 18 - Philemon 1 - Hosea 11 - Psalm 132-134  
Tuesday, November 06, 2007 --- 2 Kings 19 - Hebrews 1 - Hosea 12 - Psalm 135-136  
Wednesday, November 07, 2007 --- 2 Kings 20 - Hebrews 2 - Hosea 13 - Psalm 137-138  
Thursday, November 08, 2007 --- 2 Kings 21 - Hebrews 3 - Hosea 14 - Psalm 139  
Friday, November 09, 2007 --- 2 Kings 22 - Hebrews 4 - Joel 1 - Psalm 140-141  
Saturday, November 10, 2007 --- 2 Kings 23 - Hebrews 5 - Joel 2 - Psalm 142  
Sunday, November 11, 2007 --- 2 Kings 24 - Hebrews 6 - Joel 3 - Psalm 143  
Monday, November 12, 2007 --- 2 Kings 25 - Hebrews 7 - Amos 1 - Psalm 144  
Tuesday, November 13, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 1-2 - Hebrews 8 - Amos 2 - Psalm 145  
Wednesday, November 14, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 3-4 - Hebrews 9 - Amos 3 - Psalm 146-147  
Thursday, November 15, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 5-6 - Hebrews 10 - Amos 4 - Psalm 148-150  
Friday, November 16, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 7-8 - Hebrews 11 - Amos 5 - Luke 1:1-38  
Saturday, November 17, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 9-10 - Hebrews 12 - Amos 6 - Luke 1:39-80  
Sunday, November 18, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 11-12 - Hebrews 13 - Amos 7 - Luke 2  
Monday, November 19, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 13-14 - James 1 - Amos 8 - Luke 3  
Tuesday, November 20, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 15 - James 2 - Amos 9 - Luke 4  
Wednesday, November 21, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 16 - James 3 - Obadiah 1 - Luke 5  
Thursday, November 22, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 17 - James 4 - Jonah 1 - Luke 6  
Friday, November 23, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 18 - James 5 - Jonah 2 - Luke 7  
Saturday, November 24, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 19-20 - 1 Peter 1 - Jonah 3 - Luke 8  
Sunday, November 25, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 21 - 1 Peter 2 - Jonah 4 - Luke 9  
Monday, November 26, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 22 - 1 Peter 3 - Micah 1 - Luke 10  
Tuesday, November 27, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 23 - 1 Peter 4 - Micah 2 - Luke 11  
Wednesday, November 28, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 24-25 - 1 Peter 5 - Micah 3 - Luke 12  
Thursday, November 29, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 26-27 - 2 Peter 1 - Micah 4 - Luke 13  
Friday, November 30, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 28 - 2 Peter 2 - Micah 5 - Luke 14

Saturday, December 01, 2007 --- 1 Chronicles 29 - 2 Peter 3 - Micah 6 - Luke 15

Sunday, December 02, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 1 - 1 John 1 - Micah 7 - Luke 16  
Monday, December 03, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 2 - 1 John 2 - Nahum 1 - Luke 17  
Tuesday, December 04, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 3-4 - 1 John 3 - Nahum 2 - Luke 18  
Wednesday, December 05, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 5:1-6:11 - 1 John 4 - Nahum 3 - Luke 19  
Thursday, December 06, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 6:12-42 - 1 John 5 - Habakkuk 1 - Luke 20  
Friday, December 07, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 7 - 2 John 1 - Habakkuk 2 - Luke 21  
Saturday, December 08, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 8 - 3 John 1 - Habakkuk 3 - Luke 22  
Sunday, December 09, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 9 - Jude 1 - Zephaniah 1 - Luke 23  
Monday, December 10, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 10 - Revelation 1 - Zephaniah 2 - Luke 24  
Tuesday, December 11, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 11-12 - Revelation 2 - Zephaniah 3 - John 1  
Wednesday, December 12, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 13 - Revelation 3 - Haggai 1 - John 2  
Thursday, December 13, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 14-15 - Revelation 4 - Haggai 2 - John 3  
Friday, December 14, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 16 - Revelation 5 - Zechariah 1 - John 4  
Saturday, December 15, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 17 - Revelation 6 - Zechariah 2 - John 5  
Sunday, December 16, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 18 - Revelation 7 - Zechariah 3 - John 6  
Monday, December 17, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 19-20 - Revelation 8 - Zechariah 4 - John 7  
Tuesday, December 18, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 21 - Revelation 9 - Zechariah 5 - John 8  
Wednesday, December 19, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 22-23 - Revelation 10 - Zechariah 6 - John 9  
Thursday, December 20, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 24 - Revelation 11 - Zechariah 7 - John 10  
Friday, December 21, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 25 - Revelation 12 - Zechariah 8 - John 11  
Saturday, December 22, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 26 - Revelation 13 - Zechariah 9 - John 12  
Sunday, December 23, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 27-28 - Revelation 14 - Zechariah 10 - John 13  
Monday, December 24, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 29 - Revelation 15 - Zechariah 11 - John 14  
Tuesday, December 25, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 30 - Revelation 16 - Zechariah 12:1-13:1 - John 15  
Wednesday, December 26, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 31 - Revelation 17 - Zechariah 13:2-9 - John 16  
Thursday, December 27, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 32 - Revelation 18 - Zechariah 14 - John 17  
Friday, December 28, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 33 - Revelation 19 - Malachi 1 - John 18  
Saturday, December 29, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 34 - Revelation 20 - Malachi 2 - John 19  
Sunday, December 30, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 35 - Revelation 21 - Malachi 3 - John 20  
Monday, December 31, 2007 --- 2 Chronicles 36 - Revelation 22 - Malachi 4 - John 21

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### **Application For This Week (James 1:23-25):**

- € Why not start **even now** one of these Bible reading plans—just one chapter a day!
- € Get a notebook and when you read a chapter of the Bible, do the following:
  - **First**, pray and ask God to teach you from His Word.
  - **Second**, read the chapter once (or twice!)
  - **Third**, write down in your notebook a paragraph summary of what you just read.
  - **Fourth**, write down **ONE or TWO** ways in which you can *apply* what you just read.
  - **Fifth**, pray and ask God to help you change and apply what you just read!
- € God **longs** to have an intimate relationship with you! If you are a Christian, obey God by seeking to “**grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ**” (2 Peter 3:18).
- € Go to a church *faithfully* on Sundays to hear God’s Word taught! Get involved!!



## Lesson 3: God: His Character and Attributes

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### I. Is there a God?

- a. **Atheism:** The attempt to deny that there is the existence of a divine and sovereign God.

*Can't be true because of Romans 1:20; Psalm 14:1; 53:1*

- b. **Polytheism:** the worship of more than one god, distributing the perfections and functions of the infinite God among many limited gods.

*Can't be true because of Isaiah 44:8; 45:14, 21.*

- c. **Deism:** the belief that there is one god who has been absent from the world since creation, and sustains no present relationship to it.

*Can't be true because of Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 1:11*

- d. **Trinity:** the belief that God is three persons in one essence.

*\*Must be true because of Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19.*

- e. **Monotheism:** the belief in and worship of one true God and Supreme Being.

*\*Must be true because of Deuteronomy 6:4*

### II. The Existence of God

#### a. The Knowability of God

*"Because God is infinite and humans are finite, human beings can never fully understand God" (Wayne Grudem).*

**NOTE:** It is not **inapprehensibility** – this means that nothing at all can be known (nothing is knowable) but this IS **incomprehensibility** (that is, to know everything about/ complete knowledge).

**Remember:** the Incomprehensibility of God speaks of “complete knowledge” of His being and character.

**Psalm 145:3** <sup>3</sup> Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.

**Psalm 147:5** <sup>5</sup> Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

**Psalm 139:6** Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it.

**1 Corinthians 2:10-12** <sup>10</sup> For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

**NOTE:** “This doctrine of God’s incomprehensibility has much positive application for our own lives. It means that we will never be able to know ‘too much’ about God, for we will never run out of things to learn about him, and we will thus never tire in delighting in the discovery of more and more of his excellence and of the greatness of his works” (Wayne Grudem).

Your responsibility is, then, to study God with humility and excitement knowing that there is so much to Who God is that you will never fully and totally comprehend everything there is to know about God! So, start studying now!

## **b. The Revelation of God**

*\*God has revealed Himself through three primary means:*

### **i. Creation**

Have you ever been on a mountain looking at the stars, or on a beach pondering the “bigness” of the ocean, or on a hike marveling at the towering mountains, or skiing and viewing the white covered mountain range surrounding you and thought: “*There certainly MUST be a God who made all this?*” This is the point. God reveals His “bigness,” His power, his Greatness, His control, and His preserving grace.

**Psalm 19:1** *The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.*

**Romans 1:20** <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

## ii. Scripture

The **primary** way in which God has sovereignly chosen to reveal Himself to us is through His Word—the Bible. It is true, reliable, inerrant, infallible, authoritative, and perfect!

God didn't write a message in the sky, or on a mountain, or in a random cave somewhere. **No!** God wrote down His message in a book that He has miraculously preserved for thousands and thousands of years—without change!

**Psalms 19:7-11** <sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. <sup>8</sup> The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. <sup>9</sup> The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. <sup>10</sup> They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. <sup>11</sup> Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward.

**2 Timothy 3:15-17** <sup>15</sup> and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

## iii. Jesus Christ

Of course, we could read about God all we want yet we would never fully understand who God is. But Jesus Christ—who Himself *IS* God—is the revelation of God. He who has seen and learned Jesus has seen and learned God!

When you want to know **who** God is, then study Jesus Christ!

**Colossians 1:15-19** <sup>5</sup> He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him,

**Colossians 2:9** <sup>9</sup> For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

**Hebrews 1:1-3** God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. <sup>3</sup> And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

**John 14:8-9** <sup>8</sup> Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." <sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

### III. The Essence of God

**Main point:** God is an Invisible, Personal, Living Spirit

#### a. God is Spirit

**John 4:24** <sup>24</sup> "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

This means that God has no physical body (but, of course, Jesus Christ does now after the cross and resurrection). God has no arms, leg, nose, fingernails, hair, eyes, or toes. All of God is *spiritual* (like angels, demons, Satan, etc.).

#### God is Immense:

This means that *all* of God fills every place. In other words, God is not partly present here and partly present in China and partly present in Australia. He is *fully* present in every single place in all the universe and beyond!

**1 Kings 8:27** <sup>27</sup> "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!"

**Consider this for a second: if all of God covers every space of earth, then HOW must this impact the way we live life. If you go to an immoral movie with horrible language, visual sex scenes, graphic violence, and crude jokes, then think about this fact: you are dragging the FULLNESS of who God is into that wicked and sinful movie WITH YOU!**

Or, consider your mind: what you think about, your lusts, your pornographic desires, the websites you go to, the video games you play, the places you go to, the parties to attend, the things you do with your girlfriend/boyfriend—what would you do if **ALL** of God was there with you? Would that impact the way you live? It should—because He is!

**b. God is Invisible**

No one can see God—at any time!

**1 Timothy 1:17** <sup>17</sup> Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Don't let this fool you, however. Though you cannot see God, He is still there! Though He is invisible, He is not silent!

**What about the times in the Bible when people “See God”?**

1. **Genesis 32:30** – Jacob wrestles with God (Genesis 32:24-32)
2. **Exodus 3:1-6** – Moses and the burning bush
3. **Isaiah 6:1-5** – Isaiah's vision of God in heaven
4. **Daniel 3:25** – A fourth man walking with Daniel's three friends in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:1-30)

***\*Who did the people actually “see”? Who is the angel of the LORD?***

**c. God is Personal**

**This means that he has the constitution and characterization of a “person”**

**i. Self-consciousness**



God has the ability to speak about Himself. He reveals Himself. He gives his own name to Moses (Exodus 3).

### **God has a name: Yahweh**

**Exodus 3:13-15** <sup>3</sup> Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" <sup>14</sup> God said to Moses, **"I AM WHO I AM": (Hebrew: Yahweh is the "eternally existing One")** and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" <sup>15</sup> God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

### **ii. Intelligence**

God has wisdom, intellect, knowledge, understanding. He is an intelligent being.

**Romans 11:33-34** <sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! <sup>34</sup> For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?

Not only does God know everything about everything. He also knows what could have happened if something that didn't happen happened. In other words, he knows the endless possibilities about everything. For example, "what if I would have driven another way to school and hit the red car on the side of the road..." (those sorts of questions). God knows it all.

### **iii. Self-determination**

God sets goals. He has plans, purposes, ideas, and wills that are Sovereignly and perfectly determined.

**Ephesians 1:11** <sup>11</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

**Ephesians 3:11** <sup>11</sup> This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

**Romans 8:28** <sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

**Isaiah 46:10** <sup>10</sup> Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

The amazing thing about God is that he sets goals and has a determined plan, yet He makes certain that it **always** comes to pass. It never fails! His plans never fail. Nothing is more powerful than God—nothing can overcome, thwart, deter, change His perfect will!

**Consider:** everything that happens to you in life (**everything**—even from the going to high school geometry class to having a best friend killed in a car accident, to having a boyfriend/girlfriend, to the family and parents God has given to you) is **in the determined plan of God for YOU and YOUR life!** Isn't that encouraging! God has a reason for it all!

#### iv. Emotions

Do you think God has “emotions”? Can God experience emotions as we experience them?

We **do** know from Scripture that God: loves, delights, grieves, angers, forgives, is jealous, and many many more!

=these are **emotions!**

And he understands you. He can relate to you. He can sympathize with you. He is grieved when you sin. He is rejoicing and happy when you are holy and pure and desiring Him!

**Referring to Jesus Christ (who is God): Hebrews 4:15-16** <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**A short Scriptural survey to show that God experiences emotions:**

**Love: 1 John 4:7** <sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

**Delight: Psalm 35:27** "The LORD be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant."

**Grief: Ephesians 4:30** <sup>30</sup> Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

**Anger and Jealousy: Psalm 79:5** <sup>5</sup> How long, O LORD? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

**Wrath: Micah 5:15** <sup>15</sup> "And I will execute vengeance in anger and wrath On the nations which have not obeyed."

**Forgiveness: Jeremiah 31:34** <sup>34</sup> "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

**d. God is Living**

**1 Thessalonians 1:9** <sup>9</sup> For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,

**John 5:26** <sup>26</sup> "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;

**Psalms 42:2** <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God;

**Psalms 84:2** <sup>2</sup> My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.

God is the only being that has life in-and-of himself. He is the only **“self-existing”** being!

You don't have a dead God. Your God is living; He's here with you; He's there with you; He's everywhere. He has everything always for everyone under control. He never has to go to a "Plan B". He never says "Ooops." He is a living and real and inescapable God!

**Think about this:**

Buddha (Buddhism), Allah (Islam), Joseph Smith (Mormonism), Mary (RC), the Popes through the ages (RC), Muhammed, Mary Baker Eddy (Christian Science), Moses (Judaism), Charles Taze Russel (Jehovah's Witnesses), Anton LaVey (Satanism) are all DEAD, in the grave, and in torment under the judgment of God in Hell. But not God—He is alive! Jesus Christ conquered death! He is alive from the grave! He lives forever!

**CONCLUSION:** *All this leads us to conclude that God is, in fact, a living, personal, invisible Spirit!*

#### IV. The Distinctiveness (the “Otherness”) of God

##### a. Common Misconceptions

- i. God is like us
- ii. God needs us
- iii. God created us to fill a gap in his ‘heart’
- iv. God loves us too much to punish our sin
- v. God is uninterested in what we are doing
- vi. God has no time for us
- vii. God isn’t powerful enough to deal with “*all my problems.*”

##### b. Biblical Truth

- i. **The core idea of God’s holiness is that of: separateness.** God is totally separate, other, distinct, lofty, transcendent, majestic, pure!

*“The concept of holiness connotes the essential nature that belongs to the sphere of God’s being or activity and that is distinct from the common or profane (=impure)” (New International Dictionary of OT Theology and Exegesis, 3:879).*

**Leviticus 10:9-11** <sup>9</sup> "Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you will not die-- it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations-- <sup>10</sup> and so as **to make a distinction between the holy and the profane**, and between the unclean and the clean, <sup>11</sup> and so as to teach the sons of Israel all the statutes which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses."

- ii. **Two meanings of God’s holiness in the Bible**

1. **Majesty Holiness**

God is, in His being, totally different than anything or anyone else in the entire universe.

**Isaiah 57:15** <sup>15</sup> *For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.*

## 2. Purity Holiness

God is, in His being, morally separate from and purer than anything else in the created realm.

Often in the Bible, the “holiness” of God includes the idea of God being separated from sin or anything that is impure or defiled.

**Leviticus 11:44** <sup>44</sup> *'For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm on the earth.*

**1 Peter 1:15-16** <sup>15</sup> *but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior;* <sup>16</sup> *because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*

## V. The Trinity—God in Three Persons

Here are 3 axioms all of which are true **at the same time!**

**\*\*This is where we get into the realm of ‘paradox’—seeming contradictions that don’t seem to make sense in our mind, yet the Bible portrays both truths as correct (for example: the Bible says that Jesus is MAN and that Jesus is GOD; our *little and imperfect* minds cannot understand how these can both be true at the same time—but they ARE!).**

### a. Axiom #1 – God is three persons.

- i. When we talk about God being three “persons” we are **not** referring to human beings—like YOU and ME.

- ii. The fact that God is three persons means that the Father is not the Son; they are distinct. It also means the Father is not the Holy Spirit, but they are distinct persons.

- 1. These are natures within the Godhead that are distinct—yet there is still **one** God!

*“The big differences between Christian faith and any kind of philosophical theology is that Christians claim to know God, the ultimate reality, personally. The belief that God is a personal being is one which is shared with other monotheistic religions, especially Judaism and Islam, but Christianity is fundamentally different from them in that it claims that the one God in whom we all believe is known to us not as one, but as three distinct persons” (Gerald Bray).*

- iii. Some may think the Holy Spirit is merely a “force” or a “power” or a “thing.” **But the New Testament** is very different. He has a unique and personable relationship in the Godhead.

**1 Corinthians 12:4-6** <sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

**2 Corinthians 13:14** <sup>14</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

## **b. Axiom #2 – Each person is fully God.**

### **i. The Father is God**

**John 6:27** <sup>27</sup> "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth

### **ii. The Son is God**

**John 1:1-4, 14** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. <sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the

Light of men... <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**John 20:27-28** <sup>27</sup> Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." <sup>28</sup> Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

**Titus 2:13** <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

**Hebrews 1:8** But of the Son [God says], "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, And the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.

### iii. The Holy Spirit is God

**Matthew 28:19** <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

**2 Corinthians 13:14** <sup>14</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.

**1 Corinthians 2:10-11** <sup>10</sup> For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. <sup>11</sup> For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

**1 Corinthians 3:16** <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

**\*\*If, we were to stop here, with these two facts ([1] that God is three persons; and [2] that each person is fully God) there would be no logical problem at all in fitting them together—for the OBVIOUS solution would be that there are three Gods. The Father is fully God; the Son is fully God; the Spirit is fully God. We would have a system where there are three "equally divine beings." This would then be called "polytheism" ('many gods') or "tritheism ('three gods'). BUT THIS IS VERY FAR FROM WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES!**

### c. Axiom #3 – There is only one God.

**Recognize** that Scripture is overwhelmingly clear that there is **One** and only **One God**.

*“The three different persons of the Trinity (=Father, Son, and Spirit) are not only one in purpose and in agreement on what they think, but they are one in essence, one in their essential nature. In other words, God is only one being. There are not three Gods. There is only one God” (Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology, 238).*

**Deuteronomy 6:4-5** <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup> "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

**Exodus 15:11** <sup>11</sup> "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?

**1 Kings 8:60** <sup>60</sup> so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else.

**Isaiah 45:5-6** <sup>5</sup> "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God. I will gird you, though you have not known Me; <sup>6</sup> That men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun That there is no one besides Me. I am the LORD, and there is no other,

**1 Timothy 2:5** <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

**1 Corinthians 8:6** <sup>6</sup> yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

**Therefore**, it is absolutely impossible to get around the clear teaching of Scripture that there is **ONE** and only **ONE God**.

**\*Remember\*** we are diving deep into the realm of the “personhood” of God. This is an infinitely deep area of study and we will never get to the bottom of ALL the truths that are contained here.

At the end of the day, we do well to study, and study, and think, and think, and believe, and believe, but we must remember that the Bible declares the truths that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, yet there is **only one God**—this is believed by **faith!**



### **Application For This Week (James 1:23–25):**

- € Consider how well you think you really **know** God. How can you know Him more?
- € For a few days this week, take about 30 minutes and go for a walk, go outside, and see nature, creation, and the sky and praise God for his revelation to you in nature.
- € Try to sit and comprehend the reality that all of God fills every space and consider how that ought to change the way you do things. God is always there next to you as you live life.



## **VI. The Character of God**

### **a. Introduction**

#### **i. An Attribute of God**

*“The attributes of God are those distinguishing characteristics of the divine nature which are inseparable from the idea of God” (Strong).*

*“A divine attribute is what we know to be true of God from His revelation about Himself” (Greg Behle).*

How God reveals Himself are called “attributes”—the self-disclosure of God.

**Attributes are not total qualities.** In other words, an attribute is not an individual part of God.

#### **ii. How to observe the attributes of God.**

Often we have to understand God by talking about what God is **not**. God is **not** bound by time, God did **not** have a beginning, God was **not** created, God **cannot** die. The reason we **must** do this is because we are sinners and know sin and are imperfect. Therefore, for us to try to understand more of God and His perfect character, we have to talk about who/what God is *not*.

### **b. Incommunicable Attributes**

#### **Meaning of “Incommunicable” attributes:**

When we talk about **incommunicable attributes** we refer to those attributes of God which we as human beings *cannot* imitate and model at all.

#### **List of Attributes:**

i. **Aseity**— God depends on nothing else for existence, “but has eternally existed w/o any external or prior cause.”

Latin: *a* = from + *sei* = himself

*God depends on nothing else for existence, but has eternally existed without any external or prior cause*

**John 5:26** <sup>26</sup> *"For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;*

**Psalms 36:9** <sup>9</sup> *For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.*

**Exodus 3:14** <sup>14</sup> *God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

**Revelation 1:8** <sup>8</sup> *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."*

**John 8:58** <sup>58</sup> *Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."*

This also means that God has no needs—he is totally self-sufficient (Frame, 29).

Because God depends on no one or nothing for existence, we ought to humbly bow to the awesome power and majesty of God!

ii. **Omnipresence**— God is present in the totality of his being every place in space.

Latin: *omni* = all + *presence* = presence

**1 Kings 8:27** <sup>27</sup> *"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!*

**Psalms 139:7-8** <sup>7</sup> *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.*

**Isaiah 66:1** Thus says the LORD, "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?"

### **Hard Questions Some People Ask:**

**1. How can God fill any space since He doesn't have a body?**

- a. God is **not** present physically in space—but He is present spiritually.
- b. God is really here—just not physically here.

**2. Is God present in hell?**

- a. Yes, he certainly is.

**Psalm 139:8** <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there.

**Revelation 14:9-11** <sup>9</sup> Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, <sup>10</sup> he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone **in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.** <sup>11</sup> "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

**3. If God is present everywhere, then why does the Bible say that God dwells in heaven?**

- a. To speak of God as present in heaven is primarily to speak of his kingship, control, and exaltation in heaven.
- b. Certainly God is present everywhere—but when we talk about God being *in heaven*, that phrase "in heaven" inherently contains the idea of "power" and "sovereignty" and "control."

**iii. Omniscience— God is infinite in knowledge. He knows Himself and all other things perfectly from all eternity, whether they be actual or merely possible, whether they be past, present, or future.**

God knows **Himself** perfectly.

God knows **all existing things** perfectly.

God knows **all things possible**.

God knows **all the future**.

**Psalms 147:5** <sup>5</sup> Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite.

**John 21:17** <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep.

**Hebrews 4:12-13** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

**1 John 3:20** God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

iv. **Omnipotence— God is all-powerful and able to do whatever He decides to do.**

**Job 42:2** <sup>2</sup> "I know that You can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.

**Matthew 19:26** <sup>26</sup> And looking at them Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

**There are some things God cannot do:**

1. God cannot do anything that is out of harmony with his perfections.

That means that God cannot promise to do something and then *fail* to do it.

If he tells you He'll forgive you if you repent of sins, then *He will certainly do it*. It is impossible for Him to not do it.

2. God cannot do anything that is contrary to His nature as God.
  - a. God cannot approve evil.

**Habakkuk 1:13** <sup>13</sup> *Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor.*

**Job 13:16** <sup>16</sup> *"This also will be my salvation, For a godless man may not come before His presence.*

- b. God cannot deny His promises

**2 Timothy 2:13** <sup>13</sup> *If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.*

- c. God cannot lie

**Titus 1:2** <sup>2</sup> *in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,*

- d. God cannot do things which are absurd or self-contradictory (like: make square circles, make a rock too big that He cannot move, etc.).
  - e. God cannot do things inappropriate to his nature as God, like buying shoes or celebrating his birthday (John Frame, 26).

v. **Immutability— God is unchangeable in his essence, attributes, consciousness, and will.**

Classical theology has believed that God does not and can not change.  
**Malachi 3:6** <sup>6</sup> *"For I, the LORD, do not change;*

**James 1:17** <sup>17</sup> *Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.*

There are many who believe that God *can* and *does* change, though. The **Bible** does speak of God “changing His mind” sometimes.

**Jonah 3:10 (NLT)** <sup>10</sup> When God saw what they had done and how they had put a stop to their evil ways, he changed his mind and did not carry out the destruction he had threatened.

Yet some believe—this is known as **Process Theology**—that God is constantly changing and learning and that God is drastically different today than He was 1,000 years ago.

**\*\*This is erroneous and must be considered unbiblical!**

**vi. Impassibility—God is incapable of suffering or feeling any emotions whatsoever.**

This is debated. And good people are on *both* sides.

Some say that God *does NOT* experience emotions.

Others say that God *can and does* experience emotions.

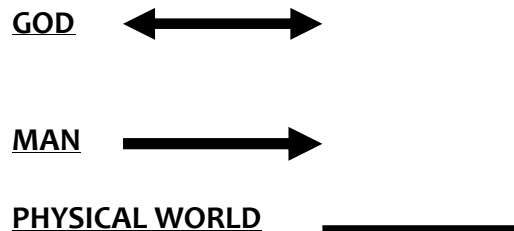
I believe that God can and does experience emotions (see above).

For example, love, joy, forgiveness, sorrow, and jealousy are all emotions.

**And, \*\*if** Jesus is the perfect revelation of who God is, and he truly suffered, then God must suffer.

*“Certainly, God cannot suffer any loss of his attributes or divine nature ... but Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, certainly did suffer as he died on the cross for us. And his Father certainly suffered when he gave up his only Son for us all (Rom 8:32)” (Frame, 29).*

**vii. Eternality—God has no beginning or end. He transcends all time and space limitations.**



**Psalms 102:27** <sup>27</sup> "But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end.

**Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**Psalms 90:1-2** Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. <sup>2</sup>  
Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

God sees the beginning and the end of everything. God knew you before you were ever thought of!

And God knows your future—and every detail of it! God knows how the end of the trial and hardship you're currently going through will end up. God has it all worked out!

*"God is free from the limitations that we experience in time. We are limited by our beginning and end; God is not. We are limited by change; God is not. We are ignorant of the past and future; God sees all times with equal vividness. We are frustrated, because time passes too quickly for us to complete our tasks or so slowly that we become bored; but God is never limited in these ways: a day with him is as a thousand years and vice versa" (John Frame, 27).*

#### viii. **Sovereignty—God is in absolute control of everything.**

*(This will be further elaborated on below.)*

Essentially, the **sovereignty of God** means that God *actively* does what He wants, when He wants, where He wants, with whom He wants, how he wants *at all times*.

God is in control of absolutely everything—nothing *at all* is left out!

**Psalms 103:19** <sup>19</sup> The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.

**Psalms 115:3** <sup>3</sup> But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

**Psalms 93:1** The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty;

### c. Communicable Attributes

#### Meaning of “communicable” attributes:

When we talk about God’s “communicable” attributes we mean those attributes which have a moral sense to them.

These are attributes that we can emulate—albeit imperfectly. And we should—and we’re required!—to emulate them in our Christian lives.

**Ephesians 5:1-2** *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup> and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us,*

**Colossians 3:13** <sup>13</sup> *bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.*

**And, of course, the greatest One to observe in seeing “how” these attributes are lived out is none other than Jesus Christ!** Read the Gospels. See how he loved, forgave, had mercy, was patient, etc.

#### List of Attributes:

- i. **Righteousness**— God always acts in accordance with what is right and is himself the final standard of what is right.

**Deuteronomy 32:4** <sup>4</sup> *"The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.*

**Psalms 145:17** <sup>17</sup> *The LORD is righteous in all His ways And kind in all His deeds.*

This means that God Himself is the **final standard** for determining whether something is right or wrong.

*“Righteousness and justice are ... legal terms, indicating that God’s conduct measures up to the highest standards—his own, of course!—of fairness and equity” (John Frame, Salvation Belongs to the Lord, 23).*

God cannot do anything that is NOT right. He cannot tolerate a sin. He cannot overlook even one sin on that final judgment day. He **must** do that which is right and He **will** do that which is right.



ii. **Justice— God’s official righteousness in that He requires other moral agents to adhere to His standard.**

This includes punitive justice. This means that God will judge *all* sin because sin deserves to be punished.

As the right and just judge, God Almighty will punish *each and every sin* that has ever been committed.

This also includes remunerative justice. This means that God will reward *all* righteousness and holy actions.

**Micah 6:8** <sup>8</sup> *He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?*

As we live our Christian lives, we are told by God, through the prophet Micah, to do (live, work, act) justly!

**Very simply, for application,** whatever God demands from you, you must do *just as* He says and adhere to *His* standard. We have to come to God and obey God on **his terms**, not **our terms**! **This**, is living according to God’s standard and living justly.

iii. **Truth—God Himself is Truth and is Himself the revelation of truth.**

1. **This includes 3 aspects:**

a. **Trueness**

God *alone* is authentically God.

**Isaiah 45:5** *"I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God.*

This means there is **no** other God; every other thing/person people may worship is a false God and, really, no god at all!

Why wouldn’t you **want** and **long** to worship the true God?

b. **Truthfulness**

God’s knowledge and fairness conform to His perfect character.

**Titus 1:2** <sup>2</sup> *in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,*

*God cannot lie!* Every single promise that God has ever vowed **will** come to pass—it must happen. It cannot not happen. God must be true to His nature and if He makes a promise, His very faithful and right, and truthful character demands that He follow through with it.

### c. Faithfulness

All that God is and tells us is NOT deceptive—at all!

**1 Thessalonians 5:24** <sup>24</sup> *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*

**1 John 1:9** <sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

### iv. Love— God’s love means that God eternally gives of himself to others.

*“That in God which moves Him to **give** Himself and His gifts spontaneously, voluntarily, righteously, and eternally, for the good of personal beings, regardless of their merit or response” (Alva McClain).*

#### Who are the objects of God’s Love?

##### 1. Jesus Christ

**John 3:35** <sup>35</sup> *"The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.*

**John 15:9** <sup>9</sup> *"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.*

This is the most intimate love that has ever existed, namely, the perfect love within the Godhead/Trinity.

##### 2. Believers (the “Elect”)

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** God is the One who initiates this love. We don’t love God first. We have absolutely NO regard for God. But while we

were totally dead in sin, wandering from God, hating God, fleeing from everything Godly, God **sovereignly chose to place his electing and saving love upon us**. We did **nothing** to receive or deserve this love.

**John 14:21** <sup>21</sup> "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

**John 14:23** <sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

**1 John 3:1** See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

**1 John 4:19** <sup>19</sup> We love, because He first loved us.

**Romans 5:8** <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

God loves all true believers with a special love that is distinct from all unbelievers in the world. There is a special love that God imparts and has for His own children because they are “**sons**” and adopted into the family of God with God as the **Loving Father**.

### 3. Israel

**Hosea 11:1** When Israel was a youth I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.

**1 Kings 10:9** <sup>9</sup> "Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."

**Jeremiah 31:3-4** The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness. <sup>4</sup> "Again I will build you and you will be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel!"

Even when Israel was a small, insignificant, sinful, rebellious nation, God **sovereignly** chose to love them. God **initiated** the love for Israel.

#### 4. The unbelieving World

**John 3:16** <sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

#### Does God love *all* people equally?

Though God loves the “world” (John 3:16) and wishes that all men might be saved (1 Tim 2:4), God does not, and cannot love the unbelieving, non-Christian, rebellious “world” with the **same** unconditional love with which He loves believing, saved, forgiven Christians.

For example, God loves His own character and faithfulness more than He loves the wicked unbelievers. Though He loves all people generally (even the wicked!), he still must be faithful to His character and destroy the impenitent (those who do **not** repent) in eternal hell forever! This is, in reality, the greatest demonstration of His love.

**APPLICATION:** You are commanded to love others **just as** you have been loved by God!

1. **Unconditional** – God promises to love his children (“believers”) *unconditionally* (cf. Romans 8:35ff).
2. **Unilateral** – God will keep loving us even if we do not love him reciprocally (cf. Romans 5:8).
3. **Unlimited** – God loves us without *limit*—to the uttermost! (John 13:1).
4. **Sacrificially** – God loves us so much that He gave up His own very dear Son for YOU! (this is the greatest sacrifice that has ever, or will ever, be given.) (cf. 2 Corinthians 8:9).

**Ephesians 5:1-2** *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup> and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us,*

**John 15:12** <sup>12</sup> "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

- v. **Grace**—The grace of God is God's goodness manifested toward the ill-deserving. It is unmerited favor.

Very simply, **grace is unmerited favor.**

The key here is the "recipient"—that is, the one who is *receiving* grace, because he does not deserve it.

Grace is not just God stooping down and doing something nice for someone, but doing something nice for someone that doesn't deserve it.

**Psalm 145:8** <sup>8</sup> *The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness.*

**Exodus 34:6** <sup>6</sup> *Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and **gracious**, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;*

**There are 2 categories of God's grace:**

1. **Common Grace** – God's gracious activity immediately or through secondary causation by which He sustains creation, restrains evil, enables excellence in the arts and sciences, and maintains a decent and orderly society.

**Matthew 5:45** <sup>45</sup> *so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

Everything that God does for *all humans* falls into this category: every single breath of life, the sun for warmth and light, a house, a bed, food, water, family, laughing, relationships, health, ability to go to school, ability to think, smile, joy, excitement... *just to name a few!*

Everyone has these characteristics (even nonbelievers)—this, then, is the definition of **God's common grace.**

2. **Special Grace** – God's grace extended to mankind for salvation and sanctification.

**Titus 2:11-14** <sup>11</sup> *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,* <sup>12</sup> *instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires*

*and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.*

This is sanctifying grace (or transforming grace) that transforms us gradually into the image of Christ as we grow in him.

Special grace is **God's grace given only to believers** which enables them to believe, be saved, repent, walk in holiness and Christlikeness. No one will ever enter heaven without receiving God's special grace.

***Can you do anything to earn/receive God's special grace?***

**NO! This is the kind of sovereign grace that God elects and sovereignly chooses to give to **SOME** people** (i.e. this is the doctrine of election or predestination). God chooses His own children out of a sea of human beings who are damned to hell. God then, gives to them special grace.

- vi. Mercy— Mercy is God's goodness manifested toward those who are in misery or distress.**

***Psalms 86:15*** <sup>15</sup> *But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.*

***James 5:11*** *the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.*

***So how do you distinguish between grace and mercy?***

Grace is emphasis on the ill-deserving (those who do NOT deserve heaven) whereas mercy is emphasis on those who are in distress (those who are totally deserving of hell).

**God demonstrates His sovereign mercy by:**

**1. Physical Deliverance**

***Philippians 2:27*** <sup>27</sup> *For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.*

## 2. Spiritual Salvation

**Ephesians 2:4-5** <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

## 3. Election

**Romans 9:18** <sup>18</sup> So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

## 4. Forgiveness of Sins

**Psalms 51:1** Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

## vii. Holiness—God's holiness is His self-affirming purity. . . God eternally wills and maintains his own moral excellence.

God is perfectly holy and pure and that is what we as believers ought to strive for.

**Leviticus 11:44** <sup>44</sup> 'For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy (cf. 11:45; 19:2; 20:7, 26).

**1 Peter 1:14-16** <sup>4</sup> As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, <sup>15</sup> but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; <sup>16</sup> because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

**2 Corinthians 7:1** Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

It ought to be your desire, as a believer in Jesus Christ, to have absolute purity in life—in thoughts, in words, in all deeds.

Only those who are perfectly pure and perfectly holy will be able to dwell with God forever in heaven.

**Does your life characterize and evidence fruits of holiness?** Are you different than the world? Or are you living just as the non-Christian world would live?

**1 Thessalonians 3:11-13** <sup>11</sup> Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; <sup>12</sup> and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; <sup>13</sup> so that He may establish your hearts without blame in **holiness** before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

- viii. **Forgiveness—God's forgiveness is His unconditional, unrelenting, unilateral, and faithful cleansing whereby he refuses to hold sins against His own children any longer.**

God is a forgiving God:

**Psalms 32:5** <sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin.

**Psalms 85:2** <sup>2</sup> You forgave the iniquity of Your people; You covered all their sin. Selah.

**Psalms 86:5** <sup>5</sup> For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You.

Just as God has forgiven **you**, so you **must** also forgive others:

**Colossians 3:13** <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

**Matthew 18:35** <sup>35</sup> "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."

Is there **anyone** in your life that you need to forgive? Even if they are NOT a Christian, you still must forgive them. If you have any unforgiveness in your heart, God will **not** hear your prayers!

**Proverbs 21:13** <sup>13</sup> He who shuts his ear to the cry of the poor Will also cry himself and not be answered.



**Matthew 5:23-24** <sup>23</sup> "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

**Biblical forgiveness always promises never to bring up the sin again to:**

1. **Me (the one sinned against)**
2. **You (the one who committed the sin)**
3. **Others (those who had nothing to do with the sin)**

Biblical forgiveness is forgiving the person in full with no strings attached. The phrase: "**but remember when you...**" must **FOREVER** be removed from the Christian's vocabulary.

**ix. Jealousy—God continually seeks to protect His own honor at all costs.**

God is so jealous that He cannot and will not allow His rightful glory and honor to be given to another.

**For example:** if you are dating someone and another person tries to take your "significant other" away by their charm, good looks, talent, and money, you would be jealous over your friend because you don't want anyone else to take him/her away. **So it is with God's jealousy for His own glory!**

**Isaiah 42:8** <sup>8</sup> "I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.

**Isaiah 48:11** <sup>11</sup> "For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.

**Exodus 20:5** <sup>5</sup> "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God,

**Exodus 34:14** you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God—

We ought to recognize that God is a **jealous** God for His own glory and honor. We must **never** take away any of that glory or honor and try to attribute it to ourselves! How prideful that would be!

**Therefore**, because God is jealous, He demands **all** your affections; **all** your love; **all** your desires; **all** your heart!

- x. **Wisdom—God always chooses the best goals and the best means to attain those goals.**

This means that **all** complaining is a SIN because complaining is, in reality, our wicked thoughts to God about how HE could have done something *better*.

Do you ever complain about your family? Parents? Friends? Jobless state of being? Grades in school? Lack of money?

***Instead, work hard, trust God, and know that God is always working out everything according to His perfect plan.***

Wisdom is a heightened form of knowledge that understands the deep significance of something and its practical relevance.

**Psalm 104:24** <sup>24</sup> O LORD, how many are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all; The earth is full of Your possessions.

**Psalm 136:5** <sup>5</sup> To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting;

**Romans 11:33** <sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

Wisdom is knowledge in depth, knowledge going to work. It could even be translated “skill.”

We are commanded to **grow in our wisdom and understanding** in order to know God better and live for Him more fully.

**Proverbs 2:2-5** <sup>2</sup> Make your ear attentive to **wisdom**, Incline your heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup> For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; <sup>4</sup> If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; <sup>5</sup> Then you will discern the fear of the LORD And discover the knowledge of God.

## VII. The Sovereignty of God

### a. Definition: God's exercise of power over all of His creation.

God's sovereignty means that He is the king (or "Sovereign") over all that He has made.

God's sovereignty is His ability to do what He wants, when He wants, where He wants, with whom He wants, all the time. When we talk about God being the **KING**, we talk about God's sovereignty.

**Psalm 103:19** <sup>19</sup> The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.

**Psalm 93:1-2** The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD has clothed and girded Himself with strength; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. <sup>2</sup> Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.

If he commands something to be done—then it'll **certainly** be done!

**Psalm 33:9** <sup>9</sup> For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

### b. Extent of God's Sovereignty:

God's sovereignty has **absolutely NO limits**. God is the reigning King and ruler over everything! To say it negatively, there is **nothing** that is NOT under God's active control.

**Psalm 99:1-2** The LORD reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! <sup>2</sup> The LORD is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples.

**1 Timothy 6:15** He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords,

**God is totally sovereign over:**

1. **Every cosmic thing** – from the planet, to the stars, to the skies, to the clouds, to the sun, to the moon, to the billions of galaxies...
2. **Every minute detail** – from the smallest leaf that falls in the highest tree on Mt. Everest, to every single ocean wave in the middle of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, to every single snowflake that falls in the heart of Northern Russia, to every single fish that swims in the depths of every ocean...

3. **Every big event** – from the electing of a new president over the USA, to every World War, to a plane crashing into 2 huge towers in New York City on 9-11-01...
4. **Every good thing** – from the cool breeze that cools you off after playing a game outside, to the ability to make money and go to the store and buy food, to meeting someone new and building a close and life-long friendship...

**c. God's Sovereignty in Salvation:**

That God is sovereign over salvation means that God is fully in charge of who is saved and who is not saved. That it is, ultimately, **a matter totally up to God!** We can never do anything to change, thwart, or alter His will.

**NOTE:** If God wants someone saved—then God will save that person. If God does NOT sovereignly elect a person to be saved—then that person will NOT be saved!

**Consider the following Logical (and biblical!) Formula:**

1. Because all human beings are SO sinful and completely unable to save themselves...
2. And because God **unconditionally** elected, predestined, and chose before the worlds ever began **those whom He wanted to save...**
3. And because Jesus Christ **only** died for those who would believe (that means, Jesus died **only** for believers—not for every single person who has ever lived!)...
4. And because of that fact that when God wants to save someone, **He will certainly save them.** NO human being can ever say NO and thwart or change God's will. If God wants to save someone, he will **certainly** be saved!
5. And because those who are truly saved **will** persevere and be kept until heaven. That means that no **true** Christian can ever lose his/her salvation...

**THEN:** God **MUST BE** sovereign in all matters of salvation!

God is **totally** in control of your salvation. If you are saved, you are kept. If you are justified, you will be glorified. If you are redeemed, you will be perfected!

**God is in total charge of your salvation. If you had any part in it whatsoever, then MAN would have a part to play in salvation and that is absolutely blasphemy!**

**d. Scriptural Proof:**

**\*\*\*If you are a Christian, then...**

**You are so dead and helpless in your sin that you cannot save yourself:**

**Romans 3:23** <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

**You were chosen by God because of His sheer grace:**

**Ephesians 1:5-6** <sup>5</sup> *He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace,*

**2 Timothy 1:9** <sup>9</sup> *who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,*

You did nothing and could do nothing to cause God's electing you. He chose you out of His sheer grace:

**John 6:44** <sup>44</sup> *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.*

**John 15:16** <sup>16</sup> *"You did not choose Me but I chose you,*

**Your sins were forgiven in Jesus Christ if you believe:**

**Matthew 1:21** <sup>21</sup> *"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*

**You were irresistibly drawn and saved when God called you to believe:**

**Romans 8:29-30** <sup>29</sup> *For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*

**You were saved, sealed, and guaranteed eternal life when you believed:**

**Philippians 1:6** <sup>6</sup> For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

**Therefore, God is totally in control and sovereign over salvation.** Everything that you are *in Christ* must be credited to God by His grace! Praise God for His work of grace in our lives in saving us!

**So, why did He save us?**

**Romans 9:23** <sup>23</sup> And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

This is what we will marvel at for ages and ages to come in heaven...

**Revelation 5:9** <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

The sovereignty of God, then, is the most comforting of all doctrines for if God is sovereign over everything, then everything that happens in life—every single thing without exception!—comes to pass under the perfect, authoritative, and all-wise God!

## **VIII. The Providence of God**

- a. Definition: Providence is that continuous agency of God by which He makes all the events of the physical and moral universe fulfill the original design with which He created it.**

*“Providence is that continuous work of the triune God whereby He controls all things in the universe for the purpose of certainly bringing about the fulfillment of his own wise, loving, and perfect plan, as in ways consistent with the free moral agency of His creatures” (Alva McClain).*

Providence explains the *active* control of God in every affair of everything in existence in order to bring about His sovereign and already decreed purposes.

God has absolute providence over everything.

### **b. How Providence Works:**

- i. God has a sovereign decree which **certainly will** come to pass.
- ii. God uses *secondary causes* (or “means”) to bring about His sovereign purposes.

*For example, when you meet someone and decide to get married, you don't just wake up one day and "poof"—you're married (some of you wish it was only that easy! 😊). Rather, God uses many secondary causes to bring about His sovereign and perfect purposes—how the two people meet, start dating, get engaged, get married, etc.*

- c. **Application:** This means that because God is the all-powerful King of the universe, that He has absolute control to do with your life whatever He wants to do. As you live your life, you are fulfilling God's perfect purposes.

- i. **Don't be anxious**

*Luke 12:7 <sup>7</sup> "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.*

- ii. **Remember the will of God**

*2 Corinthians 12:7 <sup>7</sup> Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me-- to keep me from exalting myself!*

## IX. **The Creation Spoken into Existence by God**

- a. **Definition of Biblical "Creationism":** God, by a direct act, brought into being virtually instantaneously everything that is.

- b. **Two important tenets of Creationism:**

- i. **The brevity ("shortness") of time involved.** In other words, there are no millions of years or evolutionary processes here.
  - ii. **The recency of what occurred at creation.** In other words, this is a recent phenomenon and not something that happened billions of years ago.

*God brought everything into being by a single act—His spoken word!*

*Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

*Psalms 33:6 <sup>6</sup> By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.*

- c. **Theology of Creation:**

- i. **God the Father as the Originator**

**1 Corinthians 8:6** <sup>6</sup> yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

**ii. God the Son as the Mediator**

**John 1:3** <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

**iii. God the Spirit as the Executioner (the one who carried it out)**

**Genesis 1:2** <sup>2</sup> The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

**Revelation 4:11** <sup>11</sup> "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

**Remember**, God created everything out of nothing—ex nihilo (Latin for “out of nothing”)

**Hebrews 11:3** <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

**3 important realities from Heb 11:3**

1. All things are from God.
2. Creation was by the Word of God.
3. Material did NOT come from previous matter.

**X. Miracles from God**

- a. **Definition:** A miracle is an unusually powerful work of God that amazes people, reveals God, and authenticates His revelation and revelation bearer.
- b. **Terminology:** Often in the Bible, the words “signs” and “wonders” accompany passages that refer to miracles.

**Hebrews 2:3-4** <sup>3</sup> how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who



heard, <sup>4</sup> God also testifying with them, **both by signs and wonders and by various miracles** and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

**c. Characteristic of a miracle:**

- i. It is to reveal God.
- ii. It is to be spectacular.
- iii. It is to be undeniable.
- iv. It is uncommon (or rare).
- v. It usually occurs in one of 4 special time periods of history:
  1. **Moses (Exodus, Numbers)**
  2. **Elijah and Elisha (1-2 Kings)**
  3. **Jesus and the Apostles (Gospels, and Acts)**
  4. **Tribulation and Millennial Kingdom (Revelation)**

**d. The Purpose of Miracles in the Bible**

- i. **First**, to introduce more biblical revelation (that is, to give more revelation from God to His people).
- ii. **Second**, to accredit and validate the message and messenger sent from God to His people.

**e. What about many miracles today (magic, black magic, etc.)?**

- i. Oftentimes, they are controlled and executed by demons.
- ii. It is possible for demons to do miracles; this was exemplified in the gospels.

**f. Further questions:**

- i. **Could miracles happen today?**

1. Sure—because God exists. And God can do a miracle if He so chooses.

ii. Is it **likely** that miracles would happen/occur **today** (or regularly)?

1. No, because God has given all the revelation of Himself that He thought was sufficient and has no need to do miraculous signs to validate his message and give further revelation.

iii. What about miracles of people healing from sickness?

1. Oftentimes, these may be explained “medically” and “scientifically”. And, frankly, God **still** answers prayer and is able to heal people (James 5).

iv. What about all the miracles that will happen in the “end times”?

1. Scripture shows that miracles will certainly be evident in the Tribulation period by the Antichrist and the false prophet as well as the 144,000 Jewish believers!

v. Why is the modern **emphasis** on miracles dangerous?

1. Because God *no where* guarantees that He will accomplish miracles for US today—nowhere! Also, many people seek miracles and God to “speak to them” and show them “miraculous signs” which is seeking God to reveal Himself **outside** of Scripture.
2. Scripture is **the only sufficient source** for finding out about God.

**Application For This Week (James 1:23–25):**

- € Having learned about God and who He is, how should this impact your prayers?
- € How should your knowledge of God and His character change the way you live, the way you think, the way you talk, the places you go?
- € Now that you learned about the Sovereignty of God, how should this change the way you think about life, the things that happen to you, and everything that you see?
- € When you go outside, consider that God, by His awesome and powerful Word, spoke that into existence! Worship Him! Bow before Him!
- € Do you ever seek for a miracle from God to “show Himself to you?” God has shown himself to you already in His Word—the Bible! Read it and learn about Him.



## Lesson 4: The Person of Jesus Christ

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### I. The Importance of Jesus

#### a. Introduction:

*“JESUS OF NAZARETH. No other name has inspired greater devotion, evoked greater reverence, or ignited greater controversy. For 2000 years, the controversy over Christ has continued to rage without let up. Today, everyone has an opinion about Jesus, and these opinions range from the traditional to the novel to the heretical” —Douglas Groothuis, Jesus in an Age of Controversy, 7.*

*“Since Christ said that the world would hate Him, we can be quite sure that when the world loves Him it is because they have made Him into something He is not” —Erwin Lutzer, Christ Among Other Gods, 23.*

#### b. Necessity:

It is necessary to study the person of Jesus Christ because everyone everywhere has some kind of thought about who Jesus is.

#### c. Undeniable:

That some claim that Jesus' claims are radical, life-altering, and eternally significant warrants that we study and understand *who* Jesus is and *what* He is all about.

It's undeniable. He was a historical figure. No one (who knows anything!) doubts this!

#### d. Controversial:

Jesus is controversial. He is a part of Christianity, Roman Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, and a host of others... **Therefore**, it is understandable that Jesus would be a *controversial* person.

So, let us delve deep and study what the *Bible* has to say about Jesus.

**Remember:** Since we believe that the Bible is *THE* ultimate source for understanding *who* Jesus is and *what* He has done, the Bible **MUST** give the final say. The Bible has more authority than our ideas, thoughts, philosophies, rationalities, and mystical visions. Therefore, let us proceed with the Bible open to help us understand *the absolute truth* regarding the person of Jesus.

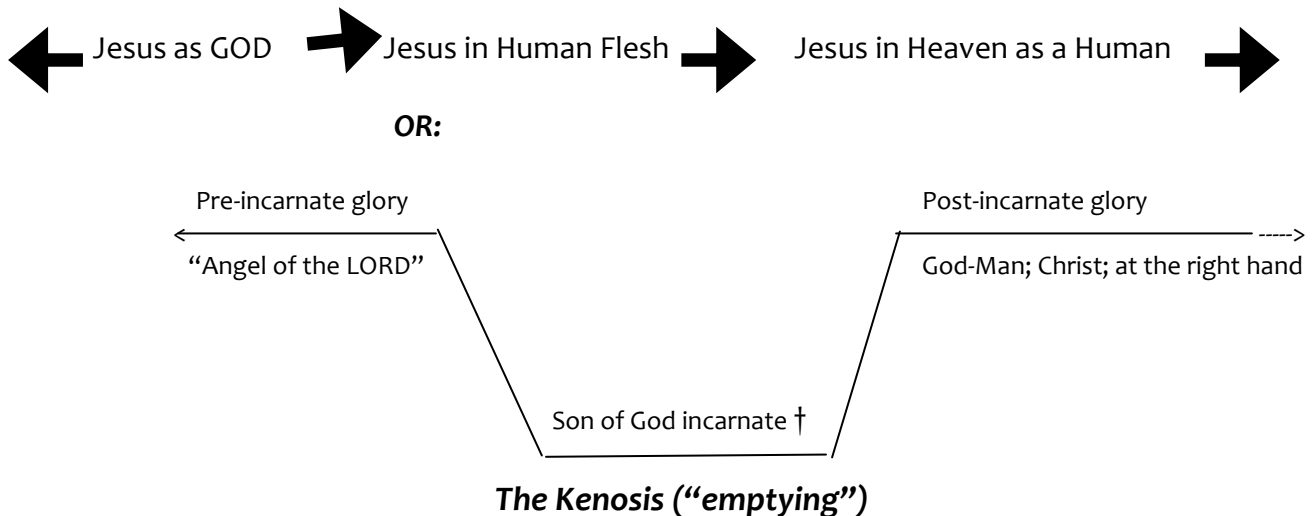
## II. Who is Jesus?

### a. His Deity—The Godhood of Jesus

#### i. The Pre-Existence of Jesus

1. The pre-existence of Jesus simply means that Jesus has always existed as God from all eternity past even before He entered into the world in human form.

Note the diagrams below:



2. Jesus as the second person of the Triune God *has always* existed. In other words, when talking about the “Godhood” (=deity) of Jesus, this simply means that **Jesus never had a beginning or a starting point.**

#### ii. The Attributes of Jesus that are Equated with God

##### 1. Omniscience

**Luke 11:16-17** <sup>16</sup> Others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven. <sup>17</sup> But He knew their thoughts and said to them...

**John 16:29-30** <sup>29</sup> His disciples said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech. <sup>30</sup> "Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."

**Matthew 9:4** <sup>4</sup> And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"

**Mark 2:8** <sup>8</sup> Immediately Jesus, aware in His spirit that they were reasoning that way within themselves, said to them, "Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?"

## 2. Omnipresence

**Matthew 28:20** <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

## 3. Forgives Sins

**Matthew 9:2-3** <sup>2</sup> And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven." <sup>3</sup> And some of the scribes said to themselves, "This fellow blasphemes."

**Matthew 9:5-6** <sup>5</sup> "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, and walk '? <sup>6</sup> "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins "-- then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home."

**Luke 7:48** <sup>48</sup> Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."

## 4. Knows Men's Hearts

**Luke 6:8** <sup>8</sup> But He knew what they were thinking, and He said to the man with the withered hand, "Get up and come forward!" And he got up and came forward.

**John 6:6** <sup>6</sup> This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.

## 5. Receives Worship

**Matthew 14:32-33** <sup>2</sup> When they got into the boat, the wind stopped. <sup>33</sup> And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

**Matthew 28:9** <sup>9</sup> And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.

**Matthew 28:17** <sup>17</sup> When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some were doubtful

**John 9:38** <sup>38</sup> And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

## 6. Creator of All Things

**John 1:1-3** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

**Colossians 1:16-17** <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

**Hebrews 1:2** <sup>2</sup> in these last days [God] has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom [Jesus] also He [God] made the world.

**Luke 19:40** <sup>40</sup> But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

### iii. The Claims of Jesus

#### 1. Oneness with the Father

**John 10:30** <sup>30</sup> "I and the Father are one."

**John 17:11** <sup>11</sup> "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.

**John 17:21-22** <sup>21</sup> that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. <sup>22</sup> "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;

**John 14:9-10** He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? <sup>10</sup> "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I

do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

## 2. Knows all things about the Father

**John 5:20** <sup>20</sup> "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

**Matthew 11:27** <sup>27</sup> "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

## 3. The Only Way to God

**John 14:6** <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

## 4. The Only Way to Heaven

**Matthew 21:38-44** <sup>38</sup> "But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' <sup>39</sup> "They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. <sup>40</sup> "Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" <sup>41</sup> They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine-growers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons." <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES ' ?' <sup>43</sup> "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it. <sup>44</sup> "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust."

### iv. The Miracles of Jesus

#### 1. Physical/Illness Healings

##### a. Fever

**Matthew 8:14-15** <sup>14</sup> When Jesus came into Peter's home, He saw his mother-in-law lying sick in bed with a fever. <sup>15</sup>

He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and waited on Him.

**b. Blindness**

**Matthew 9:28-30** <sup>28</sup> When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." <sup>29</sup> Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith." <sup>30</sup> And their eyes were opened.

**c. Deaf and Mute**

**Mark 7:32-35** <sup>32</sup> They brought to Him one who was deaf and spoke with difficulty, and they implored Him to lay His hand on him. <sup>33</sup> Jesus took him aside from the crowd, by himself, and put His fingers into his ears, and after spitting, He touched his tongue with the saliva; <sup>34</sup> and looking up to heaven with a deep sigh, He said to him, "Ephphatha!" that is, "Be opened!" <sup>35</sup> And his ears were opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he began speaking plainly.

**d. Diseases**

**Matthew 4:23** <sup>23</sup> Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

**2. Cosmic Miracles**

**a. Create the world**

**Colossians 1:16** <sup>16</sup> For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him.

**b. Still a Raging Storm**

**Mark 4:37-39** <sup>37</sup> And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up. <sup>38</sup> Jesus Himself was in the



stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"<sup>39</sup> And He got up and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm.

#### c. Turn Water into Wine

**John 2:8-9** <sup>8</sup> And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him. <sup>9</sup> When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom,

**John 2:11** <sup>11</sup> This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

#### d. Create Much Bread from a Small Loaf

**Mark 6:40-44** <sup>0</sup> They sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. <sup>41</sup> And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food and broke the loaves and He kept giving them to the disciples to set before them; and He divided up the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> They all ate and were satisfied, <sup>43</sup> and they picked up twelve full baskets of the broken pieces, and also of the fish. <sup>44</sup> There were five thousand men who ate the loaves.

#### e. Walk on Water

**Matthew 14:24-27** <sup>24</sup> But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. <sup>25</sup> And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. <sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. <sup>27</sup> But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid."

### 3. Raise the Dead

**John 11:43-44** <sup>43</sup> When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth." <sup>44</sup> The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

**Luke 7:12-15** <sup>12</sup> Now as He approached the gate of the city, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a sizeable crowd from the city was with her. <sup>13</sup> When the Lord saw her, He felt compassion for her, and said to her, "Do not weep." <sup>14</sup> And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise!" <sup>15</sup> The dead man sat up and began to speak. And Jesus gave him back to his mother.

#### **b. His Humanity—The Humanness of Jesus**

*"The testimony of the NT, particularly the narrative of the four Gospels, presents a consistent picture of a true man, walking in dependence upon his heavenly Father."*

##### **i. The Birth of Jesus**

1. The birth of Jesus was similar to any human being coming into the world
2. **Yet**, it was very unique in that He existed previously in heaven!
3. see more below...

##### **ii. The Human Features of Jesus**

###### **1. Hunger**

**Matthew 4:2** <sup>2</sup> And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

###### **2. Thirst**

**John 19:28** <sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty."

###### **3. Pain**

**Matthew 27:26** <sup>26</sup> Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

#### 4. Sorrow

**Mark 14:33-34** <sup>33</sup> And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. <sup>34</sup> And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch."

#### 5. Crying/Tears

**John 11:33-35** <sup>33</sup> When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled, <sup>34</sup> and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." <sup>35</sup> Jesus wept.

#### 6. Anger

**John 2:14-17** <sup>14</sup> And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup> And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; <sup>16</sup> and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business." <sup>17</sup> His disciples remembered that it was written, "ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME."

#### 7. Sleep

**Matthew 8:24** <sup>24</sup> And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep.

#### 8. Eating

**John 21:12** <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord.

**John 21:15** <sup>15</sup> So when they had finished breakfast,

#### 9. Up all Night

**Luke 6:12** <sup>12</sup> It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

### iii. The Physical Family of Jesus

**Matthew 12:46-47** <sup>46</sup> While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. <sup>47</sup> Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You."

**Matthew 13:55-56** <sup>55</sup> "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?" <sup>56</sup> "And His sisters, are they not all with us?"

### iv. The Death of Jesus

#### 1. Crucifixion

**Matthew 27:26** <sup>26</sup> Then he released Barabbas for them; but after having Jesus scourged, he handed Him over to be crucified.

**Mark 15:27** <sup>27</sup> They crucified two robbers with Him, one on His right and one on His left.

#### 2. Dead

**John 19:32-33** <sup>32</sup> So the soldiers came, and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; <sup>33</sup> but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

**Matthew 16:21** <sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.

## III. The Incarnation and Virgin Birth of Christ

### a. Why Become a Man?

**The incarnation:** refers to the second person of the triune God—while still remaining fully God—clothing Himself with genuine humanity in order to relate to and live as a human being.

**John 1:14** <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus had to become a man in order to relate to man and die as a man for men in bringing sinful men to God.

**Hebrews 2:17** <sup>17</sup> Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

“Jesus could have never been our Redeemer if He were not from our own kin” — Doug Bookman

**b. Why Born of a Virgin?**

**i. Foretold in the Old Testament in 700BC (700 years before Jesus lived!)**

**Isaiah 7:14** <sup>14</sup> "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

**ii. The Definition of the Virgin Birth:** This is that miraculous act whereby Jesus Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary with the result that the Second Person of the Triune God was joined eternally to a real human body and nature.

**iii. NOT the Roman Catholic View of “Immaculate Conception”**

1. This is not to be confused with the Roman Catholic doctrine of the **Immaculate Conception**. This refers to Mary's conception as holy and free from sin. Declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854.
2. Simply, immaculate conception speaks of the miraculous conception of Mary.
3. This is totally unbiblical and flat-out wrong! Mary was a sinner (she even needed a “Savior”, see Luke 1:47!).

**Only Jesus Christ was born of a virgin woman:**

**Matthew 1:20** <sup>20</sup> But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

**c. Conclusion:**

*“If Jesus was indeed God incarnate and if the incarnation is indeed unrepeatable then Jesus was indeed absolutely unique and also if this historical Jesus is indeed the Creator and if Christianity claims this to be indeed true THEN Christianity is unique among religions THUS no incarnation then no Christianity.”*

#### IV. How the Divine and Human Natures Fit Together

- a. **Hypostatic Union** – the doctrine that Jesus Christ is both 100% God and 100% Man.
- b. **Theanthropic Person** - the doctrine that Jesus Christ is the God-Man!
- c. **NOTE:** The divine and human natures never compete with one another. The Bible gives a portrait of ONE person—a GOD-MAN person!
- d. Read how an ancient Creed understood this mystery:

“We, then, . . . teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; . . . one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, *inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably*; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son. . . .” (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, 2:62-63).

#### V. What did He do?

- a. Death
- b. Resurrection
- c. Ascension

#### VI. The Search for the “*Historical*” Jesus

- a. You will hear many today speak of the “*historical Jesus*.” But to them—the ***historical Jesus*** is ***different*** than the ***Biblical Jesus***. To them, the biblical Jesus is a made-up myth, a lie, a foolish idea. Rather, they seek to understand the *real* Jesus of history.
  - i. ***This is the standard argument of liberals and those who deny Jesus as being the Messiah. You will hear your secular college professors speak of the “historical Jesus” or the “Jesus of history.”***
- b. **You must remember:** The Jesus of history ***is*** the Biblical Jesus. The Historical Jesus is the biblical Jesus. They are ONE and the SAME. There is no divide or separation.

- c. **The Quest for the Historical Jesus** is a foolish search because the only way to truthfully learn about the *historical* Jesus is through the *biblical* record about Jesus!

**Application For This Week (James 1:23–25):**

- € Because Jesus is **fully** God, how must this impact your worship of Him?
- € Knowing that Jesus Christ was also a *human being*—like you—how should this impact the way you think He can relate to you and your struggles (cf. Hebrews 4:15-16).
- € Because Jesus is the *only* way to God the Father and, therefore, the only way to be forgiven of your sin and enter heaven, have you committed your life to Jesus Christ?
- € What is one way in *your life* that you need to commit to Jesus Christ as your LORD and as your Savior? In other words, is there one area, hobby, relationship, activity that you just aren't willing to give *totally* over to God? Think of one area and give it over to God today!



## Lesson 5: The Work of Christ

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### I. Introduction

The person and work of Jesus Christ lie at the very heart of Christianity. The essence of the work of Christ is that Jesus died as a perfect and sinless man *in the place of* sinful and wretched sinners who believe upon Him with the result of a reconciliation between sinful man and holy God and sovereign adoption into God's heavenly family.

**All that will be talked about in this unit is essentially the doctrine of SOTERIOLOGY. That's a fancy word that means: the doctrines of *salvation*.**

*It is not that each Christian must understand all these truths and every minute detail, **however**, if one is genuinely saved, then he will know, at least, the basics of the work of Christ.*

Note the chain of salvation in the following passage—the past, the present, and the future are all linked together:

**Romans 8:29-30** For those whom He **foreknew**, He also **predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He **predestined**, He also **called**; and these whom He **called**, He also **justified**; and these whom He **justified**, He also **glorified**.

**Very clearly** from these passages all the initiative for salvation rests fully in the hands of a gracious and sovereign God and **definitely not** in the hands of a sinful, lost, spiritually-blinded, and condemned man, who is fundamentally an enemy of God (Trevor Craigen, Seminary Course Lecture).

**Scripture clearly reveals that God has had a plan for redemption since the beginning of time:**

**Ephesians 3:10-11** <sup>0</sup> so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. <sup>11</sup> This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,

**Acts 2:23** <sup>23</sup> this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

**Ephesians 1:11** <sup>11</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,



## II. The Doctrines of Salvation/Atonement

### a. The Atonement

*Why the need for the atonement anyway?*

#### i. The holiness of God

Remember, God is perfectly holy and separated from sin and *nothing*—absolutely nothing!—that is sinful can ever enter His awesome presence.

**Habakkuk 1:13** <sup>13</sup> *Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor.*

*“In the final analysis our great problem with holiness is not that our concepts of holiness are feeble, but that our hearts are rebellious. We are selfish, that's our problem. And the fact that we often won't admit our selfishness shows how deep the pride goes” (Floyd McClung).*

This is the **problem** of man: God is holy and there is **no conceivable way** you as a miserable sinner could ever have a relationship with God!

#### ii. The sinfulness of all mankind

Because man is **totally, radically, and comprehensively** dead in sin and unable to save himself, God **must** be the One who intercedes if anyone is ever to be saved.

Man is sinful and is an enemy of God without Jesus Christ.

Man is dead in sin and has utterly no hope of any peaceful relationship with God in and of himself...

**Romans 3:23** <sup>23</sup> *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

**Romans 6:23** <sup>23</sup> *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Isaiah 48:22** <sup>22</sup> *"There is no peace for the wicked," says the LORD.*

**1 Kings 8:46** <sup>46</sup> "When they sin against You (for there is no man who does not sin) and You are angry with them

**Ephesians 2:1-3** and you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

Therefore, no one who is **wholly sinful** and **entirely wretched** can have peace with an infinitely holy and righteous God!

iii. **The Sinlessness of Jesus Christ in bringing man to God and God to man.**

**Hebrews 4:15** <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

**This is God's solution to man's problem—remember, it is only God who can bridge the great chasm between God and man. And the bridge offering man access to God is Jesus Christ.**

It's only through Jesus Christ—the perfect God/Man—that we—the sinful human beings—can be brought into a relationship with God.

b. **Election**

i. **Definition of Election**—The unmerited selection by God in choosing certain unworthy individuals to Himself.

Election is the doctrine whereby, before the earth was created, God selected or appointed certain people to be His own children (Eph 1:4-5).

**Matthew 24:24** <sup>24</sup> "For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

**Romans 8:33** <sup>33</sup> Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies;

**John 15:16** <sup>16</sup> "You did not choose Me but I chose you,

**Ephesians 1:4** <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

**1 Corinthians 1:27-28** <sup>27</sup> but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, <sup>28</sup> and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are,

**The question that follows is this: What did God base his election on? What was the purpose of God electing some to salvation and not others? There are 2 primary views:**

- ii. **Conditional Election**—God selected certain individuals to salvation based upon the foresight that they would one day believe in him.

This, unfortunately, is a false teaching that is based upon a **faulty** and **man-centered** understanding of some texts (cf. Rom 8:29-30) that God knew beforehand who would believe.

This, then, makes the condition of God's election of us based upon whether we would believe upon Him! That means, **MAN INITIATED HIS SALVATION**. Not only is that impossible for man to choose God, but this is salvation by human works, and that's heresy (cf. Rom 3:10-20).

- iii. **Unconditional Election**—God selected individuals to be saved **not** based upon anything the person did/initiated but solely on God's sovereign purpose and grace.

**2 Timothy 1:9** <sup>9</sup> who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

**Ephesians 1:4-5** just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

**John 15:16** <sup>16</sup> "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

*If you are a Christian, you credit your salvation to God! If you reject Him and are cast into hell, you are wholly responsible for your own damnation.*

*“If you are saved you dare not take any credit to yourself; if you are lost you alone are responsible” (Alva McClain).*

*“If you perish in hell, blame yourself, as it is entirely your fault. But if you should make it to heaven, credit God, for that is entirely His work! To Him alone belong all praise and glory, for salvation is all of grace, from start to finish” (Mark Webb).*

#### **iv. Reprobation (“Double Predestination”)**

*This answers the question: what happened to those who were not elected unto salvation?*

- 1. Definition:** This is the doctrine where God not only selected (or elected) certain individuals for salvation, but he also actively, selected or appointed all the rest to eternal damnation in hell.

Though this is a hard concept to accept, it puts God in absolute charge of everything showing His utter sovereignty in election of some and damnation of the rest.

#### **2. Scriptural support:**

**Romans 9:22** <sup>22</sup> What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath **prepared for destruction?**

**Jude 1:4** <sup>4</sup> For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were **long beforehand marked out for this condemnation,** ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

#### **c. The extent of the atonement**

*This issue of the “extent of the atonement” answers the basic question: “For whom did Christ die?”*

#### **i. Principles of Agreement:**

- 1.** All agree that not everyone will be saved.

2. All agree that Christ's death was sufficient in order to save sinners.
3. The question is: *for whom did Jesus die?*

## ii. General Redemption (“Unlimited Atonement”)

**Obviously**, we cannot believe in **total redemption or universal redemption** meaning that *everyone will be saved*. Of course, everyone is not a Christian nor will everyone end up in heaven (compare this thinking with Jesus' words in Matt 7:13-14).

However, **general redemption** refers to the teaching that Jesus' death and atonement was sufficient for *all* but efficient (or applied) for the *elect only*.

**In other words**, Christ died for the “world”, but the application of that death with all of its glorious doctrines (redemption, reconciliation, adoption, forgiveness) is entrusted only to those who believe.

**John 1:29** <sup>29</sup> *The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

**1 John 2:2** <sup>2</sup> *and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world*

**1 Timothy 4:10** <sup>10</sup> *For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.*

**Isaiah 53:6** <sup>6</sup> *All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.*

\*This is the same thing as telling people: “Jesus died for YOU” because you don’t know if that person will ever become a believer. What if they die having rejected Christ and end up in hell? Did Jesus, then, really die *for them*?

Though some verses may lead to this thinking, I believe the better understanding of Christ's work on the cross and its application toward people is **not** to be understood in this way.

iii. **Particular Redemption or “Definite Atonement” (sometimes known as “Limited Atonement”)**

**Particular redemption** teaches that Christ’s death was only for the elect and it is *sufficient and efficient* for the elect only. In other words, **non**-believers have NO (“salvific”) part in the death of Jesus Christ whatsoever.

When you hear “Limited Atonement,” it does **not** mean that Jesus’ death is *limited* in any way, that is, weak or incapable of accomplishing certain facts, rather, it is limited in scope, namely, it does NOT reach to every single person on earth, but only to the elect.

Therefore, the better term to describe this doctrine is “particular redemption”—Christ’s death was accomplished for a *particular group of people only* (=the redeemed/elect).

**Matthew 1:21** <sup>21</sup> *"She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."*

**John 10:15** <sup>15</sup> *even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.*

**Ephesians 5:25** <sup>25</sup> *... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,*

**Isaiah 53:5** <sup>5</sup> *But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.*

**In other words, particular redemption teaches that when Jesus died for believers, he *actually accomplished and secured salvation for them* (hence, the term “definite atonement”). The best those of the “universal redemption” (unlimited atonement) can believe is that Jesus’ death only *made their salvation possible* (otherwise, everyone would be saved!).**

Some (**wrongly!**) teach that Christ’s work on the cross was designed to make *possible* the salvation of all men on the condition that they believe, but that Christ’s death *in itself* did not actually secure or guarantee salvation for everyone (Steele, et al, *Five Points*, 40).

**John 19:30** <sup>30</sup> *Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine,*

He said, "**It is finished!**" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

**NOTE:** This phrase: *it is finished* is a legal, law-court term and it signifies an *actual* payment showing that the debt **has actually been paid for in full** and there is nothing left in the transaction. In other words, when Christ died, he *actually paid the debt in full* for His own children so that there is nothing left to be done!

**Romans 5:10** <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

**\*\*Therefore, did Christ die for all people, including those in hell?**  
NO—that's why they're being punished for their sin by the terrifying wrath of God for all eternity.

**Acts 20:28** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

**d. The result of the atonement**

**i. Peace with God**

**You are no longer at enmity (hostility) with God. You are no longer God's enemy. God will no longer judge you. You are no longer destined for eternal punishment because of your sin. But now, you are on peaceful terms with the Holy God of the universe because of Christ's atonement credited to you if you believe in Him.**

**Romans 5:1-2** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

**Galatians 1:3** <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

**2 Peter 1:2** <sup>2</sup> Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

If you are a believer, then you are at **absolute peace** with God! You are no longer under his wrath and anger as an enemy of God! You are now his friend, his child, his treasured possession.

Are you at peace or enmity with God? Are you His friend or his enemy?

## ii. Forgiven by God

**Isaiah 6:7** <sup>7</sup> He touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away and your sin is forgiven."

**Romans 4:7** <sup>7</sup> "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED."

**Ephesians 4:32** <sup>2</sup> Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

**Colossians 2:13-14** <sup>3</sup> When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <sup>14</sup> having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

**1 John 2:12** <sup>12</sup> I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

## iii. Hope in God

**Romans 5:2** <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

**Romans 8:25** <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

**2 Corinthians 1:10** <sup>10</sup> who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us,

**1 Thessalonians 2:19** <sup>19</sup> For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-14** <sup>13</sup> But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. <sup>14</sup> For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.



**Hebrews 3:6** <sup>6</sup> but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house-- whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

### III. The Theology of the Work of Christ on Calvary's Cross

#### a. Introduction

- i. The accounts of Christ's death on the cross (the 4 gospels) and the theology of the accounts (the NT) give us a **theology** of the cross.

#### b. The Turning Away of the Wrath of God—"Propitiation"

*"It is the combination of God's deep love for the sinner with His uncompromising reaction against sin which brings about what the Bible calls propitiation" (Leon Morris).*

**Hebrews 2:17** <sup>17</sup> Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

**Whenever** we talk about "propitiation," we must talk about the "wrath of God" which has been turned away from the repentant sinner because it has been unleashed on Jesus Christ.

Therefore, to speak of God propitiating the sinner, we refer to God turning away his angry wrath from the sinner.

**1 John 2:2** <sup>2</sup> and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

**1 John 4:10** <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

**Romans 3:25** <sup>25</sup> whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;

**In conclusion to this masterful and mysterious doctrine of "propitiation," Dr. John Stott summarizes:**

*"It is God himself who in holy wrath needs to be propitiated, God himself who in holy love undertook to do the propitiating, and God himself who in the person of his Son died for the propitiation of our sins. Thus God took his own loving initiative to appease his own righteous anger by*

bearing it his own self in his own Son when he took our place and died for us. There is no crudity here to evoke our ridicule, only the profundity of holy love to evoke our worship.”

Therefore, this means that those who do not repent and believe upon Christ **will certainly** suffer under the angry wrath of God forevermore in torment.

**Psalm 7:11** <sup>11</sup> God is a righteous judge, And a God who has indignation every day.

**c. The Substitution**

**i. Definition of Substitution (or “Penal Substitution Theory”)—Christ’s death was in the place of sinners who believe.**

**ii. Scriptural support:**

**2 Corinthians 5:21** <sup>21</sup> He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**1 Peter 2:24** <sup>24</sup> and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

**Hebrews 9:28 - 10:1** <sup>28</sup> so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

**Galatians 3:13** <sup>13</sup> Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE "--

**iii. Purpose of Substitution:** to transfer the sins of true believers to Jesus Christ.

- 1. God is, therefore, taking the offense upon Himself.**
- 2. No principles of judgment left ever to be placed upon the repentant sinner.**

**d. Justification**

**i. Definition—***This is the legal, divine, supernatural, and instantaneous act whereby God declares the sinner to be absolutely sinless and, at the same time, imputes (=credits) the all of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ to the penitent sinner.*

**ii. Scriptural proof:**

**Romans 5:1-2** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

**Luke 18:14** <sup>4</sup> "I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

**Romans 3:28** <sup>28</sup> For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.

**Romans 8:30** <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

**Galatians 3:24** <sup>24</sup> Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

**Titus 3:7** <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**1 Corinthians 6:11** <sup>11</sup> Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

### iii. The Nature of Justification:

1. Justification is a declarative act of God.
2. God pronounces the sinner righteous, not that He makes the sinner righteous.
3. Justification is not through (by means of, the result of) sanctification (=this is, then, salvation by works).
4. Justification is a FREE gift (Rom 5:16; Eph 2:8-9).
5. Justification is not a mere pardon. When a person is pardoned, the requirements of the law have still NOT been satisfied. A pardoned debt is one that is NOT paid. A pardoned criminal is one who does NOT serve his sentence. BUT IN JUSTIFICATION, GOD HAS PAID THE PENALTY, NOT OVERLOOKED IT OR SET IT ASIDE.

6. Justification is an *eternal* decree. It can never—indeed, it *will* never—be overturned. Those whom God justifies, he promises to glorify. Therefore, **A GENUINE CHRISTIAN CAN NEVER LOSE HIS/HER SALVATION!**

*Have you been justified? Are you declared right with God? If you haven't been justified, then you are not a Christian! If you are a Christian, then you are justified.*

**e. The Reconciliation**

The idea of **reconciliation** belongs to the language describing a **changed relationship**, from enmity to amity, and is directed to the need created by the alienation between God and man.

You were an enemy of God; You are now a friend of God.  
You were once hated by God; You are now eternally loved by God.  
You were once hating God; You are now serving God.  
You were under God's wrath; You are now under God's grace.

*"Reconciliation brings together two parties who were separated by an offense. We are the offenders, God is the offended One. God Himself removed the barrier through the work of Christ" (Brian Morley, TMC Course Notes).*

**2 Corinthians 5:18-19** <sup>8</sup> Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

**IV. The Demands on Your Life because of the Work of Christ**

*This is the application of all that was discussed above. It answers the question, **In light of all the theology and the meaning of Christ's work on the cross, "SO WHAT!"; "what does this have to do with me and my life?"; and "how should I respond?"***

**a. Total Repentance**

**Acts 2:38** <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 3:19** <sup>19</sup> "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

**Luke 13:3** <sup>3</sup> "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

**Have you repented of your sin and turned to Christ? Are you genuinely confessing your sin every day to God? Do you weep over your sin? Do you hate to break God's heart? Does it bother you when you sin?**

**b. Total Faith/Belief/Trust**

**John 11:26** <sup>26</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

**John 3:18** <sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**John 8:24** <sup>24</sup> "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

**Ephesians 2:8-9** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**Compare these with:**

**John 2:23-25** <sup>23</sup> Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. <sup>24</sup> But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, <sup>25</sup> and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

**Horatius Bonar, who wrote the hymn *It is Well with My Soul* wrote:**

"Faith is the acknowledgment of the entire absence of all goodness in us, and the recognition of the cross as the substitute for all the want on our part. The whole work is His, not ours, from first to last."

"However, when salvation is all of grace, then all of your past life, however black and filthy it may be, need not keep you from coming to Jesus. Christ receives sinners. God has elected sinners. He has elected some of the blackest of sinners, so why not you? He receives everyone who comes to Him; He will not cast you out" (Charles Spurgeon).

**Have you placed your total trust in Christ as Lord and Savior? Do you believe in Him?**

### c. Total Commitment

**Matthew 10:37-38** <sup>37</sup> "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. <sup>38</sup> "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

**Matthew 16:24-25** <sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. <sup>25</sup> "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

**Ephesians 5:1-2** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; <sup>2</sup> and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

**Jesus demands that you love Him supremely, live for Him completely, rejoice in Him wholly, and represent Christ accurately.**

### d. Total Obedience

**Colossians 3:12-13** <sup>12</sup> So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

**Do you obey Christ? Do you even read the Bible in order to know what God demands of you and HOW you should obey Him? If not, start reading God's Word today! Are you committed to obeying Him even if that means sacrificing your reputation, your friends, your popularity, your "coolness," your video games, the movies you watch, the TV shows you watch, the friends you hang out with, the parties you go to...?**

### e. Total Reverence

**Matthew 14:33** <sup>3</sup> And those who were in the boat worshiped Him, saying, "You are certainly God's Son!"

**John 9:38** <sup>38</sup> And he said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped Him.

**Hebrews 10:30-31** <sup>30</sup> For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." <sup>31</sup> It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

**f. Total Humility**

- i. You didn't deserve it!
- ii. You didn't do anything to earn it!
- iii. God's grace *did it all!*
- iv. Therefore, God chose you and had pity upon you *simply out of his sheer grace and mercy!*
- v. Praise God!

**God's work on the cross, if you believe in Jesus Christ, was accomplished for YOU and this must produce humility in you as you wonder why Christ would die for YOU!**

**g. Total Hope**

**Acts 24:15** <sup>15</sup> *having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.*

**Romans 8:24-25** <sup>24</sup> *For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?* <sup>25</sup> *But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*

**Hope in Jesus Christ! Long for His return! He is coming quickly. Scripture says we are to watch and be ready for His appearing!**

**Remember, you don't want Jesus to return while you're engaged in a sin (i.e., watching a filthy movie or looking at porn on the internet), so always live in light of the possibility that God could return at any moment—and this will spur you on to live a HOLY and Christlike life!**

## Lesson 6: Salvation (How does a person get saved?)

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### I. Introduction

#### a. Current Stats of “Christians”

- i. From a news article in 2000, *adherents.com* ([http://www.adherents.com/largecom/com\\_christian.html](http://www.adherents.com/largecom/com_christian.html)), it noted that the 10 largest Christian nations in the world are:

	Nation	Population	Percentage Christian
1.	USA (225 million)		85%
2.	Brazil (139 million)		93%
3.	Mexico (86 million)		99%
4.	Russia (80 million)		60%

- ii. **However, they do mention that:** (1) Christianity, as defined for the purpose of census and surveys, includes all those who claim to be Christian; and (2) These numbers also include adherents of different divisions within Christianity, including Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Latter-day Saints, African Indigenous Churches and others.
- iii. So according to this website, **all the above groups** are the same—that is, part of Christianity.

#### b. Jesus' Words for Most 'Christians'

##### i. But Jesus said:

**Matthew 7:13-14** <sup>13</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. <sup>14</sup> "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

**Matthew 7:21-23** <sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup> "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup> "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' (Note context here!)

“The religion pages of major newspapers in our day are filled with advertisements for very kind of sect and false religion, including deviant



forms of Christianity as well as cults and the occult. Many of those groups masquerade as forms of Christianity and claim to teach a new and better gospel. But while purporting to offer spiritual life and help, they instead teach the way of spiritual death and damnation. While claiming to lead people to heaven, they usher them directly into hell" (John MacArthur, *Matthew*, MNTC, 3:354).

**Luke 13:22-28** <sup>22</sup> And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them, <sup>24</sup> "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup> "Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, 'Lord, open up to us!' then He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know where you are from.' <sup>26</sup> "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets'; <sup>27</sup> and He will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.' <sup>28</sup> "In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out.

**Matthew 16:24** <sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.

At a pastor's conference, a well-known theologian and writer said: "Pastors, brothers, we need to come to grips with the fact that most of the people sitting in the pews of our church are unbelievers dressed in sheep's clothing." —**Jerry Bridges**

**\*Therefore, I exhort you who think that you are believers, 2 Corinthians 13:5** <sup>5</sup> Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! **Examine yourself! Test yourself! Make certain you're genuinely saved!**

### c. Exclusivity of Salvation

#### i. There is only one Savior who offers salvation to you! Believe in Him!

**Acts 4:12** <sup>12</sup> "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

**John 14:6** <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

**1 Timothy 2:5-6** <sup>5</sup> For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

**1 Peter 3:18** <sup>18</sup> For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

## **II. Your Need for Salvation**

### **a. You are a Sinner**

**Ecclesiastes 7:20** <sup>20</sup> Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.

### **b. You are Separated from God**

**Isaiah 59:2** <sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.

### **c. You have no Hope apart from God**

**Ephesians 2:12-13** <sup>12</sup> remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. <sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

### **d. You have been offered salvation as a free gift!**

**Romans 3:23-24** <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

**Romans 6:23** <sup>23</sup> For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

## **III. What is Salvation?**

- a. The Definition:** The deliverance that God provides and accomplishes on behalf of the sinner who repents from his sin, believes upon Jesus Christ for eternal life,

and lives a life of submissive obedience to God's Will as revealed in the Scriptures.

- b. **The Savior:** Jesus Christ is the only Savior offered to mankind to save from sin.

**1 Timothy 4:10** <sup>10</sup> For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

- c. **The Means:** The means of salvation is through **faith**.

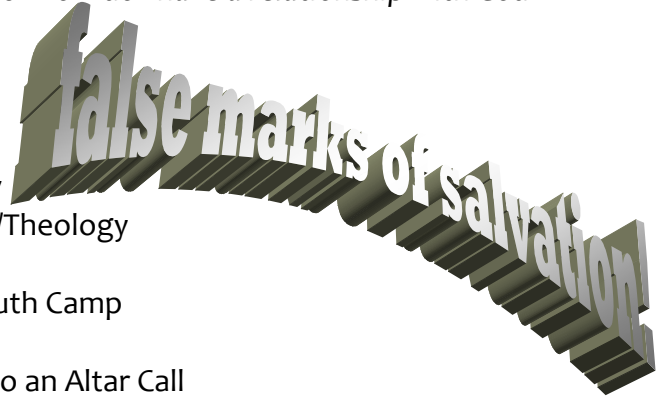
**Romans 4:5** <sup>5</sup> But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

#### IV. How does a person get “saved”?

In other words, how do I get to heaven? or How do I have a relationship with God?

- a. **False Ways of “Getting Saved”**

- i. Going to church
- ii. Reading your Bible
- iii. Growing up in a Godly Family
- iv. Knowing Christian Doctrines/Theology
- v. Filling out a Card
- vi. Going to Summer/Winter Youth Camp
- vii. Praying ‘the prayer’
- viii. Raising a Hand/Responding to an Altar Call



“All of these actions and attitudes listed above—though not inherently bad in and of themselves, in fact, many are good!—are absolutely **unable** of saving a person. They get a person no where with God. Instead of putting a person on better grounds with God; they are plunged deeper into their own pride and self-sufficiency.”

“Often it is because the person who witnessed to (a new Christian) told them that all they ad to do was make a profession of faith, walk an aisle, raise a hand, say a prayer, and never doubt what the Lord had done in their lives. Unfortunately, many evangelists, pastors, and personal workers attempt to certify a person’s salvation apart from the convicting work of the Holy Spirit and the evidence of fruit with continuance in obedience to the Word” (John MacArthur, Matthew 1-7, MNTC, 475).

- b. **The Only Way of Receiving Salvation**  
i. **Repentance of Sin**

**Repentance:** a turning away from sin and its actions and pursuing holiness found in Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 3:2** <sup>2</sup> "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Matthew 4:17** <sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

**Mark 6:12** <sup>12</sup> They went out and preached that men should **repent**.

**Acts 3:19** <sup>19</sup> "Therefore **repent** and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

**Acts 17:30** <sup>30</sup> "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should **repent**,

A person **must** repent and confess his sins to God. He must come to grips that he has offended a perfect God by his sin nature and all of his sinful acts in life. You must come before God broken, begging for forgiveness and mercy—even though you DON'T deserve it!

**If you have never done this**, then you are **NOT** a Christian.

A person who: lives with a mate before marriage, engaged in a homosexual relationship, involved in a sexual relationship outside of marriage, continually disobeys his/her parents with pleasure, disrespects and disobeys authority, cheats in school on tests, homework and neglects the Christian duties habitually (e.g., prayer, reading of the Word, encouragement, church attendance, repentance) **IS NOT** a Christian. Yes, he **cannot** be a Christian, **because...**

**1 Corinthians 6:9-10** <sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

Have you ever **repented** of your sin? Do you still **repent** of your sin?

## ii. Belief in Jesus Christ

**But be careful, this belief is NOT:**

### 1. Mere temporal faith

God, I believe in you because my mom has cancer and I want you to heal her... (this is a short-lived faith cause if/when she is healed, then your faith in God is over. This is a false, temporal faith.)

### 2. Mere intellectual assent

It is not just enough to believe **about** Jesus Christ; to **know** the right things; to **know** the theology. Many people know *about* God.

In fact, **Satan** would win the award before all of us—and he certainly isn't a believer!

*James 2:19* <sup>19</sup> You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

**True belief in Jesus Christ involves an active, ongoing, fervent, and confident trust in God regardless of what happens in life. It's placing yourself wholly on the person and work of Jesus Christ.**

**Saving faith is: trusting in Jesus Christ alone for eternal life. It means resting upon Christ alone and what He has done rather than in what YOU or I have done to get us into heaven.**

*Acts 16:31* <sup>31</sup> They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved,

## V. What are the results of genuine salvation?

*If I could approach **Jesus** and ask Him if YOU evidenced a Christian life by the way that you live, what would He say? In other words, would Jesus confirm that you are a Christian as **shown** and **evidenced** by the way that you live life?*

### a. Introductory Remarks:

- i. There are **many** who “profess” to be believers, but the truth of the matter—as stated by Jesus Himself in the Scriptures—is that *narrow* is the door that leads to life and few are those who find it!
- ii. Additionally, in the New Testament **the way in which** someone may determine as to whether he is a believer or not is **NOT** whether you “believed in Jesus” at some point. **Rather**, the way to determine the

genuineness of someone's conversion is to observe the **life that they are living now**. How are they living? Are they evidencing "the fruit of the Spirit" (cf. Gal 5:22-23)? Are they pursuing Christlikeness and holiness? Are they repenting of and confessing their sins?

- iii. In other words, if you are wondering whether you're a believer, ask someone who knows you real well and say: "How am I living? Do I live like Jesus Christ?" If the answer is **NO**: then believe today and turn to Christ!
- iv. **God never saves someone without sanctifying him. He will never justify someone without purifying them in life. He will never wash someone's sins away without commanding them to walk in holiness and new life.**

**Read James 2:14-26 if you doubt me on this!**

(In this argument, James [Jesus' brother] says: you validate your faith [i.e., your Christian life] by your works; just look at the way you live and that'll tell you if you are a "new Creation in Christ" or not.)

- v. **These marks are not optional! You can't pick some and leave others. If you're a believer, you should be growing in all of these aspects...**

## **b. Marks of Genuine Conversion:**

*Note: you will not have all of these traits perfectly, but I would argue and Scripture affirms that every single trait here **MUST** be present in your life in progressing measure signifying your conversion.*

### **i. Love for Christ**

**John 14:15** <sup>15</sup> "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

**John 14:21** <sup>21</sup> "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

**John 14:24** <sup>24</sup> "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.  
(\*Note\* the boldness here: if you don't obey Jesus, you don't love him and therefore you aren't a believer!)

**Deuteronomy 6:5** <sup>5</sup> "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

**1 Corinthians 16:22** <sup>22</sup> *If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed. Maranatha.*

No one will enter heaven who does not **love** Jesus Christ. Don't think that something magically happens when you die. You don't know when you'll die. Do you love Jesus Christ **now**?

## ii. Hatred of Sin

**2 Corinthians 7:10-11** <sup>10</sup> *For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.* <sup>11</sup> *For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.*

True Christianity requires that we pursue holiness and therefore **hate** sin. **Do you hate it when you sin?**

**\*\*Note\*\*** Be careful here: some people hate their sin because they hate the consequences that it brings (e.g., getting caught doing things with your girlfriend when your dad walks in) **rather than** seeing your sin as, first of all, an affront and reproach to Jesus Christ!

**The more you love Jesus Christ and know Him, the more you will literally despise, hate, and disdain your sin!** (even the little ones!)

## iii. Pursuit of Holiness

**Hebrews 12:14** <sup>14</sup> *Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; **without holiness no one will see the Lord.***

**Romans 15:5-6** <sup>5</sup> *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,* <sup>6</sup> *so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**1 Timothy 4:16** <sup>16</sup> *Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.*

Very simply: do you live a holy life? Are you set apart for Jesus Christ? **(read 1 Cor 6:9-11)**

#### iv. Fervency in Prayer

**1 Thessalonians 5:17-18** <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing; <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

The first and most important aspect of a marriage is **communication** with your spouse. It is similarly the case with our relationship with God. The most important aspect is **communication, prayer, dependence upon God!**

*"A prayerless "Christian" is a deceived Christian and, in fact, a non-Christian."*

#### v. Urgency in Evangelism

**2 Timothy 4:2-5** <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup> But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Another mark of a true believer includes a **passionate** desire to share the gospel with the lost who, if they die *apart* from Christ, will be judged eternally under God's wrath.

#### vi. Membership in Church

**Hebrews 13:17** <sup>17</sup> Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

#### vii. Obedience in Baptism

**Matthew 28:19** <sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

**Acts 2:38** <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### VI. How Should You Share the Gospel?



- a. **Luke 14:25-33 – Jesus’ Call for Discipleship**
  - i. Christ must be supreme relationship!
  - ii. Consider the cost!
  - iii. Be willing to give everything up!
  
- b. **Acts 8:26-38 – Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch**
  - i. Philip obeyed the Spirit.
  - ii. Philip began where the Eunuch was in sharing the gospel with him.
  - iii. Philip preached Jesus to the man.
  - iv. Philip baptized the new convert and exhorted obedience to Christ.
  
- c. **Acts 16:22-34 – Paul and the Philippian Jailer**
  - i. Persecuted for Christ
  - ii. Praising the LORD
  - iii. Preaching about Jesus Christ!
  
- d. **Romans 10:8-17 – Paul and the people in Rome**
  - i. Christ is accessible
  - ii. Believe in Him
  - iii. Confess Him as LORD
  - iv. Share the gospel and let God use YOU to bring others to salvation.

**Therefore, I ask you a very simple question: Are You Saved?  
Genuinely? Does your life verify what your lips speak?**

## Lesson 7: The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit

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### I. Introduction—The Need for This Study

***If I were to give you 2 passages where the Holy Spirit is mentioned in BOTH the OT and the NT—could you do it?***

***In an April 2009 survey entitled: “Survey: Satan and Holy Spirit Only “Symbols”, The Barna Group noted (<http://www.faithnews.cc/2009/04/17/survey-satan-and-holy-spirit-only-symbols/>).***

--Most Christians (58 percent) also do not believe that the Holy Spirit is a living force, strongly agreeing or somewhat agreeing with the statement that the Holy Spirit is “a symbol of God’s power or presence but is not a living entity.” Just 34 percent strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with that statement, while nine percent were unsure.

--“The majority of ‘Christians’ who do not believe the Holy Spirit is a living force shows that there is a great need for a rediscovery in Christendom of what the early Church experienced—namely, salvation!” (=baptism of the Holy Spirit.)

**How said this is! So-called “Christians” don’t even know Who the Holy Spirit is—even though they claim to have been saved by Him! WOW!**

Interestingly, there is even a hospital in Harrisburg, PA called: “*The Holy Spirit Hospital*” (no kidding!). (I wonder if every patient is *always* healed! ☺)

“The person of God the Holy Spirit is absolutely crucial for our understanding. Without a proper understanding of who He is, we will be misguided, misinformed, and incomplete in our understanding of who God is.”

**Consider the importance of the Holy Spirit:** if there were no Holy Spirit, there would be no salvation. If there were no sealing and securing of our salvation, there would be no hope and no assurance whatsoever. God the Holy Spirit is inextricably linked with and unbreakably bound to the doctrine of salvation!

.....  
: “There are several reasons why the study of the Holy Spirit is of special significance :  
: for us. One is that the Holy Spirit is the point at which the Trinity becomes personal :  
: to the believer. We generally think of the father as transcendent and far off in :  
: heaven; similarly, the Son seems far removed in history and thus also relatively :  
: unknowable. But the Holy Spirit is active within the lives of believers; he is resident :  
: within us. The Holy Spirit is the particular person of the Trinity through whom the :  
: entire Triune Godhead works in us!” —Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 846.  
: .....

**II. Who is the Holy Spirit?**  
**a. He is God**

*Why is the Holy Spirit to be **equated with** (or, equal to) God?*

**i. Words and works of the Holy Spirit are considered as the words and works of God**

**Isaiah 6:9** <sup>9</sup> He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.' (cf Acts 28:25-27 where this passage is attributed to the **Holy Spirit**.)

**Genesis 1:27** <sup>27</sup> God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

**Job 33:4** <sup>4</sup> "The Spirit of God has made me, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

**ii. He is called "God"**

**Acts 5:3-4** <sup>3</sup> But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the **Holy Spirit** and to keep back some of the price of the land? <sup>4</sup> "While it remained *unsold*, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to **God**."

**2 Corinthians 3:17** <sup>17</sup> Now the **Lord** is the **Spirit**, and where the **Spirit** of the Lord is, *there* is liberty.

**iii. He has divine names/characteristics attributed to Him**

**a. He Inspires Scripture:**

**2 Timothy 3:16** <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

**2 Peter 1:21** <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

**b. He is Eternal**

**Hebrews 9:14** <sup>14</sup> how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

### c. He is Omnipresent (Everywhere)

**Psalm 139:7-10** <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. <sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, <sup>10</sup> Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me.

**d. He is Omnipotent (All Powerful)**

**Luke 1:35** <sup>35</sup> The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God."

**e. He gives Life** (*no one gives life except God and God alone!*)

**John 6:63** <sup>63</sup> "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

**iv. Church History has always held to the deity (“Godhood”) of the Holy Spirit.**

**Since 325 AD (council of Nicea), the Church has believed:**

*“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.”*

**b. He is a Personal Being**

i. The Holy Spirit is not just a mere influence or divine power.

IF the Spirit can be shown to be directly linked with terms descriptive of personality,  
AND, can be shown to act as a person would act,  
AND, can be shown to be a separate identifiable person in relation with other persons,  
AND, can be shown to be clearly possessing divine attributes,

THEN, there is only one obvious conclusion--

He is a very Important Person, not merely an Impersonal Force!

**ii. Personal Pronouns used of the Spirit (“he,” and “him”)**

**John 14:26** <sup>26</sup> "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He** will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

**John 16:13** <sup>13</sup> "But when **He**, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, **He** will guide you into all the truth; for **He** will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever **He** hears, **He** will speak; and **He** will disclose to you what is to come.

"The explanation is surely that John habitually thought of the Spirit in personal terms, as 'He' rather than 'It'" —Leon Morris, *Spirit of the Living God*, 36.

iii. He has four primary elements of personality:

1. Intellect

**1 Corinthians 2:11** <sup>11</sup> For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

**Isaiah 11:2** <sup>2</sup> The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

2. Sensibilities

**Romans 8:27** <sup>27</sup> and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

**Romans 15:30** <sup>30</sup> Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,

3. Will

**1 Corinthians 12:11** <sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

4. Life

**Romans 8:2** <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

“It is a fundamental revelation of Scripture that the Holy Spirit is a person in the same sense that God the Father is a person and the Lord Jesus Christ is a person” —John Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, 5.

**c. He is a Spirit**

**Genesis 1:2** <sup>2</sup> The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

**Conclusion:**

*All of this leads to one conclusion: the Holy Spirit is a person, not a force, and that person is God, just as fully and in the same way as are the father and the Son” Erickson, Christian Theology, 862).*

**III. What does the Holy Spirit do?**

**a. Had a Part in Creating the World**

- i. **Genesis 1:2** <sup>2</sup> The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters
- ii. **Job 26:13** <sup>13</sup> By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

**As a footnote here:**

- 1. The **Father** Created the World (Gen 1:1; Isa 40:28)
- 2. The **Son** Created the World (Heb 1:1-3; John 1:1-4; Col 1:15-18)
- 3. The **Spirit** Created the World (Job 26:13)

**b. Glorifies Jesus Christ**

**John 16:13-14** <sup>13</sup> "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. <sup>14</sup> "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

In other words, the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to lift up, glorify and show the world who Jesus Christ is. The Holy Spirit does NOT exist for Himself, rather He exists to point the world to the *only* Savior of sin—Jesus!

**c. Indwells Every Believer**

**Romans 8:15** <sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

**Galatians 4:6** <sup>6</sup> Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

God the Holy Spirit ***lives inside of every single*** believer. He is the person in the Godhead who is ***actively involved inside of you*** (literally!) indwelling you!

#### d. Guarantees the Believer's Salvation

**2 Corinthians 1:21-22** <sup>21</sup> Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, <sup>22</sup> who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

Because you have God the Holy Spirit living inside of you, ***He is your seal, your guarantee, your down-payment, your deposit for salvation.*** Salvation is a DONE deal. It's accomplished. It is finished!

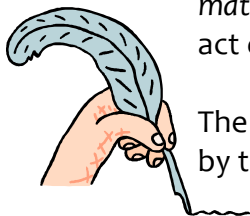
**Romans 8:29-30** <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, ***He also glorified*** (note—past tense here!).

### IV. What is the Holy Spirit's Role in the Writing of Scripture?

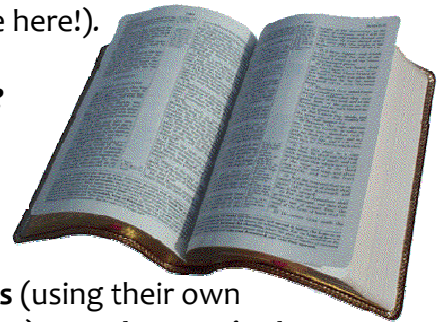
#### a. Inspiration

God wrote the Scriptures ***through human instruments*** (using their own personalities, writing styles, cultures, backgrounds, etc.) ***to make certain that the Scriptures (=writings) are inspired, God-breathed and fully accurate in every way, in every letter, in every book, and in everything it says.***

**2 Peter 1:20-21** <sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the ***Holy Spirit*** spoke from God.



The writers of Scripture **wrote** as they were “moved” (literally: ***carried along***) by the Holy Spirit! That is ***how inspired*** the Bible really is!



*“The Bible bears the fingerprint of God in every single letter, word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, and book.”*

## **b. Internal Testimony**

**Definition:** The **internal witness of the Spirit** that produces a fullness of conviction about the certainty and reliability of Truth, the Word of God, in the mind and heart of the believer.

**In other words, it is God—and GOD ALONE—who testifies to the truthfulness, veracity, authenticity, and inspiration of the Bible.**

When you’re reading, when you’re studying, when you’re at church listening to a sermon, it is GOD the Holy Spirit who is *teaching* you as you hear His Word.

**1 John 2:20** <sup>o</sup> But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know... **1 John 2:27** <sup>27</sup> As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

**1 John 3:24** <sup>24</sup> The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

“God intends that Scripture should function in our lives as His Spirit-illuminated Word. It is the Spirit who opens man's being to a keen personal awareness of God's revelation” —Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:273.

## **V. What is the Holy Spirit’s Role in Salvation?**

### **a. He Convicts the Unbeliever Concerning Sin**

#### **i. He convicts of sin**

**John 16:8** <sup>8</sup> "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;

NOTE: God the Holy Spirit is the one who convicted YOU of your sin and brought you to repentance and salvation in Jesus Christ.



## ii. He regenerates

**John 3:5** <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

*"Regeneration is the miraculous transformation of the individual and implantation of spiritual energy" (Erickson, Christian Theology, 873).*

**Regeneration = Born Again = New Life = Christian = A Believer**

As a Christian, you have been regenerated (=given new life) by God the Holy Spirit!

## b. He Irresistibly Calls Men to Himself

**1 Peter 1:2** <sup>2</sup> according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.

When you heard the Gospel and God wanted to save you, God the Spirit **drew** you to salvation. You could **not** refuse this call. When God calls to save, **no one can refuse it; no one can overcome it; no one can say "NO!" to it.**

## c. He Indwells every Christian

**Ephesians 1:13-14** the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance,

**Romans 8:26** <sup>26</sup> In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

**This means that God the Spirit lives WITHIN YOU as a Christian.**

**1 Corinthians 3:16** <sup>16</sup> Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

## d. He Secures every Christian



**Ephesians 4:30** <sup>30</sup> Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

**Romans 8:11** <sup>11</sup> But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

**Romans 8:14-18** <sup>14</sup> For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*. <sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

## VI. What is the Holy Spirit's Role in Sanctification?

### a. He Comforts every Christian

**John 16:7** Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

The Spirit is the one who *comforts* you, he is your *helper*, your *Advocate*, the one who *counsels* you. There is no greater comforter than God the Spirit—the *Holy Comforter*.

### b. He Guides every Christian

**John 14:26** <sup>26</sup> "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

**John 16:13** <sup>13</sup> "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

### c. He Guards every Christian

**Romans 8:27** <sup>27</sup> and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*.

### d. He Sanctifies every Christian

**1 Corinthians 6:11** <sup>1</sup> Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

**Titus 3:5** <sup>5</sup> He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

**e. He Intercedes for every Christian**

**Romans 8:26-27** <sup>6</sup> In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; <sup>27</sup> and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

**VII. What is the Holy Spirit's Role in the Church?**

**a. He indwells every true believer**

**Ephesians 1:13-14** <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

**b. He brings about unity in the church**

**1 Corinthians 12:7-8** <sup>7</sup> But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. <sup>8</sup> For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

**Ephesians 4:1-3** *Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, <sup>3</sup> being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

**Ephesians 4:4-6** <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

God the Spirit is the one working in the church to bring about unity and Christlikeness.

**VIII. What is the Holy Spirit's Role in the End Times?**

**a. At the Rapture**

**2 Thessalonians 2:6-8** <sup>6</sup> And you know what restrains him [=Spirit] now, so that in his time he will be revealed. <sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he [Spirit] who now restrains *will do so* until he [Spirit] is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup> Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

*When the **restrainer** (who is, the **Holy Spirit**) is removed, then the church has to be removed if the Holy Spirit is dwelling within Christians. In other words, if the Spirit is removed, then we must also be removed. And we know the Spirit is removed **before** the Man of Lawlessness is revealed (=the Antichrist) during the Tribulation.*

**b. During the Tribulation**

**Revelation 7:14** <sup>14</sup> I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Though the Spirit is *removed* at the beginning, he will still **be active** in saving people *during* the Tribulation. There will be many people who are saved by believing in Jesus Christ (though ~~many~~ most of them will be killed for their faith).

**IX. Practical Questions:**

**a. Should we pray to the Holy Spirit?**

**b. Should we seek for repeated baptisms of the Holy Spirit (2<sup>nd</sup> conversions)?**

**c. Should we seek for continual filling of the Holy Spirit?**

**d. Can anyone today commit the "unpardonable sin" (Matt 12)?**

**Practical Conclusions for YOU to apply this week:**

1. 1 Thess. 5:19 – DO NOT quench the Spirit by saying NO and thus disobeying Him – THUS we are to yield to the Spirit
2. Eph. 4:30 – DO NOT grieve him by living like the unsaved – THUS we are to confess
3. Gal. 5:16 – DO walk by Him by His standards – THUS we are to depend upon him
4. Col. 3:16 – DO fill yourself with God's word – THUS we are to be absorbed in it

## Lesson 8: Prayer and the Believer

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### Introduction:

Philippians 4:4-7

*“Division and anxiety mark the church of Jesus Christ today. Denominations, churches, families, and individuals are fragmented, confused, and depressed. A revival of joy is needed, but it must first begin in the heart of a yielded believer”*

Five ways to have a God-honoring life...

### I. Be Joyful in God (4)

#### a. The command

#### b. The continuation

#### c. The repetition

*“People who are very happy, especially those who are very happy in the Lord, are not apt either to give offense or to take offense. Their minds are so sweetly occupied with higher things, that they are not easily distracted by the little troubles which naturally arise among such imperfect creatures as we are. Joy in the Lord is the cure for all discord” —Charles Spurgeon*

### II. Be Gentle to All (5)

#### a. Possess gentleness

What does “gentleness” mean?

#### b. Practice gentleness

### III. Be Anxious for Nothing (6a)

#### a. Anxiety defined

#### b. Anxiety defeated

*“Anxiety is at its core a distrust in God because it is wanting to be in charge rather than letting God be in charge (and resting happily in His sovereignty.”*

## IV. Be Praying in Everything (6b)

Note the 4 words for prayer:

a. Prayer

*“The only divine medicine to the sin of anxiety is outpouring of your heart to God in prayer!”*

b. Supplication

c. Thanksgiving

d. Requests

## V. Be Peaceful in Heart (7)

a. The source of peace

*“Now think about this: If joy rules in your heart, and if gentleness and generosity is shown to everyone you come in contact with, and if there is constant prayer to God above, then the **obvious result is that there will be ABUNDANT PEACE.**” —William Hendriksen*

b. The surpassing nature of peace

c. The safeguard of peace

Conclusion:

## Lesson 9: The Church: Worship and Fellowship

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Introduction:

Ephesians 4:11-16

*“The Church: Worship, Fellowship, and Your Role in It”*

**Get Plugged In!—Grow, Mature, Serve!**

### **I. The Leaders of the Church (11)**

a. Who appoints the leaders? (11a)

b. Who are the leaders? (11b)

c. Who are the leaders today?

### **II. The Purpose of the Church (12)**

*What are the 2 purposes?*

a. Equip the saints for ministry (12a)

b. Build up the body of Christ (12b)

### **III. The Duration of the Church (13)**

*The church exists until we all attain...*

a. Perfect unity

b. Perfect knowledge

c. Perfect maturity

d. Perfect fullness

#### **IV. The Protection of the Church (14)**

a. Don't be immature (14a)

b. Don't be deceived (14b)

#### **V. The Submission of the Church (15-16)**

a. Submit to Christ (15)

b. Serve for Christ (16)

- ***So how do you know your ROLE and your GIFT and HOW you should use it in the church?***
  - *Begin by studying what the Bible has to say about spiritual gifts*
  - *Bathe your thinking, reading, and study in prayer.*
  - *Make a sober assessment of your spiritual strengths and abilities (base it on Scripture, not your “feelings”). Ask questions like: “what am I good at? What do I enjoy? Do I currently use this gift in any way? Are people blessed when I minister in this way?*
  - *Seek the wisdom of other Christians where your gifts are concerned. Ask other believers, pastors, and elders to affirm and confirm your gifts.*



### Concluding questions for thinking and application:

- **What is the Church?**  
(Eph 4; Col 1; Matt 16; Acts 2; 1 Tim 3-4)
- **What is the purpose of the Church?**  
(Eph 4; Col 1; Acts 2:42ff; 1 Tim 3)
- **What marks a good and solid Church?**  
(Acts 2:42; 1 Tim 3-4; 2 Tim 4; Titus 1-3)
- **What are the main activities in church?**  
(1 Tim 4:13)
- **What are the pastor, elders, and deacons all about?**  
(1 Tim 3; Titus 1; 2 Tim 2; 1 Pet 5)

**1 Peter 5:1-5** *Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup> nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. <sup>5</sup> You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.*

## Lesson 10: Spiritual Gifts

Geoffrey R. Kirkland

CCC Youth Group

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

*Romans 12:1-2 – Spiritual Gifts, part 1: “How to Present Your Life as a Life of Worship”*

### Introduction:

**Offer Yourself to God Without Restraint!**

*Tonight I want to offer you 5 ways in which you can present yourself to God so that you will live a life of true worship to God!*

### **I. Depend Upon God’s Mercies (1a)**

a. Recognize your dependence

b. Recognize your abundance

### **II. Sacrifice All You Have (1b)**

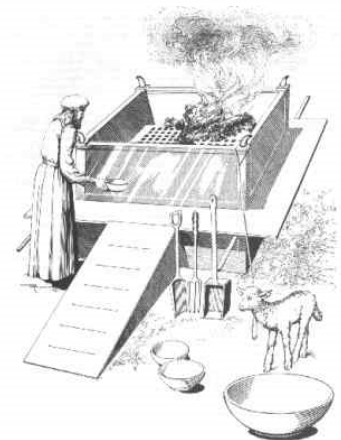
### **III. Reject the World’s Influence (2a)**

*5 practical ways:*

a. Watch your friends!

b. Guard your heart!

c. Examine your life!



d. Confess your sins!

e. Determine your steps!

#### IV. Cultivate the Renewed Mind (2b)

*5 practical ways:*

a. Read God's Word

b. Memorize God's Word

c. Preach God's Word

d. Ponder God's Word

e. Practice God's Word



#### V. Fulfill the Divine Will (2c)

a. God's will is revealed

b. God's will is perfect

#### Conclusion

## Lesson 10: Spiritual Gifts continued...

Geoffrey R. Kirkland

CCC Youth Group

Tuesday, November 3, 2009

**Romans 12:3-8 – “How to Implement Your Spiritual Gift for the Benefit of the Church!”**

### Introduction:

#### I. **Be Humble in Mind!** (3)

i. Don't be proud (3a)

ii. Do be humble (3b)

iii. Do exercise faith (3c)

#### II. **Be Involved in Church!** (4-5)

i. The picture (4)

ii. The principle (5)

#### III. **Be Using Your Gift!** (6-8)

Notice who gives the gifts:

The seven gifts individually:



i. Prophesying—

ii. Serving—

iii. Teaching—

iv. Encouraging—

v. Sharing—

vi. Leading—

vii. Showing Mercy—



**Conclusion:**

*Questions for further discussion and thinking...*

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| I.   | What are Spiritual Gifts?                                     |
| II.  | Do I have any Spiritual Gifts?                                |
| III. | Are ALL the gifts operating today?                            |
| IV.  | Is the gift of “speaking in tongues” for today?               |
| V.   | What if my gifts aren’t as “recognized” as my friends’ gifts? |
| VI.  | What is the purpose of gifts?                                 |

## Lesson 11: Evangelism and the Believer

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### I. What is Evangelism?

- a. **Definition:** *Evangelism is the verbal action by which a believer communicates the gospel to the unsaved.*

Another definition: “to evangelize is to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church.”

#### Different Greek Words for “Evangelizing”:

1. speak the good news – 1 Cor 15:1; Gal 1:8
2. tell (“teach”) the good news – Acts 5:42; 15:35
3. to herald/preach the gospel; invite to fellowship – Rom 10:8-15; 1 Cor 15:11; Acts 10:37
4. to testify, bear witness to – 1 John 1:2
5. to persuade, convince, bring someone to your view – Acts 12:20; 19:26; Matt 27:20
6. to give a short speech, short sermon – Acts 20:11

- b. **Purpose:** *The purpose of evangelism is relaying the saving gospel of Jesus Christ who is the only Savior for sin to the unbeliever in hopes that God the Holy Spirit might awaken their dead heart to believe the gospel, repent, and be saved.*

**NOTE: We should evangelize because missions is the mission of God**

- c. **Result:** *The result of evangelism is **multi-faceted**:*
1. **God is glorified because His Gospel was proclaimed**
  2. **The “evangelist” (one proclaiming the gospel) is a faithful servant.**
  3. **The non-Christian has the opportunity to hear the Word of Christ and believe**

**Romans 10:14** <sup>14</sup> How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

**Romans 10:17** <sup>17</sup> So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

**NOTE:** This means that every gospel presentation **must** have a specific application. In other words, you CALL and EXHORT, and COMMAND, and PLEAD with people to repent and believe upon Jesus Christ! **Call them to respond to what you've just told them!**

**Communicate with a view to convert!**  
**Pray with the intent of persuading!**  
**Speak with the goal of saving!**

**d. Examples:**

**Jesus** – John 3 with Nicodemus (“**Be Born from Above!**”)

**Philip** – Acts 8 with the Ethiopian Eunuch (“**Jesus died for Sins!**”)

**Stephen** – Acts 7 with the Jewish Leaders (“**You Stubborn People—Repent!**”)

**Paul** – Acts 26 to Herod Agrippa (“**I am persuading you—Believe!**”)

*And, love must make the evangelist warm-hearted and affectionate in his evangelism. Love the sinner. Plead with him to repent! Warn him of coming judgment and fire!*



**And, it is the most loving thing to (**ever**) do to warn people of coming hell and future judgment and eternal damnation! If you call yourself a Christian and DON'T care about evangelizing others, don't care about saving their souls, don't care about seeing them repent and be saved, then you probably are NOT a Christian!!**

**II. What is the Purpose of Evangelism?**

**a. Again, missions is the mission of God.**

**b. God is about taking his gospel to the ends of the earth.**

**Psalm 96:1-6** Sing to the LORD a new song; Sing to the LORD, all the earth. <sup>2</sup> Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim good tidings of His salvation from day to day. <sup>3</sup> Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples. <sup>4</sup> For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. <sup>5</sup> For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the

heavens. <sup>6</sup> Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

**Psalm 96:9-13** <sup>9</sup> Worship the LORD in holy attire; Tremble before Him, all the earth. <sup>10</sup> Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity." <sup>11</sup> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and all it contains; <sup>12</sup> Let the field exult, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy <sup>13</sup> Before the LORD, for He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness And the peoples in His faithfulness.

**c. We should evangelize to be OBEDIENT to our God and Savior!**

**2 Timothy 4:5** <sup>5</sup> But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

**So if we know this command to “do the work of an evangelist,” and we have no option of NOT obeying because...**

**John 14:15** <sup>15</sup> "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

Therefore, **we must obey and be “evangelists” – sharing the gospel!**

**1 Peter 3:15-16** <sup>15</sup> but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; <sup>16</sup> and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

**III. If God is Sovereign, Why Evangelize?**

Many people ask, if you believe God saves someone, God predestines and elects someone to salvation, then WHY share the gospel? In other words, if salvation is ALL God's Work, why should I evangelize?

If they're going to get saved, then God will save them—I don't need to evangelize! Right?



**WRONG! This is sinful and anti-biblical thinking! Nothing could be more disgraceful to Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation!**

**a. God is Absolutely Sovereign Over Everybody's Salvation**



1. God saves (2 Timothy 1:9)
2. God draws (John 6:44)
3. God elects (2 Thessalonians 2:14)
4. God predestines (Ephesians 1:3-4)
5. God calls (Romans 8:29-30)
6. God gives faith to believe in Him (Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 1:29)

**b. Man has a Responsibility to Believe in Jesus Christ**

1. Repent! (Matthew 4:17)
2. Believe! (Acts 16:31)
3. Turn! (Acts 14:15)
4. Confess! (Philippians 2:11)

**c. Christians Also have a Responsibility to Share the Gospel**

**Note these verses: Read them!**

2 Timothy 4:5

Acts 1:8

Matthew 10:7

Acts 10:42

1 Corinthians 1:17

1 Corinthians 9:16

*“According to the Bible, all believers have received this commission... It’s clear too, from all the talk of persecution in the New Testament that the earliest Christians didn’t try to keep their religion a secret, even though sharing it brought consequences” (Dever, Gospel & Personal Evangelism, 47-48).*

**d. How do they reconcile?**

**We must** pray for the salvation of people, we must preach as if their salvation depended on us, we must call them to repentance and urge them to believe as if they were going to die today; **yet knowing that Jesus Christ is totally sovereign over their salvation and He will save them if He wants!**

**We are the vessel, the instrument, and the MEANS that GOD uses to bring the gospel to them!**

*“We must remember that God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility are taught us side by side in the same Bible; sometimes, indeed, in the same text” (Packer, Evangelism & The Sovereignty of God, 22).*

**Luke 22:22** <sup>22</sup> "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"

**Acts 2:23** <sup>3</sup> this Man [=Jesus], delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

**Therefore**, they must be held together (as friends), and not played off against each other (as enemies). Man is a responsible moral agent, though he is *also* divinely controlled; man is divinely controlled, though he is *also* a responsible moral agent. God's sovereignty is a reality, and man's responsibility is a reality too. This is the revealed antinomy ("apparent" contradiction) in terms of which we have to do our thinking about evangelism (see Packer, *Evangelism*, 23).

**Well**, you ask, how do they reconcile since they both *can't* be true? They *can't* be true? Are you sure? **Spurgeon was asked: if he could try to reconcile divine sovereignty and human responsibility and he answered:** "I wouldn't even try, I never reconcile friends!"

#### IV. How should the Christian Evangelize?

Share the *whole* gospel:

1. Man's sin and need for a Savior
2. God and His infinite holiness and justice
3. Jesus Christ and His death *in the place of sinners* who believe
4. Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead (proving His power!)
5. Repentance, faith, and a LIFE of obedience.
6. Obedience and fruit-bearing as the Christian grows and matures.

Finally, the Christian should evangelize with **urgency**. "We must emphasize the urgency with which people ought to repent and believe if they will be saved. They must decide now. They certainly shouldn't wait until a "better deal" comes along. People might be careful enough with their money to wait to sign up for a cell phone plan. But there's no point here in waiting for a better offer of forgiveness... It's not manipulative or insensitive to bring up the urgent nature of salvation. It's simply the truth. The time of opportunity will end! (Dever, *Gospel & Personal Evangelism*, 57-58).

#### V. Why ~~Don't~~ **Can't** My Friends Believe When I Evangelize?

See 1 Corinthians 2:14-16.

1. A natural man (“unspiritual” → **nonbeliever!**) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. He doesn’t care about them!
2. The spiritual things are *foolishness* to the nonbeliever!
3. **Note:** He cannot understand them. The nonbeliever *cannot* fully comprehend and understand the spiritual things of God’s Word.
4. The nonbeliever *cannot* understand the spiritual truths because they are spiritually dead!
5. But the spiritual one (“the Christian” → **believer!**) CAN and DOES understand spiritual things because we have the “mind of Christ”

**Question:** Why don’t my friends believe?

**Answer?** ***Because God hasn’t opened their eyes yet. So keep preaching. Keep praying. Keep evangelizing. Keep warning them of judgment and pleading with them to believe! LISTEN: it is THE most loving thing YOU COULD EVER DO!***

Listen, no one can ever believe the gospel until **God** opens their eyes to see the glories of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness He alone can offer.

## VI. What Is the Proper Christian Attitude Towards Evangelism?

*Pray! Prayer is confessing your powerlessness and need, it is an acknowledging of helpless and dependence, and an invoking of the mighty power of God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves—save someone! In evangelism, we depend wholly upon God to make our witness effective ... these facts ought to drive us to prayer! (Packer, Evangelism, 122).*

Preach as if their salvation depended upon you! Pray as if their salvation wholly depended on God. **And do both—preach and pray; trust and talk; speak to God and speak to others!**

**But remember:** “According to the Bible, converting people (=saving people) is not in our power. And evangelism may not be defined in terms of result but only in terms of faithfulness to the message preached” (Dever, Gospel, 79).

**One more quote will suffice:**

“Evangelism is not persuading people to make a decision; it is not proving that God exists, or making out a good case for the truth of Christianity; it is not inviting someone to a meeting; it is not exposing the contemporary dilemma, or arousing interest in Christianity; it is not wearing a badge saying ‘Jesus Saves’! Some of these things may be right and good in their place, but *none of them should be confused with evangelism*. To evangelize is to declare on the authority of God what he has done to save sinners, to warn men of their lost condition, to direct them to repent, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ!”

—John Cheeseman, *Saving Grace*, quoted in Dever, *Gospel*, 80.

**Matthew 28:18-20—“Evangelism—What Is it? Why Do it? What Is the Result?”**

**Share the Gospel! Call people to Repent! God is With You!**

**I. Your God Possesses the Greatest Authority (18)**

*4 truths about Jesus’ authority:*

1. Extent
2. Power
3. Pervasiveness
4. Possession

**II. Your God Presents the Greatest Assignment (19-20a)**

1. The mandate

2. The method

*3 requirements:*

- i. Go Out!
- ii. Baptize Believers!
- iii. Teach Obedience!

**III. Your God Promises the Greatest Assurance (20b)**

1. Who will be with us?

2. How long will he be with us?

**2 great sources to get *if possible* on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) for *under \$10*.**

1. Mark Dever, *The Gospel & Personal Evangelism* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007).
2. J.I. Packer, *Evangelism & the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1991).

## Lesson 12: Obedience

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### “NOT EVERYONE WHO CLAIMS TO BE A CHRISTIAN REALLY IS!”

#### I. What is Obedience to God?

**Clarification:** This whole Bible study today is not about whether one is saved by faith alone or by faith *plus* works! **That is not the point at all! Rather, the point today is: what is the nature of true saving faith?** Again, works cannot ever merit someone’s salvation—no one is advocating that.

Salvation is all God’s work (**none of our human works do anything** to achieve salvation!):

**Titus 3:5** <sup>5</sup> *He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,*

- a. **Definition:** *the gospel call to faith presupposes that sinners must repent of their sin and yield to Christ's authority. And this yielding to Jesus Christ's authority evidences itself in a life of good works. This is an essential element in the sanctification of the believer!*

- b. **Need:**

It is a reality for every believer.

“Real faith, saving faith, is all of me (mind, emotions, and will) embracing all of Him (Savior, Advocate, Provider, Sustainer, Counselor, and Lord God)”  
(MacArthur, *Clarifying Lordship Debate*, Part 1, 3).

**True salvation consists of salvation which includes repentance.**

**Acts 2:38** <sup>38</sup> *Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins;*

**Acts 17:30** *God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,*

**2 Peter 3:9** <sup>9</sup> *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

**But why is this an issue? Here’s why...**

**The (true) story is told:** “This view is so popular that recently when I was doing a Bible conference at one of the major Christian institutions in America, a man spoke to the student body every day for the week, as I did as well, he said to them, “The point at which you really become a disciple, the point at which you really make Christ Lord of your life usually comes some time in your thirties (!).” And I was shocked, to put it mildly, that he had just basically told a group of young people to put their spiritual commitment on hold until they reached their thirties. He was holding to a view that it's enough to accept Jesus as Savior, take your forgiveness, take your guarantee of heaven and then live any way you want until you come to some crisis point, hopefully sooner than later, when you make Christ Lord.”

## II. Who Can Obey God?

### a. Only true believers can please God (\*\*Romans 8:6-8)

“Apart from grace none of us can do anything good in the sight of God” Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord*, 316).

**NOTE:** “Unbelievers often contribute to the betterment of society ... these ‘good’ deeds do not please God, however, because it is altogether devoid of a few essential marks:

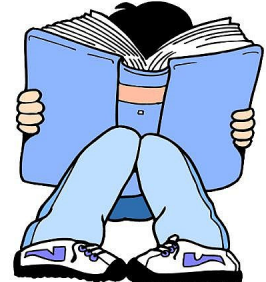
1. They come from a heart not purified by faith in Jesus Christ
2. They are not done in a right manner, according to the Word of God
3. They do not have the proper motive, the glory of God, and are therefore sinful and cannot please God.

### b. Only true believers can know God

—see Philippians 3:10; Ephesians 3:17-19

### c. Only true believers can love God

—see Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 16:22; 1 John 4:19



So, “the crucial issue for lordship salvation is not merely authority and submission, but the affections of the heart. Jesus as Lord is far more than just an authority figure; He's also our highest treasure and most precious companion. We obey Him out of sheer delight” (MacArthur, *Clarifying the Lordship Debate*, part 1, 4).

**\*Jonathan Edwards wrote:** “The more a true saint loves God with a gracious love, the more he desires to love Him, and the more uneasy is he at his lack of love to Him; the more he hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and laments that he has so much remaining love to it; the more he mourns for sin, the more he longs to mourn for sin; the more his heart

is broke, the more he desires it should be broke: the more he thirsts and longs after God and holiness, the more he longs to long, and breathe out his very soul in longings after God” (The Religious Affections, 303).

**d. Only true believers can understand God’s Word**

—see 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

**Conclusion: Romans 14:23** and whatever is not from faith is sin. **Therefore, whatever is not from faith is sin.**

**III. How Does Someone Obey God?**

What does true obedience look like?

**a. Is it outward?**

**Look at Matthew 23:25-26 and how Jesus noted people with “outward righteousness”:**



**Matthew 23:25-28, 33** <sup>25</sup> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. <sup>26</sup> "You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. <sup>27</sup> "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> "So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness... <sup>33</sup> "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?"

**b. Is it a matter of the heart?**

It must come from a heart that loves God:

**1 Corinthians 13:1-3...**

“We learn from this passage that love is not only necessary for good works but also sufficient; that is, if our act is motivated by a true love for God and neighbor, then we are truly obeying God and pleasing God” (cf. Frame, *Salvation Belongs to the Lord*, 316).

Many people do good works, but the **motive** is wrong or sinful. If the motive for good works is **anything** other than bringing glory to God, it is **SINFUL**.

“Seeking the glory of God is a necessary condition of good works” (Frame, 317).

#### IV. How Important Is Obedience to God?

***\*\*It is crucial and important to do good works as believers because...***

1. God created us for this purpose (Ephesians 2:10)
2. When Jesus died, we died to sin; when he rose, we rose to righteousness. We are one with Christ in his death and resurrection. So, we should **live in accord with this new life, given to us by God's grace when we rose with Christ!**  
→see Romans 6:1-23; Romans 7:4
3. The fact that God **commands** us to obedience should be sufficient enough to place an obligation upon us. We should need no other incentive.  
→see Luke 9:23;
4. It is important because we who are truly believers are **children of God** and as a child longs to make his daddy happy, so **true believers must long to make their Heavenly Father happy!**  
→see Jeremiah 17:7-8;
5. Because believers have God the Holy Spirit living in them, we **must** walk in holiness and NOT gratify the sinful lusts of our flesh.  
→see Galatians 5:16-18; Romans 8:1-17

#### V. What Does this Obedience Look Like?

Don't be man-pleasers but worship Jesus Christ **from the heart**

***Ephesians 6:6*** *doing the will of God from the heart.*

It will be a life characterized by bearing fruit and repenting:

**John the Baptist said:**

**Matthew 3:8, 10** <sup>8</sup> "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance; ...<sup>10</sup> "The axe is already laid at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

The true faith in Jesus Christ will produce a life of obedience characterized by a **changed life**.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** <sup>17</sup> Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.



*“Real faith, he says, will produce righteous behavior. And the true character of saving faith may be examined in light of the believer's works” (MacArthur, “Faith According to James,” JETS 33, no. 1 [March 1990]: 16-17).*

**James 1:22** <sup>22</sup> But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves (see also James 1:23-27).

**James 2:14** <sup>14</sup> What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?

**James 2:19** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

*If the demons believe, tremble and are not saved, what does that say about those who profess to believe and do not even tremble? (cf. Isa 66:2, 5).*

**NOTE:**

*“Those with genuine faith follow Christ (John 10:27), love their brothers (1 John 3:14), obey God's commandments (1 John 2:3; John 15:14), do the will of God (Matt. 12:50), abide in God's Word (John 8:31), keep God's Word (John 17:6), do good works (Eph. 2:10), and continue in the faith (Col. 1:21-23; Heb. 3:14). In contrast, easy-believism teaches that although some spiritual fruit is inevitable, that fruit might not be visible to others and Christians can even lapse into a state of permanent spiritual barrenness.”*

*—John MacArthur, An Introduction to Lordship Salvation, Part 1, 2.*

**Questions for Discussion:**

- I. **What about someone who claims to know God yet lives an ungodly life.**
  - i. **1 John 2:19**

*“True grace is more than just a giant freebie, opening the door to heaven in the sweet by and by, but leaving us to wallow in sin in the bitter here” (MacArthur, Clarifying Lordship Debate, part 2, 3).*

Simply put, if you don't obey God, then you don't love God. Because Jesus said:

**John 14:15** <sup>15</sup> *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

**1 John 5:3** <sup>3</sup> *For this is the love [for] God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.*

**1 John 2:4-6** <sup>4</sup> *The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; <sup>5</sup> but*

whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: <sup>6</sup> the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

**II. What about someone who was a pastor and walked away from the faith?**

- i. 1 John 2:19
- ii. Matt 7:21
- iii. Jeremiah 14:14-15\*

*In other words, can a true Christian “backslide”? Certainly true Christians can and sometimes do backslide for a short time (a time of spiritual dullness or disobedience). **But**, if a person backslides in the sense of a perpetual (continuous) state of willful rejection and rebellion or ungodly indifference to God and His Word, then this is a sign of a **false** profession and a **deceived** nonChristian who thinks he’s a Christian (Matt 7:21-23; 1 John 3:4-10).*

**III. What about YOU if YOU’RE not living an obedient life NOW?**

- i. John 14:15
- ii. 1 John 3:4-10
- iii. 1 John 3:24

**RIGHT  
HERE  
RIGHT  
NOW!**

*“1.2 billion people say they're Christians. Do you believe that? Believe 1.2 billion people in the world are Christian? A Gallop poll, one third of all Americans are Christians. You know what that tells me? Millions of people are deceived...millions of people are deceived. One of these writers said, "If we accept the fact that you must take Jesus as Lord to be saved, then only a few people will really be saved!" and an exclamation point. Well, isn't that exactly what Jesus said? "The gate is narrow and...what?...few thereby that find it" (Mac, Lordship of Christ Intro, 7).*

**IV. The test in the Bible for determining whether someone is a believer is present OBEDIENCE to God.**

- i. 1 Corinthians 5:11-13
- ii. 1 John 5:20
- iii. Matthew 18:15-17

*When believers sin, they dishonor Christ (1 Cor. 6:15-17), they grieve the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30), and they subject themselves to the discipline of a loving Father (Heb. 12:5-7).*

**But**, *If they can continue in sin without experiencing divine discipline, something is terribly wrong, as Hebrews 12:8 explains: "If you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons."*

V. It begins with baptism; honoring your parents; working hard and doing well in school; being humble and not proud; making church a priority; sharing your faith with others.

- i. Matthew 19:21; Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22
- ii. Matt 28:19-20 (baptism)
- iii. Colossians 3:20 (obey your parents)
- iv. Colossians 3:17, 23; 1 Corinthians 10:31 (do everything for God)
- v. Hebrews 10:24-25 (make church a priority)
- vi. 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (share your faith)

**Question:**

***What about those who grew up in godly homes, went to Christian school, went to youth group, and then are now living in blatant sin, a party-life, a homosexual, and refusing to repent and refusing to believe?***

**Answer:**

*“We maintain that those who denounce the faith never had true faith in the first place (regardless of how “godly or holy” they once seemed). They may have been among believers, but they were not one of them ... true believers remain in the faith and in the Church! They endure to the end. It is certainly possible for a believer to defect for a time, but, like Peter or John Mark—who both had temporary lapses in their faith—in the end they WILL repent and return.”*

—Jay Adams, “Perseverance of the Saints,” in *After Darkness, Light: Essays in Honor of RC Sproul*, 179-80.

VI. Well, what if a friend of mine (OR ME!) is living like a NonChristian and claiming to be a Christian? How should I respond? How do I know how to treat them?

- i. Follow God’s steps in Matthew 18:15-18

*“If you have a friend or loved one whose lifestyle seriously discredits his or her profession of faith, I suggest you speak frankly to that person about your concerns. Certainly we have the Lord's own warrant for that in Matthew 18:15-20. If you carefully and lovingly follow the steps Jesus outlined in that passage you will soon know whether to treat the person as a brother or sister in Christ, or as “a Gentile and a tax-gatherer” (v. 17). Either way, your attitude toward the person is not to be judgmental, but loving and compassionate” (MacArthur, Common Questions About Lordship, Part 2, 3).*

**3 JOHN 1:11 “DO NOT IMITATE EVIL, BUT IMITATE GOOD. REMEMBER THAT THOSE WHO DO GOOD PROVE THAT THEY ARE GOD'S CHILDREN, AND THOSE WHO DO EVIL PROVE THAT THEY DO NOT KNOW GOD.” (NLT)**

## **Matthew 7:15-20:**

*Insights Gleaned from this passage:*

1. **NonChristians look good on the outside but inside they are destructive (15a)**  
(keyword: *Hypocrites*)
2. **You will discern a true Christian by the way he lives his life (16, 20) (keyword: Obedience)**
3. **True Believers cannot live patterns of sinful lives (16b, 18) (keyword: Repentance)**
4. **The fruit a person bears is outward evidence of the spiritual condition (17, 19)**  
(keyword: *Fruitbearing*)
5. **Every person not bearing spiritual fruit will be cut off and thrown into hell (19b)**  
(keyword: *Seriousness*)
6. **Many people *think* they're going to heaven but, in fact, are headed for hell (21a)**  
(keyword: *Deceived Ones*)
7. **The one who enters heaven proves his spiritual condition by his good works (21b)**  
(keyword: *Transformation*)
8. **Many do *spiritual* things for God and are involved in *spiritual* things but end up in hell (22-23) (keyword: Works-Salvation)**

## Lesson 13: God's Will and Guidance

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### Introduction:

**2 Peter 1:3-4** "...seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises..."

### I. What is God's Will?

#### a. Introduction:

- i. This is such an important section because **God's will** is revealed in the Scriptures.
- ii. In other words, Scripture is **replete** (full) of references to God's will.
- iii. *Tonight's study answers the question: **WHAT** is God's will and **HOW** do I find out what it is for me and my life?*

#### b. Definitions:

##### i. Two wills of God:

##### 1. God's Prescriptive Will (his determined will)

This prescriptive will is the **sovereignty of God**. Nothing **ever** happens outside of *this* will.

This is God's absolute right to do all things according to his own good pleasure (Dan 4:25; Rom 9:15-23; 1 Tim 6:15; Rev 4:11)

This is God's perfect and sovereign plan that can *never* be shaken, changed, thwarted, tricked, or failing.

In other words, **God's sovereign will shall always be accomplished! Period.**

For example, God's will is that **true believers** enter eternal life, **and this is his prescriptive will and it will happen.**

**James 1:18** <sup>18</sup> In the exercise of His **will** He brought us forth by the

word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

**The practical outworking of God's sovereignty (that is, God's involvement in our lives in a sovereign way) is called providence.**

**“Providence** emphasizes a divine ordering and regulation of the world and history toward a positive goal, predestination emphasizes a divine predetermination of human destiny in conformity with an eternal plan. God “foreordains” according to his design and purpose; he chooses and elects according to his counsel and will (2 Chron 19:7; Rom 11:15; Prov 16:4; Rom 9:18, 20-24; Gen 50:20).”

## **2. God's Permissive Will (his desirous will)**

God's *permissive* will is what God **wishes** would happen, but it does not trump his prescriptive and decretive will.

For instance: God *wills* (=“wishes”) that everyone be saved. But **obviously**, this does not happen, nor can it happen. Billions of people have died without Jesus Christ and have ended up in eternal judgment in hell.

**1 Timothy 2:3-4** <sup>3</sup> *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,* <sup>4</sup> *who **desires** all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

But God, in His infinite love and mercy, could *desire* that all humans enter the glory of heaven and not suffer under His righteous and just anger forever.

It is God's *desirous* will that everyone is **sexually pure**, yet that doesn't always happen (see 1 Thess 4:3).

### **ii. Two Greek words for “Will”**

#### **1. Thello – I wish, I desire, I could only hope...**

This word expresses more of the desire of God (→ 1 Tim 2:4)

2. *Boulamai* – I determine, I decree it to happen, I declare, I order something...

This word expresses the decreative, determined, nothing-can-shake-it will of God (→James 1:18)

**c. Reasons:**

**i. The topic within Scripture**

1. Moral decisions

**Sexual purity:**

**1 Thessalonians 4:3** <sup>3</sup> *For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;*

2. Difficult decisions

**Obeying government:**

**1 Peter 2:13-15** <sup>13</sup> *Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, <sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. <sup>15</sup> For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.*

**ii. The relevance to our daily living**

1. **NOTE:** God's will is *directly* related to YOUR moral decisions: lying, cheating, stealing, immorality, adultery, sinful divorce, cursing, murder, rape, abortion, abuse, deceit, etc.
2. What about this common question? *Should we lie as long as the situation occasions it??* **No! It is absolutely wrong to lie!**

**IT IS NEVER GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IF IT CAUSES YOU TO SIN!  
NEVER—EVER!**

**II. Where is God's Will Found?**

**a. Must be a Christian to Rightly Interpret/Understand the Bible**

"It is Holy Spirit's role is to convict, teach and conform us—all through the vehicle of the Word of God (John 16:8; 17:17)"

See 1 Corinthians 2:14-17

## b. The Bible

“The insistence of Jesus and the Old Testament writers was **NOT** on the importance of discovering the will of God, but *always upon the necessity of doing it*. It was as if they took for granted that we would know what we were to do (revealed will). The battle for us seems to be in the diligent study of His revealed will (2 Tim. 2:15), the application of it (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jas. 1:19-27), along with the proper motivation (Ps. 1:2; 40:8; 119:16, 24, 35, 47, 70, 77, 174)” (Dr. Street, *Advanced Biblical Counseling Syllabus*, 39).

“The Bible must be our standard. Whenever we are confronted with a question about Christian practice, we must apply the teaching of the Bible. Sometimes the Bible will deal with it directly, and we must go by its direct teaching. Often the Bible will not deal with it directly, and then we must look for general principles to guide us. It does not matter what other people think. Their behavior is not a standard for us. But the Bible is a standard for us, and it is by the Bible that we must live.”

—J.C. Ryle, *Walking with God*

## c. Prayer

**Always** and continually pray for wisdom!

**James 1:5** <sup>5</sup> *But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

**Colossians 1:9** <sup>9</sup> *For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,*

## d. Obedience

If God reveals the **obvious** answer in the Bible, the issue is a matter of obedience.

**For example:**

- if someone wants to marry a NON-Christian (2 Cor 6:14-28; 1 Cor 7:39)
- if someone wants to drink and get drunk at a party (Eph 5:18; Prov



20:1)  
--if someone wants to gossip and slander and make fun of others (Eph 4:29)

e. Trust

See Psalm 25 below (esp. vv.1, 5).

III. How do I know God's Will?

a. Will God Speak?

- i. We find the revealed will of God in the 66 canonical books of the Bible and not holy hunches, subjective feelings, mystical experiences, or goose-bump leadings

Note this:

- ii. When a person says: "***GOD TOLD ME I SHOULD ...***" there are 3 problems here:
  1. 1<sup>st</sup> – ***they are lying*** – God doesn't tell us those things (Deut 29:29; Rev 22:18-20)
  2. 2<sup>nd</sup> – ***they are stealing*** – they are wanting to know God's sovereign will when God has revealed his moral will (Deut 29:29)
  3. 3<sup>rd</sup> – ***they are taking God's name in vain*** (cf. Ex 20) – they are invoking God's name by saying "God told me..." in order to excuse their decision.
- iii. **Remember this:** God holds us fully responsible to search out and follow His preceptive will (God's written Word) in all of life (2 Tim. 2:15).

b. Does God even Know what will happen?

**Yes! In fact, everything that happens is part of God's decretive will** (in His infinite wisdom and knowledge it is!).

**No one is ever outside of God's decreed plan** (Lam. 3:37-38; Rom. 8:28-29)

**Before something happens, you only have God's revealed will** (as found in the Bible) to go by (which is enough); and, it isn't until *after* the situation happens or occurs that you learn what God's decretive will is.

- c. What about those things not *specifically* touched upon in Scripture (who to marry, etc.)?

- i. **Remember:** What is not directly addressed in Scripture concerning a specific decision is covered by broader theological principles

**God has given good things for us to enjoy in life. So, enjoy them! Just be wise in what you do; honor God in what you do; and know that God will judge you for what you do...**

**Ecclesiastes 5:18** <sup>18</sup> *Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting: to eat, to drink and enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward.*

**Ecclesiastes 11:9** <sup>9</sup> *Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things.*

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** <sup>13</sup> *The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person.*  
<sup>14</sup> *For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.*

#### **IV. Biblical decision Making—A Sample Plan**

*So how do you do it? How do you make a good and God-honoring decision?*

##### **Summary of Principles for Decision Making:**

- In situations where the Bible directly addresses your decision, it is to be obeyed
- In situations where there is NO direct or indirect principle or command, you are free and responsible to choose your behavior.
- In situations that you have NO bearing on biblical morality, you are responsible to STILL make a wise decision
  - Ask yourself: “what’s the wisest (and most God-honoring) thing I can do?”
- In all situations you are to humbly submit, in advance, to God’s sovereign will as it affects the outcome of each of your decisions.

*But when Scripture does not explicitly tell you what to do, here are some principles you can follow in making a good and God-honoring decision...*

## Questions to ask yourself in seeking to make a decision on an issue...

1. Is it my primary desire to please and glorify God?
2. Do I have any sinful desires involved?
3. Do I recognize that God is absolutely sovereign?
4. Will I cause another brother ("Christian") to stumble?
5. Will I have a clean conscience if I do this?
6. How can I honor God while I perform this action?

Therefore, check out this great conclusion:

*"God's will is that you be saved, Spirit-filled, sanctified, submissive, and suffering. God's Word makes all this clear ... If you are doing all five of the basic things, do you know what the next principle of God's will is? Do whatever you want! If those five elements of God's will are operating in your life, who is running your wants? God is! The psalmist said, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart (Ps 37:4). God does not say He will fulfill all the desires that are there. He says He will put the desires there. If you are living a godly life, He will give you the right desires."*

—John MacArthur, *Found: God's Will*, 57–58

## Psalm 25 – How to Find Guidance from God:

- I. Focus on God (1-3)
- II. Ask from God (4-7)
- III. Trust in God (8-11)
- IV. Fear only God (12-15)
- V. Rest in God (16-22)

The **faithfulness** of God (no one will be put to shame, v.3).  
The **truthfulness** of God (his paths are paths of truth, v.4-5).  
The **salvation** of God (God is Savior, v.5).  
The **mercy and love** of God (which are from old, v.6, 10)  
The **goodness and uprightness** of God (v.8)  
The **forgiveness** of God (v.11)  
The **wisdom** of God (he counsels His people, v.14).  
The **graciousness** of God (v.16)  
The **power** of God (to rescue his people (v.15)  
The **protection** of God (God delivers his people (v.20)

**THE WAY OF GOD IS FOUND IN THE WORD OF GOD!**

Another memorable way to find guidance from God from Psalm 25:

- a. Acknowledge You need guidance (1-3)
- b. Acknowledge God has the answer (3-7)
- ➔ **c. Acknowledge The Character of God (8-11)**
- b' Acknowledge God has the answer (12-15)
- a' Acknowledge You need guidance (16-22)

**Conclusion:**