

GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD BIBLE GUIDES

E. H. “Jack” Sequeira



Study #1

Why We Need a Saviour

The world today is troubled. Men and women everywhere are seeking the solution to their insurmountable problems — personal, social, national, and international. Underneath it all is a longing to know the real meaning of life and the destiny to which it leads.

Where did the world come from, and how did life begin? Why are men continually at war, and why is there so much hatred between various races and ethnic groups? Is there no hope for lasting peace in this world of ours? Why is human nature torn between ideals and actions, between hope for something better and the perverse inclination to do something worse?

Unaided by some power outside of itself, humanity has never been able to find a satisfactory answer to these questions. But there is hope! Implanted in every heart is a desire to worship

some higher power, a desire after God. And God has the answers.

The purpose of this Bible course is to lead men and women to God and to His message of salvation. Discover for yourself how much He longs to bring peace, hope, and joy into your life. Listen as God speaks to you from His Word and tells you how He “so loved the world that he gave us his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16, NIV)

Because sin is a deceiver many have been misled into thinking they can save themselves by their own good works. But the Bible is clear, “by observing the law no one will be justified” (Galatians 2:16 NIV). The Jews of Christ’s day made the tragic mistake of thinking that they could be saved by keeping the law. It is for this reason Jesus said unto them: “Come unto me all you that labor and are very discouraged and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Man’s only hope of salvation is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But before we can rejoice in this good news of salvation, we must first come to grips with our sin problem. Once we lose all confidence in ourselves, we will accept with open arms God's incredible gift of salvation in Christ. In this first lesson we are going to discover what the Bible has to say about the universal sin problem, as a prerequisite to appreciating the good news of the gospel. It is only when the night is darkest that the stars shine their brightest. Likewise, to fully appreciate the glorious truth of the gospel, we must view it against our total depravity.

1. Who created man and for what purpose?

Genesis 1:26

2. What did God do after he formed man out of the dust of the ground?

Genesis 2:7

Note: The word life in this text is in the plural form in the original Hebrew Bible. God breathed into man “the breath of lives.” This is because God created all men in that one man. That man was called Adam, which means mankind.

3. How did God create woman and with what material was she made?

Genesis 2:21-24

Note: The Bible tells us that God created this world by “the word of His mouth,” except for man and woman. Adam (mankind) was formed by the hands of God out of the dust; and Eve, which means mother of all, was formed out of Adam’s rib. According to the Bible, the whole human race, of which we are all members, is the multiplication of Adam’s one life. (see Acts 17:26)

4. What was Adam not allowed to eat, after God had placed him and his wife in the beautiful garden of Eden?

Genesis 2:16,17

Note: Because God created man with a free will, He placed him under a law by which his loyalty to God could be tested. The penalty of failing this test was death, good-bye to life.

5. Since all humanity was created in Adam, how many were affected by Adam's sin?

Romans 5:12

Note: When Adam sinned it implicated the whole world. Since the Fall took place before Adam had any children, the whole human race was

in him when he sinned. While all of mankind suffer the consequences of Adam's original sin, God does not hold the human race guilty of that sin.

6. Although the judgment of condemnation to death came to everyone as a result of Adam's sin, how did God reverse humanity's status?

Romans 5:18

Note: Justification (i.e., to be declared righteous) comes as a free gift from God because of the righteous act of one man—the perfect life and the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. Because of what Christ did, the hope of salvation has been brought to all humanity. This is the good news of the gospel.

7. As a result of the fall, how many are righteous or good in God's eyes?

Romans 3:9-12

Note: The word “under” means to be ruled or dominated by. It was a term used to refer to slaves in Bible days. Just as a slave had no freedom but was ruled by his master, so also, all humanity is under sin, ruled by it. This is the universal sin problem and our only hope of deliverance is a Saviour.

8. Because of the universal sin problem, how many stand guilty or condemned under God’s law?

Romans 3:19

9. How many have sinned and who is our only hope of salvation?

Romans 3:23,24

Note: The Bible is clear. Mankind's only hope of salvation is Jesus Christ.

10. What does David say about himself, which is also true of all of us?

Psalms 51:5

Note: Sin is a condition or state which we all inherit from birth. It is something we are born with because of Adam's Fall. Therefore, we can do nothing to escape it, in and of ourselves. However, this is not our fault and God does not blame us for being born sinners.

11. What condition is ours from birth?

Psalms 58:3

Note: We are born separated from God. But although we may be wicked from birth, God has given us the choice to escape this problem through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

12. Like sheep, in what two conditions do we find ourselves?

Isaiah 53:6

1.

2.

Note: We are by nature self-centered. We go our own way from the moment we are born, but we also have hope because the Lord laid the iniquity of us all on Christ.

13. Why can we not trust our own hearts?

Jeremiah 17:9

Note: Because we are naturally self-centered, our own hearts deceive us into believing we can save ourselves by our good works. But this is where many make a big mistake. A good example of this is the story of Peter's betrayal of Jesus. Peter promised Jesus that he would die rather than betray Him, but when the test came he denied his Lord three times (see John 18:15-27).

14. What does Jesus, the true witness, say regarding our own self-evaluation?

Revelation 3:17

Note: The problem with most of us is that we do not know how sinful we are. Therefore, we do not realize our own deplorable condition. This is why God has to first convict us of our total

sinfulness before He offers us the gift of salvation.

15. Instead of the interests of Jesus, how many seek their own way?

Philippians 2:21

Note: This problem is inherent in every human being. Even babies demand their own way from birth.

16. What is the only thing that can truly set us free from our sin problem?

John 8:32

17. When we commit sin, even against our own wishes, what does it prove?

John 8:34

18. Freedom from sin's slavery is found only in whom?

John 8:36

Note: Jesus is the only answer to our sin problem. Without Him we remain slaves to sin and the wages of sin is death (see Romans 6:23).

19. Why did Jesus come into this world?

1 Timothy 1:15

Note: Do you accept this fact? Note that even Paul, the great apostle, admits in the present tense, that he is the chief or the worst of sinners.

20. What does the Bible have to say to those who claim “we have no sin”?

1 John 1:8

21. Of what do we accuse God when we say we have not sinned?

1 John 1:10

Note: The only reason God’s Word tells us that we are sinners is to show us our need of a Saviour. Once we recognize our total sinfulness, the gospel does become the best good news we have ever heard.

22. What are two things God does for us if we confess our sins to Him?

1 John 1:9

1.

2.

Conclusion: Most people think they are sinners because they have committed sins; but the fact is that we commit sins because we are born sinners. The only hope of escaping this universal sin problem is Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. Our study of the Bible becomes exciting as we discover His plan of salvation for the human race. In our next few studies we shall learn about God's unconditional love for us, the ground of our salvation, as well as how He saved us in Christ!

Study #2

The Love of God

It is hard for many to comprehend how God can save them as sinners. As a result most people are running away from God out of fear. This is one way the devil, the enemy of souls, veils the good news of the gospel from men and women. For this reason, it is important for all to realize that the ground of our salvation is God's unconditional love for us, and not our goodness. Jesus Himself declared in that favorite text of the Bible: "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). The apostle Paul, once a persecutor of the Christian church, made this profound statement to young Timothy: "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst" (1 Timothy 1:15).

The reason why we sinners do not need to be afraid of God and can come to Him with full

confidence is because God is love. In this study we are going to discover the true love of God that is the ground of our salvation. Once our eyes are opened to this fact, the gospel will become fantastic or incredible good news. Let us see how this is true from the Word of God.

1. Whom does God love?

John 3:16

Note: The world (human race) God so loved is the world that has rebelled against Him. Therefore, we are saved not because we deserve it or because we are good, but because God is love. This is the foundation to a correct understanding of the gospel.

2. After Paul shows us that all are sinners by performance and nature deserving God's wrath, what reason does he give why God redeemed humanity in Christ?

Ephesians 2:4-6

Note: Even though the Bible declares that we are all sinners, it also tells us that God loves us infinitely. That is why God made us alive together with Christ, raised us up together, and made us sit in heavenly places in Him, all because of His unconditional love for mankind.

3. Since we are not saved by works of righteousness or right doing, why did God save us?

Titus 3:3-5

Note: The ground of our salvation is God's love for sinners. Scripture declares that "God is love" (1John 4:8). This love is not just one of God's characteristics but is what He is by very nature and therefore all that He does is in the

context of His love.

4. In the time of Christ what were the people being taught?

Matthew 5:43

Note: The word “neighbor” here refers to fellow Jews and the word ”enemy” refers to the Gentiles. Human beings know how to love their own, but it is impossible for us to love our enemies, in and of ourselves.

5. In contrast to this human love, what did Jesus say Christians should do?

Matthew 5:44

Note: It is this kind of love that demonstrates

true Christianity to the world. Such love reflects the love God has for sinners. It is the greatest proof of the power of the gospel and the fact that we are followers of Christ (see John 13:34,35).

6. How far reaching is God's love?

Matthew 5:45

Note: God's love extends beyond all barriers. It is the opposite of human love. God even loves and cares for those who are His enemies by supplying all their needs. God's love is unconditional; it does not depend on our goodness. Therefore, in understanding God's love for us we must never attribute our human ideals of love to God. This is where many go wrong.

7. What four conditions were we still in when God demonstrated His love for us and reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son?

Romans 5:6-10

1.

2.

3.

4.

Note: This passage tells us that while we were incapable of saving ourselves, wicked people, still sinners, and even enemies of God, he redeemed us through the death of His Son. Such love is beyond our comprehension, but it is real because God says so and demonstrated it on the cross of Christ.

8. How many times does the word “love” appear in your Bible, in this passage?

John 21:15-17

Note: Unfortunately, our English Bibles fail to bring out the real significance of this dialogue between Christ and Peter. The reason being that the English language has only one word for love. But in the Greek, the language of the New Testament, the Bible writers had about four words to choose from. In the first two questions, “do you love me,” Jesus used the word “agapao” which is unconditional love. Peter’s answer both times was “phileo” which means human affection, which, incidentally, is unreliable. (Keep in mind, Peter promised he would never deny Jesus.) In his answer, Peter was admitting that he did not have unconditional love towards Christ. In Jesus’ third question, He used the word “phileo” and Peter was “grieved” because this third time, Jesus used the word “phileo” instead of “agapao.” Peter answered by saying in effect, “Yes, Lord you know everything. You know that all I’m capable of is this unreliable human love.” But unlike Peter, Christ’s love for us is unconditional and never fails.

9. What draws us to God?

Jeremiah 31:3

Note: Most people are running away from God because they think He is out to punish them. But the truth is that God loves us and gave us His only Son so that whoever believes in Him should not be lost but have eternal life. This is what draws us to God.

10. What endearing term does God use for His people?

1 John 3:1,2

Note: Not only does God love us unconditionally, but He has given us a new standing before Him. Anyone who is a child of

God through faith in Christ need not have a low self esteem. We have become children of the King of kings and this is what gives us hope, security, and a self worth that puts a spring in our step. With heads up, He gives us the ability to face whatever is ahead.

11. On what basis should we rely on God for our salvation?

1 John 4:16

Note: God not only loves us with an everlasting love but He Himself is love. Every other aspect of God's character, which is His glory, is unconditional love. There are some things we may not understand but everything He does is in the context of "God is love."

12. What does perfect love cast out?

1 John 4:17,18

Note: Fear is the result of sin. Because all of us have sinned, we are all victims to the fear of death (Hebrews 2:14,15). Only God's redeeming love can cast out this fear.

13. List the ten things that Paul says cannot separate us from the love of God.

Romans 8:35-39

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Note: Although as Christians we may face many hardships in this world, our joy and our peace come from knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God. God is eternal and therefore His love is everlasting; it is the ground of our salvation. He offers us the free gift of salvation in Christ Jesus purely on the basis of His unconditional love for us. The only thing that can keep us from experiencing this salvation is our own rejection of His saving grace. May this never be true of you.

How God's Love Was Perverted

In order to fully appreciate the good news of

the gospel, it is important to be familiar with how Satan has perverted God's love, in order to pervert the gospel. Here is a brief history of what happened. The Greek language, in which the New Testament was originally written, had four words for love. They were eros, storge, phileo, and agape. Of these four words, eros was considered to be the highest form of love. As Plato described it, eros was man seeking after God. It was the basis of all pagan religions.

The New Testament writers NEVER used this word, eros. This was unacceptable to some of the Church Fathers, who became the leaders of the Christian church after the apostles died. Some of these Church Fathers, who were all of Greek origin, wanted to substitute eros for the word agape, the key word used in the New Testament to define God's self-emptying and unconditional love. This started the great battle in Church history between eros and agape.

It was Augustine, the great Church Father of the 4th century, who settled the issue. By using Greek logic, Augustine synthesized the concept of

eros with the concept of agape and produced a new concept of love which he named caritas from which we get our English word charity. This new concept of love was accepted by the Christian Church and, as a result, caritas became the dominant word defining God's love during the dark ages of Church history. Thus, by modifying the true meaning of God's love, Satan managed to pervert the pure gospel from being "good news" to "good advice" — "I must do my best and God will make up the difference." Below is an outline showing the contrast of man's eros love to God's agape love and how caritas perverted the gospel:

HUMAN EROS LOVE IS:

A. CONDITIONAL

Depends on beauty or goodness and therefore needs arousing. When this love is attributed to God it perverts the gospel into conditional good news or good advice: Matt. 19:16-27; John 9:14-31

B. CHANGEABLE

Fluctuates and is unreliable: Luke 22:31-34 (Divorce rate in U.S.)

C. SELF-SEEKING (U-turn agape)

Egocentric; therefore always ascending, socially, politically, academically, economically, and even religiously: Isa. 53:6; Phil. 2:21. (Satan is the originator of this self principle and infected man with it at the Fall.) Ezk. 28:14,15; Isa. 14:12-14

GOD'S AGAPE LOVE IS:

A. UNCONDITIONAL

Is spontaneous, uncaused, and independent of our goodness. This is why God redeemed us: Rom. 5:6-10; Eph.2:1-6,8,9; Titus 3:3-5

B. CHANGELESS

Everlasting and never fails: Jer. 31:3; 1 Cor. 13:8; Jn. 13:1; Rom. 8:35-39

C. SELF-EMPTYING (agape)

Selfless; therefore will step down for the benefit of others: 1 Cor. 13:5; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-8

Agape and The Great Controversy in Church History

The battle between Agape and Eros love resulted in Caritas love. These 3 loves have produced the 3 gospels comprising today's world religions:

The Eros Gospel
(Salvation by Works)



The Caritas Gospel
(Salvation by Faith Plus Works)



The Agape Gospel
(Salvation by Grace Alone)



Study #3

How God Saved You In Christ

When Jesus came into this world, some two thousand years ago, He came to be the Saviour of the world. It was however, the apostle Paul that God set aside to explain this good news of salvation, the gospel. When reading Paul's writings you will find a key phrase that runs through all his epistles. If you were to remove this phrase there would be very little left of Paul's explanation of the gospel. That phrase is "in Christ" or "in Christ Jesus." The truth expressed by this phrase is also expressed by other similar phrases such as "in Him" or "together with Him" or "in the beloved" or "in whom," etc. All these phrases express the same "in Christ" idea or motif (theme).

This truth, stated in the phrase "in Christ," was first introduced by Christ Himself when He told His disciples to "abide in me." These are the undergirding words of the gospel. If we do not understand what the New Testament means by this

expression “in Christ,” we will never be able to fully understand the good news of the gospel. There is nothing we have as Christians except we have it in Christ. Outside of Him we have nothing but sin, condemnation, and death.

The concept of “in Christ” is however, difficult to understand. Just as “you must be born again” was beyond Nicodemus, one of the top religious leaders of the Jews, the phrase “in Christ” is likewise a difficult idea for us to comprehend. This is especially true of the Western mind. How can I, as an individual, be in someone else? Worse still, how can I, born in the Twentieth Century, be in Christ who lived almost 2,000 years ago? This makes absolutely no sense to our Western way of thinking. Because we cannot fathom this truth, we tend to ignore or skim over it. Yet appreciating the good news of the gospel hinges on our understanding these vital two words, “in Christ.”

The “in Christ” concept is based on Biblical solidarity, the idea that all men constitute or share a common life. This is what we touched on in our

first lesson, the sin problem. Therefore, if we are to come to grips with this phrase “in Christ,” we must first understand what the Bible has to say about solidarity or corporate oneness. In Hebrews 7:7-10, Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek “in Abraham” since he was in the loins of his great grandfather Abraham when he paid tithe to Melchizedek. This is based on Biblical solidarity.

According to Scripture, three fundamental facts are revealed:

1. God created all men in one man – Adam
2. Satan ruined all men in one man – Adam
3. God redeemed all men in one man – Christ

It is this last fact that constitutes the good news of the gospel and gives us everlasting hope. As you study God’s Word regarding the “in Christ” motif or idea may your eyes be opened to the matchless charms of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

1. There are three people involved in this text: “Him” (i.e., God), “you” (i.e., us), and Christ. What has God made Christ to be for us?

1 Corinthians 1:30

Note: Out of His unconditional love, God united the divine life of His Son to our corporate human life in the womb of Mary. Thus Christ, the God-man, qualified to be our substitute and representative. By His perfect life and sacrificial death He satisfied all the demands of the law on our behalf. In Christ, humanity has a new history which fully qualifies every believer for heaven. This is the incredible good news of the gospel.

2. In our first study we found that all men were created in one man, Adam, and when he sinned, all sinned in him, and therefore the death sentence was passed upon all men. In the same way what will happen to all who are in Christ?

1 Corinthians 15:21,22

Note: The man who brought death to humanity is Adam and the man who brought life to humanity is Christ. Today, science is trying to find a solution to the death problem but they cannot because the only solution is Christ.

3. What were the first Adam and the last Adam made to be?

1 Corinthians 15:45

First Adam

Last Adam

Note: Because the first Adam (mankind)

sinned and brought death to all mankind, God sent His Son as the last or second Adam (mankind) to redeem men from that death sentence. Christ is our only hope of eternal life (see 1 John 5:11,12).

4. Through one man's sinful act, what came to all men and with what result?

Romans 5:18 (first part)

Note: Because we were in Adam, his one sin made us all sinners (verse 19). While God does not blame us, or hold us responsible or guilty for Adam's sin, nevertheless, because we were in Adam when he sinned, we share his condemnation to death.

5. Through one Man's righteous act what came to all men and with what result?

Romans 5:18 (last part)

Note: Just as all die because all have sinned in Adam, so also, all have obeyed in Christ and stand justified to life in Him. Please notice that what God has brought to the whole human race by Christ's obedience is a "free gift" and like any other gift, we cannot enjoy it until we receive it (verse 17). What is ours in Adam is ours by inheritance; what is ours in Christ is a gift from God, for "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life."

6. When did God plan our redemption in Christ?

Ephesians 1:4

Note: Before we were even created in Adam, God, who knew beforehand that Adam would sin, had already planned our salvation in Christ.

According to verse 5, God predestined our adoption to be His sons and daughters by uniting us to Christ. He did this, not because we were good or deserved it, but because of His unconditional love for us. The moment you accept Christ as your Saviour, God looks at you as if you are His son or daughter, “accepted in the Beloved” (Christ ,verse 6).

7. What three things has God done for us in Christ, while we were still sinners?

Ephesians 2:5,6

1.

2.

3.

Note: These three facts are what God has accomplished in Christ for all men and women. Together, they constitute the good news of the gospel: salvation full and complete for sinful humankind. However, for these facts to become ours individually, there must be a human response.

8. How do we experience this salvation obtained for all people in Christ?

Ephesians 2:8,9

Note: Salvation comes as a result of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and is made effective through faith; this grace is the supreme gift of God to mankind. The fruit of receiving this grace is good works (see verse 10).

9. What is the wages of sin?

Romans 6:23 (first part)

Note: By nature, as well as by performance, we are sinners and deserve death since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

10. What is the gift of God in Christ?

Romans 6:23 (last part)

Note: Please note that while death is wages we earn, eternal life is entirely a free gift that comes through the holy history of Christ and which we have not earned or deserved. That's why the Bible tells us that we are saved by grace alone.

11. What has God given us in His Son?

1 John 5:11

Note: The whole world is trying to escape from the “grim reaper.” No one wants to die, but there is only one Source of the life that never ends — Jesus Christ.

12. What are the two options we have regarding this gift of life from God?

1 John 5:12

1.

2.

Note: Please do not refuse this incredible gift. If you refuse it you will not have this eternal life, no matter how many good works you have performed. If you accept Jesus as your only source of salvation and life, the eternal life God offers you in Christ is guaranteed.

13. What assurance does John give to those who believe in the Son of God?

1 John 5:13

14. If we believe in Jesus, what do we become?

John 1:11-13

Note: God looks at every one who believes in Jesus Christ as His child. If you believe in His name you have already received life, even though you may not feel it or think you deserve it.

15. If we hear and believe God's Word, what will be the result?

John 5:24

Note: We pass from death to life by accepting the gift of God, Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law. However, to those who are justified by faith in Christ, the law becomes the standard of Christian living (see Galatians 5:13,14).

16. What is Christ to those who believe?

Romans 10:4

Note: The word “end” means something completed or terminated. Paul tells us in this verse that, by faith, Christ’s perfect obedience to the law becomes ours. In His earthly mission, Christ met both the positive demands of the law as well as its justice. Thus, He terminated legalism (salvation by our own attempts to keep the law).

17. What happens when you accept the gift of Christ’s righteousness?

2 Corinthians 5:17

Note: Read also verses 18-21. On the cross, God heaped all the sins of the world on His Son Jesus Christ. Thus, by His death humanity has been redeemed from sin. Then, in exchange, God gave humanity the life of His Son in the resurrection. When you accept Jesus by faith as your personal Saviour, you pass from death to life.

18. What two things did Christ accomplish by His death and resurrection?

2 Timothy 1:8-10

1.

2.

19. What two things must we do for the good news of salvation in Christ to become ours?

Mark 16:15,16

1.

2.

Do you believe that Christ has redeemed you?
If yes, check here: []

Study #4

God's Supreme Sacrifice For You

At the very heart of the gospel message is Christ and Him crucified. It is Satan's determined purpose to engulf this truth in darkness. In this he has had some measure of success. By convincing the Christian church to believe the lie that men possess an immortal soul, he has robbed the cross of its glory.

If man possesses an immortal soul then death is not good-bye to life but simply the separation of the soul from the body. In that case, that which constitutes Christ's supreme sacrifice has to be limited to the shame and torture of the cross, which was no different than that of the two thieves who were crucified with Him and countless others who were executed by crucifixion.

Another factor that has robbed the cross of its

glory is looking at the crucifixion of Christ from the Roman perspective. While it is true Christ was crucified on a Roman cross, it must be remembered that it was not the Romans who demanded His crucifixion but the Jews. It is only as we perceive the cross of Christ from the Jewish perspective, as did the New Testament writers, that we can begin to grasp the meaning of His supreme sacrifice that demonstrated God's infinite and unconditional love for us.

Crucifixion was not a Jewish method of execution. On the contrary, the Jews detested the cross because it had a very special meaning for them. As we discover the significance of the cross to the Jews, we will understand why the Jews demanded that Christ be crucified and why this constitutes the supreme sacrifice.

The cross was invented by the Phoenicians approximately 600 years before Christ. It was then adopted by the Egyptians and later the Romans, who refined it and used it to execute run-away slaves and their worst criminals.

Crucifixion was the most painful and shameful instrument of execution ever practiced by man. Besides bringing disgrace and shame, it involved tremendous physical and mental pain and anguish. It could take anywhere from three to seven days for the crucified one to die.

However, as we look at the cross of Christ with Jewish spectacles, we will be amazed to discover the self-emptying love of Jesus and what He was willing to give up in order to save humanity. May this truth of Christ and Him crucified impact you as it did the disciples of Jesus and the early church.

1. What condition were we in when Jesus died for us?

Romans 5:8

Note: God commended or demonstrated His unconditional love towards us in that while we

were still sinners Jesus died for us. This unconditional love, as we saw earlier, is the ground of our salvation.

2. What did the death of Christ do to man's relationship with God?

Romans 5:10

Note: The good news is that God no longer looks upon the human race as sinners. He has reconciled or redeemed the world to Himself through the death of His Son. Because of this God is able to accept you in His Son as if you had never sinned.

3. What does the law say is necessary for the remission or forgiveness of sins?

Hebrews 9:22-26

Note: The word purged or purified here means cleansed. The law demands death in order for sins to be forgiven. The sacrifice of animals, as was practiced in the Old Testament, could not accomplish this. They were only types to point to Christ's sacrifice. When Christ died on the cross, He paid the full price for the sins of the whole world once and for all.

4. Through what are we justified freely by God's grace?

Romans 3:24

Note: To be justified means to be declared righteous in the sight of God's law. To be redeemed means to be bought back. By His death on the cross, Christ has removed the barrier between sinful man and a holy God. That is what it means to be reconciled.

5. What did the death of Christ demonstrate?

Romans 3:25 (NIV)

Note: God cannot lawfully forgive sins without the shedding of blood (death). Therefore, before the cross event, God forgave the sins of the Old Testament believers out of His kindness or patience. But since Christ met the justice of the law for the sins of the entire human race on the cross, God is just in forgiving all who come to Him through the shed blood of His Son. This is what Christ meant when He instituted the Lord's supper, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins" (see Matthew 26:28).

6. Since the cross, what can God lawfully do to those who have faith in Christ?

Romans 3:26

Note: This is how the Amplified Bible translates verse 26: “It was to demonstrate and prove at the present time in the now season that He Himself is righteous and that He justifies and accepts as righteous him who has true faith in Jesus.” Through the cross, God can legally or lawfully justify sinners and that is good news. That is why Paul calls the cross of Christ “the power of God unto salvation” (see 1 Corinthians 1:18).

7. In contrast to the wages of sin, what is the gift of God?

Romans 6:23

8. Christ died on the cross and is risen. Where is He now and what is He doing?

Romans 8:32-34

Note: At the cross, the love and the justice of God met. God did not spare His own Son the wages of sin because He so loved the world. The devil will accuse you of being a sinner and not deserving heaven. But there is One who will never accuse you and that is God. God has set you free, acquitted or justified you from all sins, therefore, He will never accuse you. Also, Christ, who died for our sins, is interceding on our behalf, since the devil accuses us day and night (see Rev. 12:10).

9. What did Christ taste for every man on the cross?

Hebrews 2:9

Note: When Christians die they only go to sleep. The death that Christ tasted for everyone was not the sleep death but the wages of sin, good-bye

to life. One of our future studies will be on the state of the dead, but now we want to find the meaning of the death that Jesus tasted for everyone.

10. What did the chief priests and officers cry out when Pilate presented Christ to them?

John 19:5-7

Note: Pilate, who represented Roman law, found no fault in Jesus. The Jews had to give a reason why they were demanding Jesus' crucifixion. They said that they had a law that condemned Christ to death. This law referred to the law of blasphemy.

11. According to the law of blasphemy to which the Jews referred, what method of death was stipulated?

Leviticus 24:16

Note: In John 10:30,31 we see the Jews taking up stones “again” to stone Jesus when He said, “The Father and I are one.” This proved they were aware that stoning was the method of death for blasphemy.

12. Why then did the Jews demand that Christ be crucified, which to the Jews was synonymous to hanging on a tree? (see Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29)

Deuteronomy 21:22,23

Note: When the Jews cried out “crucify him,” they were not only demanding that Christ be put to death, but they were demanding that God curse Him. When God’s curse falls on anyone, that is saying good-bye to life forever. Christ experienced this God-abandonment death on the cross and that is why He cried out, “My Father, my Father, why

hast thou forsaken me?”

13. What is the curse of the law to all who have failed to obey it?

Galatians 3:10

Note: Have you kept the law perfectly? If not, you deserve to be cursed. But what we deserve God heaped on His Son at the cross.

14. How did Christ redeem us from the curse of the law?

Galatians 3:13

Note: The reason why the law does not curse the believer is because God made Christ to be the curse for us. Jesus tasted the wages of sin, the curse

of the law, for all humanity on the cross. That is the supreme Sacrifice.

15. Why was God the Father satisfied when He saw the results of Jesus' suffering and death?

Isaiah 53:6,10,11

Note: We can only faintly understand the agony that our Heavenly Father must have suffered as He Himself allowed the curse of our sins to fall on Jesus, His beloved Son. Through the supreme sacrifice on the cross, both the Father and the Son were telling the human race that their love for us is more than their love for themselves! This is God's selfless love which Christ demonstrated on the cross.

16. How should the supreme Sacrifice affect us?

2 Corinthians 5:14,15

Note: Not the fear of punishment nor the desire for reward must be the motivation of Christian living. The love of God, demonstrated on the cross, is the driving force in true Christian living. No wonder the songwriter wrote: “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all.” This is exactly what the cross of Christ did to His disciples, and this is what it must do to us.

17. What has Christ done to show us the love of God?

1 John 3:16

Note: Jesus laid down His life and was willing to be blotted out of existence that we might live in His place. This is how much the cross demonstrated God’s love for us sinners. By this supreme sacrifice, Jesus was telling sinners that He

loves us more than Himself. That is why He said, “But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself” (John 12:31-33). As you contemplate the supreme sacrifice of Christ may you not only be drawn to God but willingly accept His indescribable gift.

Conclusion: The following statement, by one who so clearly understood the supreme sacrifice of Christ, is worth serious contemplation:

“Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendent of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father’s mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see

the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.

“Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Saviour could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.”

Study #5

The Cross of Christ

In our last study we looked at the cross in the light of the supreme sacrifice Christ made in behalf of the fallen human race. In this study we are going to consider how and why it was necessary for the human race to be included in the death of Christ on His cross.

As sinners everyone of us is under the curse and condemnation of the law (Romans 3:19; Galatians 3:10). And the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). According to the Bible, Jesus bore this curse of the law for us when He died on the cross. This is what we studied in our last lesson.

However, the fact is that no law, God's or man's, will allow an innocent person to die in the place of a guilty one. According to the Bible, the father is not to be punished for the sins of the son and neither is the son to be punished for the sins of the father (see Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:20).

How then could Christ, who committed no sin, legally die for the sins of the world when the law of God does not allow the innocent to be punished for the guilty?

This is the great ethical issue that surrounds the cross of Christ. And unless we clearly understand how God solved this problem, we will never be able to fully appreciate the good news of the gospel or experience its full power to save us from the sin problem. That is why this is a most important study.

1. How many have to die because of Adam's one sin?

1 Corinthians 15:22 (first part)

Note: As we saw in study #3, the reason all die because of Adam's one sin is not because God holds us guilty for Adam's sin, that would be unethical. All die because the human race is the

multiplication of Adam's life (see Acts 17:26) and therefore inherit from him a life that has already sinned and stands condemned to death.

2. When was this condemned life of the human race executed and in whom?

John 12:31-33

Note: At the cross the world (human race) was executed or judged in Christ. God could do this because Christ was the second Adam or mankind. Just as God created all humanity in Adam so that by his representative sin he ruined all his posterity, so also God united all humanity to Christ at the incarnation so that He could be the Saviour of the world.

3. How many were implicated in the death of Christ?

2 Corinthians 5:14

4. What did God make Christ to be in order to make us sinners righteous?

2 Corinthians 5:21

Note: When Christ assumed our corporate sinful humanity at His incarnation He became the second Adam (mankind) and qualified to be man's representative and substitute. This gave Him the legal right to live and die on man's behalf. It is in this sense that Christ was made to be sin for us that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him. This constitutes the "in Christ" truth that we studied in lesson #3.

5. Who died when Jesus bore our sins in His body on the tree (cross)?

1 Peter 2:24

Note: According to the Greek text, the language in which the New Testament was written, we actually died when Christ bore our sins on the cross in His body. This is because Christ could not bear our sins without bearing us. As a result, by dying in Christ, the very root of our sin problem, our sinful nature, was dealt with. This is the healing power of the cross which makes holy living possible in the life of the believer.

6. What does the apostle Paul say about himself regarding the law of God?

Galatians 2:19

Note: Because we are all sinners, we must all die. Jesus did not come to do away with the death sentence that hangs over our heads but to fulfill it

(see Matthew 5:17). Since “all died” in the death of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14), Paul acknowledges that he died to the law in Christ so that now he may live for God.

7. When did Paul die to the law?

Galatians 2:20

Note: It is through the cross of Christ that we sinful humans were executed and have been set free from our sin problem. As a result we may experience justification as well as live a life pleasing to God. The cross of Christ is what sets us free from both the guilt and punishment of sin as well as from the power and slavery of sin.

8. How long does the law of God have dominion over us?

Romans 7:4

Note: All humanity is born under the law and because everyone of us has failed to perfectly obey it, the whole human race stands guilty and condemned under the law (see Romans 3:19). This condemnation hangs over us as long as we are living. Since the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23), it is only when we die that we are set free from the condemnation of the law.

9. How did God set us free from under the law?

Romans 7:4

Note: God set us free from under the law by our death in the body of Christ. As we saw earlier, the death of Christ was a corporate death so that all humanity died in Christ on His cross. When we by faith accept Christ's death as our death, we experience justification from the condemnation of the law and are set free. By His resurrection we

were also raised in Christ with His life, married so to speak to Him, and this makes it possible for us to bear fruit pleasing to God (see John 15:5-8).

10. How should one who has been delivered from the condemnation of the law serve God?

Romans 7:6

Note: The unbeliever who is still under the law tries to obey God's rules out of fear. This is what it means to serve in the letter. The believer however, who has accepted Christ and has been delivered from the law, serves God out of love. This is serving in the spirit, since the spirit of the law is love (see Matthew 22:35-40; Romans 13:10).

11. What truth does Paul bring out regarding those who believe in Christ?

Colossians 3:3

Note: As we shall see in our next study, a Christian is one who has died to the old life of sin and has risen in Christ to serve Him in newness of life which the believer has received through the new birth experience.

12. In order for us to live with Christ what must first happen to us?

2 Timothy 2:11

Note: There are too many Christians who want to live with Christ without first dying with Him. This is called cheap grace. This is not the teaching of Scripture. In this sinful world, we begin with life and end up with death. In God's kingdom it is the very opposite. We begin by dying to the old condemned life and end up with the immortal life of Christ (see Romans 6:8-11). This is what conversion is all about.

13. What must take place before we can experience freedom from sin?

Romans 6:7

Note: A condemned criminal can only be justified from his crime after he has paid the penalty for that crime. In the same way we cannot experience justification in Christ unless we first identify ourselves by faith with the death of Christ on His cross. The word “freed” in this text in the original is the word “justified” or “acquitted.” Hence, the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation from the condemnation of the law (see 1 Corinthians 1:17,18).

14. Besides acquitting us from the condemnation of the law, what else does the cross of Christ free us from?

Romans 8:2

Note: Sin is a dual problem. It is the transgression of the law which condemns the sinner to death. Sin is also a law or a principle that resides in our sinful natures and which makes it impossible for us to live the holy life (Romans 7:14-25). Through the cross of Christ we are delivered from both of these problems. Our death in Christ does not only justify us but it also strikes at the very root of our sin problem.

15. Because the cross of Christ frees us from sin itself, what kind of life should a believer live?

Romans 6:22

Note: While the cross of Christ liberates us from the condemnation of sin it does not give us the liberty to live as we please. When we accept Christ and Him crucified as our Saviour, we are

accepting both salvation from the guilt and punishment of sin as well as salvation from the power and slavery to sin.

16. What did Jesus say to those who refuse to take up the cross and follow Him?

Matthew 10:38

Note: Since the death of Christ on His cross was a corporate death in which all humanity died in Him, to accept or follow Christ is to accept His cross as your cross.

17. How often must the believer take up the cross to follow Christ?

Luke 9:23

Note: Many Christians make the mistake of

separating the cross they have to bear from the cross of Christ. This mistake leads to another error; equating the cross with the hardships of life. In Scripture there is only one cross that saves. It is the cross of Christ. When we are baptized into Christ, the cross of Christ becomes the believers' cross. It symbolizes self-denial and not the hardships of life, which all people, believers and unbelievers have to put up with.

18. What example did Jesus give from nature that explains the principle of the cross?

John 12:24

19. How did Jesus apply this truth to the believer?

John 12:25

Note: The principle of the seed is the principle of the cross. Just like the seed must die in order for it to spring up to life and bear fruit, so also we must die to the old life of sin in order for us to experience the new birth which brings forth fruit unto God. This is the principle of the cross of Christ.

20. What did Paul say about the same principle of the seed?

1 Corinthians 15:36

Note: Christianity is not an improvement or a modification of the old life of sin we were born with, but the exchange of our old life that died on the cross of Christ for the eternal life of Christ which God gave us in His Son (see 1 John 5:11,12).

21. What attitude must a Christian have towards the flesh or the sinful nature which has

been surrendered to the cross of Christ?

Galatians 5:24

Note: It was a French preacher of the 19th Century who said that all Christians are “born crucified.” By this he was referring to the true meaning and significance of Baptism, which will be study #7. Before you accept Christ, it is important that you know the cost of discipleship. As the German martyr Dietric Bonhoffer once said, “when Christ calls you to follow Him, He calls you to die.”

Conclusion: This study brings us to the conclusion of the objective facts of the gospel. Everything necessary for our salvation from the sin problem has been taken care of by the birth, life, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the good news of the gospel.

In this gospel God has redeemed, reconciled,

and justified unconditionally all humanity in His Son Jesus Christ (see Romans 5:10, 18). But because God created us with a free will, He does not force this salvation on us. Therefore, to experience the good news of the gospel there needs to be a human response. That human response is faith. Hence, salvation as a subjective experience is conditional.

This is what this Bible course is all about. God so loved the world (the human race) that He gave us His only Son, at infinite cost to Him but as a free gift to us. In this gift we have salvation full and complete. However, only those who believe will not perish but have eternal life. As you enter the next phase of our studies dealing with our human response to the gospel, may you be willing to meet the conditions for accepting the gift of salvation.

Study #6

What Must I Do To Be Saved

In our last five studies we not only realized how sinful we are and how impossible it is to save ourselves, but we also discovered that God's love for us sinners is infinite and unconditional, which He demonstrated by the death of His Son on the cross. As a result, God has obtained for all mankind salvation full and complete in Christ's holy history. This is what makes the gospel fantastic or incredible good news! Now, in this study, we are going to answer a question, which may be in your mind: how can this wonderful salvation become mine? In other words, what must I do to be saved?

Because God created mankind with a free will, He will not force on anyone the gift of salvation He has accomplished for all humanity in Christ. While it is true that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the fact is only those who believe will not perish but have eternal life. The

good news of the gospel demands a human response in order to make Christ's accomplished salvation for all mankind individually effective. According to the Bible, that human response is described by the word faith. Thus, when we combine the good news of salvation, which God has obtained for all humanity in Christ, with our individual faith response, we have this wonderful truth called Justification by Faith. Let us see what the Bible has to teach about this wonderful truth.

1. What great commission did Jesus give His disciples before He returned to heaven?

Mark 16:15

2. What did He say would happen to: (a) those who believed the gospel and were baptized, and (b) those who did not believe the gospel?

Mark 16:16

(a)

(b)

Note: The only reason anyone is lost is because of a deliberate and persistent rejection of the gospel. God does not blame us for being sinners, since we are born sinful, but He does hold us responsible if we deliberately and ultimately reject His gift of salvation in Christ (see also John 3:18,36).

3. What did Jesus say will happen to those who believe in God and Jesus whom He sent to save the world?

John 5:24

4. How does the apostle Paul describe this salvation that is received by faith apart from our law keeping?

Romans 3:28

Note: In the Bible, Justification by faith is God's way of saving sinners in contrast to salvation by works of the law, which is man's way of saving himself.

5. Will anyone be saved by keeping the law?

Galatians 2:16

6. What part does the law play when it comes to our justification by faith?

Galatians 3:24

Note: The Greek word Paul used for “school

master,” “tutor,” or “guardian” was *pedagogai*. This was an entrusted slave who was responsible to take his master’s children to their private tutor. So also, Paul says, while the law itself does not save us, one of its functions is to bring us sinners to Christ so that we may be justified by faith.

7. What does the judge do when a person is found righteous or not guilty in a court case?

Deuteronomy 25:1

Note: The word “justify” or “justification” is a legal term and is applied only to those who are found righteous or not guilty. It is the very opposite of “condemnation,” which is the verdict for sinners or those who are found guilty.

8. What is the first thing that one must have in order to have faith in Jesus?

Romans 10:17

Note: A knowledge of the gospel is the first prerequisite to have saving faith. It is for this reason Jesus said, “you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” By “truth” He meant the truth about Himself (John 8:32,36; see also John 17:3). It is this truth we covered in lessons 3 and 4.

9. What is the second thing that one must do to make salvation effective?

John 6:40

Note: Having a knowledge of the gospel is not enough, one has to believe or accept it. The Jewish nation of Paul’s day heard the gospel but not all of them believed it. Those who refused to believe will be lost (see Romans 10:16,18). Jesus made it clear that only those who believe in Him will be saved (see John 3:18; 5:24; 11:25).

10. Belief in the gospel involves more than merely a mental assent to truth. What is the third requirement to have genuine faith that saves?

Romans 6:17

Note: The Bible is clear that true saving faith is more than a belief or mere mental assent to the gospel. According to James, the devils believe but certainly do not possess saving faith (see James 2:19). Faith requires a heart obedience to the gospel (see Romans 1:5; Galatians 5:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Hebrews 5:9; 1 Peter 4:17). Just as faith is a heart obedience to the truth of the gospel, unbelief is a deliberate rejection of, or disobeying the gospel. Therefore, we are saved by faith and lost by unbelief.

11. What does it mean to obey the gospel?

Note: Keep in mind, the gospel is what God did to you in Christ (Lesson 3). By joining us to Christ in the incarnation, God made it possible for Christ to re-write our history so that by his perfect life and His sacrificial death we stand complete in Him (Colossians 2:10). To obey the gospel therefore means that we surrender our wills to this truth and accept Christ's life as our life and His death as our death. Such faith obedience means we must confess with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20). Since Christ is the same "yesterday, today, and forever," He will produce in the believers, that perfect life that He lived (see John 14:12). The good works produced will be in harmony with the law of God and while they do not save us, they are the evidence or fruits of salvation (Galatians 5:22,23).

12. What clear statement does the Old

Testament make concerning the just—those who have accepted the righteousness of Christ?

Habbakuk 2:4

13. In contrast to the Jews, how did the Gentiles obtain righteousness?

Romans 9:30

14. In spite of much effort on their part, why did Israel fail to attain to the righteousness that saves?

Romans 9:31,32

15. What did it cost the apostle Paul, who was a Jew and a Pharisee before his conversion, to

obtain the righteousness of God that comes by faith?

Philippians 3:7-9

Note: It is impossible to be saved by faith in Christ and still hold on to our own righteousness. We are saved by justification by faith alone and nothing else. While we are not saved by faith plus works, genuine justification by faith always produces works as evidence of our salvation (see Ephesians 2:8-10).

16. What happens when a believer tries to add works of the law as a contribution towards justification by faith?

Galatians 5:4

Note: Any believer who has tried to add his or

her own good works as a contribution to their salvation, will forfeit salvation altogether. By accepting the righteousness of Christ, we must admit our own total depravity. Thus we cannot add our own good works which falsely implies our being good. The gospel will not allow salvation partly of Christ and partly of us. Salvation is totally through Christ's righteousness alone.

17. Since we are saved by grace alone, through faith in Christ's righteousness, does this mean that we can live as we please, since our works do not count towards our salvation?

Galatians 5:13,14

18. Why is it that salvation by grace alone, through justification by faith, does not give us the license to sin?

Romans 6:1,2

Note: If faith means we have obeyed the gospel from the heart, then it means we must consider ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God, since that is what is true of Christ (see verses 10 & 11). And since God is the source of righteousness in Christ, it is through our faith obedience that we choose that righteousness.

19. What other reason does Paul give why believers, who are justified by faith, cannot condone sinning?

Romans 6:15-18

Note: Sin and righteousness belong to opposite camps. When we obey the gospel we are not only saying good-bye to death, the wages of sin, but also to sin itself. In exchange we have chosen a life of righteousness. This is the true meaning of repentance. However, this does not mean we will

not fall in our Christian walk. But it does mean we have chosen to live a life of righteousness in our minds.

20. What happens when a true Christian, who has turned from sin, falls and commits a sin?

1 John 2:1

Note: A Christian does not become unjustified or lost every time he or she falls. Yes, every sin we commit, no matter how small, contributed to the death of Christ. That is why a true believer will hate sin for what it did to their beloved Saviour. Such a person will confess that sin, based on a heart appreciation for Christ and not based on fear of punishment.

21. What is the immediate blessing that comes to those justified by faith?

Romans 5:1

Note: This peace for those who have been justified by faith is expressed by Paul in the present continuous tense. This means that as long as we are believers in Christ and stand under the umbrella of justification by faith, we continue to have peace with God. But note, this peace is a vertical peace between us sinners and our Holy God. We may not have peace in the world we live in, but our hearts rejoice because we have a future hope that the world cannot take away from us, as long as we believe.

22. Besides peace, what two other blessings do those who have been justified by faith have access to?

Romans 5:2

(i)

(ii)

Note: Access to God's grace here means the power or strength of God which makes it possible for believers to live the Christian life and fulfill God's purpose for them. While the primary meaning of grace is God's wonderful gift of salvation to sinful man, something we do not deserve, grace also means God's power or strength which he makes available to those who are justified by faith (see 1 Cor. 15:9,10; 2 Cor 12:7-9). Such grace makes it possible for us to manifest the love of God. This is the hope of true Christianity, since sin has robbed us of it (see Romans 3:23; 2 Cor. 3:17,18).

Study #7

Why You Need To Be Baptized

Because God has created mankind with a free will, He will not force His gift of salvation in Jesus Christ on anyone. Only those who receive this gift by faith and are baptized into Christ will enjoy its blessings. In our last study, we discovered that the primary meaning of faith is the surrender of the will to the truth as it is in Christ. Faith says to God, “Yes, I accept my history that you have provided for me in Your Son Jesus Christ. I accept His death as my death, His burial as my burial, and His resurrection as my resurrection to newness of life.” This conversion experience, which is referred to as the new birth or regeneration, is confessed by baptism.

The word baptism was first coined by those who dyed cloth. In Bible days there were basically two kinds of materials—cotton and wool—both of which were white in color. Many of the people preferred to use colored material, the favorite being

purple. The ones who dyed the material used the word “baptize” (baptizo in Greek) to describe the dyeing process. They took the white material, submerged it totally in a purple dye so that the cloth which went in came out purple.

Jesus used this word baptism to describe the conversion or new birth experience. By being immersed in the waters of baptism, the believer is saying good-bye to the old life of sin, which by faith is surrendered to the cross of Christ, and when the believer is raised out of the waters of baptism, this signifies the resurrection of the believer to a new life in Christ. This study will answer the question of why baptism is necessary for salvation.

1. What human response, besides believing, is essential for salvation?

Mark 16:15,16

2. In what three names should a believer be

baptized?

Matthew 28:18-20

(1)

(2)

(3)

Note: All three members of the God head are involved in the salvation of mankind. God the Father chairs the plan of salvation, Christ is the Saviour of the world, and the Holy Spirit is the active agent in the experience of salvation.

3. While the act of baptism is performed by the pastor, Who is the One who actually baptizes us into the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 12:13

Note: We are baptized into the body of Christ (verse 27) by the Holy Spirit. The expression “made to drink into one Spirit” means we have experienced the new birth and are now born from above. When the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us, because of our obedience to the gospel, we have been baptized into the body of Christ. We receive the life of Christ and have become one with Him.

4. What does the Bible say to those who have joined the Church but do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them?

Romans 8:9

Note: Only when we have experienced the new birth and have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us are we truly Christians and have experienced salvation.

5. Instead of living the old life of sin, what kind of life should we live when we experience the new birth?

Romans 8:10

Note: Before conversion we had only one life, the life of sin and that is all we could do; we were dead spiritually. But now we have received a new life, through the new birth experience. This life is the righteous life of Christ. We must now allow this righteous life to dominate us.

6. What happens to us when we have been baptized into Christ?

Galatians 3:27

Note: True baptism says, “Not I, but Christ.”

Every Christian must confess with Paul: “I am crucified with Christ, but I am still living; however, it is not I who lives but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

7. What does it really mean to be baptized into Christ?

Romans 6:3

Note: When the phrase “baptized into Jesus Christ” is used in the Bible, it is not referring to the act of baptism but to its experience. When we are baptized into Christ we are also baptized into His death. His death becomes our death.

8. As Jesus was raised up from the dead, what does Paul say happens to the believer who has been baptized into Christ?

Romans 8:4

Note: In this world we begin life by birth and end it by death. In the gospel plan we experience the very opposite. We begin our Christian experience by our death to the old life and in exchange end up with the eternal life of Christ. What a bargain!

9. What is the result of being planted in the likeness of Christ's death?

Romans 6:5

Note: The word Paul used in the Greek is “grafted,” which is a joining of two branches together so that they become one. By baptism we have surrendered or identified ourselves with Christ's death and His resurrection and we become one with Him.

10. What are the consequences of being crucified with Christ?

Romans 6:6

Note: The Greek actually says: “the body of sin might be deprived of its power.” Through the new birth experience we receive a life that is able to subdue the old life of sin.

11. What is our condition if we are dead in Christ?

Romans 6:7

Note: The actual word Paul used is “justified” which means freed or acquitted. The law of God condemns sinners to death. The moment we die in Christ through our baptism experience, the law can

no longer condemn us because we have met the justice of the law in Christ. We are set free and now have peace with God (see Romans 5:1).

12. What is the final result of this whole baptism experience?

Romans 6:8

Note: Christ did not come to change the death sentence that we all deserve but to fulfil it. The choice the gospel confronts us with is either choosing to die in Christ or choosing to die outside of Christ. If we choose to die out of Christ there is no resurrection. But if we choose to die with Christ we have the hope of resurrection. Christ has conquered the grave and His resurrection now becomes the blessed hope of the believer.

13. When we are buried with Christ in baptism how are we risen with Him?

Colossians 2:12

Note: Our part is faith; God does the operation. The moment we believe in Christ, God sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and we become spiritually alive.

14. When we have been quickened or made alive by the presence of the Holy Spirit, what does God do for us?

Colossians 2:13

Note: God is just in forgiving all our sins because we died in Christ. He has a legal right to say “Yes, all your sins are forgiven.”

15. We have seen that baptism is more than an act. It's above all an experience. How does this experience of baptism affect our outlook on life

and our Christian living? Note what the exodus of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan teaches us.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-5.

Note: Paul uses the Exodus of the Jews as a type of salvation. Crossing the Red sea is a type of baptism. Moses symbolized Christ, therefore Egypt symbolized the world, Pharaoh symbolized Satan, and Canaan symbolized the kingdom of heaven. Even though the Jews had crossed the Red Sea, their hearts were still in Egypt. When a person is baptized only in the act and the heart is still in the world, the act of baptism is a sham and it cannot save that person. It is the experience of baptism that saves us in Christ.

16. Another example of Scripture's use of the Exodus as a type of baptism is found in the story of Joshua.

Read Joshua 4:1-9.

Note: When the Jews came to the Jordan river

in the Exodus, God said to Joshua, “Take twelve stones from the wilderness, and place them in middle of the river Jordan and take twelve stones from the river to the promised land and build an altar.” Those twelve stones represented the church. The sinful life of Egypt, which the Jews had brought with them, could not be taken into Canaan, it must be buried in the Jordan. Only the new resurrected life which God offers us in Christ can enter heaven.

17. At the time of the flood what were Noah and his family saved by?

1 Peter 3:20,21

Note: The ark Noah built represented Christ. Only Noah and his family, with all the animals on board, were saved. In the same way, only those who enter into Christ by baptism will be saved when this world is destroyed by fire. Baptism, therefore, is rightly defined as the door through

which we make our exit from this present world and enter the church of Christ which is destined for heaven.

18. With Paul, what must we glory in?

Galatians 6:14

Note: When we have experienced baptism we have the hope of salvation and a new outlook on life. We can say, “I have been crucified with Christ. I have said good-bye to the world and now I live; yet it is not I but Christ who lives in me.” The fruit of this experience is holiness of living. When we have been baptized into Christ we have dedicated ourselves not to live for self but for Christ. When the Bible says to be holy as God is holy it simply means to let Christ live in us.

Baptism by immersion becomes important and of value only because of what it signifies. It is not the act of baptism itself but it is our union by faith to Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected,

symbolized by baptism that saves us.

19. What did the Ethiopian eunuch request of Philip when he heard the good news of the gospel?

Acts 8:36

Note: This Ethiopian was probably the finance minister of Ethiopia who had come to celebrate the Passover feast in Jerusalem. On his way back he was reading from the 53rd chapter of the book of Isaiah when Philip approached him. The Ethiopian requested Philip to join him and explain who the prophet Isaiah was talking about. Philip took this opportunity to preach Christ and Him crucified. The Ethiopian's heart was convicted and, as a result, the first Gentile was baptized into the Christian church.

20. Wouldn't you like to make the same request that this Ethiopian did?

Study #8

Why You Must Be Born Again

On one occasion, Nicodemus, one of the chief rulers of the Jewish religion, came to visit Jesus at night. Even though the Jewish leaders had rejected Jesus Christ as the Messiah, this leader admitted, “we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him” (John 3:2).

In response to this admission Jesus replied: “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again” (verse 3). This response surprised Nicodemus since he had never heard of the new birth, even though he was a religious leader. So his reply was, “How can a man be born when he is old? Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born” (verse 4).

But Jesus was not referring to His physical

birth, so He said, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (verses 5,6). In order to be a true Christian, every believer must experience the new birth. For without this experience Jesus said we can never make it to heaven. This study will therefore deal with what the Bible teaches about the new birth.

1. What must take place before we can see the kingdom of God?

John 3:3

2. What two questions did Nicodemus ask which showed that he did not understand what Jesus was saying?

John 3:4

(i)

(ii)

3. What two births must a person experience to enter God's kingdom?

John 3:5

(i)

(ii)

Note: Being born of water is the experience of baptism, which we covered in our last study. Being born of the Spirit refers to our spiritual birth. In baptism we participate by faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this experience the life of sin we were born with is surrendered to the cross of Christ and in exchange we receive the

life of Christ. This is the new birth experience. It is not a re-birth of the old life. It is a new life in exchange for the old.

4. Is being born of the flesh the same thing as being born of the Spirit?

John 3:6

Note: God told Adam and Eve that the moment they sinned they would surely die (see Genesis 2:17). We know that they did not die physically that same day, but they died spiritually. The Holy Spirit, Who was dwelling in them, left them and their lives were plunged into darkness. Because Adam could not pass on to us what he did not have, all his children were also born spiritually dead. This is our natural inheritance.

5. What two words used in this text mean the same thing?

John 1:12

(i)

(ii)

Note: The words “received” and “believed” are synonymous. To believe in Jesus Christ is not only a mental assent to truth, it is to receive Him, to make Him part of yourself.

6. Of whom are we born when we receive Jesus?

John 1:13

7. Can we belong to Christ and not have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us?

Romans 8:9

8. What must we consider the body to be when Christ's spirit is living in us?

Romans 8:10

Note: Paul shows us that Christ dwelling in us is the same as the Spirit dwelling in us and the body is dead because we have surrendered it to the cross. By faith, our old life is gone and the new life must take over. This is the foundation of Christianity.

9. Name two of the privileges we receive when we experience the new birth.

Romans 8:15-17

(i)

(ii)

Note: An adopted child has all the legal rights of a natural child. If we have received Christ's life we have received the life of the Son of God. Therefore we also become the sons of God with all the privileges of natural children. Before we received this adoption — the new birth — we were under the bondage of fear, afraid of God. But now fear is gone because God is our beloved Father. "Abba, Father" means "Dear Father."

10. What did God restore in saving us in Christ?

Titus 3:5

Note: God saved us by giving us the Holy Spirit. The new birth is receiving the life of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, in exchange for our life of sin. This is what regeneration is all about. Receiving the life of Christ is experienced by the

renewing of the Spirit.

11. What does it mean to obey the truth?

1 Peter 1:22

Note: When we obey the truth of the gospel we surrender to what Christ did to us on the cross. He cleansed us from sin. Not only from the guilt and punishment of sin but also the principle of sin, which is the love of self. In exchange, He gave us His life of love. This love must now manifest itself in our relationship with one another.

12. How does Peter describe the experience of the new birth?

1 Peter 1:23

Note: If we have the new birth experience, we

receive a life that will last forever because it is the eternal or everlasting life of Christ, the gift of God.

13. In exchange for our stony hearts of the flesh what does God give the one who is born of the Spirit?

Ezekiel 36:26

Note: In the new birth experience, God takes away our stony heart of sin and replaces it with Christ's heart of love. This love is what makes it possible to keep the commandments of God.

14. What happens when God puts His Spirit in us?

Ezekiel 36:27

15. When the Spirit of God lives in us, what do

we become?

1 Corinthians 3:16

Note: When God comes and dwells in us we become very special. Imagine! The God of the universe comes and dwells in us. Our bodies are His dwelling place. What a privilege!

16. When the Holy Spirit lives in us to whom do we belong?

1 Corinthians 6:19

17. What two things does God want to do in us?

2 Corinthians 6:16

(i)

(ii)

Note: God wants to dwell in us so that He may give us the hope of salvation. God also wants to walk in us so that he can demonstrate to the world, through us, what He is like — a God of love. That is the privilege of being a Christian.

18. What two types of people does God seek to revive?

Isaiah 57:15

(i)

(ii)

Note: If you feel discouraged or downtrodden God says, “You are My child. Do not worry about your situation.” By dwelling in us He brings hope,

peace, and security. God is dwelling in you and He wants to walk in you as well. The new birth is not an option; it is a fundamental requirement to be part of the body of Christ. While God has redeemed the human race in Christ, this gift of salvation has to be received.

19. The new birth is made possible because of two things Christ accomplished on the cross. What are they?

2 Timothy 1:8-10

(i)

(ii)

Note: The life of Adam we were born with is a condemned life that must die. Jesus did not come to change this death sentence but to fulfill it. This He did on the cross when our corporate human life died the wages of sin once and for all in Christ. In

the resurrection God gave humanity the eternal life of His Son. This is His supreme gift to mankind.

20. What trustworthy or faithful saying must all Christians know?

2 Timothy 2:11

21. What blessed and living hope does the new birth bring to the Christian?

1 Peter 1:3,4

22. When will this blessed hope be realized?

1 Peter 1:5

Note: By “the last time” Peter means the

second coming of Christ. The ultimate hope of the Christian is not in this world but in the world to come. Until then we are saved by faith, and faith is looking forward to something we do not have as yet.

23. How must this blessed hope affect us while we put up with the hardships of life in this world of sin?

1 Peter 1:6

Note: Being a Christian does not exempt us from the trials and hardships of life. In fact, these may even worsen, since Christians are citizens of heaven living in enemy territory. To a large degree Satan still has control of this world and he is the enemy of God, whose children we are through the new birth experience.

24. Why does God allow Christians to go through some of these trials?

1 Peter 1:7

Note: The purpose of these trials is to strengthen our faith so that it may endure unto the end, that is, until Christ comes to take us home. May your faith be strengthened as you prepare for the blessed hope of Christ's second coming.

Study #9

Walking In The Spirit

Being a born-again Christian means you have become a new creation in Christ. Christianity is not a modification, or an improvement, or a purification of your old life. It is receiving a completely new life, the life of Christ, in exchange for your old sinful life that was executed on the cross of Christ. This is what the Bible means by the experience of conversion or regeneration, which we covered in our last study.

The moment you experienced the new birth, you passed from death to life, or from condemnation of the law to justification unto life. This is the beginning of the Christian walk. Now that you have the life of Christ, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, your goal in life must be to manifest that life, so that all may see “Christ in you.”

The work of subduing the sinful desires of the

flesh and reproducing the holy and righteous life of Christ in you is the work of the Holy Spirit. This work is the process of sanctification. And while this experience of sanctification does not contribute one iota towards your title to heaven, it witnesses the salvation you already have in Christ through justification by faith. Hence, sanctification, which is the fruit of the Spirit, is witnessing true justification by faith or the power of the gospel.

But for this to happen, you must learn to walk in the Spirit. In Adam, all you were capable of was to walk in the flesh, satisfying the drives of the sinful nature. But now, as a born-again Christian, you are able to walk in the Spirit as Christ Himself did when He was on this earth. This is what this lesson is all about—the experience of walking in the Spirit.

1. What is the only way you can overcome the sinful desires of our sinful natures?

Galatians 5:16

Note: When God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, He created them with certain desires such as hunger, thirst, sex, etc. While these were created by God, they were supposed to be created with the Holy Spirit indwelling Adam and Eve. When Adam sinned, the Spirit departed from him and his mind became a slave to the flesh. Thus the natural desires God created in our first parents became lusts. This is what they passed on to us. If you try to control these desires in your own strength, you will meet with nothing but failure.

2. What happens to your lifestyle when you walk in the Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-25

Note: Notice that when Paul talks about the flesh in verse 19 he uses the word “works” because works are what we humans can do. In verse 22 he

uses the word “fruit,” because it is the Holy Spirit that produces fruit; we simply bear the fruit.

3. What blessing does a Christian experience in Christ?

Romans 8:1

Note: The reason that there is no condemnation for the Christian who has accepted the truth as it is in Christ Jesus is because on the cross Christ condemned the law of sin that is in the flesh (read verses 2 and 3).

4. What will happen if you walk in the Spirit and do not live to please the flesh?

Romans 8:4

Note: God wants you to walk in the Spirit so

that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in your life. This is not to save you but to witness that salvation.

5. Through what part of the body does the flesh or the Spirit control us?

Romans 8:5

Note: The mind is the battle ground in the Christian warfare. The question is, “What is your mind occupied with?” Those who are walking in the flesh are always thinking about pleasing the desires of their sinful nature. When you walk in the Spirit, you want to please Christ. This is the battle of the mind from which you cannot relax. The moment you do so, the devil comes in with all kind of sinful ideas.

6. What is the result of being carnal or fleshly minded?

Romans 8:6 (first part)

Note: The word “carnal” means controlled by the sinful desires of the flesh, your sinful nature. The flesh can only bring death to you, not life, because all that the flesh can produce is sin and “the wages of sin is death” (see Romans 6:23).

7. When you are spiritually minded what two things do you have?

Romans 8:6 (last part)

(i)

(ii)

8. Why is the carnal mind, the mind controlled by the flesh, hostile to God?

Romans 8:7

9. What is the result of being controlled by the fleshly mind?

Romans 8:8

10. Who should the Christian allow to control his or her mind?

Romans 8:9

Note: By obeying the gospel you have said in your heart, “Not I, but Christ.” You have chosen not the flesh but the Spirit to control your life.

11. If Christ’s Spirit is dwelling in you, how should you consider your body?

Romans 8:10

12. If the Spirit controls you, what will happen to your mortal body?

Romans 8:11

Note: The mortal body is your sinful nature which cannot produce righteousness, but the Spirit can. The gospel does not only give you peace with God and the joy of salvation, but it can also give you victory over sin. That's the wonderful thing about the gospel. It is the power of God to save you from the guilt and punishment of sin as well as from the power and slavery of sin.

13. If you have been born of the Spirit, what is your obligation?

Romans 8:12-14

Note: God says to every Christian, “Because of your faith in Christ, you have been born of the Spirit; I have given you peace, but remember that, by choosing the gospel, by choosing Me, you have also chosen not to walk in the flesh but in the Spirit.”

14. Who is the one that gives you real life?

John 6:63

Note: The source of real life is the Holy Spirit. When He comes and dwells in you He brings with Him the life of Christ which has conquered both sin and death.

15. Besides victory over sin, into what does the Spirit guide you?

John 16:13

16. What transformation takes place in your life when you walk in the Spirit?

2 Corinthians 3:17,18

17. Who actually does the work of sanctification in your life?

1 Peter 1:2

Note: The work of sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. Your part is to keep your eyes focused on Christ and to walk in the Spirit.

18. How should your baptism into Christ's

death affect you?

Romans 6:4

Note: Walking in newness of life means letting the Holy Spirit now control your life.

19. What kind of life will you live when you are walking in the Spirit?

Ephesians 5:1,2

20. What will you experience when you walk in the light of the gospel?

1 John 1:7

Note: Walking in the light is the same as

walking in the power of the gospel, since Jesus said, “I am the light of the world.”

21. How much fruit (holy living) are you able to produce without Christ?

John 15:4-8

Note: Walking in the Spirit is the same as abiding in Christ. If we abide in Christ, we will bear much fruit and God will be pleased.

22. In whose strength was Christ able to do what He did?

John 6:57

Note: “Living by the Father” means “living by the strength of the Father.” In the same way, you must live in the strength of Christ. That is what

Christian living is all about.

23. Why is Christian living so important in witnessing the gospel?

Matthew 5:14-16

Note: The world judges your Christianity by your works. By your love for your fellow men, said Jesus, all men will know that you are His disciples (see John 13:34,35).

Mahatma Ghandi, one of the great leaders of this century, made a remarkable statement while addressing a large assembly of leaders and members of the Dutch Reformed church in South Africa. This statement was made as part of a speech which condemned the unjust system of apartheid during the time he lived there and was practicing law. He said to this vast assembly: “When you Christians live the life of your Master, all India will bow down to Christianity.”

May your life be constantly led of the Spirit so that the world might see in you the wonderful life of Christ and be drawn closer to Him.

Study #10

The Two Covenants

The Bible describes two opposite methods of salvation. The first is based on man's promise and his works while the second is based on God's promise and His works. One is salvation by works of the law while the other is salvation by grace alone. These two opposite methods of salvation are labeled in the Bible as the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

The Old Covenant was first introduced to the Jews of the Exodus. This covenant was a contract, or an agreement, between God and the Jews. In this contract God spelled out His laws, especially the ten commandments, and the Jews agreed to keep all of them. If they failed to keep any of them it meant condemnation unto death. If they succeeded to obey all of them they would be justified unto life.

When God gave His laws to the Jews of the

Exodus and entered into the Old Covenant, He knew they could not keep them because of their sinful condition. But because sin is a deceiver, the Jews were not fully aware of this problem and therefore entered into an agreement with God saying, “all that you say we will do and obey.” The Old Covenant was therefore given so that the Jews might come to the realization of their utter sinfulness and their need of a Saviour.

In this study we will examine the two Covenants and see why the Old Covenant can never save us. Our only hope of attaining eternal life is the New Covenant of salvation by grace alone.

1. How did the Jews respond when they heard the book of the covenant?

Exodus 24:7

Note: The book of the covenant that was read

to the people, the Jews of the Exodus, was the book of the law, the Torah, that God had given them at Mt. Sinai through Moses. When they agreed to keep these laws, they entered into what is known as the First or Old Covenant.

2. Why was it necessary for God to introduce the New Covenant?

Jeremiah 31:31,32

Note: Since the Fall, the only way man could be saved was through the plan of salvation promised by God in Christ. The reason God entered into the Old Covenant of salvation by works of the law was to convince man of his need of a Saviour.

3. What two things did God promise to do under the New Covenant?

Jeremiah 31:32-34

(i)

(ii)

Note: Putting His laws in our minds simply means He will create in us new desires that are in harmony with His laws (see Romans 7:22). Such desires are created in our minds as a result of a heartfelt appreciation for the forgiveness of sins and the hope of salvation, given to us in Christ. These desires are impressed on our minds through the indwelling Holy Spirit whom we have received through the new birth experience.

4. What phrase does Paul use for those who are under the Old Covenant?

Romans 3:19

Note: To be “under the law” means to be ruled

or dominated by it's demands, which are, "obey and you will live, disobey and you will die." According to Paul, all of humanity has failed to obey God's law and, therefore, stand guilty before God.

5. What do we become conscious of through the law?

Romans 3:20

Note: The law of God has no power to save sinful men. All it can do is make us conscious of the fact that we are sinners (see verse 23). This is an important step as a means to accepting God's promise of salvation in Christ, which is the New Covenant, salvation by grace alone (see verse 24).

6. Why is our only hope of salvation through justification by faith?

Galatians 2:16

7. According to Paul, what do Abraham's two sons and their mothers represent?

Galatians 4:22-26

Note: The two sons of Abraham and their mothers are excellent examples of the two covenants. Ishmael, Abraham's son through the slave woman Hagar, represents the Old Covenant because he was born as a result of human effort. While Isaac, Abraham's son through his wife Sarah, was born as a result of God's promise and His direct intervention, seeing that Sarah had passed the age of child bearing (see Romans 4:18-21). Ishmael, therefore, represents salvation by works, the Old Covenant; while Isaac represents the New Covenant, salvation by grace, which is experienced through faith alone.

8. Which of Abraham's two sons are Christians linked with, according to Paul?

Galatians 4:28

Note: A true Christian is one who has realized that it is impossible to be saved by works of the law and has therefore accepted Christ as his or her Saviour. Such a person depends entirely on God's grace offered in Jesus Christ for salvation. This is what it means to be under the New Covenant: righteousness is attained by faith in Christ rather than by the works of the law.

9. What must we give up if we are to experience salvation by grace alone?

Galatians 4:29-31

Note: Salvation by works and salvation by

grace are two opposite ways of salvation that cannot be reconciled. It has to be one or the other. When we by faith accept God's gift of salvation through His Son Jesus Christ, we cannot hold onto any of our own self-righteousness that we previously depended on for salvation. The gospel is not "I plus Christ" but "not I but Christ" (see Philippians 3:3-9; Galatians 2:20).

10. What happens when one tries to add law-keeping to salvation by grace?

Galatians 5:4

Note: You cannot have it both ways. Realizing on the one hand that you are 100% sinful, you know that you cannot make any contribution towards your salvation. If, on the other hand, you turn around and try to add your own good works or law-keeping as a means or partial means of your salvation, you deny the gospel of salvation by grace alone. Our only hope of salvation is through

righteousness by faith in Christ and nothing else (read verses 5 and 6).

11. Compared to the Old Covenant, why is the New Covenant superior?

Hebrews 8:6

Note: The Old Covenant is based on our human promises, which are like ropes of sand because we are unable to keep them; the New Covenant is based on God's promises which never fail. That is why the New Covenant is a better covenant.

12. What reason does Paul give for the need of the New Covenant?

Hebrews 8:7

13. Why was the first or Old Covenant faulty?

Hebrews 8:8,9

Note: The fault with the Old Covenant was not in the law that God gave the Jews but in the fact that they could not keep them, because of their sinful condition. This is the very purpose of the Old Covenant: to convince us that we are slaves to sin and in need of a Saviour, which the New Covenant supplies.

14. Does the New Covenant do away with the law?

Hebrews 8:10

Note: Many Christians believe that the New Covenant did away with the law. But nowhere in Scripture is this taught (see Matthew 5:17-19).

While the law cannot save sinners, it is still the standard for Christian living. Through the power of the indwelling Spirit, God's agape love replaces our sinful desires. This is what it means when God says, "I will put my laws in their minds." As a result this love manifested in our lives becomes the fulfillment of the law (see Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:13,14).

15. How does Paul contrast the law with himself as a sinner?

Romans 7:14

Note: Before his conversion, Paul had not realized how sinful he was. He considered sin only as an act. But when the law opened his eyes to the fact that even sinful desire is sin, he realized that there was no way he could save himself by the works of the law. This is what turned this great apostle from the Old Covenant to the New. The same must be true of us. Only when the law has

convinced us of how exceedingly sinful we are will we appreciate the good news of the gospel (see Romans 7:7-13).

16. When we know and believe in Jesus, what will the truth do for us?

John 8:31,32

Note: Jesus is the truth who sets us free from sin. He did not only save us sinners from the guilt and punishment of sin but also from its power and slavery. As John the Baptist introduced Him, Christ is “the lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.” Through the New Covenant promise we have a complete Saviour from sin.

17. When Jesus said “the truth will make you free,” how did the Jews respond?

John 8:33

18. How did Jesus reply to them?

John 8:34

19. Who is the truth that sets us free?

John 8:36

20. Why did the Jewish nation of Paul's day fail to obtain righteousness?

Romans 9:30-32

Note: The Israelites tried to attain righteousness by the Old Covenant and failed. The Gentiles tried it by the New Covenant and they

succeeded. The history of the Jews has been recorded for our benefit, that we might not repeat the same mistake.

21. What did Jesus link His blood with when He introduced the Lord's Supper?

Matthew 26:28

Note: Unlike the Old Covenant, which is a contract or agreement between two parties, the New Covenant is a will or promise made by God on behalf of all humanity. Like any will it does not come into effect until death takes place. When Jesus died on the cross, God's promise became reality.

22. As a result of the cross of Christ, what does the New Covenant take away?

Romans 11:27

23. What is another name for the New Covenant?

Hebrews 13:20-22

Note: Just as the Old Covenant brings everlasting or eternal death to those who have failed to keep it, in the same way the New Covenant brings everlasting or eternal life to those who accept the gift of salvation in Christ. That is why Scripture sometimes refers to the New Covenant as the Everlasting or Eternal Covenant. This Everlasting Covenant is your only hope of salvation. Please do not refuse it.

Study #11

Law And Grace

Closely related to our last study of the two covenants is the issue between Law and Grace. These two are opposites when it comes to salvation. The law says you have to obey in every detail to live; while grace says, believe in Christ and you will live. Consequently, many Christians find it difficult to reconcile the two. Yet both are from God and, therefore, do not contradict each other when seen in the light of the true gospel. It is only when law and grace are correctly understood that law and grace can be reconciled.

There are three main reasons why God gave the law to the fallen human race. The primary reason was to convict us of our sinfulness. This, in turn, will make us realize the need of a Saviour, which is the tutorial function of the law. Secondly, the law points to Christ as the perfect fulfillment of righteousness for our salvation. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the demands of the law

were fully met on man's behalf. This is the gospel function of the law. Finally, the law defines the righteousness which we Christians must attain. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, law-keeping comes within the reach of every believer. Accordingly, the law becomes the standard of Christian living.

Seen in this light, there is really no contradiction between God's law and His grace. The problem we sinners face is that God's holy law and our sinful natures are incompatible. This makes salvation through law-keeping impossible. Grace comes in and satisfies the demands of the law in Christ and then gives power to the believer to fulfill its requirements. This study will cover the relationship between law and grace.

1. What commandment did God give to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden?

Genesis 2:16,17

Note: The tree of knowledge of good and evil was not sinful, in and of itself. But since God created man with the power of choice, it was placed in the Garden of Eden as an alternative to obeying God. By eating the forbidden fruit, our first parents sinned against God and the result of this fall brought condemnation and death to them, as well as their posterity. This is the sin problem we inherited from Adam.

2. Through whom did sin and death enter the world (mankind)?

Romans 5:12

3. Who is that one man who brought sin and death to all mankind?

1 Corinthians 15:22 (first part)

Note: The word “Adam” means mankind. This is because when God created Adam, He actually created the whole human race in Adam. Therefore, when Adam sinned, the whole human race was implicated in that sin. The result is that the death sentence passed on to Adam spread to all humanity.

4. What are the wages of sin, and in contrast, the gift of God?

Romans 6:23

Sin

God's gift

5. Besides the condemnation of death, how did Adam's sin affect humanity?

Romans 5:19 (first part)

Note: Because of the fall of Adam, all mankind is born with a nature that is sinful and incapable of obeying God's holy law. This is our predicament under law.

6. What does the law demand in order to be justified?

Romans 2:13

Note: Unlike the gospel, which justifies us by faith, believing in the law of God cannot save anyone. Being under the law means that we are required to obey its demands perfectly and continually if we are to qualify for life. If we fail once, it means that we come under the law's condemnation, the sentence of death (see Galatians

3:10).

7. How does Moses describe the righteousness which is of the law?

Romans 10:5

8. In contrast, how is one declared righteous under grace?

Romans 10:4

9. Under law, what is the legal status of the whole human race?

Romans 3:19

Note: God gave the law in the first place to

show humanity that we are born into a sinful race. Through the law we become conscious of the fact that we are all sinners condemned to death and are in need of a Saviour.

10. How many can save themselves by keeping the law?

Romans 3:20

11. What does it mean to be under grace?

Romans 3:21-24

Note: Under grace we are not saved by our performance but by faith in what Jesus did. This is God's supreme gift to sinful humanity.

12. Does our law-keeping make any contribution towards justification by faith?

Romans 3:28

Note: Justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ is the very opposite of salvation by works of the law. The two are diametrically opposed to each other. That is why the two methods of salvation (law and grace) cannot be reconciled.

13. What logical conclusion does Paul draw from this verse?

Romans 11:6

Note: The New International Version says, “And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.” In other words, we cannot be saved by both methods; it is either one or the other. To be saved by grace means “not I, but Christ.”

14. If we cannot be justified by the works of the law, how are we justified?

Ephesians 2:8,9

Note: The New Testament makes it absolutely clear that man's only hope of salvation is by faith in Christ. This is what it means to be saved by grace. We cannot earn it but simply accept it as a gift from God.

15. Does this justification by faith do away with the law?

Romans 3:31

Note: The word faith in this text is preceded by the definite article "the" in the original. Paul's real question was, "Do we then make void the law

through the faith?” By “the faith” Paul is referring to the doctrine of justification by faith and not the believer’s faith. In other words, did God ignore or bypass the law to save us? The answer Paul gives is a definite NO! God had to fully satisfy the law to save us. By His perfect obedience and His sacrificial death Christ met the full demands of the law on man’s behalf. This is how the law was established by grace.

16. Does a Christian saved by grace no longer need to keep the law?

Matthew 5:17-19

Note: The Pharisees of Christ’s day accused Him of undermining or doing away with the law. Christ, in turn, made it clear that He came to fulfill all the demands of the law on man’s behalf, and then upheld it as the standard of Christian living.

17. How does Paul describe those who still want

to be saved by the law?

Galatians 5:1

Note: The Galatians became Christians through righteousness by faith, but false teachers convinced them that it is not enough to believe in Christ to be saved. They insisted that keeping the law was still required for salvation. This is the yoke of bondage.

18. In contrast, what does the yoke of Christ do to the believer?

Matthew 11:28,29

Note: Christ was totally God-dependent when He lived on this earth. He made it clear that He could do nothing of Himself (John 5:30). Now He tells us Christians to take His yoke and depend totally on Him for salvation. This is the only way

we can find rest or peace for our souls.

19. Does salvation by grace give us license to sin?

Galatians 5:13

Note: Since our law-keeping does not save us, the great danger we face under grace is condoning sin. This is called “cheap grace.” But being saved by grace gives us no such liberty. Instead, it creates in us love for others and a hatred for sin.

20. In loving others as ourselves, what are we fulfilling?

Galatians 5:14

21. In the New Covenant, where does God write His law?

Hebrews 8:10

Note: Besides giving peace and assurance of salvation to the believer, God also puts His unselfish agape love in the heart of the believer, creating desires that are in harmony with the spirit of His law, which is love. This is also part of the New Covenant. This love manifests itself in good deeds to our fellow men (see Titus 3:8).

22. When was God's strength or His grace made perfect in Paul?

2 Corinthians 12:9

Note: God's strength does not depend upon our natural abilities. He can take our weakness and turn it into strength. That is why Paul could say to the Christians in Philippi: "I can do all things through

Christ who strengthens me” (see Philippians 4:13).

23. Besides being saved, what were we created in Christ Jesus to do?

Ephesians 2:10

Note: God did not save us in Christ only from death to life or from condemnation to justification, but also from a life of sin to a life of good works. These good works do not save us but witness the salvation we already have in Christ.

24. What is the greatest evidence we can give that we are Christ’s followers?

John 13:35

Note: When we love each other as Christ loved us, this is true commandment-keeping. If we speak

like angels, understand all mysteries, do many good works, and even give our bodies to be burnt, but do not manifest the love of God, it will profit us nothing (see 1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

25. How does the Bible describe the last generation of Christians?

Revelation 14:12

Note: Through the everlasting gospel, the Christians who are living just prior to the second coming of Christ will develop the endurance of the saints, have the faith manifested by Jesus, and demonstrate this by their unconditional love, which is the true fulfillment of the law (see Romans 13:10). May you be one of them.

Study #12

The Blessed Hope

In our earlier studies we discovered that God has obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race in Jesus Christ. However, when it comes to actually experiencing this full salvation in the life of the believer, it is realized in three stages.

The first is referred to as justification by faith. This is experienced the moment one believes the gospel and receives Jesus as one's personal Saviour. The immediate result of justification by faith, as we saw in (Study #6), is peace with God (see Romans 5:1). This experience also results in the new birth in which the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the believer (Study #8).

While justification by faith changes our standing before God from condemnation to justification, it does not change the believer's sinful nature. That is why we need the indwelling

of the Holy Spirit to make the second stage of salvation possible. This second phase is holy living, commonly referred to as sanctification. This is realized only as the believer learns to walk in the Spirit (Study #9).

However, even the experience of sanctification does not bring about any change to the nature itself, which remains sinful all the believer's life. This sinful nature is the greatest hindrance to holy living and that is why Christians long to experience the third phase of salvation. This final stage of salvation is glorification and will take place at the Second Coming of Christ. The Bible refers to this ultimate experience of salvation as "the blessed hope" and this study will cover that topic.

1. What hope does Jesus give to His disciples in this passage?

John 14:1,2

Note: The phrase “you believe in God” or “trust in God” is in the imperative. This means we Christians are never to doubt God’s promise of salvation while we struggle to live the Christian life in this world.

2. When will this ultimate hope of salvation take place?

John 14:3

Note: The Second Coming of Christ is the blessed hope of every Christian. Until then we must realize, and constantly keep reminding ourselves, that we are citizens of heaven but still living in this wicked world controlled by Satan.

3. What is the basis for this blessed hope?

Titus 2:11

Note: The believer's blessed hope is not in one's performance but in the truth that salvation is already an accomplished fact for him or her in Jesus Christ.

4. What does this accomplished salvation in Christ teach us to do?

Titus 2:12

Note: While our salvation is guaranteed in Christ, this does not give the believer license to sin. The good news of the gospel saves us not only from the punishment of sin but also from its slavery. Therefore, even though we may be struggling to live the Christian life because of our sinful natures, we must never condone sinning.

5. How does Paul describe the Second Coming of Christ?

Titus 2:13

6. What do Christians wait eagerly for while they are living in this world?

Romans 8:22,23

7. What will Christ do to our bodies when He comes the second time?

Philippians 3:20,21

Note: As mentioned above, no change takes place in our sinful nature or bodies when we are justified by faith or experience sanctification. Therefore, the blessed hope of our bodies being redeemed from the corruption of sin is at the

Second Coming. Only then will we be made righteous (see Romans 5:18b). Until then, we are righteous only in Christ and Him crucified.

8. In view of the above, how is faith described in the book of Hebrews?

Hebrews 11:1

Note: In righteousness by faith we are declared righteous only in Christ, even though we may experience victory over sin in our daily life. It is only at the Second Coming of Christ that we will truly be made righteous.

9. In order for us to experience this ultimate salvation, what must we do?

2 Timothy 4:7,8

Note: While the Bible gives full assurance of salvation to believers it does not teach, as some Christians teach, that “once saved” means “always saved.” For as long as you have faith in Christ your salvation is guaranteed, but the moment you turn your back to Christ through unbelief, you are also turning your back to your salvation in Christ.

10. What warning does the Bible give to those who are tempted to give up their faith in Christ?

Hebrews 10:37,38

11. Therefore, what admonition did Jesus give to His disciples?

Matthew 10:22

Note: Because Christians are living in a sinful world that has turned its back to Christ and is dominated by Satan, we may have to face many trials in this life. But this suffering is only temporary. That is why we must not focus on the hardships of our present life but on Christ, who will deliver us from all these at His Second Coming.

12. What will happen if we do draw or shrink back and give up our faith?

Hebrews 10:39

Note: The righteousness that saves us and entitles us for heaven is always in Christ; that the devil cannot touch. But the faith that makes that righteousness effective in us, that the devil can destroy. Therefore the most valuable thing we Christians possess is our faith in Christ. To give it up is to give up heaven itself.

13. What counsel does Jesus give us regarding His soon coming and why?

Revelation 3:11

(i)

(ii)

14. How is the second coming of Christ looked upon by the lost?

Revelation 6:15-17

Note: While the Second Coming of Christ is the blessed hope for the Christian, it is the very opposite to the unbelievers who have rejected the gift of salvation in Christ. It is referred to as “the great day of His wrath.” That is why it is foolish to reject or give up the gift of salvation in Christ.

15. What will all the nations of the earth do when they see the Son of God coming in the clouds?

Matthew 24:30

Note: In contrast, the believers will rejoice. They will shout for joy: “This is our Saviour; we have been waiting for Him.” This is the blessed hope.

16. What will the unbelievers be saying just before the second advent?

1 Thessalonians 5:2-4

Note: Today, there is much talk in the political world about “peace and safety” but we Christians

must not be deceived by such talk. The Bible is clear that at such a time, sudden destruction will take place.

17. In view of the above, what admonition does Jesus give to believers?

Luke 12:40

Note: Time and time again the Bible warns us that the second coming of Christ will take even the Christians by surprise. That is why we must always be ready by keeping our faith focused on Christ.

18. What will happen if you are not waiting and watching for the second Advent?

Revelation 16:15

Note: To come as a thief in the night means that the coming of Christ will be at an unexpected time, even for Christians. Therefore, we must not be fooled by the political situation or by those who claim that His coming cannot be near.

19. How will Christ respond to those who claim they deserve to be saved because of their good works?

Matthew 7:21-23

Note: Unfortunately, there are many today who think because they are involved in some kind of Christian ministry they will be saved. Salvation is through faith alone and good works are the inevitable fruits of it. Nothing we do can contribute towards our salvation which is by grace alone. However, the fruits of salvation by grace is always good works (see Ephesians 2:8-10).

20. Before Christ comes, what will the last

generation of Christians experience?

Jeremiah 30:7

Note: The time of Jacob's trouble is the great tribulation that the last generation of Christians will have to endure before Christ comes. This is the final showdown between Satan, the enemy of souls, and Christ the redeemer.

21. What did Jesus say will be tested during the great tribulation?

Luke 18:8

Note: During the great tribulation the supreme test will be the faith of the believers. At this time God will produce a people whose faith in Christ is unshakable, even though they feel forsaken of God. Thus the power of the gospel will be vindicated

and Christ can come to take the Christians home. These faithful ones are referred to as the 144,000, God's remnant (a subject we will study later on).

Dear believer, we are living close to the testing time and my prayer is that you may be among the faithful ones. Whatever trials you are facing now or will have to face in the future, always remember that the blessed hope for us Christians is the second coming of Christ. Remember this promise, "The one who calls you is faithful and will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

Study #13

The Godhead

In Matthew 28:19,20 Jesus commissioned His disciples to go into all the world and make disciples (followers of Christ) of all nations, teaching them to observe all things that He commanded them. Now that you have believed the gospel and have personally become a follower of Christ, we will turn our attention to the doctrines of the Bible. The next thirteen lessons will therefore cover the main doctrines of Scripture, beginning with the Godhead.

God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever-present. He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation. He is forever worthy of worship, adoration, and service by the whole of creation.

The doctrine of the Godhead is based on the Biblical truth that there is one God constituting a

unity of three co-eternal divine persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This profound truth is beyond our finite human understanding but is a truth clearly revealed in the Word of God and we accept it by faith.

All three members of the Godhead are infinitely concerned and involved in the redemption of mankind. The Father chairs the plan of salvation, the Son is the Saviour of the world, and the Holy Spirit communicates this salvation to the human race and in the life of the believers.

In this lesson we will study what the Bible reveals about the triune God and the part each member of the Godhead plays in their united effort to save fallen humanity from the sin problem.

1. What two pronouns are used to indicate that there is more than one person in the Godhead involved in the creation of man?

Genesis 1:26:

(i)

(ii)

Note: The pronoun “us” and “our” clearly indicate that the Godhead consists of more than one person (see also Genesis 3:22; 11:7). In the Old Testament the name for God is “Elohim.” In the Hebrew language, the singular for God is “El,” the dual for God is “Elohim,” and the plural for God is “Elohim.” Thus the very name for God points to the fact that the Godhead consists of at least three persons. It is in the New Testament we fully realize that the Godhead constitutes three divine persons — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

2. In what three names did Jesus say believers are to be baptized?

Matthew 28:19:

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

Note: The reason why a believer is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, is because all three members of the Godhead are actively involved in our salvation. It is important that from the very start of our Christian experience we realize that all three members of the Godhead are infinitely concerned about our salvation.

3. How does Paul describe the Godhead's involvement in our salvation?

2 Corinthians 13:14

Jesus-Christ

God the Father

The Holy Spirit

Note: In this benediction, the apostle Paul clearly indicates that all three members of the Godhead are actively involved in the redemption of mankind. Let us now proceed to see what part each plays in the plan of salvation.

4. What part does the Father play in the plan of redemption?

John 3:16

Note: As the chairperson of the plan of salvation, God the Father so loved the world that He gave His Son to be the redeemer of fallen humanity. According to verse 17, the Father did not send His Son to condemn us sinners but to save fallen humanity. This is the divine purpose of the Godhead.

5. When the fullness of time came, why did the Father send His Son to be under the law?

Galatians 4:4,5

Note: God the Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem mankind from under the law that condemns all sinners to death. By His perfect life and His sacrificial death, Christ satisfied the holy demands of the law on behalf of all humanity. All who believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life. This is the good news of the gospel.

6. What was Christ, the Word, made in order to be the Saviour of the world?

John 1:14

Note: In order to be our substitute and representative, Christ had to be united to the human race that needed redeeming. In the incarnation, God the Father, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, united the divine life of His Son to the corporate life of the human race. He came to redeem. By this act, Christ, the Son of God, was made flesh and became the Son of man. This qualified Him to be the Saviour of the world.

7. At the end of His saving mission, what two things did Jesus say to His Father?

John 17:4

(i)

(ii)

8. What is Christ the end of, to all who believe in Him?

Romans 10:4

Note: The Greek word “end” can either mean “terminated” or “completed.” Both meanings are true of what Christ accomplished in His earthly mission. By His perfect life and sacrificial death, Christ fully satisfied the demands of the law on man’s behalf. Thus He terminated legalism (the need to keep the law in order to be saved), as well as becoming man’s complete righteousness.

9. What happens to a sinner who believes in the Father who sent His Son to save the world?

John 5:24

10. Whom did Jesus promise His Father would send after He returned to heaven?

John 14:16

Note: The Greek word translated “comforter” or “counselor” is paracletos. It means someone who is by your side to guide, comfort, encourage, and meet all your needs.

11. Who is this Comforter or Counselor and what is His mission?

John 14:26

12. What did Jesus promise the disciples when He gave them the commission to preach the

gospel into all the world?

Acts 1:8

Note: Jesus promised His weak disciples the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out His great commission of witnessing the gospel to the world. That same power is available to us who are called to witness Christ to our modern world.

13. Of what three things does the Holy Spirit convince or reprove the world?

John 16:8

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

14. How did Jesus define sin in the above text?

John 16:9

Note: We often limit sin to transgression of the law. But here Christ defines sin as unbelief because it is only this sin that will deprive us of heaven. Every sin against the law can be forgiven because of the cross, but the sin of unbelief, (deliberately rejecting the convictions of the Holy Spirit), is the unpardonable sin (see Matthew 12:31).

15. How did Jesus explain righteousness?

John 16:10

Note: Since it was the Father who sent His Son to save the world, Jesus could not return to the Father until His earthly mission was complete. Going to the Father means that Christ obtained a righteousness that qualifies sinners for heaven. This is the good news of the gospel!

16. Why must the world be convicted of judgment?

John 16:11

Note: When Adam sinned, the whole human race was taken captive by Satan. On the cross, Jesus bought us back and Satan was judged for destruction (see John 12:31). Those who refuse God's gift of redemption in Christ must be warned

that they are deliberately choosing their destruction with Satan (see Matthew 25:41).

17. What great comfort does Paul give to those who put their trust in God for salvation?

Romans 8:31

Note: The wonderful truth about the Godhead is that God is on the side of the believer. While it is true that Satan is against us and accuses us day and night (see Revelation 12:10), the good news is that he is a defeated foe and all who put their faith in Christ will be vindicated in the judgment (read Romans 8:35-39).

18. What is cast out by the knowledge of the Godhead's love for us?

1 John 4:16-18

Note: As Christians we no longer have to fear the judgment of God. The Godhead is on our side and will never let us down. With such peace, dear believer, you can live above the problems and heartaches of this life.

Study #14

Creation

One of the great issues facing the Christian Church today has to do with the arguments between creation and evolution. Ever since Charles Darwin published his ideas in his book, *On The Origin Of Species*, in 1859, the story of creation as recorded in the book of Genesis is being challenged, even within the Church.

This controversy is more than a scientific problem and definitively affects our understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Why is this so? Because, according to the good news of salvation, when Christ comes the second time to take the believers to heaven, the dead in Christ will be raised instantly with perfect glorified bodies (see 1Corinthians 15:51,52).

This truth flies in the face of what evolution teaches. If it took millions of years for man to develop to his present stage, then, obviously, it is

impossible for man to be raised from the dust with a perfect body in an instant. Yet this is the clear teaching of the Bible.

While creation cannot be proven, neither has the scientific method demonstrated evolution. It is still a theory or idea awaiting confirmation. Therefore, both creation and evolution are today accepted by faith—the former by faith in God’s Word and the latter by faith in the opinions of scientific man.

In this study we will examine what the Bible says about the creation of the world, especially of mankind. We must keep in mind that every heresy that has crept into the Christian church is ultimately an attack on the gospel of Jesus Christ. This includes the theory of evolution which denies the creative power of God. Therefore, we will study the truth about creation in the light of the gospel hope.

1. According to the Bible, who created our universe?

Genesis 1:1

2. How long did it take God to create the heaven and the earth?

Exodus 20:11

Note: Scripture clearly teaches that God created this world in six days. He spoke and it happened. It is hard for our finite minds to understand how God could speak and things come into existence, but the Bible declares it so and we accept it by faith (read Genesis chapter one).

3. How did Paul distinguish the true and living God from the false ones?

Acts 14:15

Note: All through the Bible, the true and living God is distinguished from all false gods by the fact that He alone created all living things. He only is the source of life. In contrast, evolution teaches that life came into existence by chance.

4. According to David, what do the heavens declare?

Psalms 19:1

5. What evidence does Paul give that the invisible God does exist?

Romans 1:20

Note: While God may not be seen, one of the greatest proofs of His existence is creation. To

believe that this highly complex world of ours came about by chance, as do the evolutionists, requires more faith than belief in an all-powerful God who created our universe.

6. How does Paul describe those who change the glory of the incorruptible God into man-made images?

Romans 1:21-23

Note: While those who turn their backs on God today no longer worship graven images, they have created their own gods according to their own foolish reasoning. Evolution is based on man's ideas contrary to what the Bible teaches. Therefore, the theory of evolution is a false, man-made god.

7. According to the New Testament, who actually created our world?

John 1:1-3

Note: The Word is none other than Jesus Christ, who was made flesh in order to redeem fallen mankind (see verse 14). While all three members of the Godhead were involved in creation, it was Christ who spoke and brought our world into existence.

8. For how much of creation is Christ responsible?

Colossians 1:16

Note: Not only is Christ the one by whom God created our universe, but He is also our redeemer, intercessor, and, finally, will be our restorer. If we deny His act of creation, how can we accept Him as our Saviour?

9. On what grounds do we Christians believe

Christ created this world without the use of pre-existing matter?

Hebrews 11:3

Note: Faith is taking God at His word, even though what He says in Scripture disagrees with our experience, our rationale, or the scientific method. Without this faith we cannot please God. In the Bible, Abraham is the father of all true believers. His faith is set as an example of what our faith must be (read Romans 4:16-22).

10. In order to have faith in God, what must we believe?

Hebrews 11:6

11. According to the following text, do you think Jesus believed in the Genesis account of the

creation of Adam and Eve?

Mark 10:6

Note: Reading through the four gospels — Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John — it becomes clear that Jesus understood the Genesis account of creation as being a historical fact. Never once did He even hint or imply that the human race was the result of millions of years of the evolutionary process.

12. Through whom did sin and death enter the world?

Romans 5:12

Note: The one man who brought sin and death into this world was Adam. Sin is not the leftovers of our animal nature, as the evolutionists teach, but

the result of the Fall. According to Scripture, mankind is not getting better and better but is going from bad to worse. The history of this world and today's news media clearly reveals this Biblical fact.

13. Who are the two men, one responsible for death and the other for the resurrection to life?

1 Corinthians 15:21,22

Note: Unlike the theory of evolution, the Bible teaches that Adam was created perfect, in the image of God (see Genesis 1:26,27). But by the Fall, Adam ruined the whole human race. If we deny this Biblical fact then we have to deny the reverse, which is that God redeemed all men in one man, Jesus Christ.

14. Who is used by Paul as a pattern or type of Adam?

Romans 5:14

Note: The one to come is none other than Jesus Christ. In an earlier study (Lesson #1) we discovered that God created all men in one man (see Acts 17:26). That man was named Adam because the name means mankind. Likewise, Christ is called the second or last Adam because he represented all humanity in His work of redemption.

15. In what sense was Adam a type or pattern of Christ?

Romans 5:15

Note: The reason why Adam's and Christ's actions affected "the many" (i.e., the human race) is because all of humanity was in each of these two men — in Adam by creation and in Christ by the

incarnation.

16. How many stand condemned because of Adam's sin, and how many were justified to life by Christ's obedience?

Romans 5:18

Note: It would be impossible for these two facts to have taken place if the theory of evolution is correct. That is why anyone who denies the truth about creation, as revealed in Scripture, must deny the truth about the two Adams. Once that is done, the whole foundation of the gospel message is destroyed.

17. What blessed hope did Job express in the face of death and being eaten by worms?

Job 19:25-27

Note: This blessed hope of seeing our redeemer with our resurrected physical bodies can only become a reality because of the creative power of Christ. Deny this power and we have to deny the blessed hope.

18. What will Christ do to our sinful bodies when He comes again?

Philippians 3:20,21

19. How long will it take Christ to change our bodies from corruption to incorruption?

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Note: This wonderful change becomes impossible if the only power God has is to create us through the process of evolution. Not only is it

necessary to believe in the six-day creation story to uphold the gospel truth, but the blessed hope becomes impossible if we deny the creative power of God.

20. What admonition does Paul give to believers who have lost a loved one?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Note: As Christians, we look at death as a sleep because we have the hope of the resurrection. Therefore, when a believer dies, even though it brings us grief, we do not have to mourn as the unbelievers do. The Christ who created us is also the Christ who has redeemed us and conquered the grave for us. Remember, dear friend, science has no solution for the death problem, but Christ does!

Study #15

The Sabbath Rest

One of the main reasons Christ came to our world as the Saviour of mankind was to bring rest to human restlessness. Sin has not only separated us from God but has inflicted guilt and shame on the human race, causing much stress and restlessness. That's why Christ gave this invitation to the discouraged Jews of His day: "Come unto me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Since the Fall, that divine rest which Christ came to give sinful humanity is linked with the Sabbath. That is why it was included in the ten commandments as part of the covenant God made with Israel. Unfortunately, many Christians limit this Sabbath commandment, requiring God's people to keep the Sabbath holy, to only the Old Covenant. However, you will not find this taught in Scripture. The Sabbath is vitally linked with the New Covenant.

As we saw in our study of the two covenants, the difference between the Old and the New Covenants is that the former offered salvation on the basis of man's obedience to the law, while the latter was based on God's promise to meet the law's demands for the human race in Christ.

The New Covenant does not do away with the law, as some teach, but writes it in our hearts (see Hebrews 8:7-10). In this study we will examine what the Bible teaches regarding the Sabbath, as part of the New Covenant of salvation by grace, in the redemption that is ours in Christ.

1. According to the fourth commandment, to whom does the Sabbath belong?

Exodus 20:10

Note: All through the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, we find that the Sabbath belongs to

God and not man. Yes, it was made for man but it does not belong to him (see also Exodus 31:13).

2. According to the prophet Isaiah, whose holy day is the Sabbath?

Isaiah 58:13

3. What promise does God make to those who keep His Sabbath holy?

Isaiah 58:14

4. Why did God rest on the seventh day of creation and sanctify it?

Genesis 2:1-3

Note: There are two reasons why God rested on the seventh day of creation. The first was because all that He had created was “very good,” i.e., absolutely perfect (see Genesis 1:31). The second was because “the heavens and the earth were finished” (Genesis 2:1). Therefore, the reason God rested (the meaning of Sabbath) and set aside (the meaning of sanctified) the seventh day was to commemorate a perfect and finished work.

5. For whom did Jesus say the Sabbath was made?

Mark 2:27

Note: Please note, Jesus did not say that the Sabbath was made for the Jews but for man, i.e., mankind. It was at creation that the Sabbath was set aside (sanctified) for man. The reason for this will be answered in the next two questions.

6. Upon which day of the week were Adam and

Eve created?

Genesis 1:26,27,31

Note: Adam and Eve were created at the end of the sixth day. This means that God's Sabbath was really their first whole day. Therefore, while the Sabbath is God's seventh day it is our first day, since the human race was created in Adam (see Acts 17:26). Consequently, when we consider the Sabbath from God's point of view, we begin by resting on God's Sabbath and then work the other six days. This order becomes significant when we consider the Sabbath in the light of redemption.

7. What did God give mankind after He created us in Adam?

Psalms 8:4-8

Note: God created man to have dominion over all of creation. But he himself was to be totally God-dependent. Adam made no contribution to creation but was only its recipient. The Sabbath was therefore made or set aside (sanctified) for man to be a constant reminder of this fact. When we live independent of God we are really breaking the Sabbath covenant.

8. What did God say to Adam after the Fall?

Genesis 3:19

Note: When Adam and Eve sinned, they turned their backs on God and became self-dependent. That is why, after the Fall, God said they would eat their bread by the sweat of their brow. At the Fall, the Sabbath covenant was broken since our first parents were no longer God-dependent.

9. According to the New Testament, who actually created our world?

John 1:3

Note: Jesus is the Word by whom God created all things. He was the spokesman for the Godhead when this world of ours was created. That is why He could claim to be the Lord of the Sabbath (see Mark 2:28).

10. What was the Word made in order to save fallen mankind?

John 1:14

Note: At the incarnation, Jesus, who created the world, became one of us in order to be the Saviour of the world. By His perfect life and sacrificial death He redeemed mankind and restored the Sabbath rest.

11. What reason did Jesus give the Jews of the Exodus for keeping the Sabbath day holy?

Deuteronomy 5:15

Note: According to 1 Corinthians 10, the Exodus is a type of salvation from our bondage to sin. By commanding the Jews of the Exodus to keep His Sabbath, God gave the Sabbath a redemptive significance. This is how we must consider the Sabbath under the New Covenant.

12. Why did the majority of the adult Jews who were delivered from Egypt never reach Canaan?

Hebrews 3:18,19

Note: Unbelief is deliberately turning one's back on God. In spite of all the miraculous

evidence God gave the Jews of the Exodus concerning His saving power, it is sad to say that the majority turned their backs on Him.

13. What is God's rest linked with in the book of Hebrews?

Hebrews 4:1,2

Note: In these verses, entering into God's rest is linked with believing the gospel. This is because Jesus, who created this world, is also the source of our redemption. As Adam and Eve entered into God's rest at creation, so also must we enter by faith into the rest God has obtained for us in Jesus Christ.

14. Why is this divine rest of the gospel linked with the seventh day?

Hebrews 4:3,4

Note: Our salvation was planned in Christ before the foundation of the world (see Ephesians 1:4). Just as Jesus created a perfect and finished world by the end of the sixth day and rested in the seventh, He finished our redemption in the sixth day (Friday) and rested in the tomb on the Sabbath.

15. What still remains for the people of God to do?

Hebrews 4:9

Note: Since the epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to the First Century Jews, the phrase “the people of God” refers to the Jewish nation. The word “rest” in this text is Sabbatismos, a keeping of the Sabbath. Even though the Jewish nation was keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, in God’s eyes this was meaningless as long as they rejected Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath.

16. What happens when the people of God do enter God's rest?

Hebrews 4:10

Note: When we, by faith, enter into God's rest and depend totally on Christ's perfect and finished redemption for our salvation, we will cease trying to add our own works of the law towards that salvation (see Galatians 5:4). The keeping of the Sabbath as a day of rest reminds us of this fact.

17. What did Christ cry out on the cross regarding our salvation?

John 19:30

Note: When Jesus cried out "it is finished," He was proclaiming to the world that His saving

mission had been accomplished. This took place at the end of the sixth day (Friday) just before the Sabbath had begun (read Luke 23:44-56).

18. When Jesus eradicates sin and ushers in everlasting righteousness in the earth made new, what will the redeemed do every Sabbath?

Isaiah 66:22,23

Note: When we consider the Sabbath in the light of the full and complete plan of redemption, we discover that the Sabbath, God's seventh day, points to three important facts. First, it points to a perfect and finished creation which sin has marred and ruined. Secondly, it points to a perfect and finished redemption realized on the cross of Christ. Finally, it points forward to a perfect and finished restoration.

19. Of what is the Sabbath a covenant sign?

Exodus 31:13

Note: After the Fall the Sabbath was given a redemptive significance. It was made a covenant sign that God would step into our shoes in the person of Christ and make us holy and blameless in Him. All those who enter God's rest and keep the Sabbath (not as a means of salvation but as their confession of faith in Christ) are guaranteed the salvation which Christ has obtained for everyone at the cross (see Hebrews 10:14).

Conclusion: The Sabbath rest was not merely given exclusively for the Jews, but was made for man (see again Mark 2:27). In fact, you can search the Scriptures from now until the end of the world and you will not find even one text making the seventh-day Sabbath exclusive only to the Jewish people. Regarding the fantastic good news of our salvation and rest in Christ, it can be truly said that the Sabbath is the outward sign of our inward experience of again becoming totally dependent on

God's salvation in Christ and resting from our own futile efforts to save ourselves through legalistic attempts to earn salvation through works of the law. In light of this truth, Sabbath keeping becomes a delight and a joy which beautifully represents the fact that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone and not of works, lest any man should boast (see Ephesians 2:8-9).

Isn't it wonderful to know that God's special blessing is promised to those who remember to appreciate and observe His holy day?

Study #16

Christian Stewardship

When Adam sinned, he sold the whole human race to Satan. As a result, Scripture tells us that, apart from the redemption we have through Jesus Christ, the whole world is under the sway of the evil one. That is why Jesus referred to Satan as the “prince of this world” on more than one occasion (see John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).

When we, by faith, accept Christ as our personal Saviour, we not only pass from death to life, or from condemnation to justification, but we also change our spiritual citizenship from this doomed world under Satan and we become citizens of heaven, the kingdom of God (1 John 5:19).

Therefore, as Christians we are God’s stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We acknowledge God’s ownership of all that we are and have by faithful

service to Him and our fellowman. We also acknowledge His ownership by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church, the body of Christ.

True Christian stewardship is a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love and the victory over selfishness and covetousness. As ambassadors of Christ we represent Him here on earth by our faithful stewardship to the gospel commission. This is what this study on Christian stewardship is all about.

1. To whom does this earth and all it contains belong?

Psalm 24:1

2. To whom did God give dominion over this earth and all that it contains?

Psalms 8:4-8

3. Who claimed this dominion when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness?

Luke 4:5,6

Note: At creation God placed man in charge of all that He had created (see Genesis 1:26). When Adam and Eve sinned, Satan usurped this dominion and became the prince of this world. Therefore, apart from the redeeming grace of Christ, humanity is a slave to Satan. This is mankind's predicament.

4. What price did Christ pay in order to redeem the human race?

Matthew 26:28

Note: The word “blood” in the Bible represents life, and shed blood means life laid down in death. This was the infinite price Christ paid for our redemption.

5. When was this infinite price paid?

John 12:31-33

Note: When Christ laid down His life in death at the cross, He was paying the infinite price for our sins by accepting its wages on man’s behalf. Therefore, when we by faith accept Christ as our Saviour we also recognize Him as our Lord and Master.

6. As a result of what happened at the cross, to whom do Christians belong?

1 Corinthians 6:19,20

Note: At the cross Christ reclaimed as His own that which man had surrendered to Satan at the Fall. Because Christians have accepted this salvation in Christ, God now appoints His people to serve as stewards of His possessions.

7. How are Christians to acknowledge God's ownership?

1 Corinthians 10:31

Note: Life can be divided into four basic areas, each a gift from God. He gave us a body, abilities, time, and material possessions. As God's stewards we must take care of all four as faithful stewards.

8. What does God require of believers as His stewards?

1 Corinthians 4:2

Note: A steward is a person entrusted with management of the estate of another. To the Christian, stewardship means being responsible for, and the use of, everything entrusted to the believer by God—life, physical being, time, talents, and possessions.

9. What is our main responsibility as God's stewards?

2 Corinthians 5:20

Note: As God's stewards, our main responsibility is to witness the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to our fellowman. This means sharing with others the good news of the gospel, that in Jesus Christ they have already been reconciled to God (verses 18, 19).

10. To whom are we to administer the gifts God has given us?

1 Peter 4:10

11. What are we to avoid as God's faithful stewards?

1 Timothy 6:20

Note: As God's faithful stewards, we are to avoid any controversy that creates doubts about God or what He has revealed in His Word. True faith is taking God at His word even though it may disagree with our rationale or the opinions of science.

12. What is the root of all evil that we must avoid as faithful stewards?

1 Timothy 6:10

Note: Please notice that the text does not say that money is the root of all evil but the love of it. Money is the ingredient that runs this world. As citizens of heaven it is not a sin to be rich, but we must not make money our god. Like the apostle Paul, we must learn to be content with whatever condition we find ourselves in (read Philippians 4:11-13).

13. What are we guilty of when we fail to support God's church in tithes and offerings?

Malachi 3:8-10

Note: The tithe is a tenth of all that we earn, and offerings are what we give of our own free will for the cause of God. When we fail in these things

it is an outward sign that our faith in God's ability to take care of us is weak. Please notice that when the Jews failed to pay tithes and offerings, this was an indication that they had turned their backs on God (read verses 6,7).

14. Who are the two masters we cannot serve at the same time?

Matthew 5:24

Note: Money is the god of this world. Therefore, one cannot make money one's god and at the same time be loyal to Christ. Being a Christian means we become totally God-dependent.

15. On whom must we Christians fully rely for our every need?

Matthew 6:33

Note: To understand the full implication of this statement, please read verses 25-34. Here Jesus is teaching His followers that, when we become Christians, we must place ourselves entirely in the hands of God for our every need. This does not mean we must not work for our living but that our ultimate confidence for survival is God, who is able to supply all our needs.

16. How should we live while we patiently wait for the Lord's return?

Luke 19:13

17. Since we Christians admit we belong to God, how should we live?

Romans 14:8

Note: Because by faith we admit we belong to God, we must consider everything we are and have as God's — our bodies, our money, our time, and all our God-given abilities. To be faithful stewards, we must join Paul in declaring: For me to live is Christ (Philippians 1:21).

18. What attitude should believers have regarding their possessions?

Acts 4:32

Note: The idea that all we possess belongs to God is not easy for our sinful natures to accept. It is only through experiencing the power of the cross that we can accept this fact and really know this truth.

19. How much did Jesus say the poor widow gave to God?

Mark 12:41-44

Note: This poor widow gave what she really needed to survive. In giving all to the cause of God, she was manifesting complete faith in God's promise to take care of her. This is true stewardship.

20. After admonishing young Timothy to flee from covetousness, what six things did he advise him to follow after?

1 Timothy 6:11

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

(vi)

21. What is the greatest battle we engage in our Christian walk?

1 Timothy 6:12

Note: Because Christians are citizens of heaven but live on earth, Satan's domain, our faith will always be tested. This is especially true in the areas of stewardship. Faithful stewardship is a vital part of our fight against unbelief.

22. What warning does the writer of Hebrews give to his readers?

Hebrews 3:12

Note: To say good-bye to your faith in Christ is to say good-bye to salvation in Christ (see Hebrews 10:35-39). Christian stewardship is an outward evidence of our faith walk with Christ. This is what Christ will say of all faithful stewards: Well done, thou good and faithful servants: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (Matthew 25:21). May this be true of you.

Study #17

The State of the Dead

One of the questions that is uppermost in the minds of many is, what is the state of the dead? This is especially true if we have lost a loved one. Death is the “grim reaper” and as such, every one of us have to face it. According to the Bible all humanity is born slaves to the fear of death (see Hebrews 2:15). One main reason for this is because we do not know what our destiny is or what happens to us once we die.

Does the Bible have anything to say about this subject? The answer is a most definite yes. This is what these Bible studies are all about: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish [i.e., die], but have everlasting life.”

This eternal or everlasting life is God’s supreme gift to mankind. Many pagan religions and especially Greek mythology, teach that the

soul of man is immortal. Unfortunately, this idea of an immortal soul was borrowed from the Greeks by the early Church Fathers and made to be a part of Christian teaching. However, it may surprise you to know that the Bible does not teach this.

What then does the Bible teach about the soul and the state of man in death? Furthermore, if man does not have an immortal soul, where does one go after death? These are important questions that this lesson will answer.

1. What did Adam become when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life?

Genesis 2:7

Note: The primary meaning of the word soul is “the life principle.” That is why the same word “soul” is used in the original language of Scripture to define the life of animals. A good example is Genesis 1:20 where the word soul is translated in

the King James version to mean the word “life.”

2. What warning did God give our first parents if they disobeyed His command not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree?

Genesis 2:17

Note: The word “die” means to say good-bye to life. The life or soul that God created in Adam was not naturally immortal but conditionally immortal. As long as our first parents obeyed God they were given the privilege to live forever. But the moment they sinned their life would become mortal. That is what happened at the Fall and is what we inherited from them at birth.

3. Where did the idea of an immortal life or soul first come from?

Genesis 3:1-4

Note: The idea that sin does not deprive us of life came from Satan. That was his first lie which he has perpetuated since the Fall.

4. What is: (i) the wages of sin; and (ii) the gift of God through His Son?

Romans 6:23

(i)

(ii)

Note: Please notice that the wages of sin is the opposite of the gift of God. The former is good-bye to life while the later is eternal life.

5. Who only has natural immortality?

1 Timothy 6:13-6

Note: Only God has natural immortality. And this He bestows as a gift only on those who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.

6. What two things did Christ accomplish on the cross?

2 Timothy 1:10

(i)

(ii)

7. How does one receive the gift of eternal life?

1 John 5:11, 12

Note: When we by faith receive Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour the gift of eternal life becomes ours. Apart from Christ the only life we have is the mortal life we inherited from Adam.

8. What will be the consequences of rejecting the gift of eternal life God offers us in His Son?

Matthew 25:41

Note: The word “everlasting fire” can mean that the fire itself is everlasting or that the effect it has is everlasting. The Bible teaches the latter.

9. What example has God recorded in Scripture of the everlasting or eternal fire that will finally destroy the wicked?

Jude 7

Note: Today Sodom and Gomorrah lie in ruin and ashes. The destruction of these two cities by fire have been recorded in Scripture as a warning to mankind that all who rebel against the God of heaven will experience the same fate. Please read Genesis, chapter 19, for a description of why Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire.

10. What was Sodom and Gomorrah turned into as an example of the punishment of the wicked?

2 Peter 2:6

11. What happens to the soul that sins?

Ezekiel 18:4, 20

Note: Here is a clear statement in Scripture that when a soul sins it will die. By the word soul the Bible means the whole of the person who sins will

die. This is the wages of sin.

12. What happens to a person's knowledge and feelings when he or she dies?

Ecclesiastes 9:5,6

Note: In death all our thoughts and feelings come to an end. The Bible is clear that we cannot communicate with the dead. This too is a deception of the devil.

13. When one departs from the truth of the gospel and you bring that person back to the Lord, what have you saved that soul from?

James 5:19,20

Note: Once again, the word soul (KJV) means the total person. When Adam sinned, the total

person forfeited life and the only way to have eternal life is through faith in Christ.

14. When will the believers experience immortality?

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Note: It is only at the second coming of Christ that believers will experience immortality as a tangible reality. This is the blessed hope of all believers.

15. How did Christ describe the death of Lazarus to His disciples?

John 11:11-14

Note: Lazarus was a believer who had died of illness. Jesus described his death as a sleep because

Christians do not experience the eternal death.

16. What hope did Jesus give Martha, the sister of Lazarus, regarding the resurrection?

John 11:20-25

Note: The hope of a Christian is not experienced at death but at the resurrection. This will take place at the second coming of Christ.

17. What guarantee does the Bible give that believers will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ?

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

Note: Because Jesus has conquered the grave we believers have the guarantee that He can and will raise us from the dead.

18. If we deny the resurrection of Christ, what will happen to those who are asleep in Christ?

1 Corinthians 15:17, 18

19. Whose resurrection does the resurrection of Christ guarantee?

1 Corinthians 15:23

Note: There were some believers in Corinth who did not believe in the resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:12). Paul, however, makes it very clear in verses 13-19 that if we deny the resurrection of the believers, we have to deny the resurrection of Christ. According to this passage, the hope of the Christians is not going to heaven at death but at the resurrection, which will take place at the second coming of Jesus Christ.

20. Jesus promised His disciples that He would one day take them to heaven. When did He say this would happen?

John 14:3

Note: Jesus promised to take His followers to heaven at His second coming and not at death. The Bible is clear that believers are asleep in Christ until the resurrection.

21. What power cannot touch the believers who will experience the first resurrection?

Revelation 20:6

Note: The Bible speaks of two resurrections, just as it does of the two deaths. The first death is referred to as a sleep because it will be followed by

a resurrection. The first resurrection will consist of those believers who are asleep in Christ and will at that time experience everlasting life. The unbelievers will rise in a later resurrection and will then experience eternal damnation (see John 5:28,29). The wages of sin is the second death, good-bye to life forever. This is the eternal punishment.

22. Who will experience the second death?

Revelation 20:14,15

Note: Those who have rejected the gift of salvation in Christ have refused to have their names recorded in the book of life. Consequently, they will have to join Satan and his angels in the lake of fire that will completely destroy the wicked. May this never be true of you.

Study #18

Spiritual Gifts

When you accepted Christ as your personal Saviour, God sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in you and as a result you were baptized into the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:13). Hence, God's church on earth may be described as an extension of Christ to show forth the glory of God.

In order to function as the body of Christ, the church has been bestowed with certain gifts by the Holy Spirit. These gifts may be divided into two categories. The first category of gifts, such as apostles, prophecy, pastors, and teachers etc., are for the edification or building up of the church as a whole (see 1 Corinthians 12:7). The second category of gifts, such as miracles, healings, tongues, are supernatural signs and wonders manifested to witness the power of the gospel (see Acts 5:12).

Every believer is endowed with one or more

gifts. None are excluded. These gifts must not be equated with our natural talents or abilities but to the divine grace that the Holy Spirit bestows upon us in order that the church may grow up into Christ and witness the Saviour to the world.

In this study we will consider in general what these spiritual gifts are and zero in on the most important ones. We will concentrate on what the Bible says about the prophetic gift, since it is the gift that edifies the church.

1. When Christ ascended to heaven what did He bestow upon the church?

Ephesians 4:7,8

Note: Since the church is to represent Christ on earth, some of the first things Jesus bestowed on the believers, after He returned back to heaven, were gifts of grace known as spiritual gifts.

2. Who is the source of these spiritual gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:4

Note: The mission of the Holy Spirit in the church is to reproduce the life of Christ. In order to do this He bestows on all believers gifts or divine abilities so that each believer functions as part of the body of Christ.

3. For whose benefit are these gifts bestowed on individual believers?

1 Corinthians 12:7

Note: It is important that every believer understands the purpose of spiritual gifts. They are not for personal benefit alone but primarily for the common good of the whole church.

4. Who decides what gift or gifts an individual believer is to receive?

1 Corinthians 12:11

Note: It is not the believer or the church that determines which gift or gifts each person is to receive but the Holy Spirit. We must however keep in mind that these gifts are supernatural abilities and may have nothing to do with our natural talents or abilities.

5. What does Paul compare the church to in describing its mission?

1 Corinthians 12:12

Note: Like the human body, the church is also made up of many parts (i.e., members), yet constitutes one body, the body of Christ (see verse

13). That is why the greatest evidence the church can give to the world of the power of the gospel is when the church acts as one body perfectly united in love (see John 13:34,35).

6. As the body of Christ what should be the attitude of believers towards each other?

Romans 12:5

Note: Only the gospel of Christ can unite believers of various cultures and backgrounds into one unified body. Such a witness is the most powerful evidence that the gospel is able to unite men and women in love, something the world desperately needs to experience.

7. In order that the church may function as the body of Christ, what must each believer do with the gifts received?

Romans 12:6-8

Note: Just as the human body needs all its members to do its part, so every member of Christ's church is to use his or her gifts. Failure to do so is what paralyzes the witness of the church.

8. List the three most important gifts of the Holy Spirit as the apostle Paul enumerates them?

1 Corinthians 12:28

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

Note: Of the three important gifts, the gift of being an apostle is a unique one and was bestowed

only on the 11 disciples of Christ plus Paul. These men were chosen by God to lay the foundation of the church by establishing the truth as it is in Christ (see Ephesians 2:19,20).

9. Apart from the above three gifts, what other five gifts does the Holy Spirit bestow on the church?

1 Corinthians 12:28

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

(iv)

(v)

10. Next to the apostolic gift, the next most important gift is prophecy. Why is this so?

1 Corinthians 14:2,3

Note: Today much emphasis is given to speaking in tongues and very little is mentioned about the gift of prophecy. Yet the Bible places great importance in the gift of prophecy because it is the gift that builds up the church of Christ.

11. Who is edified by the two gifts, tongues and prophecy?

1 Corinthians 14:4

(i)

(ii)

12. To whose benefit are the two above gifts directed?

1 Corinthians 14:22

(tongues)

(prophecy)

Note: The purpose of the gift of tongues is not for the benefit of the believers themselves, as some use it today, but to give evidence to the unbelievers that the believer's tongue is controlled by a supernatural power. The prophetic gift is for the benefit of the church, to edify believers in their Christian walk.

13. What counsel does the apostle Paul give regarding the gift of prophecy?

1 Thessalonians 5:20

Note: While we are not to treat the prophetic gift with contempt, the apostle Paul does warn believers to test the gift before accepting it (see verse 21). The measuring stick for all truth is the Bible. All other truths must be verified by the words of Scripture.

14. What is the purpose of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 4:11,12

Note: The purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are twofold. The first is to build up the church in Christ. The second is to equip the church for service and to witness the gospel to the world.

15. How long are the gifts of the Holy Spirit to continue in the church?

Ephesians 4:13

Note: Apart from the apostolic gift all the other gifts of the Holy Spirit are to continue as long as time will last, until the church fully reflects Jesus Christ.

16. In prophesying about last day events, who did Christ predict would appear to deceive God's people?

Matthew 24:24

Note: As we approach the end of the world, false Christ's and false prophets will appear to deceive even the most mature believer. That is why we must be grounded in the Word of God as well

as to be always on our guard.

17. With what must all the messages we hear and read agree, for us to know it is from the Lord?

Isaiah 8:20

Note: The words and writings of modern day prophets are not to replace or substitute the words of Scripture. That is why everything must be evaluated and judged by what the Bible teaches. The Bible alone is the only standard of truth for what we believe and practice.

18. When a prophet makes predictions, how are we to know that they are from the Lord?

Jeremiah 28:9

Note: Since God only knows the future, the predictions of a true prophet will always come to pass, whether they be of peace or calamity. When some of the predictions of a prophet do not come to pass, we know he or she is not a true prophet (see also Deuteronomy 18:21,22).

19. What is one way we can identify a true prophet?

1 John 4:1-3

Note: In order for Christ to redeem fallen humanity, He had to become one of us by assuming the nature of the human race that needed redeeming (see John 1:14). Any prophet who denies this fundamental truth of the gospel is a false prophet.

20. Who controls a true prophet?

2 Peter 1:21

Note: Several ways you can distinguish a true prophet from a false one is to ask the following four questions:

Do these teachings agree with Scripture?

Do all their predictions come true?

Do their messages point to Christ rather than themselves?

Does their life-style agree with their message?

Study #19

Health Reform

The original sin of Adam affected mankind in three ways — spiritually, morally, and physically. Christ came as Saviour of the world to save humanity from these threefold effects of sin. Therefore, when we by faith receive Christ as our Saviour, we are to surrender to His transforming grace in all these three areas.

While we will not experience total salvation from the effects of sin until the second coming of Christ, in this study we will consider what the Bible has to say about our bodies and how we should take care of them while we wait for His return. This, too, is part of Christian living, the fruits of the gospel.

The reason why Christians must take care of their bodies is twofold. In the first place, when we believers experience the new birth and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we become the temple of God

(see 1 Corinthians 3:16). Therefore, we must treat our bodies as the house of God.

Secondly, as Christians we are ambassadors of Christ, called to witness Him to the world. In order that we may fully represent Christ and be used by His Spirit to glorify our Saviour, we must take good care of our bodies. The Holy Spirit can use us only in direct proportion to how healthy our bodies are.

Based on these twofold reasons, the Bible gives counsel on healthful living. When Israel was a theocracy (totally under God's rulership), God gave them all kinds of guidelines, not as a requirement for salvation but for their own good as His witnesses. Among these guidelines were many health principles or laws.

Since we are made of the same material as the Jews, these health principles and laws are just as valid today as they were in ancient times. In this study we will consider some of the basic health principles and laws laid down by God in His Word

as the fruits of salvation in Christ.

1. According to Paul, how much of the believer does God want to sanctify?

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Note: Since sin has affected the total person, God also plans to rescue the total person from the sin problem — spirit, soul, and body. This is part and parcel of His saving plan through the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. How does this total redemption affect our Christian living in terms of eating and drinking?

1 Corinthians 10:31

Note: Before our conversion we ate and drank

as we pleased, often abusing our bodies. But now that we belong to Christ and have become the temple of the Holy Spirit, God wants us to eat and drink for His glory. The principle of “not I, but Christ” also applies to what we eat and drink.

3. As Christians, who do we belong to and live for?

Romans 14:8

Note: Because Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us on the cross (see Galatians 3:13), we belong to Him — spirit, soul, and body. Out of a heartfelt appreciation for His redeeming grace, all our actions are motivated by this love relationship.

4. In what things does God want us to prosper, besides our souls?

3 John 2

Note: God is not only concerned about our spiritual well-being but also our health. A healthy body means a healthy mind. This, in turn, means we are better able to discern spiritual things. Since there is a close relation between spirit, soul, and body, what affects one affects the other.

5. What promise did God give the Jews of the Exodus if they would follow all His health instructions?

Exodus 15:26

Note: All the health instructions God gave the Jews of the Exodus was for their own good and not a requirement for salvation. As His children, God wants us to experience and witness His saving grace in every way. The rules and regulations that God imposed upon the Jews was for this purpose.

That is how we Christians must consider them.

6. What blessings did God say Israel would experience if they obeyed all that He had instructed them?

Deuteronomy 7:14

Note: Even though the ancient Jews made the mistake of turning all the health rules and regulations God gave them into legalistic requirements for salvation, they still experienced physical blessings from obeying them.

7. As Christians, what kind of sacrifice does God want from us?

Romans 12:1

8. What must we do daily to experience this

transformed life that is pleasing to God?

Romans 12:2

Note: The battlefield in the Christian walk is the mind. On the one hand, the converted mind, that which Paul refers to as the new man (see Ephesians 4:22-24), wants to do the will of God. Yet, on the other hand, the mind of the flesh, our sinful nature, wants to do the very opposite. The next question explains how we are to gain the victory over the flesh.

9. What is the only way to gain victory over the desires of the flesh, our sinful natures, which contradict the desires of the converted mind?

Galatians 5:16

Note: Only as we surrender our wills to the

control of the Spirit can we gain the victory over the flesh. This is what it means to “walk in the Spirit.” To do this we must keep our minds focused on spiritual things (see Romans 8:4-6).

10. How should our relationship with fellow believers affect our eating habits?

Romans 14:21

Note: To be a true Christian means we are dead to self and live unto the Lord. This affects every phase of our Christian living so that the two guiding principles that motivate all our actions are: (i) I do nothing that affects my right relationship with God; and (ii) I do nothing that weakens the faith of a fellow believer (see 1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

11. How should we consider ourselves as Christians?

1 Corinthians 3:16

12. As temples of God, what does He not want us to do and why?

1 Corinthians 3:17

Note: As temples of God, we are to keep our bodies holy. The reason for this will be answered in the next question.

13. As His temple, what does God want to do in and through us?

2 Corinthians 6:16

Note: The whole purpose of the Christian life is to glorify the Saviour: “for me to live is Christ”

(Philippians 1:21). The only way this can be done is to let the life of Christ shine through us. This is what sanctification is all about. That which motivates such a life is the love of God manifested in Christ crucified and not the fear of punishment or the desire for reward.

14. How does God fulfill the above through the New Covenant promise?

Hebrews 8:10

Note: The New Covenant does not do away with the laws of God but puts them into our hearts. Under the Old Covenant, the laws were a series of rules — do's and don'ts. Under the New Covenant, the same laws become the inner desires of the converted mind. This is how God writes His laws in our hearts and minds. This is the transforming grace of the gospel!

15. When it comes to healthful living, what was

the original diet God gave mankind?

Genesis 1:29

Note: Just as the car manufacturer entrusts us to use the best oil and gas for our cars, so God, the Creator, instructed our first parents regarding what are the best foods to eat — nuts, fruits, and grains.

16. What did God add to man's diet after the flood?

Genesis 9:3

17. While God did add meat to man's diet, after the flood, what two things did He prohibit?

Genesis 9:4

(i)

Leviticus 7:23

(ii)

Note: God knew what He was doing when He forbade the Jews to eat the blood and fat of animals. Today, medical science has discovered and proved that both of these items are harmful to our health.

18. What further instruction did God give the Jews concerning meat eating?

Read the whole chapter of Leviticus 11.

Note: Even though God gave man permission to eat meat after the flood, He distinguished the clean (healthy) meats from the (unhealthy) meats in chapter 11 of Leviticus and elsewhere. These health regulations are still valid today, as long as

we do not make them a requirement for salvation.

19. What warning does the wise man give regarding appetite?

Proverbs 23:1-3

Note: Appetite is one of the great weapons of Satan. It was through food that Adam fell. Likewise, it was through tempting Christ to turn stones into bread that Satan tried to cause the downfall of Christ. In the same way, Satan uses our appetite to cause us Christians to stumble. Smoking, drugs, alcohol, and overindulgence in eating are some of his methods for preventing God's purpose from being fulfilled in us or for destroying the Christian faith.

20. Of what must we constantly remind ourselves regarding our bodies?

1 Corinthians 6:19

Note: When we are tempted to indulge in wrong kinds of foods and drink, we need to remind ourselves that we are the temple of God and we are not our own. Therefore, as verse 20 reminds us, we must “glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God’s.” This is true health reform.

The Sanctuary

After the death of the apostles, the leadership of the church fell into the hands of Gentile believers, commonly referred to as the Church Fathers. These men saw very little value in the sanctuary doctrine. To them this was something that belonged to Judaism and had no relevance to New Testament Christianity. Consequently, the sanctuary truth became somewhat obsolete, until the mid-Nineteenth Century when it was resurrected to life. Today there is renewed interest in the sanctuary message.

When we examine the teachings of the New Testament, we find that much of the truth it presents is expressed in sanctuary language. The simple reason for this is because the sanctuary was given by God as a visual aid of the whole plan of redemption. It is His master model plan of salvation. Through it, God reveals to mankind the various stages of our redemption in Christ — His

earthly mission as well as His heavenly ministry. The sanctuary, therefore, is God's "Show and Tell" (see diagram at end).

God's primary purpose in giving the sanctuary was to reveal through symbols, Jesus Christ and His saving grace. Everything about the sanctuary, its buildings, its furniture, as well as its rituals, all point to Christ as the Saviour of mankind. Since the sanctuary reveals the full plan of salvation from beginning to end, its study becomes very meaningful to us as Christians. Through the sanctuary message, we get a bird's eye view of the whole plan of salvation. This, in turn, will strengthen our faith in the eternal hope we have in Christ. This is the purpose in studying the sanctuary.

1. Why did God instruct Moses to build a sanctuary?

Exodus 25:8

Note: Sin had separated a holy God from sinful man (see Isaiah 59:2). What God was revealing through the sanctuary was the plan of redemption that would bridge that gulf so that God and mankind may once again be “at-one-ment.”

2. In whom was this plan of redemption fulfilled?

John 1:14

Note: Christ is the reality of the Sanctuary message. Everything about the sanctuary pointed to Christ and salvation through Him. That is why David declared, “Thy way [of salvation] O God, is in the sanctuary.”

3. To what was Jesus referring when He made this statement?

John 2:19-21

Note: This is where the ancient Jews went wrong. They put the emphasis of the sanctuary on their temple building and its rituals, rather than on what it pointed to — salvation through Jesus Christ.

4. When did the disciples of Jesus discover the true meaning of the temple?

John 2:22

Note: The disciples were also victims of Judaism and it was not until the resurrection that they realized the whole of the sanctuary message of the Old Testament. The sanctuary was given to point them to Christ, the promised Messiah.

5. What did God prepare for Christ instead of the sacrificial system of the sanctuary?

Hebrews 10:5

Note: The whole purpose of the sacrificial system was to point to Christ and Him crucified. The only value the sacrifice of animals had in the Old Testament was to point God's people to the coming Messiah. In and of themselves, the sacrifice of animals had no merits and that is why God had no pleasure in them.

6. Why did God prepare a body for Christ?

Hebrews 10:7

Note: It was through the human body of Christ that the world was redeemed. This was the will of God (see John 3:17). That is why the humanity of Christ is everything to us. In it God has obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human

race.

7. What did the coming of Christ replace?

Hebrews 10:9

Note: The coming of Christ replaced the type with reality. This is the difference between the Old and the New Covenants. The Old Covenant was never given by God as a means of salvation but pointed to Christ, the promised Saviour. The New Covenant is the fulfillment of that promise. However, since we have not experienced the full reality of salvation, the sanctuary message continues to point us to the consummation, the ultimate end of God's plan of salvation in Christ.

8. Why did the gospel preached to the Jews of the Exodus fail to profit them?

Hebrews 4:2

Note: The pronoun “them” refers to the Jews of the Exodus. God gave them the gospel through the sanctuary, the gospel in type. Unfortunately, they missed the whole point of the sanctuary message, which is one of the main reasons why the nation of Israel rejected Christ as the promised Messiah.

9. What did the sacrificed lamb of the sanctuary ritual point to?

John 1:29

10. The candle lamps in the sanctuary pointed to Christ as what?

John 8:12

11. How did Christ describe Himself in this

passage?

John 6:51

Note: In the Holy Place of the earthly sanctuary, the two main pieces of furniture were the seven-branch candlestick and the table of shew bread. The candlestick pointed to Christ as the light of the world, while the table of shew bread pointed to Christ as the living bread of life.

12. What has God made Christ to be for us through faith in His blood?

Romans 3:25

Note: The word “propitiation” (KJV) or the phrase “sacrifice of atonement” (NIV) is translated from the same word used in the Greek Old Testament (the LXX) for the mercy seat that rested

on the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary. This mercy seat covered the law of God that condemns us sinners.

13. What did Christ obtain for mankind in His earthly mission?

Hebrews 9:12

14. What is Christ the end of, to all who believe in Him?

Romans 10:4

Note: In His earthly mission, Christ satisfied the full demands of the law on behalf of fallen humanity. All who have accepted Him as their personal Saviour are looked upon by God as meeting all the requirements of the law for righteousness. This is the good news of the gospel!

15. Having redeemed humanity, what is Christ now doing in the heavenly sanctuary?

Romans 8:34

16. To what extent can Christ save those who put their full trust in Him?

Hebrews 7:25

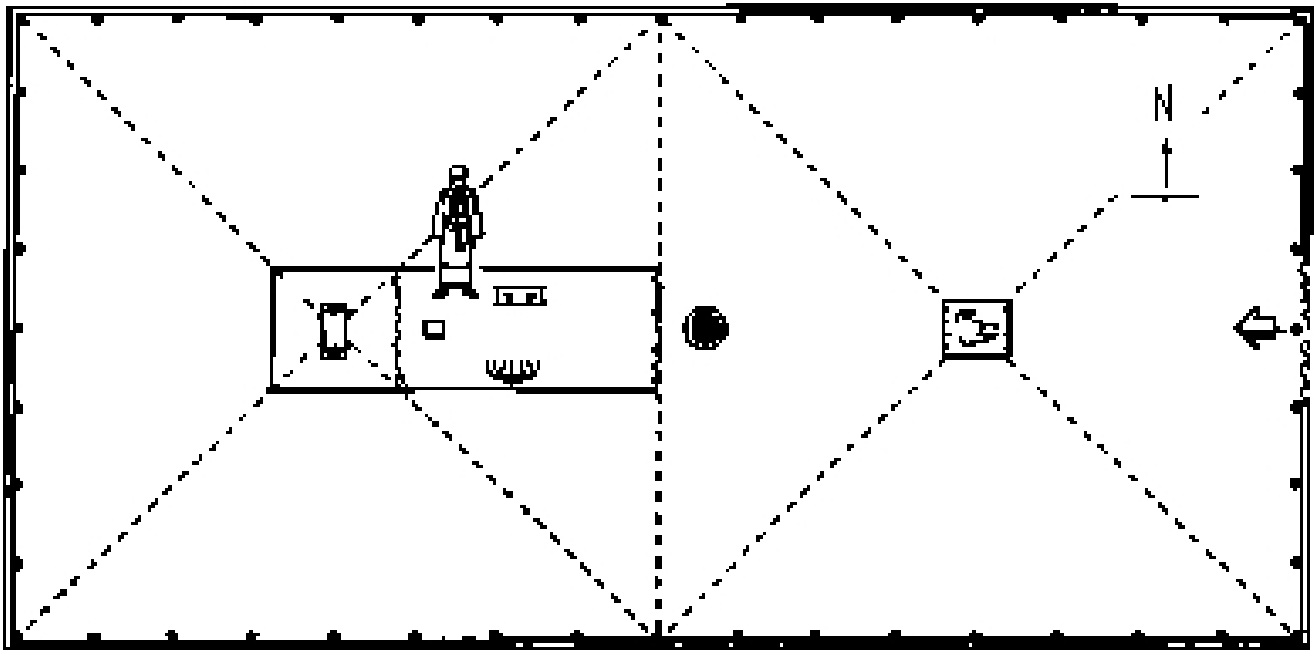
Note: In His earthly mission, represented by the eastern square of the sanctuary courtyard, Christ obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race. The western square reveals Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Thus, through the sanctuary and its services God has revealed the whole plan of redemption from the beginning to the end. The diagram below illustrates the two-fold work of Christ as our Saviour and

Priest. The next two lessons will cover some important sanctuary truths regarding Christ's priestly ministry on the believer's behalf.

THE SANCTUARY GOD'S MODEL PLAN OF SALVATION

Christ is the Reality of the Sanctuary

Ex. 25:8 (Jn. 1:14); Ps. 77:13 (Heb. 10:5-10);
Jn. 2:19-22



CHRIST'S HEAVENLY MINISTRY

PRIESTHOOD

(31 A.D. - New Earth; Heb. 10:12,13)

1. DAILY - Intercession
(31 A.D. - Probation Closes)

2. YEARLY - Cleansing
(1844 - New Earth)

CHRIST'S EARTHLY MINISTRY

GOSPEL

(4 B.C.? - 31 A.D.; Heb. 9:12)

1. SPOTLESS LAMB - Doing
(Birth - Temptation in the Wilderness)

2. SACRIFICE - Dying
(Baptism - Cross)

Study #21

The Investigative Judgment

In our last study, we examined the Sanctuary doctrine, God's "show and tell" of the entire plan of redemption. In the next few studies, which will bring these series of Bible lessons to an end, we will consider what the Sanctuary truth reveals about the closing events of this earth's history. The purpose of these studies is to strengthen your faith in Christ and prepare you to face the coming crisis that will transpire before the second advent and the end of the world.

One of the events that has to take place before Christ can come to take believers to heaven is the vindication of the saints against the accusations of the devil. Satan is "the accuser of the brethren ... which accused them before God day and night." He is the great enemy of souls, and as such is determined that none of the believers make it to heaven.

Therefore, before the second advent can take place, Christ, our Great High Priest and Intercessor, has to vindicate the saints in the judgment. This is part of the good news of salvation. This judgment of the saints is referred to as the Investigative Judgment. This is what we will examine in this study.

1. What change takes place to our status when we believe in Christ?

John 5:24

Note: As we discovered in a previous study, at the cross the entire human race was executed in Christ, our substitute. Because of this supreme sacrifice every sinner, who by faith receives Christ as their personal Saviour, passes from death (condemnation) to life (justification).

2. Will believers have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ?

Romans 14:10

Note: Since a believer has already passed from condemnation to justification, the question is often asked why believers have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The answer is because, as in all court cases, there is an accuser.

3. Who accuses the believers and how often does he accuse them?

Revelation 12:10

4. Who is on the believer's side in this court case?

Romans 8:31

Note: What Paul is saying here is that since God is on the believer's side, it does not matter who is against us. All three members of the Godhead are on our side in the investigative judgment. This is indeed good news!

5. How do we know that God is on our side?

Romans 8:32

Note: With blood mingled with His sweat, indicating great distress, Jesus plead with His Father in the garden of Gethsemane, that if it were possible, could He remove the cup from Jesus. The Father's reply was NO because He so loved the world. Without the cross, man would be lost.

6. Besides dying for our sins, what is Christ now doing for us?

Romans 8:34

Note: In Christ we not only have a perfect Saviour but also an intercessor who will defend us against all the accusations of Satan. He is our advocate now and in the judgment (see 1 John 2:1).

7. What witness does the Holy Spirit bear to every believer?

Romans 8:16

Note: In the judgment, all three persons of the Godhead — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit — are on the side of the believers. With such a defense on our side, we can be sure that Satan has no chance in the judgment to win his case against us.

8. According to Peter, with whom does the final judgment begin?

1 Peter 4:17

Note: The term “house of God” refers to all those who by faith have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour and whose names are written in the book of life. In this judgment, Christ acts as their advocate and Satan as their accuser.

9. What will be exposed in the judgment of the believers?

1 Corinthians 4:5

Note: We humans judge each other by our outward acts but God judges us by our motives. Sometimes our acts are wrong even though in our hearts we want to do what is right (see Romans 7:19,20). This is part of our Christian struggle. But God understands and will judge us by the counsels

of the heart.

10. What were we created in Christ to do?

Ephesians 2:10

Note: Not only did Christ save us from condemnation to justification but also from a life of sin to a life of good works. These good works do not save us, but they are evidence of our salvation.

11. What is dead if justification by faith does not produce good works?

James 2:17

Note: Genuine justification by faith always produces good works. However, the believer may not be aware of these good works since they are the fruits of the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 25:34-40).

12. The good works of the believer are profitable to whom?

Titus 3:8

Note: Good works do not save us but they do give evidence to others that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. People judge us by our behavior and they must see the love of Christ manifested in every believer.

13. What clear evidence proves that we are followers of Christ?

John 13:34,35

Note: The greatest proof we Christians can give to the world that we are born-again believers is by manifesting the selfless love of Christ.

According to the Bible, such love is the true keeping of the law (see Galatians 5:13,14).

14. How is a person justified by God?

Romans 3:28

Note: We must constantly remind ourselves that we are justified, or declared righteous, before God by faith alone in Jesus Christ. Law-keeping does not save us but is the evidence of our salvation. Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments” (see 1 John 5:1-3).

15. How will we be judged in the investigative judgment?

Revelation 20:12

Note: The Bible is clear that we sinners are

justified by faith alone, apart from any good works we do (see Romans 4:5; Ephesians 2:8,9; Titus 3:5). Yet believers are judged and rewarded according to their works (see Matthew 16:27; John 5:28,29; 2 Corinthians 5:10). How do we reconcile this apparent contradiction? This will be answered in the next few questions.

16. What is the greatest proof we can give that we are justified by faith?

Matthew 5:14-16

Note: As Christians we are to be the light of the world. It is not by our words that we give evidence of this but by our works. As Jesus said, they shall know us by our fruits (Matthew 7:16-20).

17. What did (i) Christ redeem us from, and (ii) why?

Titus 2:14

(i)

(ii)

18. What did the works of Abraham prove?

James 2:22

Note: Abraham's works proved that his faith was genuine. In the same way, our works of faith will be used by Christ, our advocate, to prove in the investigative judgment that our faith is true.

19. What kind of works will not justify a person before God?

Galatians 2:16

Note: We must not confuse works of faith, which is the fruit of the gospel, with works of the law. The phrase “works of the law” refers to good works or keeping the law in order to earn salvation. In English, we call it legalism. In contrast, “works of faith” are the fruit of the Spirit. While these fruits do not contribute toward our salvation, they do give evidence of it. That is why they will be brought up in the judgment, to prove our justification by faith.

20. According to the prophet Daniel, how many will stand before the judgment seat of God?

Daniel 7:10

Note: Daniel is here describing the investigative judgment of the saints. While the saints themselves will not be physically present there, they will be represented by their great High

Priest and advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous (see Zechariah 3:1-4; Joshua is the Hebrew name for Jesus).

21. In this judgment of the saints, who will be vindicated?

Daniel 7:22

Note: The verdict in the investigative judgment will be in favor of the saints. It is only after Christ has vindicated us that He will come to take us to heaven. This is the blessed hope for which we are all waiting.

22. For how long will the saints rule with Christ?

Daniel 7:26,27

Note: This is the consummation of the ages. At this time, Satan and his kingdom will be forever destroyed. In its place, God will usher in His everlasting kingdom, where peace will reign forever. By faith, plan to be there.

Study #22

The Day of Atonement

In (Lesson #20), we discovered that the Sanctuary was God's visual aid, His "show and tell," revealing the total plan of salvation in Christ. The daily services of the Sanctuary ended every year with the Day of Atonement. This was, and still is, the most solemn feast day in the Jewish calendar. It represented the culmination of the plan of redemption. It pointed to the time when sin would be totally eradicated from the universe and when everlasting righteousness would be ushered in.

The Day of Atonement pointed to the final day of judgment, the consummation of the ages, when all that the Sanctuary and its services pointed to would be fulfilled. It was the only time of the year God required His people to keep it as a solemn day of fasting and prayer. On that day no strong drink was allowed to be consumed and the women were required to remove all their jewelry. This feast day

pointed to the moment in time when the great controversy between Christ and Satan would finally be brought to an end.

Besides the Investigative Judgment, which vindicated the believers and which we studied in our last study, the purpose of the Day of Atonement is to vindicate God's holy and righteous name as well as to eradicate the sin problem. When the Day of Atonement will be accomplished in reality, Satan and his angels, along with all those who have refused the gift of salvation in Christ, will be destroyed forever. God will then create a new heaven and a new earth for the saints.

In this study we will examine the significance of this solemn Day of Atonement, what is required of God's people, and the meaning of the main ceremony that took place on this feast day. This ceremony, which centered around the two goats, pointed to the end of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. This controversy began in heaven when Lucifer rebelled against God and became Satan.

1. When did the Day of Atonement take place in the Jewish calendar?

Leviticus 23:27

Note: The word Atonement is a combination of three separate words joined together, AT-ONE-MENT. Its meaning is synonymous with the word “reconcile.” This solemn feast day pointed to the end-time when the whole universe will once again be AT-ONE-MENT with God. At that time everlasting peace will be ushered in.

2. What did the high priest do to God’s people on the Day of Atonement?

Leviticus 16:30

Note: This cleansing of God’s people before

the Lord prefigured the Investigative Judgment (Lesson #21) when Christ, our great and faithful High Priest, will vindicate the saints from all the accusations Satan has been making against them.

3. Besides God's people, what else was cleansed on the Day of Atonement?

Leviticus 16:33

Note: Besides the saints, God's sanctuary will also be cleansed on the Day of Atonement. It will be cleansed of all the blame that has been heaped against God by Satan. Since God justifies sinners who believe in Christ (see Romans 4:5), not only do the believers have to be vindicated but God Himself has to be vindicated. When this is accomplished, the whole universe, including Satan and his angels, will confess to God that "just and true are your ways."

4. When, finally, the sin problem is brought to

an end and everlasting righteousness is ushered in, what will the saints declare in song?

Revelation 15:3

Note: When all that the Day of Atonement pointed to is fulfilled, all doubt about God and the way He has dealt with the sin problem will be removed. Then, and then only, will we see things clearly. As the apostle Paul stated to the Corinthian believers, “now we know in part” (1 Corinthians 13:12), but in heaven we shall see God as He truly is, a God of love, mercy, and justice.

5. What two things were the people of God required to do on the Day of Atonement?

Leviticus 23:32

(i)

(ii)

Note: The reason why the Day of Atonement was required to be kept as a solemn day of Sabbath rest was in order to remind God's people that only those who were resting in Christ's righteousness — i.e., justification by faith alone — would experience the ultimate rest God is offering to mankind. (see Hebrews 4:10,11). "Afflicting the soul" simply means denying oneself all of our self-righteousness (see Philippians 3:7-9). Together, these two requirements pointed to the gospel formula of "Not I, but Christ."

6. What two animals were used on the Day of Atonement to cleanse God's sanctuary and His people?

Leviticus 16:7

Note: According to the law given by God

through Moses, both the goats had to be spotless or without blemish. These two goats symbolized the ultimate issue in the great controversy between Christ and Satan, who is responsible for the sin problem.

7. By casting lots, who did these two goats represent?

Leviticus 16:8

Note: The goat selected for the Lord represented Jesus Christ, who bore on the cross the guilt and punishment of the sins of the world. The second goat represented Satan, who must ultimately take the blame of the sin problem he has created. That is why this goat is called the “scapegoat” or the “goat of removal.”

8. What two groups are represented by the sheep and the goats in this passage?

Matthew 25:31-34,41

Sheep

Goats

Note: The sheep represent the believers who have accepted Christ as their sin bearer. The goats represent the unbelievers who have refused the gift of salvation in Christ. Please notice that while the kingdom of heaven was prepared for humanity from “the foundation of the world,” the fire that will consume and destroy God’s enemies forever was only prepared for “the devil and his angels.” The reasons why unbelievers will be included in that fire is not because of God’s choice but because of their own (see John 3:18,36).

9. How many were reconciled to God through the redeeming work of Christ?

2 Corinthians 5:19

Note: At the cross the whole human race was reconciled to God. Therefore, there is no excuse for anyone to be lost. Those who will ultimately be lost, will be lost because they have deliberately and willfully refused and rejected the free gift of salvation in Christ.

10. In order to save mankind from sin, what did God make Christ to be?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (first part)

11. In exchange, what did God make us to be in Christ?

2 Corinthians 5:21 (second part)

12. How many of us have gone astray and on whom did God lay our iniquity?

Isaiah 53:6

Note: This is what the Lord's goat represented on the Day of Atonement: Christ our sin bearer. Therefore, all who are resting in Christ's righteousness for their salvation (symbolized by their Sabbath-keeping) and deny themselves of all their own self-righteousness (the significance of afflicting the soul) will be vindicated in the solemn Day of Atonement. This is the good news of the Investigative Judgment.

13. How perfect or complete was Christ's sacrifice for our sins on the cross?

Hebrews 10:12-14

Note: When Jesus cried out at the cross “it is finished,” He meant His work of saving sinful mankind had now been accomplished. All those who have accepted this salvation by faith and are sanctified by that sacrifice stand perfect in Christ.

14. According to this text, who is the originator of the sin problem?

Ezekiel 28:14,15

Note: When God created Lucifer he was created flawless, absolutely perfect. But how could a perfect being sin? This is a mystery that our finite minds cannot comprehend. Only when we go to heaven will our eyes be opened and we will fully understand how sin could enter a perfect world. That is why the Bible declares Satan’s fall as “the mystery of iniquity.”

15. What did Lucifer say in his heart that caused his downfall?

Isaiah 14:12-14

Note: When Lucifer decided to exalt himself and take the place of God, he brought about his own downfall. At the core of every sin is the problem of self, which completely contradicts God's agape love that "seeketh not its own" (1 Corinthians 13:5). It is the principle of self, which Satan inflicted the human race with at the Fall, that is the source of all human problems.

16. Because God is Sovereign, what is one thing He assumes the blame for?

Isaiah 45:7

Note: Since God is Sovereign, Lord of the universe, nothing happens without His permission. It is for this reason that God assumes the blame for

all the bad things that have happened and that are happening in this world. In the fulfillment of the Day of Atonement, however, the blame will be put on Satan, the one who is really responsible for the sin problem. This is whom the scapegoat represents, the one who truly deserves the blame for our sin problem.

17. Who did Adam and Eve ultimately blame for eating the forbidden fruit?

Genesis 3:9-13

Note: Ultimately, Adam and Eve blamed God for their sin. Adam accused God for giving him a defective wife, while Eve put the blame on God for creating the serpent. Since then, God has assumed much of the blame for the sin problem. He will, however, settle this matter, once and for all, on the Day of Atonement, when every knee will confess to God, “just and true are your ways.”

18. When did David say he will praise God with uprightness of heart?

Psalms 119:7

Note: On the great Day of Atonement, in that final Judgment, God will be vindicated. All the blame He has assumed since the Fall will now be placed on the real culprit, Satan. Only then will God be able to eradicate sin and usher in everlasting righteousness. May you be found to be on God's side in that final Day of Atonement.

Study #23

The Remnant

Before God will bring this wicked world to an end, Jesus prophesied that “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached into all the world for a witness” (Matthew 24:14). When this prophecy is fulfilled every person on this earth who has reached the age of accountability will have made up his or her ultimate choice, either for Christ or against Him.

At this time the whole world will be polarized into only two camps. The Bible describes these two groups, the believers and the unbelievers, in many different ways — the sheep and the goats; those who build their houses on the Rock Jesus Christ and those who build their houses on the sands of their own self-righteousness; those who receive the mark of the beast and those who are sealed with the seal of God, etc.

As a result of this polarization, the closing

events of this world's history will culminate with the final showdown in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. As pointed out in an earlier study, this controversy began in heaven when Lucifer, the highest angelic being, rebelled against Christ, the second person of the Godhead (see Revelation 12:7-9).

In this final showdown, which the book of Revelation describes as the war of Armageddon or “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (see Revelation 16:12-16), the conflict will actually be between God’s people, the last generation of Christians who are living under the banner of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and Satan’s people, those who have deliberately and ultimately rejected Christ and have chosen to be under the banner of Satan, the enemy of the gospel.

At this time the faith of these last generation of Christians will be tried and tested to the utmost and in a way that no other generation of believers have ever been tested. This final test is described in the Bible as the great tribulation or the time of trouble.

It will take place just before the second coming of Christ and the end of the world.

These final generation of believers, who will endure this great time of trouble and will triumph over the full force of Satan's attacks, are described in the Bible as the Remnant. In the book of Revelation they are referred to as the 144,000, those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and who loved not their lives unto death (Revelation 12:11).

According to Bible prophecy, we are presently living in the Day of Atonement, the closing events of this earth's history. Therefore, it is God's purpose that every believer living in these last days be a part of that last generation of Christians who will vindicate Him in this final showdown between God and Satan. In this study we will examine what the Bible has to say about the Remnant, those who will vindicate the full power of the gospel.

1. What did Jesus say will take place before the end of the world?

Matthew 24:14

Note: According to Scripture, God does not want anyone to be lost (see 2 Peter 3:9). That is why He will not bring this sin cursed world of ours to an end until He gives everyone a chance to accept His gift of salvation in Christ.

2. How is the gospel of the kingdom described in the book of Revelation?

Revelation 14:6

Note: The reason why this final message is called “the everlasting gospel” is because it is the only message that offers everlasting hope to mankind and that will be able to carry the last generation of Christians through the great time of trouble.

3. Who gets angry when the everlasting gospel is proclaimed and why?

Revelation 12:12

Note: The devil hates the everlasting gospel because it is the only power he cannot defeat. He will therefore do his utmost to destroy anyone who proclaims this message and anyone who receives it.

4. How does the Bible describe the last generation of Christians and what does the dragon do to them?

Revelation 12:17

Note: The last generation of Christians are described as “the remnant of her seed” (KJV). The word “remnant” in the Bible refers to God’s people

who remain faithful to Him no matter what happens or whose faith endures to the end in spite of apostasy or persecution (see Romans 11:2-5).

5. According to the prophet Isaiah, who only will be saved?

Romans 9:27

Note: To experience ultimate salvation it is not enough to believe in Christ, that faith must endure unto the end (see Matthew 10:22). In the last days the Christians who endure the time of trouble and remain faithful to Christ unto the end are called the remnant.

6. What question does Jesus raise regarding His second coming?

Luke 18:8

7. What similar question does John the revelator ask?

Revelation 6:15-17

Note: Judging from what is described in verse 15 and 16 it seems that no one will be able to stand the second coming of Christ. But in Revelation 7, John does describe the remnant who will be able to stand.

8. What must happen before the great tribulation takes place?

Revelation 7:2,3

Note: Before God allows Satan to test the remnant, the faith of the believers has to be sealed. This means their faith in Christ must become

unshakable no matter what Satan and the wicked do to them.

9. How many of the last generation of believers will be sealed?

Revelation 7:4

Note: Is this 144,000 of God's sealed saints a literal number or is it symbolic? This is a question often asked by many sincere Christians. Several factors must be kept in mind in answering this question. (i) The language of Revelation is highly symbolic. (ii) In verse 4, John does not see the 144,000 but only hears their number. (iii) The 144,000 are "from all the tribes of Israel." If this is to be taken literally then the 144,000 must all be Jews. (iv) In verse 9, John does see an innumerable great multitude. These must be the 144,000 as they are described as coming out of the great tribulation (see verses 13,14).

10. What will the 144,000 sing in heaven which no other saint can sing?

Revelation 14:2,3

11. What makes these 144,000 so special in God's eyes?

Revelation 14:4

Note: The reason why the 144,000 will be given special privileges in heaven is because their faith endured the great tribulation and in doing so they vindicated God in the final showdown between Christ and Satan.

12. How does the prophet Daniel describe the great tribulation?

Daniel 12:1

Note: The great tribulation will be a time of trouble that has not been experienced by any previous generation. The prophet Jeremiah gives a similar description (see Jeremiah 30:7). But both prophets indicate that God's sealed people, the remnant, will ultimately be saved.

13. What will make the time of trouble so terrible for the Remnant?

Note: The issue in the great tribulation will be similar to what Christ faced on the cross when He felt forsaken of God (Matthew 27:46). In this great tribulation God will produce a people who will manifest the faith of Jesus even though they feel forsaken of God (Revelation 14:12). This is the faith Christ manifested on the cross and which will be reproduced in the remnant.

14. What must the Remnant be rooted and grounded in for their faith to become

unshakable?

Ephesians 3:16-19

Note: The ground of the believers salvation is the unconditional agape love of God we studied in (Lesson #2). It is faith in this love that is able to keep us from falling in the great tribulation.

15. What should all Christians be convinced of regarding God's love?

Romans 8:38

Note: When we are rooted and grounded in God's agape love, we will know that nothing on earth or in heaven can ever separate us from God's love, which was manifested to mankind in Christ (see Romans 6:5-10).

16. How does the prophet Jeremiah describe God's love?

Jeremiah 31:3

Note: There will never come a time when God will stop loving us. We may fail Him and we do many times; but He will never fail or forsake us. Even though we will feel forsaken of God in the time of trouble, by faith we will know better and this is what will win in the great tribulation.

17. According to the apostle Paul, Who is the source of our power in Christian living?

2 Corinthians 4:7

18. How does Paul describe the Christian battle between faith and feeling?

2 Corinthians 4:8,9

Note: We must never confuse faith with feelings. The two may be in harmony when all is well, but under distress or persecution the two will part company. Our feelings will then tell us that God does not love us or that we are not good enough to be saved. In contrast, our faith will convince us that we have been accepted in Christ and God will never stop loving us or forsake us. This is the kind of faith the last generation of Christians must develop in order to be sealed by God and be part of the Remnant.

19. What principle did Jesus use to describe solid unshakable faith?

Matthew 7:24-27

Note: Our faith must be established on the rock

Jesus Christ if we are to withstand the coming storm. We believe from Scripture that this storm is soon to come. It is our sincere hope and prayer that you, dear reader, will be rooted and grounded in the agape love of God and that His faith may become your faith to prepare you for the soon coming crisis. May this be your experience.

Study #24

The Millennium

The closing chapters of the book of Revelation describe the final events of this world's history and the plan of redemption. One of the events it records is the 1,000 years that is commonly known as the Millennium. The word millennium comes from two Latin words joined together — mil, meaning one thousand, and annum, meaning year.

Unfortunately, there is much confusion in the Christian church regarding this doctrine of the Millennium. The only way we can clearly understand the true meaning and purpose of this doctrine is to examine it in the light or context of the Day of Atonement, when the whole universe will be made “at-one-ment” with God.

The purpose of the Millennium is part and parcel of the objectives of the Day of Atonement, which is to eradicate sin and usher in everlasting righteousness. God cannot bring sin to an end, He

cannot usher in everlasting righteousness, until all doubt about Him and His dealing with the sin problem is removed.

It is only when the entire universe, including the devil and his angels, as well as the lost, admits to God that “just and true are your ways.” Finally, at the end of the Millennium, when Satan, his angels, and the wicked are judged, they too will confess to God, “just and true are your ways.”

Then, and then only, will God destroy Satan, the originator of sin, the wicked angels who have joined him in the rebellion, and the unbelievers (those who have deliberately, persistently, and ultimately rejected the gift of salvation in Christ.

In this study we will turn our attention to the thousand years, the doctrine of the Millennium, when God will remove all doubt from the minds of the saints about Himself and His dealings with the sin problem.

1. What are the two kinds of resurrections that

Jesus taught?

John 5:28,29

(i)

(ii)

Note: The Bible speaks of two resurrections. The first is the resurrection of the believers, all those who have accepted Christ as their Saviour. The second resurrection is that of the lost, those who have deliberately and ultimately rejected Christ. The “time” between these two resurrections is the millennium.

2. When will the resurrection of the believers take place?

1 Thessalonians 4:16

Note: The resurrection of the righteous will take place at the second coming of Christ. This is the first resurrection, the blessed hope of all believers. This is when the thousand years, or millennium, begins.

3. What will happen to the believers at the second coming of Christ?

1 Thessalonians 4:17

Note: The last generation of Christians, those who go through the time of trouble, will not experience death but will experience a change.

4. What change will take place to the believers in the resurrection?

1 Corinthians 15:51-53

Note: Until the second advent, Christians will still have sinful natures and mortal bodies. Immortality as a subjective experience will not be a reality for the saints until the second coming of Christ. This is the blessed hope.

5. Where will Jesus take the believers after they are resurrected?

John 14:1-3

6. What promise was made to the disciples who saw Christ's ascension?

Acts:1:10, 11

Note: When Jesus ascended into heaven after His resurrection, He went to prepare a place for the believers. At His second coming, He will come to

take them to His heavenly home. This is the promise He made to His disciples and to all who believe.

7. How many who are alive will witness Christ's second coming?

Revelation 1:7

Note: Besides the living, God will raise those who crucified Christ in a special resurrection, just before the second advent. This is to fulfill what Christ promised them at His trial (see Matthew 26:64).

8. What will happen to the wicked at the second coming of Christ?

2 Thessalonians 2:8

Note: God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29); therefore, when Christ comes in His divine glory, all those who have accepted the deceptions of Satan and rejected the gift of salvation in Christ will be destroyed in the presence of that brightness.

9. What serious question did Jesus ask of those who reject Him?

Matthew 16:26

Note: When the wicked face death at the second coming of Christ, they will realize what they have given up for the pleasures of sin. But it will be too late!

10. What condition will this earth be reduced to after the second advent?

Jeremiah 4:23

Note: This was the condition of the earth before creation week began (see Genesis 1:2).

11. What will happen to the vegetation and the cities when Jesus returns?

Jeremiah 4:26

12. Describe the condition of the lost after the righteous are taken to heaven?

Jeremiah 25:33

13. What will God do to Satan at that time?

Revelation 20:1,2

Note: The “bottomless pit” means that the earth will once again be “without form and void.” Out of this formless and lifeless earth did God create a perfect world. When Satan introduced sin to our planet it meant doom to that perfect creation. Satan will have a thousand years to ponder over and think about what sin has done to this earth.

14. What will happen to Satan after the thousand years are over?

Revelation 20:3 (last part)

Note: At the end of the Millennium, the wicked will be raised up. This is the second resurrection. At this time Satan will take advantage to deceive them again (see verses 7,8).

15. What will Satan and the wicked do at this time and what will happen to them?

Revelation 20:9

Note: When Satan uses the wicked to attack God and the saints, it clearly proves that the thousand years did not produce any repentance or change in his attitude towards God. He and those who have joined him deserve to be destroyed. This is the final end of Satan, the wicked angels, and the lost (see verse 14).

16. What will the saints be doing in heaven during the thousand years?

Revelation 20:6

Note: Reigning with Christ involves investigating the lives of the lost. This is what it means to be “priests of God and of Christ.”

17. How does Paul describe reigning with Christ during the Millennium?

1 Corinthians 6:2

Note: During the thousand years, all the questions concerning God's dealing with the sin problem will be answered and the saints will be satisfied that God was just.

18. Before the judgment takes place what blame does God assume?

Isaiah 45:7

Note: Because God is sovereign, nothing can happen without His permission. For this reason, He assumes all the blame for the havoc and atrocities that sin has produced in this world. It is only after the thousand years, when all will have had the opportunity to examine God's dealings with the sin problem, that all His creatures will confess "just

and true are your ways.”

19. On whom will God ultimately place the blame for the sin problem?

Leviticus 16:20-22

Note: The goat in this verse represents Satan, the originator of the sin problem. After God has vindicated Himself on the Day of Atonement, He will put the blame for the havoc that sin has produced where it really belongs, on Satan.

20. How will the righteous finally respond to God’s judgments?

Revelation 16:7

Note: The whole purpose of the Millennium is to clear all doubt from the minds of the righteous

regarding God and His dealings with sin. It is only when this is done that He can put the real blame for the sin problem where it belongs, i.e., on Satan. Only then can Christ usher in everlasting righteousness.

21. Will heaven be the permanent home for the saved?

Revelation 21:1-3

Note: At the end of the Millennium, Christ and all the saints dwelling in New Jerusalem will return back to earth. This is when Satan and the wicked will be destroyed. Following this, Christ will create a new heaven and a new earth which will be the permanent home of the saved. Please bear in mind that the final restoration of a perfect universe without sin will become reality because of the wonderful truth that God loved us so much that He willingly gave of Himself by sacrificing His only Son, Jesus Christ, to be the Saviour of the world.

This salvation is not limited to only the human beings who were held in the bondage of sin but also involves the absolute re-creation of the eternal home of the redeemed, the earth made new. This will be the topic of our next study.

Study #25

The New Earth

Before creation, this world was “without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (Genesis 1:26-28). Then, in six days, God created a perfect world and placed Adam and Eve to rule over it (see Genesis 1:26-28). Unfortunately, the entrance of sin marred the bliss of this perfect and finished creation. At the fall, this world was handed over to Satan and he became its ruler (see Luke 4:5,6). Thus began the downward trend.

Unlike the theory of evolution, the Bible teaches “devolution.” That is, in the beginning, God created a perfect and finished world to which nothing could be added for improvement. But, when sin entered this world, things began to go from bad to worse. Ultimately, sin will destroy our world until one day this earth will be reduced to what was before creation, “without form and void.”

The book of Revelation describes this destroyed world as the “bottomless pit” (see Revelation 20:1-3). This is where Satan, the originator of sin, and his angels will be bound during the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3) They will have one thousand years to contemplate what sin has done to God’s perfect creation.

After the thousand years are ended and God has judged and executed Satan and all who have joined him, thus eradicating sin from the universe, He will create a new heaven and a new earth wherein will dwell righteousness. At that time God will move His throne from heaven to this earth made new and the saints will rule with Him forever and ever. This wonderful truth, which culminates the plan of redemption, will be the concluding lesson of these Bible studies.

1. What was the condition of the earth before creation?

Genesis 1:2

Note: Before creation, this earth was just a lump of formless and shapeless rock most of which was covered by water.

2. How long did it take God to create this world we live in?

Exodus 20:11

Note: Please read Genesis 1:3-31 to get a complete description of creation week. Note that all that God created was “very good.” At the end of the sixth day, this world was perfect and finished so that God rested on the seventh day from all His work and sanctified the seventh day (see Genesis 2:1-3).

3. Out of what did God create this universe of ours?

Hebrews 11:3

4. Who of the three persons of the Godhead actually created this world?

John 1:1-3

Note: According to verse 14, the “Word” is Jesus Christ who “was made flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus who created us is also the One who redeemed us.

5. What promise did Jesus make before returning to heaven?

John 14:2

Note: What Christ was implying is that in

heaven there is room for everybody. No one will be lost who accepts by faith the gift of salvation offered in Christ. This is the good news of the gospel.

6. Where will Christ take the believers at His Second Coming?

John 14:3

Note: Heaven is God's dwelling place and that is where Christ will take the saints when He comes the second time.

7. What will happen to this earth at the second coming of Christ?

2 Peter 3:10

Note: Because "God is a consuming fire"

(Hebrews 12:29), nothing that has been tainted by sin will be able to withstand Christ's full glory at His coming.

8. To what do believers look forward because of the plan of redemption?

2 Peter 3:13

Note: Heaven will not be the permanent home of the saints. The earth made new will be the final home of the saved, a world in which dwells righteousness.

9. What will this world be like when Christ takes the saints to heaven?

Jeremiah 4:23

10. What will happen to life and the vegetation

at Christ's Second Advent?

Jeremiah 4:25,26

Note: Sin will ultimately destroy this earth and all life in it. Once again, this world of ours will be reduced to what it was before creation, “without form and void.” It is to this destroyed earth Satan will be bound for a thousand years.

11. Will this earth remain desolate forever?

Jeremiah 4:27

Note: God's plan is to eventually restore this earth to its original perfection.

12. What promise did Christ make to His disciples in this beatitude?

Matthew 5:5

Note: The meek are all those who have lost all confidence in self and are depending entirely on the righteousness of Christ for their salvation.

13. How long will the saints reign with Christ in heaven?

Revelation 20:6

14. What New Covenant promise will be fulfilled in the earth made new?

Revelation 21:3

Note: After the thousand years, the saints, along with the Holy City they have been dwelling

in, the New Jerusalem, will descend to this earth and become the capital of the earth made new (see verse 2).

15. What special tree will be found growing in the New Jerusalem?

Revelation 22:1, 2

16. Describe briefly what life will be like in New Jerusalem:

Revelation 22:3

Note: How wonderful it will be to live in such a city. But the greatest joy the saints will experience is to serve their God and their Savior, Jesus Christ.

17. What will God wipe out in the earth made

new?

Revelation 21:4

Note: Just think of it, no more death or pain or heartaches in the earth made new! According to verse 5, God is going to make “everything new.”

18. Who will be allowed to inherit the earth made new?

Revelation 21:7

Note: All those who have overcome unbelief and received by faith God’s gift of salvation will inherit the earth made new. Only those who have deliberately and ultimately refused Christ as their Savior will be destroyed forever (verse 8).

19. Briefly describe what life will be like in the

earth made new.

Isaiah 65:21, 22

20. What other description of the new earth does Isaiah give us?

Isaiah 65:25

21. Will illness ever threaten the lives of God's people in the new earth?

Isaiah 33:24

Note: What a future! Surely the new earth will be paradise restored. Therefore, anyone who refuses such an offer, which God makes us through the gospel of Jesus Christ, needs to think twice

what he or she is rejecting.

22. Will sin ever rise again in the new earth?

Nahum 1:9

Note: Sin will not rise up a second time to plague the new earth. That is not because God will take away our freedom of choice but because the saints will know first-hand what sin is. They will hate sin for what it did to Christ on the cross and the thought of rebellion against God will never enter their minds.

23. What two things are required of all believers to inherit the new earth?

Hebrews 10:35, 36

(i)

(ii)

Note: Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that once saved means always saved. As Jesus stated in Matthew 10:22, only those whose faith has endured to the end will be saved. Hebrews 10:38 says the same thing. This is what it means to have the perseverance of the saints. Even if it costs us our lives, if we are to make it to heaven and the earth made new, our faith in Christ must be unshakable. Jesus does not want believers to lose their confidence in Him and, therefore, He wants our faith to endure unto the end. His final words in the Bible are, “Surely I come quickly.” May your response to this promise be, “Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20). The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and forever more. Amen.