

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 1

The Bible Is The Word
of God!

CH.#1 What Every Christian Ought To Know

THE **BIBLE** IS THE WORD OF GOD!

- The Devil hates this book and would love to destroy it. Some despise the Bible. Some deny, distort, twist, misuse, and abuse the Bible. The greatest enemy of the Bible is the so-called Christian who simply ignores or disregards it.
- Why is **“TRUTH”** so important?
 1. Your **SALVATION** depends on understanding the gospel message of the Bible.
 2. Your **ASSURANCE** depends on resting in the truth of the Bible.
 3. Your **SPIRITUAL GROWTH** depends on living by the principles of the Bible.
 4. Your **POWER IN WITNESS** depends on the confidence you have in the Word of God.
- (John. 10:27–28) ***“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; (28) and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”***

THREE GREAT *TERMS* YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. REVELATION:

Is the process by which God unveils Himself and His will to human messengers.

2. INSPIRATION:

This refers to God's inbreathing into the chosen human messengers through the Holy Spirit, enabling them by divine guidance to deliver or record God's revealed message. In a scriptural sense it means God breathing into His Messenger.

3. ILLUMINATION:

Is the Holy Spirit's work as He enlightens the human mind with spiritual understanding in order that persons might grasp the revealed truth.

THE *ATTRIBUTES* OF THE BIBLE

➤ 1. The Bible is **INFALLIBLE!**

- The Bible, in its entirety, has no mistakes. Specifically, in its original autographs it is without errors. In (Psa. 19:7) the Bible says of itself, *“The law of the Lord is perfect.”* It is flawless because it was authored by God—and He is flawless. Therefore, if God wrote the Bible, and if He is the ultimate authority, and if His character is flawless, then the Bible is flawless and is the ultimate authority. You see, the fact that God is perfect demands that the original autograph, the original giving of the Word of God, must also be perfect. So, the Bible is infallible, and that’s the first reason to study it; it is the only Book that never makes a mistake—everything it says is the truth!

➤ 2. The Bible is **INERRANT!**

- The Bible is not only infallible in total, but inerrant in its parts. In (Prov. 30:5–6) *“Every word of God is tested (Pure); He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. 6 Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.”* This means, every word in the Word of God is pure and true!

The *Attributes* of the Bible

➤ The Bible is **COMPLETE!**

- Nothing needs to be added. Now that may be a surprise to some people, because there are those today who believe we need to add to the Bible. There exists a philosophy/theology combination known as **neo-orthodoxy**. It tells us that the Bible was simply a comment in its day on man's spiritual experiences, and today man is still having spiritual experiences, therefore he needs another comment. One writer said that we need a Bible to be written today, just as we did when the Bible, we have in our hands was written, because we need somebody to comment on what God is doing now. He also said that when Tom or Mary stand up in your church and say, "Thus says the Lord," they are as equally inspired as Isaiah, Jeremiah, or any of the other prophets. In other words, they claim that the Bible is not complete. That's the current philosophical/theological thought.

THE *ATTRIBUTES* OF THE BIBLE

- (Rev. 22:18-19) says *“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”*
- The Bible ends with a warning not to take away anything, and not to add anything. That’s a testimony of its completeness. This principle applies to **ALL** of scripture , not just the book of Revelation!
- It is **INFALLIBLE** in its total, **INERRANT** in its parts, and it is **COMPLETE!**

THE *ATTRIBUTES* OF THE BIBLE

➤ The Bible is **AUTHORITATIVE!**

- If it is perfect and complete, then it is the last Word—the final authority. (Isa. 1:2) says, *“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.”* When God speaks everybody listens, because His is the final authority; the Bible demands obedience. We can discuss its implications, its applications, and its meanings, **but we shouldn’t discuss whether or not it is true.**
- In John 8 Jesus was confronted by some of the Jewish leaders, and there were other people present. (John. 8:30–32) *“As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him. (31) So, Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; (32) and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”* In other words, He demanded a response to His Word. It is **AUTHORITATIVE**
- (Gal. 3:10) *“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.”* Amazing! Cursed was anyone who didn’t continue in everything that was written in the law. That’s a tremendous claim to **ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY!**
- (Jam. 2:9–10) *“But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (10) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.”* To violate the Bible at one point is to break God’s law. **The Bible is authoritative in every part.**

THE BIBLE IS *SUFFICIENT* FOR A NUMBER OF THINGS!

➤ THE BIBLE IS SUFFICIENT FOR!

1. SALVATION.

2. PERFECTION.

3. HOPE.

4. EFFECTIVE.

5. DETERMINATIVE.

- In (2 Tim. 3:15) *“and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD.

Jesus/Miracles.

A. JESUS HIMSELF BELIEVED IN THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE.

- In (Matt. 5:18) Jesus says, *“Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the law till all be fulfilled.”* Furthermore, He showed His trust in the authority of Scripture by quoting from every part of the Old Testament. Jesus believed in the absolute inspired authority of the Word of God. Miracles

B. MIRACLES PROVE THAT THE BIBLE IS DIVINE.

- And that proves that God is involved in it. It’s got to be a supernatural Book because of all the supernatural activity it contains. Now some might say, “Well, how do you know all the miracles are true?” Because miracles are given in Scripture and there is supportive information. For example, when Jesus rose from the dead, **more than five hundred** people saw Him after the resurrection. Those are enough witnesses to convince any jury. **THE MIRACULOUS NATURE OF THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF GOD.**
- So, experience, science, the testimony of Christ, and the miracles of the Bible all prove that **SCRIPTURE IS TRUE.**

THE **OLD** TESTAMENT CANON!

➤ A study of the gospels shows that, throughout His ministry, **Jesus affirmed the Old Testament in its entirety (Matt. 5:17–18)** *“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. (18) For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”*

1. **HISTORICAL RELIABILITY:** (cf. Matt. 10:15; 19:3–5; 12:40; 24:38–39),
2. **PROPHETIC ACCURACY:** (Matt. 26:54),
3. **SUFFICIENCY:** (Luke 16:31),
4. **UNITY:** (Luke 24:27, 44),
5. **INERRANCY:** (Matt. 22:29; John 17:17),
6. **INFALLIBILITY:** (John 10:35)
7. **AUTHORITY:** (Matt. 21:13, 16, 42).

➤ **Jesus affirmed:** the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets and all that was written in them; clearly seeing the Old Testament Scriptures as the Word of God (Matt. 15:16; Mark 7:13; Luke 3:2; 5:1)

THE **NEW** TESTAMENT CANON!

- The same principle applies to the New Testament canon. Our Lord not only affirmed the Jewish canon of the Old Testament, He also promised that He would give additional revelation to His church through His authorized representatives—namely, the apostles.
- Jesus made this point explicit on the night before his death, Jesus said to His disciples: (John. 14:25–26) ***“These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”***
- That last line is especially significant for the doctrine of canonicity. Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would help them remember all the things that He had said to them.
- That is an amazing promise, the fulfillment of which is found in the four gospel accounts—where the things that our Lord did and said are perfectly recorded for us.

UNDERSTANDING THE *GENRES* OF THE BIBLE!

➤ THE BIBLE IS A WORK OF *LITERATURE*.

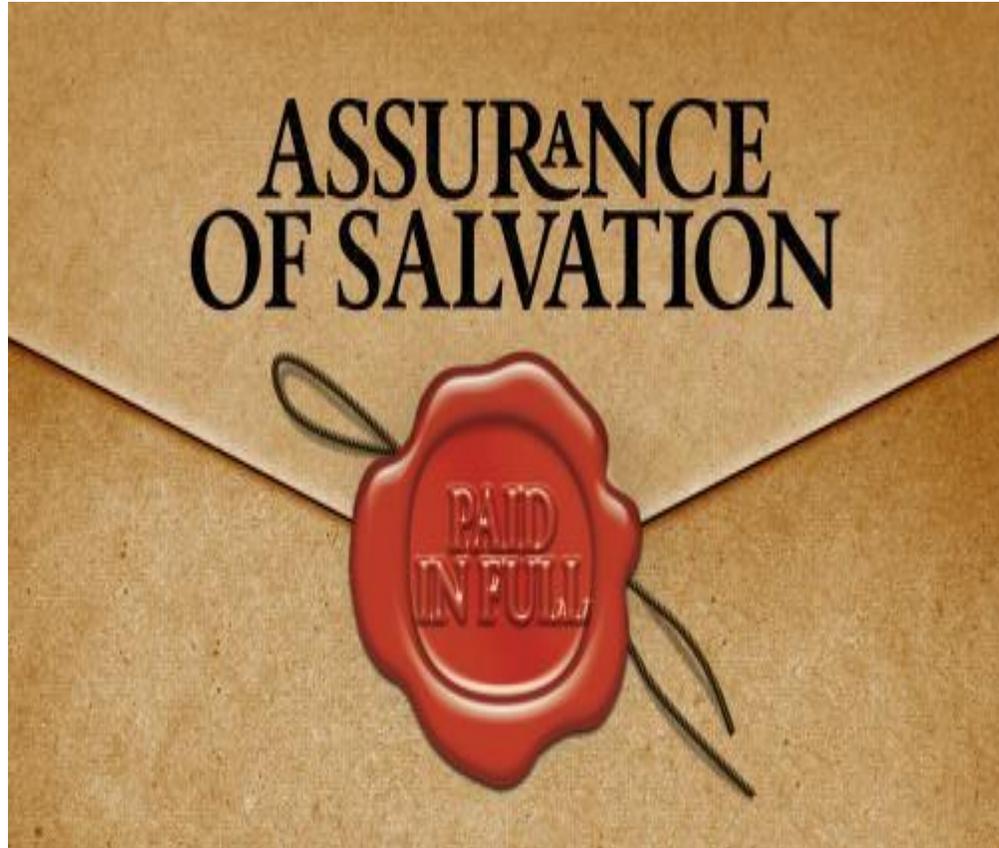
Literature comes in different genres, or categories based on style, and each is read and appreciated differently from another. For example, to confuse a work of science fiction with a medical textbook would cause many problems—they must be understood differently. And both science fiction and a medical text must be understood differently from poetry. Therefore, accurate **EXEGESIS** and **INTERPRETATION** takes into consideration the purpose and style of a given book or passage of Scripture. In addition, some verses are meant figuratively, and proper discernment of these is enhanced by an understanding of genre. An inability to identify genre can lead to serious misunderstanding of Scripture. The main genres found in the Bible are these:

1. LAW.
2. HISTORY.
3. WISDOM.
4. POETRY.
5. NARRATIVE.
6. EPISTLES.
7. PROPHECY.
8. APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 2 The Assurance of Salvation!

CH.#2 What Every Christian Ought To Know
THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION!



What Every Christian Ought To Know!

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”
(1 John. 5:13)



- You Should have **“ROCK RIBBED”** Assurance of Salvation, but What Does It Mean To Be Saved? There Are **3** Terms You Need To Know!
- **REGENERATION**: It is the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given. (**Jn. 3:3-8; Tit. 3:5**).
- It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the **WORD OF GOD (Jn. 5:24)**, when the repentant sinner, as enabled by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (**1 Cor. 6:19,20**). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (**2 Cor. 3:18**). Other words used: **“BORN AGAIN,” “SAVED,” “CONVERTED.”** This means that **EVERY SIN** past, present, and future has been buried in the grave of God’s forgetfulness! **PRAISE GOD, FOR SALVATION!**

REGENERATION!

- (Jn. 3:3–7) “Jesus answered and said to him, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”** (4) Nicodemus *said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” (5) Jesus answered, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’**
- (Tit. 3:5–6) **“He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, (6) whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,”**
- (Jn. 5:24) **“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”**
- (2 Cor. 3:18) **“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”**

SANCTIFICATION!

- **SANCTIFICATION:** Every believer is sanctified (**set apart**) unto God by **JUSTIFICATION** (God declares righteous through faith in Christ) and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with **PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION**. This sanctification has to do with the believer's **STANDING**, not his present walk or condition. (**Acts. 20:32**)
- **PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION:** The state of the believer is brought closer to the likeness of Christ through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit. The believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like Christ. (**1 Thess. 4:3-7**)
- Every truly saved person is involved in daily conflict, or battle. The new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh, but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. **The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended.** Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit comes to live with us to give us peace, power, and purpose! (**1 Pet. 1:14-17**) **I'M BEING SAVED!**

SANCTIFICATION!

- (2 Thess. 2:13) *“But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.”*
- (1 Cor. 1:30) *“But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,”*
- (1 Thess. 4:3–7) *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; (4) that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, (5) not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; (6) and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. (7) For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.”*
- (1 Pet. 1:14–17) *“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, (15) but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; (16) because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.” (17) If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;”*

GLORIFICATION!

- **GLORIFICATION**: The future and final work of God upon Christians where He transforms our mortal physical bodies to the eternal physical bodies in which we will dwell forever.
- Jesus is the first resurrected from the dead in a glorified body. He is called the “**first fruits of creation.**” (1 Cor. 15:20) says, ***“But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.”*** Since He is the first fruits, we will follow. **HIS RESURRECTION IS THE PROMISE AND GUARANTEE OF OUR FUTURE RESURRECTION.** When we die or when Jesus comes again, we are going home to heaven to be with Him.
- (1 Cor. 15:52) ***“in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. I’M FOREVER SAVED!***

DEALING WITH YOUR *DOUBT!*

- CAN YOU KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE SAVED? IS IT EVER OKAY TO DOUBT YOUR SALVATION?
- These are difficult questions, but both questions can be answered in just one verse in the book of 1 John. (1 John. 5:13) *“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that YOU MAY KNOW that you have eternal life.”*
- Right away that tells me two things: you can be saved and know it, and you can be saved and doubt it. John wrote the book of **1 JOHN** in order that **WE MAY KNOW — WITHOUT A DOUBT — THAT WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE**. And he gave us **3** major tests to deal with that doubt.

The *COMMANDMENT* Test

- The first test is found in (1 John. 2:3–5) *“By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴ The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; ⁵ but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:”*
- A person who says he is saved but doesn't keep the commandments of God is lying. I don't care whose church he is a member of, how much theology he has in his head, or what kind of experience he has had at an altar; John says if he's not keeping the commandments of God, he doesn't know Him. He is not talking about sinless perfection, but that **the commandments of God are to be the standard by which we chart our course.**
- There are many people who join a church as if they were joining a country club. There's no **CHANGE** and they continue to live the same ungodly lives. Those people have no reason whatsoever to think that they are going to heaven. If you can sin willfully, knowingly, deliberately, and habitually and feel no conviction or remorse; **YOU HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE YOU ARE SAVED.**

The *COMPANION* Test

- There's another test found in (1 John. 3:14) *“We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.”* Also notice (1 John. 4:20) *“If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.”*
- If God is love and we have the nature of God, then we are going to have love in us. If we don't have love, we don't have the nature of God. If we don't have the nature of God, we haven't been born of God. **IT IS VERY CLEAR THAT ANOTHER BIRTHMARK OF THE BELIEVER IS LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN.** When I am saved, not only do I want to be **RIGHT** with my brothers, but I want to be **WITH** my brothers.
- **IF YOU *LOVE* JESUS, YOU'RE GOING TO *LOVE* HIS CHURCH.**

The *COMMITMENT* Test

- The third test is found in (1 John. 5:10–12) *“The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. ¹¹ And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹² He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”*
- The word **BELIEVE** here really means **"COMMITMENT"** or **"TRUST."** And that commitment and trust is in the **PRESENT TENSE**. I cannot find a single verse in the Bible that tells us to look back to some experience for the assurance of our salvation. The Bible doesn't deal with what happened in the past for assurance. Verse *thirteen* says, *“These things have I written unto you that believe....”* It doesn't say, **"BELIEVED."** It means those who believe **RIGHT NOW**. Do you have that faith in your heart **RIGHT NOW**? Is there that trust and commitment to Jesus Christ **RIGHT NOW**? That's how to have assurance.
- **YOU CAN BE SAVED AND KNOW IT!** You can be free from nagging doubts. It's so important to get this issue settled. Everything else builds on the strong confidence that God has saved you and will never let you go. Stand on His Word, and rest assured in your salvation.

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 3 About Eternal Security!

ETERNAL SECURITY! Ch. #3

JOHN 10:27

**“My sheep
hear My
voice, and
I know them,
and they
follow Me.**



What's The Big Deal About Eternal Security?



➤ “The only thing better than **knowing** your saved, is having the **assurance** of salvation, because you **know** you can **NEVER LOOSE IT!**”

➤ This Doctrine is **VITAL** to **All Believers.**

1. **YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH.**

“There is a peace that won’t let your emotions ride the roller coaster.”

2. **YOUR PRODUCTIVITY.**

“If your confident of your future, you can concentrate on the present.”

3. **YOUR WITNESS.**

“If God is able to save you, He is certainly capable of sustaining you.”

WHAT IS **ETERNAL** SECURITY?

- **A.K.A.= THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**. “Those whom God has excepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will **NEVER** totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end.; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the church, and temporal judgements on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be **KEPT** by the power of God through faith unto salvation. **(Bylaws: 2.13)**



IS ETERNAL SECURITY A BAPTIST THING, OR A BIBLE THING?

1. **(ROM. 8:38–39)** “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, **(39)** nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD**, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
2. **(JN. 10:27-28)** “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; **(28)** and **I GIVE ETERNAL LIFE TO THEM**, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. **(29)** My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”
3. **(PHIL. 1:6)** “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you **WILL PERFECT IT UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS.**”
4. **(HEB. 10:14)** “For by one offering **HE HAS PERFECTED FOR ALL TIME** those who are sanctified.”
5. **(EPH. 1: 13-14)** “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, **YOU WERE SEALED IN HIM** with the Holy Spirit of promise, **(14)** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”

GOD'S *SACRED PROMISE!*

➤ EXAMINING: (Rom. 8:38-39)

- CONVINCED: DBL. Greek= Persuade, Obey; Be Certain.
- DEATH: Christ has changed death's sting from defeat to victory. (2Cor. 5:8) *“we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”*
- LIFE: It is in our present earthly life that spiritual dangers lie. It's in this life that we have to deal with the dangers of verse (8:35). *Tribulation, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword*, and many other dangers. These threats are EMPTY, because we have eternal life in Christ Jesus.
- ANGELS: Paul is referring to “holy angels” which is a hypothetical, and impossible situation. Another example of this usage is found in (Gal. 1:8) *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!”*
- PRINCIPALITIES: Evil beings, fallen angels, specifically demons. Paul is saying that **NO** supernatural created being, good or evil, can sever our relationship to/with Christ.

- **THINGS PRESENT** and **THINGS TO COME**: These represent everything we are experiencing and will **YET** experience.
 - **POWERS**: This word translates *dunamis*, it's the ordinary Greek word for power. Here in its plural form, it often refers to miracles or mighty deeds. It is also figuratively used of persons in positions of authority and power. Paul is basically saying this is another obstacle the believer **NEVER HAS TO FEAR**.
 - **HEIGHT** and **DEPTH**: This could be in reference to astrological terms. The high point, or zenith, of a star's path, to its lowest point. Perhaps this is to signify the infinity of space, which is endless in every direction. The basic meaning is that of totality.
 - **NOR ANY OTHER CREATED THING**: Paul adds this to leave **NO DOUBT** that eternal security is all-encompassing. Since God Himself is uncreated, everyone, and everything else is excluded.
 - **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING**: ***“Shall be able to separate US from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus OUR Lord.”***
- Our salvation was secured by God's decree from eternity past and will be held secure by Christ's love through all future time and throughout all eternity.

GOD'S DETERMINED *PURPOSE!*

- (Phil. 1:8) *“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”*
 - WHO'S SALVATION IS IT? (Psa. 85:9) *“Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, That glory may dwell in our land.”* Also: (Psa. 98:2) *“The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations”* Salvation is the work of God, and He alone saves us!
1. HE IS THE CONVICTOR: You were not convicted by yourself. The Holy Spirit convicted you of your sin. Notice: (Rom. 3:11) *“**THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;**”* Also: (1 Jn. 4:19) *“We love, because HE FIRST LOVED US.”*
 2. HE IS THE CONVERTOR: (Col. 2:13-14) *“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, HE MADE YOU ALIVE TOGETHER WITH HIM, having forgiven us all our transgressions, (14) having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”*

GOD'S DETERMINED PURPOSE!-CONT.

3. HE IS THE COMPLETOR! Again notice: (Phil. 1:6) *“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you WILL PERFECT IT UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS.”*

There may be a lot of times, and a lot of things that you were never able to complete, school, job, relationship, sports, promises, and many more, but God finishes (**COMPLETES**) everything He starts. Your salvation is **NO EXCEPTION**.

- Notice: (1 Cor. 1:8) *“who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- Notice: (Eph. 5:27) *“that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.”*

GOD'S SOVEREIGN PREDESTINATION!

➤ WE ARE PREDESTINED TO BE LIKE JESUS.

Notice: (Rom. 8:29-30) *“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; (30) and these whom He PREDESTINED, He also CALLED; and these whom He called, He also JUSTIFIED; and these whom He justified, He also GLORIFIED.”*

➤ If you are **GENUINELY** saved, then you are **ETERNALLY** saved. These two verses are perhaps the most explicit, and clearest presentation of this truth in all of God's word. Let's break this verse down for an easier understanding. So, what's the purpose of salvation anyway?

I. TO CONFORM BELIEVERS TO CHRIST. (Rom. 8:29)

“To become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren.” God will complete the salvation of every sinner who is **converted to Christ**. Notice what Paul said in (Rom. 8:1) *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”* Verse (9) says that God's Holy Spirit indwells every believer. Every believer is already, in this life, an adopted child of God (vv. 14-16), those children are therefore *“heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ”* (v.17) and that *“the Spirit also helps our weakness” and intercedes for the saints according to the will of God* (vv. 26-27)

- When we go to **GLORY**, we're going to receive a **GLORIOUS BODY**.
It will work in the same environment and according to the same principles as does the resurrected glorified body of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I think it's even more than that. I think we're not only going to be like Him in whatever that glorified body is, but I think we're going to be like Him in the spiritual dimension as well. We will be **outwardly** perfect, and we will be **inwardly** perfect.
- Residing in us will be the very **HOLINESS** of Jesus Christ.
The divine, incorruptible nature given to us at the moment of salvation will be freed from the hindrance of the humanness which we now possess, and we'll be liberated, as it says in this chapter, ***“unto the glorious liberation of the children of God”***. We will be delivered from the bondage of corruption, back in (v. 21), and so we will have an outward **appearance** like that of Jesus Christ, and an inward **holiness** like that of Jesus Christ.
- Notice: (1 Cor. 15:49) ***“As we have born the image of the earthly (or the earthy), we shall also bear the image of the heavenly,”*** We **are like** the earthy. We **will be like** the heavenly. **THAT'S HIS PURPOSE, TO MAKE US LIKE HIS SON.**
- Notice: (Heb. 2:10) ***“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.”***

II. TO MAKE CHRIST PREEMINENT. (8:29)

“That He might be the (prōtotokos) first born among many brethren.” In the Jewish culture obviously, the firstborn was the one who inherited everything. The firstborn was the one that was elevated. The firstborn was the one that uniquely represented the dignity of the family and carried the name. He was the supreme one, the **preeminent** one, and that's exactly what it's saying here. The reason we've all been saved is to make us like Christ, and the reason God wants to make us like Christ is so that there will be a whole redeemed and glorified humanity over which He will be the supreme one. That's what it's saying. That is the purpose.

- YOUR SALVATION DOESN'T END WITH YOU. Your salvation could be explained another way
Notice: (Phil. 2:9) “God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” You see what God wants to do is to bring into glory, to bring into heaven, to bring into eternity a redeemed humanity who will spend all of that eternity giving glory to the one who stands above and beyond them all, the **prōtotokos** (first born), **THE PREEMINENT CHRIST.**
- **Notice: (Col. 1:18) “And He's the head of the body, the church. Who is the beginning, the prōtotokos from the dead that in all things HE MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE.”**

- Why did God create us in the first place? Tough question. He created us for **HIS GLORY**. He created us so that there would be a group of people who would give Him the glory due His name. Now you understand why you're saved? It isn't just to keep you out of hell. That's a nice by-product. It isn't just to make you happy here and now. ***You've been redeemed to be made like Christ so that you can be a part of a redeemed eternal community who will give to the preeminent one the glory due His name.***

1. **FOREKNOWLEDGE**: (Rom. 8:29) ***"For whom He foreknew."***

Yes, God is able to look into the future and beyond. His foreknowledge is not a reference to his omniscient **"FORESIGHT,"** but to His **"FOREORDINATION"** (1 Pet. 1:1-2). He not only sees faith in advance but ordains it in advance. God foresees faith, He foresees who is going to believe, **BUT THE FAITH THAT HE FORESEES IS THE FAITH THAT HE HIMSELF CREATES.**

- **Notice what Jesus said:** (Jn. 6:44), ***"No man comes unto me except the Father draw him. All that the Father gives to Me shall come to Me."*** We're born again not of the will of men, but of the will of God. It is not of ourselves, ***"it is a gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast,"*** (Eph. 2:8-9). The Bible is very clear on this.

- **THIS IS ILLUSTRATED IN:** (Acts. 13:48) *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord."* They heard Paul and Barnabas preaching, and listen, *"As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* What were they ordained to? **ETERNAL LIFE**. You can't have a salvation that doesn't end in eternal life. You can't have a salvation that doesn't ultimately end in glory. You can't have a salvation that doesn't ultimately end in the person being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, a part of a redeemed humanity for the purpose of exalting the One who is over and above them. **THE REASON THEY BELIEVED WAS BECAUSE THEY WERE ORDAINED TO THAT.**

2. **PREDESTINATION**: So, it starts with foreknowledge; it moves to predestination. Back to **Romans 8** again: *"For whom He did foreknow,"* verse **29**, *"He also did PREDESTINATE."* And then verse **30** picks it up: *"Moreover whom He did PREDESTINATE."* So **twice** it says He predestinated. He did predestinate, *proorizō*. It's the word horizon with a prefixed pronoun. It means to **appoint before, to mark out before**. It's really the word to predestine, to predetermine. There's really no argument at that point, predestination, **PREDETERMINING DESTINY**.

- In fact, it is also used in (Acts. 4:28) where it talks again about the death of Christ and it says that *“For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, (28) to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose PREDESTINED to occur.”*
- Notice also: (Acts. 2:23) *“This Man, delivered over by the PREDETERMINED PLAN AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.”*
- So, the word **“PREDESTINED”** along with the word **“FOREKNOWLEDGE,”** both of them are used to speak of the **CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST** and if we're going to say then that **“foreknowledge”** simply means that God looks down history and sees what's going to happen and just responds to what **we decide**, then God did the same thing with Christ. He just looked down history, saw what Jesus, on his own prerogative was going to do, and reacted to it. **Absolutely heretical**, and if **“foreknowledge”** and **“predestination”** mean that God predetermined and planned the death of Christ for the redemption of man, and chose Christ to be the agent of redemption, then these words must mean in relation to us **THE SAME THING.**

- **HE CHOSE US, AND PREDETERMINED US TO BE THE REDEEMED.** Notice: (Eph. 1:4-5) *"just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will."*
- Notice: (Rev. 13:8) *"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain."* Notice also: (Rev. 17:8) Which says that our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life **"BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN."**

3. CALLING: *Foreknowledge, predestination.* The third word is *"calling."*

- Verse 30 says, *"Whom He predestined, He called."* **HE CALLED.** Now listen, here is where God's eternal plan intersects with your life. In eternity past He *predetermined* to have a love relationship with you; therefore, predestined your salvation. The calling is the time when God moves in your life. And now we come into time. We've been in eternity past, now we're in time. And this is the central truth. The first two preceded, the last two flow out of it.

- **WE ARE THE CALLED.** Verse 28 says that *“God is working all things together for them that love Him and them who are the called.”* This has reference not to an **outward** call but an **inward** call. It has reference to the work of God turning the heart, the heart that could **never turn** to Him, the heart that could **never know** Him, that could **never understand** the gospel, blind, dead, ignorant, all of those things, without God, without hope in the world.
- We know it must be a saving call because of where it's fitting here. It says, them He called...whom He called, them he also what? **JUSTIFIED**. So, all the people that were called were also what? **JUSTIFIED**; therefore, the calling must be an effectual call. It must be a successful call. It's not just a wild invitation to anybody and everybody. It is a call to salvation. And if God, in eternity past, predetermined the love relationship and foreordained our salvation then He has to bring it to pass in time, by moving into our life, right? **That's why I say you're not saved because of something you decided, as if you could decide it alone. YOU'RE SAVED BECAUSE OF SOMETHING GOD DECIDED A LONG TIME AGO.**

- God's saving call in time moves in. Well, what happens? God moves and begins to convict the heart, to draw the heart away from sin, to draw the heart toward the Savior. **Notice: (2 Tim. 1:9), “Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,”**
- This text says, “**HE has saved us.**” How? “**He has called us with an holy calling,**” listen to this, “**NOT according to our works.**” He didn't call us because of something we did, “**but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.**” Now that's what it says. You were called to Christ, called to salvation to fulfill a purpose that was planned before the world began.
- Folk’s, this is why we are **ETERNALLY SECURE**, because we're not in some whimsical rollercoaster deal. The reason we are saved is to be saved unto glory, **TO BE LIKE CHRIST**, to be a part of a holy humanity that can **EXALT HIS GLORIOUS NAME**, and if that is the end and God began it before we were ever born, then God will bring it to pass and there will not be any fallout.
- And so, all the way along the line, all things are continually overruled **TO BE WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR ULTIMATE GLORY**. This is a tremendous passage! **That's the promise.**

WHY CAN'T I WRAP MY **MIND** AROUND THIS?



- Some Things Still Belong To God. (Deut. 29:29) ***"The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law."***
- "There are some things about God that we will **NEVER UNDERSTAND.**"

LET'S START WITH **ADAM**.



- When **ADAM** was placed in the Garden of Eden, he was warned not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the “knowledge of good and evil” on the threat of immediate **SPIRITUAL DEATH**.
- Notice: (Gen. 2:16-17) *“The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; (17) but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it **YOU WILL SURELY DIE.**”*
- When Adam disobeyed and ate of the forbidden fruit consequently, he brought **“SPIRITUAL DEATH”** upon himself and upon the race.
- 1. **WE INHERITED “SPIRITUAL DEATH.”** Adam’s offspring are **BORN** with sinful natures, they do not have the **ABILITY** to **CHOOSE** spiritual good over evil. As a result, man’s **WILL** is no longer free (i.e., **free from the dominion of sin**) as Adam’s **WILL** was free before the Fall. Instead, **MAN’S WILL** as the consequence of inherited depravity, is in bondage to his sinful nature.
- Notice:(Rom. 5:12) *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men, because all sinned.**”*
- Notice: (Psa. 58:3) *“The wicked are estranged **from the womb**; These who speak lies go **astray from birth.**”*

Notice: (Eph. 2:1-3) “And you were DEAD in your trespasses and sins, (2) in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. (3) Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

2. WE INHERITED A DARKENED MIND, CORRUPT HEARTS, AND A DEFILED CONSCIENCE.

Notice: (Rom. 8:7-8) “because the MIND set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, (8) and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

Notice: (1 Cor. 2;14) “But a NATURAL MAN does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

Notice: (Gen. 6:5) “Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

Notice: (Jer. 17:9) “The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? “

- **Notice: (Gen. 8:21)** “.....for the intent of man’s **HEART IS EVIL** from his youth;.....”
- **Notice: (Eph. 4:17-19)** “So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, **(18) being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, **because of the hardness of their heart;** **(19)** and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness”
- **Notice: (Tit. 1:15)** “To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but **both their (mind) and their (conscience) are defiled.**”
- **This is why Jesus said: (Jn. 3:5-7)** “Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. **(6)** “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. **(7)** “Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘**You must be born again.**’

3. OUR “FREE WILL” IS IN BONDAGE TO THE INFLUENCE OF SIN AND SATAN.

Before sinners are “**BORN AGAIN,**” they are children of the devil and under his control and influence, therefore making them slaves to sin.

Notice: (Jn. 8:44) “*You are of your father the Devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires.* He was a murderer from the beginning and has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from **HIS OWN NATURE**, because he is a liar and the father of liars.”

Notice: ((Eph. 2:1-2) “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, (2) in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, **according to (or following) the prince of the power of the air**, of the spirit (**Anti-Christ**) that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Notice: (2 Tim. 2:25-26) “with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, **if perhaps God may grant them repentance** leading to the knowledge of the truth, (26) and they may come to their senses and **escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.**”

Notice: (1 Jn. 3:10) “ By this the children of God and the **children of the devil** are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”

Notice: (1 Jn. 5:19) “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies **in the power of the evil one.**”

4. THE WHOLE WORLD IS IN BONDAGE.

Notice: (Job. 14:4) **“Who can make the clean out of the unclean? NO ONE!”**

Notice: (Job. 19:14-16) **“What is man, that he should be pure, Or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? 15 “Behold, He puts no trust in His holy ones, And the heavens are not pure in His sight; 16 How much less one who is detestable and corrupt, Man, who drinks iniquity like water!”**

Notice: (Jer. 13:23) **“Can the Ethiopian change his skin Or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good Who are accustomed to doing evil.”**

Notice: (Psa. 143:2) **“And do not enter into judgment with Your servant, For in Your sight no man living is righteous.”**

Notice: (Prov. 20:9) **“Who can say, “I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin”?”**

Notice: (Rom. 3:9-12) **“What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; (10) as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; (11) THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; (12) ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.”**

Notice: (1 Jn. 1:10) **“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.”**

5. BY THE GRACE OF GOD, YOU WERE CHOSEN.

- **Notice: The O.T. “Israel.” (Deut. 10:15-16)** “Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. (15) “Yet on your fathers did the **LORD set His affection to love them, and HE CHOSE** their descendants after them, **EVEN YOU ABOVE ALL PEOPLES, AS IT IS THIS DAY.”**
- **Notice: (Hag. 2:23)** “On that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will make you like a signet ring, for **I HAVE CHOSEN YOU,**’ ” declares the LORD of hosts.”
- **Notice: The N.T. “Bride of Christ.” (Matt. 11:27)** “All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and **ANYONE TO WHOM THE SON WILLS TO REVEAL HIM.**”
- **Notice: (Matt. 22:14)** “For many are called, **BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN.**”

- **Notice: (Lk. 18:7)** “now, will not God bring about justice for **His elect** who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?”
- **Notice: (Col. 3:12)** “So, as those **who have been chosen of God**, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;”
- **Notice: (1 Pet. 2:8-9)** “**But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION**, so that you may proclaim the excellences of Him **who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**;
- **Notice: What God says about His APPLE, and BRIDE. (Rom. 11:28)** “From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, **but from the standpoint of God’s choice** they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;”
- **Notice: The “TRIBULATION SAINTS.” (Rev. 17:14)** “These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and **those who are with Him are the CALLED AND CHOSEN AND FAITHFUL.**”

- **Notice (Eph. 1-14)** The Bible says, ***“He set his love on us and chose us before the foundation of the world.”*** From **vs. 3** when the process of our salvation begins **to vs. 14** when it is over, God is the one taking all the action!
 - This is one, long **202-word sentence**. The sentence has **48 pronouns**: **30** of them belong to God. There are **24 verbs**, or action sequences in it: God does **20** of them, and only **4** of them we do.
- Vs. 3, GOD** blesses; **Vs. 4, HE** chooses.
- Vs. 5, HE** predestines and adopts **Vs. 6, HE** bestows grace;
- Vs. 7, HE** redeems and forgives; **Vs. 8, HE** lavishes;
- Vs. 9, HE** makes known and **HE** purposes; **Vs. 10, HE** unites together in Christ;
- Vs. 11, HE** works; **Vs. 13, HE** seals.
- **LISTEN TO THE 4 THAT WE DO**: we **listen**; we **receive**; we **believe**; and we **hope**. Isn't that beautiful?
 - **You may be thinking: “What part of salvation are we responsible for?”** **WE DID ALL THE SINNING. JESUS DID ALL THE SAVING.**

- You may be thinking, “WELL, WHY DID HE CHOOSE ME? WHAT WAS IT ABOUT ME?” Did God see that I was going to make a great Christian and say, “Man, I gotta have that guy on my team! He’s such a great debater, or she has such potential for leadership—I want them!” **I DON’T THINK SO!**
- In one of the most beautiful and mystifying passages of the OT, when God was explaining to **ISRAEL** why he chose them, he said, (Deut. 7:7-8,) *“It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the Lord loves you...”*
WOW, IT’S NOT YOUR POTENTIAL. I didn’t choose you because you were great, Israel; **you became great because I CHOSE YOU.**
- You may be thinking, “I KNOW—MAYBE IT WAS THAT I WASN’T AS SINFUL AS OTHER PEOPLE; God saw that deep down I had a good and teachable heart.” • Well, that’s not true either. • Look again, at (Deut. 9:6): *“Know therefore that the Lord your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stubborn people.”* In other words, “Yeah, it wasn’t your good heart either. Actually, your heart was even harder than most.” • God didn’t look down and say: “I know there’s still some good in you! I’ll save you.”

- **GOD DIDN'T CHOOSE US BECAUSE WE WERE *LOVEABLE***. In fact, chapter 2, Paul is going to tell us that sin had made us **GOD'S ENEMIES, SONS OF DISOBEDIENCE, OBJECTS OF HIS WRATH.**
- **SO, WHAT WAS IT THEN, ABOUT YOU, THAT CAUSED HIM TO CHOOSE YOU?** This is the mystifying part. Did you see that phrase in (Deut. 7:8) ***"IT WAS JUST BECAUSE THE LORD LOVED YOU."***
- Before we'd ever done good or bad, before the foundation of the world, **GOD SET HIS LOVE ON US. Glory, Hallelujah!**
- **NOTICE WHAT CHARLES SPURGEON SAID:** "I have no questions that God chose me, because I am quite sure that if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love. So, I feel like I am forced to accept this doctrine."

- You may be thinking, “WELL, DIDN’T THAT VIOLATE MY **FREE WILL?**” No. The Bible says his choice is never against our will but always in concert with it. In some places, God says *“I chose you before the foundation of the world,”* but in others Jesus said, *“Whoever will may come.”*
- Jesus explained how it works in (Jn. 6:44) when he says, *“No one comes to me unless the Father draws him.”*
- Also: (Phil.2:13) *“for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”*
- OUR CHOICE TO COME AND THE FATHER’S DRAWING GO HAND IN HAND. The Greek word for **“DRAW”** there, *helkuo*; it carries the idea of a desperately hungry man being drawn to food. That is what God did to us: he created a hunger in us to know Jesus. And that hunger drew us to Jesus.
- THE PROBLEM IS NOT THAT WE WANTED TO CHOOSE GOD AND WE COULDN’T; our problem is that deep down **none of us want to choose God**—we prefer to rule ourselves and be the center of our own universe. It’s our **“WANTER”** that is all out of whack. That’s what it means to be **SPIRITUALLY** dead. So, God, through the preaching of the gospel and the power of the Spirit, changes our hearts **so that we begin to WANT God.**

- You may be thinking, “WELL, WHY DIDN’T GOD CHOOSE **EVERYBODY?**” That’s a big question—let me just say **two** things:
- First: Keep in mind that **GOD IS NOT OBLIGATED TO EXTEND SALVATION TO ANYONE.** What is fair is that we all perish. The fact that any of us have a chance to receive forgiveness **IS A FREE GIFT OF UNDESERVED GRACE.**
- Second: This is the part of this discussion where a certain amount of mystery sets in, because Scripture never presents a lack of God’s choosing as the reason why someone didn’t come. **NOT ONCE! IT’S ALWAYS ON US.**
- **Notice:** (Matt. 23: 37), *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!”*
- **Notice:** (2 Peter 3:9), *“The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should **come to repentance!**”* The Bible itself ends with, *“Whosoever will may come.”* (Rev. 22:17) **IT’S YOUR CHOICE!**
- If you’re a Christian, it’s because God chose you. If you’re not, it’s because you have chosen to reject God, and *“the Lord is not willing that you should perish, but that you **should come to repentance.**”*
- Are you chosen? In one sense, you have the power to decide that. If you choose to repent and believe in Jesus, you’re chosen. **THE CHOICE IS YOURS!**

- Why does God do things the way that he does them? *“For the praise of his glory.”* He saved us the way that he did to demonstrate his glory, because until you learn this, a lot of the rest won’t make sense. That is the repeated phrase, *“to the praise of his glory,”* found in (vv. 6, 12, 14)
- This is not the only place we see this in the Bible, Notice what God said to Israel in (Eze. 36:22): *“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone.”* Also: (Psa. 23:4), *“He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.”*
- This is why God sometimes saves impossible people— people you’d never think could be saved, because he likes do some things where he alone can get the credit. For some of you, when God saved you, the angels were like, “Well, I didn’t see that coming” and God was like, “I was just showing off.

- **Notice: (1 Cor. 1:26-29)** *“For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; (27) but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, (28) and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, (29) so that no man may boast before God.”*
- **IF YOU ARE SAVED, YOU ARE ONE OF THE ELECT, FOR HIS GLORY.**

4. **JUSTIFICATION**: So, foreknowledge, predestination, calling, next word (justification). *“Whom He called He justified.”* It means made right with God. So, when He moved into your heart and called you to Himself, you were made right with God. You say, **“Well how close are calling and justification?”** I don't know. I guess it'd be like putting together two pieces of paper and shooting a bullet through them and asking which, how much time was between the bullet going through the first sheet and the second sheet. It's just a distinction in theological terms, not necessarily in time, for He calls you to be justified. He calls you to be right with God. But you understand the sequence. **The calling is the moving in to turn your heart. The justification is what happens.**

- What does it mean to be JUSTIFIED? To be made right with God, that's all.
- How do you get right with God? You have to get rid of something. What is it? **SIN.**
- HOW DO YOU GET RID OF SIN? God takes it and puts it on whom? **JESUS CHRIST.** And listen, if He predetermined to love you, and He predestined you to be redeemed, in eternity past before the world began, and in time He moved in and called you away from your sin and through your faith made you right with Him through Jesus Christ, it says **whom He JUSTIFIES, verse 30, them He also, what, GLORIFIES.** See anybody dropping in the cracks?
- In the moment that God predetermined to love you, your glorification was so secure He could speak of it as if it already happened. Marvelous thought, glorious thought. You were saved unto glory and all things are working toward that. **THAT'S HIS PURPOSE,**

CAN ONE WHO COMMITS SUICIDE BE saved?

- **SUICIDE is a grave sin equivalent to murder.** (Exo. 20:13; 21:23), but it can be forgiven like any other sin. And Scripture says clearly that those redeemed by God have been forgiven for all their sins--past, present, and future (**Col. 2:13-14**). Paul says in (**Rom. 8:38-39**) that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.
- So, if a true Christian would commit suicide in a time of extreme weakness, he or she would be received into heaven (**Jude 24**). But we question the faith of those who take their lives or even consider it seriously--it may well be that they have never been truly saved.
- That's because God's children are defined repeatedly in Scripture as **those who have hope** (Acts. 24:15; Rom. 5:2-5, 8:24; 2 Cor. 1:10, etc.) **and purpose in life** (Lk. 9:23-25; Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:29). And those who think of committing suicide do so because they have **NEITHER** hope nor purpose in their lives.

SUICIDE?

- Furthermore, one who repeatedly considers suicide is practicing sin in his heart (**Prov. 23:7**), and (**1 John. 3:9**) says that **"no one who is born of God practices sin."** And finally, suicide is often the ultimate evidence of a heart that rejects the lordship of Jesus Christ, because it is an act where the sinner is taking his life into his own hands completely rather than submitting to God's will for it. Surely many of those who have taken their lives will hear those horrifying words from the Lord Jesus at the judgment--**"I never knew you; Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness"** (**Matt. 7:23**).
- So, though it may be possible for a true believer to commit suicide, we believe that is an unusual occurrence. Someone considering suicide should be challenged above all to examine himself to see whether he is in the faith (**2 Cor. 13:5**).

THE *UNPARDONABLE* SIN!

- **WHO IS JESUS?** You only have **3** options and that is He is a liar, a lunatic, or He is Lord. And we see that kind of played out in the final verses of (Mk. 3:28-30), *“Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness but is guilty of an eternal sin.”*
- **WHAT'S THAT ETERNAL SIN?** Because they were saying He has an unclean spirit.
- **THE ETERNAL SIN FOR THEM WAS THIS...JESUS IS DEMONIC.** They went to hell for that. You say, “Wait a minute. What if I said that? Would I go to hell for that?” Not necessarily, if you said that without full information. That's a blasphemy that's forgivable, right? But if that's your ***FINAL CONCLUSION WITH FULL REVELATION***, if that's your response to the full understanding of the gospel, the full revelation of Christ contained on the pages of Scripture, if that's your **final conclusion**, you could never be forgiven because you've had full revelation, you've had full light. What else is there? You can't get anymore if that's your final conclusion, **THAT'S AN ETERNAL SIN.**

- **NOW THIS IS THE WORK OF AN [APOSTATE](#)**. The one who was blaspheming against the Holy Spirit was saying Jesus is demonic.
- **HOW DOES THAT BLASPHEME THE HOLY SPIRIT?** Because when Jesus came into the world, the N.T. says, He set aside the prerogatives of His own power. NOTICE: (Jn. 12:49) *“For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.”*
- That's what the ***incarnation*** meant, Jesus laid aside His glory, became a man, He restricted the independent use of His divine attributes and He left Himself to the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit. Whatever He did was the Father's will and was done through the Spirit's power. So, if you say Jesus is satanic, you have just blasphemed the Holy Spirit **cause the Holy Spirit doing His work through Him**. The Holy Spirit came upon Him at His baptism, led Him from there into the wilderness to be tempted, was with Him through His temptation, and anointed Him to preach.

- **NOTICE ANOTHER WARNING TO THE SAME PEOPLE IN: (HEB. 6:4)**

In the case of those who have once been **ENLIGHTENED**...that's knowledge, mental...you had information, revelation, you **TASTED** the heavenly gift...heavenly gift being the kingdom, Christ, the message of salvation, the gospel, you tasted it, and you were partaker of the Holy Spirit.” Maybe you got healed. Maybe somebody you know got healed. You were there when the miracles were poured out by the power of the Holy Spirit, and you tasted the good word of God when Jesus taught it and you tasted the power of the age to come miracles. In other words, you were exposed to all of it, and you've now **fallen away**...turn away, walk away. **IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO RENEW YOU** to repentance because you crucified to yourself the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

- You say, “I reject full revelation and enlightenment, you tasted it, you touched it, you were there, you're exposed to it, your decision is to walk away...you join the crucifiers. You conclude He's not God. And with those supernatural powers, must be satanic.
- You're left with that. You say He has an unclean spirit after full revelation. You can't be saved. **Verse 6, “IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO RENEW THEM AGAIN TO REPENTANCE.”**

- One final **WARNING** that I want to show you: (Heb. 10:26) *“If we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.”* If you just go on living your life of sin after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there's nothing else. There's no other sacrifice. If you reject Christ and His sacrifice, there's nothing waiting for you except **verse 27**, *“A terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries.”*
- And then **verse 29**, *“How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled underfoot the Son of God and regarded as unclean the blood of the Covenant by which He was sanctified as insulted...whom?...the Spirit of grace.”* **“The Holy Spirit is the power behind the life and ministry of Jesus.”**
- Some of you perhaps have thought that you were guilty of some blasphemy that could never be forgiven. May I remind you in final comments that the Apostle Paul made in (1 Tim. 1:12) *“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who strengthened me because He considered me faithful, putting me into ministry even though I was formerly a...what?...blasphemer.”* All manner of blasphemy can be forgiven except that final blasphemy that says with full revelation, **“I REJECT CHRIST.”** And you're left with the fact of explaining His supernatural power as satanic. And you stand then with the crucifiers, crucifying Him again and putting Him to open shame.

The **SAINT**, The **BELIEVER**, The **BRIDE**, The **BORN AGAIN**, **ADOPTED**
Child, and The **ELECT**
HAVE ETERNAL LIFE NOW!

- **Notice:** (Jn. 5:24) *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, HAS ETERNAL LIFE, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”*
- **When Does Eternal life Begin?** when you die? **NO!** It starts the moment you **BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST**. You **HAVE** eternal life **NOW!**
- **Jesus is Praying For You:** Notice: (JN. 17:9) *“I ask (pray) on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;”*
- **What Did/Does He Pray For?** Notice: (Jn. 17:15) *“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil.”*

YOU HAVE THE **HIGHEST POWER** PRAYING FOR YOU **JESUS!**

- **Remember:** (Lk. 22:31-32) *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat. (32) but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail;”*
- **Did Jesus Ever Pray A Prayer That Went Unanswered?** Absolutely **NOT!** Notice: (Jn. 11:41-42) *“So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. (42) “I knew that You always hear Me;” Why? Because He always prayed in the Fathers will.*
- **Jesus Prayed For These Disciples,** *“Father I pray that You keep them.”* I bet **PETER** is grateful that Jesus prayed for him, because he went from cursing, swearing, and denying Christ, to the apostle of Pentecost. The one who wrote two books in the N.T. because Jesus prayed for him.
- **Jesus Is Praying For You Too:** Notice: (Jn. 17:20-21) *“I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; (21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.”*
- **If Jesus Prays For You, His Prayer Will Be Answered:** Notice: (Heb. 7:25) *“Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”*

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 4

What Happens When a Christian Sins!

#4 WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS?

Psalm 51:1-2

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing
love; according to your great
compassion blot out my
transgressions. Wash away all
my iniquity and cleanse me from
my sin.

CAN **YOU** BE **BLOTTED** OUT ?

- *“He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”* (Rev. 3:5–6)
- **CHRIST DESCRIBED THE REWARDS AWAITING THOSE WHO ARE TRUE CHRISTIANS**. They, **will be clothed in white garments**. In the ancient world, **white garments** were also worn for festive occasions such as weddings. True Christians will wear theirs at the marriage supper of the Lamb (**Rev. 19:7–9**). White robes were also worn by those celebrating victory in battle; all true Christians are victorious through Christ over sin, death, and Satan. But primarily believers’ **white garments** represent **purity** and **holiness**. Christ promises to clothe Christians in the brilliance of eternal purity and holiness.

- Christ further promises every true Christian: (Rev. 3:5) *“He will not erase his name from the book of life but will confess his name before the Father and before His angels.”* Incredibly, although the text says just the opposite, some people assume that this verse teaches that a Christian’s name can be erased from the **book of life**. They thus foolishly turn a promise into a threat.
- **NOTICE: (Ex. 32:33),** *“The LORD said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.”* It is argued by some, who supports the idea that God may remove someone’s name from the Book of Life. In this passage the Lord tells Moses that *“whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.”* There is no contradiction, however, between that passage and Christ’s promise in **(Rev. 3:5)**.

- The **BOOK** referred to in (Ex. 32:33) is not the **BOOK OF LIFE** described here, in (Phil. 4:3), *“And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life,”* and later in Revelation (13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). Instead, it refers to the **BOOK OF THE LIVING**, the record of those who are alive (cf. Ps. 69:28). **the threat, then, is not ETERNAL DAMNATION, but PHYSICAL DEATH.**
- **IN JOHN’S DAY**, rulers kept a register of the citizens of a city. If someone died, or committed a serious crime, their name was erased from that register. Christ, the King of heaven, promises never to erase a true Christian’s name from the roll of those whose names were *“written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain”* (Rev. 13:8).
- **The TRUTH is,** Christ will **confess every believer’s name** before God the Father and before His angels. He will affirm that they belong to Him. Here Christ reaffirmed the promise He made during His earthly ministry: *“Everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven”* (Matt. 10:32).

WHAT DOES **SIN** DO TO THE **BELIEVER**?

1. **SIN DIRTIES THE SOUL**: “Wash me; Cleanse Me.” (Psa. 51:2) *“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin.”*
2. **SIN DOMINATES THE MIND**: David’s sin was etched upon his conscience **“ALL”** the time. (V. 3) *“For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.”*
3. **SIN DISGRACES THE LORD**: David Saw Sin For What It Was, He Sinned Against God! (V. 4) *“Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight,”*
4. **SIN DEPRESSES THE HEART**: David’s sin had cost him his “JOY.” (Vv. 8-12) *“Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice;”* Notice: (V:12) *“Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.”*

WHAT DOES **SIN** DO TO THE **BELIEVER**? CONT.

5. **SIN DISEASES THE BODY**: David felt like God was crushing him. (V. 8) *“Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.”*
Remember: (Prov. 17:22) *“A joyful heart is good medicine, But a broken spirit dries up the bones.”*
6. **SIN DEFILES THE SPIRIT**: David’s sin created in him a **NEGATIVE** spirit. (V. 10) *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*
7. **SIN DESTROYS THE TESTIMONY**: David wasn’t filled with the **SPIRIT**; he was filled with **SIN**. (Vv. 14-15) *“Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. (15) O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”* HIS SIN HAS DESTROYED HIS TESTIMONY.

HOW CAN A BELIEVER GET RIGHT WITH GOD?

1. **YOU MUST HAVE CONFIDENCE:** David knew there was a “multitude of mercy.” Notice: (V. 1) *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.”*
2. **YOU MUST HAVE CONFESSION:** David called it “**MY SIN.**” *“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. (3) For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.”*

Notice: (Prov. 28:13) *“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.”*

This is the principle of (1Jn. 1:9) *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

HOW CAN A BELIEVER GET RIGHT WITH GOD? CONT.

3. YOU MUST HAVE **CLEANSING**: David said in (V. 2) *“Wash me.”* This is speaking of being “OUTWARDLY CLEANSED” because sin is **defilement**. In (V. 7) David said, *“purge me.”* This speaks of an “INWARD CLEANSING.”
Notice: (Isa. 1:18) *“...Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”*
GOD’S GRACE IS GREATER THAN OUR SIN!
4. YOU MUST BE **CONSECRATED**: *“AN IDLE MIND IS THE DEVIL’S WORKSHOP.”* Vv. (12-15) *“...“Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.. Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. (15) O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise....”* David was at the **WRONG place**, at the **WRONG time**, thinking the **WRONG thing**, which led to doing the **WRONG DEED!**

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 5 How To Handle Temptation!

#5 HOW TO *HANDLE* TEMPTATION.

*No temptation has overtaken you
that is not common to man.*

God is faithful,

*and he will not let you be tempted
beyond your ability,*

but with the temptation he will also provide

the way of escape,

that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

THERE ARE ONLY **THREE** WAYS TO **HANDLE** TEMPTATION.

1. **YOU GIVE IN TO IT**: “What is natural and feels good the just do it.” Give caution to the wind, the animal in you says go with it.
2. **YOU FIGHT IT**: There are those who constantly battle but are constantly losing in the battle. They try to defeat temptation in the energy of the flesh.
3. **YOU OVERCOME IT THROUGH CHRIST**: Notice: (1 Cor. 10:12-13) You don't have to be defeated by lust. *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. (13) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”*

THE SUBJECTS OF *TEMPTATION*.

- **BEING SAVED** does not make you immune to temptation. As a believer you will be tempted in the areas of:
 1. **DISHONESTY.**
 2. **MATERIALISM.**
 3. **SEX.**
 4. **GREED.**
 5. **PRIDE.**
- Thank God for Jesus. **Notice: (Heb. 4:15) *“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”*** The one who thinks he’s in control and doesn’t need help will be the one who **FALLS TO TEMPTATION.**

THE SOURCE OF *TEMPTATION*.

- TEMPTATION WILL COME THROUGH *THREE* AVENUES.

- A. THE *WORLD*.

- B. THE *DEVIL*.

- C. THE *FLESH*.

- 1. THE *EXTERNAL FOE-THE "WORLD."*

- Notice: (1Jn. 2:15) *"Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

- Notice: (Rom. 12:2) *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."*

• HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF THE “**WORLD**” AND ITS **VALUE** SYSTEM?

1. **FASHION**: acceptance is in the way we look? Too thin, Too fat?
2. You can be **WHATEVER SEX** you want to be?
3. You **DON'T NEED TO BE MARRIED** to live together?
4. Do what you feel is right, if it feels good to you? **NO MORAL/ETHICAL ABSOLUTES.**
5. Your **POLITICAL AFFILIATION** defines your worth?
6. **EVERYBODY** lies, cheats, and steals a little?
7. **I'M NOT ACCOUNTABLE** to no one, matter a fact **I'M ENTITLED?**

Notice: (Jam. 4:4) ***“You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”***

- The **“WORLD”** can be **ANY BELIEF/ VALUE** system that ultimately drives a wedge between you and God. It’s contrary to His Holy Word.

2. THE **INTERNAL FOE**=THE **“FLESH.”**

(Gal. 5:19-21) “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- WHAT IS THE **“FLESH?”** It’s your **PREDISPOSITION** to sin/ It’s your old **“ADAMIC NATURE.”**
- BUT....I’M A **GOOD** PERSON: (Rom. 3:23) **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**
- Notice: (Eph. 2:3) **“Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”**
- Also (Psa. 58:3) **“The wicked are estranged from the womb; These who speak lies go astray from birth.”**

- THE **DEEDS** OF THE **FLESH!**

- Notice: (Gal. 5:16-21) ***“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. (17) For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (18) But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. (19) NOW THE DEEDS OF THE FLESH ARE EVIDENT, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”***

- THE **DEEDS** OF THE **SPIRIT!**

- Notice: (Gal. 5:22-23) ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”***

- HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE TRULY **“BORN FROM ABOVE?”**

- Notice: (Gal. 5:24) ***“Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”***

3. THE *INFERNAL FOE*= THE “DEVIL.”

Notice: (Eph. 6:12) *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*

▪ YOU HAVE A REAL ENEMY! Notice: (Jn. 10:10) *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

▪ Notice: (1Pet. 5:8) *“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”*

▪ THE “UNHOLY TRINITY OF TEMPTATION” IS :

1. THINK OF THE WORLD AS A LIGHTED MATCH.

2. THINK OF YOUR FLESH AS A POOL OF GASOLINE.

3. THINK OF THE DEVIL AS THE ONE WHO STRIKES AND THROWS THE MATCH.

▪ Notice: (1 Cor. 10:13) *“No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”*

THE *SEAT* OF TEMPTATION!

- When temptation comes, it will be in *three* areas because that's all there is. Remember your nature is made of **BODY, SOUL,** and **SPIRIT.**
- Notice: (1 Thess. 5:23) *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- Remember: **ADAM** and **EVE** were created in the perfect image of God. After sin interred in, we are left with is a faint representation of the tri-unity of Almighty God.

THE FIRST SEAT OF TEMPTATION THE BODY. ENEMY FLESH!

- This is the **first** part of your nature that will be tempted because it is visible **(YOU CAN SEE IT)**.
- Our bodies are nothing but flesh, an earthly monkey suit crying to be released. Therefore, your bodily appetites can be a seat of temptation.
- **Notice: (Matt. 26:41) “Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the FLESH is weak.”**
- **Notice: (Rom. 6:12) “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal BODY so that you obey its lusts,”**

THE **BODY** AND IT'S **APPETITE**

- **MILK DOES A BODY GOOD, NOT SIN!**

Notice: (Gal. 5:19-21) *“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, (21) envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*

- **WHAT ARE SOME OTHER SIN'S OF THE BODY?**

GLUTTONY, CUTTING, SUICIDE.....?

- **QUESTION #1: Why are sexual sins specified by Paul as being the only sins AGAINST HIS BODY? Why not, for example, drugs or alcohol?**
- **QUESTION #2: What is it in the nature of a sexual sin that makes Paul highlight this as being against a man's body?**

ANSWER TO QUESTION #1

- **ON THE BASIS OF OT TEACHING** (Gen. 2:24), *“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”*
- **JESUS REAFFIRMED THIS** in (Mark 10:6-9), *“But from the beginning of creation, God MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. (7) “FOR THIS REASON, A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, (8) AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH; so, they are no longer two, but one flesh. (9) “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.”*
- **JESUS WAS TEACHING** that sexual intercourse is not an inconsequential, isolated act but one **UNITING MAN AND WOMAN** in an intimate, complete, and enduring bond.
- **CONSEQUENTLY, HE IS REVOLTED** by the thought that a member of Christ's body should ever be united with the body of a *prostitute*.
- **IN CORINTH**, most of the prostitutes were slave women attached to the service of a pagan temple. It was commonly thought that any man having sexual relations with these sacred prostitutes entered into communion with the god of whom they served.

- **Notice:** (1 Cor. 6:15-20) *“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! (16) Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.” (17) But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. (18) FLEE IMMORALITY. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. (19) Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? (20) For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body.”*
- **WHAT WAS ANOTHER DANGER OF BEING INVOLVED WITH A PROSTITUTE? IDOLATRY!**
Notice what Paul said about this: (1 Cor. 10:20-23) *“No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. (21) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (22) Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we? (23) All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify.”*

ANSWER TO QUESTION #2

- **QUESTION #2:** What is it in the nature of a sexual sin that makes Paul highlight this as being against a man's body?
- **ANSWER:** Sins like the abuse of alcohol and drugs are more of **OUTSIDE** stuff being put in a body, but in a case of sexual sin, it's where you use yourself to **INTERTWINE** with someone's soul and thus creates a **SOUL TIE**. In any other sin there are not soul ties created. This also involves the **SECONDARY PERSON** while any other sins are done **INDIVIDUALLY**.
- **Notice:** (Prov. 6:32-33) *“The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; He who would destroy himself does it. (33) Wounds and disgrace he will find, And his reproach will not be blotted out.”*

- **AS FAR BACK AS THE *MOSAIC BOOKS*** we find some interesting references to sexual immorality and nakedness.
- **THE FIRST RECORDED *HUMAN CURSE* WAS OVER NAKEDNESS (Gen 9:20-23).**
- **NEARLY *TWO* ENTIRE CHAPTERS** along with many other references were a code of ethics on nakedness and sexual immorality (**Lev. 18 and 20**).
- **EXPOSED GENITALIA OR *NAKEDNESS* WERE COMMON IN CANAANITE DEMONIC WORSHIP.** Instructions and prohibitions to Moses were given so that ***ISRAEL'S ALTARS*** would not be like the Canaanites' (**Ex. 28:41-43; 20:26**).

- WHEN **MOSES** RETURNED FROM THE MOUNTAIN, Aaron had lost control of the people as they worshiped a golden calf, (Ex. 32:25). N.K.J.V. says they were "**UNRESTRAINED**" The K.J.V. says "**NAKED,**" The **Living Bible** says, "**COMMITTING ADULTERY,**" and finally the **N.A.S.B.** say's they were "**OUT OF CONTROL.**" All this happened shortly after a move of God.
- ONE OF THE **KEYS** TO OVERCOMING SEXUAL SIN LIES IN THE **MEDITATION OF THE WORD OF GOD.** This will nurture the fear of the Lord in you. For example, in (Gal. 5:19-21) the works of the flesh are divided into **four** basic categories **1) sexual sins, 2) sins connected with pagan religion and the occult, 3) sins of the temper,** and **4) sins of drunkenness.**
- It is interesting that **SEXUAL SIN** is listed **FIRST**, not only here, but also in several other scriptural references in the New Testament.

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES ON *SEXUAL SIN.*

- (Rom. 1:24, 6:19) – **UNCLEANNES** IS SINGLED OUT.
- (1 COR. 6:9-11) – **SEXUAL SINS** LISTED FIRST.
- (GAL. 5:19-21) – **SEXUAL SINS** LISTED FIRST.
- (EPH. 4:19) – **LEWDNESS** AND **UNCLEANNES** SINGLED OUT.
- (EPH. 5:3) – **FORNICATION** AND **UNCLEANNES** SINGLED OUT; LET IT NOT ONCE BE NAMED AMONG YOU.
- (COL. 3:5) – **FORNICATION** AND **UNCLEANNES** LISTED FIRST.
- (1 THESS. 4:3) – **SEXUAL IMMORALITY** SINGLED OUT IN OUR WALK OF SANCTIFICATION.
- (1 PET. 4:3) – **LEWDNESS** LISTED FIRST FROM OUR PAST LIFE.

THERE ARE **FOUR** SEXUAL SIN'S **RUN!!!!!!**

1. **ADULTERY**: Unlawful sexual intercourse involving at least one married person. Adultery is incompatible with the harmonious laws of family life in God's kingdom and is under God's judgment since it violates God's original purpose.
2. **FORNICATION**: Pornography, illicit sexual intercourse including prostitution, whoredom, incest, licentiousness (lack of moral restraint), and habitual immorality (would include sexual fantasies that lead to masturbation).
3. **UNCLEANNES**: Often refers to homosexuality and lesbianism
4. **LEWDNESS**: unashamed indecency, unbridled lust, unrestrained depravity (a disposition or settled tendency to evil, the innate corruption of unregenerate man), the person with this characteristic has an insolent defiance of public opinion, sinning in broad daylight with arrogance and contempt. Again, this often refers to sexual sin

- **Notice:** (1 Cor. 6:13-14). *“Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body. 14 Now God has not only raised the Lord but will also raise us up through His power.”*
- **Notice:** (Matt. 10:28) *“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

The Second Seat of Temptation

The SOUL. Enemy World.

- **Your soul** is the “psychological part of you. It consists of your MIND, EMOTIONS, and WILL. It’s your sense of humor, intellect, temperament, taste, ego, and self.
- **Notice: (1 Pet. 2:11)** *“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”*
- **So do you want to be a stranger to God, or a stranger in the world?**

You can't be both. **Notice: (James. 4:4)** *“Don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”* This doesn't mean you shouldn't build friendships with people who don't know the Lord. But it does mean that Christians are not to make an alliance with sinful desires. It should feel strange to us to indulge in anything which God forbids. And if it doesn't feel strange, then we need to take a hard look at whether we truly have a relationship with God.

- **Notice: (Ephesians 5:3)** *“But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.”*
- **Remember**, God judges the **SOURCE** and **ORIGIN** of sin, not it’s manifestation or lack of manifestation!

Be **Who** You Already Are.

- Remember, Peter is urging these believers to abstain from the *“passions of the flesh.”* (1 Pet. 2:11)
- He warns them to do this because these passions are *warring against their souls*, hoping to destroy them.
- Peter just explained **who we are** as believers (**identity**), and then comes to **how we ought to live**. Because of **whom you already are**. Notice: (1 Pet. 2:9–11) *“But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellences of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (10) for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. (11) Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.”*
- Some will get this wrong by thinking these kinds of commands are not necessary for believers, because they’ve already been saved. Others will get this wrong by thinking we abstain so that we can be saved. **BOTH ARE SERIOUSLY WRONG.**

BE WHO YOU ALREADY ARE.

- The text tells us who we are, and then gives us the command (so that we increasingly become who we already are). Those who walk in love and crucify their flesh (not perfectly) **are showing they have already been made new through faith.**
- The same pattern shows up in (1 Cor. 5:6–7) ***“Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? (7) Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.”*** Be about becoming something new, because you already have been made new.
- You don’t become a good tree by bearing good fruit. You show that you are a good tree by bearing good fruit. **(Matt. 7:17–20)**
- When you abstain from the passions of the flesh, you’re not making yourself God’s chosen people, but revealing that you already are God’s chosen people.

HOW DO PASSIONS DESTROY YOU?

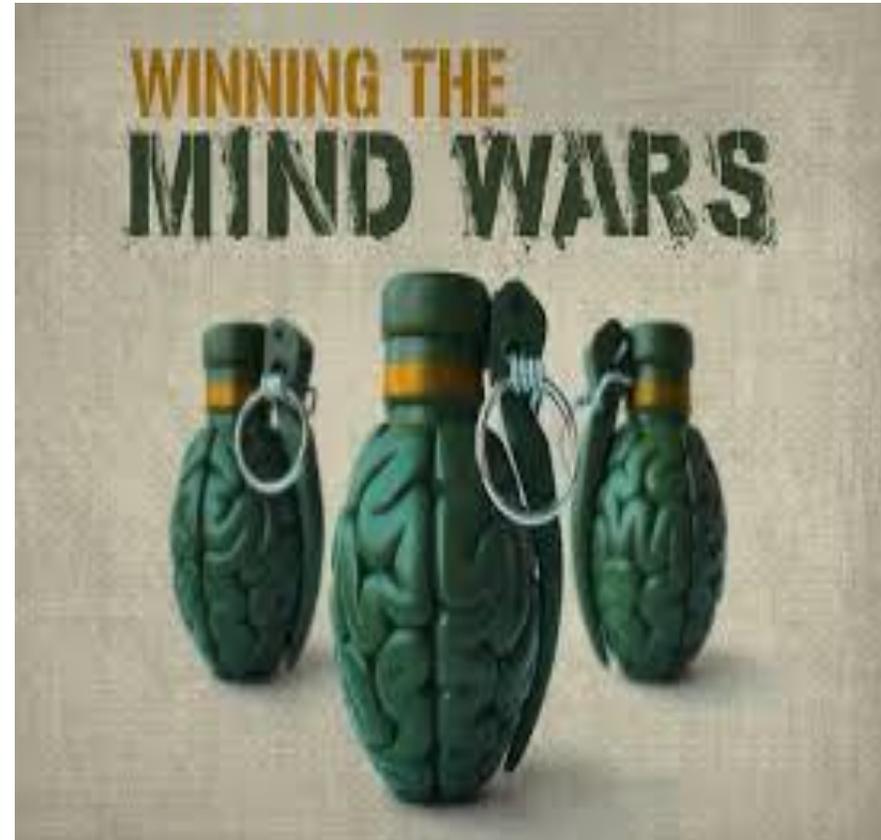
- How do your passions war against you and try to destroy you? **(1 Pet. 2:11)** Notice: that the **“SOUL”** of a man or woman is the place of godly thinking, living, and choosing. That is why fleshly passions wage war against it.
 1. The **ENEMY** is not your **SOUL**.
 2. The **ENEMY** is your **FLESH!**
 3. The **ENEMY** is not your **MIND**.
 4. The **ENEMY** is your **FLESH!**
- You exist (were made) to proclaim **“excellent things”** about God. **(1 Pet. 2:9)**
- **The passions of the flesh**: These are any passions that cause you to stop marveling most in the excellency of God They **DIM** and **DESTROY** your passions for God.
- They do this by making other things **look brighter** and **more beautiful** than God. **(1 Pet. 2:11)**
- The passions of the flesh strip you of the power to do the thing you were created to do: **“to proclaim God’s excellences.”**

WHAT CAUSES US TO SIN?

- **JAMES** identifies the fundamental cause, or source of our sin: it is our **“PASSIONS”** or **“DESIRES”** that wage war within our souls.
- **Notice: (James. 4:1-3)** *“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? (2) You lust and do not have; so, you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so, you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.”*
- **NOTICE WHAT JAMES DOES NOT SAY.**
 1. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is Satan.
 2. He doesn't say that you fight and engage in bitter conflict because Satan is at war within you.
 3. He doesn't say that the cause of our sinning is the world and its corrupt ways.
 4. He doesn't say that the cause of our sin is the dysfunctional family in which we were raised.
 5. The **CAUSE** of all our sinning are those **“PASSIONS”** or **“DESIRES”** that wage war within us.

MIND WARS!

➤ (2 Corinthians 10:3–5) *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, (4) for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. (5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking Every Thought captive to the obedience of Christ,”*



- The Apostle Paul was in complete agreement with Peter on this point. Notice: (Col. 3:5) *“put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry”*
- Notice: (Mk. 7:21–23) *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, (22) deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. (23) All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man.”*
- Both **PAUL** and **PETER** is based on their belief that the Christian is **ENERGIZED**, **ANIMATED**, and **EMPOWERED** by the **HOLY SPIRIT (Col. 1:29)**. **NO DESIRE OR PASSION OR URGE** is so entrenched in the human soul that a person indwelt by the Spirit cannot conquer it. But even if you can't conquer it or change it you can, with the Spirit's help, **CHOOSE** not to indulge in it.

- Many contend that you can't simply choose to suppress certain passions. In fact, they argue that it is psychologically dangerous to attempt any such thing. Venting our desires, giving them full and fetterless freedom, is the counsel we most often hear. "Be yourself! Embrace your longings!" And above all else, never judge or condemn someone for their expression or attempt to find fulfillment of these inward urges.
- When I look within myself, I see evil passions and selfish desires and uncleanness and covetousness, and I want nothing of them. These are ***VIOLATIONS*** of my true self. These are invasive enemies from which I long to be delivered by the grace of God. I have no desire to affirm all that is within me. I rather **CHOOSE** to defy much of what is within me. I choose by the grace of God to **OPPOSE IT, DEFEAT IT, and LIVE-IN TRUE FREEDOM FROM ITS ENSLAVING POWER.**

Winning The War For Your Soul.

- In (Eph. 4:22) Paul referred to this as **“DECEITFUL DESIRES.”**
- These *“passions”* or *“desires”* that Paul, Peter and James all mention will always **LIE TO YOU!!!!!!!**
- They will try to deceive you into believing that by indulging them and giving them sway in your life and by making room for them in your experience that you will find real and lasting joy. Don't believe them! They lie!
- They are “deceitful” desires. Fight them with reminders of truth. Fight them by laying hold of the truth found in (Psa. 16:11) ***“You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.”***

The Third Seat of Temptation

The SPIRIT. Enemy Devil.

- There are a lot of believers who reason that the “Soul,” and “Spirit” are the same thing, but that’s bad theology. There is a difference!
- **Notice: (1Thess. 5:23)** *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
- **Notice: (Heb. 4:12)** *“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”*
- **What is The Spirit?** The spirit is much like the soul in that it is invisible. Spirit, and soul are “Indivisible,” but they are not identical. Remember I've shared with you that man is created in the image of God, therefore we've been given something that no other creature has, a **“SPIRIT,”**
- **Notice: (Jn.4:24)** *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* At the moment of “conversion” something wonderful happens.

Benefits From Being SAVED.

- **Notice:** (Col. 2:13) *“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,”*
- **Notice:** (1 Pet. 3:18) *“For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;”*
- **The “PROOF” Of Your CONVERSION:** Notice: (Rom. 8:16) *“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,”*
- **The spirit is therefore**, that part of your nature that can,
 1. You can **“KNOW”** God.
 2. You can **“FELLOWSHIP”** with God.
 3. You can **“COMMUNE”** with God.

Understanding **BODY, SOUL, and SPIRIT.**

• What Do I **NEED TO KNOW?**

1. With your **“BODY”** you have **“PHYSICAL”** life, and you know the world beneath you.
2. With your **“SOUL”** you have **“PSYCHOLOGICAL”** life, and you know the world around you, and within you.
3. With your **“SPIRIT”** you have **“SPIRITUAL”** life, and you know the world above you.
 - When your **“BODY”** is right, then your **“HEALTHY.”**
 - When your **“SOUL”** is right, then your **“HAPPY.”**
 - When your **“SPIRIT”** is right, then your **“HOLY.”**
 - This was the original intent of creation. This is what made Adam whole!
 - Remember: The World is **“OUT OF WHACK,”** because of **“SIN.”** When the devil comes to tempt, he attacks the **body, soul, or spirit.**

How Do believers “RESIST” The Devil?

- **Notice: (James. 4:7)** *“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*
- Peter commands Christians to have a mind that is resolute and to **RESIST** Satan by being **FIRM IN** their **FAITH**.
- **“RESIST” means:** *“TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST,”* and to be **“FIRM”** is to make that stand solid (the Greek is *stereos*, from which comes the English *stereo*, meaning **“solid,”** or **balanced at both ends**). That is done by being solidly fixed on *the faith (te pistei)*, which is biblical revelation. It is the **whole body of revealed truth contained in Scripture**.
- This is a call to **KNOW** and **BELIEVE SOUND DOCTRINE**, to be discerning in distinguishing truth from error, and to be willing to defend the truth and expose error.
- **Jude’s call is most appropriate in this connection:** Notice: (Jude. 3) *“Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints”* It is that **“ONCE-FOR-ALL”** faith which is the inscripturated revelation of God and constitutes the **FAITH** on which believers **STAND SOLIDLY** and from which they continually resist Satan.

- This **“STRONG STAND”** is the result of the faithful leading of shepherds in the church, as Paul indicates in: **(Eph. 4:11–14) Notice:** *“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;”*
- **Understand, SATAN IS A LIAR** (John 8:44; cf. Gen. 3:1; 2 Thess. 2:9) and a **DECEIVER** (Rev. 20:7–8), the only sure way to stand up against him is by faithful obedience to biblical truth. The battle is a spiritual one, in the supernatural realm, as Paul notes in:

- Notice: (2 Cor. 10:3–5) *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”*
- “SPECULATIONS” are satanic **ideologies, ideas, theories, religious philosophies,** and **systems of thought** *“raised up against the knowledge of God”*; that is, they are **ANTI-BIBLICAL** viewpoints that have people captive as if they were imprisoned in a great fortress. Christians cannot smash those ideas with human ingenuity, but only with biblical truth—*“taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”* Only when someone has the mind of Christ on a matter is he rescued from such ideas.

How Do You “Test” The Spirit’s?

- **JOHN understands** how important it is to realize that you can't believe everything you hear, you can't believe everything that is purported to come from God, you can't believe everything that is supposedly biblical. Cannot believe all teachers of religion, you cannot believe all Christian preachers, or Christian evangelists or teachers. You cannot believe all who came...who claim to speak for God and claim to have a prophetic voice that is set loose in the world.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:1-6)** *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. 4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. 5 They are from the world; therefore, they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”*

- **There is the SPIRIT OF TRUTH**, the Holy Spirit, and there is the spirit of error who would be Satan and his demons. Nothing is benign. All spiritual truth either comes from a divine source or a demonic source. And we know that God speaks truth and reveals truth and Satan speaks a lie and is a deceiver and so it is critical that we be able to discern the difference. God's truth must be guarded very, very carefully. It is always under attack. It is relentlessly under attack.
- **This is why the APOSTLE PAUL instructed TIMOTHY at the end of his first letter to him, Notice: (1 Tim. 6 :20) *“O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge”—***
- **Here’s how PAUL began his second letter to TIMOTHY. Notice: (2 Tim. 1:13-15) *“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. 15 You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.”* Paul is saying to Timothy, **“DON'T BE LIKE THEM, DON'T ABANDON THE TRUTH, DON'T ABANDON ME THE TRUE APOSTLE.”****

- 
- **IT'S THE *GUARDIANSHIP* THAT IS SO IMPORTANT.** There are always false religionists, cultists. There are always those who come along with their deceptive schemes that purport to be biblical, that quote Bible verses, that say they have a message from God, that have a better way to understand the Bible and apply the Bible to make the Bible acceptable, to make the gospel acceptable. There are those who in outright fashion attack the Bible and then there are those who are much more subtle than that. But we are constantly being called to the defense of the Scripture and the defense of the truth.

TWO REQUIREMENTS ARE NEEDED TO “GUARD” THE TRUTH.

1. **FIRST**, you have to *“know the truth.”* That's why Paul said to Timothy, *“Hold on to sound doctrine.”* You can't guard what you don't understand. If a minister or a pastor does not know sound doctrine, he can't guard it. So, first of all, it requires the knowledge of sound doctrine, and
2. **SECONDLY**, it requires the *“Recognition of error.”* **SOUND DOCTRINE** and **SOUND DISCERNMENT**, are essential in the church. This is our primary responsibility, and it runs parallel to our teaching. How can we teach sound doctrine if we don't know it, how can we teach our people to avoid error if we don't recognize it. Sound doctrine and sound discernment go side by side and are the primary responsibility of every preacher, every elder, every shepherd and pastor in the church. And **JOHN** discharges that responsibility. John knows sound doctrine and he articulates it, and John also possesses sound discernment, and he provides helpful warnings to aid others to do the same.

- **IN (1 JN. 4,) JOHN COMMANDS BELIEVERS TO TEST THE SPIRITS.**

This is necessary if you're going to discern between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. You have to know whatever information is coming to you by **its source**. And again, I say, error is not benign, it is malignant. It is not human, it is demonic. We saw last time, spiritual truth comes from the Holy Spirit, and it is **LIFE-GIVING, LIFE-SUSTAINING, LIFE-PRODUCING, GOD-GLORIFYING**, or it comes from demons. It is either the doctrine of God or the doctrine of demons. It is either that word which is sent and energized by the Holy Spirit, or it is that which comes from seducing spirits. And teachers are either the true teachers of God, or hypocritical liars, espousing the doctrine of demons fostered by seducing spirits. We must know the difference because of the malignancy of error because of the power of truth. **THE TRUTH GIVES LIFE, ERROR KILLS.**

- **FIRST**, John gives us a ***“command” to test, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”***
- **SECONDLY**, is the ***“reason” for the test.*** And the reason is found at the end of V. :1, ***“Because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”***

- **IT'S THE *GUARDIANSHIP* THAT IS SO IMPORTANT.** There are always false religionists, cultists. There are always those who come along with their deceptive schemes that purport to be biblical, that quote Bible verses, that say they have a message from God, that have a better way to understand the Bible and apply the Bible to make the Bible acceptable, to make the gospel acceptable. There are those who in outright fashion attack the Bible and then there are those who are much more subtle than that. But we are constantly being called to the defense of the Scripture and the defense of the truth.

TWO REQUIREMENTS ARE NEEDED TO “GUARD” THE TRUTH.

1. **FIRST**, you have to *“know the truth.”* That's why Paul said to Timothy, *“Hold on to sound doctrine.”* You can't guard what you don't understand. If a minister or a pastor does not know sound doctrine, he can't guard it. So, first of all, it requires the knowledge of sound doctrine, and
2. **SECONDLY**, it requires the *“Recognition of error.”* **SOUND DOCTRINE** and **SOUND DISCERNMENT**, are essential in the church. This is our primary responsibility, and it runs parallel to our teaching. How can we teach sound doctrine if we don't know it, how can we teach our people to avoid error if we don't recognize it. Sound doctrine and sound discernment go side by side and are the primary responsibility of every preacher, every elder, every shepherd and pastor in the church. And **JOHN** discharges that responsibility. John knows sound doctrine and he articulates it, and John also possesses sound discernment, and he provides helpful warnings to aid others to do the same.

- **IN (1 JN. 4,) JOHN COMMANDS BELIEVERS TO TEST THE SPIRITS.**

This is necessary if you're going to discern between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. You have to know whatever information is coming to you by **its source**. And again, I say, error is not benign, it is malignant. It is not human, it is demonic. We saw last time, spiritual truth comes from the Holy Spirit, and it is **LIFE-GIVING, LIFE-SUSTAINING, LIFE-PRODUCING, GOD-GLORIFYING**, or it comes from demons. It is either the doctrine of God or the doctrine of demons. It is either that word which is sent and energized by the Holy Spirit, or it is that which comes from seducing spirits. And teachers are either the true teachers of God, or hypocritical liars, espousing the doctrine of demons fostered by seducing spirits. We must know the difference because of the malignancy of error because of the power of truth. **THE TRUTH GIVES LIFE, ERROR KILLS.**

- **FIRST**, John gives us a ***“command” to test, “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”***
- **SECONDLY**, is the ***“reason” for the test.*** And the reason is found at the end of V. :1, ***“Because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”***

Notice: (1 Jn. 2:22-23) “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the *antichrist*, the one who denies the Father and the Son. (23) Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.”

- I hope you understand how very, important one's **CHRISTOLOGY** is. If one errors on the identity of Jesus Christ, that is not from the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. That's the first proposition about Jesus, that He is God, He is the eternal life that came from dwelling in the very presence of God the Father and God the Spirit down to earth. You're confessing that Jesus is a person, not just a proposition. You're confessing that Jesus as a person is God in human flesh, not a created being, as the *Mormons* and the *Jehovah's Witnesses* and *others say*. You are saying He is come from God. That is implying the necessity for Him to come into this world in human form to carry out His redemptive work as a substitute for men. We believe then that the human Jesus and the divine Christ are one and the same. When someone has that *Christology*, they are speaking a message that comes from the Holy Spirit.

The “Jesus” of The Cults.

- IN MATTHEW CHAPTER 24, Jesus’ disciples came to him and asked, *“Tell us, when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”* In responding to this question, it’s very interesting what Jesus identified as the foremost sign of his second coming and of the end of the age, *“Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”*
- Today we are seeing the fulfillment of this warning sign as never before. Our world is literally flooded with **false “christs”** and **false messiahs**. It is estimated that there are over **1,000 cults in America** alone with some **25-30 million followers!** And each of these false cults promotes their own man-made version of “Jesus Christ” **WHO IS NOT THE JESUS OF THE BIBLE.**
- SO, WHO IS THE “JESUS” OF THE CULTS?

1. **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES**: They say that Jesus is actually Michael, the Archangel. He was the first creation of God. He came to Earth as a man, died on a stake, and rose from the grave invisibly as a spirit. Jesus then returned invisibly to Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1914 to head-up the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.
2. **MORMONS (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)**: They teach that Jesus is the spirit brother of Satan. He was once a human being like you and I, but through good works he evolved spiritually to become a god. However, Jesus is just one god amongst a pantheon of gods, all of whom were once human and evolved to become gods themselves. Jesus was born to Mary through physical incest when his father god had sexual relations with her. And Mormons teach that the blood and cross of Christ is foolishness and cannot fully atone for our sins (ever notice how there's no cross on any Mormon church or temple?).

3. **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE: and Mary Baker Eddy:** say that Jesus was only a man, and that Christ is a Divine idea. Furthermore, Jesus never did any supernatural miracles; he simply showed people their mental illusions of sin, evil, illness and disease. Christian Science says that Jesus did not die and his resurrection was only in a spiritual sense.
4. **SUN MYUNG MOON: (the Korean messiah):** claims that Jesus was a man who failed his divine mission and he, Rev. Moon, is the second coming of Christ to unite the world under the banner of the **UNIFICATION CHURCH.**
5. **UNITARIANS:** believe that Jesus was a good man who was mistakenly deified by his followers.
6. **SCIENTOLOGY: and L. Ron Hubbard:** claim that Jesus is a false dream.
7. **SPIRITISTS:** say that Jesus is an advanced medium in the 6th sphere of the astrological projection (wherever that is?).

So, who is the real Jesus?

- **Notice:** (John 1:1) *“In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* A few verses later in (John 1:14) we learn, *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
- **Notice:** (Col. 1:15) Paul tells us that Jesus *“is the visible image of the invisible God...”* In (Col. 2:9) Paul says, *“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...”*
- **THE REAL JESUS IS THE ONE TRUE GOD OF ALL CREATION**. He is the second person of the eternal Triune Godhead. He loves us so much that He broke into human history and split history into B.C. and A.D. to personally reveal Himself to us. The Bible says that Jesus came to *“seek and to save the lost”* (Luke 19:10; John 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:8-9). And as (Acts 4:12) declares, *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”*

Proof Is In The TEST!

- Thirdly, is the “WAY TO TEST,” or the “How” to test.

We need to know **how** to know that something comes from the Spirit of God. And he tells us, "**By this..**" and then goes on to identify what "**this**" refers to.

- Here are the “Three Tests” that will reveal that something is coming from the Spirit of God, and not a demon spirit.

1. THE FIRST TEST, “THE CONFESSION OF THE DIVINE LORD.”

(1 Jn. 4:2) again, "**Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.**" There's one thing demons will inevitably deny in all their demonic systems, and that is they will deny the deity of Jesus Christ. They will deny God in human flesh. In a word, they deny the incarnation. When someone comes and affirms that Jesus Christ is God in flesh, that is divine truth. If you have somebody who denies the Trinity, you have a problem because Jesus Christ cannot be God come in the flesh, the second person of the Trinity in the fullness of what the New Testament teaches about Him if in fact there is not a Trinity.

▪ **THE SECOND TEST “POSESSION OF THE DEVINE LIFE.”**

- It comes from (Rom. 10:9,) *“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord...what...Lord...Lord...Lord.”* Demons recognize His deity. There are others who would recognize or affirm His deity. But it is absolutely critical that you confess Him as Lord.
- **Notice: (Lk. 10:16)** *“The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”*
- **Notice: (Jn. 8:42)** *“Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.”* In the **INCARNATION**, God becomes a partaker of human nature.
In **REGENERATION**, man becomes a partaker of the divine nature.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:4)** *“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.”*
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 2:27)** *“But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”*

- **Notice:** (2 Jn. 3) *“Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.”*
- **Notice:** (1 Jn. 4:2) *“Jesus Christ has come in the flesh,”* not **“INTO THE FLESH,”**...as if the Christ's spirit...just came down and temporarily went into some man, stayed there for a while and then left. It doesn't say that He came into the flesh, it says that He came in the flesh. He didn't descend into an already existing man; He came and was born. He came and actually indwelt that little tiny baby in the mystery of the incarnation in the very womb of Mary and was framed and formed there into the God/Man.
- **JESUS CHRIST ALSO IS FULL OF MEANING.** *“JESUS,”* is the Greek form of *“JOSHUA,”* which means **Jehovah saves.** *“CHRIST”* means the **Anointed One, the King, the Messiah.** **So, YOU HAVE TO CONFESS** that this is the God/Man who came as God's chosen King and Messiah and took on flesh to be a substitute for sinners. And on the other side of that, **V:3,** *“Every spirit that does not confess Jesus in this way is not from God.”*

- **THE BIBLE TEACHES, WHEREVER JESUS IS NOT CONFESSED, YOU CAN'T KNOW GOD.** Every spirit that comes up with any religion, any spiritual teaching that leaves out Jesus, is not from God. Any redefinition of Jesus or the absence of Jesus is not from God.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 4:3) it says, *"This is the spirit of antichrist of which you heard it is coming and now it is already in the world."***
- **SO, WHEREVER CHRIST IN HIS TRUE PERSON IS DENIED, you have demonic data. Any system that denies the deity of Christ, anything from **CHRISTIAN SCIENCE** to **ISLAM**, any of it that denies the true nature of Jesus Christ **IS FROM DEMONS, THE SPIRIT OF ERROR.****
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 2:18) *"Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour."*** In other words, we know Christ has come because of all the attacks on Him.

The Holy Spirit Works In The TRUE Believer.

- YOU UNDERSTAND BECAUSE YOU HAVE *THE MIND OF CHRIST*, (1 Cor. 2).

God has planted His truth in you, planted His Spirit in you as a resident teacher. You are impervious, in one sense, from fatal error. You can be led astray on some issues, **but not concerning the truth of the gospel.**

- YOU *POSSESS GOD'S LIFE*.

You possess God's Spirit. And that's another simple test. Does this teacher possess divine life? Are they from God? Are they free from error, **heresy?**

- As you *LISTEN* to what people have to say, you can be **"discerning"** because you know the truth. You have spiritual instincts that are right and accurate. You can trust them. When you hear somebody teaching something, and you say to yourself, **"That is not right,"** that's the Spirit of God, the truth of God kicking in and acting in a discerning fashion on your behalf.
- As you *WALK* in the Spirit and *WALK* in obedience to the truth, the Spirit of God exercises that protective influence. You are saved because **you know the truth and believe the truth.** It is the **"evidence"** of your regeneration. And there will be in your life the fruit of that regeneration.

So... How Do You **TEST PEOPLE?**

1. BY THEIR VIEW OF CHRIST. “CHRISTOLOGY.” The “**INCARNATION.**”
2. BY HOW THEY LIVE. Do they manifest, do they demonstrate the characteristics of “**regeneration**” (are they born from above)? Remember, The Bible says, “**You're from God, you're His little children, you have overcome them.**” You've overcome the world,” and that's what moves them, controls them, attracts them, dominates them.
3. THE **THIRD TEST** “THE PROFESSION OF THE DIVINE LAW.”
Notice: (1 Jn. 4:5) “**They are from the world; therefore, they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them.**” The false teachers are very popular. That's a dead giveaway. The source of their knowledge is “**The World.**”

Notice: (1 Jn. 4:6) “**We're from God. He who knows God listens to us. He who is not from God does not listen to us.”**

HERE'S THE BOTTOM LINE. When you meet these teachers, and listen to their teaching, you test their Christology. What's their doctrine of the incarnation? You test their regeneration. Are they manifesting evidences of being a child of God, or are they just parroting stuff from the world?

- And then, **THIRDLY, WHEN YOU BRING THE “LAW OF GOD” TO BEAR UPON THEM, DO THEY RESPOND TO IT?** Do they express devotion to the divine law? And that's V :6 ***“He who knows God listens to us.”*** Do these false teachers/religions **“SUBMIT”** to the authority of **SCRIPTURE?**
- Notice: (2 Jn. 9) ***“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.”***

You Must **“TRY”** The **SPIRIT’ S** . **JUDE 2-4**

- *“May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. (3) Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. (4) For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”*

Studying The Seasons of Temptation.

- A. THE TEMPTATION OF YOUTH: Primarily when we are young temptation comes in the realm of the **BODY**. Sex, drugs, violence, rebellion, laziness. Even though a person of any age can succumb to these temptations, they are primarily sins of youth.
- B. THE TEMPTATIONS OF MIDDLE AGE: The **WORLD** is the primary agent of temptation for the middle aged. This sin involves the soul, (ego) wanting the **biggest, newest**, and the **best**. Biggest house, yard, pool. New car, clothes. Best of everything, kids, achievements, trophies, and sometimes that includes “spouse.” They spend their time, resources, and energy chasing after the world.
- C. THE TEMPTATION OF OLD AGE: You're too old to chase the kids, and you never achieved “Big-shot” status in middle age, so now you're listening to the voices of **DOUBT**, and **FEAR**. The agent of this temptation is none other than the **DEVIL** himself. You began to believe the lies that “**God doesn't love you anymore.**” “You're going to run out of retirement money and be left homeless.” “Some crazy disease is waiting to befall you, and you're going to die alone.” **FORGETTING** the mercy, grace, and providence of God that has seen you through all these many years.

Subduing The **PULL** of **Temptation**.

- When you understand how the **WORLD** , the **FLESH**, and the **DEVIL** work, then you are able to get **VICTORY** over these areas of temptation.

1. GETTING VICTORY OVER THE **WORLD** YOU NEED “FAITH.”

Remember the “world” is the “External foe.” Notice: (1 Jn. 5:4) *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”* It’s not just faith in the “general” sense; it is “specific” faith in Jesus.” Notice (1 Jn. 5:5) *“Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* Remember, a worldly (carnal) Christian is trying to satisfy life’s hidden hunger with an ungodly system of values. A Christian is someone who has seen Jesus with the eye of faith and realizes how wonderful He is. They have found their satisfaction in the Son of God.

Don’t forget (1 Jn. 2:15) *“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”* “FAITH” makes Jesus a reality in our lives, therefore He’s truly more than enough to satisfy!

“If your satisfied with steak, you won’t want the devil’s crumbs!”

Subduing The **PULL** of Temptation.

2. GETTING VICTORY OVER THE **FLESH** YOU NEED “FLIGHT.”

Remember the “**FLESH**” is the “**INTERNAL**” foe. Notice: (2 Tim. 2:22) *“Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.”* We are not told to “**FIGHT,**” but to “**FLEE.**”

Notice: (1 Cor. 6:18) *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”* Why should we run, and not fight?

Notice: 1 Cor. 10:13) *“No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”*

Truth is, if you're struggling to keep your mind, and heart pure, then **DON'T** watch that garbage, or read that trash. If you're trying to lose weight, then throw out the “**LITTLE DEBBIE'S.**” Whatever is tempting your flesh **GET RID OF IT!** *“He who would not fall down ought not to walk in slippery places.”*

Subduing The **PULL** of Temptation.

3. GETTING VICTORY OVER THE **DEVIL** YOU NEED “FIGHT.”

Remember, the “**DEVIL**” is the “**INFERNAL**” foe. Notice: (Eph. 6:12) *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* Notice also: (James. 4:7) *“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”* You can use “faith,” and you can use “flight,” but against the devil, you better learn to **FIGHT!**

It’s not a matter of you being afraid of the devil, the question is, is he afraid of you? Notice: (Rev. 12:11) *“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”*

SO HOW DO I FIGHT? By confessing any, and all unrepented sin that would sever your “Fellowship” with God. **MAKE SURE YOUR HEART IS CLEAN!**

SECONDLY, Proclaim who you are in Jesus' name, not who you feel like you are, but who the bible says you are, and the devil **WILL FLEE** from you.

“YOU CAN KNOW VICTORY, AND TURN TEMPTATION INTO TRIUMPH.”

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 6 About Believers Baptism!

What every Christian Ought To Know.
#6 Believers Baptism!



THERE ARE **THREE** MODES (OR METHODS) OF **WATER BAPTISM** USED IN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES TODAY:

1. **IMMERSION**: Is the practice in which the person is completely “**submerged**” in water.
 2. **AFFUSION**: Is the practice of, “**pouring water**” over one's head. This practice came into being around the 12th century because of the lack of water that was needed to baptize, (**convenience.**)
 3. **ASPERSION**: Is the act of “**sprinkling water**” over one's head, a ritual that started back around the 12th century for those who were bed ridden, and unable to be moved.
- Evangelical Christians are divided on the question of which mode or modes are proper forms of baptism.
 - Some Christians, typically those who believe that only believers should be baptized think that immersion is the only valid mode.
 - Other Christians, usually those who recognize the validity of “***infant baptism,***” consider all three modes to be acceptable.

BAPTISM ACCORDING TO JESUS!

- BAPTISM IS A “BIBLE” DOCTRINE, NOT JUST A “BAPTIST” DOCTRINE.

- Jesus **“COMMENCED”** His three-and-a-half-year ministry by being baptized.

Notice: (Mk. 1:9) “In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.” Notice also V. 10 “Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him;

- Jesus **“CONCLUDED”** His Ministry by commanding baptism-

“The Great Commission.” Notice: (Matt. 28:19-20) “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Baptism According to Jesus!

Cont.

- Jesus was **“FULLY IMMERSED,”** again **V. 10** ***“coming up out of the water.”*** There is **NO biblical** account of “Sprinkling, or Pouring.” There is only one kind of water baptism taught in the Bible= **Immersion!**
- Jesus was not **“INCONVENIENCED”** by the long journey of about sixty miles to be baptized. The bible says He came from Nazareth of Galilee to where John was in the Jordan.
- Why was John at this particular location? **Notice: (Jn. 3:23)** ***“John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized—”*** **“IMMERSION.”**

WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED?

- **Notice: (Matt. 3:13-15)** *“Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” 15 But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him.”*
- It is not difficult to understand John’s concern. His (John’s) baptism **was for CONFESSION OF SIN and REPENTANCE (Matt. 3:2, 6, 11)**, of which he himself needed; but Jesus had no sins to confess or be forgiven of. John’s baptism was for those who turned from their sin and thereby became fit for the arrival of the great King. Why, then, would the sinless King Himself want to be baptized?

VIEWS THAT ARE **UNSCRIPTURAL!**

- **WHY DID JESUS**, Want To Submit Himself to an act that testified to *confession* and *repentance* of sin?
 1. Some interpreters suggest that He intended His baptism to be a sort of initiatory rite for His high priesthood, reflecting the ceremony which prepared the Old Testament priests for their ministry.
 2. Others suggest that Jesus wanted to identify Himself with the Gentiles, who were initiated into Judaism as proselytes by the act of baptism.
 3. Still others take Jesus' baptism to be His recognition and endorsement of John's authority, His accrediting of John as a true prophet of God and the genuine forerunner of His own ministry.
 4. A fourth view is that the Lord intended to be baptized vicariously for the sins of mankind, making His baptism, along with His atoning death on the cross, a part of His sin-bearing, redemptive work.

JESUS TELLS US WHY?

- **JESUS** Himself explains to **JOHN** His reason for wanting to be baptized. In His first recorded words since the age of twelve, when He told His parents, ***“Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?”*** (Lk. 2:49),
- **Notice** what Jesus said to John in, (Matt. 3:15) ***“Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.”*** These are words of **ROYAL DIGNITY** and **HUMILITY**.
- Jesus assured the prophet that ***“in this way it is fitting,”*** and went on to explain to John that His baptism was important for **BOTH** of their ministries, ***“for us to fulfill all righteousness.”*** **FOR GOD’S PLAN TO BE PERFECTLY FULFILLED**, it was **necessary** for Jesus to be baptized and to be baptized specifically by John.

THERE ARE AT LEAST 3 BIBLICAL REASONS FOR *HIS BAPTISM.*

1. One reason Jesus submitted to baptism was to give an ***“EXAMPLE OF OBEDIENCE”*** to His followers. **Notice: (Lk. 20:25) *“And He said to them, “Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”*** Also: (Matt. 17:25-27)
2. Jesus came into the world to ***“IDENTIFY WITH MEN;”*** and to identify with men is to identify with sin. He could not purchase righteousness for mankind if He did not identify with mankind’s sin. Hundreds of years before Christ’s coming, Isaiah had declared that the Messiah ***“was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors”*** (Isa. 53:12).

This was the first act of His ministry, the first step in the redemptive plan that He came to fulfill. He who had no sin took His place among those who had no righteousness. He who was without sin submitted to a baptism for sinners. In this act the Savior of the world took His place among the sinners of the world. The sinless Friend of sinners was sent by the Father ***“in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh”*** (Rom. 8:3); ***and He “made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”*** (2 Cor. 5:21)

Notice: (Isa. 53:11). ***“As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.”*** There was no other way to **“FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS.”** Again, (Matt. 3:15)

3. Jesus' baptism was also a **“SYMBOL OF HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION, AND THEREFORE A PREFIGUREMENT OF CHRISTIAN/BELIEVER'S BAPTISM.”**

Jesus made only **two** other references to personal baptism, and each related to His death. Not long before His final trip to Jerusalem He told His disciples, ***“I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!”*** (Lk. 12:50).

On the other occasion He was responding to the request by **JAMES** and **JOHN** that they be given the top positions in His heavenly kingdom. ***“You do not know what you are asking for. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?”*** (Mark 10:38). Jesus' supreme identification with sinners was His taking their sin upon Himself, which He did at Calvary.

Though John, having been given such a brief explanation, could not possibly have comprehended the full meaning of Jesus' baptism, he accepted His Lord's word and obeyed. ***"THEN HE PERMITTED HIM."***



The Meaning of BAPTISM.

1. BAPTISM PICTURES THE SAVING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST.

- Notice: (Rom. 6:4-7) *“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.”*
- This passage is saying that baptism is the picture of **“CALVARY.”** The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and our death, burial, and resurrection **with Him. (Jesus)**
- A. **DEATH, and BURIAL:** The baptistery becomes a liquid tomb, and you're at a **funeral** service. Your sin is buried in the **“GRAVE OF FORGETFULNESS.”**
- B. **RESURRECTED LIFE:** Baptism not only represents a resurrected **NEW LIFE**, but it pictures ultimate **“GLORIFICATION”** with Jesus as well. You're also at a **celebration** service, because it also pictures **EASTER, PENTECOST**, and the **SECOND COMING!**

2. BAPTISM IS A CLEAR PICTURE OF THE GOSPEL.

- Notice: (1 Cor. 15:3-4) *“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,”*

3. Baptism Comes **AFTER** Salvation, **NOT BEFORE.**

- This is why it's called "**BELIEVER'S BAPTISM.**" Notice: (Acts. 2:41) ***"So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls."***
- Notice: (Acts. 10:46-47) ***"For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?""***
- Notice: (Acts. 16:31-33) ***"They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. 33 And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. (PHILIPPIAN JAILER)***
- Notice: (Acts. 18:8) ***"Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized."***

4 . BAPTISM IS NOT “BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.”

“BAPTISMAL REGENERATION”—the view that teaches that one is saved (regenerated) through water baptism.

- **Notice (1 Pet 3:21)** *“...who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the **days of Noah**, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,”*
- **“BAPTISM”** (from baptizō) simply means **“TO IMMERSE,” AND NOT JUST IN WATER.** Peter here uses baptism to refer to a figurative immersion into Christ as the **“ARK OF SAFETY”** that will sail over the holocaust of judgment on the wicked.
- **NOAH** and his family were immersed not just in water, but in the world under divine judgment. All the while they were protected by being in the ark. God preserved them in the midst of His judgment, **WHICH IS WHAT HE ALSO DOES FOR ALL THOSE WHO TRUST IN CHRIST.**
- God’s final judgment will bring fire and fury on the world, destroying the entire universe (**2 Pet. 3:10-12**); but the people of God **WILL BE PROTECTED** and taken into the eternal new heavens and new earth (**2 Pet. 3:13**).

- Peter made clear that he did not want readers to think he was referring to water baptism when he specifically said, ***“not the removal of dirt from the flesh”*** (1 Pet. 3:21). Peter was actually referring to a spiritual reality when he wrote ***“baptism now saves”*** is also clear from the phrase, ***“an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”*** (v. 21).
- The word **“APPEAL”** has the idea of a pledge, agreeing to certain conditions of a covenant (**The New Covenant**) with God. What saves a person plagued by sin and a guilty conscience is not some external rite, but the agreement with God to get in the ***“ARK OF SAFETY,”*** **The Lord Jesus, by faith** in His death and resurrection. (**Rom. 10:9**) **Heb. 9:14, 10:22**)
- The only baptism that saves people is **DRY**—the spiritual one saves into the death as well as the resurrection of Christ—of those who appeal to God to place them into the spiritual ark of salvation safety. **Notice: (Rom. 10:9-10).** ***“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.***
- Just as the Flood immersed all people in the judgment of God, yet some passed through safely, (**NOAH AND FAMILY**) so also his final judgment will involve everyone, **BUT** those **WHO ARE IN CHRIST** will pass through securely.

- The experience of Noah’s family in the Flood is also **ANALOGOUS** to the experience of everyone who receives salvation. Just as they died to their previous world when they entered the ark and subsequently experienced a resurrection of sorts when they exited the ark to a new post-Flood world, so all Christians die to their old world when they enter the body of Christ. **(Rom. 7:4-6); (Gal. 2:19-20); (Eph. 4:20-24).**
- They subsequently enjoy newness of life that culminates one day with the resurrection to eternal life. . . .
- Therefore, God provides salvation because a sinner, **BY FAITH**, is immersed into Christ’s death and resurrection and becomes His own through that **spiritual union**. **SALVATION DOES NOT OCCUR BY MEANS OF ANY RITE, INCLUDING WATER BAPTISM.**
- There are no shortcuts or religious rituals that can achieve salvation—in fact, it’s not a product of human works at all. As Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians, ***“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast”*** (Eph. 2:8-9).

Baptism of The HOLY SPIRIT. (Acts 2:1-4)

- We begin our study in Acts chapter **one**, with the **“PREPARATION” for the birth of the church**. In Acts chap. 2, we will see the **“BIRTH” of the church**.
- 1.** Chap. **2** we see it born. **2.** Chap. **1**, the disciples were waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- 3.** Chap. **2**, He comes. **4.** Chap. **1**, they were anticipating the church being born.
- 5.** Chap. **2**, it is born. **6.** Chap. **1**, the disciples were equipped.
- 7.** Chap. **2**, they are empowered. In **8.** Chap. **1**, the believers are held back.
- 9.** Chapter **2**, they are sent forth.
- **So, Chapter 2 then is a very important passage.** In Chapter 2, (Acts 1-8) is fulfilled . **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses...”** This promise of Jesus comes to pass in the beginning of **Chapter 2**. The church is born and moves out in testimony in **Chapter 2**.

- **Notice: (Acts. 2:1-4)** “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”
- Now this is a tremendous *transitional* passage. This is the greatest change that has occurred in all of the Scriptures. "**For it is the end of the OLD AGE and the birth of the NEW AGE.**" The great crux of God's redemptive history is right here. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ issues itself in the sending of the Spirit and the birth of the new age, **THE AGE OF THE SPIRIT.**
 1. IN THE **OLD AGE**, THE SPIRIT WAS **WITH YOU.**
 2. IN THE **NEW AGE** HE IS **IN YOU.**
 3. IN the **OLD AGE**, men served God out of fear of consequences **UNDER LAW.**
 4. IN the **NEW AGE**, men served God out of love for Jesus Christ **ENERGIZED BY THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.** It's a new economy altogether.

- There is **NO** way that we can possibly comprehend the **CHANGE** that is taking place here. Only God, Himself, can define this fantastic feat.
- **Notice: the definition** of this change is found in **(Jn. 7:37-39.)** “Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. **38** “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” **39** **But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”**
- **IN GOD'S REDEMPTIVE HISTORY**, the **SPIRIT AGE** couldn't happen until Jesus ascended and was glorified in heaven. So, in the great flow of history, Jesus must return to the Father **BEFORE** the Spirit can be sent. And that's exactly where we find ourselves in **(Acts. 2)**
- The closing of Chap. **1** is the **ASCENSION** of Jesus Christ, the beginning of Chap. **2** is the **COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**.

- **THIS IS A NEW DISPENSATION.** A new thing is born, and you and I are a part of it **BY FAITH** in Jesus Christ.
- This whole new age is called the **CHURCH**, the word “**church**” is from **ECCLESIA**, meaning “**CALLED OUT ONES.**”
- This is something Paul calls a “**MYSTERY,**” it was something **HIDDEN** throughout the O. T. The (O.T. saints) never saw the church.
- This is a **BRIDE** of Christ, the N. T. says.
- These are **BRANCHES** for the vine Jesus Christ, says John.
- This is a **FLOCK** for Jesus, the good shepherd.
- This is a **MYSTERY KINGDOM** ruled by the Son of God.
- This is a **HOUSEHOLD**, a **FAMILY OF SONS** by adoption.
- This is a **BUILDING** says Paul, a **SPIRITUAL TEMPLE** with Jesus Christ as the foundation.
- This is a **BODY, HIS BODY.**

- **THE MOST UNIQUE METAPHOR** in defining the church is a **HUMAN BODY**. It is fitly joined together so that everything functions in harmony, so the church is brought together in union with Jesus Christ and with each other by the Holy Spirit.
- **BODY ONE**, Jesus Christ **INCARNATE ON EARTH- "FLESH."**
- **BODY TWO**, Jesus Christ **INCARNATE IN HIS CHURCH**. Not one body, but a **MULTIPLICITY** of bodies in whom Jesus lives- **"SPIRITUAL."**
- I'm describing to you the **"TRUE"** church, **THOSE WHO KNOW CHRIST BY PERSONAL FAITH**. We all possess the Holy Spirit. He lives in us. That's the character of the age you see.

- There are people today who would tell you that there are some Christians **WHO DON'T HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT**. These folks do not understand the dispensation of the church at all. They don't understand what the character of the church is. **IT IS A BODY OF BELIEVERS ALL INDWELT BY THE SPIRIT**. It can't be anything less than that.
- That's why in Rom. 8:9 Paul said, *"...But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."* So, every believer possesses the Spirit. Here are just a few blessings received from the Holy Spirit.
 1. HE GIVES **INSTRUCTION/WISDOM**.
 2. HE GIVES **POWER**.
 3. HE GIVES **COMFORT/PEASE**.
 4. HE GIVES **SECURITY**.
 5. HE GIVES A **GUARANTEE OF OUR INHERITANCE**.
- **The Spirit is in every "TRUE" BELIEVER**. Now, our Lord promised that this would happen, and it happens here in Acts 2. The church is born and from then on, every believer **AT THE POINT OF FAITH IN CHRIST RECEIVES THE HOLY SPIRIT**. And this is why we believe that to be true.

- Now the Bible calls this the **“baptism of the Holy Spirit.”** Jesus, Himself, gave it that title. **Notice: (Acts 1:5) “for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”**
- There is no doubt what Jesus was talking about when He said, **“not many days from now.”** He was talking about what would happen at **PENTECOST**, which was **10** days later. Jesus said, **“You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”**
- **THEY WERE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**. Jesus had promised that the character of the church would be such that those who were in the church would be **indwelt** by the Spirit. He shall be in you and that they would be...this was called baptized in the Spirit. And we'll take this apart in a moment.
- **THERE ARE THREE THINGS THAT I WANT US TO LEARN FROM: (Acts. 2:1-13)**
 - I. THE **EVIDENCE** OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING.
 - II. THE **EFFECT** OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING.
 - III. THE **EXPLANATION** OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING.

1. THE EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING.

- THE EVIDENCE OF THE SPIRIT'S COMING.
- (Acts. 2:1-4) “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”
- Now keep in mind this is the introduction of a **NEW AGE**. This is the birth of the church, the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus *that you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit*. Also, the fulfillment of the promise of Jesus that *the Spirit will be in you*. Both occurring **SIMULTANEOUSLY at SALVATION** from here on, but obviously couldn't occur at salvation here because these people were already believers, and it was the birth of the church in a unique historical sense.

- To say that you get the Holy Spirit later, *after salvation* because the apostles did is to misunderstand the redemptive history of God. The Spirit came here because this was the time for the Spirit to come. And there had to be a beginning. It is not to say that this is the example of every Christian who then gets the Spirit X number of years after his salvation. **ABSOLUTELY NOT!**
- THERE ARE *TWO* TYPES OF *PROPHECY* WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND.
One is *verbally predictive*, The other is *typically predictive*.
- 1. *VERBAL PROPHECIES, OR WORD PROPHECIES*: Here's what it looks like; *“a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son.”* That's a word prophecy.
- 2. *TYPICAL PROPHECY*: is a “Type,” or a “Picture.” **THE PASSOVER LAMB**, which typically predicts a final Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, in a picture sense. Another typical prophecy would be, for example, *“the blood on the door posts in the middle.”* A picture of the blood of Christ which satisfies the requirements of God and stays the hand of the angel of death.

- So, there are both **VERBAL PROPHECIES** and **PICTURE PROPHECIES** that we call **types** in the Bible. These picture prophecies are no less strategic than the verbal ones and they better come true with just the same accuracy, or the Bible really has problems.
- When God predicts something whether He predicts in **verbal statement** or by **perfect picture**, **IT BETTER COME TRUE**. And so, when we come to the **“DAY OF PENTECOST,”** this is a fantastic fulfillment of a predictive type. And it must happen on the day of **Pentecost**, or it blows the whole thing in terms of what God prophesied through pictures.
- **Notice: Verse 1, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”** **Ten** days later and they're still with one accord, what an awesome thing. The historical designation is extremely important here, and it's important for many reasons. Note that it does not say **when** the disciples had prayed or **when** the disciples had tarried or **when** the disciples had fulfilled some spiritual requirements or **when** the disciples had paid the price of Pentecost When this occasion occurred. It doesn't say that at all. It says it happened **“WHEN” THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS FULLY COME.**

- Luke is pointing to the *HISTORY* and the *DIVINE TIMING* of God.

This happens when God wants it to happen, **not in response to anybody's spiritual activity no matter how spiritual it may be.** Now, I want you to look at the concept of Pentecost because this is a basis for which all the interpretation hinges.

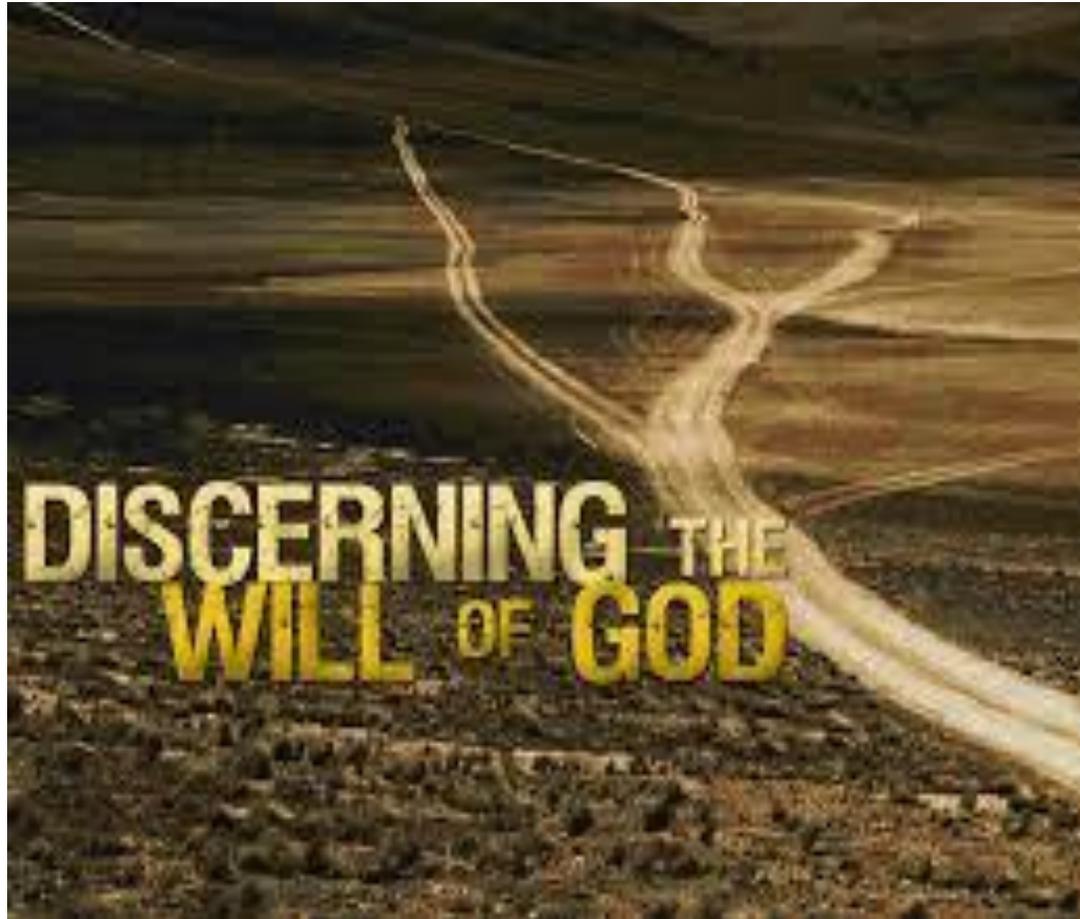
What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 7

How To Discern the
Will of God!

What every Christian Ought To Know.

#7 Discerning the Will of God!



6 Myths Concerning the WILL OF GOD.

- When it comes to the **“WILL OF GOD,”** there are **three** must in the believer's life. Otherwise, your life will be pointless, aimless, and fruitless.
 - I. YOUR **DESIRE**: TO **KNOW** THE WILL OF GOD.
 - II. YOUR **DELIGHT**: TO **OBEY** THE WILL OF GOD.
 - III. YOUR GREAT **DANGER**: TO **REFUSE** THE WILL OF GOD.
 1. **THE “MAP” MYTH**: This is the idea that God is going to give you a road map for His will for you. “God is not a Garmin.” The will of God is a journey through a relationship, not a road map.
- **HOW DID GOD LEAD THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL INTO THE WILDERNESS?**
A pillar of cloud by day; a pillar of fire by night. All they had to do was **“SEE”** that cloud, or pillar of fire to know that God’s presence was indeed with them.
(Ex. 13:21)

- **HOW DID GOD LEAD ABRAHAM?** *“...Go... to the land which I will show you.”* (Gen. 12:1) Along his journey God would appear to Abraham giving him the assurance that His (God’s) **presence**, and **guidance** was with him.
- 2. **THE “MISERY” MYTH:** This has the idea that **“Doing the will of God”** is going to be **PAINFUL**. These folks are afraid to surrender to God, because the **“PRICE”** might be greater than the **“PRIZE.”**
- **SOME PEOPLE ARE AFRAID TO SAY: “I’LL DO anything, anywhere, anytime, at any cost,”** because their afraid God is going to send them to the most remote part of Africa only to be eaten by cannibals, or worse, be sent to **ALABAMA**, and be forced to eat **hawg jaws**, and **pigs' feet** with **NO TEETH**.
- **YOU MUST UNDERSTAND:** “God will never **SEND YOU**, where His grace won’t **SUSTAIN YOU**.” Why? Because He Loves You! Some simply don’t won’t to give up their sin, or lifestyle to follow God’s will, and in doing so they forfeit God’s **BEST** for their life.

- Remember what Jesus said: (Lk. 14:26-27) *“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple,”*
- 3. **THE “MISSIONARY” MYTH**: The belief that God’s will is for a certain class of people, such as Preachers, missionaries, but not ordinary people.
- Notice: (Gal. 2:6) *“But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.”*
- Notice: (Acts. 10:34-35) *“Opening his mouth, Peter said: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, 35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.”*
- Notice: (Col.1:27) *“but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong,”*
- **“YOU CAN’T ANSWER THE CALL IF YOU DON’T REPORT FOR DUTY.”**

4. **THE “MIRACLE” MYTH**: Those who believe that you have to have a sign, or something dramatic in order to know the will of God.
- God can speak any way **HE CHOOSES**. Audibly, through other believers, circumstances, and even miracles.
 - **REMEMBER O BALLAAM**? Notice: (Num.22:28) *“And the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?”*
 - Notice (1 Kings. 19:11-12) *“So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing (a still small voice).”*

- If you want to know the will of God for your life it's usually found through **"a still small voice,"** and **"But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day."** (Prov. 4:18) As He guides you through the day, God's will for your life becomes brighter for you see plainly.
- 5. **THE MISSED-IT MYTH**: This is the belief that God called you to something in the past when you were young, and you missed it. I've had people to tell me that they know God called them to preach, but now they think their too old, and it's too late for them.
- **AS ADRIAN SAYS**, ***"It's NEVER too late for you. GOD HAS A PLAN for your life, at EVERY STAGE OF YOUR LIFE."***
- If you think that you **"MISSED" GOD'S ORIGINAL PLAN FOR YOU**, then notice what God says in (Joel. 2:25) ***"Then I will make up to you for the years That the swarming locust has eaten, The creeping locust, the stripping locust and the gnawing locust, My great army which I sent among you."***

6. THE “MYSTERY” MYTH:

This is the belief that God’s will for your life is supposed to be a mystery, and you're not really supposed to figure out what it is. **Notice: (Jer. 29:13) “*You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”*** God wants you to **KNOW** His will for your life. To know His will, is to know Him. It might not always be easy, but it’s never impossible.

- **NOTICE PAUL’S DIALOG WITH JESUS:** (Acts. 9:3-6) “And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: **4** And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? **5** And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. **6** And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. KJV.

- **PAUL ASKED TWO QUESTIONS**: Questions we all should be asking.

1. **WHO** ARE YOU, LORD?

2. **WHAT** DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?

THREE Principles for Knowing God's Will

#1 GOD WILL GUIDE YOU--HE PROMISED

➤ **GOD HAS A PLAN ORDAINED FOR US, BEFORE IT EVER COMES TO PASS.**

Notice: (Acts. 9:6) **“but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.”**

- Notice (Psa. 37:23) **“The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way.”** (God is leading you **ONE STEP AT A TIME.**)
- Notice (Psa. 32:8) **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.”**
- Notice: (Isa. 58:11) **“And the LORD will continually guide you,..”**

- **Notice:** (Prov. 3:6) *“In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.”*
 - **Remember,** You have a **FATHER** above you **CONTROLLING** all things. You have a **SAVIOR** beside you **DIRECTING** your footsteps. And you have the **HOLY SPIRIT** living inside you who is **ENERGIZING** you by impressing upon your **heart, mind, and will.**
- A. **GOD’S PREVAILING WILL:** For Ex. The kingdom of this world will one day be the kingdom of Christ. That’s going to happen. It’s part of **His Sovereign will.**
Notice: (Prov. 19:21) *“Many plans are in a man’s heart, But the counsel of the LORD will stand.”*
- B. **GOD’S PERMISSIVE WILL:** For Ex. Christians are not to marry unbelievers, but sometimes tragically they do. (2 Cor. 6:14)
Notice: (Prov. 14:12) *“There is a way which seems right to a man, **But its end is the way of death.**”* God allows His children to **voluntarily** obey or disobey. We (believers) truly exercise **“Free will.”**

- 
- **GOD'S PERSONAL WILL**: For Ex. God led me to Christi, likewise He led me to Mount Carmel. God's word teaches that He has a special plan, a specific plan, and a personal plan for each one of us.

Notice: (Jer. 29:11) *"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."*



UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WILL

WHAT IS IT?

1. GOD'S WILL IS FOR YOU TO BE **SAVED!**

- Notice: (2 Pet. 3:9) *“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing (willing KJV.) for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*
- Notice: (1 Tim. 2:4) *“who desires (will KJV.) all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*
- You need to understand that both of these verses are referring to “**God’s will of DESIRE, WISHING,**” It’s His expression, **NOT** His “**SOVEREIGN WILL OF DECREE.**” God’s choices are determined by His sovereign, eternal purpose not His desires.
- Not everyone is going to be saved, (Jn. 17:6) but we do know the heart of God “**desires**” all men to be saved. You will never know the mind, or the will of God until you first “**BELONG TO GOD**” THROUGH SALVATION.

- **THE WILL OF GOD BEGINS BY SALVATION.** Now Jesus made this very clear **Notice: (Mk. 3:31-35).** *“Then His mother and His brothers arrived, and standing outside they sent word to Him and called Him. 32 A crowd was sitting around Him, and they said to Him, “Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You.” 33 Answering them, He said, “Who are My mother and My brothers?” 34 Looking about at those who were sitting around Him, He said, “Behold My mother and My brothers! 35 “For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother.””*
- What Jesus is saying is this: ***“The will of God is being related to me through FAITH, not through HUMAN RELATION.”*** And you know that Mary and all of His brothers had to be saved, just like you, and I, and in the same manner, ***“by Grace, through Faith.”***
- **JESUS SAYS, THE WILL OF GOD IS A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD; A SAVING RELATIONSHIP WITH ME.** This is the will of God. And so, **Jesus expresses salvation** in terms of the **will of God.**

- Jesus could have as easily said, for whosoever shall be saved, the same is my brother and my sister and my mother. But he chose to say, who does the **WILL OF GOD** is my brother and sister and mother, equating the statement. So, **TO BE SAVED IS TO DO THE WILL OF GOD**. That is God's will.
- **Notice (1 Jn. 2:17) *“The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”***
- **FOREVER LIFE** or **ETERNAL LIFE** then is equated to doing the **WILL OF GOD**. So, in those two passages, **salvation** and **the will of God are equated**.
- God's will is that you be saved, said **Paul to Timothy**. **God's will is that you not perish, said Peter**. So, to begin with then, the will of God is that men be saved. When God sets about to express His will, He goes to the ends that are necessary to make the expression of that will possible.
Notice: (Eph. 2:4-6) *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ.”*

- **Notice: (Eph. 2:4-6)** *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ.”*
- **In response to His own will, He sent that which made it possible.** He Himself came in bodily form, died on the cross and rose again. And He did it for **HIS GREAT LOVE WITH WHICH HE LOVED US.**
- A lot of people talk about what God wants in their life, but they don't even know God. He isn't even running their life. God's will is that you be saved. That's where it all starts. **YOU COMMIT YOUR LIFE TO JESUS CHRIST.**

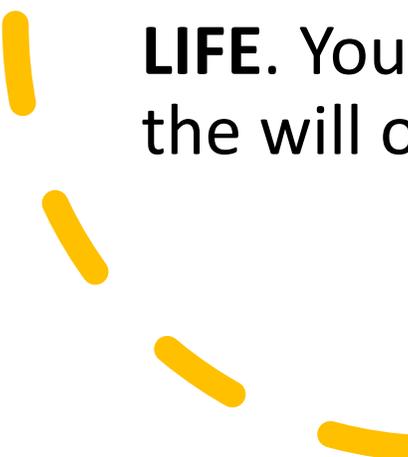
That's basic!

2. GOD'S WILL IS FOR YOU TO BE SPIRIT-FILLED!

- Notice: (Eph. 5:17-18) ***“So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,”***
- Paul is saying as a Christian, you need to **YIELD CONTROL** of your life to an **INSIDE AGENT**, only not something like alcohol but the **HOLY SPIRIT**, who dwells in you. And when you're **really Spirit-filled**, you have no more self-control over yourself than when you do when you're really wasted with alcohol.
- A **SPIRIT-FILLED CHRISTIAN** is one who has thrown out **SELF** and is **LED** by the Spirit. You can be given (**controlled**) by anger, lust, greed, pride, or the Holy-Spirit.

- **Understand** the Holy-Spirit doesn't come in sections, or pieces. **Notice:** (Rom. 8:9) *“However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.”* **YOU EITHER HAVE HIM ALL, OR NOT AT ALL.**
- Here's the deal, the Holy-Spirit lives in you, and all His energy is there, ready to be released to transform you into the very image of Christ (**2 Cor. 3:18**).



- 
- 
- The problem arises when we put a **LID OF SIN** over our life which quenches the Holy-Spirit's energy, and power so that it can't be released. And so, the Bible is really saying, **confess your sin, yield to the Spirit**, He will release His energy and you'll taste like He does. And then when you wander through the world, people will mistake you for Jesus Christ. They'll see godliness in you. **THAT'S THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE**. You know, once you're Spirit-filled, then you just begin to go in the will of God; it's fantastic!

- **PETER** is a great example of a life that is **transformed** by the indwelling power of the Holy-Spirit. **Remember when Jesus is taken to be tried?** Peter's outside warming his hands by a fire and just hanging around, following but far off. On **three occasions**, what did he do? **He denies Jesus**. How could this be? You see here's the guy who walks on the water, sees the miraculous, has a sword in his hand, he's going to fight the whole Roman army and then suddenly, he denies Jesus in front of a few people? You say, "What happened to him?" Here's what happened to him, on those other three occasions, he was standing **NEXT TO JESUS**. At the time where he denied him, he was **SEPARATED FROM JESUS**. Now do you know why he wanted to be where Jesus was? **That's where his POWER was.**
- **Then came "PENTECOST,"** and Peter boldly **preached**, and **3,000** souls are saved. He was no longer paralyzed by fear. Do you know what the Spirit-filled life is? **It's living every single moment IN THE CONSCIOUS PRESENCE OF JESUS CHRIST.** That's exactly what Peter learned, and experienced.

- Notice: (Matt. 16:15-17) *“He said to them, But who do you say that I am?”* 16 *Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”* 17 *And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”*

- Jesus was explaining to Peter that God had given divine revelation through him as a vehicle. Just to keep Peter in the human perspective, the next person to speak through him was Satan. And Satan said, "No, don't go on the cross," and Jesus said to Peter's face, *“get thee behind me Satan.”* So, Peter was an available vehicle, unfortunately, too available. This is an example of just how quick a believer can get in the *“flesh.”* But isn't it interesting? When Peter was near Jesus, he **SAID** the miraculous, and **DID** the miraculous.

- **A BIBLICAL LOOK AT THE CHARACTER OF A SPIRIT FILLED LIFE.**

- **Notice: (Col. 3:12-21)** *“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; **13** bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. **14** Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. **15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **17** Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. **18** Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. **19** Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them. **20** Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. **21** Fathers, do not exasperate (irritate) your children, so that they will not lose heart.”*

- **Vv. 12-14**: This is the attitude, and behavior God expects from you as a response to His grace, and goodness.
- **V. 15**: The believer is to enjoy **“peace”** with God because of Salvation, also a **“peace”** with other believers. The **“bond,”** or the adhesive of the church is the supernatural love of Christ poured out into the hearts of believers.
- **V. 16**: You must **“live-in.”** This means that you voluntarily saturate yourself in the Holy-Spirit inspired scripture through **study, teaching, preaching, and singing**. Scripture should permeate **every aspect** of the believer's life and control every **thought, word, and deed**. Without this the above-mentioned **Vv. 12-15** do not happen. **The Holy Spirit FILLS the life CONTROLLED by the word.**
- **V. 17**: This means you are living consistent with **“who” Jesus is, and “what” He expects from you.**
- **Vv. 18-21**: Describes the Spirit-filled life in the **“Christian home.”** Husband, wife, and children all have responsibilities to God, and each other for these relationships to bring glory to God. **There will never be HARMONY in your home without the FILLING OF THE HOLY-SPIRIT.**



- “The more I focus on Him and the Word, and the more the thoughts of God saturate my mind, the more the word of Christ controls me, the more yielded I am to Him.”

- “There's no handle for the Spirit to control unless the Word is there.” **SPURGEON** said, *“You ought to study the Bible until your blood is bubbling.”*



3. GOD'S *WILL* IS FOR YOU TO BE *SANCTIFIED!*

- Notice: (1 Thess. 4:3) *“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;”*
- God wants you to be *SET APART* and the word **“SANCTIFICATION”** means **“SET-ASIDE,” “HOLY.”** In other words, God wants you to be pure. His **WILL** (expression, wish, desire) is for all men to be *SAVED, SPIRIT-FILLED,* and *SANCTIFIED.*
- THERE ARE *FOUR* PRINCIPLES OF “PURITY.”

1. NOTICE: VERSE 3:

that you should *“abstain from fornication.”* Now the word fornication means sexual sin. He says you should stay away from sex-sin. The outside of marriage thing, the perversion, this can mean anything from consenting bisexual, homosexual, bestiality, or anything else that is a perversion (Pornography). It can mean the gamut of sexual activity outside God's perfect design in marriage. Stay away from it!!!

2. NOTICE: VERSE 4:

that every one of you, **NO EXCEPTIONS**, *“that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel (BODY) in sanctification and honor.”* God has given you your body to honor Him. Your body should be possessed and the idea there is that you should control your body to honor God. You have to be careful, because that old body will run away, and take off. Satan uses the lust of the flesh to set things aflame. And there's all kinds of lust of the flesh incidentally, it's not just sexual. It can be the way you dress. Some people dress to draw attention to their bodies.

- **WE ARE ALL *COMMANDED* TO DRESS “*MODESTLY.*”** (1 Tim. 2:9) *“Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments,”*
- **Remember (Rom. 12:1)** *“...to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God,...”*

3. NOTICE: VERSE 5:

“not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God;” Principle three is simply, **"DON'T ACT LIKE A GODLESS HEATHEN."**

- **LUST IS A CRUEL MASTER**. That's what we are seeing in America today. There are no restraints, or self-control on those **who don't know God**.
- **Notice (Rom. 1:20-32)** *“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.”*

- **24 Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”**

4. NOTICE: VERSE 6:

“and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is the avenger in all these things...”

- Don't take **ADVANTAGE** of other people. You know it's so easy to use other people to get what you want. People use, and abuse.
- What are some ways people can take advantage of others?
 1. **PHYSICALLY**: that girl/boy just wanted to fit in.
 2. **FINANCIALLY**: begging and borrowing from others labor.
 3. **EMOTIONALLY**: dumping your bad decisions on others, critic.
 4. **SOCIALLY**: use people for your advancement, or relationship.
- Btw, all of these were done if you remember to the “**Supreme Court Judge**” **Brett Kavanaugh**.
- God's will is that you be **SAVED**, **SPIRIT-FILLED** and **SANCTIFIED**. Listen, folks. If you're running around trying to find God's will for some specific in your life and you're not living a pure life, what reason is there that God should show you His will **UNREVEALED** when you haven't obeyed His will **REVEALED**?

4. GOD'S WILL IS FOR YOU TO BE SUBMISSIVE!

- Notice: (1 Pet. 2:13-15) *“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.”*
- Isn't that interesting? Not institutions of God, but institutions of man... This means the **“WILL OF GOD”** is that you submit to the government?
- Well, what if I don't like the laws that the president, congress or APPOINTED leaders are passing? Notice: Vv. 16,17. *“Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil but use it as bondslaves of God.”*

- This is a free country, so I'll just start a riot; you are free, but don't use your spiritual liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. No, here's what we are supposed to do. **17 *Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.***
- However, we should **NEVER VIOLATE GOD'S WORD** in order to obey man!!!! (Matt. 22:21)
- Well..., what about my cranky, perverted boss? **Notice: V. 18. *"Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable."***
- So..., Why is submission so important? **Notice again: V. 15. *"...that by DOING RIGHT you may SILENCE THE IGNORANCE of foolish men."***

You know that people want to criticize Christianity? How best can they do it? What is Christianity's poorest testimony? **CHRISTIANS!** We live in an ungodly system, and we need to be **EXEMPLARY PEOPLE**.

Remember, Satan can't get your **salvation**, so he's after your **TESTIMONY!** A bad testimony is a dagger to the cause of Christ.

Don't forget that we are to submit to **Christ**, as well as **each other**. Notice: (Eph. 5:21) ***“and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.”***

5. GOD'S WILL IS FOR YOU TO SUFFER!

- Notice: (1 Pet. 2:19) *“Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.”*
- Notice: (1 Pet. 3:17) *“For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong.”*
- Understand that he’s not talking about your **“SUFFERING”** being your wife/husband, or any other relationship. What he's talking about here is when you suffer for **“DOING WHAT IS RIGHT.”** What does he mean? When you live a godly life in an ungodly society, you're going to get some opposition/persecution. That's what he's talking about.
- Notice: (1 Pet 4:13) *“**but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.**”*
- In other words, He (**CHRIST**) suffered for doing what's **right**, and for the **truth**, that's what he's talking about. When you go out and really confront the world and are bold for Christ and you suffer, **THAT'S THE WILL OF GOD**. We really need to suffer as a Christian. Notice: (1 Pet. 4:16) *“**but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.**”* Do we really suffer as Christians? Do we really face the world and take what they give?

- In this world, there are always going to be critics , mockers, and persecutors. However, **it is God's will that you make the Gospel an issue, the issue.**
- **Notice: 2 Tim. 3:12) *“Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”***
- Godly followers of Christ should expect to suffer. Paul’s experiences were not isolated or exceptional. These words were an emphatic appeal for Timothy to join Paul in suffering.
- ***PERSECUTION*** may vary in degree and take different forms in different countries and in different ages, but the basic hostility of the world to the godly man remains unchanged. For the most part ***“PERSECUTION”*** is foreign to Americans.

- Christians will suffer because the world is hostile to the kingdom of God. Both **Christ (Matt. 5:11–12; Mk. 8:34)** and **Paul (2 Cor. 12:9–10; 1 Thess. 3:4)** had prepared their followers to anticipate such hardship. Paul’s words about the expectation of suffering were frightening, and they are also a reminder to every Christian to expect opposition for devotion to Jesus. Such forewarning allows the thoughtful Christian to be armed with a **commitment for spiritual battle**.
- The phrase **“IN CHRIST JESUS”** carries the meaning of union with Christ. The believer experiences fellowship with Christ in suffering as a part of the **“mystical union”** with him.
- **Notice: 3:13** Paul’s explanation for the certainty of suffering was that evil would grow in its intensity. Paul described the false teachers as **“EVIL MEN”** and branded them as religious swindlers or **“impostors.”** Although the word **“imposter”** is used outside the New Testament to refer to a dabbler in the occult or a wizard, Paul may have been designating them as impostors, not magicians.

Notice (2 Cor. 12:7-9) *“Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”*

1. **GOD** uses *suffering* to **REVEAL** our **spiritual condition**, or **character**.
2. **GOD** uses *suffering* to **HUMBLE US**.
3. **GOD** uses *suffering* to **DRAW US TO HIMSELF**.
4. **GOD** uses *suffering* to **DISPLAY HIS GRACE**.
5. **GOD** uses *suffering* to **PERFECT HIS POWER**.

GOD'S WILL IS
FOR YOU TO BE
SAVED!

GOD'S WILL IS
FOR YOU TO BE
SPIRIT-FILLED!

GOD'S WILL IS
FOR YOU TO BE
SANCTIFIED!

GOD'S WILL IS
FOR YOU TO BE
SUBMISSIVE!

GOD'S WILL IS
FOR YOU TO
SUFFER!

THREE PRINCIPLES FOR KNOWING GOD'S WILL

#1 God Will Guide You--He Promised! #2 Guidance Is Provisional !

1. YOU MUST BE WILLING.

- You must be willing to search and know God's will. Notice what Paul said after meeting Christ on the road to Damascus: (Acts. 9:6) *"Lord what do you want me to do?"*
- Notice what **MARRY** said in response to the angel's message. (Lk. 1:38) *"And Mary said, Behold, the bond slave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her."*
- Notice what **Jesus** said in the garden of Gethsemane: *"He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done."*
- "You will never **KNOW** the will of God unless you are willing to **DO** the will of God."
- We must stop asking God to "conform" to our will, but we must learn to **ACCEPT** and **CONFORM** to His will, **WILLINGLY!**

2. YOU MUST BE **MEEK**.

- Notice: (Acts. 9:8) *“Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus.”* How humbling it must have been for this **“Proud Pharisee”** to be blinded and led by the hand.
- Notice: (Psa. 25:9) *“He leads the humble (Meek) in justice, And He teaches the humble (Meek) His way.”*
- The word **“MEEK”** means teachable and broken spirit. The ideal is to be under control of your Master. Do you have a broken teachable spirit? Can God gently lead you, or do you come kicking and screaming?

3. YOU MUST BE **OPEN**.

- If we are to discern God’s will then we must be **“OPEN”** to His commands through not only **“TALKING”** in prayer, but **“LISTENING”** in prayer.
- Notice: (Acts. 9:6) again Paul was open: *“Lord what do you want me to do?”*
- God will and does speak generally it is *“with a still small voice.”* Notice: (1 Kings. 19:11-12) *“So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.”*

- I'm reminded of (Isa. 6:8) ***"Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!""***
- That's why it's important to rise up early **BEFORE** you are distracted by the world, the flesh, and certainly the devil. Do you have a **"MORNING"** quiet time? **Notice: (Psa. 5:3) ***"In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch."*****
- Instead of ***"Listen Lord your servant speaks,"*** we should say **"SPEAK LORD YOUR SERVANT LISTENS."**

4. YOU MUST BE **YIELDED.**

- Whatever, and however God says, you must be ready to accept, and obey His will. God might send the most unlikely circumstance, or person to show you His will, and you must be willing to yield to His leading. The great **PAUL** was now under the tutelage of an insignificant disciple of Christ named, **ANANIAS.**
- **Notice: (Acts. 9:17) ***"So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."*****

#1 GOD WILL GUIDE YOU--HE PROMISED!

#2 GUIDANCE IS PROVISIONAL –HE MADE AWAY!

#3 GUIDANCE IS PRACTICAL—HE MADE IT EASY!

WE ARE GUIDED BY:

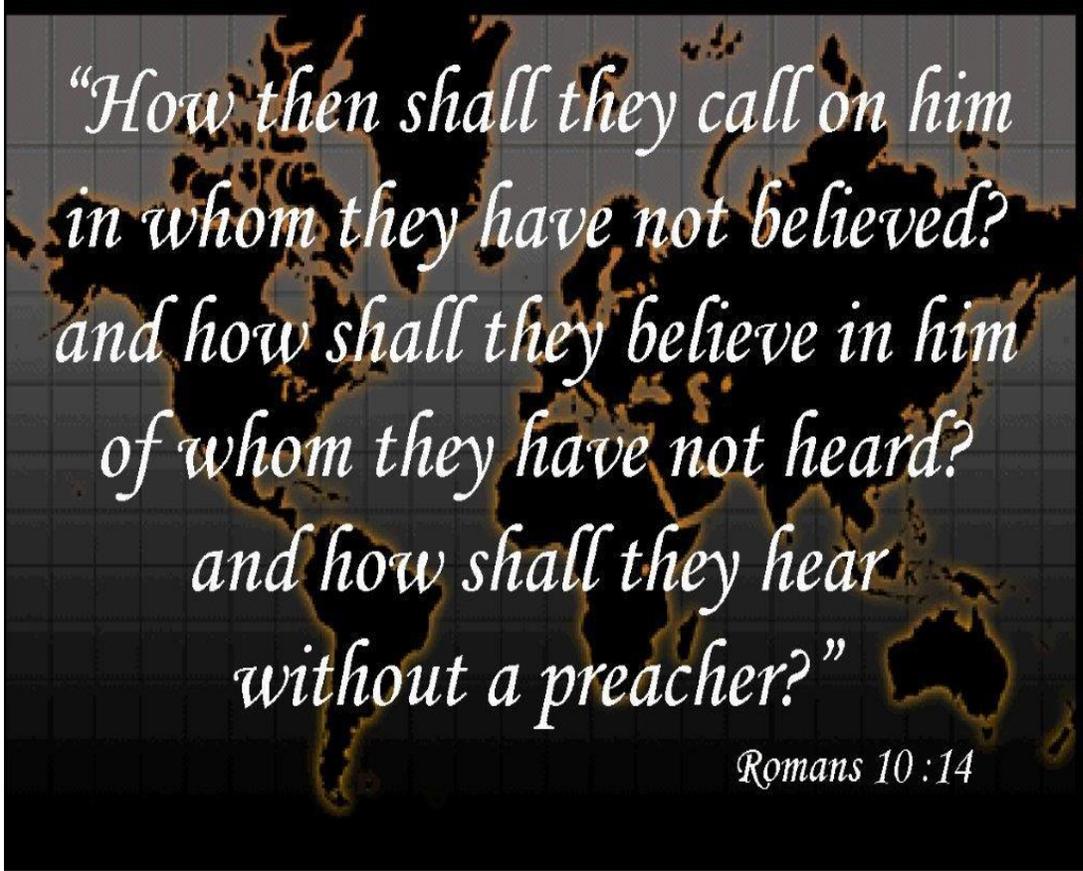
- 1. THE MIRACLES OF GOD.**
- 2. THE WORD OF GOD.**
- 3. THE PEOPLE OF GOD.**
- 4. THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**
- 5. THE WISDOM OF GOD.**
- 6. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.**

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 8 About Faith and How to Have It!

What every Christian Ought To Know.
#8 ABOUT FAITH AND HOW TO HAVE IT!

- (Matt. 9:29) ***“...It shall be done to you according to your faith.”***
- *“Pray, believe; and you’ll receive.*
- *Pray, and doubt; you’ll do without.”*



*“How then shall they call on him
in whom they have not believed?
and how shall they believe in him
of whom they have not heard?
and how shall they hear
without a preacher?”*

Romans 10 :14

Finding Out What **FAITH** is **NOT!**

- **FAITH IS HEAVEN'S MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE**, it's the greatest asset we have. **UNBELIEF**, however, is not only the greatest stumbling block, but it is the chief **"WICKEDNESS."**
- The sin of **ALL** sin is **UNBELIEF**. It caused Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden when she failed to trust God's Word.
- **UNBELIEF** locked the doors to the "Promised land" for the children of Israel. (**Heb. 3:19**) ***"because of their unbelief."***
- **UNBELIEF** tied the hands of Jesus while visiting His hometown. Notice: (**Matt. 13:58**) ***"And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief."***
- Jesus paid for every sin that is generated by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Things such as murder, lying, homosexuality etc. These sins are **NOT** what sends people to a Christ less hell. **"UNBELIEF"** is what sends people to hell. Notice: (**Jn. 3:18**) ***"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."***

What is FAITH, and Where Does it Come From?

- **FAITH**: A belief and trust in and loyalty to God. Notice: (Heb. 11:1) ***“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”*** True faith is not based on empirical (observation, or experience) evidence, but on **divine assurance**.
- **HOW DOES ONE OBTAIN FAITH?** Can faith be acquired (through effort, or experience), purchased, stolen, wisdom, or inheritance? **NO**, faith is received as a **“GIFT”** from God through His Word. Notice: (Rom. 10:17) ***“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”*** “You don’t ***name it*** and ***claim it***. God speaks, and you ***believe it*** and ***receive it.*** (Adrian Rodgers).
- Notice: (Phil.1:29) ***“For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,”***

- Notice: (Phil. 2:13) *“for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.”*
- Notice: (Jn. 3:27) *“John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.”*
- Notice: (2 Tim.2:25-26) *“with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”*

“FAITH IS A GIFT FROM GOD”

- Notice: (Eph. 2:8-9) *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*
- Our response in salvation is “FAITH,” but even that is “NOT OF OURSELVES” [but is] “THE GIFT OF GOD.” FAITH is nothing that we do in our own power or resources. Bedside's, God wouldn't want us to rely on them even if we had them. Otherwise, salvation would be in part by our own works, and we would have some ground to boast in ourselves. PAUL intends to emphasize that even faith is not from us apart from GOD'S GIVING IT.
- If salvation is of grace, it has to be an “UNDESERVED GIFT OF GOD.” Faith is presented as a gift from God in (Phil.1:29), (Phil.2:13), (2 Tim. 2:25-26)
- Notice; (2 Pet. 1:1) *“Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ”*

- **EVERY PERSON LIVES BY FAITH IN SOMETHING, OR SOMEONE.**

When we go across a bridge, we trust it to support us. When we put our money in the bank, we trust it will be safe. Life is a constant series of acts of faith. No human being, no matter how skeptical and self-reliant, could live a day without exercising faith.

- **HOWEVER, IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT WHEN IT COMES TO "SAVING FAITH."**

Church membership, baptism, confirmation, giving to charity, and being a good neighbor have no power to bring salvation. Nor does taking Communion, keeping the Ten Commandments, or living by the Sermon on the Mount. The only thing a person can do that will have any part in salvation is to **exercise faith in what Jesus Christ has done for him.**

- **WHEN WE ACCEPT THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST ON OUR BEHALF,** we act by the faith supplied by God's grace. That is the supreme act of human faith, the act which, though it is ours, is primarily God's—**HIS GIFT TO US OUT OF HIS GRACE.**

- When a person chokes or drowns and stops breathing, there is nothing he can do. If he ever breathes again it will be because someone else starts him breathing.
- **A PERSON WHO IS SPIRITUALLY DEAD** cannot even make a decision of faith unless God first breathes into him the breath of spiritual life.
- **FAITH IS SIMPLY BREATHING THE BREATH THAT GOD'S GRACE SUPPLIES.** Yet, the paradox is that we must exercise it and bear the responsibility if we do not.
- **Notice: (Jn. 5:40) "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."**
- **OBVIOUSLY**, if it is true that salvation is all by God's grace, it is therefore **not as a result of works**. Human effort has nothing to do with it (**cf. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16**). And thus, **no one should boast**, as if he had any part in it. All boasting is eliminated in salvation. (**cf. Rom. 3:27; 4:5; 1 Cor. 1:31**). Nevertheless, good works have an important place, as Paul is quick to affirm.

BLESSINGS OF FAITH!

1. **SALVATION**- Notice: (Rom. 5:1) “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,” Notice that word “Justified.” It’s an act of God by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, **repent** of their sins and **confess** Him as Sovereign Lord. (Rom. 10:9-10)
2. **SANCTIFICATION**- Notice: (Acts. 26:18) “to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.”
3. **VICTORY OVER THE WORLD**- Notice: (1 Jn. 5:4) “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” This doesn’t mean you will never loose “a” battle with temptation, and sin. It means through Christ and His provision of salvation; the believer is a “Victor” over the invisible system of demonic and human evil that Satan operates to capture men’s souls for hell.

4. VICTORY OVER SATAN- Notice: (Eph. 6:16) “in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”
5. VICTORY OVER THE FLESH- Notice: (1 Cor. 10:13) “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”
6. VICTORY OVER DEATH- Notice: (1 Thess. 4:13) “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.”
7. THE FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT- Notice: (Gal. 3:14) “in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

BURDEN'S OF NO-FAITH!

1. WORRY- “God you're not big enough to handle this.” Which in turns “has been proven” to cause all sorts of health problems.
2. LONELINESS- God seems distant, and your desire to interact with anything spiritual diminishes.
3. GUILT- Our guilt gland is overactive because we do not trust God for (total) cleansing. Faith is our acceptance of God’s acceptance of us.
4. DISOBEDIENCE- If You truly believed God’s word you wouldn’t violate it.

*“THE
REALITY OF
BIBLICAL
FAITH”*

- YOUR **FAITH** IS NO BETTER THAN ITS **OBJECT**.
- Anytime you find yourself at a cross-road there will always be that one friend that say’s **“Brother you just need to have faith, or all you have to do is believe.”** When this happens don’t be **“DUPED.”** There is nothing magical or mystical about **“believing”** because there is no power in faith alone.
 - **Notice (Rom. 10:11)** *“For the Scripture says, **“WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”**”*
 - **Notice: (Mk. 11:22)** *“And Jesus answered saying to them, **“Have faith in God.**”*

- It's not **YOUR FAITH** that moves mountains. **IT IS GOD** that moves mountains, so you can't put "faith in faith" either. Remember we are not relying on "positive thinking," your "Feelings," or the fact that your faith may be "weak." The **least** amount of faith in the **right object** is better than **strong** faith in the **wrong object**.
- THE OBJECT OF "REAL" FAITH is not self, someone, or service. The object of "real faith" is the **SAVIOR JESUS THE CHRIST**. Notice: (Heb. 12:2) *"fixing (looking) our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith,..."*
- Notice; (Dan.11:32) *"...but the people who know their God will display strength and take action."*
- Notice: (Psa. 19:10) *"And those who know Your name will put their trust in You, For You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You."*

“*THE* ROOT OF BIBLICAL FAITH”

- **All true biblical faith is rooted** not only in **KNOWING** God but in **HEARING** from the God that you know.
- **Notice: (Rom. 10:14-18)** “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? **15** How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!” **16** However, **they did not all heed the good news**; for Isaiah says, “LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT?” **17** **So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ-(The Gospel)**. **18** But I say, surely, they have never heard, have they? Indeed, they have; “THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD.”

HOW TO HAVE A *VICTORIOUS* FAITH.

1. **BE *SATURATED* WITH THE SCRIPTURES.** Remember that faith comes by hearing from God.
2. **BE *DEDICATED* TO THE SAVIOR.** Remember faith is no better than its object. It's not about having a "great faith," it's about having a "GREAT FAITH IN GOD."
3. **BE *SEPARATED* FROM SIN.** Unconfessed sin is a "FAITH KILLER."
4. **BE *ACTIVATED* BY THE SPIRIT.** Faith without works is dead. Your faith needs legs on it.

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 9

How To Be Filled With The Holy Spirit!

What every Christian Ought To Know.
#9 HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

- (Eph. 5:15-18) *“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT,”*



What is “Filled With The Spirit?”

- THE KEY TO RIGHTLY LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:

It is simply being controlled by the Holy Spirit, who provides energy for walking *"worthy of the calling with which you have been called"* (Eph. 4:1). Unless you are controlled by the Spirit of God, you can never walk in **humility, love, unity, light, and wisdom**. The life of God in the soul of man is the only way anyone can live a righteous life. To walk without the Spirit is to walk without wisdom (cf. Eph. 5:15 -17).

- GOD'S COMMAND YOU TO "BE FILLED."

- (Eph. 5:18) contains this imperative from the Apostle Paul: *"Be filled with the Spirit."* This concise, straightforward injunction is loaded with significance for you if you're a believer. However, that significance is often **misunderstood, misapplied, or missed** altogether. To begin with, many Christians are unclear about what the verse does not mean. Once you discard the incorrect meanings you can then focus on what Paul is really saying.

• THE **WRONG** FACTORS FOR BEING FILLED.

1. This phrase is not commanding empty Christians to acquire something they don't already have. Each of us possesses the entire Holy Spirit from the time we repent and believe: **Notice (Rom. 8:9-10)** "You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. **10** And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness"
2. Paul's phrase is not equating "**fullness of the Spirit**" with "**baptism with the Spirit.**" Holy Spirit baptism is not an extra experience you need to seek; it is something you have from the moment you are saved. This baptism is a theological reality, an act by which Jesus Christ through the agency of the Spirit places you into the Body of Christ (**1 Cor. 12:13 ; cf. John 7:37 -39**). **Notice (1 Cor. 12:13)** "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit."

- **THE *RIGHT* FACTORS FOR BEING FILLED.**

1. An understanding of the Greek for "**be filled,**" plerousthe, quite clearly reveals the correct meaning of Paul's command in **(Eph. 5:18)**
A literal translation of the verb would read something like "**be being kept filled.**" The idea is one of keeping yourself constantly filled, as you yield moment by moment to the leading of the Spirit. It fits perfectly with the process of walking by the Spirit.
2. An accurate rendering of the Greek verb also **DESTROYS** the widespread Charismatic notion that being filled is a one-time emotional experience "**YOU INITIATE,**" which instantly places you into some inner circle of spiritual maturity. "**BE FILLED**" is actually in the passive voice and indicates that **YOU RECEIVE THE ACTION**—the Holy Spirit is continuously filling you. It is simply another facet of the Spirit's indwelling ministry, which allows you to have daily, moment-by-moment effectiveness and fulfillment in your Christian life.

Practical Consequences of Being Spirit-filled

- Now that we have dealt with the meaning of the divine command to **“be filled with the Spirit,”** you may be asking, **“How can I really know if I'm walking in step with the Spirit and realizing His fullness?”**
- The apostle Paul answers this with **three** clear evidences for judging the Holy Spirit's full operation in your life.
- **Notice (Eph. 5:19-21) “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.**

1. SINGING TO THE LORD.

- So, how does the matter of singing relate to the great doctrinal truth of *“being filled with the Spirit?”*
- There is a **RELATIONSHIP**—the first consequence of being Spirit-filled is that **YOU WILL HAVE A SONG IN YOUR HEART**—and other Scripture passages will help us understand it.
- The Bible is silent on the pre-Fall role music and song had, but we can safely infer that music has been important to mankind from the earliest times.
Notice (Gen. 4:21) *“His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.”*
- **MOSES** and the people of Israel praised God after they were delivered from the Egyptians (**Ex. 15**).
- **DEBORAH AND BARAK** sang following their victory over Sisera. (**Judges 5**)
- **The Psalms** are filled with references to song, music, and praise, culminating in this exhortation in the very last verse of the book:
Notice (Ps. 150:6) *“Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!”*
- **JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES** sang a hymn at the close of the Last Supper (**Matt. 26:30; Mark 14:26**).

2. GIVING THANKS TO THE LORD.

- **Notice (Eph. 5:20) “always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”** This is the second virtue that will result when a believer is truly filled with the Spirit: he will be thankful toward God. Gratitude is the single greatest act of personal worship we can render to God.
- **WILLIAM HENDRIKSEN** said this concerning the matter: "The expression of gratitude is therefore a most blessed response to favors undeserved. While it lasts, worries tend to disappear, complaints vanish, courage to face the future is increased, virtuous resolutions are formed, peace is experienced, and God is glorified" Genuine thankfulness also sees beyond the difficult or baffling circumstance to the sovereign plan and purpose of God.
- **Notice (Rom. 8:28-29) “And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;”**
- **PAUL** makes it clear to the Ephesians and us that thankfulness is to be a well-rounded, complete response that affects all areas of life.

- **ALWAYS!**

- First, the Spirit-filled person will be thankful **always** and **at all times**. In Ephesians and elsewhere Paul makes it crystal clear that this is the Lord's will for you: **"In everything give thanks; for this is GOD'S WILL FOR YOU in Christ Jesus"** (1 Thess. 5:18; cf. Eph. 5:17; James 1:2-5).
- Such a consistent, no-exceptions-permitted reaction to what the Lord brings into your life is not easy or even possible **in your own strength**. But it will become your response all the time if you are living the **"SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE."** The Holy Spirit works graciously and mercifully to enable you to respond with thanksgiving no matter when blessings or challenges come.
- Sometimes He blesses you unexpectedly, which makes it easy to give thanks.
- The gratitude and praise of **MOSES AND THE ISRAELITES** after God delivered them by parting the Red Sea is one major example of that (**Ex. 14-15**).

• FOR ALL THINGS!

- If the Spirit-filled believer is thankful at all times, it reasonably follows that he will also be thankful for all things. We have just seen that difficult times will also include difficult matters for which we must give thanks (**see again James 1:2-5; cf. Heb. 12:3-13; 1 Peter 2:20-21**). There are however a lot of things that Scripture reminds us to be thankful for. Some of the major ones include:
- THE GOODNESS AND MERCY OF GOD: (Psa. 106:1; 107:1; 136:1-3)
- THE GIFT OF CHRIST: (2 Cor. 9:15)
- THE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL: (2 Cor. 2:14)
- VICTORY OVER DEATH AND THE GRAVE: (1 Cor. 15:57)
- THE RECEPTION AND EFFECTUAL WORKING OF GOD'S WORD IN OTHERS: (1 Thess. 2:13; 3:9)
- THE SUPPLY OF OUR BODILY WANTS: (Rom. 14:6-7; 1 Tim. 4:3-4).
- Each of those categories contains many more specific items for which you can be grateful, so the point is that those filled by the Spirit know no limits or distinctions on **WHAT TO THANK GOD FOR.**

3. SUBMITTING TO ONE ANOTHER!

- **The third practical consequence** of being filled with the Holy Spirit is “**mutual submission to other believers**”: “**and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ**” (Eph. 5:21). Once again, this aspect of the Spirit-filled life reflects and draws together a principle found in many other places in Scripture.
- The Bible is replete with statements and exhortations about the importance of being subject to one another and ministering to one another. I want to highlight some and list various others to underscore the importance the Holy Spirit has given to the concept of believers' supporting one another.
- **Notice (1 Jn. 4:7)** “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”
- **Notice (Phil. 2:3-4)** “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; **4** do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”
- **Notice (Heb. 13:17)** “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

- The only way to *voluntarily* and *joyfully* submit to the Lord and to one another in the Body of Christ is to be **“filled with the Spirit.”** He is the one who truly makes us willing to follow the narrow path of submission and relinquish our wills for His.
- When you surrender to the control of God's Spirit, you'll find Him producing amazing things in you—things that are entirely of His doing. Paul calls those marvelous blessings the **“FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT”**, and they are: **“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”** (Gal. 5:22-23). The person who is Spirit-filled and who bears the Spirit's fruit is the person who belongs to Christ and who has **“crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit,”** Paul continued, **“let us also walk by the Spirit”** (Gal. 5:24-25). To be filled by and walk in the Spirit is to fulfill your ultimate potential of your life on earth as one of **GOD'S CHILDREN.**

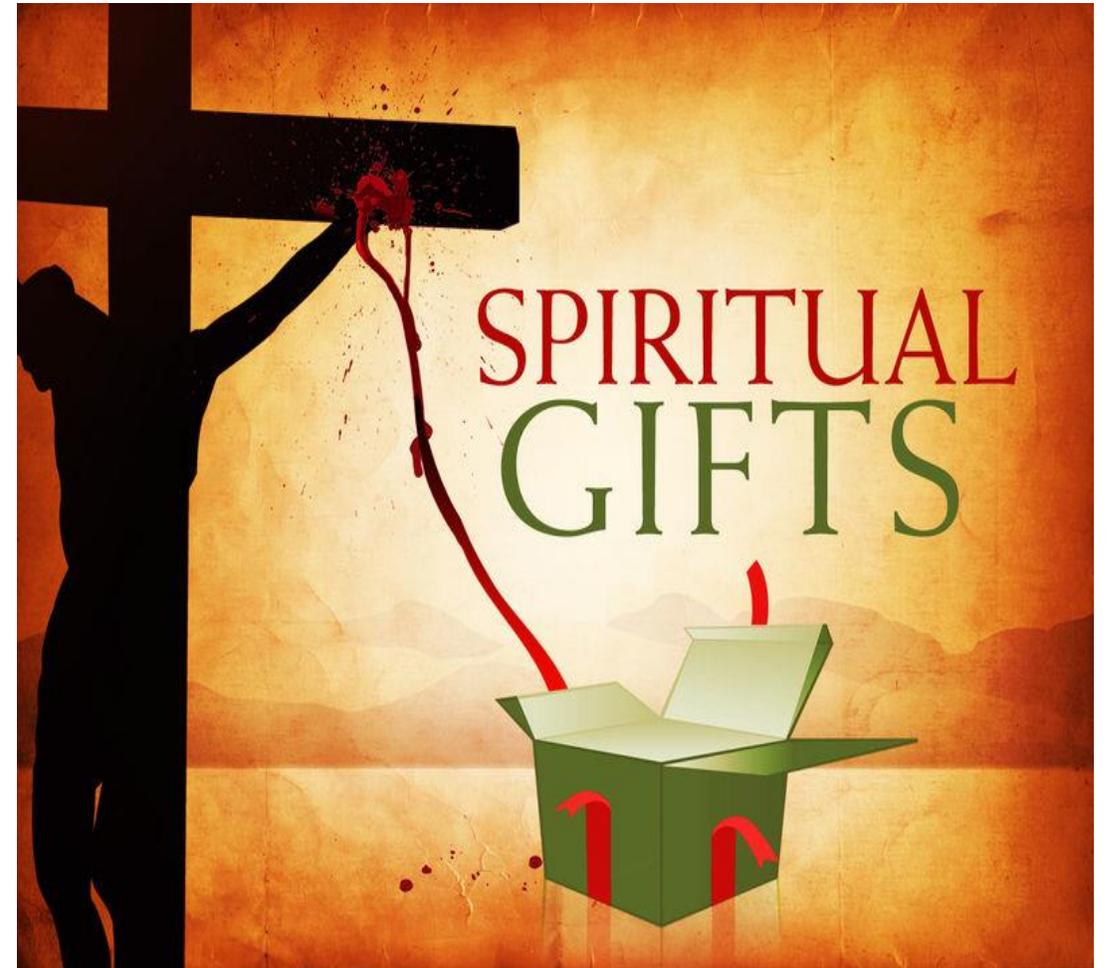
What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 10

How To Discover His
Spiritual Gift!

What every Christian Ought To Know.
#10 HOW TO DISCOVER HIS SPIRITUAL GIFT.

- Notice (Rom. 12:6-8) *“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”*



AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- Notice (1 Cor. 12:1) *“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.”* (IGNORANT)
- A spiritual gift may be linked to a “natural” talent, but it goes beyond natural talents. A Christian is **“SUPERNATURAL.”** These gifts are not **EARNED**, nor are they **LEARNED**. They are the Supernatural **“GIFTS OF GRACE.”**
- Nothing has been more abused in our modern time, and nothing more misunderstood in Evangelicalism than this whole area of **“SPIRITUAL GIFTS.”** And it is critical that we understand it because it is absolutely vital to the life of the Church. There is nothing that is any more vital, apart from the divine energy of God Himself, than the ministry that the believers have by way of their spiritual gifts, or their endowments from God for ministry.

- There are **THREE** categories of gifts. There are **SIGN** gifts, there are **SPEAKING** gifts, and there are **SERVING** gifts. That's easy to remember, each with an "**S,**" sign, speaking, serving.
- **SIGN GIFTS** were intended for a reason, for signs pointing to something very significant.
- They were unique to the time of the apostles. They were unique to the New Testament age. They were unique to the establishing of the new covenant, to the time when Israel rejected the Messiah, when the apostles' teaching **NEEDED TO BE AUTHENTICATED.**
- They were unique to the time of the writing of Scripture. That's why they are called in **2 Corinthians 12:12** **special gifts** or **signs** that belong to an apostle. ***"The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles."*** So, the sign gifts, or the miracle gifts, tongues and healing and miracles and so forth, interpretation of tongues, those miracle gifts were for the **APOSTOLIC PERIOD.**

- These gifts are also referred to in (Heb. 2:4) *“God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”* Also, in (Mk. 16:20) *“And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed.”*
- **SIGN GIFTS** attended the works of the apostles so that the people would **KNOW that they were from God**. There was no Bible. There was no New Testament to compare their teaching with, so it was the miracles that **“AUTHENTICATED”** them.
- Sign gifts are included in (1 Cor. 12) where Paul talks about the gifts. (1 Cor. 12) was written about 54 A.D., 54 in the year of our Lord, after Christ's birth. By 58, Romans is written. And what is intriguing is that in Paul's list of gifts in **Romans**, unlike his list of gifts in Corinthians, **none** of the miraculous/**sign** gifts is mentioned. They were very much a part of the list of 1 Corinthians a few years earlier. They are **not mentioned** at all in the list in Romans.
- Spiritual gifts are also found in **Ephesians**, written about 63 A.D. and **they're not mentioned there**. And you find (1 Peter 4) mentioning the gifts and that's in 66 A.D. and **they're none of them either**.

- You can see even in the sequence of New Testament books that there was a ***DIMINISHING OF THOSE GIFTS.***
- If the sign gifts have passed away with the apostles, what is left? Notice (**1 Pet. 4:10**), "**As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**"
- You've been given gifts by God's grace, as you have received a gift, minister it as a good steward. You don't **OWN** your gift; you only **MANAGE** it for God. It's His. So, as you've received it, **USE IT FOR HIS GLORY.**
- Then the Lord divides those gifts into two kinds. **Notice verse 11. "*Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies..*"** And he divides the gifts into those **two** categories: **speaking gifts** and **serving gifts**, says nothing about **SIGN** gifts, which **again** were **UNIQUE, TO THE APOSTOLIC ERA.**

- In **(Rom. 12)**, there's no mention of the **sign gifts**. Paul is giving instruction here for the ongoing life of the church. There's no need to correct the Roman church as there was need to correct the Corinthian church because they were misusing, counterfeiting and abusing those sign gifts. But that is not the issue in Romans and when he speaks here to the ongoing life of the church, he says nothing about the sign gifts, as **Ephesians** says nothing about it, as **1 Peter** says nothing about it.
- So basically, we are left with **TWO CATEGORIES OF GIFTS**;
 1. **THE SPEAKING GIFTS**, such as **PROPHECY, TEACHING** and **EXHORTATION**.
 2. **THE SERVING GIFTS** such as **SERVING, GIVING, LEADING**, and **SHOWING MERCY**.
- ***Paul leaves out the sign gifts*** because they have an end to them. **WHY?** Because they belong to a unique era and not the ongoing life of the church. And his instruction here for the ongoing ministry of the church does not include them.

THE SPEAKING GIFTS-PROPHECY

- **Prophecy**: Notice (Rom. 12:6) "if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith;"
- To often prophecy is misunderstood. It's basically the gift of **PREACHING**, of *proclaiming*. There are people who believe that it is a supernatural apostolic gift that has ceased. That is simply **NOT TRUE** because of its inclusion in (**Rom. 12**), and (**1 Cor.**) where the sign gifts are listed.
- Now **PROPHECY** is a very important gift, In fact, the apostle Paul in writing to the Corinthians said the most about prophecy and tongues. The reason being if you'll remember, **TONGUES** was being **ABUSED** and **PROPHECY NEGLECTED**.
- But it's an essential gift. Do you remember (**1 Cor. 14: 1-5**) "**Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophecy.** **2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit, he speaks mysteries.**

- **3 But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. 4 One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. 5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.** Paul really puts the emphasis on the **IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY.**
- Now the **GREEK TERM “PROPHECY”** tells us exactly what it means. It is the term *prophteia*. The verb is *prophteu*. It simply means to **“SPEAK PUBLICLY, TO SPEAK BEFORE, LITERALLY.”** Before what? Before people, to get up and speak. That's all it means. There's Nothing mystical, or supernatural in that sense. It simply means to speak before people. It is the gift of public speaking.

- Now prophecy may be included in a supernatural way, like a prophet of the O.T. or the N.T. Their primary purpose was “**FORTHTELLING**, and **FORETELLING**, the **FUTURE**.” But its primary significance is **PUBLIC SPEAKING**. In the O.T, you will find that prophets

1. **INSTRUCTED.**

2. **EXHORTED.**

3. **WARNED.**

4. **REBUKED.**

5. **ENCOURAGED.**

6. **THEY STRESSED DUTY.**

7. **OBEDIENCE.**

8. REPENTANCE.

9. THEY PROMOTED REVERENCE.

10. THEY CALLED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

11. THEY CONDEMNED SIN.

12. THEY WARNED ABOUT JUDGMENT.

13. THEY PROMISED BLESSING.

- It wasn't always brand-new revelation. It was simply public speaking in giving forth the message of God. Their emphasis usually was in a practical application, making the Word of God relevant to life. They were relevant communicators of God's Word.
- The best definition anywhere of the *prophetic gift* is found in (1 Cor. 14:3) **“But one who prophesies speaks to men...”** That's what the prophecy gift is, it's a **SPEAKING-TO-MEN GIFT.**

- This speaking gift is mentioned in (1 Pet. 4:11) "**Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances (oracles) of God;**" It's a speaking gift that uses the **WORD OF GOD FOR ITS CONTENT.**
- **EXAMPLE:** When God called Moses to deliver Israel out of Egypt in (Ex. 4-7:1) Moses said I can't do it, I can't speak publicly. God said to him in
- (Ex. 4:14-16) "**Is there not your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he speaks fluently. And moreover, behold, he is coming out to meet you; when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. 15 "You are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I, even I, will be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you what you are to do. 16 "Moreover, he shall speak for you to the people; and he will be as a mouth for you and you will be as God to him." Notice 7:1 "and your brother Aaron shall be your **PROPHET.**"**
- In other word's, Aaron will be your ***public speaker***. He was not a supernatural prophet; He was just a man who **STOOD IN FRONT OF PEOPLE AND SPOKE.**

- **THERE ARE OTHER EXAMPLES FOUND IN THE O.T.**
- **(Num. 11:25-26,) (1 Kings. 18:29,) and (1 Chron. 25:2-3)** and then, we see it in **(Matt. 7:22)** where many people are going to stand at the judgment and say, **“...‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophecy in Your name,’”** We've been Your preachers, we've been Your public speakers, we've stood up in front of crowds and spoken on Your behalf. So, Aaron was going to be Moses' speechmaker. That's the idea.
- Again, looking back at **(1 Cor. 14:3)** really sums it up beautifully. It says, **“*he that prophesies speaks unto men.*”** **FOR WHAT PURPOSE?**
 1. For **EDIFICATION**: To build them up.
 2. For **EXHORTATION**: To challenge them to obedience.
 3. For **COMFORT**: To comfort them in time of need.

- 
- It isn't necessarily for telling the future. It isn't necessarily supernatural revelation. It is public speaking with the purpose of building up, challenging to obedience and comforting. And the content of it is the oracles of God. It may be to **UNBELIEVERS**. It may be to **BELIEVERS**.
 - **IT IS A PUBLIC SPEAKING GIFT, *PROCLAIMING* THE WORD OF THE LIVING GOD.**
- 

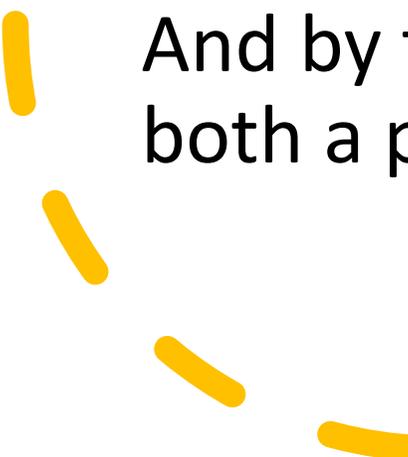
THE SPEAKING GIFTS-TEACHING

- So, what's the difference between **TEACHING** and **PREACHING**?

It's hard to recover all the distinctions in the *Greek* terms, but we know this, that the speaking publicly gift, the “**prophteia**” gift, the proclaiming gift, the gift of the herald, if you will, like **JOHN THE BAPTIST**, who was a prophet and heralded the coming of the Messiah, the proclaiming gift is distinct from the “**DIDACTIC**” gift. (Rom. 12:6; **prophteia**)(12:7; **didactic**)

- Here the word is **DIDASK** from which we get “**DIDACTIC.**” The implied meaning of this word is the “**formal, systematic training or teaching.**” It is used, for example, of training a choir over the weeks and the weeks until finally they have mastered what they have been trained to learn and they are ready to perform. The “**GIFT OF PREACHING**” is a one-time (**one sermon at a time**) proclamation, an announcement, a heralding of the biblical truth.

- The gift of **“TEACHING”** is the function of systematically training people, taking them from one point to another systematically. It can refer to a teacher in a seminary or a Bible college or a Bible fellowship teacher. It can refer to someone who disciples a person one-on-one, someone who carries them from point A to point B to point c. It is the **“ministry of leading someone along in the systematic understanding of the teaching of the Word of God.”**
- The early church met ***every day***. (Acts 2:42) says they were continually together in the apostles' **“DOCTRINE.”** There was a didactic exercise going on where the church came together to analyze and systematize the Word of God. And that's what we're called to do in (Matt. 28,) ***“go into all the world, and make disciples of all men, teaching them,*** (didactically, systematically instructing them in an increasing understanding of the Word of God,) ***teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”***

- 
- It is undeniable that **PAUL** had the gift of **“TEACHING.”** Paul was not only a teacher. But he could **PROCLAIM** as well. He could also systematically impart truth. Anyone who reads Romans, knows that Paul was a teacher. He is the **SYSTEMATIZER** of all systematizers. And that's what he says in (2 Tim. 1:11,) ***"I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher."*** He uses all **three** words to describe himself. And by the way, it's not totally uncommon for a person to be both a preacher and a teacher in God's design. Paul was that.
- 

- **JESUS CERTAINLY HAD IT.** You remember on the road to Emmaus, (Luke 24,) He (Jesus) opened the Scriptures and expounded. The word "**EXPOUNDED**" is? *Diermneu*, from which we get "**HERMENEUTICS,**" thorough interpretation. *Dia* adds an intensity. "**He thoroughly interpreted the Scriptures.**" That's the teaching gift, to fully interpret, to thoroughly interpret the Scriptures so that it's understandable, systematic feeding of the Word of God.
- Where a "**PASTOR**" must be evaluated is on the basis of whether or not he faithfully, systematically exposit to his people the Word of God. I'm not sure that all are doing that?
- **ERIC FIFE** once said, "If the study is a lounge, the pulpit is an impertinence." And if you don't have the gift of teaching, **LEAVE IT ALONE!** Notice (James. 3:1) "***Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.***" Greater condemnation, don't be in a hurry to be a teacher. You better know that God has "**CALLED**" you and "**GIFTED**" you for the task.

- **PROPHECY**-(Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10)

A person with this gift has the God given ability to “**PUBLICLY SPEAK FOR GOD.**” This involves both “*Foretelling*, and *Forth Telling*,” They declare the truth for the purposes of:

- **EDIFICATION**: to **build someone up.**

- **EXHORTATION**: to challenge someone to **fire them up.**

- **COMFORT**: to find the hurting and **hold them up.** This person is able to discern right from wrong.

- **OPPORTUNITIES**: Preaching, Community, National concern, Finance Comm., Search Committee.

- **TEACHING**-(Rom. 12:7)

Those with this gift know how to clarify truth, you like to study and discover Insights of why facts are true. You like to mine nuggets from the word of God and share them with the people of God.

- **OPPORTUNITIES**: Pastor, Bible fellowship teacher, V.B.S., Men’s/women’s ministry, Youth/Children’s ministry.

- **EVANGELISTS**-(Eph. 4:11)

Those with this gift can comfortably share their **testimony** and the **Gospel** with the hope of leading the sinner to salvation. In the early church this office had the same responsibility as the Pastor except they usually went to places where Christ had never been mentioned. They resembled a Missionary in the field.

- **OPPORTUNITIES**: Pastor, Preacher, Visitation, Outreach, and Missions.

- **EXHORTATION**-(Rom. 12:8)

This person has the ability to stimulate people in their faith. They lead others to love Jesus more. They have the ability to **ENCOURAGE**. Man, every church needs more encouragers. We need more like Barnabas.

- **OPPORTUNITIES**: Preacher, Counseling, Crises center, Music ministry, witnessing, Evangelism.

- **WISDOM**-(1 Cor. 12:8)

This doesn't just mean your intelligent. It's not even mere common sense. Wisdom is seeing life from God's point of view. It's being able to know the mind of Holy Spirit through the truth of God's Word, and properly apply it to any given situation.

OPPORTUNITIES: Pastor, Church leaders, Deacon, teacher, Counselors, women's shelter, crises center, nursery.

- **DISCERNING OF SPIRITS**-(1 Cor. 12:10)

This gift often goes hand and hand with "**WISDOM**." This person has the ability to understand that not everything that is spiritual is of God. They understand spiritual warfare, and the devil comes to imitate, and destroy that which is holy.

OPPORTUNITIES: Pastor, teacher, Church leaders, Counseling, Crises center, Music ministry, witnessing, Evangelism, nursery.

THE SERVING GIFTS

- **SECOND GIFT IS THE GIFT OF SERVING.**
- Paul says in verse in (Rom. 12:7), *"if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching."* **MINISTRY**, or literally, *diakonia*, the gift of the deacon the serving gift. If you have the gift of serving, **THEN SERVE**.
- It's a practical service. It's the same as the gift of **HELPS** in (1 Cor. 12:28.) *"And God has appointed in the church, first APOSTLES, second PROPHETS, third TEACHERS, then MIRACLES, then gifts of HEALINGS, HELPS, ADMINISTRATIONS, various kinds of TONGUES."*
- It's the same word used in (Acts 20:35), *"In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must HELP the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"*

- **“HELPS”** means. **“SUPPORT,”** It's a support gift, a gift of practical help, a gift of *servicing*. It could come, in a million ways, unique as each individual.
- In **(Acts 6:2)**, the apostles said, ***“It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to “serve tables.””*** Look, we need to give ourselves to serving the Word and praying, so let's get some people who can serve tables. **THE CHURCH IS DEPENDENT ON THE HELPERS.** There are myriad of support things that have to be done in the ministry. Absolutely no limit to it. **IF YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF A GIFT, THEN BE AT IT.**

- **SERVING**, means to **“WAIT ON A TABLE.”** It's used, for example, when Jesus raised Peter's wife's mother and it says she got up and served them. She ***diakonia'd*** them, she deaconed them. That's what the word means. It means to serve them something to eat.
- It's used several places in the N.T. meaning to serve, to provide a meal, very, very menial but very important service. It came then to be a very general term for any kind of spiritual service. And throughout the N.T. you find that the word is used over and over again. It's a very common word.
- There is nearly **75 different** times when one form of that word or another is used in the New Testament, serving, all kinds of dimensions to it. Any kind of supporting service, it could be the ***official service*** of someone designated as a deacon, or it could be the ***unofficial service*** of someone just stepping into a gap to serve.

- Remember, don't get caught up thinking that one gift is better than the other. You see, the issue isn't what you are; the issue is what you do with what you are. Your eternal **"COMMENDATION"** is not going to be whether or not you had the same effect that **Billy Graham** did on the world. The issue in your eternal reward is going to be did you **maximize the gift** you had because God designed you the way He designed you. Did you use the gift that God gave you? That's the issue, to the fullest.
- In a sense, our judgment is relative. Not relative to each other but relative to what God enabled us to do and whether or not we did it.
- Remember **(Rom. 12,)** ***"Present yourself a living sacrifice."*** Abandon yourself to a renewed mind and a renewed will, rightly evaluate your own attitude. Are you humbly thankful for the gift you have, and do you understand it not too highly and not too lowly? Do you understand how essential it is to the body of Christ, the body of Christ can't function without it? Will you, do it? If it's preaching, will you preach? If it's serving, will you please serve? If it's teaching, will you please teach?

- **MINISTRY**-(Rom. 12:7)

This is just another word for **“SERVICE.”** This person meets spiritual needs in a practical way. The everyday things that make the church function, and flow. Some people go as far as to differentiate **“Service,”** and **“Helps.”** **Helps** tend to be more specific such as an Associate Pastor, is one who comes along side of the Pastor using their talents to aid (**HELP**) the Pastor in serving the body.

Service, has a more general role of **“Doing whatever needs to be done.”**

Opportunities: Deacon, Ushers, Nursery worker, Meal organizer, Event organizer, I.T. tech, audio/visual tech, Bus ministry, flower/decoration, lawn care, building maintenance, Musicians. Custodian.

- **GIVING.**-(Rom. 12:8)

Even though we are **ALL** commanded to give, these people have the ability to accumulate and disperse assets so that the work of God may be carried on. They make good decisions to meet immediate needs.

Opportunities: Benevolence Comm., Personal comm., Finance Comm., Financial advisor, Tax accountant.

- **FAITH.**-(1 Cor. 12:9)

When Paul mentions the word **“FAITH”** in this context, he’s not referring to **“Saving faith,”** or **“Serving faith”** that is common to all Christians. After all (Rom. 12:3) is clear **“For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.”**

- This type of faith is referring to **“SUPERABUNDANT FAITH,”** the **“GIFT”** of **FAITH.** Notice (1 Cor. 13:2) **“...and if I have ALL FAITH, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”** As Adrian Rodgers said: **“If God wants you to remove mountains, he’ll give you mountain-moving faith.”**

- I know a few people with this kind of faith, and I’d like to think I have it, but to compare my faith with Sister **Charlotte Harvey’s** faith, is humbling at best. I love to be around folks with this kind of faith. They believe God can do anything, anytime, or anywhere, **ALL THE TIME!** It’s an **EXTRAORDINARY CONFIDENCE IN THE POWER OF GOD.**

- 
- **Opportunities**: Benevolence Comm., Finance Comm., Intercessory of prayer ministry, basically every ministry needs someone with this gift.
 - **MERCY**-(Rom. 12:8)
 - The person with this gift can identify with people and help to alleviate the pain in those who are hurting. This person can feel a genuine empathy and compassion for people in general. **(the saint and sinner.)**
 - **Opportunities**: Hopefully your Pastor, Benevolence (giving) comm., Counseling, Crises center, Teen Challenge, Hospital visitation. Any ministry that needs acts of mercy.
- 

What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 11

How To Pray (with
Power)!

What every Christian Ought To Know. How To PRAY (With POWER)



- (Matt. 6:9-13) **“After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”**

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

- If you were to study the exemplary prayers in Scripture, you cannot help noticing that all of them are brief and simple. Prayer that is heartfelt, urgent, and unfeigned must be of that style. Verbiage and windbagery are badges of *insincerity*, especially in prayer. Here are a few examples.
- 1. The prayer of the **publican**: (Lk. 18:13) is as short and to the point as possible: *“God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”*
- 2. The prayer of the **thief** on the cross: “Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!” (Lk. 23:42).
- 3. Peter’s cry for help when he was walking on water:—sometimes cited as the shortest prayer in the Bible: *“Lord, save me”* (Matthew 14:30). All of these prayers are cut from the same cloth.
- Scripture records very few long prayers. Much of (Psa. 119) is addressed to God in the language of prayer, and of course, that is the Bible’s longest chapter. Other than that,
- (Neh. 9:5-38) contains the longest prayer in all of Scripture, and it can be read aloud with expression in less than seven minutes.

- **(John 17)** is the **New Testament's** longest prayer. It's also the longest of Jesus' recorded prayers, just **twenty-six** verses long.
- We know, of course, that Jesus prayed much longer prayers than that, because Scripture records several instances where He prayed in solitude for extended periods of time (**Matt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46**).
- When it suited Him, Jesus would even spend the entire night in prayer (**Lk. 6:12**).
- Jesus made it a habit to pray, both privately and with His disciples (**Jn. 18:2**). And the pattern was clear: His **long prayers** were the ones He prayed **in private**. His **public prayers** were perfect examples of **crisp, forthright, plain speaking**.
- Listening to Jesus pray and observing His constant dependence on private prayer gave the disciples an appetite for prayer. So, they asked Him, ***"Lord, teach us to pray"*** (**Lk. 11:1**). He responded by repeating the very same model prayer He gave in the **"SERMON ON THE MOUNT."** We call it the **"LORD'S PRAYER."** We should probably think of it as the **"Disciples' Prayer,"** because its centerpiece is a **petition for divine forgiveness**, something Jesus would never need to pray for.

- Like all great praying, it is both **straight forward** and **without *elegance***. There is not a wasted word, not a hint of vain repetition, and not a single note of **attracting attention (SELF)**, or religious **ceremony** in the whole prayer: Notice (Lk. 11:2-4) *“And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. 3 Give us day by day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”*
- This prayer was a pattern for the disciples to follow, not a mantra to be recited without engaging the mind or passions. The various elements of Jesus’ prayer are all reminders of what our praying ought to include: **PRAISE, PETITION, PENITENCE**, and a **PLEA** for grace in our sanctification. Those are not only the key elements of prayer, but they are also some of the principal features of **AUTHENTIC WORSHIP**.

- Scripture repeatedly promises that if we ask for anything in faith, God will answer—meaning if we ask, “in accord with **GOD’S WILL** as prompted by His Spirit,” He will always graciously and generously respond **Notice (Matt. 21:22) “And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” (Matthew 7:7-11; 17:20; 21:22; Mark 11:24; James 1:6; 1 John 3:22).**
- God often grants our requests according to (Eph. 3:20) *“exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.”*
- The nature of a **“TRULY FAITHFUL PRAYER”** is clearly spelled out in (1 Jn. 5:14) *“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”*
- In other words, the promise of answered prayer is not an unqualified blank check. The promise is made only to **FAITHFUL, OBEDIENT, SOBER-MINDED, BIBLICALLY INFORMED** Christians whose prayers are in “**harmony with the will of God.**” It’s not a guarantee of cargo to every gullible or superstitious religious enthusiast who uses **“JESUS’ NAME”** as if it were an abracadabra.

- Notice what Jesus said in (Jn. 15:7) *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”*
- Far from being merely a wish list, **“GODLY PRAYER”** is fundamentally an **“ACT OF WORSHIP.”** It is an expression of our **“PRAISE,”** our unworthiness, our desire to see God's will fulfilled, and our utter **“DEPENDENCE”** on Him for all our needs. Thus, every aspect of prayer is an **“act of worship.”**
- That includes the **“PETITIONS”** we make, because when we properly make our requests known to God—without anxiety, through **prayer** and **supplication**, and with **thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6)**—we are **“acknowledging”** His sovereignty, **“confessing”** our own total reliance on His grace and power, and **“looking”** to Him as Lord and Provider and Ruler of the universe—not as some kind of celestial Santa. **Proper prayer is PURE WORSHIP, even when we are making requests.**

- The “**GODWARD FOCUS**” of Jesus’ model prayer is impossible to miss. The prayer starts with “**praise of God’s name.**” *“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.”* It expresses a willingness for His Kingdom to come and His will to be done. **Pure worship thus precedes and sets the context for supplication.**
- Those opening lines establish the focal point of the prayer: the glory of God and His kingdom. In other words, the supplicant is concerned first of all not for his personal wish list but for the **honor of God and the extension of His kingdom.** Everything else fits into that context, so that the whole agenda of the prayer is determined by the kingdom and glory of God. That is perhaps the **most important** perspective to keep in mind in all our praying.
- Jesus said in (Jn. 14:13) *“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son”* The purpose of all legitimate prayer is not to fulfill the felt needs or material desires of the one praying, but to acknowledge the **SOVEREIGNTY** of God and to magnify **HIS GLORY.**

- Prayer is not about getting what I want, but about the fulfillment of God’s will. The proper objective of prayer is not to enlarge my borders, build my empire, or expand my wallet but to **“further the kingdom of God.”** The point is not to elevate my name but to **“HALLOW”** God’s name.
- Everything in prayer revolves around **who God is, what God wants,** and **how God is to be glorified.** That is the sum and substance of proper praying. So how do we accomplish this? Through **reading, meditating,** and **memorizing** God’s **WORD.**
- Any prayers that are **self-consuming, self-indulgent, self-aggrandizing;** any prayers that seek whatever I want no matter what God wants; any prayers that suggest God must deliver because I have demanded it—those are prayers that take His name in vain. Such praying is an egregious sin against the **nature of God,** against the **will of God,** and against the **Word of God.**

We Must Submit To God's Paternity. #1

- The model prayer Christ gave His disciples stands in stark contrast to the kind of rambling repetition that we hear and often times exercise. Every word in the Lord's Prayer is **deliberate, intentional**, and loaded with **spiritual significance**—including the name Jesus used to address the Lord.
- **“And He said to them, *“When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.”*** (Luke 11:2-4).
- The prayer starts with a reference to God's **“PATERNITY.”** The first word—the address—is a reminder that **God is our heavenly Father**. We go to Him not only because He is a sovereign Monarch, a righteous Judge, and our Creator, but because He is a **“loving Father.”** That beautiful expression reminds us of the grace that gives us unlimited access to His throne, and it encourages us to come boldly, just as a son or a daughter would come to a loving dad.
- **Notice (Heb. 4:16) *“Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”***

- So, when we pray, we are going to a God who is our **LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER**. We can go with a sense of **INTIMACY**, and **CONFIDENCE** in the same tender, trusting way a little child would go to an earthly father. We can go boldly.
- We are approaching a loving deity who does not need to be appeased, but who embraces us as His own. In fact, because we are His true children, **Notice (Gal. 4:6)** *“Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”* **“ABBA”** is a term of deep affection, a common term for **“FATHER”** derived from the Chaldean dialect. Because it is easy to pronounce, it was how little children in New Testament times commonly addressed their fathers, like **“DADDY”** or **“PAPA”** in today’s English.
- When used properly, **“ABBA”** — **“FATHER”** — is an expression of profound worship filled with childlike trust. Here’s what that looks like:
- Father, I recognize that I’m Your child. I know You love me and have given me intimate access to You.
- I recognize that You have absolutely unlimited resources, and that You will do what is best for me.
- I recognize that **I need to obey You**. And I recognize that whatever You do, You know best. All of that is implied in the truth that God is our Father, and **THAT’S HOW JESUS TAUGHT US TO BEGIN OUR PRAYERS**.

We Must Seek God's Priority. #2

- **What is the most common motivation to go to the Lord in prayer?** Is it to **CONFESS SIN**? Or is it to make a petition on behalf of a loved one? Do we want to bring our latest requests to Him, or remind Him of something we think He may have overlooked? Far too much of our time in prayer is spent **FOCUSED ON US**, not on the One to whom we're praying.
- When was the last time you prayed simply to give God **glory**, or to express your **appreciation** for His **love**, His **mercy**, His **grace**, or His **character**? If prayer is an **"ACT OF WORSHIP,"** our prayer lives cannot revolve around us—our schedules, our trials, our needs, wants, and concerns.
- That self-centered approach stands in stark contrast to the model Christ gave His disciples. The Lord's Prayer is a **"WORSHIPFUL MEDITATION"** on **WHO** God is and the sovereign care He bestows on His people. It's a pattern for successful prayer—one that emphasizes the **glory** and **supremacy** of God.

- Notice again (Lk. 11:2-4) **“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’ ”**
- The entire opening sentence of the prayer is a straightforward exclamation of **WORSHIP: “Father, hallowed be Your name” (Luke 11:2)**. That is expressed as a **“petition,”** but it is by no means a **“personal request;”** it is an expression of **praise**, and it reflects God’s own **PRIORITY:**
- Notice (Isa. 42:8) **“I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, Nor My praise to graven images.”**
- Jesus established the truth that prayer is worship by beginning His model prayer that way.

To worship God is to **“sing the glory of His name” (Psa. 66:2)**. **“Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name” (1 Chr. 16:29; Psa. 29:2; 96:8)**. **“Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory” (Psa. 115:1)**. Such expressions capture the true spirit of a **“WORSHIPING HEART.”**

- Moreover, that first sentence qualifies every other petition in the prayer. It rules out asking for things “with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures” (**James 4:3**). It eliminates every petition that is not in accord with the perfect will of God.

- I love what **ARTHUR W PINK** had to say:

“How clearly, then, is the fundamental duty in prayer here set forth: self and all its needs must be given a secondary place and the Lord freely accorded the preeminence in our thoughts, desires and supplications. This petition must take the precedence, for the glory of God’s great name is the ultimate end of all things: every other request must not only be subordinated to this one, but be in harmony with and in pursuance of it. **We cannot pray aright unless the honor of God be dominant in our hearts.** If we cherish a desire for the honoring of God’s name, we must not ask for anything which it would be against the Divine holiness to bestow.”

- What does that expression mean: **“Hallowed be Your name”**? In biblical terms, God’s **“name”** includes everything God is—His **character**, His **attributes**, His **reputation**, His **honor**—His very **Person**. God’s name signifies everything that is **TRUE** about God.
- We still use the expression **“my name”** in that sense at times. If we say someone has ruined his good name, we mean he has disgraced himself and spoiled his reputation. He has diminished others’ perception of who he is. And if I give you power of attorney, I have **authorized** you to act in my name. You thereby become my legal proxy, and any legal covenants you enter into are as binding on me as if I signed them myself.
- That is precisely what Jesus meant when He taught us to pray in His name: **“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it”** (Jn. **14:13-14**). He was delegating His authority to us to be used in prayer—authorizing us to act as if we were His emissaries when we let our requests be made known to God.

- God's name represents everything **HE IS**, everything **He approves**, and everything **He is known for**. So, when we pray, ***"Father, hallowed be Your name,"*** we are expressing a **DESIRE** for God's character, His glory, His reputation in the world, and His very being **TO BE SET APART AND LIFTED UP**.
- The word ***"HALLOWED"*** (Greek *hagiazō*) means **"consecrated," "sanctified,"** or **"set apart as holy."** It includes the idea of being separated from all that is profane. This phrase is a prayer that God Himself would be blessed and glorified. Jesus Himself prayed for that very thing in (Jn. 12:28) ***"Father, glorify Your name."*** It is a petition **God delights to answer**.
- By starting His model prayer that way, Jesus was reminding us of the **ultimate purpose of every prayer we ever offer**. The proper aim is for **God to be glorified, honored, known, and exalted in EVERY CONCEIVABLE WAY**.

- This needs to be a reminder **NOT** to call God “**Father**” in a cheaply sentimental or overly familiar way. He is our loving Father, but we are not to forget that **HIS NAME IS HOLY**. The fatherhood of God in no way diminishes His glory, and if we find ourselves thinking that way, here is the corrective: “**FATHER, HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME.**”
- The spirit of that plea is contrary to the main thrust of the so-called prosperity gospel. A story is told of a televangelist teaching the “**positive confession**” doctrine, and he told his audience that if they tacked the phrase “**not my will but Thine**” onto any of their prayers, they were not praying in faith. That is a lie from the pit of hell. Jesus Himself prayed “**not My will, but Yours be done**” (Lk. 22:42). By teaching us to begin all our prayers with a concern that the name of God be hallowed, He was teaching us to pray for **God’s will over and above our own.**
- The kind of god who is at everyone’s beck and call and who must cave under to someone else’s desires **is not the God of the Bible.** Those who portray prayer in such a fashion are not hallowing God’s name; they are dragging His name through the mud. Their false teaching is a denial of the very nature of God. It isn’t just **bad theology**, it is **gross irreverence. IT IS BLASPHEMY.** They are taking God’s name in vain, and that is patently antithetical to the spirit of this plea.

- **Luther's catechism (section 39)** asks and answers this question: "How is God's name hallowed among us? Answer, as plainly as it can be said: **When both our doctrine and life are godly and Christian.** For since in this prayer we call God our Father, it is our duty always to deport and demean ourselves as godly children, that He may not receive shame, but honor and praise from us."
- So, when we pray, ***"Father, hallowed be Your name,"*** we are asking God to glorify Himself—to put His power, His grace, and all His perfections on display. One way He does that is by answering our prayers—**assuming our prayers are expressions of submission to His will** rather than merely flippant requests that arise from our own selfish desires.
- We were not created to enjoy prosperity in a fallen world. We were created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. We ought to be more concerned for the glory of God than we are for our **own prosperity, our own comfort, our own agenda,** or any other **self-centered desire.** That's why Jesus taught us to think of prayer as an **ACT OF WORSHIP** rather than merely a way to ask God for things we want.
- **FOLKS THAT'S GOOD STUFF RIGHT THERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

We Must Surrender to God's Program. #3

- Very few people make it through life without some sort of **PLAN**. The vast majority of us have to put a lot of thought into our schedules if we want to accomplish anything. And what we put the most time into planning says a lot about where our hearts are—too often **vacation, celebrations, and general leisure time** get lots of forethought, while responsibilities at work and around the house fit into our schedules as needed.
- **But where does God's will factor into our plans?** Are we too quick to get absorbed in our own plans and expectations for tomorrow without properly considering God's sovereign will?
- **Notice (Jam. 4:15) *"Instead, you ought to say, *'If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.'*"*** When planning the days and weeks ahead. We can't get carried away with our own program. **FAILING TO ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S SUPREME WILL AND CONTROL IS DISRESPECTFUL—ESPECIALLY WHEN HE'S THE ONE WHO GRANTS OUR EVERY BREATH.**
- That same mindset needs to carry over into our prayer lives. It's easy to get caught up in petitions to the Lord regarding our immediate needs and desires. **IT'S MUCH HARDER** to routinely **surrender those things** to His will and wisdom, trusting in His perfect plan and provision.

- Christ's example to the disciples makes it clear—**the priority for believers is God's program, not our own.** As we saw earlier in this series, our relationship to God gives us bold confidence to bring our requests before Him. But those requests—and our entire lives—**must be subordinate to His plan.**
- **Notice (Lk. 11:2-4) *“And He said to them, “When you pray, say: ‘Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. 3 ‘Give us each day our daily bread. 4 ‘And forgive us our sins, For we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.’ ”***
- The closing phrase of **Verse 2** is ***“Your kingdom come.”*** It is a prayer for the advancement of God's kingdom. Like every phrase of the Lord's Prayer, this is antithetical to the prayers typically prayed by those who are concerned mainly about the advancement of their own programs, the building of their own empires, or the padding of their own pockets.
- **This is a prayer that God's program be advanced, and that His will be done.** In fact, in some Greek manuscripts the text includes the phrase, ***“Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth”*** (KJV). Jesus Himself included that phrase in the model prayer when he gave it in His **“Sermon on the Mount”** (Matt. 6:10) ***“Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.”***

- Every request we make in our prayers should first be run through this filter:
 1. **Is it in harmony with the goals and principles of God’s kingdom?**
 2. **Is it consistent with the expansion of the kingdom?**
 3. **Does it truly advance the kingdom, or does it merely fulfill some selfish want?**
- Name-it-and-claim-it theology is self-indulgent, and small minded. All it cares about is self-interest and selfish desires, with no thought for the greater cause of **CHRIST’S KINGDOM**.
- A godly attitude says, **Lord, advance Your kingdom if that means I lose everything**. That’s what the phrase **“Your kingdom come”** implies.
- The **“KINGDOM,”** of course, is the **“sphere where Christ rules—the realm where He is Lord.”** To pray **“Your kingdom come”** with sincerity is to submit one’s desires and to yield one’s heart without reservation to the **lordship of Christ**. To affirm the program of Christ’s kingdom is to set aside one’s own fleshly, materialistic, or selfish prayer requests, because, after all, according to **(Rom. 14:17) “for the kingdom of God is not EATING and DRINKING, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”**
- Any prayer that follows a different pattern is not an act of true worship, and therefore it is not a legitimate prayer.
- Remember, all true prayer is **WORSHIP**. We go to a loving Father, accepting that He knows best. Our prayers, then, reflect an obedient heart, a passion for His glory, and a desire to see the extension of His kingdom—that God might be honored. **Folks remember this statement!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

We Must **Stick** to Godly **Patterns. #4**

- A church in Florida recently began offering drive-thru prayer services. Men and women at the end of their rope and in need of prayer pull up outside the church to order up petitions to the Lord the way you and I might order a burger or coffee. Of the roughly 150 people they've prayed with so far, many of them have never actually set foot inside a church.
- That is clearly a ridiculous and **UNBIBLICAL** practice. But how often are we guilty of using our prayers just like a drive-thru window? We're too often driven to prayer by the **NEEDS** of the moment only, concerned about our **CIRCUMSTANCES** alone, and eager to get on with life as quickly as possible. We're prone to **self-centered thinking** that focuses on how **events impact** our lives rather than how **the Lord is working through them**.
- Instead, we need to **DISCIPLINE** ourselves to put God and His purposes **first** and look for what He is accomplishing in every situation, **REGARDLESS** of our **DESIRES** or **CIRCUMSTANCES**.

- Tonight, I want you to consider the prayers of **one O. T.** prophet—in the midst of a **truly dire situation**. But as you'll see, he didn't allow his **circumstances** to be an **EXCUSE**.
- **JONAH**: He prayed an exemplary prayer from the most unnatural and unimaginable of settings— ***“the belly of a fish.”*** If you can picture the wet, suffocating darkness and discomfort of such a place, you might begin to have an idea of how desperate Jonah's situation was at that moment. The whole second chapter of Jonah is devoted to the record of his prayer, and the entire prayer is a profound ***“expression of worship.”*** It reads like a psalm. In fact, it's full of references and allusions to the **Psalms**—almost as if Jonah were singing His worship in phrases borrowed from Israel's psalter while he languished inside that living tomb.
- The prayer is as passionate as you might expect from someone trapped inside a fish under the surface of the Mediterranean. Jonah begins in **Ch. 2:2** ***“I called out of my distress to the LORD, and He answered me”*** This was not a plea to God for help, but an **expression of praise and deliverance**, mentioning God in the third person and speaking of deliverance as if it were an **accomplished fact**.

- The remainder of the prayer is addressed directly to God in the second person—and the whole thing is an extended expression of more praise. Jonah rehearses what has happened to him **Notice (Jon. 2:3)** *“For You had cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me.”* **Notice V. 5** *“Weeds were wrapped around my head,”*
- Keep in mind, **Jonah is still inside the fish** while he is praying this prayer (**Jonah 2:10**); yet he consistently speaks of his **“DELIVERANCE”** in the **past tense**. And here’s the amazing thing about this prayer: though Jonah must have been as desperate as anyone who ever prayed for rescue from the Lord, his prayer contains **NOT ONE SINGLE REQUEST**. It is a pure, resounding expression of **WORSHIP** and **FAITH IN GOD**, who alone could deliver Jonah. The key sentence is **verse 7**: *“While I was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple.”*

- 
- The **FOCUS** of **JONAH'S** prayer—like all great prayers—was the **GLORY OF GOD**. Although no one, perhaps, has ever been in a situation where it would be appropriate to plead and beg God to answer more than Jonah was, there was none of that in his prayer. And the past-tense references to Jonah's deliverance were the furthest thing you can imagine from the contemporary prosperity-preachers' notion of **"positive confession."** Jonah wasn't under any illusion that his words could alter the reality of his plight. He was simply extolling the character of God. And that is precisely what our Lord was teaching when He gave the disciples that model prayer in **LUKE 11**.
- 

- So, it ought to be clear that when Jesus taught His disciples to regard prayer as **“WORSHIP,”** that wasn’t anything novel. The great prayers we read in the O. T. were likewise expressions of **worship**—including those that were prayed in the most desperate situations. The parallelism between prayer and worship is no coincidence. **Prayer is the distilled essence of worship.**
- How much more, then, do you and I need to **reevaluate** our own **PRIORITIES** in prayer? Rather than paying momentary lip service to God before we get to our list of requests, we need to constantly examine our hearts in prayerful worship before the Lord, making sure we’re holding to the pattern **CHRIST PROVIDED.**
- **Successful prayer** isn’t about getting what you want from God. **IT’S ABOUT BENDING YOUR WILL TO HIS,** recognizing **His supremacy,** and reflecting on **His glory. It’s an act of worship**—one that knits your heart and mind to the Lord in consistent communion with Him.

We Must be Satisfied with God's Provisions. #5

- Now notice with me verse 11, a simple, familiar phrase. The petition: **“GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.”**
- The word **“BREAD”** opens up to us the **simplicity, commonness, and power** of this petition, and yet suggests to us a deep and profound meaning that demands our careful study.
- As I began to examine this thought, I realized that as American's we are unlike many countries in that we throw more food away than some consume.
- When you come to the statement, **“*Give us this day our daily bread,*”** it may at first seem a little irrelevant to us. Think about it, when was the last time you prayed, **“Lord, I plead with You to provide for me a meal.”**

- I bet there's not many who would be honest and pray something like **“Lord, please prevent me from eating another meal. Teach me self-discipline. Lord, I must lose weight. I not only have enough for me but several others.”** When was the last time we really got desperate about our food? You say this message ought to be preached in Bangladesh, or Cambodia, or Sahara or somewhere, but not in America. This is **“irrelevant.”** **But this way of thinking proves our lack of understanding of the marvelous truth found in this text.**
- God has so richly blessed America with fertile soil, technology, and industry that we as a country have forgotten what it's like to trust God for our next meal.
- For us to say, **“Give us this day our daily bread,”** is a little hard to imagine, and that's what we are going to have to do tonight, **“IMAGINE”** that you don't have any bread/food, then **imagine** that you're desperate, and praying for some.

- Christ is presenting here the **proper way to pray**, the **proper pattern for praying**. And in this very simple prayer, we have all of the necessary ingredients for prayer, if you want to pray according to His standard. And one of the elements of praying is to pray for our daily bread. Now, that doesn't assume that we have it or don't have it. It's just there, and we have to deal with it as it is.
- But in this prayer, we noted first of all **two sections**: the **first** one dealing with **GOD**, and His **GLORY**. The **second** one dealing with **MAN**, and his **NEED**. First we saw **three requests**: ***"Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. And thy will be done,"*** and those focused on **GOD AND HIS GLORY**. Then we see **three other requests** focusing on man and his need: ***"Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*** God, then, is the **SUPREME ISSUE** here, and not until God is in the proper perspective can man pray properly about his own needs. Keep that in mind.

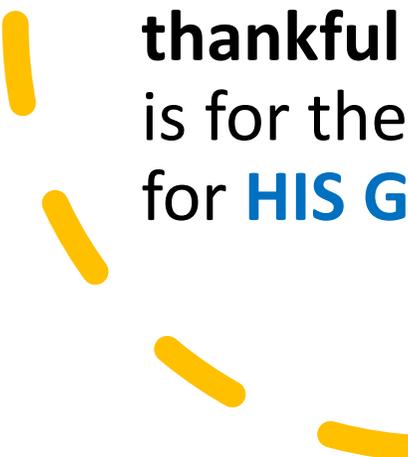
- First, we see **God's name, God's kingdom, God's will**, and then we move to **man's need**. We cannot pray properly in regard to our own human situation until God is in the proper place.
- Even though God is primarily exalted in the **first half**, the second half exalts Him, also and does not set Him aside. For example, the fact that **God gives us our daily bread, forgives our debts, and leads us not into temptation** is an **EXPRESSION** of **His power** and **His grace**. So, God is brought to earth, as it were, in the second part. Notice ***"Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done,"*** **WHERE?** ***"In earth, as it is in heaven."***
- How does God hallow His name, bring His kingdom, and do His will in the earth? **By giving us our DAILY BREAD, BY FORGIVING US OUR DEBTS** and by **LEADING US IN OUR LIVES.**

- In other words, it's as if the second half brings God into **HUMAN LIFE**. It is not that the **first three butter God up, NO!** We are saying,
 1. **GOD, GLORIFY YOURSELF IN OUR DAILY PROVISION.**
 2. **GOD, GLORIFY YOURSELF IN OUR CONSTANT FORGIVENESS.**
 3. **GOD, GLORIFY YOURSELF IN THE LEADING AND THE DIRECTING OF YOUR SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES.**
 4. **GOD, BE ON DISPLAY IN YOUR WORLD, THAT YOUR KINGDOM MAY COME TO EARTH.** So, it is not a setting aside of God, in any sense.
PRAYER IS NOT BUTTERING UP GOD AND THEN DEMANDING CERTAIN THINGS FROM HIM.

- We are to give God the privilege and opportunity of **REVEALING HIS GLORY** through the meeting of the deepest of human needs. We should want to do this because we want God to be on **display**, not because we make demands on Him for our benefit. If prayer becomes **man-centered, self-centered, or selfish** in any sense, it ceases to be the kind of prayer our Lord said should be characteristic of His kingdom. And yet so many people approach God that way.
- We approach God in prayer to get something for us rather than to allow Him to glorify His name, and when we don't get it, then we begin to question God. If we would just allow God **"the right"** to make the choice as to how He would reveal His glory, no matter what He did we would then say, **"So let it be for Your glory. If that's what You choose as the avenue for Your majesty, so let it be."** However, when we become self-centered in our prayers, then we become **"questioning"** of God, and then that is a **serious SIN**.

- Don't forget (Jn. 14:13) ***“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”***
- Notice these three petitions that give God opportunity to glorify Himself. First of all:
 1. ***“Give us this day our daily bread,”*** This speaks of **“PHYSICAL life.”**
 2. ***“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”*** This speaks of the **“MENTAL life.”**
 3. ***“Lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil,”*** This speaks of **“SPIRITUAL life.”**
- **Bread**, that's our **physical life**. **Forgiveness**, that frees our mind from the anxiety and the pain of guilt, and the burden of sin. And **leading us and directing** us away from evil is the spiritual direction. By the way, bread takes care of the present, forgiveness takes care of the past, and help takes care of the future. So, all the dimensions of life are covered, and all the needs of life are covered. It's amazing, the marvel, the wonder of how God's infinite mind can reduce all there is of human need to **three simple profound statements.**

- This entire prayer is set up to “*GLORIFY GOD.*”
- *“Our Father, which art in heaven,”* that’s **GOD’S PATERNITY.**
- *“Hallowed be thy name,”* that’s **GOD’S PRIORITY.**
- *“Thy kingdom come,”* that’s **GOD’S PROGRAM.**
- *“Thy will be done,”* that’s **GOD’S PURPOSE.**
- *“Give us this day our daily bread,”* that’s **GOD’S PROVISION.**
- *“Forgive us our debts,”* that’s **GOD’S PARDON.**
- *“Lead us not,”* that’s **GOD’S PROTECTION.**
- *“For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.”* that’s **GOD’S PRE-EMINENCE.**

- 
- 
- **ALL OF THIS IS FOR GOD'S GLORY.** We must remember that everything we are, and everything we do is for His glory. Even when you stick food in your mouth, it's for God's glory **not for your sustenance**, primarily.
 - Notice (1 Cor. 10:31) "*Whether then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*" Well, how can eating food be to the glory of God? It brings Him glory if you remember **where it came from**, if you remember that He's the **SOURCE** of your food. If you remember **the capacity that you have to enjoy the flavor**. If you're **thankful to the one who provided the nourishment in it**. Everything is for the glory of God. **EVERYTHING!!!!** And prayer, nonetheless, is for **HIS GLORY**.

- We can't ask God for the **luxuries** of life based on this verse, but for the **necessities**. What He chooses to give us by way of luxury is at **HIS GRACIOUS** hand, but He promises to give us the necessities.
- **Notice (Prov. 30:8-9)** ***“Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, 9 That I not be full and deny You and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.”*** I think that's the heart of this. It isn't self-seeking, give me more and more, It's just saying, **LORD GIVE ME WHAT I NEED**, and I want to let You know that I realize that **YOU** are the source of my **life**, my **food**, my **shelter**, my **clothing**, **MY ALL**.
- Why do we ask the Lord to forgive our sin and cleanse our life of something? Hasn't He already promised to forgive our sin (**1 Jn. 1:9**)? **Yes**, but He also said to **KEEP ON CONFESSING IT!!!**
- When we say things like, **“Lord, lead me and guide me in a certain direction,”** doesn't the Bible say He will be our leader, and He will guide us in this way and in that way (**Prov. 3:5-6**)? **Yes**, but He wants me to **affirm that I recognize that LEADERSHIP in my life.**

- When we call out to the Lord and say, “**Lord, hear my prayer and answer,**” and we know He has, and always will. **But God wants us to affirm that confidence BECAUSE THAT EXALTS HIM.** I may never have to say, “**Oh God, I don’t have any food for my family, where is it going to come from?**” But I will always need to say, “**GOD EVERYTHING I HAVE AND ALL THAT I SHARE WITH THOSE I LOVE COMES FROM YOUR GOOD AND GRACIOUS HAND.**”
- “**BREAD**” is the staple of life. And though we may not always be on the edge of hunger we are always to be **thankful** for all of it comes **FROM HIM.**



We Must be **GREATFUL**
For
GOD'S
PARDON.
#6

- For the next couple of weeks our focus is going to be on **verse 12**, “**And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**” And then a footnote on **verse 14**, and **15**, “**For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**”
- Those three verses, the statement in the prayer and then the very important footnote and the very much **misunderstood** footnote that our Lord gives in **14** and **15**, are going to be the “**theme**” of our study for the next few Wednesday nights. The focus and the concentration of **verse 12** is on the subject of **SIN** and its **FORGIVENESS**.
- This is a petition that **EVERY SOUL NEEDS** to face as a part of their prayer life.

- I think you will agree with me that the most essential, the most blessed and the most difficult thing that God ever did was provide man with the **FORGIVENESS of sin**. It is most essential because it keeps us from **ETERNAL HELL** and gives us **JOY** even in this life.
- It is most blessed because it introduces us into a fellowship with God that goes on forever and it is most difficult because it cost the Son of God His life, on a cross. The forgiveness of sin is the greatest need of the **HUMAN HEART**.
- Sin has a two-fold effect, generally, and that is that it damns men forever. That's its future effect.
- Secondly, its present effect is that it robs men of the fullness of life by bringing to bear upon his conscience an unrelieved and unrelenting **GUILT**. And so, as we face the problem of **SIN**, we face the fact that sin brings **IMMEDIATE** consequences, **guilt, loss of purpose, peace, joy, life** and the future consequence of **ETERNAL DAMNATION**.



- Just “thinking” about human life where sin is unforgiven, we have to face the fact of what **guilt** and **condemnation** in our own **CONSCIENCE** does to us.
- **WILLIAM SADLER** said quote: “A clear **conscience** is a great step toward barricading the mind against neuroticism.”
- **JOHN R. W. STOTT** in his little book, *Confess Your Sins*, quotes the head of a large British hospital as having said and I quote, “I could dismiss half of my patients tomorrow if they were assured of forgiveness.” Again, **Forgiveness** is man’s deepest need **NOW**, and in the **future**, for **health** and for **heaven**. This is “**WHY**” it is the first petition related to man’s soul here in the Lord’s prayer.

- Now remember, the **first three** petitions *“Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven,”* these RELATE TO GOD.
- The **last three** petitions RELATE TO MAN. *“Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,”*
- The first of the last three is for **PHYSICAL** sustenance. *“Give us this day our daily bread.”* And while there is only one petition for the physical life, there are **two** for the spiritual because it is much more important. **But the physical is first of all necessary.**
- We cannot live out spiritual principles unless we are alive **physically**. So, first our physical needs are met in **verse 11**, and then when we come to the **spiritual**, the first and most basic request on the part of the inner man is for the **FORGIVENESS OF SINS**.

- This is man's deepest spiritual need, and this is where God and man must **meet**. So, before God can ever lead us at all let alone lead us **NOT into temptation**; before God can **deliver us at all from anything** we must have a relationship to Him which is possible **ONLY WHEN OUR SINS ARE DEALT WITH**.
- **GOD** our Father is a holy God is of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look upon iniquity. **"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God,"** said Isaiah. And there is no way that an absolute holy God can possibly entertain in His presence a relationship with unholy, ungodly sinful men.

- If we are to have any relationship with God, if there is any spiritual thing to be gained, it begins with a **petition for FORGIVENESS**. And you will notice that in **verses 12, 14, and 15 FORGIVE** is mentioned **twice**. **SIX** times we see the thrust and the theme, **the forgiveness of sins**.
- The very nature of this prayer, is that we are **“acknowledging”** a **TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON GOD**. We will have **“no daily bread without God.”** We will have **“no forgiveness of sin without God.”** We will have **“no leading and directing in our lives APART FROM GOD.”** Therefore, **“HIS IS THE PREEMINENCE, THE POWER AND THE GLORY IN THE KINGDOM FOREVER!”** We are to focus on nothing, **BUT GOD**.

- And now we come to **verse 12** in our prayers, routinely, to speak to God about the matter of the “**forgiveness of sin.**”
 - Now, there are **four** principles I want to give you tonight, and **four** words we’ll be discussing.
1. **“SIN”**: makes man guilty and brings judgment.
 2. **“FORGIVENESS”**: is offered by God on the ground of Christ’s death.
 3. **“CONFESSION”**: of sin is necessary to receive that forgiveness from God.
 4. **“FORGIVING”**: one another is an essential part of receiving forgiveness for ourselves.

PRINCIPLE #1: "SIN"

MAKES MAN GUILTY AND BRINGS JUDGMENT.

- **SIN** makes man guilty and brings judgment. That's the human dilemma; man is a *sinner* and that is his problem. Now the Bible says sin is "**LAWLESSNESS,**" which means **YOU** are breaking God's law. It is violating God's standard.
- **Notice: (1 Jn. 3:4)** ***"Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and SIN IS LAWLESSNESS."***
- **Notice (Rom. 3:19)** ***"Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that EVERY MOUTH may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God;"***
- **Notice (Rom. 3:23)** ***"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"***
- **Notice (Rom. 6:23)** ***"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."***
- **Here's what this looks like.** We break His laws, we become guilty. And because we are **GUILTY**, the **wages, penalty** or the **sentence**, of our sin is "**DEATH.**" So, man is a sinner because he is "**LAWLESS.**" All men across the face of the earth stand in judgment before God for their sin.

PRINCIPLE #2: “FORGIVENESS”
IS OFFERED BY GOD ON THE GROUND OF CHRIST’S DEATH.

- Our second word is: FORGIVENESS. If **sin** is the **PROBLEM**, forgiveness is the **PROVISION**. We should be thankful for that?
- **Notice verse 12 again.** *“Forgive us our debts,”* forgive us. And you notice again the collective nature of the prayer, the **“us”** rather than the **“me”** encompassing **ALL OTHER BELIEVERS**. There’s a sense of community here. We’re all in the same boat, folks. Forgiveness, do you really understand what forgiveness is?
- Now this is the part we’ve been kind of building up to. What is forgiveness? What is it for God to forgive you?

- Remember our second principle, forgiveness is available on the ground of **Christ's death**. Basically, forgiveness is
- **"GOD PASSING BY OUR SIN."**
- **"GOD WIPING OUR SIN OFF THE RECORD."**
- **"GOD SETTING US FREE FROM PUNISHMENT AND GUILT."**
- **(Micah 7:18-19)** says *"Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea."* **Folks that is awesome!** The O.T. says, *"He remembers our sins no more."* He passes by our sins.

- Let me sum it up in two simple statements. Forgiveness is
 1. **TAKING AWAY OUR SIN**. Notice (Isaiah 53:6) *“All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.”* He has taken the iniquity of us all and laid it on Him (**JESUS**). Right? Then He:
 2. **COVERED OUR SIN**. Notice (Psalm 85:2) *“You forgave the iniquity of Your people; You covered all their sin. Selah.”* Notice also (Isa. 43:25) *“I, even I, am the one who wipes out (BLOTTED-OUT) your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.”* God literally eliminates our sin, and it’s only possible because of Christ. God couldn’t just pass by your sin unless He placed the punishment for it on someone else, and that is exactly **WHY** Christ Jesus died.
- Now, there are **TWO** kinds of forgiveness. Now watch this, this is really interesting.

1. JUDICIAL FORGIVENESS.

- It views God as a judge. God looks down and see's, Your guilt. You've broken the law. You're under judgment, condemnation, there's got to be punishment. But then that same judge says, **“On the basis of Christ's death, He bore your punishment; He took your guilt; He paid for your sin; the price is accomplished. I declare you to be forgiven.”** That is a **judicial act.**
- **FULL, COMPLETE, POSITIONAL** – positional forgiveness granted by God as the moral Judge of the universe. And by that act of judicial forgiveness, listen to this, **ALL** your sins: **PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE**, committed, being committed, and uncommitted are **TOTALLY, COMPLETELY** and **FOREVER FORGIVEN**, and you are **JUSTIFIED** from all things forever.

- Wow! So, when does that happen?” It happens the moment you invite Jesus Christ into your life, the moment you are **redeemed, saved, born from above, born again, converted**. It happens the moment you place your faith in Christ, your sin is put on Him. **HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS IS PUT ON YOU, AND GOD JUDICIALLY DECLARES YOU TO BE JUSTIFIED.** That’s Romans 3 all day long. You are declared righteous. Positionally and forever, all sin covered, passed over, blotted out and forgotten. Isn’t that awesome? This is a great time for a **HALLELUJAH!**
- And He just keeps on doing it. This is what He did on the cross for you, and me! **Notice (Matt. 26:28)** Jesus said as He was holding the cup, ***“for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many FOR FORGIVENESS OF SINS.”***

- As we looked at **“JUDICIAL FORGIVENESS,”** there are many words to describe it. We said it involves **God taking away our sin, covering our sin, God blotting out our sin** and **God forgetting our sin**. It is done with; judicially settled for good. Now if we have Christians, then, praying this prayer, **“Our Father,”** and all of their sins forever are forgiven, and God has dropped the gavel and declared us righteous, then **WHY** are we saying, **“Forgive us our debts.”? WHY** are we asking God for forgiveness? If all of that is a settled matter, what is the point of praying that kind of prayer? The point is answered in a second kind of forgiveness. There is not only judicial forgiveness, but there is:

2. PARENTAL FORGIVENESS. This is why **“Our Father”** begins the prayer.

- Now we are not dealing with God as a **“RIGHTEOUS JUDGE,”** we are dealing here with God as a **“LOVING FATHER.”** Even though we have been judicially forgiven and forever that is settled eternally and never changes, we still **SIN, DON’T WE?** And when we sin, something happens in our relationship to God.

- **DAVID** was under something other than the law; something above the law and even though his sins were heinous, he was spared because of his **POSITION**.
- **Notice the nature of his prayer in (Psalm. 51)** This is the kind of prayer that comes out of his guilt-ridden, bloodstained heart as he reflects on his sin. And I want you to know this first of all, **verse 14.** *“Deliver me from blood guiltiness,”* – now watch – *“O God, the God of my salvation.”* Listen. David affirms his salvation, and that God is still the God of his salvation. He cries to a God whose presence is there, whose spirit is there, whose salvation is his still.
- But, even in affirming that the **JUDICIAL FORGIVENESS** was there, David can’t help but feel the loss of something **INTIMATE** in the relationship and that’s what he means when he cries out in **verse 2.** *“Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight,”* Watch **Verse 7,** *“Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”*
- You see, there’s a sense in which **JUDICIAL forgiveness** and **PARENTAL forgiveness** are different. David was saved but there was something between he and God that made him lose the **MEANING** of that salvation.

- Notice what he says in **verse 8**, *“Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.”* **DAVID** wanted his joy back, didn’t he? Notice **verse 10**, *“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”* The Capp-stone to this prayer is found in **verse 12**, *“Restore to me the”* – **WHAT?** – the *“JOY of your salvation.”* It doesn’t say restore unto me your salvation. He says restore unto me **the joy of it**. Now watch this:
 - **JUDICIAL forgiveness** takes care of the **“FACT OF SALVATION.”**
 - **PARENTAL forgiveness** takes care of the **“JOY OF SALVATION.”** I can be forgiven but if I’m sinful and refuse to confess, and repent in that sinfulness, **I forfeit the JOY** of the fullness of that relationship.
 - **Notice (1 John 1.)** John begins **this wonderful epistle by saying that he preaches Christ, the word of life, from firsthand experience.** *“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— 2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.”*
 - Okay, but why are you preaching Christ?

- The “**Why**” is found in **verse 3**. “**what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have FELLOWSHIP with us; and indeed our FELLOWSHIP is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**”
 - John says we preach to bring you into the “**fellowship.**” We want to link you up with God, Christ and every other true follower. We want to bring you into the family. That’s **JUDICIAL forgiveness, (SALVATION)**. We want to get you participating in the common eternal life, to be one in the *koinonia* (fellowship,) That’s why we preach Christ.
 - Then **John** goes a step further in **verse 4**, “**And these things**” – what things? “**The things we write to you,**” in order that “**your joy may be full.**”
 - Now on the one hand, we preach the gospel so that you’ll come **into the fellowship**, and on the other hand we write the epistle so that in the fellowship you will know the **fullness of joy**.
1. **JUDICIAL forgiveness** is being saved and puts you “**IN THE FELLOWSHIP.**”
 2. **PARENTAL forgiveness** is being obedient to the standards and the principals we lay out makes you “**KNOW THE JOY OF THAT FELLOWSHIP.**”
- Then John says if you’re in the fellowship, **verse 9**, you’ll be “**confessing your sin and He’s faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to keep on cleansing us from all unrighteousness.**”

- Now that's something like God. When Barnhouse finished the story, the college professor lifted up his eyes reverently and said, "My God, if anything could ever keep a man straight, that kind of forgiving love in advance would sure do it."
- That is exactly and precisely the way God perceives his relationship to us. Listen, we've seen
 1. THE PROBLEM OF SIN. We've seen the
 2. THE PROVISION FORGIVENESS. I want to close with a
 3. Our third principle is THE PLEA CONFESSSION. – We receive his forgiveness by confession of sin.
- You can know about **SIN** and **FORGIVENESS**, but if you don't **CONFESS** your sin, you'll never receive it. As long as you **HARBOR** your sin and **NEVER CONFESS** it, **REPENT** of it, **TURN** from it, **GIVE IT** to God and **AGREE** with Him about it, you will **NEVER** be free to know the joy that He wants you to know because the barrier is there and **IT SHATTERS THE INTIMACY OF FELLOWSHIP**.

- Let's be honest, it's hard to confess the sin in our lives. But you are not alone. Remember when **ADAM** and **EVE** sinned, and they were used to walking and talking with God in the cool of the day, but the minute they sinned, the next thing they did was what? **"HIDE."** It's tough to confess, and as long as you don't, you **FORFEIT** the joy of your salvation. **Notice (Prov. 28:13) "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion."** **COVER YOUR SIN, YOU DON'T PROSPER!** Whoever confesses and forsakes shall have mercy.
- Our **SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY** is at stake. That's why he says you'd better say, **"Forgive us our debts."** Confession of sin is vital. Remember when **David** said to **Nathan**:
- **Notice (2 Sam. 12:13) "I have sinned against the Lord,"**
- **Notice what David said to Nathan again in (2 Sam. 24:17) "I have sinned against the Lord..."**

- Notice (1 Chron. 21:7) **DAVID** said to God, *“I am the one who has sinned and done very wickedly.”*
- Notice what **ISAIAH** said, *“I am a man of unclean lips and I live amidst a people of unclean lips.”*
- Notice what **DANIEL** said in (Dan. 9:20) *“I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin.”*
- **PETER** said in (Lk. 5:8) *“Depart from me for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”*
- **PAUL** said (1 Tim. 1:15) *“It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners among whom I am” – what? – “chief.”*
- Confessing sin isn’t easy **BUT IT’S NECESSARY** to appropriate the attended joy that comes with **PARENTAL FORGIVENESS**.
- Don’t conceal your sin, confess your sin. **John Stott** says, and it’s true, one of the surest *antidotes* to the process of moral hardening is the disciplined practice of uncovering our sins of thought and outlook as well as word and deed, and the repentant forsaking of the same. If you don’t do that it’ll harden you.

- There are Christians who are, *judicially* forgiven and eternally secure, who are so hardened, so un-confessing, so insensitive to sin and so totally joyless who didn't even know the meaning of a loving, intimate fellowship with God. They've blocked it out by the barricade of their unconfessed sin. Confession.
- Here's an excerpt from the book [*THE PRAYERS OF PURITANS.*](#)
- **“Grant me never to lose sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the exceeding righteousness of salvation, the exceeding glory of Christ, the exceeding beauty of holiness, and the exceeding wonder of grace. I am guilty but pardoned. I am lost but saved. I am wandering but found. I am sinning but cleansed. Give me perpetual broken heartedness. Keep me always clinging to thy cross. Food me every moment with descending grace and open to me the springs of divine knowledge sparkling like crystal flowing clear and unsullied through my wilderness of life.”**

- **“SIN”**: makes man guilty and brings judgment.
- **“FORGIVENESS”**: is offered by God on the ground of Christ’s death.
- **“CONFESSION”**: of sin is necessary to receive that forgiveness from God.
- **“FORGIVING”**: one another is an essential part of receiving forgiveness for ourselves.



3. The **PLEA** was **CONFESSIO**. that we confess our sins, that we acknowledge it to God, that we agree with God about our sin. If you're not doing this, you are short circuiting your spiritual effectiveness. It is to repent of your sin, forsake your sin. Then we should thank God for forgiving it, and anything less than that is not true confession. And as soon as you do that you free God to chasten you without any impunity. Why, because you just admitted that you deserved it.
4. The **PREREQUISITE** is **FORGIVING OTHERS**. This is an utterly significant prerequisite. **Verses 14 and 15** explain the statement at the end of **verse 12: *"as we forgive our debtors."***
 - I've given you **five** reasons at the beginning why you should forgive one another. 1. **The character of saints**, 2. **the example of Christ**, 3. **the glory of man**, 4. **freedom of conscience**, 5. **deliverance from chastening**, and finally number 6. **"IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OURSELVES, WE MUST FORGIVE OTHERS."**

- Notice verse 12, *“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”*
- You could translate it like this, *“Forgive us our debts as we have forgiven...”* The idea is before we ever seek forgiveness for our own sin against God for which we are indebted. Before we ever do that, we already have forgiven those who have sinned against us. That’s pretty potent stuff, folks. First, **WE FORGIVE**, then **WE ARE FORGIVEN**. That’s the order it’s in.
- This is another reason it **CAN’T** be talking about an **UNBELIEVER**, because an unbeliever has no capacity, no spiritual virtue to do an act of forgiveness by which he would earn forgiveness. It’s talking about a believer. Before we come to get our feet washed each day, before we bring our sins to the Lord and say, Lord, cleanse me again and use me. We’ve got to be sure that we’ve forgiven others. **THAT’S THE PREREQUISITE**.
- Trace your steps back for a minute, you look at your life and say, I come to church, I read the Bible. I go to seminars or whatever, but I don’t have the **JOY** that I ought to have. I miss out on being used by God. I feel my life isn’t all it could be. I get tired of the routine of trying to get up to a certain spiritual standard.

- Maybe the answer is very simple. **YOU'RE NOT CONFESSING YOUR SINS.** You're not going to the Lord and saying: I am a sinner, I acknowledge it. I admit it, and here are my sins. Purify Me. Maybe you are doing that, but you still don't have joy, fulfillment, or growth like you should be.
- Maybe you need to back up a little further. Maybe all that confession isn't cutting it because the **Lord isn't giving you RELEASE** from those sins, because you've **still got something cooking with somebody else that YOU HAVEN'T FORGIVEN**, therefore, you have short-circuited your own spiritual welfare. That's what Jesus is saying.
- Is the way we treat others important? **OSWALD SAUNDERS** says, "Jesus is here stating a principle, and God's dealing with His children." He deals with us as we deal with others. **He measures us by the yardstick we use on others.**
- The prayer is **NOT** forgive us *because* we forgive others but forgive us even as we have *already* forgiven others. That's the idea. **GOD IS GOING TO DEAL WITH US AS WE DEAL WITH HIM.**

- Here's another illustration that's very clear. Jesus said this: ***“give and it, WHAT? Shall be given to you.”*** In whatever measure you mete it out that's exactly how God will mete it out to you. Notice **(Luke 6,)** how about this one? ***“Sow sparingly, reap WHAT? Sparingly.” “Sow bountifully, WHAT? Reap bountifully.”***
- God deals with us the way we deal with Him. Whatever we invest in His kingdom, we receive a return on. If we harbor **sins** and **grudges** and so forth, we cut ourselves off from the blessedness that can accrue to us because of those things. We have taught you so many times that as you give, you invest with God, you receive a return on it. The same thing is true on your confession of sin and seeking forgiveness. God deals with you the way you deal with others, and maybe the short circuit in your spiritual life is just that you have some people that **YOU'RE HOLDING BITTER RESENTMENT OR A GRUDGE AGAINST, AND IT'S CONSTANT.**

- 
- What about your life? Are you forgiving? Because if you're not God's not going to forgive you and **you're going to be going through the world with muddy feet.**
 - Oh, **JUDICIALLY** you are **JUSTIFIED**, and the righteousness of Christ is imputed to you, but the **JOY** is gone, and the **INTIMACY** isn't there, and the **USEFULNESS** disappears. So, if I have a grudge like this with somebody, how do I take care of it?
- 

1. **TAKE IT TO GOD AS A SIN**. That's where it starts. Take it to God as a sin. "Lord, there is this person, and this is the way I feel, and it's a sin, and I admit it, and I'm sorry, and I acknowledge it, and I repent of it, and I forsake it." That's where you start.
2. **GO TO THE PERSON**. Tough, huh? Well, I'm only telling you this so you can know spiritual joy. You make the decision, what you want to forfeit to harbor your judgment and your grudge. Second, go to the person. You say, "I want to seek your forgiveness." You know, I've had people do that to me many times, and see the freedom that comes. I may have already forgiven them. I may not even have known I did anything by which they were offended. But go to the person.
3. **GIVE THE PERSON SOMETHING YOU VALUE VERY HIGHLY**. It's a very practical approach. Let me tell you why. Jesus said, ***"Where your treasure is," WHAT? "That's where your heart will be also."*** You have a grudge against somebody or a bitterness, and maybe it's somebody in your family, work, or somebody in the church. Whatever you hold against somebody else is to be dealt with. And I'll tell you this, you put something of value, something that is precious to you in their hand, and your heart will go with it, and it will change the way you feel about them.

#7

WE SHOULD

PRAISE HIM

FOR HIS

PROTECTION!

- We come to **verse 13**, the sixth and final petition. It's just a continuing thought. ***“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.”*** It's tied together as one. **This is God's protection.**
- Our petition begins by addressing our **PHYSICAL** need, God takes care of our daily bread. Then we move to the **SPIRITUAL**, God takes care of the sin of our lives by forgiveness, and then finally, God takes care of the **MORAL** standard of our life by guiding us away from sin.
- **Verse 12** deals with **past** sins, **verse 13** deals with **future** ones. If you're a true Christian, then you are just as **CONCERNED** about your **FUTURE** sins being **AVOIDED** as your **PAST** ones being **FORGIVEN.**

- The **SINNER** whose evil past has been forgiven longs to be delivered from the tyranny of sin in the future. I know what sin does in the past, and I don't want to get involved in it again in the future. God has been so gracious to forgive the past, I'm not anxious to **TREAD ON HIS GRACE IN THE FUTURE**.
- We not only need **FORGIVENESS**, but we also need **PRESERVATION**. We need to be forgiven when we sin, yes, but we need to be delivered so we don't sin, too. And that is the cry of **verse 13**. The true Christian doesn't find in grace a way to trample on God, a way to abuse His love, but rather he seeks **SANCTIFICATION**.
- Notice again **verse 13**. At first it seems simple, ***“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”*** When we say it at first, well that's clear. Keep us out of trouble, God. But as you look at it a little closer, several questions come to your mind.
 1. **Lead us not into temptation**. You mean we have to ask God to do that? Does God lead us to temptation if we don't ask Him? Can a holy, righteous, pure, undefiled, blameless, unblemished, virtuous God possibly lead anybody to temptation?

- This is a prayer based on **SELF DISTRUST**. It is the humility of self distrust that grows out of the previous petition because I know I'm a sinner, because I sense my debt, because I have gone through the pain of confession so many times, because I am so battered and bruised by a fallen world around me that continues to bump into me, **I ASK GOD, DELIVER ME FROM THESE THINGS.**
- I don't trust myself. I don't know about you, but I have to set a watchman over my eyes, my ears, and especially my tongue. I have to be careful where I go, what I see and who I talk to about what. Why? Because I don't trust myself, and when I get into a trying situation, it's at that point that I rush into the presence of God like the sentry on duty who doesn't fight the enemy himself but runs to tell the commander. I retreat to the presence of God, and I say, ***"God, I will be overwhelmed in this thing unless You come to my aid."*** And so, it's a prayer based upon **self distrust**.
- The **"kingdom child"** realizes that he/she lives in a fallen world, and that fallen world pounds against them with temptations of great strength which they, in their own humanness, **CAN NEVER RESIST!!!!!!!**

- Let's look at the text itself. ***“And lead us not into temptation.”*** Would God deliberately lead us to temptation? Again, look at **(James. 1:13)** ***“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.”***
- **GOD NEVER TEMPTS ANYBODY.** Now God may allow Satan to bring certain trials into your life, but ***SATAN DOES THE TEMPTING, NOT GOD.***
- God may allow, some evil **BELIEVER** in the church to be turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, but it is Satan that inflicts it, **NOT** God. **Notice (1 Cor. 5:5)** ***“I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”***
- God may **DISCIPLINE**, ***“Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.”*** (1 Tim. 1:20).

- And **GOD MAY PERMIT JESUS CHRIST TO FEEL THE ONSLAUGHT OF HELL AGAINST HIM ON THE CROSS**, but it is not God that does the tempting. Sometimes it is His encompassing will. By the way, folks, you will note that God allows all that is, because He is in control of everything, **(SOVEREIN)** so that's no problem for your theology. God has to allow everything that is, **OR IT COULDN'T BE.**
- And there are times when God allows us certain trials. There are times when God allows Satan to have his way in our lives because we've been **DISOBEDIENT** and **UNFAITHFUL.**
- There are times, like in Job's case, when God allows Satan to do some things to prove how righteous we are. But God is not the tempter. **EVIL NEVER TOUCHES GOD**, notice **(James. 1:14)** ***"But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed BY HIS OWN LUST."***

- This is referring to that **INTERNAL** drawing of the **(flesh)**. And “**ENTICED,**” by the **(Devil,)** is that external pull by Satan-**(the world)**. Men sin because they’re tempted, and they are tempted internally by their lust and externally by the enticement of Satan. **“Then when lust conceives, it brings forth sin and sin, when it’s finished, brings forth death.”** But watch this, **V. 16 “Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.** Do not make a mistake at this point. When sin comes, when lust and temptation comes, remember this. **17 Every good thing given, and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”**
- **KNOW THIS!** Every gift that God ever gives is a **GOOD** and **PERFECT GIFT**, and that will never vary, and God will never turn from that, so that when evil comes it comes **NOT FROM GOD**. It’s imperative that you understand this theological **TRUTH.**

- **Why?** Because people struggle with this all the time. **“GOD ALLOWS EVIL.”** That’s in His own choice, and we’ll have to wait for eternity, if even then, to find out **WHY**. Again, God does not do evil or tempt to do evil. Everything that proceeds from God is a good and perfect thing. He may allow certain things, but they are not the expression of **HIS HEART, HIS MIND, HIS WILL OR HIS CHARACTER.**
- In fact, if you want to know what God feels about temptation, simply listen to Jesus in **(Matt 26:41)**. Jesus said to His disciples, ***“Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”*** In other words, He wanted them to avoid it. And how does Satan tempt us? **Lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.**
- Now the total is within the framework of God’s allowance, for He has given men a choice. He didn’t make us robots to love Him and to do right because we had no choice. And so, God does not tempt us to do evil, rather God’s desire is that **WE WATCH AND PRAY AND NOT ENTER INTO TEMPTATION.**

- Remember, when you sin, **DON'T BLAME GOD**. Lust comes, as the Latins used to say, ab intra, *“from inside”* or ab extra, *“from outside.”* Satan is the culprit, not God.
- So, the first thing we want to do, then, is go back now to **Matthew. 6**, and let's apply what we've just said. *“Lead us not into temptation.”* Now we see the word **“TEMPTATION.”** It is the word *peirasmos* and it is used over and over in the Scripture. It is a **neutral** word. It doesn't mean bad, it doesn't mean good, it is simply a **test** or a **trial**. Now the English word **“TEMPTATION”** means *“seduction to evil,”* but the word temptation is not always the right translation. Sometimes this word is translated **“test, prove, trial, or temptation.”** And that's because it can be any of those things. It is a test. It is a neutral word. We think of temptation as a seductive act which draws us into sin, but the word *peirasmos* here, would better be translated **“TRIAL.”** Let's read it that way. *“Lead us not into trials, testings.”* Now let me give you a thought here. Any time there is a legitimate trial or test, there is the possibility to *pass* or to – What? – *fail*, or it isn't a test. You got to have the possibility of pass or fail, succeed or not succeed.

- So, when God brings a trial there is always the possibility that that trial can be turned into a **temptation**. *JOSEPH* said in (**Gen. 50:20**), regarding his brothers selling him into Egypt, ***“You meant it for evil, but God meant it for”*** – What? – for ***“GOOD.”*** In every struggle and trial of life, God brings it along to test us, to exercise spiritual muscle, to strengthen us, to grow us to maturity, but in the midst of that, if we don’t perceive it through the eyes of God, committed to God, stand in His strength, Satan turns it into a temptation, entices our lust, draws us into sin.
- So, when the prayer says, ***“Lead us not into trial,”*** I believe the implication of the prayer is, **“Lord, don’t ever lead us into a trial which will present to us such a temptation that we will not be able to resist it.”** In other words, ***“Don’t ever lead us into something we can’t handle.”*** Don’t give us a trial that is going to become an irresistible temptation, but rather deliver us from any trial that would bring evil on us as a natural consequence. Don’t put us into something we can’t handle.” And, you know, that’s just a claim of a promise, as we shall see in a little while. The term implies **testing**, a **process**.

- So this petition, is a safeguard against **presumption** and it's a safeguard against **FALSE SENSES OF SECURITY**. Notice (1 Cor. 10:12) ***“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.”*** Many of us think we have arrived spiritually, but we haven't.
- Notice the word **“into”** – ***“lead us not into”*** – it's an interesting word. It's the Greek word **eis**, and some have compared it to the Hebrew **“into the power of”** or **“into the hands of.”** Basically this means, **“Do not cause us to be led into the hands of the trial.”** In other words, if the trial is around us, that's one thing, but don't let us get into the hands of that trial. That's when it becomes a temptation. In other words, as long as we're in the boat, the sea can churn all at once - just keep us in the boat. Don't let us get in the sea or we'll drown. Don't let us get caught in the vortex of the trial. Keep us in your hands in the midst of that trial.
- Our Lord prayed the same prayer in (Jn. 17:15) ***“Father, I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.”*** Don't let them fall into the hands of, or into the power of, the **evil one**. **MARTIN LUTHER** said, **“We cannot help being exposed to the assaults, but we pray that we may not fall and perish under them.”**

- It's a prayer for God to defend us when He tests us, so Satan and the flesh do not turn His tests into temptation, which become irresistible and draw us into lust and lust into sin.
- Now how do we deal with it in the middle of the trial? When we begin to feel temptation coming, here we are in the trial. Somebody has died. We've lost a beloved one, lost a job, angry at our wife or our kids, conflicts in relationships, upset with the church, whatever it is we're in a trial – financial or emotional, psychological, social, spiritual. We're in this trial and we're saying, **“Lord this is a growing time for me.”**
- And then Satan begins to attack us and wants to make us bitter and angry, and so how do we deal with it? **Notice (James 4:7) *“Submit yourselves, therefore, to God.”*** What do you mean, submit to God? Well, that means that we are to get under God's lordship. Well what does that mean? That means if I'm going to submit to God and to His lordship; then I'm going to do what He says to do in obedience. It means that you and I are to live in submission to biblical principles. **James just quoted it in verse 5. *“Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose:”*** It's talking about the Scriptures. **“SUBMIT YOURSELVES THEREFORE TO GOD.”**

- How has God self-disclosed Himself? How has God revealed His will, and the principles of His lordship? How has God manifested that which He wants us to do? **IN AND THROUGH HIS WORD.** Therefore, as we enter into a situation of a trial, what we do then is we begin to order our responses to that trial **according to the principles of the Word of God** and that's how we submit to God. And by doing so, we ***"...Resist the devil and he will flee from you."***
- That's a great word, isn't it? **Submitting to God is ordering my life to respond in accord with the biblical revelation (WORD) of God's will.** Therefore, in the midst of a trial I say, **"O God, I need your strength infused in me, and I submit to the truths of your Word. My responses, my attitudes, my actions, my thoughts and my deeds are all in submission to Your Word."**
- You can pray to submit to God all you want, but until you get your life ordered, it isn't going to do any good to pray that way. You can say, **"I submit to you, Lord, protect me,"** and just keep on sinning and wrongly reacting, because you're violating the very thing you're asking for.

- **Submitting** to God is to **SUBMIT TO HIS WORD.**
- It is His Word that prunes off the sucker branches in (**Jn. 15.**)
- It is His Word that is hidden in our heart that we might not sin. (**Psa. 119:11**)
- It is His Word that is the sword that defends us against the attack, (**Eph. 6.**) We are delivered in the midst of the trial by submitting to God. And as we submit to the truths of His Word and take up the sword of the Word of God and begin to put it to use in our lives. **THEN**, we resist the devil, and he flees, and that trial stays a trial and never becomes an irresistible temptation. What is this petition really saying?
- It faces the danger of living in a cursed world where we are being battered by evil around us. It confesses our inadequacy to deal with that evil.
- It confesses the weakness of our flesh.
- It confesses the absolute lack of human resource.
- It takes into account the fact that we are impotent, and it demands the protection of a loving Father as we submit to His Word.

- To be very honest, I don't like trials, and I don't look for them. I've prayed many times in my life, "Lord, bring into my life what I need to be the man you want me to be," knowing good and well, I don't realize what I'm asking.
- As soon as I get in a trial, I can only think of one thing, **GETTING OUT!** And I look back on trials in the past and I actually get happy knowing that they're over. Nobody likes them, not even Jesus. **Notice what He said in (Matt. 26:39) *"Let this cup pass from me."*** But then He turned around and said, ***"yet not as I will, but as You will."***
- So we cry with Christ, "Father, spare me the trial, but if the trial fits your wisdom, your will, and your plan, then protect me through the trial so that I can come out as **Daniel's three friends** did **WITHOUT EVEN THE SMELL OF SMOKE.**
- Do you think God will protect you from trials that are irresistible temptations that draw you into sin? Yes, He will, and it's based on **(1 Cor. 10:12-13)**, one of the great verses in all the Bible.

- The Bible says, *“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man...”* Your **“temptation”** is not going to be superhuman. You’re not going to get one that everybody else hasn’t had. And in the midst of it, watch this; *“...and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”*
- What an awesome truth. **God will not allow you to be tried, tested, or tempted above what you can’t handle.** You must go through the trial like a tunnel. **THE WAY OUT IS “THROUGH.”**
- You are laying claim to a promise and if you meet the condition, What is the condition? **SUBMIT YOURSELVES TO THE LORD**, then you will resist the devil. That sums up the entire the prayer.
- The Lord’s prayer closes with a **DOXOLOGY**, **“an expression of praise.”** The doxology is simply this, *“For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”* You just think it, say it, and then you offer it up to God.

*Yours, O Lord, is the greatness
and the power and the glory
and the victory and the majesty,
for all that is in the heavens
and in the earth is yours.*

*Yours is the kingdom,
O Lord, and you are
exalted as head above all.*

1 Chronicles 29:11

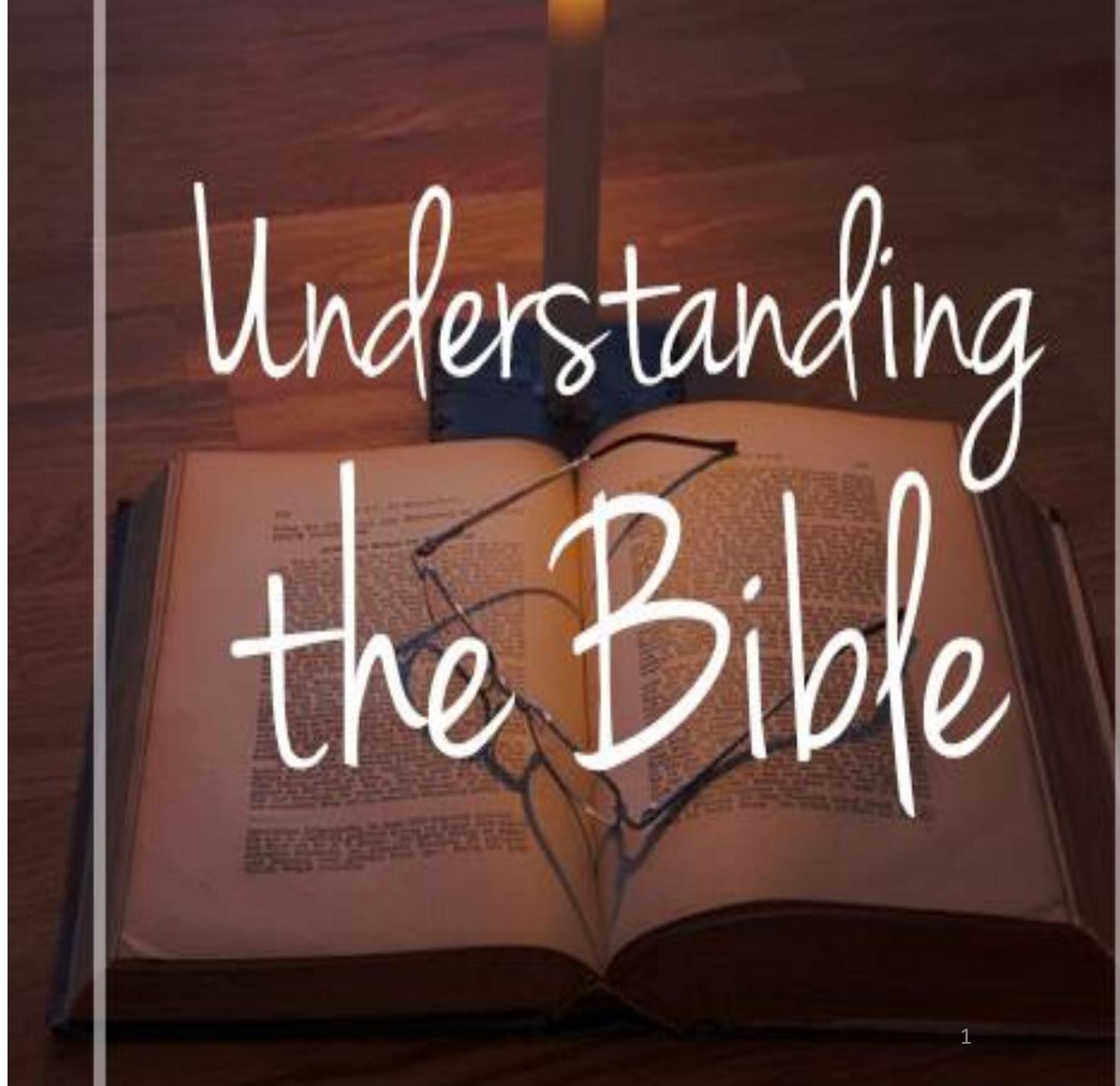
What Every Christian Ought To Know!

Chapter 12

How To Understand The Bible!

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN
OUGHT TO KNOW
HOW TO UNDERSTAND
THE BIBLE

*“Open my eyes, that I may
behold Wonderful things from
Your law.”* (Psa. 119:18)



Holy Bible

- “A wise man once said, “These hath God married and no man shall part, **DUST** on the Bible and **DROUGHT** in the heart.” If you do not **know love, understand, practice** and **obey** the Word of God, I can tell you without stutter, stammer, or apology that YOU are not a victorious Christian.”-

Adrian Rodgers

Three Great Terms YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. **REVELATION**: Is the process by which God unveils Himself and His will to human messengers.
2. **INSPIRATION**: This refers to God's inbreathing into the chosen human messengers through the Holy Spirit, enabling them by divine guidance to deliver or record God's revealed message. In a scriptural sense it means God breathing into His Messenger.
3. **ILLUMINATION**: Is the Holy Spirit's work as He enlightens the human mind with spiritual understanding in order that persons might grasp the revealed truth.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE BIBLE

➤ 1. THE BIBLE IS INFALLIBLE!

- The Bible, in its entirety, has no mistakes. Specifically, in its original autographs it is without errors. In (Psa. 19:7) the Bible says of itself, ***“The law of the Lord is perfect.”*** It is flawless because it was authored by God—and He is flawless. Therefore, if God wrote the Bible, and if He is the ultimate authority, and if His character is flawless, then the Bible is flawless and is the ultimate authority. You see, the fact that God is perfect demands that the original autograph, the original giving of the Word of God, must also be perfect. So, the Bible is infallible, and that’s the first reason to study it; it is the only Book that never makes a mistake—everything it says is the truth!

➤ 2. THE BIBLE IS INERRANT!

- The Bible is not only infallible in total, but inerrant in its parts. In (Prov. 30:5–6) ***“Every word of God is tested (Pure); He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. 6 Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.”*** This means, every word in the Word of God is **pure and true!**

THE **ATTRIBUTES** OF THE BIBLE

3. THE BIBLE IS COMPLETE!

- Nothing needs to be added. Now that may be a surprise to some people, because there are those today who believe we need to add to the Bible. There exists a *philosophy/theology* combination known as **neo-orthodoxy**. It tells us that the Bible was simply a comment in its day on man's spiritual experiences, and today man is still having spiritual experiences, therefore he needs another comment. One writer said that we need a Bible to be written today, just as we did when the Bible we hold in our hands was written, because we need somebody to comment on what God is doing now. He also said that when Tom or Mary stand up in your church and say, "**Thus says the Lord,**" they are as equally inspired as **ISAIAH, JEREMIAH**, or any of the other **PROPHETS**. In other words, they claim that the Bible is not complete. That's the current philosophical/theological thought.

THE **ATTRIBUTES** OF THE BIBLE

- (Rev. 22:18-19) says *“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”*
- The Bible ends with a warning not to **TAKE AWAY** anything, and not to **ADD ANYTHING**. That’s a testimony of its completeness. This principle applies to **ALL** of scripture, not just the book of Revelation!
- It is **INFALLIBLE** in its total, **INERRANT** in its parts, and it is **COMPLETE!**

THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE BIBLE

4. THE BIBLE IS AUTHORITATIVE!

- If it is perfect and complete, then it is the last Word—the final authority. (Isa. 1:2) says, *“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken.”* When God speaks everybody listens, because His is the final authority; the Bible demands obedience. We can discuss its implications, its applications, and its meanings, **but we shouldn’t discuss whether or not it is true.**
- **IN JOHN 8** Jesus was confronted by some of the Jewish leaders, and there were other people present. (John. 8:30–32) *“As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him. (31) So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; (32) and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”* In other words, He demanded a response to His Word. It is **AUTHORITATIVE**
- (Gal. 3:10) *“For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM.”* Amazing! Cursed was anyone who didn’t continue in everything that was written in the law. That’s a tremendous claim to **ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY!**
- (Jam. 2:9–10) *“But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (10) For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.”* To violate the Bible at one point is to break God’s law. **The Bible is authoritative in every part.**

THE BIBLE IS SUFFICIENT FOR A NUMBER OF THINGS!

5. THE BIBLE IS SUFFICIENT FOR:

1. SALVATION

- In (2 Tim. 3:15) *“and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*
- First of all, the Bible is sufficient to make you wise unto salvation. Ask yourself this question: What is more important than salvation? **NOTHING!** It is the greatest reality in the universe—and the Bible reveals that salvation.

2. PERFECTION

- (2 Tim. 3:16) *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;”*
- **“REPROOF”** that means you’re able to go to someone and say, “Hey, you’re out of line. You can’t behave like that; there’s a standard and you’re not keeping it.” Scripture is also **profitable “FOR CORRECTION”**—that says to the person you’ve just reproofed, “Now don’t do that, do this instead; this is the right path.” You teach, you reprove, you show the correct way—and further it is **profitable “FOR TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.”** Now you point to the new way and show them how to walk in it.
- The Bible is a fantastic Book. It can take somebody who doesn’t know God, who isn’t saved, and then save them. Then it will **TEACH** them, **REPROVE** them when they do wrong, **POINT OUT** the right thing to do, and then **SHOW** them how to walk in that right path.
- The result is stated in (2 Tim. 3:17) *“So that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* The incredible reality of the Bible is that it is sufficient to do the **WHOLE** job.

3. HOPE

- In (Rom. 15:4) *“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”* The Bible is the source of **patience** and **comfort**, ultimately giving us **hope** now and forever.

4. EFFECTIVE

- Listen to the words of (Isa. 55:11) *“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”*
- That’s great! **God’s Word is effective**. One of the incredible things about being a teacher of the Word of God is that it will do what it says it will do.
- (1Thess. 1:5) *“for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.”* In other words, when you hear the Word of God, it isn’t just words. When the Word goes forth it has power; it is powered by the Holy Spirit, and we have the assurance that it will do what it says.

5. DETERMINATIVE!

- The Bible is determinative because how you respond to the Word of God determines the essence of your life and your eternal destiny.
- **Notice (John. 8:47) *“He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”*** In other words, the determination of whether an individual is of God or not of God is based on whether he/she **listens** to the Word of God.
- **Notice (1 Cor. 2:9–14) *“but just as it is written, “THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.” (10) For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. (11) For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. (12) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, (13) which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. (14) But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”***

INTRODUCTION

- Here at **MOUNT CARMEL**, we are totally dependent upon the word of the living God, the **“SCRIPTURE,”** the Bible. We are committed to the Word of God as absolutely **TRUE**. We believe every phrase, verse, chapter, and book as having come from God Himself. The only way we can know God and His will is to have it given to us in a way that is unmistakable, and God has chosen to do that in a book, the Bible.
- The Bible is calling people to the single authority of the Word of God as over against all **HUMAN OPINION**, and to the only Savior, **JESUS CHRIST** as over against all **HUMAN RELIGION**. God gave us a book, and in that book, He spoke, and what He said is exactly what He wanted to say, and He desired to say it in a way that we would understand it, because we are accountable for it. And God has sworn in His revelation, the holy Bible, that He has spoken the truth, the whole truth, and **NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH**.

- The Bible is true, it is all true, and it is also all the truth that God desired to reveal to us. The rest is left for us to know in eternity. The Bible alone is the true word of the one true God, who does not contradict Himself, who does not write other books that say other things that are contrary to what He has said in this book. **THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, AND HE HAS SPOKEN IN ONE BOOK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**
- All other supposed revelations from God are not at all from God; they are the concoctions of men, and for the most part, demon-inspired men. For example, the **KORAN**, the **BHAGAVAD-GITA**, (Hindu-scripture) the writings of Mary Baker Eddy, (**CHRISTIAN SCIENCE**) Joseph Smith (**Book of Mormon**), to all the false prophets, seers, cultists, all the religious leaders, all the world religions – **IT IS ALL DECEPTION!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**
- **Notice (Dt. 4:2) “You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”**
- **Notice (Prov. 30:6) “Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.”**

- In **1903** a man died by the name of **HERBERT SPENCER**. Herbert Spencer was a scientist and was heralded by the world; he was given all kinds of prizes as a ground-breaking scientist.
- His greatest achievement was **CATEGORICAL**. It was Herbert Spencer who announced to the scientific world that everything that exists in the universe falls into **five categories** – **TIME**, **FORCE**, **ACTION**, **SPACE**, and **MATTER**. Nice going, Herbert, you discovered what the Bible already said in (**Gen. 1:1**) watch this:
 - **“In the beginning,” THAT’S TIME!**
 - **“God,” THAT’S FORCE!**
 - **“created” THAT’S ACTION!**
 - **“the heavens,” THAT’S SPACE!**
 - **“and the earth,” THAT’S MATTER!**
- Poor **HERBERT**, he was trying to find this truth without using the Bible. We could go to science, and we could say that science verifies the Bible but while we would get a general affirmation – a little better than experience, we’d get a general affirmation, that’s pretty amazing stuff.

Three Great Terms YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. **REVELATION**: Is the process by which God unveils Himself and His will to human messengers.
2. **INSPIRATION**: This refers to God's inbreathing into the chosen human messengers through the Holy Spirit, enabling them by divine guidance to deliver or record God's revealed message. In a scriptural sense it means God breathing into His Messenger.
3. **ILLUMINATION**: Is the Holy Spirit's work as He enlightens the human mind with spiritual understanding in order that persons might grasp the revealed truth.

UNDERSTANDING THE *GENRES* OF THE BIBLE!

- **AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE GENRES**: of Scripture is vital to the Bible student. If the wrong genre is assumed for a passage, it can easily be misunderstood or misconstrued, leading to an incomplete and fallacious understanding of what God desires to communicate. God is not the author of confusion
- In (1 Cor. 14:33), God wants us to ***“correctly [handle] the word of truth”***
- In (2 Tim. 2:15). God wants us to know His plan for the world and for us as individuals. How fulfilling it is to come to ***“grasp how wide and long and high and deep,”*** is the love of God for us! (Eph. 3:18)

- **THE BIBLE IS A WORK OF *LITERATURE***. Literature comes in different genres, or categories based on style, and each is read and appreciated differently from another. For example, to confuse a work of science fiction with a medical textbook would cause many problems—they must be understood differently. And both science fiction and a medical text must be understood differently from poetry. Therefore, accurate ***exegesis*** and interpretation takes into consideration the purpose and style of a given book or passage of Scripture. In addition, some verses are meant figuratively, and proper discernment of these is enhanced by an understanding of genre. An inability to identify genre can lead to serious misunderstanding of Scripture.

The main genres found in the Bible are these:

1. **LAW**
2. **HISTORY**
3. **WISDOM**
4. **POETRY**

5. NARRATIVE,

6. EPISTLES,

7. PROPHECY

8. APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.

- The summary below shows the differences between each genre and how each should be interpreted:
- LAW: This includes the books of **LEVITICUS** and **DEUTERONOMY**. The purpose of law is to express God's sovereign will concerning government, priestly duties, social responsibilities, etc. Knowledge of **Hebrew** manners and customs of the time, as well as a knowledge of the covenants, will complement a reading of this material.

- **HISTORY**: Stories and epics from the Bible are included in this genre. Almost every book in the Bible contains some history, but **Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah,** and **Acts** are predominately history. Knowledge of secular history is crucial, as it dovetails perfectly with biblical history and makes interpretation much more robust
- **WISDOM**: This is the genre of **APHORISMS** that teach the meaning of life and how to live. Some of the language used in wisdom literature is metaphorical and poetic, and this should be taken into account during analysis. Included are the books of **PROVERBS, JOB** and **ECCLESIASTES**.

- **POETRY:** These include books of rhythmic prose, parallelism, and metaphor, such as **SONG OF SOLOMON**, **LAMENTATIONS** and **PSALMS**.
- We know that many of the psalms were written by **DAVID**, himself a musician, or David's worship leader, **ASAPH**. Because poetry does not translate easily, we lose some of the musical "**flow**" in English. Nevertheless, we find a similar use of idiom, comparison and refrain in this genre as we find in modern music.

- **NARRATIVE**: This genre includes the Gospels, which are biographical narratives about Jesus, and the books of:
RUTH, ESTHER, and JONAH.
- A reader may find bits of other genres within the Gospels, such as
- **PARABLE**- A usually short fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or religious principle. **(Luke. 8:1-15)**
- **DISCOURSE**- Units of connected texts that are longer than paragraphs. The book of **RUTH** is a perfect example of a well-crafted short story, amazing in its succinctness and structure. **(Matthew 24).**

- **EPISTLES**: An epistle is a letter, usually in a formal style. There are **21** letters in the New Testament from the apostles to various churches or individuals. These letters have a style very similar to modern letters, with an opening, a greeting, a body, and a closing.
- The content of the Epistles involves clarification of **prior teaching, rebuke, explanation, correction of false teaching** and a **deeper dive into the teachings of Jesus**. The reader would do well to understand the cultural, historical and social situation of the original recipients in order to get the most out of an analysis of these books.

• **PROPHECY AND APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE**: The *Prophetic* writings are the Old Testament books of **ISAIAH** through **MALACHI**, and the New Testament book of **REVELATION**. They include predictions of future events, warnings of coming judgment, and an overview of God's plan for Israel.

➤ **Apocalyptic literature** is a specific form of prophecy, largely involving symbols and imagery and predicting disaster and destruction. We find this type of language in

1. **DANIEL (THE BEASTS OF CHAPTER 7),**
2. **EZEKIEL (THE SCROLL OF CHAPTER 3),**
3. **ZECHARIAH (THE GOLDEN LAMPSTAND OF CHAPTER 4)**
4. **REVELATION (THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF CHAPTER 6).**

- **THE PROPHETIC AND APOCALYPTIC:** books are the ones most often subjected to faulty **EISEGESIS** -(the interpretation of a text “as of the Bible” by reading into it one’s own ideas.) and personal interpretation based on *emotion* or *preconceived bias*.
- (Amos. 3:7) tells us, **“Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.”** Therefore, we know that the truth has been told, and it can be known via careful **EXEGESIS**- (exposition, explanation; an explanation or critical interpretation of a text), a familiarity with the rest of the Bible, and prayerful consideration. Some things will not be made clear to us except in the fullness of time, so it is best not to assume to know everything when it comes to prophetic literature.