

# God

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 1 of 15

### INTRODUCTION

*"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" ([Genesis 1:1](#)). This is the first verse in the Bible.*

- All things begin with God.
- The Bible begins with God.
- A study of the Bible must also begin with God, for the Bible is God's book.

**"What is God like?" "How can we know there is a God?"** These are the most important questions anyone can ask. Nothing is of greater importance than the answers to these questions. **The answers we give** to these questions **will determine (decide) how we live** on the earth. **The answers we give** to these questions **will determine where we will live** after this life on this earth is over. Let us turn to the Bible, God's book, to learn the answers.

### WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

God is **eternal**! God has always lived. He will always live. The Bible says of God: *"Before the mountains were brought forth, Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" ([Psalms 90:2](#)).*

All people who live on the earth will grow old. All will die. But God can never grow old or die. Let us hear the Bible again:

*"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the works of thy hands: They shall perish; but thou continuest: And they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a mantle shalt thou roll them up, As a garment, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, And thy years shall not fail" ([Hebrews 1:10-12](#)).*

God is **all powerful!** *"Is anything too hard for the Lord?"* ([Genesis 18:14](#)). We human beings are weak. There are many things we do not have the strength to do. But God has all power. He can do anything. By His great power, God created the heavens and the earth. By His great power, God created man. We can **trust** the promises of God, for He has the power to fulfill them.

God is **all-knowing!** God knows everything, for God sees every-thing. It is possible to hide things from the eyes of men, but **nothing can be hidden from God.** *"For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings"* ([Proverbs 5:21](#)). *"...God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things"* ([1 John 3:20](#)).

God is **unchanging!** Everything in this world changes. Governments change when nations become independent and new leaders replace old leaders. Ways of living change. Habits and customs of people change. The weather changes. Styles of clothing change. Even our bodies change as we grow older. **But God never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.** *"For I am the LORD, I change not..."* ([Malachi 3:6 KJV](#)).

God is **spirit!** God is not a human being as you and I are. *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth"* ([John 4:24](#)). God does not have weaknesses and sicknesses of the body as you and I do. *"...for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having...."* ([Luke 24:39](#)).

God is **light!** *"And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all"* ([1 John 1:5](#)). There is no darkness (sin) in God. Therefore (for this reason) we can trust Him for He will not deceive (lie to or mislead) us.

God is **love!** *"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love"* ([1 John 4:8](#)). God loves us. He has proved His great love for us by giving His Son to die for our sins. *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [to pay the price—His death on the cross] for our sins"* ([1 John 4:10](#)).

God is **holy!** *"Ye shall be holy; for I Jehovah your God am holy"* ([Leviticus 19:2](#)).

God is **righteous**! God cannot do any wrong. He hates all sin. "*For Jehovah is righteous; He loveth righteousness: The upright shall behold his face*" ([Psalms 11:7](#)).

God is **merciful**! God loves us. Although He hates sin, He is merciful. He will forgive our sins **if we truly repent (make up our minds to turn away from practicing sin and turn back to God)**. "*Jehovah is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness*" ([Psalms 103:8](#)).

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THERE IS A GOD?**

We know there is a God because of the things which He has made. "*The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork*" ([Psalms 19:1](#)). When we see a house we know that someone wise enough and strong enough built it. A house cannot exist without a builder. In the same way, when we see the sun, moon, stars, the earth, and all that is in the earth, we know they have a builder. Someone wise enough and strong enough made all these things. Only God has power to create the heavens and the earth. Therefore, we know there is a God when we see the things He has made.

We know there is a God because our hearts or conscience tell us. People have always believed in some sort of deity. This has been true in every country and in every age. People have often had false ideas about God but they have always believed in Him. Read [Romans 2:14-16](#).

We know there is a God because He has revealed Himself to us in His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible says:

*"God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds"* ([Hebrews 1:1-2](#)).

# Authority in Christianity

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 2 of 15

We must have standards and authorities in all the affairs of life. If we do not, then we have much confusion. Every nation has a government which exercises authority over it. The headmaster and teachers exercise authority in the school. Parents exercise authority in the home.

In Christianity we see much division and confusion. Why? Because we fail to be guided by the true standard of authority! The result is hundreds of churches with many different teachings. Before this confusion can be cleared, we must all agree on an authority in Christianity. What will it be?

### **THE BIBLE IS THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD**

The Bible is the authority in Christianity because it is the inspired Word of God. The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy, said:

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16,17).* Peter said, *"...men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21).* Peter is talking about the men who wrote the Bible. They were men who were told what to write. The Holy Spirit is the one who told them. If we listen to what the Bible says, we are listening to God. God is perfect. What He says is right. Man is not perfect. He makes mistakes. We must not listen to man because he is sometimes wrong. Since God cannot be wrong, we must listen to Him. Then we know we are right.

*"...Thy word is truth" (John 17:17).* The Bible is the Word of God. The words of God are truth. Therefore, the Bible contains all truth.

### **MAN CANNOT DIRECT HIS OWN WAY**

The Bible is the authority in Christianity because man cannot direct his own way. "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" ([Jeremiah 10:23](#)). Many people think that they can decide by themselves what is right in Christianity. When man tries to direct his own way, he finds much trouble. When he listens to God, he does much better. If man were able to direct his own way, God would not have given us the Bible. In order to find the way of life that is pleasing to God, we must let the Bible be our guide.

### **WE WILL BE JUDGED BY THE BIBLE**

The Bible is the authority in Christianity because we will be judged by it at the second coming of Christ. "...it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment" ([Hebrews 9:27](#)).

No one can escape death. The whole world agrees with that. Neither can a person escape the judgment. Since we cannot escape the judgment, we must prepare for it. But **how** can we prepare for it? By listening to Jesus. God gave Jesus authority to speak. It will be the words of Christ that will judge us. Listen to what Jesus has to say: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" ([John 12:48](#)).

Every man will be judged by his own life. "...then he shall reward every man according to his works" ([Matthew 16:27](#)). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" ([2 Corinthians 5:10](#)).

### **THE BIBLE TELLS US WHAT TO DO TO BE SAVED**

The Bible is the authority in Christianity because it tells us what to do to be saved. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" ([Romans 1:16](#)). "and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" ([Hebrews 5:9](#)).

No one but Jesus can tell us what to do to be saved. What does Jesus say we must do in order to be saved? Jesus said, "He that believeth

*and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" ([Mark 16:16](#)).*

Again we read in the book of Acts: *"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" ([Acts 2:38](#)).*

In order to be saved, **we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He died so that we can have forgiveness of sins. We must repent [make up our minds to turn away from practicing sin and turn back to doing things God's way] of our sins. Then we must be baptized [briefly buried in water] for the forgiveness of our sins.**

### CONCLUSION

If we do not accept the Bible as the authority in Christianity, then we are not listening to God. God does not like this. God condemns those who do not listen to Him. Here is what the Bible has to say about it:

*"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" ([Galatians 1:8](#)).* If we listen to the teaching of man, we do not have God in our lives.

*"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father (**God**) and the Son" ([2 John 9](#)).*

**Do you listen to the teachings of Christ or to the teachings of man?**

# The Old Testament

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 3 of 15

### INTRODUCTION

**The Bible has two main divisions.** The **first** division is called the **Old Testament**. The **second** division is called the **New Testament**. The Old Testament includes the first 39 books of the Bible. It begins with Genesis and ends with the book of Malachi. The Old Testament tells the story of God's dealings (working) with mankind from the beginning of the world until the birth of Jesus.

### THE WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament was first written in the Hebrew language. The 39 books of the Old Testament were written by several different men. These men received the message which they wrote from God.

**In the New Testament, we learn how these writers received the message they wrote:** *"For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit"* ([2 Peter 1:21](#)).

### THE DIVISIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

We have learned that the Bible has two major divisions, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament can be further divided into four main sections. These sections are: **Law, History, Poetry, and Prophecy.**

### THE BOOKS OF LAW

The first 5 books of the Old Testament make up the first section of LAW. The books in this section are: **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.** These books were written by Moses, the great servant of God.

**Genesis** is the story of the beginning of all things. In Genesis we learn about the beginning of man and woman, marriage, sin, death, different languages, the nation of Israel, and God's plan to save man from his sins.



Genesis also tells about men such as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. These men are often called **Patriarchs**. The word "patriarch" means "a father," or a "head of a family." The book of Genesis tells us about the **Patriarchal Age (from Adam and Eve to Moses' receiving the ten commandment Law on Mount Sinai)**. In the Patriarchal Age the people did not have God's commandments written down in the Bible. Instead, God spoke directly to the patriarchs and revealed His commandments and teachings to them.

**Exodus** tells about the nation of Israel. God had chosen Israel to be His special people. From Israel God planned later to bring Jesus to be the Saviour of the world. The people of Israel had gone to live in Egypt during a time of famine (no food). The Egyptians made slaves of them. Exodus tells the story of how God sent Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt.

**Leviticus** and **Deuteronomy** contain the first written law which God gave to mankind. This law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. It contains the **Ten Commandments** and **many other laws**. This law of Moses was given **ONLY** to the nation of Israel ([Exodus 19:3](#); [Deuteronomy 5:1ff](#)). It was to last until the death of Christ on the cross. Christ fulfilled the law of Moses and took it out of the way. Read [Matthew 5:17,18](#); [Galatians 3:23-28](#); [Colossians 2:13,14](#).

**Numbers** is a book of history and also contains some of the laws which God gave to Israel. It tells about Israel's wanderings in the desert for 40 years before they entered the land of Canaan.

### **THE BOOKS OF HISTORY**

The second section of the Old Testament is called **History**. This section contains 12 books. They are: **Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**.

These 12 books tell the history of the nation of Israel. They tell about the wars in which God helped Israel destroy the wicked people of Canaan. They tell about the building of God's temple in Jerusalem. They tell how Israel became a rich, powerful nation but later divided into **two separate kingdoms called Judah and Israel**.



These books also tell how the people of Israel forgot about their God and worshipped idols (false gods). God punished them for their sins by permitting other nations to make slaves of them. But whenever Israel repented [decided to stop doing wrong things and turn back to God, doing things God's way], God permitted them to return to their home.

### **THE BOOKS OF POETRY**

There are five books in this section. They are: **Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.**

**Job** is the story of a man who suffered much. But even though he had many troubles, he still remained faithful to God.

**Psalms** are poems and songs written by King David and others. These poems praise God for His goodness, power, and glory.

**Proverbs** is a book of wise sayings. It was written by King Solomon and others.

**Ecclesiastes** was written by King Solomon. It tells about a man who tried to find happiness in riches, love, power, fame, and learning. He found that none of these could bring true happiness. He learned that true happiness can only come from fearing God and keeping his commandments.

**The Song of Solomon** is a love song.

### **THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY**

The last section of the Old Testament is **Prophecy**. It contains 17 books. These books were written by the great prophets of God whose names they bear. They are: **Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.** These prophets were men who spoke for God. The prophets had big jobs to do. First: They rebuked the people of their own time for their sins. Second: They were permitted by God to see into the future. God gave them the power to foretell things which would happen many years later. For example, the prophet Isaiah lived 700 years before Christ came to the earth. Yet he (Isaiah) foretold many things about Christ and His kingdom. Read Isaiah, Chapter 53, which tells of Christ's death for our sins.

# The New Testament

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 4 of 15

### INTRODUCTION

The Bible has two main parts. The first part is called the **Old Testament**. The second part is the **New Testament**. The New Testament contains 27 books. It begins with Matthew and ends with Revelation. These books were written by 8 men. These men wrote what God told them to write. The New Testament books were written in the Greek language. Later the New Testament books were translated into other languages. The New Testament is divided into 4 main sections. These sections are: **The Gospels, History, Epistles, and Prophecy**.

### THE GOSPELS

The first 4 books of the New Testament (**Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**) are called the gospels. **The word "gospel" means "good news."** These books tell us the good news of the coming of Christ to save man from his sins. These books also tell us of the birth, life, teachings, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. The authors of the gospels are the same as the title of each book.

### HISTORY

The book of history in the New Testament is **Acts of the Apostles**. It is often called the book of **ACTS**. This book was written by Luke. It tells of the beginning of Christ's church in Acts, chapter 2. Throughout the rest of the book, it tells how the church spread throughout the world. Acts tells many things that Peter and Paul did.

The book of Acts also tells and shows us **how people became Christians**. Acts is often called the book of conversions. This is because it has so many examples of people being converted to Christ. The following verses are examples of how people became Christians. You should study them carefully.

A. [Acts 2:36-38, 41-42, 47](#)

People on day of Pentecost

B. [Acts 8:1, 4-5, 12](#)

People of Samaria

C. <a href="#">Acts 8:35-39</a>	Ethiopian Eunuch
D. <a href="#">Acts 9:1-11</a> , <a href="#">17-18</a> ; <a href="#">22:12-16</a>	Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul
E. <a href="#">Acts 10:1-5</a> , <a href="#">44-48</a>	Cornelius
F. <a href="#">Acts 16:23-34</a>	Philippian jailor
G. <a href="#">Acts 18:8</a>	Corinthians

## THE EPISTLES

The word "**epistle**" means "**letter.**" There are 21 epistles in the New Testament. The epistles of the New Testament can be divided into 2 groups: the **Epistles of Paul** and the **General Epistles**. The apostle Paul wrote 13 of the 21 epistles.

They are: **Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon.** Some believe Paul also wrote **Hebrews**.

Paul's epistles were written to individual persons and some to certain churches. Here is a brief summary of each book that Paul wrote:

**Romans:** Chapters 1-11 show that we are saved by faith. Chapters 12-16 are given to encourage the Romans to live the Christian life.

**1 and 2 Corinthians:** These books were written to the church at Corinth. Paul started this church. First Corinthians tells of the many problems the church had. Paul tells them to correct them. Second Corinthians shows that some of these problems had been overcome.

**Galatians:** This letter shows that Christians do not live under the law of Moses.

**Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians:** These letters were written while Paul was in prison at Rome. The letters tell us that unity should be among Christians and that Christ is above and over all.

**1 and 2 Thessalonians:** These letters deal with the second coming of Christ. Some Christians had stopped working. They thought that Christ was to come again very soon. Paul told them this was not true.

**1 and 2 Timothy and Titus:** Timothy and Titus were two young preachers. They had been helping churches that Paul had established. He gave them much advice.

**Philemon:** Philemon was a Christian. He had a slave by the name of Onesimus. Onesimus ran away from Philemon. Paul met Onesimus and converted him. Paul then wrote a letter to Philemon asking him to take Onesimus back as a brother in Christ.

**Hebrews:** This epistle shows clearly the greatness of Christ's law over the law of Moses.

**James ; 1 and 2 Peter; 1, 2, and 3 John; Jude:** These books are called the General Epistles. Each book is named after its author. Here is a brief summary of each book:

**James:** He was a brother of Christ. The book was written to Jews who had become Christians. One of its main teachings is that faith without works is dead.

**1 Peter:** This book was written to encourage those who were being persecuted (harmed). It shows that it is good to suffer for Christ.

**2 Peter:** Warning is given against false teachers. It also teaches concerning the second coming of Christ.

**1, 2, and 3 John:** First John is mostly about love. Second John is the shortest book in the Bible. It is written to "the elect lady." Third John is written to Gaius. John praises Gaius for his love for the Lord. Gaius is warned against Diotrophes.

**Jude:** False teachers had come into the church. Jude wrote in order to encourage Christians to fight for the faith once for all revealed to God's people. Jude teaches us that we must oppose error, even within the Lord's church.

### **PROPHECY**

The book of Revelation is a book of prophecy. It was written by John. It tells us about the things that "*must shortly come to pass.*" Revelation is written in symbolic language. Most of Revelation **should not be interpreted** as it is stated. A person must understand what the symbols mean. Only then can he interpret it properly. Also, many of the things mentioned have already happened.

# The Two Covenants

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 5 of 15

### INTRODUCTION

The Bible is divided into two parts: (1) the Old Testament, and (2) the New Testament. The Old Testament contains the law of Moses. **It is also called the first covenant.** The New Testament contains the law of Christ. **It is also called the second covenant, or new covenant.**

The words "covenant" and "testament" have the same meaning. The two words will be used in this lesson, so remember that you can use one in the place of the other.

A "covenant" (testament) is an agreement or contract between two or more people. Let us illustrate this by looking at a man who did not have a job. He went from place to place seeking employment. Finally he found someone who would give him work. Before he started work, he was told that he would receive so much money each month. He was told to start work at 7 o'clock in the morning. He would then stop at 3:30 P.M.. He was to work these hours five days a week. Now if this man wants the job, he must agree to these rules. If the man takes the job, an agreement (contract) or "covenant" (testament) has been made between him and the employer.

### THE FIRST COVENANT

If man wants to be pleasing to God, he has to do what God tells him to do. God has had two great covenants with man. God's first great covenant was with the nation of Israel. God gave the covenant to Moses to give to the people. These first commandments that God gave to Moses are known as the Ten Commandments ([Exodus 20:1-17](#)). God also gave Moses many other commands and ordinances (**See Exodus, Chapters 21-23** ). The Israelites agreed to all of these commands and ordinances. "...All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient" ([Exodus 24:7](#)).

Moses then showed that the covenant had been made between God and the Israelites. *"And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words"* ([Exodus 24:8](#)). This covenant is referred to as the first covenant. *"But now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as he is also the mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been sought for a second"* ([Hebrews 8:6-7](#)). This "first covenant" is better known as the Law of Moses. **This covenant (Law of Moses) was given only to the Israelites (Jews).** It was not given for all people. Neither was it to last forever.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE LAW OF MOSES**

Man was sinful. He needed to know that he was a sinner. The Law of Moses showed man that he was a sinner. *"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law..."* ([Romans 7:7](#)).

Another purpose of the law was to serve as a schoolmaster to bring the people unto Christ. *"So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith"* ([Galatians 3:24](#)). The law of Moses taught the Israelites until Christ came. It was only to show man what was pleasing to God until Christ came. The law of Moses was to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. The law of Moses showed man what sin is. Since it did this, it has fulfilled its purpose.

#### **THE FIRST COVENANT NAILED TO THE CROSS**

The law of Moses had to be done away before the law of Christ (second covenant) could be established. *"He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second"* ([Hebrews 10:9](#)). When the law of Moses was done away, the law of Christ came into effect. But when was the law of Moses done away? The writer of Colossians tells us, *"...Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross"* ([Colossians 2:14](#)). The "handwriting of ordinances that was against us" is the law of Moses. Jesus did away with the law of Moses when He died on the cross.

### **THE NEW COVENANT (TESTAMENT)**

Jesus said, *"Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil"* ([Matthew 5:17](#)). Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets. When He fulfilled them, they were no longer needed.

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He said: *"...These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me"* ([Luke 24:44](#)). All of the things that had been written about Christ in the law, prophets, and psalms were fulfilled when He died on the cross. In the book of Acts we are told: *"And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb"* ([Acts 13:29](#)).

Christ fulfilled the law of Moses. When He fulfilled the law, He took it out of the way. It was no longer to be obeyed. Christ brought a new law. *"And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant...."* ([Hebrews 9:15](#)).

The law of Christ is now to be obeyed. The New Testament calls the law of Christ the new covenant or the second covenant. **This new covenant, the law of Christ, is for ALL people.** *"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female; for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus"* ([Galatians 3:28](#)).

**Christians must live according to the teachings in this new covenant.**



# Sin

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 6 of 15

### WHAT IS SIN?

John says: "...*sin is lawlessness*" [breaking the law] ([1 John 3:4](#)). Again, he says that "*All unrighteousness is sin...*" ([1 John 5:17](#)). Every nation has laws. When a person **does not obey** these laws, he has done wrong. God has laws which we are to obey. These laws are found in the Bible. When we do not obey God's law, we sin. All grown people have sinned. "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" ([Romans 3:23](#)).

We must always look out for sin. Sin is deceitful.

*But exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called To-day; lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin* ([Hebrews 3:13](#)).

God hates sin. Let us, therefore, not be deceived by it.

### THE CAUSE OF SIN

All things in life have a cause. We sleep because we are tired. We eat because we are hungry. No matter what we do in life there is a cause for it. This is also true with sin. Desiring something we should not have may lead to sin.

*"But each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death.*

([James 1:14, 15](#)).

The cause of sin is lust [desire]. If we do away with these wrong desires, then we will not sin.

### DIFFERENT WAYS WE SIN

There are two ways that we can sin. **First**, by doing that which we are not supposed to do. A father once told his son not to swim in a river.

The son went and swam in the river. The son did not obey his father. He did that which he was not supposed to do. God has told us what we are **not** to do.

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: **Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness**, [thinking and practicing immoral things], **idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God"*** ([Galatians 5:19-21](#)).

When we do these things, we have sinned. We have done that which God told us not to do.

**Second**, we sin by not doing that which we are supposed to do. A mother told her daughter to wash the dishes. The daughter did not wash the dishes. She did wrong. She did not do what her mother had told her to do. God has told us what to do to be pleasing to Him. It is all written in the Bible. When we do not do what God says to do, then we are guilty of sin. For example, God has told us to worship Him on Sunday, the first day of the week. "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching*" ([Hebrews 10:25](#)). When we do not worship God on Sunday, we sin. There are many other commands that God has given for us to do. **We must read the New Testament to learn what they are. Then we must do them.** If we do not do them, then we are guilty of sin.

### **RESULTS OF SIN**

Earlier in our lesson, we learned about a girl who did not obey her mother when she was told to wash the dishes. Now what does the mother do with such a girl? She must punish her. Why? Because the daughter must learn to do what she is told to do. If the girl is not punished, then the next time she is told to do something, she won't do it. God will also punish those who do not obey Him.

*In flaming fire taking vengeance on [punishing] them **that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ** (2 Thessalonians 1:8). We do not have to receive this punishment. God has provided a way for us to be forgiven of our sins. Jesus Christ is the way to God.*

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me" ([John 14:6](#)). Since Jesus is the Way, we must listen to Him. Here is what He says about salvation:*

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned ([Mark 16:16](#)).*

### CONCLUSION

**We must believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. We must repent of our sins. Then we must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. If we do this, we will be obeying God. He then will not punish us forever and ever. **Have you obeyed God and done what He says to do to have the forgiveness of your sins?****

# Jesus Christ, the Saviour

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 7 of 15

The greatest person who has ever lived is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Son of God. The entire Bible tells about Jesus. The Old Testament has many prophecies of His coming. The first four books of the New Testament (**Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John**) tell of His birth, ministry, death, and resurrection from the dead. The rest of the New Testament books tell about (1) His church; (2) His death for our sins; (3) His second coming to judge the world.

### PROPHECIES OF JESUS

Jesus died for the sins of mankind. God had planned this from the beginning. [Genesis 3:15](#) is the first prophecy of the death of Jesus for sins:

*And I [God] will put enmity between thee [the serpent, called the devil] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed [Jesus Christ]; he [Jesus] shall bruise thy [the devil's] head, and thou [the devil] shalt bruise his [Jesus'] heel ([Genesis 3:15](#)).*

Jesus is the seed of woman. He bruised the head of Satan when He died on the cross as a sacrifice for sins. There are hundreds of other prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. We can find these prophecies fulfilled in the New Testament.

### THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. His mother, Mary, was a virgin. She had conceived Jesus in her womb before she married Joseph. She did not become pregnant by any man. She conceived Him by the Holy Spirit. Jesus had no human father, for He was the Son of God. This was according to what an angel had told Mary.

*And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, **and shalt call His name Jesus**. Then Mary said unto the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" And the angel answered and said unto her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon*

*thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God" ([Luke 1:31,34,35](#)).*

### **THE MINISTRY OF JESUS**

The Bible does not tell us much about the early years of Jesus' life. It tells us that "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" ([Luke 2:52](#)).

At the age of 30, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist. After His baptism, Jesus went into the desert. At the end of forty days, Satan came and tempted Him. Jesus was the Son of God, He was also the son of Mary. Therefore, He was both human and divine. Since He was human, He was tempted in every way as we are.

*For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin ([Hebrews 4:15](#)).*

Then Jesus began preaching. "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel" ([Mark 1:15](#)). Jesus preached the kingdom of God. He also worked many miracles. His miracles prove that God had sent Him. He healed the sick and cast out evil spirits ([Mark 1:34,35](#)), restored sight to the blind ([Mark 10:46-52](#)), fed the hungry ([Mark 6:34-44](#)), and raised the dead ([Luke 7:11-16](#); John 11).

### **THE DEATH OF JESUS**

Jesus preached for three years. Then He went to Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover. The religious leaders of Israel were jealous of Jesus. They wanted to kill Him. Jesus also knew that He must die as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. He knew that the time had now come for Him to die. He had tried to prepare His disciples for His death.

*From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up ([Matthew 16:21](#)).*

Jesus ate the Passover with His apostles. Then He went into the Garden of Gethsemane where He prayed. About midnight, the soldiers

came to arrest Him. Jesus was taken before the high priest. Later, He was condemned by the Jewish Council. They sent Him to Pilate, the governor, for sentence. Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent. He wanted to free Him, but feared he might displease the people. Therefore, he had Jesus beaten and crucified.

Crucifixion was a slow, painful death. Jesus' hands were nailed to the cross. He hung on the cross while people mocked and insulted Him. After about six hours, He died. Two of Jesus' disciples took His body down from the cross. On Friday evening, they buried the body of Jesus.

### **THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS**

Early on Sunday morning, the first day of the week, Jesus arose from the dead. The Apostle Paul wrote years later about the resurrection of Jesus.

*For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received: how **that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures** ([1 Corinthians 15:3,4](#)).*

Jesus has power even over death. He will one day raise from the dead those who believe in Him.

Jesus Christ died for you. He was raised for you. You can have eternal life by believing in Him. Have you accepted Christ as your Saviour by obeying the gospel?

# Faith

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 8 of 15

### WHAT IS FAITH?

The importance of faith is stated for us in the book of Hebrews.

*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him ([Hebrews 11:6](#)).*

We are then told that "*faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" ([Hebrews 11:1](#)). No man has ever seen heaven. Yet by faith we are sure that there is such a place and we hope to go there when we die.

Many things that we do in life show some kind of faith. A person takes aspirin where he has a headache. **Why?** Because he believes the aspirin will get rid of the headache. When a person plants maize, he believes that it will grow. Children have faith in their parents. They believe their parents when their parents tell them something.

### HOW TO HAVE FAITH

The book of Romans says, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" ([Romans 10:17](#)). We have faith in something because we have heard about it. **We cannot have faith without hearing.** We plant maize to grow for food. **Why** do we plant it? **How** do we know that it will grow? Because we have heard that it will. An aspirin is taken to get rid of a headache. But why does a person take the aspirin? Because he has heard that it will get rid of the headache. **We believe in God and Christ by hearing about them.** We hear about them from the Bible. We can hear about them from the Bible in two ways: (1) by reading the Bible ourselves and (2) by hearing someone tell about them from the Bible. **It is not possible to have faith in God and Christ without hearing about them.**



*How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?([Romans 10:14](#)).*

### DIFFERENT KINDS OF FAITH

There are different degrees of faith. Jesus told His disciples once that they had "little faith" ([Matthew 8:26](#)). He told a Canaanite woman "great is thy faith" ([Matthew 15:28](#)). Then there is faith that is necessary for salvation.

*"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said,*

*"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house"([Acts 16:30,31](#)).*

A person must believe in Jesus Christ in order to be saved. But belief by itself is not enough. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble" ([James 2:19](#)). The devils or demons [evil spirits] believe but are not saved. What then is needed in order for faith to save? The answer is **trust and obedience**. The demons believe in Christ but they **do not trust and obey Him**. **If we only believe Christ, but do not trust and obey him, we will not be saved.** **When Jesus gives a command we will obey it if we have the faith that saves.** For example, Christ says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" ([Mark 16:16](#)). Christ gave two commands here. **First, a person must believe. Second, he must be baptized** in order to be saved. If a person believes in Christ, but is not willing to be baptized, then he is not saved. He does not have an obedient faith. His faith is dead. **Faith alone cannot save a person.** **"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only"** ([James 2:24](#)). A man is saved **when he obeys the commands of Christ. Believing in the commands of Christ without obeying them will not save a person.**

### CONCLUSION

Faith is belief based on testimony. We believe it because we have been told about it. Faith is necessary in order to be pleasing to God. Without faith we cannot be saved. Yet faith by itself cannot save us. **We must have a faith that trusts and obeys Christ's**

**commands in order to be saved. What kind of faith do you have?** Is it faith that believes in Jesus Christ as the Son of God? Does your faith stop there? Have you put your trust in Christ? **Have you done what He tells you to do to be saved?** If not, why do you not trust and obey Him now? You will then have a faith that saves.

# Repentance

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 9 of 15

*The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. ([Acts 17:30,31](#)).*

God has commanded all men to repent. On the Last Day everyone who has ever lived will appear before Christ in judgment. If we have failed to obey God's command to repent of our sins, we will be lost forever. Therefore, it is very important that we learn the meaning of repentance.

### WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

*But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went. ([Matthew 21:28,29](#)).*

This parable teaches us the meaning of repentance. At first, the son in the parable refused to obey his father's command to work in the vineyard. Later, he **changed his mind** and went to work. All of us are like the son in the parable. We have disobeyed God's commands many times. But when we stop disobeying God and begin to do His will, we have repented.

**Repentance is a change of mind.** It is a **decision to stop doing wrong** and **to begin doing right**. When a person repents, he changes his life completely. He decides that he will no longer rebel against God. He will obey the commands of God. One's repentance will be seen in the good works that he does. One who has truly repented will try to please God in everything.

### WHAT CAUSES REPENTANCE?

*For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. ([2 Corinthians 7:10](#)).*

Repentance is caused by godly sorrow. When a person realizes he has sinned by disobeying God, he becomes sorry for what he has done. This sorrow for his sin will lead the person to turn away from his sin. Thus, godly sorrow (being sorry for disobeying God) causes one to repent.

*Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? ([Romans 2:4](#))*

God is good to us. He has given us Jesus, His Son, to die for our sins. He has given us the Bible to tell about the way to eternal life. When we realize how good God is to us, we should be ashamed to disobey Him. Our sorrow for disobeying our Father will cause us to repent of our sins.

### **THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE**

*Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham ([Luke 3:8](#)).*

These words were spoken by John the Baptist. The people of Israel thought they were saved simply because Abraham, God's faithful servant, was their father. John told them that they must prove that they had repented. We prove that we have repented by doing good works. Before repenting, we do evil deeds. After repenting, we must do good deeds.

Suppose a man has a fruit tree in his garden. If the tree does not produce good fruit, he will cut it down and use it for firewood. But if the tree produces good fruit, he will save it. If we turn from our sins but do not do good works in their place, we will still be lost. But if we produce good works, God will love us and save us.

### **HAVE YOU REPENTED?**

What about you? Have you repented of your sins? Are you producing the fruits of repentance? If not, you are lost forever! Christ will reject you on the last day.

*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance ([2 Peter 3:9](#)).*

Obey God's commands:

*Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 2:38](#)).*

# Confession

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 10 of 15

### CONFESSION BEFORE BAPTISM

A person must confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God before he can become a Christian. This confession is necessary to salvation.

*because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation ([Romans 10:9,10](#)).*

If a person will not confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, then he cannot become a Christian. In the book of Acts, we have an example of a man confessing Christ before being baptized.

*And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture, preached unto him Jesus.*

*And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"*

*And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" ([Acts 8:35-37](#)).*

After the eunuch made the confession, Philip baptized him. No one can become a Christian if he is not willing to confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

### CONFESSION AFTER BAPTISM

A person must confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God before becoming a Christian. He **must** also confess Jesus Christ to others **after he** becomes a Christian. It is the duty of every Christian to tell others about the salvation that Jesus Christ offers to man. Jesus said that if we tell others about Him He will tell God about us. But if we don't tell others, He will deny us to God.

*Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven ([Matthew 10:32,33](#)).*

This confessing of Jesus Christ is to be done throughout the life of a Christian. Jesus Christ died so that all men might have the forgiveness of sins. The forgiveness of sins, however, depends upon men accepting and obeying Christ. But can men accept and obey Christ if they don't know about Him? No! Christians then must tell others about Christ so that they may accept and obey Him. Then they will receive the forgiveness of their sins. Nothing should prevent Christians from telling others about Christ. Christ has commanded Christians to confess Him, and so Christians "...must obey God rather than men" ([Acts 5:29](#)).

We have learned that we are to confess Christ to others by word of mouth. We are also to confess Him in another way. We are to confess Christ by the way we live. Christ lived a perfect life. We are to follow His example.

*For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps ([1 Peter 2:21](#)).*

People are watching Christians all the time. If a Christian does wrong, others know it. They then speak evil of Christianity. But if Christians follow Christ, they will do that which is right. People will then see that Christianity is good. If a Christian tells others about Christ, but does not live right, then he speaks in vain. People will not listen to a Christian who tells them what to do but doesn't do it himself. A Christian must tell others about Christ and at the same time do what Christ tells him to do.

### **CONFESSING OUR SINS**

There are two ways we are to confess our sins. First, we are to confess our sins to one another. James says, "*Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.*" ([James 5:16](#))



It is not easy for a person to say that he has sinned. Yet the Bible commands that we do it. Why are we to confess our sins to one another? It is so that we can pray about those sins. Christians should be interested in helping one another. If one Christian has sinned, all other Christians should want to help him overcome that sin. They can do that by praying for him.

The second way we are to confess our sins is to God.

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness ([1 John 1:9](#)).*

If we confess our sins to God, He will forgive our sins. What a great promise!

### **CONCLUSION**

A person must confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God before he can become a Christian. After he becomes a Christian, he must confess Christ to others in two ways: (1) by word of mouth, and (2) by the kind of life that he lives. After a person becomes a Christian, he will still commit sins. Christians are then to confess their sins to one another and to pray for one another so that they can overcome those sins. A Christian is also to confess to God his sins. God will then forgive him of his sins.

# Baptism

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 11 of 15

**What is baptism? Who should be baptized? What is the purpose of baptism? Only God can give us the answers to these questions.**

God's answers are found in the Bible. Let us learn what the Bible teaches about baptism.

### WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

**The Bible gives us certain requirements** which we **first** must obey before we can be baptized.

**One must believe in Jesus Christ before he can be baptized.** Jesus said: "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned*" ([Mark 16:16](#)).

**How do we come to believe in Jesus? It is by hearing the Word of God.** "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" ([Romans 10:17](#)).

**One must repent of his sins before he can be baptized.** The Bible says: "*Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins...*" ([Acts 2:38](#)). **Repentance must come before baptism.**

**Before one can be baptized, he must confess his faith in Christ.** "*...because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" ([Romans 10:9,10](#)).

**One must hear the Word of God, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of his sins, and confess his faith before he can be baptized into Christ.** A newborn baby or small child cannot be baptized. A baby cannot understand about Jesus. A baby cannot repent of sins when he has not done anything, either good or bad. A baby cannot confess his faith in Jesus. Since a baby cannot hear,

believe, repent, or confess, he cannot be baptized. **In the Bible we learn that only people old enough to hear, believe, repent, and confess were ever baptized.**

*"But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" ([Acts 8:12](#)).*

### **HOW SHOULD ONE BE BAPTIZED?**

There are two ways by which churches baptize people today. One is by pouring or sprinkling water on the person's head. The other is by burying or immersing a person in water. Which one is correct baptism? The Bible gives the answer.

**In the Bible baptism is called a burial.** *"We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:4](#)).* If we want to bury a dead body, we will not sprinkle a little dirt on the head. We will cover the body completely. Baptism is a burial. Sprinkling water on the head of a person does not baptize him. He must be completely **buried** under the water.

*"And John also was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized" ([John 3:23](#)).* John chose a place to baptize where there was **much water**. Sprinkling requires only a **little** water. But a burial in water **requires much water**. Therefore, John did not baptize by sprinkling. He baptized by **burying in water**.

*"And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing." ([Acts 8:38,39](#)).* When Philip baptized the eunuch, both of them went down into the water. After the baptism, both of them came up out of the water. To sprinkle a person, it is not necessary to go down into the water. To baptize a person by burying him in water, it is necessary to go down into it. Therefore, Philip baptized the eunuch by burial, not sprinkling.

What is the proper way to baptize? The Bible teaches it is by a burial in water. Therefore sprinkling is not true baptism.

### WHY BE BAPTIZED?

**There are four reasons why we must be baptized: First**, we must be baptized if we want **to be saved**. Jesus Himself said: "**He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned**" (Mark 16:16). The apostle Peter said: "*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ*" ([1 Peter 3:21](#)).

**Second**, we must be baptized if we want **to have our sins forgiven**. The Bible says: "*Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" ([Acts 2:38](#)).

**Third**, we must be **baptized** if we want to be in Christ. **To be "in Christ" means "to be a Christian."** The Bible says: "*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*" ([Galatians 3:27](#)).

**Fourth**, we must be **baptized** if we want to become a member of the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the church of Christ ([Ephesians 1:22,23](#)). The Bible says: "*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...*" ([1 Corinthians 12:13](#)).

# The Church, Part 1

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 12 of 15

There are thousands of different churches in the world. Each one of these denominations has its own teachings which are different from the teachings of other denominations. Each one of these churches is called by a different name. Yet, all of them claim to be following the Bible. Is this possible? No, it is not! The Bible contains only one teaching. Yet each one of these denominations has a different teaching.

**What is the true church? How can we learn which is right? There is only one way. Let us go to the Bible. The Bible will tell us what Christ's church is.**

The Bible helps us to understand what Christ's church is like. It does this by "figures" or "pictures" of the church. Let us look at some of these pictures that we may understand what the true church is like.

### THE KINGDOM

The Bible often pictures Christ's church as a kingdom. Sometimes it is called the "kingdom of God" because God is its Ruler. The members of the church are citizens of the kingdom. Sometimes the church is called the "kingdom of heaven" because it is a spiritual kingdom. It is not an earthly kingdom.

We know that the kingdom and the church are the same thing because Christ used them in this way. For example, let us hear Jesus' words to Peter: *"And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* ([Matthew 16:18,19](#)).

God has set up His kingdom on the earth. It began on the Day of Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ. Read [Acts 2:1-47](#). It began in city of Jerusalem. Since the church and the kingdom are the same, we know that Christ's church began in Jerusalem. It began on the first day of Pentecost after Jesus arose from the dead. Any church which began at any other place than Jerusalem **cannot** be the true church. Any church which began at any other time cannot be the true church. Just before He returned to Heaven, Jesus said, *"...and he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."* ([Luke 24:46,47](#)).

### **THE TEMPLE OF GOD**

**The Bible sometimes pictures the church as the temple of God.** *"So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone"* ([Ephesians 2:19-21](#)).

In the Old Testament, we can read how King Solomon built a temple for God ([1 Kings 8:12,13](#)). Today, the church is God's temple. God dwells in the church through His Spirit: *"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye."* ([1 Corinthians 3:16,17](#)).

### **THE FAMILY OF GOD**

**Sometimes the Bible pictures the church as God's household or family.** *"but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth"* ([1 Timothy 3:15](#)).

In His family, the church, God is the father. Members of the church are His children. One becomes a member of a family by being born into it. The same is true of God's family. One must be born again to become a member of it. *"...Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"* ([John 3:5](#)).

### **A HOLY NATION AND A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD**

**Another picture of Christ's church is that of a holy nation and a royal priesthood.** *"But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9).*

In Old Testament times, God chose the nation of Israel to be His people. Today, Christ's church is the chosen nation of God. In the nation of Israel, there was a special class of people who served as priests. Only the priests were allowed to conduct the public worship of God. But in Christ's church, every member is a priest. Every member can pray to God for himself.

### **THE BODY OF CHRIST**

**Many times the Bible pictures Christ's church as His body.** *"And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:22,23).*

**The church is the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body.** He rules from heaven. Heaven is the headquarters of Christ's church. The human body has only **one** head. Christ's body, the church, has only **one** head. Christ is the Head of the church! Christ's church has no pope or president on the earth to rule over it. The church is the body of Christ. Christ has only one body.

Therefore, Christ has only one church. *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling" (Ephesians 4:4).* There are many thousands of different denominations in the world today. Christ's church is His body. Does Christ have thousands of different bodies? Of course not! A man has only **one** body. Christ has only **one** body—the church.



## The Church, Part 2

### Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 13 of 15

There are thousands of different denominations in the world. But the Bible reveals only one church. Let us learn from the Bible about Christ's church. Let us become members of it. Then, we can know we are right. The Bible tells us what Christ's church is like. It tells us its names, organization, and worship.

#### THE NAMES OF THE CHURCH

The Bible gives several names for Christ's church and for its members. These names honor God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

**In the New Testament, the church is often called "the church of God."** *"Paul...To **the church of God** which is at Corinth..." ([1 Corinthians 1:1,2](#)). "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" ([Acts 20:28](#)).*

**When speaking of the various groups of Christians which make up the body of Christ, the term "churches of Christ" is used.** *"...the churches of Christ salute you" ([Romans 16:16](#)).*

**Members of the church in the Bible are often called "believers" because they trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.** *"And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women" ([Acts 5:14](#)). "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity" ([1 Timothy 4:12](#)).*

**Sometimes members are called "saints," because they are set apart to do God's will.** *"unto the church of God which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours" ([1 Corinthians 1:2](#)). "...to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" ([Philippians 1:1](#)).*

**They are often called "disciples" because they are learners of Christ.** " So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the **disciples** were first called Christians in Antioch" ([Acts 11:26](#)). "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" ([Acts 20:7](#)).

**Members are also called Christians.** "...the disciples were called **Christians** first in Antioch" ([Acts 11:26](#)). "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a **Christian**" ([Acts 26:28](#)).

"If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you. For let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or as a meddler in other men's matters: but if a man suffer as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name." ([1 Peter 4:14-16](#)).

### **THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH**

God's plan for His church is very simple. Christ is the head of the whole church. "and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." ([Ephesians 1:22,23](#)).

**The New Testament is the only law which God gave to His church.** "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." ([2 Timothy 3:16,17](#)).

In each place where there are Christians, they meet together as a group and form the church of Christ in that place. Each of these groups is independent. Each has its own leaders. Each church of Christ is overseen by elders and served by deacons when it is fully organized.

**Elders** are called by different names in the New Testament. Sometimes they are called "**bishops**," meaning "overseers." "*Faithful*

is the saying, *If a man seeketh the office of a **bishop**, he desireth a good work" (1 Timothy 3:1)*. Sometimes they are called "**pastors**," meaning "shepherds." *"And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11,12).*

*"And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed" (Acts 14:23).*

**Deacons are leaders who serve under the elders.** (Read [Philippians 1:1](#).) The word "deacon" means "one who serves."

Not everyone can be an elder or a deacon. One must be a good man before he can do this work. The qualifications for elders are found in [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#) and [Titus 1:5-10](#). The qualifications for deacons are stated in [1 Timothy 3:8-13](#). No one can serve as an elder or deacon unless he meets God's qualifications. **No church can have elders or deacons until they have men who meet these qualifications.**

### THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

The Bible tells us that Christ's church meets on Sunday, the first day of the week, for the worship of God. *"...upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7).*

*"Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:2).*

**This day is called "the Lord's Day."** *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day..." (Revelation 1:10)*. The church may meet at any time for worship, but the first day of the week is especially "the Lord's Day." **On the Lord's Day, the church "breaks bread," or eats of the Lord's Supper.** *"And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread..." (Acts 20:7).*

The Lord's Supper was given by Jesus just before His death. Read [Matthew 26:26-29](#). It is unleavened bread (made with no yeast) which represents His body, and the fruit of the vine (grape juice) which represents His blood. **The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remember Christ's death for our sins.** *"...For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" ([1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)).*

**Christ's church worships Him by singing praises to**

**Him.** *"Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord" ([Ephesians 5:19](#)). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God" ([Colossians 3:16](#)).*

Each member of Christ's church worship Him from the heart. The purpose of worship is to praise God. It is not to entertain man. **God has not commanded the use of musical instruments in His worship.** Each Christian is to praise God. The melody is to be made with the Christian's heart, **not** with musical instruments.

**Christ's church worships Him by prayers of thanksgiving, praise, and request.** *"...I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity." ([1 Timothy 2:1,2](#)).*

**Christ's church worships Him by studying and teaching God's Word.** *"Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" ([1 Timothy 4:13](#)).*

**Christ's church takes a contribution on the first day of the week. In this way money is raised for the work of the Lord.** *"Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" ([1 Corinthians 16:2](#)).*

**The Bible reveals no other method for raising money for the Lord's work.**

# The Second Coming of Christ

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 14 of 15

**Jesus is coming again!** This is clearly taught in the New Testament. *"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" ([John 14:2,3](#)).*

### WHEN IS CHRIST COMING AGAIN?

**When is Christ coming again?** Since the time that Jesus went to Heaven, men have tried to say when He will return. Yet **the Bible clearly teaches that no man knows when Christ will return.** *"But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" ([Matthew 24:36](#)).*

When will Jesus come again? The angels in heaven do not know. Jesus did not even know. **No man knows. Only God knows.** We must not say when Jesus will return because we do not know. **We only know that He will return. We must believe this!** *"For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" ([1 Thessalonians 5:2](#)).*

**The "day of the Lord" refers to the second coming of Christ.** Christ's second coming will be like a thief in the night. When does a thief steal? When you expect him to steal? No! A thief steals when he is not expected. So it will be with the second coming of Christ. Christ will come again when He is not expected.

### HOW IS CHRIST COMING?

The apostles were told by the angels that Jesus would return the same way He went into Heaven. *"...Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven" ([Acts 1:11](#)).*

It was Jesus who went into Heaven. It is Jesus who will be coming from Heaven.

Some people teach that Jesus has already returned. They teach that He returned in 1914, but many did not see Him. This teaching is **not** what the Bible says. The Bible says, "*Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him. Even so, Amen*" ([Revelation 1:7](#)). Has Jesus returned yet? Have you seen Him?

No! **When Jesus comes again, every one will see Him.** Those in the cities will see Him. Those in the villages will see Him. No one will miss seeing Him!

**Again, we are told that when Christ returns He will be heard by everyone.** "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first*" ([1 Thessalonians 4:16](#)).

Just as everyone will see Christ, everyone will hear Him too. The "shout," "the archangel's call," and the sound of the trumpet of God" all show the authority Christ has. They also show He has an important announcement to make.

### **WHY IS CHRIST COMING AGAIN?**

The Bible gives several reasons why Christ is coming again. He is coming to raise the dead. Some people teach that the bad will never rise from the grave. Others teach that the good and bad will be raised at different times. But the Bible says: "*... the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment*" ([John 5:28,29](#)).

**All faithful, obedient Christians will meet Christ in the air. From there they will go to Heaven with Him.** "*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*" ([1 Thessalonians 4:16,17](#)).



When Christ comes again, He will deliver up the kingdom to God. He is **not** coming to set up the kingdom. The kingdom is already here. The kingdom is the church.

*"Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power" ([1 Corinthians 15:24](#)).*

**The world will be destroyed at the second coming of**

**Christ.** *"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" ([2 Peter 3:10](#)).*

**When Christ comes again, people will no longer live on the earth. The earth will be burned up by fire.**



# The Judgment, Heaven, and Hell

## Beginning Bible Studies, Lesson 15 of 15

**The day of judgment is coming! God will judge the world. He has appointed His Son, Jesus Christ, to be the judge.** "...God ...commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent...he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained..." ([Acts 17:30,31](#)). **The judgment will take place on the day that Christ comes again.**

### NONE WILL ESCAPE

No person can escape the judgment! All who have ever lived will be there. All who are now living will be there. All who will live in the future will be there. The rich will be judged, the poor will be judged. Kings, presidents, and the common man will be judged. All will be judged alike. "...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" ([2 Corinthians 5:10 KJV](#)).

### ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS

**We will be judged according to our works!** All the good things we have done will be revealed. All of the bad things we have done will be revealed. "who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that...obey not the truth...wrath and indignation" ([Romans 2:6-8](#)).

### HELL

**All the wicked and all who have never obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ will be cast into Hell.** Hell is a place which was prepared for the Devil and his angels. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" ([Matthew 25:41](#)). Hell is a terrible place! The Bible uses three pictures to tell us how terrible Hell is: **First**, Hell is often described as a **fire** which never stops burning. Jesus said: "And if thine eye cause thee to stumble,

cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" ([Mark 9:47, 48](#)). **Second**, Hell is often described as a place of great **darkness** where people in pain and anguish weep and gnash their teeth, "And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth" ([Matthew 25:30](#)). **Third**, Hell is described as **the second death**. "But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" ([Revelation 21:8](#)).

**Hell is eternal!** Those cast into Hell will be punished forever and ever. Jesus said, "And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life" ([Matthew 25:46](#)).

The Bible plainly teaches that Hell is a real place. It is a place of punishment for the wicked and for all who do not obey Christ. "...and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" ([2 Thessalonians 1:7-9](#)).

### HEAVEN

On the Day of Judgment, the wicked and unbelievers will be cast into Hell, but the faithful Christians will receive eternal life. They will be given a home in Heaven which Jesus has prepared for them. "In my Father's house are many mansions... I go to prepare a place for you ...And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go, ye know the way" ([John 14:2-4](#)).

Jesus is now preparing a place in Heaven for us if we will become his faithful disciples. Heaven is a beautiful place. In Heaven there are no bad things. There is no pain, sickness, sadness, trouble, or death.

There is no hate or fear in Heaven. In Heaven there is only peace and happiness and every good thing.

The apostle John tells us about this beautiful home which Jesus is preparing for us. *"...And I saw the holy city...coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men...and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away"* ([Revelation 21:1-4](#)). Read Revelation, Chapters 21 and 22, for a full description of the beautiful place called Heaven.

### **CONCLUSION**

What about you? Are you prepared for the judgment? Prepare now so that you can have a home with Jesus in Heaven. Please let us know if we can assist you in becoming a Christian, a member of Christ's church, "which He purchased with His own blood" ([Acts 20:28](#)).