Covered in the Dust OF OUR RABBI

BECOMING ALL WE WERE MEANT TO BE IN JESUS

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING MANUAL

(The Key Theological Issues/Our Relationship to God)

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:19-20 NIV

The Two Primary Objectives of Discipleship Training (Dallas Willard)

1. To bring apprentices to the point where they dearly love and constantly delight in their "heavenly Father" who was made real to earth in Jesus and are quite certain that there is no "catch," no limit, to the goodness of His intentions or to His power to carry them out.

2. To remove our automatic responses against the Kingdom of God, to free the apprentices of domination, of "enslavement" (John 8:34; Romans 6:6) to their old habitual patterns of thought, feeling, and action.

"From that time on Jesus began to preach, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.'"
Matthew 4:17 NIV
The Kingdom of Heaven – the rule of God in the hearts of men.

THE SIGNS OF WELLNESS

(The blessings of living in compliance to the teachings of Jesus)

As a Christ-follower regularly engages in the study of the Word, in prayer, and in intimate fellowship with other sincere believers who will pour into his life, God brings about some wonderful changes in the person's character. I have found that these three characteristics combined are often a signal that the believer is ready to go "make disciples" himself. As best I can describe them, the three characteristics of people who demonstrate this mental and spiritual wellness in their lives are:

1. An inability to remain offended from slights, criticism, and gossip

Romans 12:14-19 NIV

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord."

2. An inability to worry about the future

Matthew 6:28-34 NIV

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

3. An inability to feel insecure

Psalm 139:13-16 NIV

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be."

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*Marriage and Child Raising (see Good to Great Marriage Manual)

We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.
Colossians l:28-29 NIV

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.
2 Timothy 2:1-3 NIV

THE FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS OF HARVEST CHURCH

(Our Absolutes)

"For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. They will reject the truth and follow strange myths."
2 Timothy 4:3-4 NLT

1. **WE BELIEVE...** that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God and without mistakes as originally written. It is the complete revelation of His will for salvation and the only unfailing rule of faith and practice for the Christian life.

2. **WE BELIEVE...** in one God, Creator of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that these three are co-eternal and of equal dignity and power.

3. **WE BELIEVE...** in the deity of Jesus Christ; His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit; His virgin birth; His sinless life; His substitutionary death on the cross; His bodily resurrection; His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal, imminent return.

4. **WE BELIEVE...** that man was created by and for God; that by man's disobeying God, every person incurred spiritual death, which is separation from God, and physical death as a consequence; and that all people are sinners by nature and practice.

5. **WE BELIEVE...** the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins and that all who believe in Him are declared righteous because of His sacrificial and substitutionary death and are, therefore, in right relationship with God.

6. **WE BELIEVE...** in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit indwelling all believers and thus enabling and empowering the life and ministry of the believer.

7. **WE BELIEVE...** in the bodily resurrection of everyone who has lived, the everlasting blessedness of those in right relationship with God, and the everlasting punishment of those who have rejected God's forgiveness in His Son.

"In the essentials - unity; in the non-essentials - liberty; and in all things charity."
Augustine of Hippo - 425 A.D.



Covered in the Dust OF OUR RABBI

PART ONE:

THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

Christ's Atonement on the Cross

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only He who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will say to them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from Me you evil doers!'"
Matthew 7:21-23 NIV

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you–unless, of course, you fail the test?"
2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV

"We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says, 'I know Him,' but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him."
1 John 2:3-4 NIV

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9 NIV

"We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."
Acts 5:32 NIV

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"
2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV

A SPIRITUAL CHECKUP

Biblical Requirements for Salvation

1. Do you admit that you are a sinner? Romans 3:23
2. Do you believe that Jesus became sin and died on a cross for you? 2 Corinthians 5:21
3. Do you believe that He rose from the dead, conquering death and confirming that He is the Son of God? 1 Corinthians 15:4
4. Out of gratitude for His sacrifice on your behalf have you yielded control of your life to Christ? (Are the teachings in the Bible, not your feelings, your basis of authority?) Matthew 10:37-39
5. Have you confessed to someone else that Jesus is your Lord ("boss")? Matthew 10:32

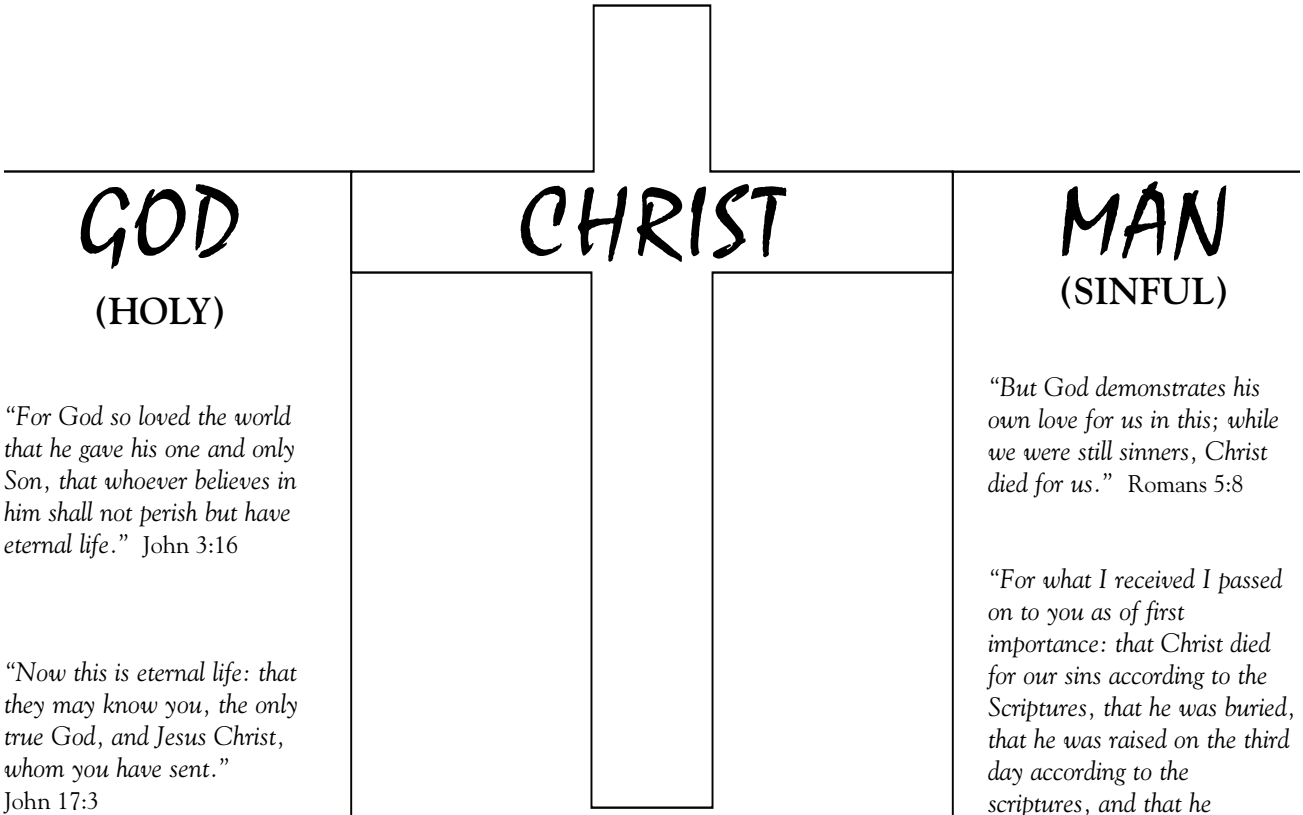
*IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, YOU MAY VERY WELL BE AN ADMIRER OF JESUS CHRIST, BUT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES NOT INDWELL YOU. WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT, THERE CAN BE NO ETERNAL LIFE (SALVATION), NO NEW NATURE, AND NO POTENTIAL FOR REAL CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE. YOU ARE STILL DEAD IN YOUR SINS. ROMANS 9:5-8

*IF, HOWEVER, YOU ANSWERED "YES" TO ALL OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS, GOD HAS GIVEN YOU THE HOLY SPIRIT. YOU ARE IN CHRIST, ARE SAVED BY HIS GRACE, AND ARE A TOTALLY NEW CREATION. JOHN 7:37-39

TO CLARIFY – IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE REALIZE THAT:

1. Salvation requires a ***coup d' etat*** (a violent overthrow of an existing government). Evidence of this "change of government" in your life is your desire to know an obey God's written Word, the Bible. John 14:21
2. Personal holiness and kingdom service do not save us; they are simply symptoms that we are saved. Ephesians 2:8-10

THE BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION



GOD
(HOLY)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."
John 17:3

"…for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
Romans 3:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
Romans 6:23

CHRIST

"God is on one side and all the people on the other side, and Christ Jesus, Himself man, is between them to bring them together."
1 Timothy 2:5

Philosophy

A Good Life

Religion

MAN
(SINFUL)

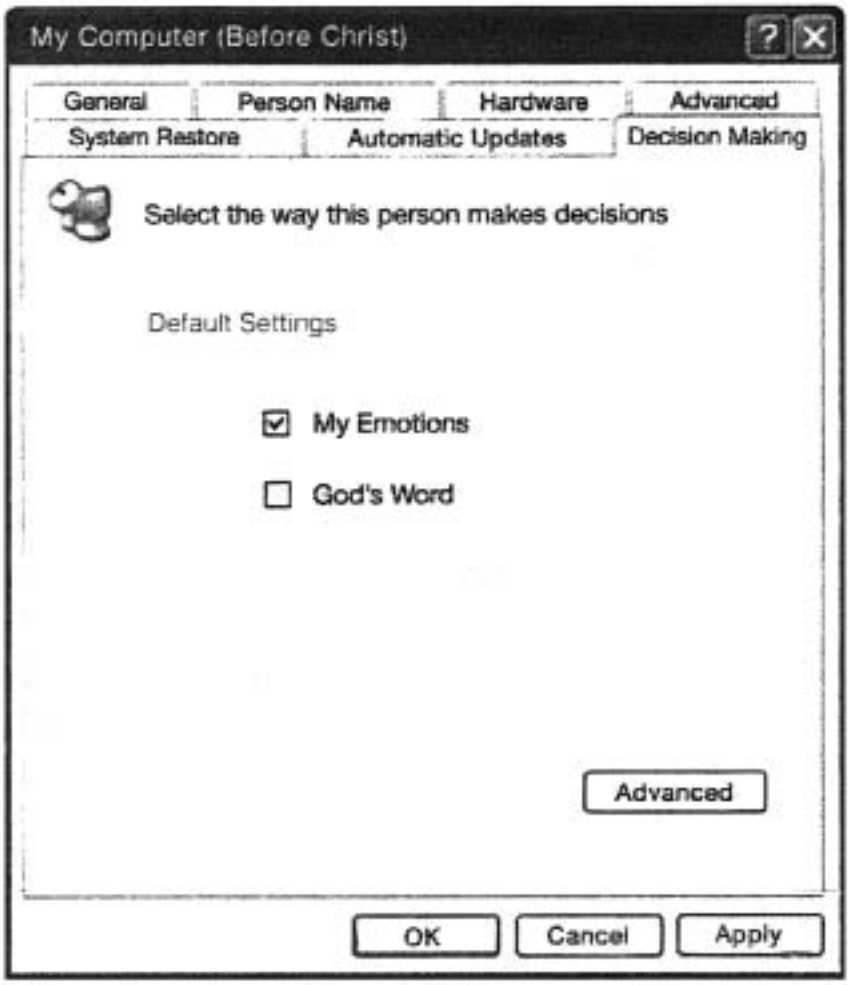
"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

"For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep."
1 Corinthians 15:3-6

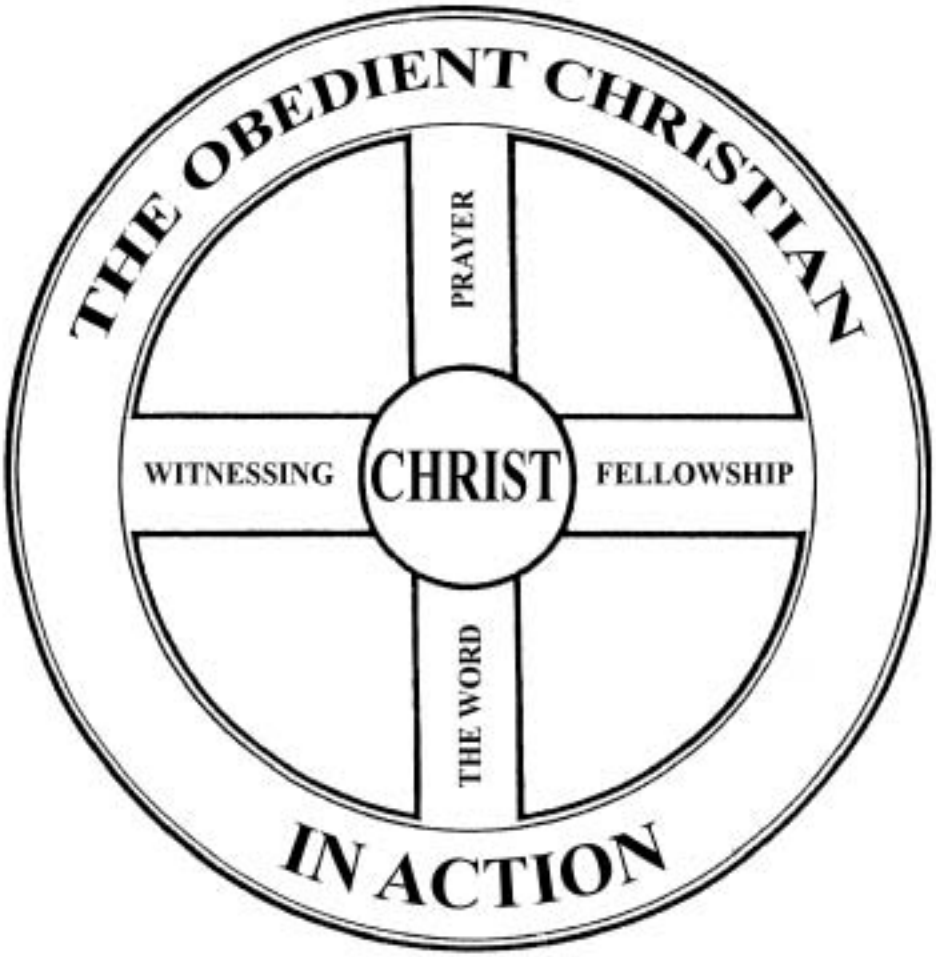
"Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
John 14:6

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."
Romans 6:23

MY COMPUTER


My Computer (Before Christ)
General
Person Name
Hardware
Advanced
System Restore
Automatic Updates
Decision Making
Select the way this person makes decisions
Default Settings
My Emotions
God's Word
Advanced
OK
Cancel
Apply

THE WHEEL ILLUSTRATION



When you are obedient to Christ and actively following God's leading, it shows in your outward life. People can see the evidences of your Christianity.

Some acts of obedience to God are more internal. They have to do with attitudes, habits, motives, sense of values, day-to-day thoughts. These internal acts of obedience eventually surface in relationships with other people. The proof of your love for God is your demonstrated obedience to Him.

"Obey Me and I will be your God and you shall be My people;
only do as I say and all shall be well."
Jeremiah 7:23, 1-11

SALVATION REQUIRES A COUP D'ETAT

"That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."
Romans 10:9-10 NIV

*Texts that Point to the Necessity of Yielding to Christ as Lord in Order to Inherit Eternal Life: (NOTE - None of these texts means that salvation can be earned by works of the law. Salvation is by grace through faith; it does not come from ourselves; it is the of God Ephesians 28). What these texts teach is that the faith that justifies also sanctifies [Acts 15:9]. LETTER TO A FRIEND BY JOHN PIPER

1. ***The Necessity of Doing Good:*** Matthew 7:21-23, John 5:28-29, Romans 2:6-10, Galatians 6:9,1 Timothy 5:8, James 2:17,26

2. ***The Necessity of Obedience:*** Matthew 7:24-27, Matthew 12:48-50, Luke 13:6-9, Luke 8:11-15, John 14:15, John 15:2, John 3:36, Romans 6:12,14, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Hebrews 5:8-9, Hebrews 10:36, 1 John 2:4, 1 John 2:17

3. ***The Necessity of Holiness:*** 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Hebrews 12:14

4. ***The Necessity to Forgive Others:*** Matthew 6:12-15, (NOTE: The eternal significance of forgiveness in Matthew 6 is made plain in the parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18. Jesus is not merely talking about losing fellowship. He is talking about losing God if we go on through life with an unforgiving spirit). Matthew 18:32-35

5. ***The Necessity Not to Live According to the Flesh:*** Romans 8:12-14, Galatians 5:19-21, Galatians 5:24, Galatians 6:8

6. ***The Necessity of Being Free from the Love of Money:*** Luke 14:25-33, Luke 18:18-22

7. ***The Necessity of Love to Christ and God:*** Matthew 10:37-39, Matthew 24:12-13, John 8:42, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, 1 Corinthians 8:3, 1 Corinthians 16:22, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10, 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, James 2:5, 1 Peter 1:8, l Peter 2:7, 1 John 2:15

8. ***The Necessity to Love Others:*** Matthew 25:40-46, Luke 10:25-28, Galatians 5:6, 1 Peter 3:9, 1 John 3:14, 1 John 4:8,20

9. ***The Necessity to Love the Truth:*** 2 Thessalonians 2:10

10. ***The Necessity of Being Childlike:*** Matthew 18:2-3

11. ***The Necessity to Bridle the Tongue:*** James 1:26

12. ***The Necessity of Perseverance:*** Mark 13:13, Luke 9:62, 1 Corinthians 15:l-2, Colossians 1:21-23, 2 Timothy 2:11-12, Hebrews 3:6, Hebrews 3:12-14, Hebrews 6:11-12, Hebrews 10:36

13. ***The Necessity of Walking in the Light:*** 1 John 1:7

14. ***The Necessity of Repentance:*** Luke 3:3, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 3:8, Luke 5:32, Luke 13:1-3, Luke 15:7, Luke 24:46-47, Acts 2:38, Acts 3:19, Acts 5:31, Acts 11:18, Acts 20:21

15. ***The Necessity of Warfare Vigilance:*** 1 Timothy 6:12, Matthew 7:13-14, Luke 13:24, Hebrews 3:12-14, Hebrews 12:14, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 2 Timothy 4:7

***NOTE:** Personal holiness and Kingdom service do not save us, but they are symptoms that we are saved!

MANY ASPIRE, BUT FEW ATTAIN

(The Basics Needed to Succeed Spiritually)

"Therefore we also have as our ambition, wether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NASU

A. FELLOWSHIP

1. A good Bible teaching church

2. A life-giving small group

3. A committed mentor

B. PRAYER

1. God talks to you - listening prayer

2. You talk to God - ACTS
Adoration - Confession - Thanksgiving - Supplication

C. THE WORD

1. Read

2. Hear

3. Study

4. Memorize

5. Meditate

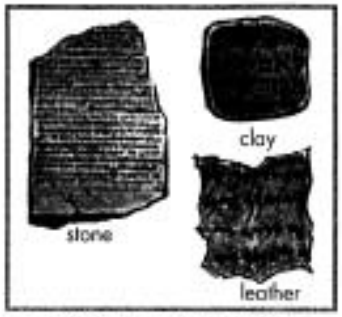
"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."
John 15:5 NASU

HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE

TEN KEY POINTS

1. The Bible is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
2. The Bible is made up of 66 different books that were written over 1600 years (from approximately 1500 BC to AD 100) by more than 40 kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus. The Old Testament has 39 books (written approximately 1500-400 BC). The New Testament has 27 books (written approximately AD 45-100). The Hebrew Bible has the same text as the English Bible's Old Testament, but divides and arranges it differently.
3. The Old Testament was written mainly in Hebrew, with some Aramaic. The New Testament was written in Greek.
4. The books of the Bible were collected and arranged and recognized as inspired sacred authority by councils of rabbis and councils of church leaders based on careful guidelines.
5. Before the printing press was invented, the Bible was copied by hand. The Bible was copied very accurately, in many cases by special scribes who developed intricate methods of counting words and letters to insure that no errors had been made.
6. The Bible was the first book ever printed on the printing press with moveable type (Gutenberg Press, 1455, Latin Bible).
7. There is much evidence that the Bible we have today is remarkably true to the original writings. Of the thousands of copies made by hand before AD 1500, more than 5,300 Greek manuscripts from the New Testament alone still exist today. The text of the Bible is better preserved than the writings of Caesar, Plato, or Aristotle.
8. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls confirmed the astonishing reliability of some of the copies of the Old Testament made over the years. Some variations exist, most of which involve spelling. No variation affects basic Bible doctrines.
9. As the Bible was carried to other countries, it was translated into the common language of the people by scholars who wanted others to know God's Word. Today there are still 2,000 groups with no Bible in their own language.
10. By AD 200, the Bible was translated into seven languages; by AD 500, 13 languages; by AD 900, 17 languages; by AD 1400, 28 languages; by 1800, 57 languages; by 1900, 537 languages; by 1980, 1,100 languages.

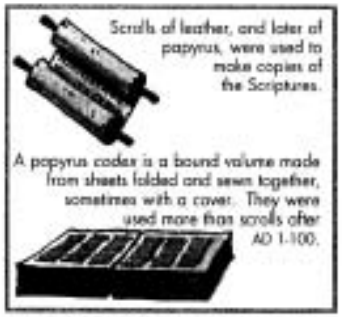
Source: *The World Christian Encyclopedia*



Old Testament Written
(approx. 1500-400 BC)



New Testament Written
(approx. AD 45-100)



Bible Copied on Papyrus



Bible Copied on Fine Animal Skins



Bible Printed by Printing Press after 1455



The Bible, God's Word to The World

The Importance of Knowing the Word

2000 BC / 500 BC / 200 BC / AD 1

Old Testament events are written down in Hebrew (portions in Aramaic) over centuries. In Exodus, the Lord tells Moses to write in a book. Other Old Testament writers, inspired by God, include leaders, kings and prophets. Together, these writings on leather scrolls and other materials are called the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament.



Ezra, a priest and scribe, collects and arranges some of the books of the Hebrew Bible—the Old Testament—about 450 BC, according to Jewish tradition.

The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament). It is translated in 250-100 BC by Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt. (The word *Septuagint* means seventy, referring to the tradition that 70 or 72 men translated it. It is often abbreviated LXX, the Roman numeral for seventy.)

The books are arranged by subject: historical, poetic, and prophetical. It includes the Apocrypha (meaning "hidden") referring to seven books that were included in the Hebrew Bible until AD 90 when they were removed by Jewish elders.



A Scribe

Papyrus, a plant, is cut into strips and pressed into sheets of writing material and can be made into a scroll or a codex. The New Testament books were probably first written on papyrus scrolls. Later Christians begin to copy them on sheets of papyrus which are bound and placed between two pieces of wood for covers. This form of early book is known as a codex.



Papyrus

Time of Jesus 6 BC-AD 30
Jesus quotes the Old Testament (Scriptures) often. He says that He did not come to destroy the Scriptures, but to fulfill them. He says to his disciples, "These are the words which I spake unto you, . . . that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. *Luke 24:44-45*

AD 100 / AD 200 / AD 300

Followers of Jesus
Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, James, Peter, and Jude write the Gospels, history, letters to other Christians, and the Revelation between AD 45 and 100. The writers quote from all but eight of the Old Testament books. These writings in Greek are copied and circulated so that by about AD 150 there is wide enough use of them to speak of the "New Testament" ("New Covenant"). The new covenant God made with people was promised in Jer. 31:31-34 and referred to by Jesus (Lk. 22:20) and Paul (1 Cor. 11:25) and in the letter to the Hebrews.



Early Coptic Translation

Council at Jamnia (90)
Jewish elders confirm the Hebrew Bible canon, without the apocrypha, as authoritative.

Earliest Translations
AD 200-300 Latin, Coptic (Egypt), and Syriac (Syria).

Church fathers accept the writings of the Gospels and Paul's letters as *canonical* (from a Greek word referring to the rule of faith and truth). Origen lists 21 approved New Testament books. Eusebius lists 22 accepted books.



Saint Matthew Lindisfarne Gospels
Approximately AD 900

The New Testament books are collected and circulated throughout the Mediterranean about the time of Constantine, the Roman emperor who legalizes Christianity in AD 313. By AD 400 the standard of 27 New Testament books is accepted in the East and West as confirmed by Athanasius, Jerome, Augustine and three church councils. The 27 books of the New Testament were formally confirmed as canonical by the Synod of Carthage in AD 397, thus recognizing three centuries of use by followers of Christ.

Jerome starts translating the Scriptures into Latin in AD 410 and finishes 25 years later. This translation, called the Latin Vulgate, remains the basic Bible for many centuries.



Jerome

AD 500

Roman Empire declines. Germanic migrations (AD 378-600) cause new languages to emerge.

The Masoretes are special Jewish scribes entrusted with the sacred task of making copies of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) approximately AD 500-900. They develop a meticulous system of counting the number of words in each book of the Bible to make sure they have copied it accurately. Any scroll found to have an error is buried according to Jewish law.

AD 600

Christianity reaches Britain before AD 300, but Anglo-Saxon pagans drive Christian Britons into Wales (AD 450-600). In AD 596, Augustine of Canterbury begins evangelization again.

Caedmon, an illiterate monk, retells portions of Scripture in Anglo-Saxon (Old English) poetry and song (AD 676).

Aldhelm of Sherborne, AD 709, is said to have translated the Psalms.



Bede

Bede, a monk and scholar, makes an Old English (Anglo-Saxon) translation of portions of Scripture. On his deathbed in 735, he finishes translating the Book of John.

Alfred The Great, King of Wessex, 871-901, translates portions of Exodus, Psalms, and Acts.

Aldred, Bishop of Durham, inserts a translation in the Northumbrian dialect between the lines of the Lindisfarne Gospels (950).

Aelfric, 955-1020, translates portions of the Old Testament.

AD 1300

Normans conquer England (1066) and make French the official language. No English translation work produced until the 1300s.

Middle English emerges, popularized by works such as the Canterbury Tales and Richard Rolle's Psalter (1340).



John Wycliffe

First English Bible is translated from Latin in 1382 and is called the Wycliffe Bible in honor of priest and Oxford scholar John Wycliffe. During his lifetime, Wycliffe had wanted common people to have the Bible. He also criticized a number of church practices and policies. His followers, derisively called Lollards (meaning "mumblers") included his criticisms in the preface to the Wycliffe Bible. This Bible is banned and burned. Forty years after Wycliffe's death, his bones are exhumed and burned for heresy.

AD 1500

In 1408, in England, it becomes illegal to translate or read the Bible in common English without permission of a bishop.

World's first printing press with moveable metal type is invented in 1455 in Germany by Johann Gutenberg. This invention is perhaps the single most important event to influence the spread of the Bible.

The Gutenberg Bible is the first book ever printed. This Latin Vulgate version is often illuminated by artists who hand paint letters and ornaments on each page.



Gutenberg Bible Page

Erasmus, a priest and Greek scholar, publishes a Greek translation and a more accurate Latin translation of the New Testament in 1516. His goal is that everyone be able to read the Bible, from the farmer in the field to the weaver at the loom. Erasmus's Greek text forms the basis of the "textus receptus" and is used later by Martin Luther, William Tyndale, and the King James translators.



Erasmus

Martin Luther translates the New Testament into German in 1522.

William Tyndale, priest and Oxford scholar, translates the New Testament from Greek (1525), but cannot get approval to publish it in England. He moves to Germany and prints Bibles, smuggling them into England in sacks of corn and flour. In 1535 he publishes part of the Old Testament translated from Hebrew. In 1536, Tyndale is strangled and burned at the stake. His final words are "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

Tyndale is called the "Father of the English Bible" because his translation forms the basis of the King James Version. Much of the style and vocabulary we know as "biblical English" is traceable to his work.



William Tyndale

THE PROGRESS OF REVELATION

Old Testament

	Book	Approximate Writing Date	Author
1.	Job	Unknown	Anonymous
2.	Genesis	1445-1405 BC	Moses
3.	Exodus	1445-1405 BC	Moses
4.	Leviticus	1445-1405 BC	Moses
5.	Numbers	1445-1405 BC	Moses
6.	Deuteronomy	1445-1405 BC	Moses
7.	Psalms	1410-450 BC	Multiple Authors
8.	Joshua	1405-1385 BC	Joshua
9.	Judges	ca. 1043 BC	Samuel
10.	Ruth	ca. 1030-1010 BC	Samuel (?)
11.	Song of Solomon	971-965 BC	Solomon
12.	Proverbs	971-686 BC	Solomon primarily
13.	Ecclesiastes	940-931 BC	Solomon
14.	1 Samuel	931-722 BC	Anonymous
15.	2 Samuel	931-722 BC	Anonymous
16.	Obadiah	850-840 BC	Obadiah
17.	Joel	835-796 BC	Joel
18.	Jonah	ca. 775 BC	Jonah
19.	Amos	ca. 750 BC	Amos
20.	Micah	735-710 BC	Micah
21.	Hosea	750-710 BC	Hosea
22.	Isaiah	700-681 BC	Isaiah
23.	Nahum	ca. 650 BC	Nahum
24.	Zephaniah	635-625 BC	Zephaniah
25.	Habakkuk	615-605 BC	Habakkuk
26.	Ezekiel	590-570 BC	Ezekiel
27.	Lamentations	586 BC	Jeremiah
28.	Jeremiah	586-570 BC	Jeremiah
29.	1 Kings	561-538 BC	Anonymous
30.	2 Kings	561-538 BC	Anonymous
31.	Daniel	536-530 BC	Daniel
32.	Haggai	ca. 520 BC	Haggai
33.	Zechariah	480-470 BC	Zechariah
34.	Ezra	457-444 BC	Ezra
35.	1 Chronicles	450-430 BC	Ezra (?)
36.	2 Chronicles	450-430 BC	Ezra (?)
37.	Esther	450-331 BC	Anonymous
38.	Malachi	433-424 BC	Malachi
39.	Nehemiah	424-400 BC	Ezra

THE PROGRESS OF REVELATION

New Testament

	Book	Approximate Writing Date	Author
1.	James	AD 44-49	James
2.	Galatians	AD 49-50	Paul
3.	Matthew	AD 50-60	Matthew
4.	Mark	AD 50-60	Mark
5.	1 Thessalonians	AD 51	Paul
6.	2 Thessalonians	AD 51-52	Paul
7.	1 Corinthians	AD 55	Paul
8.	2 Corinthians	AD 55-56	Paul
9.	Romans	AD 56	Paul
10.	Luke	AD 60-61	Luke
11.	Ephesians	AD 60-62	Paul
12.	Philippians	AD 60-62	Paul
13.	Colossians	AD 60-62	Paul
14.	Philemon	AD 60-62	Paul
15.	Acts	AD 62	Luke
16.	1 Timothy	AD 62-64	Paul
17.	Titus	AD 62-64	Paul
18.	1 Peter	AD 64-65	Peter
19.	2 Timothy	AD 66-67	Paul
20.	2 Peter	AD 67-68	Peter
21.	Hebrews	AD 67-69	Unknown
22.	Jude	AD 68-70	Jude
23.	John	AD 80-90	John
24.	1 John	AD 90-95	John
25.	2 John	AD 90-95	John
26.	3 John	AD 90-95	John
27.	Revelation	AD 94-96	John

SCRIPTURE READING PLAN

(Read one chapter of Psalms and one chapter of the following New Testament books (259 total chapters)
Monday through Saturday; read 1 chapter of Proverbs and one chapter of Genesis every Sunday)

1. MATTHEW - (Mnemonic) JESUS AS KING
2. ACTS - THE EARLY CHURCH
3. ROMANS - PAID IN FULL
4. MARK - JESUS THE SERVANT
5. 1 CORINTHIANS - SPANKING THE SAINTS
6. 2 CORINTHIANS - ANATOMY OF AN APOSTLE
7. GALATIANS - UNSHACKLED
8. EPHESIANS - BODY BUILDING
9. PHILIPPIANS - HAPPILY HUMBLE
10. LUKE - JESUS THE PERFECT MAN
11. COLOSSIANS - COMMANDER AND CHIEF
12. 1 THESSALONIANS - STAY ON TARGET
13. 2 THESSALONIANS - WORK WHILE YOU WAIT
14. 1 TIMOTHY - LEADERSHIP MANUAL
15. 2 TIMOTHY - COMBAT MANUAL
16. TITUS - CONDUCT MANUAL
17. PHILEMON - BONDAGE TO BROTHERHOOD
18. HEBREWS - MILK TO MEAT
19. JAMES - FAITH GAUGE
20. JOHN - JESUS AS GOD
21. 1 PETER - PAIN WITH A PURPOSE
22. 2 PETER - POISON IN THE PEW
23. 1 JOHN - FELLOWSHIP BAROMETER
24. 2 JOHN - BOLT THE DOOR
25. 3 JOHN - OPEN THE DOOR
26. JUDE - FIGHT FOR THE FAITH
27. REVELATION – COMING EVENTS

Marking System

P = A Promise

C = A Command

? = A Question

THE APOCRYPHA

Apocrypha: The collection of books included in the canon of Scripture by the Roman Catholic Church but not included in the canon by Protestants (from the Greek word *apocrypha*, "things that are hidden").

THE NEW AMERICAN BIBLE (the New Catholic translation) includes the following seven additional books:

1) Tobit
2) Judith
3) 1 Maccabees
4) 2 Maccabees
5) Wisdom
6) Sirach
7) Baruch

TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION (an approved Catholic translation) includes the above seven books plus the following 8 "deuterocanonical books:

1) Ester (Greek)
2) Letter of Jeremiah
3) Song of the Three Young Men
4) Susanna
5) Bel and the Dragon
6) 1 Esdras
7) 2 Esdras
8) The Prayer of Manasseh

Josephus (born c. A.D. 37/38) explained, "From Artaxerxes to our own times a complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets" (*Against Apion* 1.41). This statement by the greatest Jewish historian of the first century A.D. shows that he knew of the writings now considered part of the "Apocrypha," but that he (and many of his contemporaries) considered these writings "not...worthy of equal credit" with what we now know as the Old Testament Scriptures. There had been, in Josephus's viewpoint, no more "words of God" added to Scripture after about 435 B.C.

In the New Testament, we have no record of an dispute between Jesus and the Jews over the extent of the canon. Apparently there was full agreement between Jesus and his disciples, on the one hand, and the Jewish leaders of Jewish people, on the other hand, that additions to the Old Testament canon had ceased after the time of Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. This fact is confirmed by the quotations of Jesus and the New Testament authors from the Old Testament. According to one count, Jesus and the New Testament authors quote various parts of the Old Testament Scriptures as divinely authoritative over 295 times, but not once do they cite any statement from the books of the Apocrypha or any other writings as having divine authority. The absence of any such reference to other literature as divinely authoritative, and the extremely frequent reference to hundreds of places in the Old Testament as divinely authoritative, gives strong confirmation to the fact that the New Testament authors agreed that the established Old Testament canon, no more and no less, was to be taken as God's very words.

What then shall be said about the Apocrypha, the collection of books included in the canon by the Roman Catholic Church but excluded from the canon by Protestantism? These books were never accepted by the Jews as Scripture, but throughout the early history of the church there was a divided opinion on whether they should be a part of Scripture of not. In fact, the earliest Christian evidence is decidedly against viewing the Apocrypha as Scripture, but the use of the Apocrypha gradually increased in some parts of the church until the time of the Reformation. The fact that these books were included by Jerome in his Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible (completed in A.D. 404) gave support to their inclusion, even though Jerome himself said they were not "books of the canon" but merely "books of the church" that were helpful and useful for believers. The wide use of Latin Vulgate in subsequent centuries guaranteed their continued accessibility, but the fact that they had no Hebrew original behind them, and their exclusion from the Jewish canon, as well as the lack of their citation in the New Testament, led many to view them with suspicion or to reject their authority. For instance, the earliest Christian list of Old Testament books that exists today is by Melito, bishop of Sardis, writing about A.D. 170:

> *When I came to the east and reached the place where these things were preached and done, and learnt accurately the books of the Old Testament, I set down the facts and sent them to you. These are their names: five books of Kingdoms, two books of Chronicles, the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon and his Wisdom, Ecclesiastes, the Son of Songs, Job, the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, the Twelve in a single book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra.*

It is noteworthy here that Melito names none of the nooks of Apocrypha, but he includes all of our present Old Testament books except Esther. Eusebius also quotes Origen as affirming most of the books of our present Old Testament canon (including Esther), but no book of the Apocrypha is affirmed as canonical, and the books of Maccabees are explicitly said to be "outside of these [Canonical books]." Similarly, in A.D. 367, when the great church leader Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, wrote his Paschal Letter, he listed all the books of our present New Testament canon and all the books of our present Old Testament canon except Esther. He also mentioned some books of the Apocrypha such as Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, Judith, and Tobit, and said these are "not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness." However, other early church leaders did quote several of these books as Scripture.

There are doctrinal and historical inconsistencies with a number of these books. E.J. Young notes:

> *There are no marks in these books which would attest a divine origin…both Judith and Tobit contain historical, chronological and geographical errors. The books justify falsehood and deception and make salvation to depend upon works of merit…Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon inculcate a morality based upon expediency. Wisdom teaches the creation of the world out of pre-existent matter (Wisdom 11:17). Ecclesiasticus teaches that the giving of alms makes atonement for sin (Ecclesiasticus 3:30). In Baruch it is said that God hears the prayers of the dear (Baruch 3:4), and in 1 Maccabees there are historical and geographical errors.*

It was not until 1546, at the Council of Trent, that the Roman Catholic Church officially declared the Apocrypha to be part of the canon (with the exception of 1 and 2 Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh). It is significant that the Council of Trent was the response of the Roman Catholic Church to the teachings of Martin Luther and the rapidly spreading Protestant Reformation, and the books of the Apocrypha contain support for the Catholic teaching of prayers for the dead and justification by faith plus works, but by faith alone. In affirming the Apocrypha as within the canon, Roman Catholics would hold that the church has the authority to constitute a literary work as "Scripture," while Protestants have held that the church cannot make something to be Scripture, but can only recognize what God has already caused to be written as his own words. (One analogy here would be to say that a police investigator can recognize counterfeit money as counterfeit and can recognize genuine money as genuine, but he cannot make counterfeit money to be genuine, nor can any declaration by any number of police make counterfeit money to be something it is not. Only the official treasury of a nation can make money that is real money; similarly, only God can make words to be his very words and worthy of inclusion in Scripture.)

Thus the writings of the Apocrypha should not be regarded as part of Scripture: (1) they do not claim for themselves the same kind of authority as the Old Testament writings; (2) they were not regarded as God's words by the Jewish people from whom they originated; (3) they were not considered to be Scripture by Jesus or the New Testament authors; and (4) they contain teachings inconsistent with the rest of the Bible. We must conclude that they are merely human words, not God-breathed words like the words of Scripture. They do have value for historical and linguistic research, and they contain a number of helpful stories about the courage and faith of many Jews during the period after the Old Testament ends, but they have never been part of the Old Testament canon, and they should not be thought of as part of the Bible. Therefore, they have no binding authority for the thought or life of Christians today.

In conclusion, with regard to the canon of the Old Testament, Christians today should have no worry that anything needed has been left out or that anything that is not God's words has been included.

(From Grudem's Systematic Theology)

WHICH BIBLE DO I USE?

Different versions of scripture can serve different purposes during your spiritual journey.

All I was looking for was a Bible. Not a top-secret nuclear document. But as I searched bookstore after bookstore for a new study Bible the summer between my junior and senior year in college, everyone had an opinion on which one I should get. And unfortunately none of them agreed. Get the King James Version – it's the most authentic, some said. Get the New International Version – it's one of the most readable, others commented. Find a Bible with a good concordance, so you can dig deep into God's Word, I was told.

After buying a nice big and thick New King James Study Bible, I thought I had found one that everyone would like – including myself. Much to my surprise those who critiqued my earlier suggestions, disagreed with this one as well. It was a no-win situation.

The Bible isn't a top-secret nuclear document – it's much more powerful. But its power to change lives is only unleashed when you open God's Word and begin to read it. So picking the right version isn't near as important as picking up the Bible in the first place.

But finding a Bible that fits your spiritual needs and personality can be an important part of your Christian journey. If you know a few key principles, you can make the search for a new Bible a much more pleasant experience.

Whether you are searching for your own study Bible or looking to pick up one for a friend, you should find these principles helpful.

SOME TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND BEFORE STARTING YOUR BIBLE HUNT:

1. Any English version of the Bible is a translation from the original documents written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. Certain Bibles might be more literal translations than others, but practically all of them are translations from the originals. In other words, don't fall into the trap of picking a more traditional biblical translation because you believe it to be more "authentic."

2. No one Bible has it all. Some study Bibles come with concordances, biblical dictionaries, colorful maps or important scripture application tools. Few come with all of them. Similarly, not all Bible translations fit every use. This doesn't mean you have to buy hundreds of Bibles, but it does mean that you should be a careful consumer. Buy a Bible that is appropriate for the way you use it.

3. Any translation too cumbersome to read on a daily basis isn't the right Bible for you. Find a version you feel comfortable using. The most important thing about picking a Bible is finding one you will read!

TYPES OF BIBLES:

Word-for-Word Translations: These versions strive to translate the Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic word for word into modern languages (English for our purposes, although the same is true of other languages.) They often sacrifice readability for accuracy.

Thought-For-Thought Translations: These translations try to take entire thoughts and put them into English instead of being concerned with taking it word for word. These are usually "middle ground" translations because while they are not literal in the word order, they strive to translate the thoughts of the original texts. Both word for word and thought for thought translations are put together by a large team (up to 100) of scholars in the Bible's original languages.

Paraphrase: These are the most interpretive versions of the Bible. None of them claim to be close translation of the original text nor should they be taken as such. In fact most do not even call themselves translations. Instead these take the ancient manuscripts and put both the words and the thoughts behind them into a language we can understand. Not only do they strive for readability but also usability. Paraphrases are more concerned with the "meaning" of the authors, than their actual words. The fact that they appear to have some wide variances with the more traditional texts shouldn't be seen negatively. No translation can help believers take a fresh look at their faith better than a good paraphrase. Just try to compare the texts with more literal versions to make sure you agree with the passages' retelling. A single author usually puts together paraphrases.

KING JAMES VERSION (KJV)

Type: Word for Word
Strengths: The KJV is almost universally regarded as one of the most elegantly written books in the history of the English language. If you've ever sat down and read the Psalms in the KJV, you know its incredible poetic power. It is still the highest selling book in history. The translators of this version also stuck very close to the Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic texts they had at the time. Also, if you grew up in church, there's a good chance you memorized scripture in the KJV.
Weakness: Often the KJV can be incredibly difficult to read. In the 400 years since its translation, the English language has changed considerably. Without readable and understandable biblical texts, a consistent reading of scripture can be very difficult unless a person has a high reading level or extraordinary commitment to daily Bible reading. Best uses: Because of its historic importance in the development of Post-Reformation Christianity and its incredible eloquence, every household should own one. But don't rely on the KJV as your daily quiet time Bible unless it's a version you've become very familiar with. If you like the eloquence, but want something a bit more readable, consider the New King James Version (NKJV).
Sample Verse: *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* **John 3:16**

NEW AMERICAN STANDARD (NAS)

Type: Word for Word
Strengths: The NAS is one of the most accurate of all contemporary Bible translations. The version's translators made a strong commitment to take the ancient languages and transfer them word for word into the English language. It also takes into consideration the most reliable ancient texts available.
Weakness: This version is still difficult to read in places (11th grade reading level.). While eliminating the cumbersome "Thee's" and "Thou's," it is still very close to the original, which doesn't always take into account the best way to communicate the biblical texts into modern English.
Best uses: The NAS makes a good study Bible, particularly if you consider yourself a good reader. Its accuracy almost guarantees that the words you are reading would be close to what the writers wrote. But you might want to combine your reading of the NAS with a good thought-for-thought or paraphrase translation. This will ensure that you understand what you are reading from the context it was written.
Sample Verse: *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."* **John 3:16**

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV)

Type: Thought for Thought
Strengths: The NIV has quickly passed the KJV as the most read English Bible in the United States. It combines readability and accuracy as well or better than any Bible on the market.
Weakness: The NIV's versatility makes it difficult to discuss its weaknesses. Just be aware that as a thought for thought translation, the emphasis is on BOTH understandability and accuracy. This is not a word for word translation; instead translators tried to take phrases in the Bible and put them into current language. Even this isn't much of a weakness because at times that actually makes it more accurate since it properly conveys both meaning and the words of the original text.
Best Uses: Combined with good study helps, it makes a good study Bible that is also very easy to read. It's also readable enough for enjoyable and frequent reading. Additionally, its balance lends itself to being a good Bible for a small group study.
Sample Verse: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* **John 3:16**

THE NEW LIVING TRANSLATION (NLT)

Type: Thought for Thought
Strengths: The NLT is one of the more popular thought for thought translations out there. Just like the NIV, this translation strives to balance both accuracy and readability. It's even a smoother read than the NIV.
Weaknesses: The translators were not trying to produce a word for word translation. Instead they were trying to communicate the thoughts of the biblical authors. Even though the translators created a translation well balanced between readability and accuracy, it leans more toward readability, thereby sacrificing a little accuracy.
Best Uses: The NLT is one of the best translations for reading through the entire Bible. It can be used for more intense Bible study if you have access to other study tools or a more literal Bible to read with it.
Sample Verse: *For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.* **John 3:16**

THE MESSAGE (MSG)

Type: Paraphrase
Strengths: This is one of the most exciting and vibrant versions of the biblical story on the market. When you read it, the ancient Middle East comes alive. Letters become letters again, and poetry becomes poetry. Through the lens of Eugene Peterson (the paraphrase's author), you'll take a brand new look at scripture that you've read thousands of times. The entire Bible will be available this coming July.
Weakness: This is still a paraphrase. As you are reading it, realize that you are reading someone else's interpretation of scripture. No paraphrase should be used for intense Bible study.
Best Uses: Use The Message to liven up your own personal time with God. It's not a study Bible. Don't let it be the only Bible you use. If you get a copy of The Message, pick up a more traditional Bible to read with it. In fact one of the best ways to read The Message is to read a more literal translation like the NASB or NIV and then turn to it and read the exact same passage. You'll quickly discover this invigorates your time with God. This is also a wonderful version of the Bible for new believers, so that they can begin to pick up the life-changing habit of daily Bible reading.
Sample Verse: *"This is how much God loved the world: He gave his Son, his one and only Son. And this is why: so that no one need be destroyed; by believing in him, anyone can have a whole and lasting life."* **John 3:16**

WHICH VERSION OF THE BIBLE SHOULD I USE FOR STUDY?

Even though you've decided on a translation, you still have a plethora of different versions available to you. Although you'll never find a study Bible that has everything, look for a Bible – or maybe a couple – that has tools to allow you to dig deep into scripture.

The Best Personal Study Bible: "The Life Application Bible" (Tyndale)

In this version application notes throughout the Bible help you take age-old biblical principles and apply them to your life. Also included are: a 365-day reading plan, a Bible concordance, character sketches, in-text maps and many other helpful Bible tools. Available in NLT, NIV and NASB.

The Best Topical Study Bible: "Thompson Chain Reference Bible - NIV (Kirkbride)

This classic version of the Bible allows readers to follow more than 8,000 topics throughout scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. Available in KJV, NKJV, NIV, NASB.

The Best Background Study Bible: "The NIV Study Bible" (Zondervan)

The NIV Study Bible has more than 20,000 in-text study notes, along with in-text maps, charts, diagrams and illustrations. Available only in NIV. (The same Bible is available in NASB, but of course the name is different. It is called "The NASB Study Bible.")

The Best Doctrine Study Bible: "The Disciples Study Bible" (Broadman and Holman)

The Disciples Study Bible includes an in-depth look at 27 of the major Bible doctrines, 24 full-color illustrations on doctrine and chronology and a theological intro to each book of the Bible.

The Importance of Prayer

"Bible teachers should stress that a personal, self-denying, costly, and persistent following of Christ i s necessary if a person is to be acknowledged by Jesus" at the final day. In the absence of this teaching millions drift on, assuming that because they have made verbal acknowledgment of Christ ten, twenty, or even thirty years ago and have done nothing terribly bad since, they are Christians, when actually they may be far from Christ, devoid of grace, and in danger of perishing forever." FROM CHRIST'S CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP BY JAMES BOICE

MARKS OF A DISCIPLE

(A Learner on the Way)

Symptomatic of his new nature, a disciple of Jesus Christ joyfully strives to:

1. Surrender his identity to Christ and conform to His likeness (Philippians 3:4-8; Romans 8:29)

2. Know and obey God's Word, the Bible *[loves God; hates sin]* (John 14:21; 1 John 2:3-4)

3. Embrace a life of prayer and meditation (Mark 11:22-25; James 5:16)

4. Love fellow believers and voluntarily submit to them (John 13:34-35; Ephesians 5:21)

5. Die to himself *[bears his cross and doesn't become offended]* (Matthew 10:32-39; Galatians 2:20)

6. Live by faith *[doesn't become worried]* (Ephesians 2:; Hebrews 11:1-6)

7. Share the Gospel with the lost (1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Colossians 1:28-29)

8. Bear the burdens of others *[the heart of a bondslave]* (Mark 10:35-45; Galatians 6:2)

9. Own nothing (Matthew 8:20; Luke 12:15-21)

10. Remember that apart from Christ he can do nothing *[humility]* (John 15:5; Ephesians 2:8-9)

"I will be most useful and most content when I grasp the truth that my life is not about me but about God."

OUR PRAYERS AND GOD'S RESPONSES

I. Prayer Defined:

- a pouring out of our heart to God (Psalm 62:8); a crying out to God (Psalm 86:3); coming before the throne of grace (Psalm 84:1-2); a spiritual sacrifice (Hebrews 13:15); drawing close to God in friendship, fellowship and trust (James 4:8)

PRAYER IS SIMPLY COMMUNICATION WITH OUR HEAVENLY FATHER

The Big Idea: *"The great people of the earth today cote the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important–very important and pressing, but still less important and less pressing than prayer."* S.D.Gordon

II. Types of Prayer:

- Closet prayers (Matthew 26:36-39)
- Arrow prayers (Nehemiah 2:4-5)

III. Categories of Prayer from Jesus' Model Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)

- A - Adoration-(Psalm 147:1)
- C - Confession (1 John 1:9)
- T - Thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
- S - Supplication (Philippians 4:6)

IV. Supplication - "Requesting of God"

- **Personal petitions** - for ***wisdom*** (James 1:5-8), for ***health*** (2 Corinthians 12:7-9), for ***daily needs*** (Matthew 6:33), for ***resisting temptation*** (Matthew 26:41)

- **Intercession for others** - the ***lost*** (Romans 10:1), ***authorities*** (1 Timothy 2:1-2), the ***sick***, (James 5:13-15), our ***enemies*** (Matthew 5:43-48) ***fellow believers*** (Ephesians 1:16), ***proclaimers of the Gospel*** (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2)

V. Our Sovereign God's Potential Responses to Our Requests

- **A) Yes B) No C) Wait B) Yes, but with modifications**

Why Does God Sometimes Say "No" To My Requests?

#1 I am not in relationship with God through His one mediator (1 Timothy 2:5)
There must be a "coup d' etat" (a regime change) in my life.

#2 I have unrepented sin in my life *ie.*

- Mistreating my spouse (1 Peter 3:7)
- Regarding wickedness in my heart (Psalm 66:18)
- Harboring unforgiveness in my heart (Mark 11:25)

#3 I ask with wrong motives (James 4:3)

#4 My request is within my own ability to answer (James 2:14-16)

#5 I simply don't ask (James 4:2)

#6 My request is not in my best interest (1 John 4:16-18)

#7 I use "vain" repetition in my prayer (Matthew 6:7)

#8 I have failed to pray in line with His written Word (John 15:7)

#9 I have not persisted (Luke 18:1-8)

#10 I don't have faith the size of a "mustard seed" (Matthew 17:20) - VIP

So when you pray:

- Be thankful (John 6:5-14)
- Don't doubt but believe you have received your request (Mark 11:22-24)
- Watch your words (Matthew 12:36)

"If you pray, and then either worry or speak faithlessly, you have highlighted your request and stroked the delete key." F.M. Nelson

- Agree with other believers (Matthew 18:19)

HEARTRATE 160

The other day I was playing tennis with a good friend who was really running me around the court. The more winded I became the more unforced errors I found myself committing. After the contest, 1 was reminded of an experiment that 1 had performed in the 90's over the course of 40 tennis matches with capable opponents. I wore a heart rate monitor in each match and watched carefully to see at what heart rate I began to make careless errors. I found that, if I could keep my heart rate under 160 beats per minute for most of a match (this was often accomplished by moving slowly between points, taking the full allowable time at the change-over, and by lying my shoes frequently), it was very difficult to defeat me; if, however, a clever and or skilled opponent could move me enough to cause my heart rate to exceed that magic 160 mark, he would generally prevail

It struck me yesterday that Satan understands this very principle, and has often used it against me. If he can keep me busy and disconnected from my power source, he can generally defeat me at will. He understands that by moving me from side to side (enticing me with good things) that he can eventually run me out of breath. My own devotional life, including prayer, study, and meditation, are the ways that I slow my spiritual heart rate. My adversary will do most anything to rob me of that precious time.

"Yet the news about him spread all the more,
so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.
But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."
Luke 5:15-16 NIV

The Importance of Christian Fellowship

THE THREE PRIMARY PURPOSES OF OUR "MIND OF CHRIST" GROUPS

*The phrase "in Christ" appears 89 times in the NIV New Testament; the term "Christian" appears twice. My favorite expression for living in the Kingdom of God is having "the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:16)

We honor the Bible and hold to its inerrancy and infallibility as God's Word, but our purpose on earth is not to be "Bible Scholars" but to love God with every fiber of our being and our neighbor as our selves. Therefore, the objective of aH our small groups is to assist people to be "in Christ" and to have His "mind" by providing:

#1 - Physical, emotional, and spiritual health - "how are you doing?"
(Most of the really important things in life are fragile)

"Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise. Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:13-16 NIV

#2 - A venue where honest questions about matters of faith can be asked
(Jesus used people's legitimate questions as one of his primary teaching methods)

"As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Mark 10:17 NIV

#3 - A place for spiritual instruction
(The mind of Christ is generally both "taught and caught")

"As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." 1 Thessalonians 2:6-8 NIV

COVENANT GROUPS

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

I. The Purpose (1 Samuel 18:1-5)

To Promote:

A. Your safety. (spiritual, emotional, and physical)

B. Your growth in Christ. (personal holiness)

C. Your mission. (Kingdom service)

II. The Plan (Acts 2:42-43)

A. Get to know the Word {Christ} intimately. (memorize and meditate)

B. Get to know each other intimately. (share some meals)

C. Pray together for: one another, your families, your work/ministry, your community, your vision, etc.

D. Have fun together. Share some adventure regularly.

III. The Particulars (Proverbs 27:17)

A. Pick some men who love Jesus Christ, who believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, and who you like and respect. (having some hobbies in common doesn't hurt either)

B. Pick a time and place to meet. (the more private the better)

C. Pick some ground rules. (see sample Covenant on the back)

"A man without a small group of dose Christian friends who will love him enough to hold him accountable and encourage his spiritual growth is an accident waiting to happen."
Dr. Howard Hendricks

Covenants of Intimate Fellowship (Friendship)

1. **THE COVENANT OF LOVE (AGAPE):** I John 4:12, Colossians 3:12-14
   Your commitment to each individual in your group must be of the spirit that says: "Nothing you do or say will make me stop loving you."

2. **THE COVENANT OF AVAILABILITY:** Hebrews 10:24-25, John 15:13, 1 John 3:16
   Two commitments are sought after here:
   a. "I will be available, when humanly possible, each time our group meets"
   b. "I will make myself available to any member of our group whenever they are in need"

3. **THE COVENANT OF HUNTER:** John 15:7, 1 Timothy 2:1-3
   "I will pray for each member of our group consistently.

4. **THE COVENANT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:** 2 Corinthians 12:20, Proverbs 11:12-13, Proverbs 17:9
   "Understanding that the other points in this covenant are only possible in the security of a 'trust relationship,' I will, therefore, make the commitment to our group to share NOTHING outside of our group that has been shared inside our group or shared in private ministry with another member of our group."

5. **THE COVENANT OF OPENNESS:** James 5:16, 1 John 1:8-10
   "Understanding that I cannot know you and that you cannot know me unless we tell each other who we are. I will make the commitment to tell you who I am, both in my strengths and in my weaknesses."

6. **THE COVENANT OF SENSITIVITY:** Philippians 2:3-4, 1 Thessalonians 5:14
   "I will ask God to make me sensitive to the needs of each person in our group and I will consciously make the commitment to LISTEN to each person each time they speak, whether in words, actions, or attitudes."

7. **THE COVENANT OF HONESTY:** 1 John 3:18, Colossians 1:28-29, Acts 5:1-11
   "Understanding that 'speaking the truth in love' is both positive and constructive unto bodily growth. I will allow God to use me in our group's growth process by telling you when I agree and when I disagree."

8. **THE COVENANT OF ACCOUNTABILITY:** Philippians 2:2, Proverbs. 11:14, Galatians 5:13
   "It is my conviction that God has placed me in our group 'for building up the Body of Christ,' and that from time to time within our group it will be necessary for me to seek the mind of the Lord through the counsel and advice of our group. I will accept the responsibility for their counsel and advice and report to them what I have done with their collective wisdom."

A FREQUENT QUESTION ABOUT "THE CHURCH"

Church - NT: 1577 ekkleesia, ekklesias, hee
1. an assembly of the people called out from their homes convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberating: Acts 19:39 In the Christian sense, a. an assembly of Christians gathered for worship: 1 Corinthians 14:19,35 b. a company of Christians c. the whole body of Christians scattered throughout the earth; Matthew 16:18 d. the name is transferred to the assembly of faithful Christians already dead and received into heaven: Hebrews 12:23
(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon)

"Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds.
And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other,
especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near." Hebrews 10:24-25 NLT

Do I have to go to Church? The answer is ***yes***: in Hebrews 10:25 true believers are commanded not to neglect their regular "church meetings." But, to see this command as burdensome is truly missing the point It is much like observing a young child who protests the tasting of home-made ice cream for the first time because its appearance is unfamiliar. As with nearly every command in the Bible, God's charge to gather regularly is simply a gracious and caring Father looking after the best interests of his children. He wants us to be safe from the world and the devil; He wants us to grow and flourish in our walk with Him; and He desires that we would engage in eternally significant activities with our close friends in the body of Christ These three goals are most readily addressed by the fellowship of other believers in the setting that we call "church," Among the greatest benefits of yielding our lives to the Lord Jesus, are the rich, deep friendships now available to us. Regarding the actual format of church meetings, our wise father has allowed for great individuality. To continue our previous analogy, we believers have all been given the same wonderful "ice cream," but our Father allows us a choice of toppings. I acknowledge that all church bodies have problems. (Christ followers can still be mean and petty!) But, if we are honest in comparing the church with all other social organizations, we find that no other institution on earth accomplishes as much good for so many people. Pastor Bill Hybels of Willowcreek Church in Chicago is correct when he says "the local church is the hope of the world."

Below is a sample of the many services that a local church body provides to its congregation and its community on nearly a daily basis:

Corporate Worship	Spiritual Instruction	Mentoring Programs	Pastoral Care
Weddings	Funerals	Dedications/Baptisms	Discipleship
Child Care	Social Engagements	Recreational Opportunities	Evangelism
Children's Ministry	Hospital Visitation	Car & Home Care	Financial Aid
Addiction Programs	Community Service	Care for the Elderly & Ill	Missions Etc!!!

"They joined with the other believers and devoted themselves to the apostles? teaching and fellowship,
sharing in the Lord's Supper and in prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them (My and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47 NLT

The Importance of Sharing Out Faith

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

"Never change a winning game; always change a losing one." Coach Jim Verdic

A. Socrates summarized the essence of communication with three fascinating concepts that he called:

1. **Logos - content**, logic; do you know your subject?
2. **Pathos - compassion**, relationship; do you care?
3. **Ethos - character**, credentials; do you have peoples' esteem?

B. Ten ways to improve your communication with others:

Ask God to Help You:

1. Learn to remember names. A man's name is very important to him.

"A good name is more desirable than great riches;
to be esteemed is better than silver or gold." Proverbs 22:1 NIV

2. Become a comfortable person so there is no strain in being with you. Determine to rid yourself of the "irritating" elements of your personality.

"An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city,
and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel." Proverbs 18:19 NIV

3. Be humble. Guard against all forms of pride.

"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."
Luke 14:11 NIV

4. Cultivate the quality of being "interesting."

"Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them.
But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature,
and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:51-52 NIV

HOW TO GAIN THE ESTEEM OF OTHERS

1. Learn to remember names. Inefficiency at this point may indicate that your interest is not sufficiently outgoing. A man's name is very important to him.

2. Be a comfortable person so there is no strain in being with you ó be an old-shoe, old-hat kind of individual. Be homey.

3. Acquire the quality of relaxed easy-goingness so that things do not ruffle you.

4. Don't be egotistical. Guard against giving the impression that you know it all. Be natural and normally humble.

5. Cultivate the quality of being interesting so that people will want to be with you and get something of stimulating value from their association with you.

6. Study to get the "scratchy" elements out of your personality, even those of which you may be unconscious.

7. Sincerely attempt to heal, on an honest Christian basis, every misunderstanding you have had or now have. Drain off your grievances.

8. Practice liking people until you learn to do so genuinely. Remember what Will Rogers said, "I never met a man I didn't like." Try to be that way.

9. Never miss an opportunity to say a word of congratulation upon anyone's achievement, or express sympathy in sorrow or disappointment.

10. Get a deep spiritual experience so that you have something to give people that will help them to be stronger and meet life more effectively. Give strength to people and they will give affection to you.

The Power of Positive Thinking
BY NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

BECOMING A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN
"Being Yourself"

SIX STYLES OF EVANGELISM

1. Direct Style (also call confrontational)

- ***Biblical Example***
  Peter – Acts 2
- ***Theme Verse*** – 2 Timothy 4:2
  "Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage - with great patience and careful instruction."
- ***Characteristics***
  Confident assertive, direct, skips small talk, right to the point Strong opinions and convictions.
- ***Cautions***
  Be sure to use tact when confronting people with Truth to keep them from becoming unnecessarily offended.
- ***Contemporary Examples***
  Billy Graham, Chuck Colson, Greg Laurie

2. Intellectual Style

- ***Biblical Example***
  Paul – Acts 17
- ***Theme Verse*** – 2 Corinthians 10:5
  "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."
- ***Characteristics***
  Inquisitive, analytical, logical. Likes to debate. More concerned about what people think than what they feel.
- ***Cautions***
  Do not substitute giving answers for giving the Gospel message, and be careful of becoming argumentative.
- ***Contemporary Examples***
  Josh McDowell, Ravi Zacharias

3. Testimonial Style

- ***Biblical Example***
  Blind Man – John 9
- Theme Verse – 1 John 1:3a
  "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us..."
- ***Characteristics***
  Clear communicator, story teller, good listener. Vulnerable about personal life, its ups and downs. Overwhelmed by the way God reached them. Sees links between their own experience and that of other people's.
- ***Cautions***
  Beware of talking about yourself but not relating your experience to the other person's life. You first need to listen to them to be able to connect your story to their situation.
- ***Contemporary Examples***

4. Interpersonal Style

- ***Biblical Example***
  Matthew – Luke 5:29
- ***Theme Verse*** – 1 Corinthians 9:22
  "… have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some"
- ***Characteristics***
  Warm personality, conversational, compassionate, friendship-oriented. Focused on people and their needs.
- ***Cautions***
  Avoid valuing friendship over truth-telling. Presenting the Gospel often means challenging a person's whole direction in life, and that can mean causing friction in your relationship.
- ***Contemporary Examples***
  Joe Aldrich (Friendship Evangelism)

5. Serving Style

- ***Biblical Example***
  Dorcas – Acts 9
- ***Theme Verse*** – Matthew 5:16
  "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."
- ***Characteristics***
  Others-centered, humble, patient. Sees needs and enjoys meeting them. Shows love through actions more than words. Attaches value to even menial tasks.
- ***Cautions***
  Just as "words are no substitute for actions," "actions are no substitute for words." Romans 10:14 makes it clear that we must verbally tell the story of Jesus and His substitutionary death...and give people a chance to respond."
- ***Contemporary Examples***
  Mother Theresa, Jimmy Carter

6. Invitational Style

- ***Biblical Example***
  Woman at the Well – John 4
- ***Theme Verse*** – Luke 14:23
  "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full."
- ***Characteristics***
  Hospitable, relational, persuasive. Enjoys meeting new people. Sees the church service and outreach event as unique opportunities.
- ***Cautions***
  Careful not to always let others do your talking for you. You, *too*, need to "always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..." 1 Peter 3:15
- ***Contemporary Examples***
  Hard to know. These people stay out of the lime light.

HOW TO SHARE OUR FAITH WITH OTHERS

"The Method"

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." 1 Peter 3:15 NIV

The Big Idea: As "Christ ones" we are commanded to be willing and able to function as God's ambassadors of reconciliation.

Step 1 - Make sure you have *yielded* (surrendered) control of your life to Jesus.

Step 2 - Be prepared *always*

a. Spiritually (self-denial is the key)

1. Get to know the written Word, the Bible (study, memorize, and meditate)
2. Get to know the living Word, Jesus (solitude, silence, and prayer)

b. Intellectually

1. Prepare your personal testimony
2. Prepare some incisive questions
3. Learn the answers to their "likely" questions
4. Learn the basics of logic, history, and science ("you've got to read to lead")
5. Make "truth" your focus (many believe we are advocating simply one more psychological paradigm to improve our wretched lives)

c. Relationally

1. Learn to be a friend (win the right to be heard by meeting needs) Galatians 6:2
2. Learn to be a great listener James 1:19

Step 3 - Present our hope with gentleness and respect

1. Be kind, understanding, and patient, (you were here once)
2. Be humble (listen to your friend and to the Spirit)
3. Be bold and take control of the conversation (you have likely spent much more time framing your "world view" than has your friend

"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he who wins souls is wise." Proverbs 11:30 NIV

SHARE JESUS WITHOUT AN ARGUMENT

(Funnel Questions that Lead to the Scripture by William Fay)

*After each response from your friend, simply say ***"uh, huh"***

1. Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?

2. To you who is Jesus Christ?

3. Do you think there is a heaven and hell?
   a. If your friend says, ***"no"*** move on to question #4.
   b. If he says, ***"yes"*** ask, ***"If you were to Me tonight, where would you go?"***
   c. If he says, ***"to hell"*** or ***"I don't know"*** move on to question #4.
   d. If he says, ***"in Heaven"***, ask him, ***"Why do you think God would let you into Heaven?"***

4. If any of what you believe is not true, do you want to know it?

Any ***"no"*** response seldom sticks here, so pull out your "derringer" and have him read aloud the following Scriptures. After he reads each passage, ask him ***"what does it say to you?"*** If he says, ***"I don't know"*** or if you believe that he misunderstands it, simply say, ***"read it out loud again."*** Don't argue; stay out of God's way; simply be a "page turner" and allow the Holy Spirit to work!

1. Romans 3:23 **2. Romans 6:23** **3. Romans 5:8** **4. Romans 10:9-11**

Follow-up questions:
1. Do you believe you are a sinner? 2. Do you believe your sin makes you deserving of death (eternal separation form God)? 3. Do you believe that God made His perfect Son, Jesus, responsible for your sin and then punished Him for it on the Cross? 4. Do you believe thai God raised Jesus from the dead? 5. Is there anything keeping you from surrendering your life to Christ right now?

Principles to remember when sharing the "Good News"

- Evangelism should not be a project but a lifestyle (treat everyone with love and respect)
- We all feel inadequate and fear rejection - BE BOLD - God can't use your silence
- You can't fail if you share accurately and in love
- 7.6 exposures to the Gospel are generally required before a person yields to God
- Pre-Christians generally have two objections about our Bible - "its full of errors" and "'there are many translations"
- They generally have one objection about us- "Christians are hypocrites"
- They generally have one objection about God - "how could He allow evil?"
- Use your "derringer" when sharing not your "big boomer"
- High-light and mark to your satisfaction a small "sharing Bible"
- Relax, be yourself, and have fun - any results are God's deal, not yours.

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day." John 6:44

SHARING YOUR STORY

One of the best ways to witness is to tell your own testimony. The ways the Lord has changed your life is all you have to share initially. Below is a good way for you to learn to tell your story in three minutes or less.

On hearing your testimony, a person may be ready to respond immediately in faith. If not, you have given them a positive message that will leave an open door for further opportunity at a later date. Also, others follow by example. It will encourage those you disciple to complete this exercise as well.

> *"…always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."* 1 Peter 3:15

Ideas That Will Help You Write Your Story

- Write in your own words and make it personal.
- Do not use spiritual language. It is unfamiliar and can be offensive to an unbeliever. Use normal, everyday words!
- Try not to be impressive even if the Lord has done incredible things in your life. You want to relate to ordinary people in ordinary ways.

Answer the Following Questions

Your responses will help you formulate the thoughts that tell your story.

1. What was your life like before you received Christ? (i.e. relationships, lifestyle preferences, etc)
2. How did you hear the gospel and what about the message affected you?
3. What was your response to the message?
4. When did you make Jesus your boss?
5. How has He made a difference in your life? Name a few specific ways or changes?
6. What problems do you still struggle with, and how is God helping you have victory?

When you have prayed about and answered these questions, begin to organize your thoughts in three main paragraphs. This follows Paul's pattern outlined in his testimony to King Agrippa in Acts 26:1-23.

- **Paragraph one** should be a summary of what your life was like before you made Jesus your boss. Sometimes you will see a theme running throughout your life. If so, try to use some descriptive words like: lonely, empty, crazy, fast, good, normal, tiring, etc. to describe it.
- **Paragraph two** should be a statement of how you heard about Jesus, what you heard that led you to this decision and then how you responded.
- ***Paragraph three*** should cover how your life is different now that you have made Him your boss and have His Holy Spirit living within you.

GREAT QUESTIONS TO ASK PRE-CHRISTIANS

"But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is you, yet with gentleness and reverence." 1 Peter 3:15

"Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person." Colossians 4:5-6

Interested in obeying the commands set forth above, I have mused over the usefulness of good questioning and listening skills in sharing the Gospel one on one. Exercising my spiritual gift of plagiarism, I have polled and recorded the most useful questions employed by the those whom I believe to be among the most effective evangelists in Billings.

OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS USED TO KNOW YOUR FRIEND BETTER

1. Who is your best friend?
2. Who are some of your heroes?
3. What are you looking forward to?
4. Tell me about your family and growing up.
5. What are some of your goals for this year?
6. My hobby is prayer. How might I best pray for you?
7. What are the attributes you most admire in a person?
8. What is the most important thing you spend your money on?
9. What is your greatest achievement to date?
10. What is the most important thing you will leave behind when you die?
11. What will you want people to say about you at your funeral? If your funeral were today, what do you think people would say about you?
12. How do you think the world got to be in such a mess?
13. How do you think it all began?

More Serious, Probing Questions

1. Are you interested in spiritual matters?

2. If you were to die tonight, where would you be tomorrow?

3. Tell me about your spiritual pilgrimage to date, (or) Tell me about your spiritual heritage.

4. In your opinion who is Jesus Christ?

5. Describe your world view to me.

6. If you were to defend the claims of Christ, how would you go about it?

7. Why do you think we exist?

8. I am worried about you. You have so much going for you in this life, I am afraid you won't consider the next life in time and will spend eternity in hell. What do you think?

9. It has been said that Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord of the universe. Who do you think he was?

10. What is the worst thing you have ever done?

11. How often would you estimate that you sin each day? How about the very best of people? and the very worst? Do you think that ultimately God will grade on the curve?

12. Are you absolutely convinced that Jesus Christ is not who He said He is?

13. If you were to die tonight and were standing before God who asked you, "why should I let you in to my Heaven?", how would you respond?

14. Can you think of any problem in the world that isn't caused by people breaking the 10th Commandment (thou shall not covet)?

15. Have you had any dealings with the occult?

16. What does the term "Christian" mean to you?

17. What is it that really offends you about: the Bible? the Church? people who call themselves Christians?

Smoke Screen Removers

(Designed to lovingly expose flawed logic)

1. How many hours of study would you estimate you have spent in developing this (your) world view?

2. Could you point to one or two of the contradictions you see in the Bible?

3. Is there anything keeping you from bowing the knee to Jesus right now?

4. Tell me, why did you baptize your children? (or) Why do you celebrate Christmas?

**Certainly, as believers, we want to be led of the Spirit when we share our faith with others; however, too often we choose to be unprepared because we are either lazy or fearful. A doctor carefully plans his next surgery, the attorney labors long over his closing arguments, a professor reviews well for his classroom lecture, and the professional salesman comes to the boardroom with charts and graphs and his presentation well thought out. Yet, many of us who claim the name of Christ fail day after day to present his grace, not because "we planned to fail, but because we failed to plan". We have never thought through what we really believe about our Savior; we have never prepared our testimony; we have never developed good questions; and finally, we have never determined in our hearts to actively look for opportunities to witness for our Lord during each business day. From this day fourth may we encourage one another to be skilled and courageous warriors for Christ.

***Many thanks to the dozen or so brothers who took the time to help me assemble a tool to assist a number of young, zealous followers of Christ.

THE 3 STAGES IN MAKING A DISCIPLE

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 NLT

"A student is not greater than the teacher. But the student who works hard will become like the teacher." Luke 6:40 NLT

What should happen to a person after "getting saved?" Ephesians 2:2-10

He becomes a disciple who is first a

#1 LEARNER - HELPER

Romans 12:1-2
("Getting Well" - learning what God thinks about life)
Characterized by a devotion to prayer, the Word, intimate fellowship, holiness, and worship.

then a

#2 WORKER - INFLUENCED

Matthew 9:37-38
("Getting Going" - becoming an active part of the "discipleship process")
Characterized by a passion for sharing the Gospel and bearing the burdens of others.

and sometimes, as God directs and provides, a

#3 LEADER-VISIONARY

2 Timothy 2:2
("Getting Others Going" - becoming a completely committed Christ follower)
Characterized by initiative, personal vision, the ability to motivate others, and single-mindedness in his efforts to serve God's Church and further His Kingdom.

Our Approach to Making Disciples:
"So everywhere we go, we tell everyone about Christ We warn them and teach them with all the wisdom God has given us, for we want to present them to God, perfect in then relationship to Christ I work very hard at this, as I depend on Christ's mighty power that works within me." Colossians 1:28-29 NLT

"We loved you so much that we gave you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too." 1 Thessalonians 2:8 NLT

BITESIZE THEOLOGY

"You need to know what to believe before you can understand what to do."

- **God** - The Lord -Yahweh - "I AM" -the self-existent one who wants to be with me for my good forever. Your God "Elohim"-the strong creator; the one true God - majestic and mighty; the creator of everything; the father of all mankind. He is holy (Psalm 99:9), good (Psalm 145:9,15-16), and loving (Romans 5:6-8). God is omniscient [all knowing], omnipresent [all present], omnipotent [all powerful], and omnificent [all creative] (Job 23:13). He is sovereign and so has absolute rule and authority of God over His creation (1 Chronicles 29:11-12).

- **Jesus** - He is the son of God (Hebrews 1:3) and the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over aH creation (Colossians 1:15-16), He was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:20) and is both folly man (Hebrews 2:14-17) and fully God (Colossians 2:9).

- **The Holy Spirit** - Just as Jesus is God so also the Holy Spirit is God. The ministries of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are all essential for our salvation. The Father planned it, the Son purchased it and the Holy Spirit applies it to us (John 3:5-8, John 16:8). The Father draws us to Christ (John 6:44), and then the Holy Spirit gives us gifts and fruit (1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Galatians 5:22-23).

- **The Trinity** - A word used to describe the wonderful mystery that the one true God exists in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is not a matter for debate or even attempted explanation, but for a reverent acceptance (1 Peter 1:2).

- **Sin** - To fell short of the standard God has set; to "miss the mark". Transgress means to trespass outside the boundaries God has set (Romans 3:23). Iniquity means crookedness, not straight, moral distortion, and refers to our nature (Psalm 32:1-2).

- **Original Sin** -A term used to denote the effect of Adam's sin upon the moral life of his descendants (Romans 5:12,19: Ephesians 2:1-3).

- **Depravity** - The human condition which is marked by corruption or evil; perverted; turned away from what is right or good; obstinate in opposing what is right, reasonable, or accepted (Jeremiah 17:9-10; Isaiah 64:6; James 2:10-11).

- **Atonement** - God's planned answer to human sin whereby He blamed [imputed] our sin on His perfect Son, Jesus, and then punished Him for it (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

- **Propitiation** - On the cross Jesus, bearing our sin and guilt, faced the wrath of God instead of us and paid fully on our behalf the debt we owed to the broken law of God. The wrath of God fell upon Jesus, our substitute, instead of upon us (1 Peter 3:19).

- **Grace** - This God showing goodness, mercy, and unmerited favor to a people who deserve only judgment and condemnation (Ephesians 2:8-9).

- **Regeneration** - In this God gives new life, spiritual life, to those who are dead in sin (Titus 3:5).
- **Repentance** - The sinner, conscious of his guilt and aware of God's mercy in Christ, turns from his sin to God (Acts 3:19; Acts 26:20).
- **Faith** - This is trust in Christ as he is offered to us in the gospel. It is the channel by which salvation comes to us and is, itself, given us by God (Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:1-6).
- **Reconciliation** - Means the ending of enmity and the making of peace and friendship between persons previously opposed. God and men were at enmity with each other by reason of men's sins; but God has acted in Christ to reconcile sinners to Himself though the cross (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).
- **Redemption** - Means to set someone free from captivity or slavery by the payment of a ransom price. We are redeemed from the slavery of sin by the blood of Jesus (Romans 6:20-22).
- **Justification** - Only God can justify; we cannot justify ourselves. He does so when he clothes the guilty sinner in the righteousness of Christ and then declares that person to be acceptable to him because of Jesus (Romans 3:22-25)
- **Adoption** -A term that Paul borrowed from &e first-century Roman legal system. In this system of law the adopted person was given the right to the name and property of the person who had adopted him. From a position of not belonging and having no rights he became a son with a father. His relationship and standing was changed and this change was brought about at the instigation of the adopting father (Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:15-17).
- **Sanctification** - This is a process by which the Christian is purified in heart and mind; to be made holy; set apart for God's use (1 Corinthians 6:11).
- **Election** - Election simply means that God saves specific individuals (Ephesians 1:4).
- **Eternal security** - Not only are we saved by the grace of God but also we cannot lose that salvation. So we are eternally secure (John 10:25-30; 1 Corinthians 1:4-9).
- **Pride** - An exalted view of oneself. Pride is a focus on oneself that is expressed in thoughts, attitudes, words and actions (Psalm 101:5; Psalm 18:27).
- **Humility** - Meekness; power under control; the willingness to be known for who we are (Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6).

"because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." Hebrews 10:14 NIV



Covered in the Dust OF OUR RABBI

PART TWO:
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

TEN REASONS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE:

1. The Bible yields food for the soul. It has the milk necessary for the spiritual growth of the babe, and strong meat to sustain the older, mature Christian. (See 1 Peter 2:1-2; Hebrews 5:12-14)

2. A knowledge of the truth and obedience it is necessary to be made free from sin. (See John 8:31-32; 1 Peter 1:22)

3. The Bible reveals God's view of man. It enables the student to see himself as God sees him, for the Bible is God's mirror of the soul. (See James 1:21-25)

4. A working knowledge of the Bible arms one against the difficulties and hardships of life. It has a message to cover every condition and problem. It can be used in every emergency from the cradle to the grave. (See Romans 15:4)

5. The knowledgeable Christian is able to comfort and edify the discouraged and brokenhearted. (See Colossians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 4:14)

6. The Scriptures contain all good works that are pleasing to God, and give all things that pertain to life and godliness. (See 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3)

7. One must study the Bible to have the approval of God, to be a ready workman, and to handle aright the Word of truth. (See 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15)

8. A knowledge of the Bible is the only safeguard against fatal error. (See Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1)

9. The Scriptures are able to build us up and to give us a home in heaven. (See Acts 20:32; 2 Timothy 3:15)

10. The Bible will be our standard of judgment in the last day. (See John 12:48; Revelation 20:12).

DAVID J. RIGGS

INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

(*"In da Bible"* - the study method where the Bible is its own best commentary)

Tools Needed:

- A good translation of the Bible in a study Bible format - ie. NIV Study Bible
- An exhaustive concordance in that translation
- A Bible dictionary - ie. New Unger's Bible Dictionary
- A map of the area being studied
- A Greek/Hebrew dictionary - ie. Strongs Greek/Hebrew Dictionary
- A cross reference tool - ie. The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge
- A good commentary - ie. The Bible Knowledge Commentary

*__Note__ - comprehensive and inexpensive computer programs now exist that contain these and many more reference tools - ie. PC Study Bible and Quick Verse

Inductive Bible study as taught by Precept Ministry involves three phases:

I. OBSERVATION - Repetition is very important to grasping the Word

A. Know the context
B. Mark the people (develop your own marking system)
C. Make lists
D. Underline key words
E. Mark references to time
F. Mark geographical places
G. Use maps
H. Make an "at a glance chart"

II. INTERPRETATION - For each passage ask the 5 W and 1 H questions (the six "honest serving men")

A. Ask:
1. **Who** are the featured persons in this section of Scripture?
2. **What** is the progression of events?
3. **Where** are the events taking place?
4. **When** are the events taking place?
5. **Why** are the events taking place? (the motives involved)
6. **How** does the action of the story effect the participants?

B. Look up cross references
C. Read a good commentary or two on the passage
D. Do a word study of key words

III. APPLICATION - What are the "timeless principles" in the passage and how do I apply them to my life? (Knowing God will transform you life!)

SIXTEEN OTHER IMPORTANT BIBLE STUDY METHODS

(Many of these are *topical* studies. All of those listed below, however, may be applied to a passage, a book, or the entire Bible)

1. ***The Synthetic Method*** - reading a book through several times emphasizing a different aspect of study; ie. geographical, historical, doctrinal, etc.

2. ***The Analytical Method*** - diagramming the grammar of a passage, outlining the text, making observations on the text

3. ***The Critical Method*** - studying to determine authorship, recipients, dates, etc.

4. ***The Biographical Method*** - determining the biographical facts concerning a Biblical personality

5. ***The Historical Method*** - determining what life was like at the time and in the area under consideration

6. ***The Theological Method*** - the consideration of the explicit doctrinal teaching

7. ***The Literary Study of the Bible*** - the aesthetic appreciation of its incredible poetry and prose

8. ***The Rhetorical Method*** - the study of the figures of speech in a passage; ie. metaphors, similes, etc.

9. ***The Geographical Method*** - the comprehensive study of a specific area of land

10. ***The Sociological Method*** - examining the people in a particular passage and how they relate to one another

11. ***The Political Method*** -the study of the governments involved

12. ***The Cultural Method*** - studying the religion, science, music, art, architecture, literature, and language of a culture discussed

13. ***The Scientific Method*** - examining the plants, animals, and minerals mentioned

14. ***The Philosophical Method*** - studying to find what God has already said about the problems common to man

15. ***The Psychological Method*** - studying a book to determine the basis of our conduct

16. ***The Devotional Method*** - simply reading and enjoying the text with a spirit of eagerness and humility

Scripture **Observation** **Application** **Prayer**

FEEDING ON GOD'S WORD

"Be careful to obey all the commands I am giving you today. Then you will live and multiply, and you will enter and occupy the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors. Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for forty years, humbling you an testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would really obey his commands. Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people need more than bread for life, real life comes by feeding on every word of the Lord." Deuteronomy 8:1-3 NLT

BIG IDEA: If you want to grow as a disciple of Jesus you will have to learn to feed on God's Word by learning to "THINK!"

Time

- Your spiritual passion and health will always be directly proportional to your time in the Word.

"Remember this - a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop." 2 Corinthians 9:6 (NLT)

Hearing

"As you enter the house of God keep your ears open and your mouth shut! Don't be a fool who doesn't realize that mindless offerings to God are evil. And don't make rash promises to God, for he is in heaven, and you are only here on earth. So let your words be few. Just as being too busy gives you nightmares, being a fool makes you a blabbermouth." Ecclesiastes 5:1-3 (NLT)

- God wants to speak to *you* through His Word (the Bible), so remember to maintain a listening attitude.

Investigation

Ask questions of the text you are studying (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How).

Notes

- See the following page for more details.

Keep it in Front of You

- Pray.
- Memorize.
- Meditate - chew on it.

"In the Bible, the opposite of ignorance is obedience, not knowledge." - Howard Hendrichs

IDEAS TO HELP YOU INVESTIGATE AND TAKE NOTES

1. Read text many times.
- In as many translations as possible.

2. Make observations (who, what, when, where, why, how).
- Asking questions will help.

3. Look up key words.

4. Paraphrase the text...
- Re-write the text using your own words but without changing the message of the text.

5. Outline the text.

6. Draw a PICTURE OF THE TEXT.

7. Check commentaries to see if you are on track.
- Try to really wait this long before you consult a commentary.

8. Write the Big Idea of the text.

ADAM HUSCHKA

RULES OF INTERPRETATION

1. Work from the assumption that the Bible is authoritative.

a. A person acts in an authoritative manner, and the passage explains whether the act is approved or disapproved. John 17:17

b. A person acts in an authoritative manner and the passage does not indicate approval or disapproval. 2 John 3:16; Genesis 12:10-20

c. God or one of His representatives states the mind and will of God.

2. The Bible interprets itself; Scripture best explains Scripture. Acts 4:19; Romans 3:4

a. Where the Bible is explicit we are bound.

b. Where the Bible is silent, we are free, but not to conflict with a known Bible principle.

c. Implied principle must have consistent application.

d. Doctrinal sections of scripture take interpretive precedence over cultural/historical passages.

3. Saving faith and the Holy Spirit are necessary for us to understand and properly interpret the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 2:14

4. Interpret personal experience in the light of Scripture and not Scripture in the light of personal experience. 2 Corinthians 5:7; Romans 3:4

a. Full interpretive meaning must come from: the text, the context, the cultural setting.

5. Biblical examples are authoritative only when supported by a command. 1 Corinthians 4:6

a. The believer is free to do anything that the Bible does not prohibit.

6. The primary purpose of the Bible is to change our lives, not to increase our knowledge. James 1:22, 25

a. Some passages are not to be applied in the same way they were applied at the time they were written.

b. When you apply a passage it must be in keeping with a correct interpretation.

7. Each Christian has the right and responsibility to investigate and interpret the Word of God for himself. Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15

8. Church history is important but not decisive in the interpretation of Scripture. Matthew 15:3-6

a. The church does not determine what the Bible teaches; the Bible determines what the church teaches.

9. The promises of God throughout the Bible are available to the Holy Spirit for the believers of every generation.

a. Guidelines for promises given to specific people at specific times:

1. The Spirit of God gives them to individual Christians at particular times in their lives as He chooses.
2. Promises are often conditional and the condition is obedience.
3. The Holy Spirit of God is sovereign.
4. Do not prejudge the Lord as to when and how the promise will be fulfilled in your life.
5 . God gives His promises to make you more dependent on Him, not independent.
6. God's intent is to glorify Himself by giving you promises.

NEW TOPICAL MEMORY SYSTEM

THE NAVIGATORS
To Know Christ and to Make Him Known

A. Live the New Life

Christ the Center	2 Corinthians 5:17	Galatians 2:20
Obedience to Christ	Romans 12:1	John 14:21
The Word	2 Timothy 3:16	Joshua 1:8
Prayer	John 15:7	Philippians 4:6-7
Fellowship	Matthew 18:20	Hebrews 10:24-25
Witnessing	Matthew 4:19	Romans 1:16

B. Proclaim Christ

All have sinned	Romans 3:23	Isaiah 53:6
Sin's penalty	Romans 6:23	Hebrews 9:27
Christ paid penalty	Romans 5:8	1 Peter 3:18
Salvation not by works	Ephesians 2:8-9	Titus 3:5
Must receive Christ	John 1:12	Revelation 3:20
Assurance of salvation	1 John 5:13	John 5:24

C. Rely on God's Resources

His Spirit	1 Corinthians 3:16	1 Corinthians 2:12
His strength	Isaiah 41:10	Philippians 4:13
His faithfulness	Lamentations 3:22-23	Numbers 23:19
His peace	Isaiah 26:3	1 Peter 5:7
His provision	Romans 8:32	Philippians 4:19
His help in temptation	Hebrews 2:18	Psalm 119:9-11

D. Be Christ's Disciple

Put Christ first	Matthew 6:33	Luke 9:23
Separate from the world	1 John 2:15-16	Romans 12:2
Be steadfast (loyal)	1 Corinthians 15:58	Hebrews 12:3
Serve others	Mark 10:45	2 Corinthians 4:5
Give generously	Proverbs 3:9-10	2 Corinthians 9:6-7
Develop world vision	Acts 1:8	Matthew 28:19-20

E. Grow in Christ-likeness

Love	John 13:34-35	1 John 3:18
Humility	Philippians 2:3-4	1 Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Ephesians 5:3	1 Peter 2:11
Honesty	Leviticus 19:11	Acts 24:16
Faith	Hebrews 11:6	Romans 4:20-21
Good works	Galatians 6:9-10	Matthew 5:16

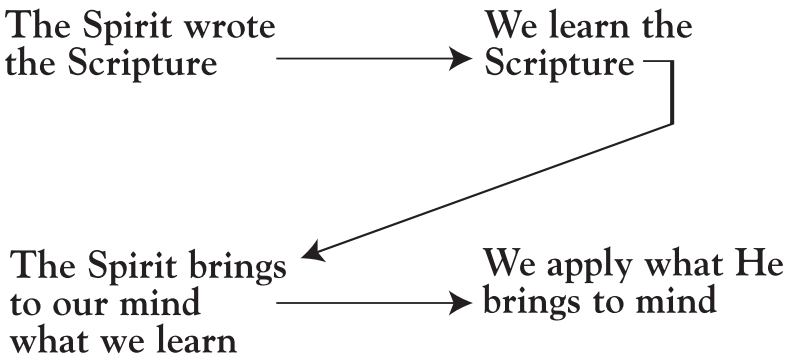
HOW TO MEMORIZE A VERSE EFFECTIVELY

GUIDELINES OR MEMORIZING A VERSE OF SCRIPTURE

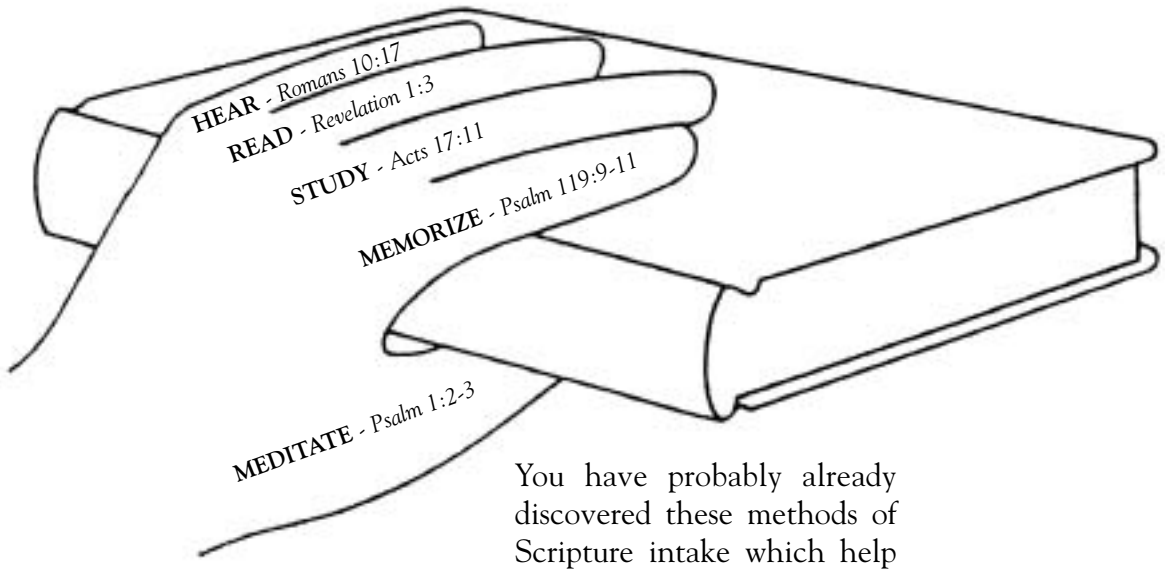
1. Before you start to memorize the verse, read it aloud several times.
2. Learn the topic, reference, and the first phrase as a unit.
3. After you have reviewed the topic, reference, and first phrase a few times, add the second phrase. Gradually add phrases until you know the whole verse.
4. Work on the verses audibly whenever possible.
5. As you memorize and review the verse, think about how it applies to your own life.
6. Always review the verse in this sequence:
   a. TOPIC: "Assurance of Salvation"
   b. REFERENCE: "First John five, eleven and twelve"
   c. VERSE(S): "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has die Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."
   d. REFERENCE: "First John five, eleven and twelve"
7. a. The most critical element in scripture memory is REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW. The most important time to review a verse repeatedly is right after you can quote the whole verse (topic, reference, verse, reference) without making a mistake. Review the verse a minimum of once daily after that, preferably several times a day. The more you review the greater your retention.
   b. The most important concept is the principle of OVERLEARNING. A verse should not be considered memorized simply at the point when we can quote it accurately. Only when we have reviewed it frequently enough for it to become *ingrained* in our memory should we consider a verse memorized.

Only in the Word of God. Discipline toward holiness begins then with the Scriptures–with a disciplined plan for regular intake of the Scriptures and a disciplined plan for applying them to our daily lives.

Here our cooperation with the Holy Spirit is very clear. A diagram of our interaction with the Spirit looks like this:



THE HAND ILLUSTRATION



You have probably already discovered these methods of Scripture intake which help you get a firm grasp on God's Word.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDITATION

Meditation is prayerful reflection with a view to understanding and application. The goal is to conform your life to God's will by giving prayerful thought to God's Word and to your life.

THE NAVIGATORS
To Know Christ and to Make Him Known

INTIMATE FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

(The key to everything good)

"Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend." James 2:21-23 NIV

I. The purpose of the Gospel is friendship

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

II. Why develop a deep friendship with God?

BECAUSE:

a. I love Him and am grateful that he saved me -1 John 4:19

b. I need His healing touch - Psalm 139:23-24

c. I need His guidance - Proverbs 3:5-6

d. I want to finish and finish strong - 2 Peter 1:3-4

III. Objections - Why I can't enjoy quality time with God?

a. Too many demands on my time - Matthew 6:33

b. Can't understand my Bible - John 14:26

c. My mind wanders - Romans 12:1-2

IV. How to have a "Quiet Time" with God

a. Pick a place

b. Pick a time

c. Pick a plan

d. Work on you plan (Vary your plan from time to time)

V. A Sample Plan - (Our ultimate goal - at least 60 minutes with God)

a. Ingest the "Logos" (the written Word) - 1/4

b. Meditate on a passage - 1/4

c. Devote yourself to "Listening Prayer" - 1/2

Ask your loving Father specific questions and by faith expect a rehma - a personal word from God for you - James 1:5-8. (Note: A true *rehma* will never contradict God's written Word)

MY FAVORITE QUESTIONS:

FATHER,

- What do you want to discuss with me today?
- Have I offended you in anyway?
- How could I be a better husband/wife?
- How could I be a better dad/mom?
- How could I be a better friend?
- Is there someone you would have me contact today?

"We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power.
We have a great deal of activity but we accomplish little;
many services but few conversions; much machinery but few results."
R.A. Torrey

SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITIES

(even harsh, unbelieving ones)

* **SUBMIT** - *hupeiko* - NT:5226; to yield; to obey

*"**Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority** instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king. **Slaves, submit yourselves to Your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.** For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God, But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps."* 1 Peter 2:13-21 NIV

*"**Wives, in the same way be submissive** to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the ward, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. **Husbands, in the same mm be considerate as you live with your wives,** and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers. **Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers. be compassionate and humble.** Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."* 1 Peter 3:1-9 NIV

Some Legitimate Exceptions to the Submission Principle:

Exodus 1:15-21 - The Egyptian Midwives refused to kill the Hebrew boys.
Daniel 6: 1-12 - Daniel refused to cease from praying to his God.
Acts 5:40-42 - The Apostles refused to stop preaching the Gospel.

WOMEN IN SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP
(Scriptures from the NIV)

The Questions We Hope to Answer from the New Testament

1. Can a woman be the lead pastor (teaching elder) of a church? Can she be an overseer (elder) or a deacon?
2. What leadership roles are women specifically allowed?
3. What principles can be gleaned about the complimentary roles of men and women in the Body of Christ?

*God's Love and Concern for Women: Numbers 30:3-15; 1 Peter 3:7

The Qualifications of Overseers and Deacons

1 Timothy 3 1-12

*"Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, **the husband of but one wife**, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover o money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of Gods church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fell into disgrace and into the devil's trap. **Deacons**, likewise, **are to be men worthy of respect**. Sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if here is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well."*

Women to Be Silent and in Submission

1 Corinthians 14:33-35

*"As in all the congregations of the saints, **women should remain silent in the churches**. **They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says**. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church."*

1 Timothy 2:8-15

*"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disrupting. I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. **A woman should learn in quietness and full submission.** I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing-if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."*

1 Corinthians 11:2-5

*"I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you. Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ,**and the head of the woman is man**, and the head of Christ is God. Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head-it is just as though her head were shaved."*

The Diverse and Vitally Important Roles of Woman Indicated in the New Testament

Acts 2: 18

*"Even on my servants, **both men and women**, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."*

Acts 21:8-9
"Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. ***He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.***"

Galatians 3:28-29
"***There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*** *If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*

Luke 8: 1-3
"After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God, The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been oared of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. ***These women were helping to support them out of their own means.***"

John 20: 16-18
"***Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher)****. Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her."*

Romans 16:1-2
"***I commend to you our sister Phoebe****, a servant of the church in Cenchrea. I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me. Greet* ***Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. They risked their lives for me.*** *Not only I but al the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them."*

Philippians 4:2-3
"I plead with ***Euodia*** *and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow,* ***help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel****, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."*

Colossians 4:15
"Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to ***Nympha and the church in her house.***"

Acts 16:13-15
"On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the woman who had gathered there. One of those listening was a woman named ***Lydia****, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized,* ***she invited us to her home.*** *"If you consider me a believer in the Lord,n she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us."*

Acts 9:36
"In Joppa there was a disciple named ***Tabitha*** *(which, when translated, is Dorcas),* ***who was always doing good and helping the poor.***"

Titus 2:3-5
"Likewise, ***teach the older women*** *to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good.* ***Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.***"

HEALING FOR THE EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED

Making a Proper Placement

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."
Galatians 5:19-21 NIV

I. The Most Common Anti-social Conditions

(These make personal contentment and living and working with others very difficult)

A. Anxiety disorders
B. Childhood disorders
C. Eating disorders
D. Mood disorders like:
   1. Bipolar syndrome
   2. Depression
E. Cognitive disorders like dementia
F. Personality disorders
G. Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders
H. Substance related disorders
I. Demonic influence (Ephesians 4:27)
J. Simply "living according to the sinful nature" (Romans 8:5)

II. Potential Causes

(Generally emotional imbalances are caused by a trauma in the past, a medical problem or by sin (a breach of the 10 Commandments). Often the problem is caused by a combination of the above three.

A. ***Trauma***: ie. accidental violence or intentional violence (abuse)

B. ***Medical Problems***: ie. illness (including glandular dysfunctions that cause chemical imbalances); poor nutrition and hydration; lack of exercise

C. ***Sin***: ie. idolatry (addictions), broken relationships with parents, murder, sexual sin, greed, deception, or unforgiveness

III. Potential Remedies

A. Confession and repentance
B. Making changes in diet, exercise, rest, and hydration
C. Professional therapy,
D. Mood altering drugs
E. surgery

I believe the key question to ask oneself is: "If I were to be reconciled to God today and began to comply to His commandments, do I sense that I would feel and behave significantly better? "The answer to this question will likely determine which remedies you should pursue. If the answer is "yes," then Bible based guidance will likely be very helpful. If the answer is "no," we would suggest that you meet with a licensed mental health care provider. *(a list is provided below)*

Local Licensed Professionals We Know and Respect

1. Robert Bakko - 259-6161
2. Robert "Biff" Hagstrom - 245-4005
3. Phil House - 254-4464
4. Diana Krumm - 254-1616
5. Virginia Rightmier - 252-1444
6. Linda Rykowski - 252-8985

*Chemical Dependency/Compulsive Behavior Treatment Center - Rimrock Foundation - 248-3175

Galatians 5:22-26 NIV

"But the unit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we lie by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."

Psalm 38:1-18 NIV

"For I am about to fall, and my pain is ever with me. I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin."

2 Corinthians 7:9-12 NIV

"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.
"No matter what the malady, I have never seen anyone completely healed of their emotional problems and freed from the conflicts that they produce, until they stopped blaming others and took responsibility for their own sinful behaviors." FMN

Definitions of the key terms related to repentance:

1. **Repent** - metanoeo NT:3340 "to change one's mind or purpose," always, in the NT, involving a change for the better, an amendment, "repentance" from sin.

2. **Confess** - homologeo NT:3670 "to assent, accord, agree with," denotes, (a) "to confess, declare, admit," "to confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of: the result of inward conviction," "to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts."

3. **Sorrow** -NT:3077 lupe (loo'-pay); "sadness, grief, heaviness."

4. **Hardness of Heart** - NT:4641 sklerokardia (sklay-rok-ar-dee'-ah) "destitution of (spiritual) perception."

"Until I understand my own depravity,
I will never truly be grateful for Christ's atonement,
and I will always be surprised by the sin of others,
and often be overwhelmed by it" FMN

WORSHIP THAT PLEASES GOD

(From The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren)

"Jesus replied, The most important commandment is this: Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is the one and only Lord. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul all your mind, and all your strength."
Mark 12:29-30 NLT

I. Worship that pleases God:

A. Is Accurate - John 4:23

B. Is Authentic - 1 Samuel 16:7b

C. Is Thoughtful - 1 Corinthians 14:40

D. Is Practical - Romans 12:1

II. 9 Worship Styles

Gary Thomas indicates in his book, Sacred Pathways, that many Christians seem stuck in a worship rut–an unsatisfying routine – instead of having a vibrant friendship with God, because they force themselves to use devotional methods or worship styles that don't fit the way God uniquely shaped them. He wondered, *if God intentionally made us all different, why should everyone be expected to love God in the same way?* As he read Christian classics and interviewed mature believers, Gary discovered that Christians have used many different paths for 2,000 years to enjoy intimacy with God: being outdoors, studying, singing, reading, dancing, creating art, serving others, having solitude, enjoying fellowship, and participating in dozens of other activities. Here are 9 ways people draw near to God:

A. **Naturalists** are most inspired to love God out-of-doors.
B. **Sensates** love God with their senses and appreciate beautiful worship services that involve their senses.
C. **Traditionalists** draw closer to God through rituals, liturgies, symbols, and unchanging structures.
D. **Ascetics** prefer to love God in solitude and simplicity.
E. **Activists** love God through confronting evil, battling injustice and working to make the world a better place.
F. **Caregivers** love God by loving others and meeting their needs.
G. **Enthusiasts** love God through celebration.
H. **Contemplatives** love God through adoration.
I. **Intellectuals** love God by studying with their minds.

"Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand." Romans 14:4 NAS

KEEP YOUR BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT FIT

(Sharpening the Saw)

1 Thessalonians 5:23

I. Dull Tools and the Tyranny of the Urgent (see matrix on following page)

II. The Body (our Cadillac) - 1 Corinthians 6:19

A. Put high octane fuel in the tank - Daniel 1:9-21

B. Get some exercise (No real concern in Bible times - everyone walked a lot!)

C. Get some rest ("Fatigue makes cowards of us all" - General George Patton) Mark 6:30-32

1. Get some good sleep (watching less T.V. often helps here)

2. Take some time to "smell the roses"

III. The Soul (the intellect and the emotions)

A. Spend time with your family (we were designed to function best in a family) - Ephesians 5:22-33; Ephesians 6:4)

1. Mentoring (you are called to be the "high priest" of your family) - Deuteronomy 6:4-15 VIP

2. Having fun (what are their favorite activities to do with you?) *If your child is age 9, over 1/2 of their life <u>with you</u> is over!

B. **Develop a small group of intimate friends and spend time with them in "communion" in Jesus Christ.** (giving a share/receiving a share) - Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

C. Give 100% at work (then leave work at work) - Ecclesiastes 9:10

D. Find a hobby (one that refreshes and recreates you and makes sense for you in regard to your family, work, and ministry) - 2 Timothy 2:4

E. Update your education (raise year value to society) - Proverbs 22:29

1. Always be a beginner at something

2. You have to read to lead

IV. The Spirit (that which is God breathed) - John 20:22

A. Have a summit meeting with Jesus everyday - Joshua 1:8 VIP

B. Find a niche where you can serve God by serving others (we were designed to wear out; not rust out) - Romans 15:1-2

The Time Management Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	**#1** **Activities** • Crises • Pressing problems • Deadline - driven projects	**#2** **Activities** • Prevention of problems • Relationships building • Recognizing new opportunities • Planning, recreation
NOT IMPORTANT	**#3** **Activities** • Interruptions, some calls • Some mail, some reports • Same meetings • Proximate, pressing matters • Popular activities	**#4** **Activities** • Trivia, busy work • Some mail • Some phone calls • Time wasters • Pleasant matters

OVER-EMPHASIS IN A QUADRANT RESULTS IN:

- **Quadrant 1:** Stress and burnout
- **Quadrant 2:** Vision, perspective, balance, discipline, control, few crises
- **Quadrant 3:** Short term focus, crisis management, sees plans and goals as worthless, shallow on broken relationships
- **Quadrant 3 & 4:** Total irresponsibility, fired from jobs

"Always be joyful. Keep on praying. No matter what happens, always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT

MY DAILY T–CHART

(To whom will I give this day?)

SATAN	JESUS

"Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand in the place of honor and power. Let heaven your thoughts. Do not think only about things down here on earth. For you died when Christ died, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your real life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory." Colossians 3:1-4 NLT

NOT MY WILL BUT GOD'S

(God is interested in our holiness not our happiness)

"Let a man set his heart only on the will of God, and he is instantly free… If we understand our first and sole duty to consist of loving God supremely and loving everyone, even our enemies, for God's dear sake, then we can enjoy spiritual tranquility under every circumstance."
A.W. Tozer

"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."
Micah 6:8 NIV

"One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."
Matthew 22:35-40 NIV

"Father, if you me willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done."
Luke 22:42 NIV

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."
John 14:18-21 NIV

"So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."
2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NIV

GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR LIFE IN CHRIST

(The Discipline of Fasting)

"So our aim is to please him always, whether we are here in this body or away from this body. For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in our bodies." 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NLT

- **WHAT IS FASTING?** Fasting is voluntarily abstaining from <u>food</u> for a period of time in order to <u>focus</u> on God. (*"Fasting is the intercontinental ballistic missile of the Christian faith."* Derek Prince)

- **ARE TRUE BELIEVERS REQUIRED TO FAST?** There is no direct commandment is Scripture, but Jesus assumes His followers will fast.

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:16-48 NIV

- **ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF FASTS?** Several!

WHO:	Private Fasts Matthew 6:16-18 "Solo"	Congregational Fasts Joel 2:25-16 "A Certain Group"	National Fasts 2 Chronicles 20:3 "A Country"

HOW:	Partial Fasts Daniel 1:12 "Restricted Diet"	Normal Fasts Matthew 4:2 "Water Only"	Absolute Fasts Ester 4:16 "No Food or Water"	Supernatural Fasts Deuteronomy 9:9 "Absolute Fasts Over 3 Days"

WHEN:	Occasional Fasts Matthew 9:15 "As God Leads"	Regular Fasts Leviticus 16:29-31 "Scheduled & Planned"

- **ARE THERE ANY CAUTIONS?** Absolutely! **AVOID:** 1. Seeking the approval of others; 2. Worldly influences during your fast, ie. T.V., magazines, etc; 3. Over-eating before and after your fast (the hibernating grizzly syndrome)

Fasting done appropriately has health benefits, but it isn't a diet plan!

- **HOW DO I GET STARTED?** 1. Be convinced; 2. Determine the type and the length of your fast (write it down); 3. Determine three to five things that will be your prayer focus for that particular fast (write them down); 4. Prepare yourself spiritually; 5. Prepare yourself physically; 6. Use your extra time to pray and meditate on God's Word; 7. Start small, practice, and don't give up

- **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF FASTING?**

"Show me a man with an addiction (idol), and I will show you a man who demands reliable pleasure and who is angry (frustrated) with an unmanageable God." Dr. Larry Crabb

"So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that alter preaching to others I myself might be disqualified." 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 NLT

- **VIP - BIBLICAL FASTING IS OFTEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO:**

1. Express repentance and seek spiritual revival - Joel 2:12

2. Strengthen prayer - Ezra 8:32

3. Provide protection or deliverance from one's enemies - 2 Chronicles 20:3-4

4. Minister to the needs of others - Isaiah 58:6-7

5. Express love and worship for your Heavenly Father - Luke 2:37

6. Seek God's guidance - Judges 20:26

7. Overcome temptation and dedicate yourself to God - Matthew 4:1-11

"Then John's disciples came and asked him, 'How is it that we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?' Jesus answered 'How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; ***THEN THEY WILL FAST.***" Matthew 9:14-15 NIV

GRATITUDE
Colossians 3:16

I. "The mother of all virtues is gratitude." G.K. Chesterton

A. People are Depressed

1. The Symptoms

2. The Reasons

B. They Want a Concerned Friend to Listen

II. Three Common Characteristics of the Consistently Happy

A. Integrity

B. Kindness

C. Gratitude

III. Gratitude - Webster Defines It As: " Being Appreciative of Benefits Received"

* My Oldest Daughter Taught Me a Lesson

IV. Who or What Give You Benefits

A. Family

B. Friends

C. Employer

D. Employees/Co-workers

E. Clients

F. Those Who Serve You

G. Circumstances

1. Apparent Obstacles

2. Apparent Failures

3. Apparent Tragedies

"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NIV

GRATITUDE PROMOTES HEALTH

"Feelings of gratitude release positive endorphins throughout the body, creating health."
Sharon Huffman

Josephine is a seventy-seven-year-old woman who, in her late fifties, was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumor and scheduled for surgery a few days later. While waiting for the operation, she.sat in her porch swing and gave thanks for all the wonderful things in her life. She wrote a letter of thanks to each of her family members, called them around her, and went into the hospital. The night before surgery, she suddenly saw "what looked like a beautiful woman with long, flowing hair smiling at me and radiating light. She said she was an angel who felt my love and she had come to reassure me that everything was OK that I would have plenty of time to fulfill my life's purpose. And then she said, 'Always remember that it was your love and your appreciation that brought healing to you.' " It turned out that the tumor was gone, and Josephine was sent home without surgery.

Not all healings are as miraculous as Josephine's, but recent scientific research has begun to indicate that positive emotions, such as gratitude and love, have beneficial effects an health. They do so by strengthening and enhancing the immune system, which enables the body to resist disease and recover more quickly from illness, through the release of endorphins into the bloodstream. Endorphins are the body's natural painkillers. Among other effects, they stimulate dilation of the blood vessels, which leads to a relaxed heart.

Conversely, negative emotions such as worry, anger, and hopelessness reduce the number and slow down the movement of disease-fighting white cells in our bloodstreams, and contribute to the development of stroke and heart disease by dumping high levels of adrenaline into the bloodstream. Adrenaline constricts blood vessels, particularly to the heart, raising blood pressure and potentially damaging arteries and the heart itself.

What this means is that the more we experience a sense of gratitude, the more endorphins and the less adrenaline we pump into our systems, thus contributing to longer, healthier lives. As we count our blessings, we literally bathe ourselves inwardly in good hormones. And while we can't guarantee that a sense of appreciation will cure us as it did Josephine, we can be sure that it will make us feel better!

HOW CAN I KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO DO?

I. *Conditions* for Receiving God's Guidance

A. Jesus Christ must be my Lord (John 14:21)

B. I must have a clean heart (Psalm 66:18-19)

C. I must walk in faith (Proverbs 3:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; James 1:5-8)

D. I must resist the devil (James 4:7)

E. I must persist in prayer (Luke 18:1-5) and fast as He may lead (Isaiah 58:1-11)

II. *Methods* God May Use to Speak to Me

A. His written Word - the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16)

B. The counsel of the Godly (Psalm 1:1-2)

C. Circumstances (Philippians 4:10-13)

D. My sanctified desires (Psalm 37:4)

E. Supernatural means (Be especially careful when relying on any of these!)

1. Dreams while asleep (Genesis 37:5-11)
2. Visions while awake (Genesis 15:1-6)
3. Angels (Matthew 1:20)
4. An audible voice (Matthew 3:17)
5. An inner conviction (Isaiah 30:19-21)

"Except for those things that are specifically commanded or forbidden, it is God's will that we be free to exercise our own intelligent choice. The shepherd will lead the sheep, but he does not wish to decide which tuft of grass the sheep shall nibble each moment of the day. In almost everything touching our common life on earth God is pleased when we are pleased. He wills that we be as free as birds to soar and sing our Maker's praise without anxiety. God's choice for us may not be one, but any one of a score of possible choices. The man or woman who is wholly and joyously surrendered to Christ cannot make a wrong choice. Any choice will be the right one." A.W. Tozer

WHAT TO DO WHEN THINGS GO BAD

Questions to ask your Heavenly Father:

a. Did this evil befall me because of my sin?

"Do not be deceived: Gad cannot be mocked A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit will reap eternal life."
Galatians 6:7-8 NIV

b. Are You changing the direction of my life?

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers."
Romans 8:28-29 NIV

c. Was this problem caused by Satan?

"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms"
Ephesians 6:12 NIV

d. Are You chastening me so that I can grow?

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."
James 1:2-4 NIV

e. Did this trauma occur so that You could be glorified?

"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."
2 Corinthians 12:7-10 NIV



Covered in the Dust OF OUR RABBI

PART THREE:

GROWING IN CHRIST-LIKENESS

HOW GOD DEFINES LOVE

agapao - verb (NT 25) - *love* - "the characteristic word of Christianity"

"Agape and agapao are used in the NT (a) to describe the attitude of God toward His Son, John 17:26; the human race, generally, John 3:16; Romans 5:8, and to such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ particularly John 14:21; (b) to convey His will to His children concerning their attitude one toward another, John 13:34, and toward all men, 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Corinthians 16:14; 2 Peter 1:7; (c) to express the essential nature of God, 1 John 4:8.

"Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God's love is seen in the gift of His Son, 1 John 4:9,10. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, Romans 5:8. It was an exercise of the divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself, Cf. Deuteronomy 7:7-8.

"Love had its perfect expression among men in the Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:14; Ephesians 2:4; 3:19; 5:2; Christian love is the fruit of His Spirit in the Christian, Galatians 5:22. "Christian love has God for its primary object. and expresses itself first of all in implicit obedience to His commandments, John 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10; 1 John 2:5; 5:3; 2 John 6. Self-will, that is, self-pleasing, is the negation of love to God.

"Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren, or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself only upon those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all, Romans 15:2, and works no ill to any, 13:8, 9, 10; love seeks opportunity to do good to 'all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith,' Galatians 6:10. See further 1 Corinthians 13 and Colossians 3:12-14."

In respect of agapao as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant "love" and interest of a perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential "love" in them towards the Giver, and a practical "love" towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to seek the Giver.

Via Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Word

* (the word *love* appears 179 times in the King James NT; in 157 of these occurrences it is derived from the Greek word *agapao*)

"We love became he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen." 1 John 4:19-20 NIV

HOW JESUS LOVED HIS BETRAYER

(An example from our Lord of how we are to love the unlovable people in our life)

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."
1 Corinthians 13:13 NIV

*"But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.' He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; **as keeper of the money bag**, he used to help himself to what was put into it."* John 12:4-6 NIV

*"The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, **he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet**, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him."* John 13:2-5 NIV

*"After he had said this, Jesus was troubled in spirit and testified, 'I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray me.' His disciples stared at one another, at a loss to know which of them he meant. One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him. Simon Peter motioned to this disciple and said, 'Ask him which one he means.' Leaning back against Jesus, he asked him, 'Lord who is it?' Jesus answered, 'It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.' **Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas Iscariot**, son of Simon. As soon as Judas took he bread, Satan entered into him. 'What you are about to do, do quickly,' Jesus told him, but no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give something to the poor. As soon as Judas bad taken the bread, he went out. And it was night."* John 13:21-30 NIV

Judas was: ***A Satanically influenced thief, fraud, and traitor***

How did Jesus love Judas?
He included him in His inner circle of friends; He treated him with dignity; He served him.

Did Judas respond well to our Lord's grace?
Obviously not!

Did Judas' subsequent betrayal surprise Jesus?
Absolutely not!

Then why would Jesus squander His love on Judas?
Because it honored His Heavenly Father!

IS THERE A JUDAS IN YOUR LIFE?

"So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NIV

SELF-DENIAL AND THE CROSS

Death on a Cross. These sentenced to death on a cross in the Roman period were usually beaten with leather lashes – a procedure which often resulted in severe loss of blood. Victims were then generally forced to carry the upper crossbeam to the execution site, where the central stake was already set up.

After being fastened to the crossbeam on the ground with ropes – or, in rare cases, nails through the wrist – the naked victim was then hoisted with the crossbeam against the standing vertical stake. A block or peg was sometimes fastened to the stake as a crude seat. The feet were then tied or nailed to the stake.

The recent discovery near Jerusalem of the bones of a crucifixion victim suggests that the knees were bent up side-by-side parallel to the crossbeam and the nail was then driven through the side of the ankles. Death by suffocation or exhaustion normally followed only after a long period of agonizing pain.

"Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." Matthew 10:37-39 NIV

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?'" Matthew 16:24-26 NIV

"Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.'" Mark 8:34-38 NIV

"Then he said to them all: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.'" Luke 9:23-26 NIV

"Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.'" Luke 14:25-27 NIV

"But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ."
Philippians 3:7-8 NIV

RESOLVING PRIDE

Pride is an exalted view of oneself. Pride is a focus on oneself that is expressed in thoughts, attitudes, words and actions. It is manifest in self-centered wisdom (look at what I know), egotistical strength (look at what I can do) and in the accumulation of possessions (look at what I have). Instead of focusing on wisdom, strength and riches, God encourages us to be proud that we know and understand Him (Jeremiah 9:23-25). We are encouraged to reject every thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10:5). Our focus must be on giving God credit for everything we do and any abilities we have.

God hates pride (Proverbs 8:13). God will not tolerate pride in a person's heart (Psalm 101:5) and will break the pride of the haughty (Psalm 18:27, Proverbs 15:25). Not only does He resist the proud, but He shows favor to the humble (James 4:6).

There are two types of pride: obvious and hidden. Obvious pride is a focus on oneself, one's possessions or one's achievements. It originates from an exaggerated view of oneself. Hidden pride is a focus on one's inner pain and feelings of rejection that develop into self-pity resulting in an inability to see anything except one's own needs and feelings. People who have hidden pride devote their attention to their own pain and cannot respond or reach out to others. If they do respond, they tend to attack those closest to them. It is possible for an individual to have both obvious and hidden pride.

Unresolved pride leads to negative consequences. Unless we resolve the pride within our hearts, we will have difficulties in relationships with others (Proverbs 13:10, 28:25). Pride prevents us from focusing our thoughts and desires on God (Psalm 10:4) and distances us from Him (Psalm 138:6). It causes God to resist us (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5), God disciplines the proud (Proverbs 15:25, 16:18, 18:12, 29:23, Matthew 23:12) leading to dishonor and shame (Proverbs 11:2). The final consequence of unresolved pride is the loss of position (Proverbs 29:23, Daniel 5:20).

Scripture teaches us to replace pride with humility. Those who are humble will gain respect, honor, grace – special favor (Psalm 138:6, Proverbs 3:34, James 4:6). Humility is focusing on loving others and caring about their needs above our own (1 Corinthians 13:4, Philippians 2:3). God's desire is to break our pride and replace it with an attitude of humility in order to conform us to the image of Christ.

IDENTIFYING PRIDE

Write OP for obvious pride and HP for hidden pride in the blanks.

Obvious Pride: Focusing on oneself, one's possessions, goals or achievements.

Hidden Pride: Focusing on one's inner pain and feelings of rejection leading to an inability to respond to other's needs.

Spouse	Yourself	
_____	_____	Desire to be recognized and appreciated.
_____	_____	Hurt feelings when others are promoted but I am overlooked.-
_____	_____	Focus on myself rather than others.
_____	_____	Blaming others for their failures.
_____	_____	Becoming defensive when criticized.
_____	_____	Concern about what others think of me.
_____	_____	Difficulty in admitting when I have failed another person.
_____	_____	View of others as lower than myself
_____	_____	Desire for others to meet my needs.
_____	_____	Desire for self-advancement
_____	_____	Desire to be successful apart from God's blessing or direction.
_____	_____	Refusal to give up personal rights.
_____	_____	Desire to control others.
_____	_____	Talking most often about myself when conversing with others.
_____	_____	Drawing attention to my abilities and achievements.
_____	_____	Feeling sorry for myself (self-pity) because I'm not appreciated.
_____	_____	Focus on my knowledge and experience.
_____	_____	Self-sufficient attitude, excluding God or others.

"Lord, I acknowledge and renounce my pride as evidenced through my _____

I ask Your forgiveness and choose to humble myself and respond with a proper attitude."

WHAT DOES JESUS REALLY MEAN WHEN HE SAYS "DO NOT JUDGE"

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." Matthew 5:21-22 NIV

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye, when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Matthew 7:1-5 NIV

"Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand." Romans 14:4 NIV

"What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you." 1 Corinthians 5:12-13 NIV

- **The word *"judge"* in Greek NT:2919 (from Strong's Exhaustive Concordance)**
  krino (kree'-no); properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide mentally or judicially);
  or
  (to try, condemn, punish)

- **Webster's Definitions**
  ***judge*:** 1) to form an authoritative opinion about 2) to sit in judgment on 3) to consider or pronounce to be after inquiry and deliberation 4) govern 5) to form an estimate 6) think; to form an opinion

  ***evaluate*:** 1) to determine or fix the values of 2) to examine and judge

- **Commentaries on Matthew 7:1**

From Barnes' Notes

[Judge not…] This command refers to rash, censorious, and unjust judgment. See Romans 2:1. Luke 6:37 explains it in the sense of "condemning." Christ does not condemn judging as a magistrate, for that, when according to justice, is lawful and necessary. ***Nor does he condemn our "forming an opinion"*** *of the conduct of others, for it is impossible 'hot" to form an opinion of conduct that we know to be evil But what he refers to is* ***a habit of forming a judgment hastily, harshly****, and without an allowance for every palliating circumstance, and a habit of "expressing" such an opinion harshly and unnecessarily when formed. It rather refers to private judgment than "judicial," and perhaps primarily to the customs of the scribes and Pharisees.*

From Adam Clarke's Commentary

[Judge not, that ye be not judged.] These exhortations are pointed against rash, harsh, and uncharitable judgments, the thinking evil, where no evil seems, and speaking of it accordingly. This is one of the most important exhortations in the whole of this excellent sermon. ***By a secret and criminal disposition of nature, man endeavors to elevate himself above others****, and to do it more effectually, depresses them. His jealous and envious heart wishes that there may be no good quality found but in himself, that he alone may be esteemed. Such is the state of every unconverted man.*

From Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible

Our Savior is here directing us how to conduct ourselves in reference to the faults of others; and his expressions seem intended as a reproof to the scribes and Pharisees, who were very rigid and severe, very magisterial and supercilious, in condemning all about them, as those commonly are, that are proud and conceited in justifying themselves. We must judge ourselves and judge our own acts, but we must not judge our brother, not magisterially assume such an authority over others, as we allow not them over us: since our rule is, to be subject to one another. Be not many masters, James 3:1. We must not sit in the judgment-seat, to make our word a law to everybody. We must not judge our brother, that is, we must not speak evil of him, so it is explained, James 4:11. We must not despise him, nor set him at nought, Romans 14:10. We must not judge rashly, nor pass such a judgment upon our brother as has no ground, but is only the product of our own jealousy and ill nature. We must not make the worst of people. We must not judge uncharitably, unmercifully, nor with a spirit of revenge, and a desire to do mischief. ***We must not judge the hearts of others, nor their intentions, for it is God's prerogative to try the heart, and we must not step into his throne; nor must we judge of their eternal state, nor call them hypocrites, reprobates, and castaways; that is stretching beyond our line****; what have we to do, thus to judge another man's servant? Counsel him, and help him, but do not judge him.*

From Dallas Willard in The Divine Conspiracy

If we would really help those close to us and dear, and if we would learn to live together with our family and "neighbors" in the power of the kingdom, we must abandon the deeply rooted human practice of condemning and blaming. This is what Jesus means when he says, "judge not" He is telling us that we should, and that we can, become the kind of person who does not condemn or blame others. As we do so, the Power of God's kingdom will be more freely available to bless and guide those around us into His ways. But, what is it, exactly, that we do when we condemn someone? When we condemn another we really communicate that he or she is, in some deep and just possibly irredeemable way, bad-bad as a whole, and to be rejected. In our eyes the condemned is among the discards of human life. He or she is not acceptable. ***We sentence that person to exclusion. (The Aramaic term "raca" was current in Jesus' day to express contempt for someone and to mark out him or her as contemptible. "Fool," in the biblical sense, is an expression of malice as well as contempt. It is the ancient equivalent of our "f——— jerk.")***

"Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself." Galatians 6:1 NLT

***As followers of Christ, we may evaluate our own behavior and that of other believers, but we do so only to bring about restoration. We are strictly forbidden by our Lord to "write off" another human being for whom He shed His precious blood.**

WHY WOULD A RED BLOODED AMERICAN TEENAGER WANT TO OBEY HIS OR HER PARENTS?

(Scriptures from the NLT)

"Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. 'Honor your father and mother.' This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise. And this is the promise: If you honor your father and mother, 'you will live a long life, full of blessing.'"
Ephesians 6:1-3 NLT

1. It is good for your health and your longevity

"Don't fail to correct your children. They won't die if you spank them. Physical discipline may well save them from death." Proverbs 23:13-14

2. Obeying the authorities in your life establishes a *pattern of living* that will help you in your vocation and with your own spouse

"Teach your children to choose the right path, and when they are older, they will remain upon it." Proverbs 22:6

3. God blesses those who submit to His chain of command

"Discipline your children while there is hope. If you don't, you will ruin their lives." Proverbs 19:18

"Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as bad as worshiping idols. So because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you from being king."
1 Samuel 15:23 NLT

CHOOSE LIFE

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 NLT

"Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between prosperity and disaster, between life and death. I have commanded you today to love the LORD your God and to keep his commands, laws, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and become a great nation, and the LORD your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy. But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live! Choose to love the LORD your God and to obey him and commit yourself to him, for he is your life. Then you will live long in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT SEXUAL SIN

(Scriptures quoted from the NIV)

*Marriage is the state in which men and women can live together in sexual relationship with the approval of their social group. Adultery and fornication are sexual relationships that society does not recognize as constituting marriage. In the Old Testament, polygamy is not sexually immoral, since it constitutes a recognized married state; though it is generally shown to be inexpedient. Monogamy is implicit in the story of Adam and Eve, since God created only one wife for Adam. Yet polygamy is adopted from the time of Lamech (Genesis 4:19), and is not forbidden in Scripture. It would seem that God left it to man to discover by experience that His original institution of monogamy was the proper relationship. It is shown that polygamy brings trouble, and often results in sin. (The New Bible Dictionary)

I. Key Words Defined

a. **Adultery** - voluntary sexual intercourse between a married man and someone other that his wife or between a married woman and someone other than her husband.

b. **Fornication** - human sexual intercourse other than between a man and his wife. This word is usually translated in the NIV as *sexual immorality* and in the NAS as simply immorality. *Fornication* includes both *adultery* and *sodomy*.

c. **Sodomy** - sexual activity with a member of the same sex or with an animal.

II. Old Testament Commands

a. You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

b. If a man seduces a virgin who is not pledged to be married and sleeps with her, he must pay the bride-price, and she shall be his wife. If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must still pay the bride-price for virgins. (Exodus 22:16-17)

c. Do not have intercourse with your neighbor's wife and defile yourself with her. Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable. Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. (Leviticus 18:20, 22-23) *See punishments for such sins in Leviticus 20:1-21.

III. New Testament Commands

a. You have heard that it was said, do not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

b. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man "unclean"... (Matthew 15:19)

c. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. (1 Corinthians 6:18)

d. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious; sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

e. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or greed, because these are improper for God's people. (Ephesians 5:3)

f. Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. (Colossians 3:5-6)

g. Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. (Hebrews 13:4)

h. But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death. (Revelation 21:8)

***Can a person be forgiven, by God, of sexual sin? Of course!!!**
(See: John 8:1-11, Romans 8:1, 1 John 1:9)

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY (SODOMY & BESTIALITY)

(Scripture References from the NIV)

SODOMITE, SODOMY

[SAHD um ite, SAHD uh me] - one who practices sodomy; unnatural sexual intercourse, especially that between two males. These English words are derived from SODOM, an ancient city in the land of Canaan noted for such depraved activities. All the men of Sodom came to Lot's house, demanding that he allow them to have sexual relations with two people inside (Genesis 19:5). But Lot refused. The next day Lot escaped from Sodom and God destroyed the city because of its great sin (Genesis 19). Sodomy was prohibited by the law of Moses (Deuteronomy 23:17) and condemned by the apostle Paul (Romans 1:27; 1 Corinthians 6:9).

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary Copyright ©1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

"Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable. Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; that is a perversion." Leviticus 18:22-23

"If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads." Leviticus 20:13

"If a man has sexual relations with an animal, he must be put to death, and you must kill the animal. If a woman approaches an animal to have sexual relations with it, kill both the woman and the animal. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads." Leviticus 20:15-16

"Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another." Romans 1:24

"Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion." Romans 1:26-27

"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

SEXUAL TEMPTATION AND HOW TO WITHSTAND IT

*(I have borrowed from 3 great books, besides the Bible: Rick Warren's The Purpose Driven Life, Robert Lewis' Raising a Modern Day Knight, and John Eldredge's Wild at Heart)

How Satan Uses Sexual Temptation Against Us

"In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, 'Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?' Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her. (She had purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, 'I am pregnant.'" 2 Samuel 11:1-5 NIV

1. Satan identifies a <u>desire</u> inside of you. (You want your question answered)

2. He gets you to <u>doubt</u> what God has said about the sin. ("Has God really said?")

3. He <u>deceives</u> you regarding sin's consequences. (Broken relationships)

4. You believe Satan's lies and you <u>disobey</u>. (You step out of God's Kingdom with its protection and blessings)

How to Withstand Sexual Temptation

Remember, the "law" produces death; God's "grace" produces life!

"For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which lends to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness." Romans 6:14-18 NIV

1. <u>Reveal</u> your struggle to a Godly friend or support group. (Sin grows in the dark!)

2. <u>Resist</u> the Devil using God's Word as your weapon. (Memorize and meditate)

3. <u>Realize</u> your vulnerability. "DON'T GET COCKY!" (Pride comes before _____?_____) Proverbs 11:2

4. <u>Refocus</u> your attention on becoming a *real man*. VIP

REGAINING OUR MASCULINITY

(Destroying Sexual Addiction at Its Roots)

The Three Building Blocks of Manhood

I. A real man ("a man after God's own heart"- Acts 13:22) **embraces a vision for manhood that includes:**

a. Rejecting passivity - Exodus 15:2-3

b. Accepting responsibility - Luke 12:48

c. Leading courageously - 1 Corinthians 16:13

d. Laboring for God's greater reward - 2 Corinthians 5:9-10

II. A real man lives by a code of conduct which includes:

a. ***Yielding*** to God's Word rather than to his feelings - John 14:21

b. ***Seeking*** a work to do - Matthew 28:19 (If the man is married, this work must include loving, honoring, and leading his wife - Ephesians 5:25-33.)

III. A real man seeks a transcendent cause (a mission that lifts a man beyond himself; a passion that stirs him to self-sacrifice and causes him to contribute to the larger community) 1 Corinthians 3:12-15. This cause must be:

a. Truly heroic (all undertaking that will require self-denial)

b. Timeless (Two things from our existence will survive the " big melt down" of 2 Peter 2:10-13 *the Word of God and the souls of men*)

c. Supremely meaningful (an ideal worth dying for)

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." 1 Corinthians 9:24-10:1

CONSEQUENCES OF VIEWING PORNOGRAPHY

1. It exploits and degrades people.

2. It undermines families.

3. It distorts personal and social relationships.

4. It reduces the gift of sexuality to a level that lacks personal dignity, human tenderness, mutual love and ethical commitment which are part of God's plan.

"Pornography… is against the divine image within us, against the soul – of the model, of the user, of the society. But a society that does not believe in a soul cannot make that argument."

Dennis Prager

PLAYING BY THE RULES

7 Keys to Healthy Human Relationships

I believe that the universal appeal of sports stems from the fact that in this one arena of life nearly everyone who participates voluntarily plays by the rules of the respective game. Everyone seems to understand that without rules and a commitment to follow them, the game will be of no interest to its players or the spectators. If, in our daily interactions with those around us, we fail to adhere to a few elementary rules of conduct, the "game" of life becomes nearly intolerable, and deep personal relationships become impossible. Over the years I have found the following principles to be simple and obvious, but are frequently overlooked in our attempts to resolve the conflicts in our lives. If you want to have rich and meaningful human relationships that make your life full, then you must:

1. **Say what you mean, and mean what you say.** (Be a person of integrity.)

2. **Do your best to understand what the other person is saying before you respond.** (Be a person of intelligence.)

3. **Have no "off limits" subjects; everything is open for discussion.** (Be a person of courage.)

4. **Be kind; never use profanity or rage to gain advantage.** (Be a person of class.)

5. **Overlook the "small stuff," and most of it is " small stuff."** (Be a person of character.)

6. **Determine to resolve every conflict as quickly and completely as possible; "walking off the field" is not allowed.** (Be an ambassador of peace.)

7. **Always take the high road.** (Be a person like Jesus.)

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you,
for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."
Matthew 7:12 NIV

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES ABOUT INTEGRITY

(Scriptures from the NIV)

"'Don't collect any more than you are required to' he told them. Then some soldiers asked him 'And what should we do?' He replied, 'Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely – be content with your pay'" Luke 3:13-14

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31

"Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone." Luke 11:42

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." Luke 16:10

"Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, 'My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day'" Acts 23:1

"So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man." Acts 24:16

"I speak the truth in Christ – I am not lying, my conscience confirms it in the Holy Spirit." Romans 9:1

"Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience." Romans 13:5

"One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." Romans 14:5

"As one who is in the Lord Jesus I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean." Romans 14:14

"So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the man who does not condemn himself by what he approves." Romans 14:22

"Rather we have renounced secret and shameful ways we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." 2 Corinthians 4:2

"Since , then, we know what it is to fear the Lord we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience." 2 Corinthians 5:11

"Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have exploited no one." 2 Corinthians 7:2

"For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men." 2 Corinthians 8:21

"Slaves obey your earthly masters in everything; and do i, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." Colossians 3:22-23

"Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like saves of Christ doing the will of God from your heart." Ephesians 6:6

"On the contrary, we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts." 1 Thessalonians 2:4

"The goal of this command is love , which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." 1 Timothy 1:5

"They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience." 1 Timothy 3:9

"Since an overseer is entrusted with Gods work, he must be blameless-not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who i self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined." Titus 1:7-8

"Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way." Hebrews 13:18

"Live such good lies among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." 1 Peter 2:12

"…keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." 1 Peter 3:16

"A person is not given integrity.

It results from the relentless pursuit of honesty at all times."

REPLACING CRUELTY WITH KINDNESS IN YOUR HOME

"A kind man benefits himself, but a cruel man brings trouble on himself." Proverbs 11:17

I. The Downward Spiral of Cruelty *(*<u>Cruel</u>- disposed to inflict pain)*

A. The Signs of a Cruel Heart

1. Unforgiveness

a. Keeping score

b. Nursing bitterness - Hebrews 12: 14-15

2. Criticism (careless words - Matthew 12:36-37) - Karamoja Bell

a. Innuendo

b. Negative body language/rolling the eyes

c. Embarrassment

e. Ridicule, sarcasm, and comparison

f. Manipulation

3. Harsh Words

a. Interrogation

b. Accusation

c. Exaggeration and lying

4. Rage (James 1:20)

a. Vile language

b. Screaming

c. Pushing, restraining, striking, and otherwise inflicting pain

B. The Consequences of Living in a Cruel Environment

1. For the offended spouse

a. Strife

b. Withdrawal

c. Plotting (departure, infidelity, murder, etc.)

2. For the children of the household

a. Guilt

b. Insecurity

c. Continuation of the family sin

II. Kindness to the Rescue - 1 Peter 3:7-9 (*<u>Kind</u> - *affectionate; loving; sympathetic; pleasant; agreeable)*

A. Pray - ask for:

1. Forgiveness (vertical and horizontal) - <u>develop a sense of humor</u>

2. Guidance (study your mate as if your final grade depended on it)

3. A heart of flesh (<u>determine</u> to be happy in your your life and with your mate) - 1 Corinthians 13

4. A plan (be as creative here as you are in your work and your play!)

B. Attack!!! - Encourage your sweetie daily - Hebrews 3:13

1. By your words

2. By your actions

3. By your gentle touch

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORDS

"The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit."
Proverbs 18:21

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken."
Matthew 12:36

What Kinds of Expressions Should Come From A Believer's Mouth

A. Encouraging

"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness." Hebrews 3:13

B. Faithful

"Have faith in God, Jesus answered. I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, Go, throw yourself into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him." Mark 11:22-23

C. Gracious

"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."
Colossians 4:5-6

D. Reconciling

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." Proverbs 15:1

E. Loving and Truthful

"Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ." Ephesians 4:15

F. Thankful

"Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which ore out of place, but rather thanksgiving." Ephesians 5:4

ROMANS 10:9 EXPANDED

"For if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9 NIV (a dynamic equivalent translation)

"For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."
Romans 10:9 NLT (a free translation)

"That if thou shalt confess(3670) with thy mouth the Lord(2962) Jesus, and shalt believe(4100) in thine heart(2588) that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved(4982)."
Romans 10:9 KJV {with Strong's #s} (a literal translation)

1. ***Confess*** - Gr. homologeo - "to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts"

2. ***Lord*** - Gr. kurios - "he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has the power of deciding; master; one in total authority"

3. ***Believe*** - Gr. pisteusees - "trust in, rely on, cling to, surrender to"

4. ***Heart*** - Gr. kardia - "universally, denotes the seat and center of all physical and spiritual life"

5. ***Saved*** - Gr. soozoo - "to save, to keep safe and sound, to rescue from danger or destruction"

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ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

September 23-24, 2000 • Stan Simmons

THE TEXT: JAMES 2:14-26

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves." 2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV

• I WAS **CONVINCED** OF THE TRUTH.

• I WAS **CONVICTED** OF THE TRUTH.

• I WAS **CONVERTED** OF THE TRUTH.

#1. HAVE YOU BEEN CONVINCED OF THE TRUTH?

There is a kind of faith where a person in convinced of the truth, but their life is not changed.

• **DEAD** FAITH.

• IT IS A FAITH THAT DEALS WITH THE **INTELLECT**.

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your Name, and in Your Name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!'" Matthew 7:21-23 NIV

"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?" James 2:14 NIV

"As the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead" James 2:26 NIV

"It is faith alone the justifies – but faith that justifies can never be alone." John Calvin

• EACH COULD **DEFEND** THEIR FAITH YET THEIR FAITH WAS NOT **DEMONSTRATED** IN THE WAY THEY LIVED.

#2. HAVE YOU BEEN <u>CONVICTED</u> BY THE TRUTH?

"You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder." James 2:19 NIV

- **<u>DEMONIC</u>** FAITH.
- IT IS A FAITH THAT DEALS WITH THE **<u>EMOTIONS</u>**.
- THEY BELIEVE IN THE **<u>EXISTENCE</u>** OF GOD.
- THEY BELIEVE IN THE **<u>DEITY</u>** OF CHRIST.
- THEY BELIEVE THAT JESUS **<u>DIED</u>** **<u>FOR</u>** **<u>THE</u>** **<u>SINS</u>** OF THE WORLD.
- THEY BELIEVE THAT GOD **<u>RAISED</u>** JESUS FROM THE DEAD.
- THEY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS **<u>LORD</u>**.

#3. HAVE YOU BEEN <u>CONVERTED</u> BY THE TRUTH?

Faith involves:

- THE **<u>INTELLECT</u>**.
- The **<u>EMOTIONS</u>**.
- THE **<u>WILL</u>**.
- TRUE SAVING FAITH LEADS TO **<u>ACTION</u>**.

"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord." Acts 3:19 NIV

"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19 NKJ

- WORKS ARE NOT THE **<u>REASON</u>** FOR OUR SALVATION, THEY ARE THE **<u>RESULT</u>** OF OUR SALVATION.

- JAMES IS NOT ARGUING FOR SALVATION BY WORKS – HE IS ARGUING THAT IF YOU ARE SAVED **<u>WORKS</u>** **<u>WILL</u>** **<u>ACCOMPANY</u>** YOUR FAITH.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV

WHAT DOES GOD REALLY WANT US TO DO?

To get saved, to get well, to get going!

It all begins with:

↓

BELIEF

in God and His one and only mediator, Jesus Christ

("Pistis" - Greek word for trust, reliance, faith)

John 6:28-29 • Hebrews 11:1-6

which produces

↓

LOVE

for the triune God and our fellow man

Matthew 22:36-40

which produces

↓

OBEDIENCE

John 14:21 • 1 John 2:3-6

which produces both

PERSONAL HOLINESS

("Hagiasmos" - Greek word for sanctification; the conduct befitting those separated to God)

Romans 12:1-2 • 1 Peter 1:15

The Results - We:

1. Please God
   Psalm 51:16-17
2. Attract the Righteous
   1 Corinthians 1:18
3. Anger the Wicked
   1 Peter 4:4-5

and

KINGDOM SERVICE

Planned Service
1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Spontaneous Service
1 Peter 3:15

ie.

Phillip and the Eunuch
(Acts 8:4-40)

The Results - We:

1. Bear Burdens - Galatians 6:2
2. Make Disciples - Matthew 28:19-20
3. Meet the needs of poor - Galatians 2:10

BIBLICAL PRINCIPALS REGARDING DEACONS AND THE POOR

(Passages from the NIV)

*Deacon - NT:1247

diakoneoo, diakonoo;

to be a servant, attendant, domestic; to serve, to wait upon

1. universally: Luke 22:26 to minister to one

2. to wait at table and offer food and drink to the guests, Matthew 4:11; 8:15

3. to minister, i.e. supply food and the necessaries of life: with the dative of person, Matthew 25:44

   to relieve one's necessities (e.g. by collecting alms): Romans 15:25; to provide, take care of; distribute, the things necessary to sustain life, Acts 6:2

   Absolutely, i.e. to take care of the poor and the sick, to serve as deacons: 1 Timothy 3:10, 13; 1 Peter 4:11

4. with the accusative of the thing, to minister, i.e. attend to, anything, that may serve another's interests: 2 Corinthians 8:19

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The Office of Deacon Instituted

Acts 6:1-7

"In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.' This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."

Qualifications for Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8-13

"Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus."

Can a Woman Function in the Role of a Deacon?

"In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor." Acts 9:36

God's Heart for the Poor

"The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me." Mark 14:7

"When Jesus heard this, he said to him, 'You still lack one thing. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." Luke 18:22

"All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do." Galatians 2:10

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." James 1:27

The Responsibilities of the Poor to Help Themselves

"Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds. As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. So I counsel younger widows to many, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan. If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need." Timothy 5:3-16

"For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'If a man will not work, he shall not eat.'" 2 Thessalonians 3:10

SCRIPTURES RELATING TO MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE POOR

(Scriptures of Jesus doing so excluded)

1. So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets to be honored by men... But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Matthew 6:2-3 NIV

2. The young man said to Him, "All of these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?"

   Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Matthew 19:20-21

3. "For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me."

   Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, "Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?"

   And the King will answer and say to them, "Truly I say to you to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." Matthew 25:35-40

4. But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "What is the point of this waste? For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." Matthew 26:8-9

5. And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up." And looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him, and said to him, "One thing you still lack; go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." Mark 10:20-21

6. He has filled the hungry with good things; and sent away the rich empty-handed. Luke 1:53

7. And he would answer and say to them, "Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise." Luke 3:11

8. "Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back." Luke 6:30

9. "The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden." Luke 4:18

10. "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear, and unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys." Luke 12:33

11. "But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind." Luke 14:13

12. Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table. Luke 16:19-21

13. And when Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One tiling you still lack; sell all that you possess, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in Heaven; and come, follow Me." Luke 18:22

14. "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii, and given to the poor people?" John 12:5

15. For some were supposing because Judas had the moneybox, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast;" or else that he should give the money to the poor. John 13:29

16. Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. Romans 15:1

17. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Romans 15:26

18. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:3

19. As it is written, "He scattered abroad, He gave to the poor, and His righteousness bides forever." 2 Corinthians 9:9

20. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. Acts 10:2

21. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a remembrance before God." Acts 10:4

22. And said, "Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor." Acts 10:31

23. If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? James 2:15-16

24. But whoever has the world's goods and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 1 John 3:17-18

25. This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. James 1:27

26. They only asked us to remember the poor – the very thing I also was eager to do. Galatians 2:10

27. Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. Ephesians 4:28

28. And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with all men. 1 Thessalonians 5:14

Some Old Testament scriptures saying the same thing:

Daniel 4:27

Psalm 41:1-3

Psalm 72:12

Psalm 112:9

Job 31:16-23

Isaiah 58:7-10

OUR PRINCIPLES OF HOSPITALITY

"Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." 1 John 2:6

I. Galatians 6:2 - bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

II. Colossians 1:28-29 - "We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me." *(Everyone either needs to know Jesus, or they need to how Him better. We ask that everyone ultimately join the team.)*

III. John 15:13 - Greater love has no man than to lay down His life for his friends. The purpose of the Gospel is friendship.

IV. We have felt called to encourage our friends - comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable.

V. A key principle we learned - *We become what the significant people in our lives encourage us to become*. Our job has two parts - to become significant to others and encourage them to be all that they can be in Christ.

VI. When people have their feet under our dinner table, they feel loved, and when the bottom falls out, as it does for us all from to time, they return to where they last felt loved. No one comes to ask us about faith in Christ because life is going so well.

VII. Our motto for life - *"We will be most useful and most content when we realize that life is not about us but about God"* (Focus on God and others and let God take care of you.)

VIII. We try to stimulate people to "wholesome thinking" (not stinking thinking) -2 Peter 3:1. Our job is to eliminate *sin* not *pain*.

IX. We encourage friends to examine themselves - 2 Corinthians 13:5
Belief + Lordship = Life in Christ (Romans 10:9)

X. If you don't take any credit when your friends thrive, you needn't accept any blame when they don't.

XI. We involved our kids. We were more concerned about loving our neighbor than about the food and the neatness of our home.

XII. We try to ask provocative questions. ie. "Tell us about your spiritual journey."

GETTING THE PROPER GRIP ON MONEY

So That it Doesn't Get a Grip on You

The Big Idea: The Bible gives us some simple and practical principles for dealing with the four major aspects of money management. If you will adhere to these principles, money will be a wonderful and useful tool for you instead of the terrible curse it is for most of the world. **(Remember - the only thing in tie that matters is obeying God; and obeying God is always in your best interest!)**

What the Bible teaches about:

Making Money

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will he content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." 1 Timothy 6:6-10 NIV

Knowing and obeying the following Biblical principles will **greatly** enhance your likelihood of material success in this world:

- Be humble; don't grumble. (Philippians 2:3; 14-15)
- Put others first. (Philippians 2:4)
- Work heartily unto the Lord. (Colossians 3:23)
- Be gracious in your speech and skilled at what you do. (Proverbs 22:11 & 29)
- Gather slowly. (Proverbs 13:11)
- Be honest with both God and man. (Proverbs 28:6 & 13)
- Meditate upon the Scripture. (Joshua 1:8)
- If you are a married man, treat your wife well. (1 Peter 3:7)
- Walk in faith; God, not your job, is the source of your well-being. (Romans 8:31)

Giving Money Away

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NIV

- Determine that all you have is actually God's and that you're are simply a steward responsible for the use of the resources given you (Luke 19: 11-27)

- Choose a percentage of your income that you can cheerfully give to the Lord's work (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

- Expect great things from God (Malachi 3:10)

VIP In your considerations factor in the O.T. principle of the *tithe*, the "law of sowing and reaping", and the instruction of the early church fathers

Saving Money for the Future

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest." Proverbs 6:6-8 NIV

- Determine to begin a systematic investment program to meet future needs – your needs and the needs of others (Genesis 41:48-49)

- Place your trust in God and not in your "well-designed" financial plan (Proverbs 11:28; Proverbs 21:31; Matthew 6:19-21)

Spending Money on Ourselves

"Everything is permissible for me" – but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible for me – but I will not be mastered by anything." 1 Corinthians 6:12 NIV

- Be free, but understand that a simple lifestyle will not only be a more economical way of life, but it will be more fun and will allow you more time, energy, and money with which to serve your Creator. (2 Timothy 2:4; 1 Timothy 6:6-19)

- Be rigorous in your judgment of how you handle God's money, but avoid judging how others handle theirs. (Romans 14:4; 1 Corinthians 11:31-32)

- Determine not to borrow (become surety) again to purchase an "depreciating" item {i.e. vehicle, appliance, vacation) (Proverbs 6:1-5)

- Determine to pay off all existing debt as quickly as possible. (Romans 13:8)

TEN STEPS TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM

"Know the state of your flocks, and put your heart into caring for your herds, for riches don't last forever, and the crown might not be secure for the next generation. After the hay is harvested, the new crop appears, and the mountain grasses are gathered in, your sheep will provide wool for clothing, and your goats will be sold for the price of a field. And you will have enough goats' milk for you, your family, and your servants." Proverbs 27:23-27 NLT

1. Determine that all you have is actually God's and that you are only a steward responsible for the use of the resources given you. (Luke 19:11-27)

2. Believe that a simple lifestyle will not only be a more economical way of life, but it will be more fun and will allow you more time, energy and money with which to serve your Creator. (2 Timothy 2:4; 1 Timothy 6:6-19)

3. Be rigorous in your judgment of how you handle <u>your</u> money, but avoid judging how others handle theirs. (1 Corinthians 11:31-32; Romans 14:4)

4. Determine a percentage of your income that you can <u>cheerfully</u> give to the Lord's work {i.e. for evangelism, discipleship, and meeting the needs of the poor}. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8; Deuteronomy 16:17; Malachi 3:8-12)

5. Determine not to borrow (become surety) again to purchase any "depreciating" item {i.e. car, appliance, vacation}. (Proverbs 6:1-5)

6. Determine to pay off <u>all</u> existing debt as quickly as possible. (Romans 13:8)

7. Determine to begin a regular and systematic savings program to meet future needs. (Genesis 41:48-49; Proverbs 6:6-8)

8. Honor God with your integrity. (Proverbs 15:27)

9. Trust in God and not in your "well-designed' financial plan. (Proverbs 11:28; Proverbs 21:31)

10. Observe a weekly Sabbath. (Exodus 20:8-11; Nehemiah 13:16-18)

*a tip from the retired CIC, CLU, ChFC: If you want to do well financially, stay married; if you want to do very well financially, stay happily married!

SAVING AND INVESTMENT BASICS

I. Saving

A. Definition - "to put aside as a reserve"

B. Key Principle - if possible, start saving when you are young!

II. The Basics of Sound Financial Management

A. Keep good records (update your balance sheet and income statement)

B. Balance your check book; use credit cards sparingly if at all

C. Develop a budget; have the integrity to stick to your budget

D. If married, pay your bills together twice per month; communicate w/o anger!

III. Nelson's 6 Account Method - On each dollar of earned income less business expenses, giving, and taxes, deposit a predetermined % to your:

A. Emergency Account (once the equivalent of 4 months take-home pay has been accumulated, redirect savings to the other accounts)

B. Next Auto Account

C. Kid's Education Account

D. Long Term Savings or "Capital " Account (this becomes your "money making machine")

E. Home Improvement Account

F. Family Fun Account

* Give each other an allowance each month to spend in any way you choose

IV. Investing

A. Definition - "committing money to someone else's use in the hope of profit"

B. Key Principle - all investments have an element of risk; the greater the potential reward, the greater the potential risk.

THE NEW TESTAMENT - HOW CAN I KNOW IF IT IS TRUE?

I. How do I know that anything is *true*? (*true* - in agreement with fact or reality; genuine)

A. By using:
1. the scientific method
   a. observation
   b. examination
   c. experimentation
2. the historical method
   a. primary source material (an eyewitness record)
   b. secondary source material
   *c. prophecy
3. subjective input
   a. is it coherent?
   b. is it rational?
   c. does it have a ring of truth?

II. How were the books of the New Testament selected? (Christians call the Bible the *canon* of sacred Scripture. *Canon* is taken from the Greek word for "reed" (measuring rod)

A. How many choices? Over 3,000 possibilities. 27 were eventually chosen. Only 3-4 others were given serious consideration.

B. What was the criterion far a book to be included in the *Canon*?
1. The book must have an *Apostolic* origin or backing (ie. Peter's authority stood behind the Gospel of Mark)
2. The book must have the *acceptance* of the early church.
3. The book must have *conformity* with that core of books about which there was never any doubt.

C. Christians talk of the Bible as being the *inspired* Word of God. Would the men who chose the books to be included in the New Testament also have been *inspired* by God? Are the N.T. books:
1. an fallible collection of fallible books?
2. a fallible collection of infallible books?
3. an infallible collection of infallible books?

D. The Case for an Infallible Collection of Infallible Books. The N.T. is unique from all other ancient literature in its:
1. continuity
2. circulation
3. survival
4. teaching
5. influence on the surrounding Literature

Pay your money and make your choice!

IS THE BIBLE REALLY GOD'S WORD?
(from Dake's Annotated Bible)

I. Six Proofs the Bible is Genuine and Authentic (p. 513-520 O.T.)

A. Claims of the Bible itself

1. The prophets of the O.T claimed they were sent of God and that their messages were given to them by God. Over 2,500 times the prophets claim that God spoke by them.
2. The whole Bible centers around the person and work of Jesus Christ
3. The Bible also represents the commission of the apostles as divine. God confirmed their ministry by signs and wonders.
4. The testimony of the N.T. to the genuineness and authenticity of the O.T. is plain to see. The O.T. is quoted about 250 times in the N.T. and alluded to about 850 times. All O.T. books are either quoted or alluded to except Ester, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

B. The testimony of secular history (ie. Josephus; Tacitus)

C. Ancient Manuscripts - Plus 5,000

D. Lectionairies (collections of Gospels and Epistles for reading in the churches) - Plus 1,000

E. Patristic quotations - (Bible quotes of Christian writers in the first 3 centuries)

II. The Authors of the Various Books of the Bible Were Inspired (p. 241 N.T.)
(*theopneustos-* Greek for "God breathed")

A. Some parts of Scripture give the exact words of God (Exodus 32:16, Deuteronomy 5:4, Matthew 3:17)

B. Some words were put into the mouths of the speakers who spoke as the Spirit inspired them. (Exodus 4:12, Numbers 23:5, Acts 3:21)

C. Same words were written as the Spirit moved men (Exodus 34:27, 2 Peter 1:21)

D. In some parts of the Scripture it was left up to the writers to choose their own words and relate truth by the inspiration and guidance of the Spirit. (Daniel 12:8-9, Luke 1:1-4)

III. Evidence that the Bible is God Breathed (p. 241 N.T.)

A. Its wonderful unity B. Its superiority to other books C. Its influence on the world D. Man couldn't have written it (i.e. paradoxes & antinomies) E. The character and greatness of those who accept it F. All man's present and eternal needs are met by the Bible G. Its preservation through the ages H. The response of the soul to it I. Fulfilled prophecy (approx 3,300 verses have been fulfilled) J. Miracles K. Its adaptability L. Its spiritual and moral power

ALLEGED BIBLE DIFFICULTIES AND CONTRADICTIONS

Bible difficulties, or apparent Bible contradictions, exist. The opponents of Christianity often use them in their attempts to discredit Christianity. Sometimes these attacks undermine the faith of Christians who either don't understand the issues or don't have the resources to deal with them.

The Originals are Inspired, not the copies.

What a lot of Christians don't know is that the autographs (original writings) are inspired, not the copies. The autographs are the original writings, the original documents penned by the biblical writers. The copies are copies **of** inspired documents. The copies are not themselves "inspired"; that is, they have no guarantee of being 100% textually pure. But don't worry, the Bible manuscripts are 98.5% textually pure and only are very small amount of information is in question because we have repetitive facts, instructions, and information found elsewhere in the Bible. Nevertheless, through the copying method over the years, various textual problems have arisen. Following is a list of the types of errors that have occurred in copying the manuscripts. I've used English as examples instead of going into the original languages for examples.

DITTOGRAPHY - Writing twice what should have been written once.

A good example would be writing "latter" instead of "later." "Latter" means nearest the end. "Later" means after something else.

FISSION - Improperly dividing one word into two words.

Example: "nowhere" into "now here."

FUSION - Combining the last letter of one word with the first letter of the next word.

"Look it is there in the cabinet... or look it is therein the cabinet."

HAPLOGRAPHY - Writing once what should have been written twice.

A good example would be "later" instead of "latter." "Later" means after something else. "Latter" means nearest the end.

HOMOPHONY - Writing a word with a different meaning for another word when both words have the exact same pronunciation.

Meat and meet have the exact same sound but different meanings. Also, there and their and they're another example.

METATHESIS - An improper exchange in the order of letters.

Instead of writing "mast," someone writes "mats," or "cast" and cats."

Does this mean we cannot trust the Bible?

Does this mean that the Bible we hold in our hand is not inspired? Not at all. Inspiration comes from God and when He inspired the Bible, it was perfect. Our copies of the original documents are not perfect, but they are very close to being so. The critics often erringly assume that even the copies are supposed to be perfect. But when we point out that God never said the copies would be perfect, they then ask how can the Bible be trusted at all? Quite simply, it is redundant in its facts and information and the amount of material that has any variation at all is so minute compared to the whole Bible that the Bible is considered to be almost 100% accurately copied. Furthermore, the copyist errors present no problems doctrinally.

Still, some will say that since there are, for example, copyist errors then we must throw out the entire Bible. But this argument is very week. Are we to throw out a book science text book because there is a misspelled word or two in it? Does this mean that the whole book cannot be trusted? Of course not. Furthermore, compared to other ancient documents, the New Testament, for example, has far more textual evidence in its favor than any other ancient writing. Please consider the chart below.

Author	When	Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	No. of Copies
Homer (Iliad)	900 BC	400 BC	500 years	643	
Caesar (The Gallic Wars)	100 - 44 BC	900 AD	1,000 years	10	
Plato (Tetralogies)	427 - 347 BC	900 AD	1,200 years	7	
Aristotle	384 - 322 BC	1,100 AD	1,400 years	49	
Herodotus (History)	480 - 425 BC	900 AD	1,300 years	8	
Euripedes	480 - 406 BC	1,100 AD	1,500 years	9	
New Testament	50 - 90 AD	130 AD	30 years	24,000	

This chart was adapted from charts in Evidence that Demands a Verdict, by Josh McDowell, 1979, pages 42 and 43.

If the Bible cannot be trusted as being reliable because it has only a small percentage of copyist errors, then neither can the above documents be trusted that have far less textual support. In other rods, the critics, to be consistent, would have to reject the Iliad, The Gallic Wars, Plato's Tetralogies, Aristotle's works, Hoerodetus' history, and Euripedes' writings. Are the critics willing to disregard all those writings — which are far less well preserved — if they throw out the Bible as being reliable? They should if they are fair in how they apply their criticism. But, since basically no one discards those writings as being so bad they can't be trusted, why would anyone apply the double standard to the Bible . . . unless they have an agenda.

We can see that the Bible is an ancient document that has withstood thousands of years of transmission with remarkable accuracy and clarity, far more so than the great works of old listed in the chart above. We can trust it to be what it says it is: the word of God.

Bible difficulties, or apparent Bible contradictions, exist in the Bible and we need to be aware of them and know how to respond to them because the opponents of Christianity often use them in their attempts to discredit Christianity by invalidating the Bible. Sometimes these attacks successfully undermine the faith of Christians who either don't understand the apparent discrepancies and don't realize they are not contradictions, or don't have the resources to deal with them.

What is a Contradiction? A contradiction occurs when one statement makes another statement impossible when both statements deal with the same topic at the same time. For example, in my right pocket is a set of car keys. In my right pocket there is no set of car keys. Both statements cannot true at the same time. Therefore, to state that both were true is to state a contradiction

If one gospel account says two people went to Jesus' tomb and another says that one went, it is not a contradiction because the accounts do not say that **only** one went or **only** two went. If one account said that only one went, then two could not have gone and that would be a contradiction.

One of the most common accounts used as a contradiction is how did Judas die, by hanging or falling down?

By hanging (Matthew 27:3-8) - *"Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? See to that yourself!" And he threw the pieces of silver into the sanctuary and departed; and he went away and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver and said, "It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood." And they counseled together and with the money bought the Potter's Field as a burial place for strangers. For this reason that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day."*

By falling (Acts 1:16-19) - *"Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. "For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry." (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)"*

There is no contradiction here at all because both are true. Remember, a contradiction occurs when one statement excludes the possibility of another. What happened here is that Judas went and hung himself and then his body later fell down and split open. In other words, the rope or branch of the tree probably broke due to the weight and his body fell down and his bowels spilled out. Also, notice that Matthew 27:3-8 tells us specifically how Judas died, by hanging. Acts 1:16-19 merely tells us that he fell headlong and his bowels gushed out. Acts does not tell us that this is the means of his death where Matthew does.

Context. When dealing with opponents who site biblical difficulties, you must always challenge them to look at the verses in context. Very often, the problems disappear when doing this. In Matthew 5:48 Jesus says, "*Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" Sometimes people will quote a verse like this and say that it is an impossibility to accomplish and that the Bible asks you to do impossible things. Therefore, it cannot be from God. The answer, of course, is found in the context, Matthew 5:43-48.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' "But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? "And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Notice that the context is dealing with loving all people equally. This is what it means to be perfect. It means to be perfect in loving others and it is a noble thing to strive for. Therefore, this is not speaking about perfection as God is perfect, but it is urging people to love as God loves — equally.

Assumptions: Sometimes people are looking for contradictions in the Bible and so they will find anything that looks like a contradiction. When this happens, point it out. When a person has misconceptions removed, many things fall into place. So, listen to what they say and see if there are any false assumptions.

Copyist Errors: The fact is that the copies of the biblical manuscripts are not perfect. These copy errors account for several alleged contradictions. For example, how many charioteers were killed by David, 700 or 7000? In 2 Samuel 10:18 it says, 700 but in 1 Chronicles 19:18 it says 7,000. This is an example of a copyist error. Notice how the number is off by a single zero; that is, by a single notation of a digit. According to Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible, by Gleason Archer, page 382, regarding the characters used

to designate numbers, "Nun final , was mistaken for dotted Zayin ," would account for the copyist error in the text. Most probably, the correct number is 7,000 charioteers." Therefore, we can admit that there are copyist errors, though minor and infrequent. We must also point out that inspiration deals with the autographs (the original writings), not the copies. **We have copies of inspired documents.**

Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry

WHY I AM A FOLLOWER OF A JEWISH CARPENTER NAMED JESUS

(The Evidentiary Case I found for Christ)

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." 1 Peter 3:15-16 NIV

1. ***The changed lives and martyr's deaths of the men in Jesus' inner circle*** (the Apostles)

2. ***The changed life and martyr's death of Paul*** (He not only "changed teams" to his detriment, but he then had to acknowledge that he had participated in the murder of Stephen rather than his legitimate execution)

3. ***The historical and geographical accuracy of the Bible***

4. ***The 65 Old Testament Prophecies regarding a coming Messiah that are fulfilled by Jesus***

5. ***The common themes that run through the entire Bible*** (ie. "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin")

6. ***The incredible foreshadowing of Jesus' death provided by Old Testament sacrificial system***

7. ***The Gospel's power to change the broken lives of men*** (Jesus' brilliant insights into human relationships)

8. ***The accurate depiction of spiritual warfare found in the New Testament***

"At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed."
Acts 14:1 NIV

TRADITIONAL VIEWS OF THE APOSTLES' DEATHS

From The Search for the 12 Apostles by William S. McBirnie, PhD

1. **Simon Peter** - Tortured at Mamertine in Rome for 9 months. Nailed upside down to a cross by Nero in AD 67 (p. 65 & 79)

2. **Andrew** - Scourged and tied to a cross in Achaia in AD 69 by Aaegaas (p. 82-85)

3. **James Son of Zebedee (The Great)** - Beheaded by the sword in Jerusalem at the command of Herod Agrippa in AD 44 (Acts 12:1 & 2) (p. 96)

4. **John** - Banished to the island of Patmos by Dominitian. Later returned to Ephesus and died there of old age in AD 99 (p. 117)

5. **Phillip** - Crucified and stoned in Hieroplis in AD 53 by priests of the pagan god, Mars. (p. 123)

6. **Bartholomew** - Beaten with clubs, flayed alive, crucified by heathen priests in Armenia in AD 68 (p. 135 & 136)

7. **Thomas** - Killed in India with a spear by emissaries of King Mizdi sometime after AD 52 (p. 145)

8. **Matthew** - Cause of Death Unknown

9. **James, Son of Alphaeus** (The Less of the Younger) - Stoned to death in Jerusalem by the Jews during the Rein of Justinian (p. 193)

10. **Jude Thaddaeus** - Killed by a javelin or by arrows in Persia in AD 50 (p. 202)

11. **Simon the Canaanite** - Crucified by the Romans in Britain May 10, AD 61 (p. 202)

12. **Matthias** (replaced Judas Iscariot) - Stoned to death by the Jews in Judea in AD 64 (p. 244)

* Jesus was crucified and resurrected in AD 33.

** John Mark, Barnabas, and Paul were also martyred.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING CHRIST

As the Son of God. Ps. 2:7
Fulfilled. Luke 1:32,35
As the seed of the woman. Gen. 3:15
Fulfilled. Gal. 4:4
As the seed of Abraham
Gen. 17:7; 22:18
Fulfilled. Gal. 3:16
As the seed of Isaac. Gen. 21:12
Fulfilled. Heb. 11:17-19
As the seed of David. Ps. 132:11; Jer.23:5
Fulfilled. Acts 13:23; Rom. 1:3
His coming at a set time.
Gen. 49:10; Dan. 9:24,25
Fulfilled. Luke 2:1
His being born of a virgin. Is. 7:14
Fulfilled. Matt. 1:22,23; Luke 2:7
His being called Immanuel. Is. 7:14
Fulfilled. Matt. 1:22,23
His being born in Bethlehem of Judea.
Mic. 5:2
Fulfilled. Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4-6
Great persons coming to adore him.
Ps. 72:10
Fulfilled. Matt. 2:1-11
The slaying of the children of
Bethlehem. Jer. 31:15
Fulfilled. Matt. 2:16-18
His being called out of Egypt. Hos. 11:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 2:15
His being preceded by John the Baptist.
Is. 40:3; Mal. 3:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 3:1,3; Luke 1:17
His being anointed with the Spirit.
Ps. 45:7; Is. 11:2; 61:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 3:16; John 3:34;
Acts 10:38
His being a Prophet like to Moses.
Deut. 18:15-18
Fulfilled. Acts 3:20-22
His being a Priest after the order of
Melchizedek. Ps. 110:4
Fulfilled. Heb. 5:56
His entering on his public ministry.
Is. 61:1,2
Fulfilled. Luke 4:16-21,43
His ministry commencing in Galilee.
Is. 9:1,2
Fulfilled. Matt. 4:12-16,23
His entering publicly into Jerusalem.
Fulfilled. Matt. 21:1-5
His coming into the temple.
Hag. 2:7,9; Mal. 3:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 21:12; Luke 2:27-32;
John 2:13-16
His poverty. Is. 53:2
Fulfilled. Mark 6:3; Luke 9:58
His meekness and want of ostentatious.
Is. 42:2
Fulfilled. Matt. 12:15,16,19
His tenderness and compassion.
Is. 40:11; 42:3
Fulfilled. Matt. 12:15,20; Heb. 4:15
His being without guile. Is. 53:9
Fulfilled. 1 Pet. 2:22
His zeal. Ps. 69:9
Fulfilled. John 2:17
His preaching by parables. Ps. 78:2
Fulfilled Matt. 13:34,35
His working miracles. Is. 35:5,6
Fulfilled. Matt. 11:4-6; John 11:47
His bearing reproach. Ps. 22:6; 69:7,9,20
Fulfilled. Rom. 15:3
His being rejected by his brethren.
Ps. 69:8; Is. 63:3
Fulfilled. John 1:11; 7:3
His being a stone of stumbling to the Jews.
Is. 8:14
Fulfilled. Rom. 9:32; 1 Pet. 2:8
His being hated by the Jews.
Ps. 69:4; Is. 49:7
Fulfilled. John 15:24,25
His being rejected by the Jewish rulers.
Ps. 118:22
Fulfilled. Matt. 21:42; John 7:48
That the Jews and Gentiles should combine
against Him. Ps. 2:1,2
Fulfilled. Luke 23:12; Acts 4:27
His being betrayed by a friend.
Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14
Fulfilled. John 13:18,21
His disciples forsaking him. Zech. 13:7
Fulfilled. Matt. 26:31,56
His being sold for thirty pieces silver.
Zech. 11:12
Fulfilled. Matt. 26:15
His price being given for the potter's field.
Zech. 11:13
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:7
The intensity of his sufferings. Ps. 22:14,15
Fulfilled. Luke 22:42,44
His sufferings being for others.
Is. 53:4-6,12; Dan. 9:26
Fulfilled. Matt. 20:28
His patience and silence under suffering.
Is. 53:7
Fulfilled. Matt. 26:63; 27:12-14
His being smitten on the cheek. Mic. 5
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:30
His visage being marred. Is. 52:14; 53:3
Fulfilled. John 19:5.
His being spit on and scourged. Is. 50
Fulfilled. Mark 14:65; John 19:1
His hands and feet being nailed to the
cross. Ps. 22:16
Fulfilled. John 19:18; 20:25
His being forsaken by God. Ps. 22:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:46
His being mocked. Ps. 22:7,8.
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:39-44
Gall and vinegar being given him to drink.
Ps. 69:21
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:34
His garments being parted, and lots cast for
his vesture. Ps. 22:18
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:35
His being numbered with the transgressors.
Is. 53:12
Fulfilled. Mark 15:28
His intercession for His murderers.
Is. 53:12
Fulfilled. Luke 23:34
His death. Is. 53:12
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:50
That a bone of him should not be broken.
Ex. 12:46; Ps. 34:20
Fulfilled. John 19:33,36
His being pierced. Zech. 12:10
Fulfilled. John 19:34,37
His being buried with the rich. Is.53:9
Fulfilled. Matt. 27:57-60
His flesh not seeing corruption. Ps. 16:10
Fulfilled. Acts 2:31
His resurrection. Ps. 16:10; Is. 26:19
Fulfilled. Luke 24:6,31,34
His ascension. Ps. 68:18
Fulfilled. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9
His sitting on the right hand of God.
Ps.110:1
Fulfilled. Heb. 1:3
His exercising the priestly office in heaven.
Zech. 6:13
Fulfilled. Rom. 8:34
His being the chief corner-stone of the
Church. Is. 28:16
Fulfilled. 1 Pet. 2:6,7
His being King in Zion. Ps. 2:6
Fulfilled. Luke 1:32; John 18:33-37
The conversion of the Gentiles to him.
Is.11:10; 42:1
Fulfilled. Matt. 1:17,21; John 10:16;
Acts 10:45,47
His righteous government. Ps. 45:6,7
Fulfilled. John 5:30; Rev. 19:11
His universal dominion. Ps. 72:8; Dan. 7:14
Fulfilled. Phil. 2:9,11
The perpetuity of his kingdom.
Is. 9:7; Dan. 7:14.
Fulfilled. Luke 1:32,33



Covered in the Dust OF OUR RABBI

PART FOUR:

IMPORTANT BIBLE DOCTRINES

WHAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE ABOUT THE TRINITY



In the simplest of terms, Christians believe:

There is only one God, and this one God is in three Persons.

The three Persons are: God the Father
God the Son (Jesus Christ)
God the Holy Spirit
(also called the Holy Ghost)

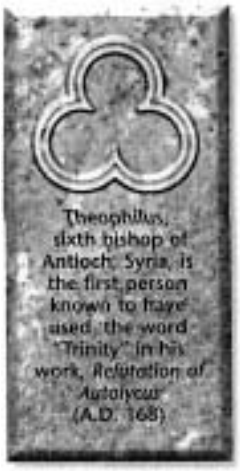


Early Christians used this diagram to explain the Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all God, but they are not three names for the same Person.

The Persons are distinct:

The Father is no the Son.
The Son is not the Holy Spirit.
The Holy Spirit is not the Father.

The Trinity and the Bible



God is one absolutely perfect, divine Being in three Persons. His *being* is what God is, in relation to the universe He created. The three are called Persons because they relate to one another in personal ways.

When Christians talk about believing in one God in three Persons (the Trinity), they do NOT mean:

1 God in 3 Gods, or
3 Persons in 1 Person, or
1 Person in 3 Gods

Rather, they mean:

1 God in 3 Persons

Therefore,

The Father is God–the first Person of the Trinity.
The Son is God–the second Person of the Trinity.
The Holy Spirit is God–the third Person of the Trinity. (The title "Holy Ghost" is an older English expression for "Holy Spirit." Each is an acceptable translation of the phrase in the Bible.)

Why do Christians Believe in the Trinity?

The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God, yet all three Persons are called God.

There is only one God:

- *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD."* Deuteronomy 6:4
- *"Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."* Isaiah 43:10

The Father is God:

- *"Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."* 2 Thessalonians 1:2

The Son is God:

- *"The Word was God."* John 1:1-5, 14 - Jesus is identified as "the Word."
- *"I and the Father are one."* John 10:30-33
- Jesus' disciple Thomas addressed Jesus as *"My Lord and my God."* John 20:28

  Jesus did not tell Thomas he was mistaken; instead Jesus accepted these titles. Other people in Scripture, notably Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14), refused to accept worship as gods.

The Church and the Creeds

The **Athanasian Creed**, written about A.D. 400 and named after Athanasius, a great defender of the Trinity, says the three Persons are not three Gods, but only one.

This is what the catholic faith teaches: we worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity.

We distinguish among the persons, but we do not divide the substance.

For the Father is a distinct person; the Son is a distinct person; and the Holy Spirit is a distinct person. Still the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit have one divinity, equal glory, and co-eternal majesty. What the Father is, the Son is, and the Holy Spirit is.

The Father is uncreated, the Son is created, and the Holy Spirit is uncreated. The Father is boundless, the Son is boundless, and the Holy Spirit is boundless. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is eternal.

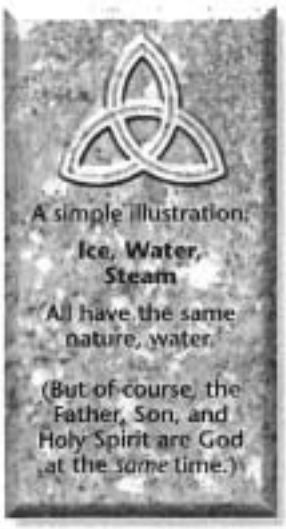
Nevertheless, there are not three eternal beings, but one eternal being, Thus there are not three uncreated beings, nor three boundless beings, but one uncreated being and one boundless being. Likewise, the Father is omnipotent, the Son is omnipotent, and the Holy Spirit is omnipotent. Yet there are not three omnipotent beings, but one omnipotent being.

Thus the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. But there are not three gods, but one God. The Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Spirit is Lord. There are not three lords, but one lord.

For according to Christian truth, we must profess that each persons individually is God; and according to Christian religion we are forbidden to say there are three Gods or three Lords.

The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. THe Son is of the Father alone; not made nor created, but begotten. The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. And in this Trinity none is afore, nor after another; none is greater, or less than another.



But the whole three persons are co-eternal, and co-equal. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

The **Chalcedonian Creed**, written in A.D. 451 by church leaders to defend the faith against false teachings, says that Jesus is fully God and fully man.

Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (homoousios) *with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer* (theotokos); *one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in tow natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way annulled by the union, but rather the characteristics of each nature being preserved and coming together to form one person and subsistence, not as parted or separated into two persons, but one and the sam Son and Only-begotten God the Word, Lord Jesus Christ; even as the prophets form earliest times spoke of him, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.*

Important Bible Verses and References

Divine Attributes	Father	Son	Holy Spirit
Eternal	X Romans 16:26-27	X Revelation 1:17	X Hebrews 9:14
Creator of all things	X Psalm 100:3	X Colossians 1:16	X Psalm 104:30
Omnipresent (capable of being all places at once)	X Jeremiah 23:24	X Ephesians 1:23	X Psalm 139:7
Omniscient (knows all things)	X 1 John 3:20	X John 21:17	X 1 Cor. 2:10
Wills and acts supernaturally	X Ephesians 1:5	X Matthew 8:3	X 1 Cor. 12:11
Gives life	X Genesis 1:11-31 see also John 5:21	X John 1:4 see also John 5:21	X Romans 8:10-11 see also John 3:8
Strengthens believers	X Psalm 138:3	X Philippians 4:13	X Ephesians 3:16

For Further Reading

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Bickersteth, Edward H. *The Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1957. Classic explosion of the doctrine from a multitude of biblical texts.

Bowman, Robert M., Jr. *Why You Should Believe in the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989. Answers to various criticisms of the doctrine.

Boyd, Gregory A. *Oneness Pentecostals and the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992. Biblical critique of the belief held Oneness Pentecostals that Jesus is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Bray, Gerald. *Creeds, Councils and Christ*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984. More advanced analysis of the origins and biblical basis of the creeds.

Christianity, Cults & Religions. Torrance, CA: Rose Publishing, 1994. 20" by 26" wall chart comparing the beliefs of 18 religions and cults. Topics include: God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, salvation, and more.

Reymond, Robert L. *Jesus, Divine Messiah: The New Testament Witness*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1990. Advance biblical study, defending Christ's deity primarily against modern critical theories.

Rhodes, Ron. *Christ Before the Manger*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992. What the Bible says about Jesus before he became a man. Also see Rhodes's book *The Complete Book of Bible Answers*.

Helpful Websites

http://www.watchman.org/subindex.htm
Watchman Fellowship, P.O. Box 530842, Birmingham, AL 35253, Ph. (205) 871-2858
Specializes in teaching biblical interpretation and in tracking numerous religious groups that deny the Trinity and other essential Christian doctrines (Scroll down to *Trinity* in this alphabetical list of topics.)

http://www.gospelcom.net/apologeticsindex/t10.html
Apologetics Index (contact: Anton Hein) Online literature explaining a variety of Christian doctrines.

http://www.irr.org/mit/biblpage.html
Institute for Religious Research (contact: Luke P. Wilson), 1340 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49505 Ph. (616) 451-4562

http://home.earthlink.net/~ronrhodes/
Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries (contact: Ron Rhodes), P.O. Box 80087, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 Ph. (949) 888-8848 Specialized in giving basic answers to commonly asked questions (See "Answers to Common Questions.")

IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

Matthew 1:18-25

Big Idea: *Without the virgin birth (virginal conception) Jesus would not be the Promised One of the Old Testament and He would also be inadequate to be the Savior of mankind.*

I. Humanity of Christ (Antinomy - a contradiction between two equally valid principles)

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

II. Deity of Christ (The hypostatic union)

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel – which means, 'God with us.'" Matthew 1:23

III. Jesus had to be both God and man to be Messiah

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

IV. Incarnation of a pre-existing person (God in a bod!)

"This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit." Matthew 1:18

V. God kept Jesus from possessing a sin nature (Sinlessness)

"Such a high priest meets our need – one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens." Hebrews 7:26

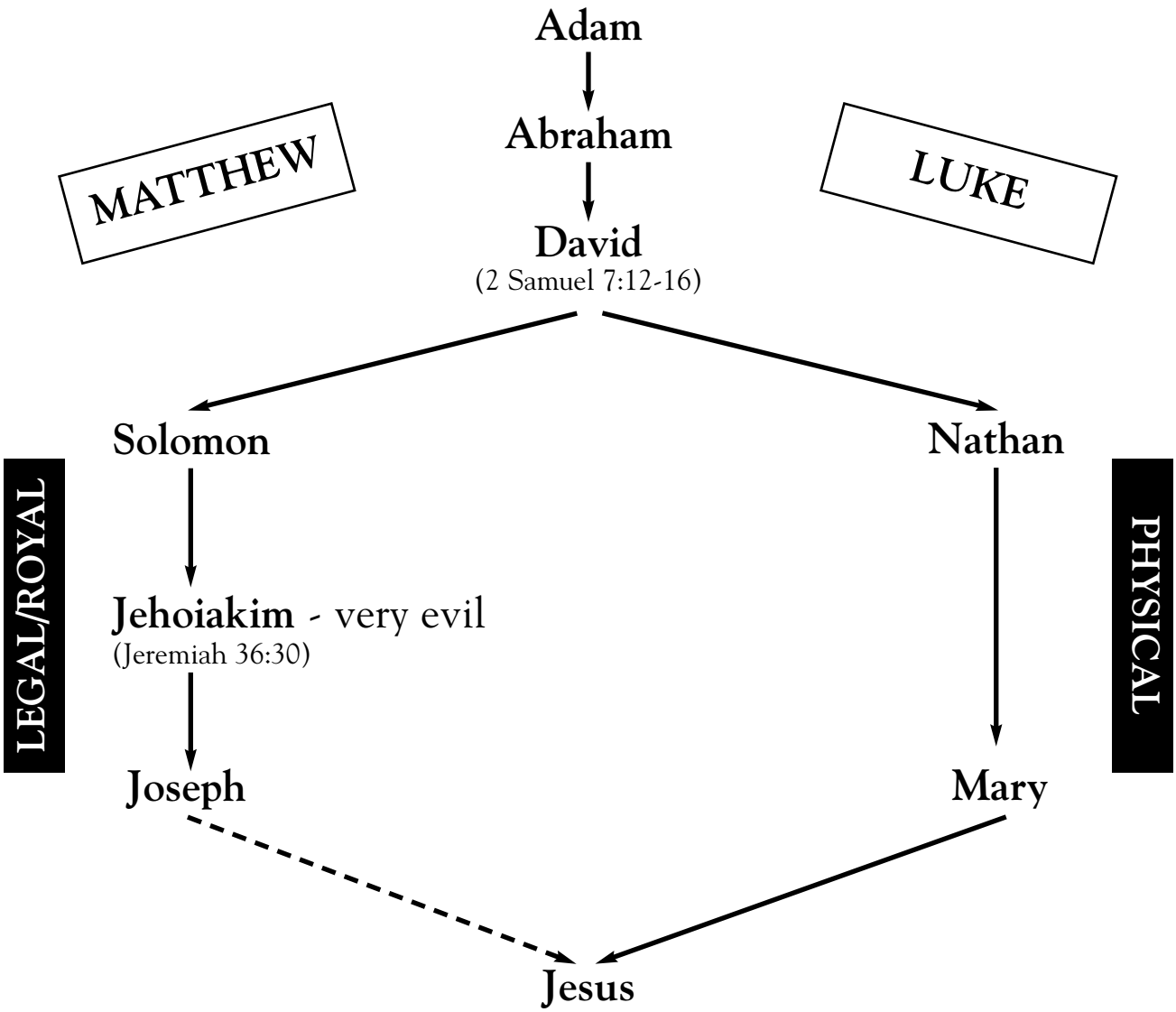
Deuteronomy 29:29 - "The secret things"

VI. Necessary in view of prophecy

a. *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."* Genesis 3:15

b. *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."* Isaiah 7:14

c. Messianic Lineage -



VII. A gift!

EIGHT FACTS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

"I know pretty well what evidence is, and I tell you, such evidence as that for the resurrection has never broken down yet." John Singleton Copley

Jesus' empty grave is reported in extremely early sources that date so close to the event that they could not have been products of legend.

The fact that the gospels report women discovered the empty tomb bolsters their credibility. In a culture where women were considered unreliable witnesses, surely the writers would have claimed men found the tomb vacant if they were fabricating the story.

The site of Jesus' tomb was known to both Christians and their opponents, so it could have been checked by skeptics.

Nobody – not even Roman or Jewish leaders – ever claimed the tomb still contained Jesus' body. Instead, they claimed the disciples, despite having no motive or opportunity, had stolen the body – an outlandish theory critics have long since abandoned.

The evidence for Jesus' numerous post-resurrection appearances didn't develop gradually over the years as mythology distorted memories of his life. Rather, the resurrection was the church's central proclamation from the beginning.

According to psychologist Gary Collins, the appearances of Jesus cannot be attributed to hallucinations or wishful thinking.

Apart from the resurrection, there's no reasonable explanation for why skeptics like Paul and James would have been converted and died for their new-found faith.

The miraculous emergence of the church in the very city where the crucifixion took place is inexplicable apart from eyewitnesses telling the truth about seeing Jesus alive again.

Concludes British theologian Michael Green: "The appearances of Jesus are as well authenticated as anything in antiquity . . . There can be no rational doubt that they occurred."

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT HELL?

I. What words in the Bible reference the destination of the soul/spirit after the death of the physical body?

A. (O.T.) Hebrew - *Sheol*; the unseen world; the grave or pit

B. (N.T.) Greek - *Hades*; the N.T. equivalent of *sheol*; the abode of departed spirits

*It appears that the Bible teaches that there exists in *sheol/hades* a temporary "torment compartment" that is commonly referred to as *hell* where wicked souls have always gone and will always go until the end of the Millennium. Then the wicked will be brought out of here to be reunited with their resurrected and immortal bodies and to be cast into the final hell or *lake of fire* for eternity (Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 20:11-15).

C. (N.T.) Greek - *Gehenna*; the valley of Hinnom used by Jesus to symbolize the final place of punishment of unbelievers (Matthew l0:28). This valley lays south and east of Jerusalem and was called the *valley of lamentation* because of the cries of the infants who were thrown into the fiery arms of the bull-like idol Molech. The Jews so abhorred the place after these horrible sacrifices had been abolished by King Josiah (2 Kings 23:10) that they cast into it not only all manner of refuse, but also the dead bodies of animals and of criminals who had been executed. It is believed that it was a place where fires burned perpetually. *Gehenna* is synonymous with the *lake of fire* and the *second death* (Revelation 2:11).

*"The word death as applied to man in Scripture means *separation* or a cutting off from realizing God's purpose for which he was created. One can logically substitute the word separation for death in every scripture where it is used. It will clarify many passages to do so." Finis Dake

II. Who will suffer the punishment of *hell*?

A. The devil (Revelation 20:7-10)

B. His demons [fallen angels] (2 Peter 2:4)

C. Human beings who have failed to trust in Jesus Christ (John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:8, Hebrews 10:28-31)

III. What is it like? *Hell* is characterized by:

A. A total absence of God's presence (Psalm 88:3-5; 2 Thessalonians 1:9)

B. Anguish from the punishment of eternal fire (Luke 16:24; Jude 7)

C. Weeping from terrible regret and despair (Matthew 25:30)

IV. How long does *hell* last?

A. It is a place of <u>eternal</u>, conscious punishment for the wicked (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)

V. When will the final assignment to the *lake of fire* take place?

A. After the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)

VI. Will there be degrees of judgment?

A. Apparently (Matthew 11:20-24)

*(N.T.) Greek - *Tartarus*; this prison is a special one for fallen angels who sinned before the flood. (1 Peter 3:19-20; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6)

"Hell is God's great compliment to the reality of human freedom and the dignity of human choice"
G.K Chesterton

"How could a good and loving God impose His eternal presence on someone who was not interested in spending roughly seventy five years in relationship with Him here on earth?"
FMN

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT HEAVEN?

I. The Bible uses the word *heaven* to name three places

*Hebrew - *shamayim* (8064); Greek - *ouranos* (3772)

A. The sky is often called *heaven*. Job 38:37

B. Outer space is often called *heaven*. Genesis 15:5

C. The central dwelling place of God is called *heaven*. Matthew 6:9

1. This central dwelling place of God is also called the third heaven or paradise. 2 Corinthians 12:2-4

2. Jesus likens the "third" heaven to a large house with many subsidiary living quarters. John 14:2

3. Since Jesus' resurrection the soul/spirit of a believer goes here from the time of death to the final judgment. 2 Corinthians 5:8

**Abraham's Bosom* is a name given to a place of comfort in sheol/hades where some scholars believe the soul/spirits of the righteous dead resided until Jesus freed them upon His Resurrection (Luke 4:18; 1 Peter 3:18-20). Since the resurrection of Christ, the soul/spirits of believers go immediately into the presence of God in the current heaven. Philippians 1:21-23

II. Who will reside in *Heaven* with the Triune God?

A. The angels who have been loyal to their Creator. Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 5:11

B. The soul/spirits of humans that have believed in Jesus Christ during their lifetimes. Hebrews 9:27, 2 Corinthians 5:7-9; Acts 4:12

*The final destiny of believers is a unified *new heaven* and *new earth* (Revelation 21:1-2). By this time their soul/spirits will have been joined together with their resurrected bodies. 1 Corinthians 15:35-40; 2 Corinthians 5:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

III. What is *heaven* like?

A. It is the beautiful and glorious, eternal dwelling of God. Revelation 21:10-27; Revelation 22:5

B. There will he no tears, no crying, no pain, no death, no mourning, no impurity, no shame and no deceit. Revelation 21:4, 27

C. There will be no curse. Revelation 22:3

D. There will be no marriage. Matthew 22:30

E. There will be no night; but the glory of the Lord God Almighty and of the Lamb will supply the light. Revelation 22:5

F. Believers will enjoy the presence of the Creator and joyfully serve Him as He reigns forever, Revelation 21:3-7; Revelation 22:5

IV. Will there be a judgment of believers prior to occupation of the new heaven and new earth?

A. Yes; there will be a judgment of the saved at what is often called the *judgment seat of Christ*. At this time each believer will be rewarded for his obedience to the Lord regarding *personal holiness* and *kingdom service*. Matthew 5:12; Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10

V. Will We Recognize People After Our Physical Deaths?

A. Yes. Jesus indicates that Dives recognized both Abraham and Lazarus. Luke 16:19-31

VI. Do we have to wait to die to enjoy the benefits of *Heaven*?

A. Emphatically, no! Heaven, like hell, is a life dynamic force that can govern our thoughts, actions, emotions, relationships, etc. We choose whether we "will live like hell" or live like the citizens of heaven that we are destined to become. 1 Peter 2:11-12

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."
Matthew 4:17

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?" 2 Corinthians 13:5

1. And this is the testimony: God has give us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 John 5:10-13

2. At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:3-7

3. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:4-9

4. Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. Romans 8:1-3

5. That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. Romans 10:9-10

6. " I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. John 5:24

7. God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? Numbers 23:19

"because by the one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."
Hebrews 10:14

FATHER'S LOVE LETTER

The cry of a Father's heart from Genesis to Revelation…

My Child…

You may not know me,
but I know everything about you… Psalm 139:1
I know when you sit down and when you rise up…. Psalm 139:2
I am familiar with all your ways… Psalm 139:3 Even the very hairs on your head are numbered… Matthew 10:29-31
For you were made in my image… Genesis 1:27 In me you live and move and have four being… Acts 17:28 For you are my offspring… Acts 17:28 I knew you even before you were conceived… Jeremiah 1:4-5 I chose you when I planned creation… Ephesians 1:11-12 You were not a mistake… Psalm 139:15-16 For all your days are written in my book… Psalm 139:15-16 I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live… Acts 17:26 You are fearfully and wonderfully made… Psalm 139:14 I knit you together in your mother's womb… Psalm 139:13 And brought you forth on the day you were born … Psalm 71:6 I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me… John 8:41-44 I am not distant and angry, but am the complete expression of love… 1 John 4:16 And it is my desire to lavish my love on you… 1 John 3:1 Simply because you are my child and I am your Father… 1 John 3:1 I offer you more than your earthly father ever could… Matthew 7:11 For I am the perfect Father… Matthew 5:48 Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand… James 1:17 For I am your provider and I meet all your needs… Matthew 6:31-33 My plan for your future has always been filled with hope… Jeremiah 29:11 Because I love you with an everlasting love… Jeremiah 31:3 My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore… Psalm 139:17-18 And I rejoice over you with singing… Zephaniah 3:17 I will never stop doing good to you… Jeremiah 32:40 For you are my treasured possession… Exodus 19:5 I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul… Jeremiah 32:41 And I want to show you great and marvelous things… Jeremiah 33:3 If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me… Deuteronomy 4:29 Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart… Psalm 37:4 For it is I who gave you those desires… Philippians 2:13 I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine… Ephesians 3:29 For I am your greatest encourager… 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles… 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you… Psalm 34:18 As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart… Isaiah 40:11 One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes… Revelation 21:3-4 And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth… Revelation 21:4 I am your Father and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus… John 17:23 For in Jesus my love for you is revealed… John 17:26 He is the exact representation of my being… Hebrews 1:3 And He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you… Romans 8:31 And to tell you that I am not counting your sins… 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled… 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you… 1 John 4:16 I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love… Romans 8:32 If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me… 1 John 2:23 And nothing will ever separate you from my love again… Romans 8:38-39 Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen… Luke 15:7 I have always been Father and will always be Father… Ephesians 3:14-15
My question is…Will you be my child?… John 1:12-13 I am waiting for you… Luke 15:11-32

Love, Your Dad
ALMIGHTY GOD

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GOD'S GREAT LOVE, MERCY, AND GRACE TOWARD US

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved."
Ephesians 2:4-5 NIV

Love - *NT:26* ***agapee, agapees, hee,***

it denotes:

affection, good-will, love, benevolence: John 15:13; Romans 13:10; 1 John 4:18

a. Used of the love of men to men;
b. Used of the love of men toward God:
c. Used of the love of God toward men:
d. Used of the love of God toward Christ:
e. Used of the love of Christ toward men:

Mercy - *NT:1656* ***eleos, eleou, ho,***

kindness or good will toward the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them

1. used of men toward men: Matthew 9:13

2. used of God toward men

   a. universally: Luke 1:50

   b. especially the mercy and clemency of God in providing and offering to men salvation by Christ: Luke 1:54

3. the mercy of Christ, whereby at his return to judgment he will bless true Christians with eternal life: Jude 21

Grace - *NT:5485* ***charis, charitos,***

good-will, loving-kindness, favor: Luke 2:52

a. the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace,

b. a token or proof of grace, 2 Corinthians 1:15

(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2000 by Biblesoft)

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

(The reign of God in the hearts of men)

According to Jesus in His "Discourse on the Hill":

A ***blessed*** person (one who is really well off) is a person who's life is based upon acceptance and intimate interactions with what God is doing in human history.

A genuinely ***good*** person is one who, from the deepest levels of their understanding and motivation, are committed to promoting the good of everyone they deal with – including, of course, God and themselves. A ***good*** person overcomes evil with ***good***! (He plays to an audience of one.)

People whom our Heavenly Father considers ***blessed*** and ***good*** are given the privilege of living in the Kingdom of God while still on earth.

*In Matthew 6 Jesus alerts us to the two main things that will block or hinder "***blessedness***" and "***goodness***" in our lives:

1. The desire to have the approval of others, especially for being devout

2. The desire to secure ourselves by means of material wealth.

From The Divine Conspiracy (pages 187-188)
By Dallas Willard

"When Jesus saw this, he was indignant He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."
Mark 10:14-16 NIV

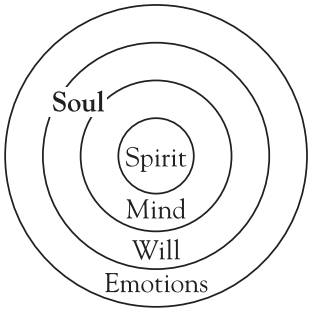
THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off–for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:37-39

- Makes its a new creation - John 3:5-8
- Seals us until redemption - Ephesians 1:13
- Frees us from sin and death - Romans 8:1-4
- Intercedes on our behalf - Romans 8:26-27
- Gives us spiritual gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:4-7
- Teaches and reminds us - John 14:25-26
- Convicts us of sin - John 16:5-8
- Strengthens us - Ephesians 3:16
- Gives us power - Acts 1:4-8
- Pours love into our hearts - Romans 5:5

"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession-to the praise of his glory." Ephesians 1:13-14 NIV

HOW DOES THE HEART RELATE TO THE SPIRIT AND THE SOUL?

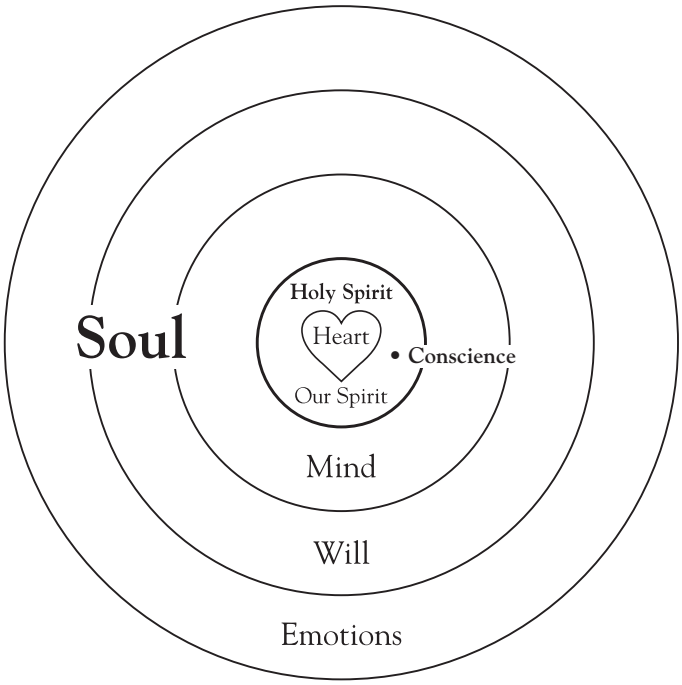


It is difficult to draw a diagram of the unseen functions of the spirit and soul. Once the diagram is drawn, however, the question must be raised as to where the heart fits into such a diagram. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, God distinguishes between the spirit and the soul and the body. However, in Mark 12:30 we are instructed to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind, and all of our strength.

The Close Relationship Between Heart and Spirit

Over twenty passages of Scripture describe a very close relationship between the heart and the spirit o a person. Here are a few of these passages.

- "*Create in me a clean **heart**, O God; and renew a right **spirit** within me*" (Psalm 51:10)
- "*The sacrifices of God are a broken **spirit**: a broken and a contrite **heart***" (Psalm 51:17)
- "*…I commune with mine own **heart**: and my **spirit** made diligent search*" (Psalm 77:6)
- "*…By sorrow of the **heart** the **spirit** is broken*" (Proverbs 15:13)
- "*…To revive the **spirit** of the humble, and to revive the **heart** of the contrite ones*" (Isaiah 57:15)
- "*A new **heart** also will I give you, and a new **spirit** will I put within you…*" (Ezekiel 36:26)
- "*For the word of God is quick, and powerful… dividing asunder the soul and **spirit**… and is a discerner o the thoughts and intents of the **heart***" (Hebrews 4:12)



1. The Heart (*kardia*)

The center o human life and spiritual activity; the "control center" of our thoughts, will, emotions, actions, and words. "*…as he thinketh in his heart, so is he*" (Proverbs 23:7). "*… out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*" (Matthew 12:34).

2. The Spirit (*pneuma*)

The home of conscience, faith, genuine love, wisdom, discernment drive, creativity, joy, and enthusiasm. Be "fervent in spirit." (See Romans 12:11).

3. The Soul (*psuke*)

The mind, will, and emotions of a person.

THE ACTS OF THE SINFUL NATURE VERSES THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

A. Galatians 5:19-21 - The Acts of the Sinful Nature (the deeds of the flesh) are:

1. Sexual Immorality
2. Impurity
3. Debauchery
4. Idolatry
5. Witchcraft
6. Hatred
7. Discord
8. Jealousy
9. Fits of Rage
10. Selfish Ambition
11. Dissensions
12. Factions
13. Drunkenness
14. Orgies
15. and the like

" I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

B. Galatians 5:22-23 - The Fruit of the Spirit are:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Patience
5. Kindness
6. Goodness
7. Faithfulness
8. Gentleness
9. Self-control

"Against such things there is no law."

C. Matthew 5:3-11 - The Roots of the Fruit - Blessed (happy) are:

1. the poor in spirit (for theirs is the kingdom of heaven)
2. those who mourn (for they will be comforted)
3. the meek (for they will inherit the earth)
4. those who hunger and thirst of righteousness (for they will be filled)
5. the merciful (for they will be shown mercy)
6. the pure in heart (for they will see God)
7. the peacemakers (for they will be called sons of God)
8. those who are persecuted because of righteousness (for theirs is the kingdom of heaven)
9. you when people insult you, and persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me (rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven)

THE SEVEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS (MOTIVATIONS) OF ROMANS 12

(from Uniquely You)

"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully." Romans 12:3-8 NIV

Spiritual gifts are supernatural motivations given to every believer. Everyone doesn't receive the same gifts. Just as many parts of the human body work together as one, so spiritual gifts are given to the Body of Christ to serve as one. Their purpose is to encourage and mature Christians for more effective ministry.

1. **Prophesying** - Prophets today are not exactly like prophets of old. Old Testament Prophets spoke the literal Word of God. Today people with the Gift of Prophecy seem to have the same seriousness and straight forward attitude toward truth. They like to share truth, regardless of what anyone thinks. Prophets today are motivated to confront anyone with what they believe is right. When controlled by the Holy Sprit, the Gift of Prophecy is a powerful tool to reprove, rebuke and exhort others. Prophets often find themselves pointing the way declaring specific truth, or standing up for something significant.

In a word: Bold
Overuse: Becomes a fighter
Goal: To declare truth without dividing
Scriptures: Ephesians 4:7,11; 1 Corinthians 14:1,3; 2 Peter 1:19-21

2. **Serving** - When you think of Christians who serve faithfully behind the scenes, you think of those with the Gift of serving. They are interested in blessing others who serve the Lord. They love to help others. Motivated by a strong sense of need, they feel like "someone has to do it." Caring and concerned for others, they find themselves doing what no one else likes to do. They tend to do whatever is called for.

In a word: Selfless
Overuse: Takes on too much
Goal: Be a servant, not a martyr
Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 12:28; Acts 6:1-3; Romans 16:1-2

3. **Teaching** - Christians with the Gift of Teaching prefer explaining why things are true. While a prophet declares truth, the teacher explains the reasons why it is true. Interested in research, those with the Gift of Teaching like to dig into seemingly insignificant details. They enjoy presenting what they discover. Often negligent of the needs of others, they press toward a deeper understanding. They love to study. Searching patiently and persistently, they may miss the obvious. They stretch the limits of learning, setting high standards of education.

In a word: In Depth
Overuse: Digs too deep
Goal: Reveal truth, don't exhaust it
Scripture: Romans 12:6, 7b; Colossians 3:16; James 3:1, 2:2; 2 Timothy 2:2

6. Encouraging - Christians with the Gift of Encouraging find themselves lifting others up. They are compelled to give advice. As counselors, they seem to often have steps of action. While Prophets declare the truth, and Teachers clarify the truth, Encouragers like to tell you what to do with truth. They bless others with a strong sense of concern. Often looking to encourage others, they are sought out as counselors. People find Encouragers friendly, understanding, and practical. They enjoy using their communication skills to share specific insights.

In a word: Encourager
Overuse: Talks to much
Goal: Apply truth, don't create expectations
Scripture: Romans 12:6, 8; Acts 11:23-24; Hebrews 10:24-25

5. Giving - Givers tend to be seriously concerned about financial matters. The Gift of Giving also involves the "gift of getting." Givers are sensitive to how money is spent and saved. Those with the Gift of Giving don't always give to the wheel that squeaks the loudest, but to the wheel that truly needs the most grease. Givers have unique financial insights. They serve especially well on boards responsible for maintaining budgets. They tend to be conscientious and conservative. The Gift of Giving may not be always evident, but a genuine interest in wise stewardship will be.

In a word: Steward
Overuse: The power of money
Goal: Sincere stewardship, not financial harassment
Scripture: Romans 12:6, 8b; Acts 4:32-35; 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

6. Leadership - The Gift of Leadership is evident in those who demonstrate an unusual ability to influence others. They seem to have an independent determination to challenge and direct others toward a specific goal. They stand out and take stands. Those with the Gift of Leadership tend to be multi-talented excelling with their people and tasks skills. Often result-oriented and driven, they need to guard their strengths. They also need to be more sensitive and patient with those who don't respond as well or positive as they. They are great motivators.

In a word: Dreamer
Overuse: Too demanding and impatient
Goal: Lead by example and willingness to be a servant.
Scripture: Romans 12:6, 8c; John 13:13-17; Hebrews 13:17

7. Mercy - Christians with the Gift of Showing Mercy demonstrate genuine sensitivity to suffering. They are compelled to help people reduce pain. They are concerned more with the person, than the reason for the suffering. Focusing on the feelings of those who hurt, believers with the Gift of Mercy desire to minister by "being there" when people really need them. Sympathizing and/or empathizing are their specialties. While others may care more about why, what, when or how, those with a Mercy gift are interested in "who" needs tender loving care.

In a word: Caring
Overuse: Too sensitive
Goal: Wise insights, not foolish responses
Scripture: Romans 12:6, 8d; Matthew 5:7

UNDERSTAND THE BASIC MOTIVATION OF EACH SPIRITUAL GIFT

If each of the seven motivational gifts were represented in a family and someone dropped the dessert on the floor, here is what each one might say and why they would say it.



THREE CATEGORIES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I. APTITUDES - Romans 12:6-8 (7 basic "function or motivational gifts")
*every believer has one; this is a complete list

A. Prophesying
B. Serving
C. Teaching
D. Exhorting
E. Giving
F. Ruling
G. Empathizing

II. JOBS - Ephesians 4:8-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 ("ministry gifts")
*most if not all believers are called into a ministry; this is not a complete list

A. Apostles
B. Prophets
C. Evangelists
D. Shepherds
E. Teachers

A. Apostles
B. Prophets
C. Teachers
D. Workers of miracles
E. Healers
F. Helpers
G. Administrators
H. Speakers in tongues etc.

III. TOOLS - 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 (9 supernatural "manifestation gifts")
*yielded believers receive supernatural manifestations; a complete list

A. Utterance of wisdom
B. Utterance of knowledge
C. Faith
D. Gifts of healing
E. Working of miracles
F. Prophecy
G. Discerning of spirits
H. Various tongues
I. Interpretation of tongues

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE GIFT OF TONGUES AND A PERSONAL PRAYER LANGUAGE

(Passages from NIV)

NT:1100 • gloossa, gloosees, hee - the tongue
1. the tongue, a member of the body, the organ of speech: Mark 7:33, 35
2. a tongue, i.e. the language used by a particular people in distinction from that of other nations: Acts 2:11

(from Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2000 by Biblesoft)

The Gift of Tongues **(What is it? Is it still a valid gift today? Is it different from a private prayer language? Is this gift an indication that a person is filled with the Holy Spirit?)**

"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;" Mark 16:17

"They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:3-4

"(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Acts 2:11

"For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God." Acts 10:46

"When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." Acts 19:6

"to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:10

"And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues." 1 Corinthians 12:28

"Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?" 1 Corinthians 12:30

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal." 1 Corinthians 13:1

"Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears." 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?" 1 Corinthians 14:5-6

"I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you." 1 Corinthians 14:18

"In the Law it is written:
'Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord (Isaiah 28:11-12)

Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers. So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind?"
1 Corinthians 14:21-23

"Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues."
1 Corinthians 14:39

A Personal Prayer Language

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."
Romans 8:26-27

"For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church." 1 Corinthians 14:2-4

"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say 'Amen' to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified." 1 Corinthians 14:14-17

"If anyone speaks in a tongue, two-or at the most three-should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God." 1 Corinthians 14:27-28

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." Ephesians 6:18

"But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit."
Jude 20

BENEFITS OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES

Pastor Stan Simmons

1. It brings personal, spiritual edification (1 Corinthians 14:4a – **those who speak to a tongue build up themselves...**). It's like a "spiritual battery charge."
2. It's a vehicle for enhanced worship (Acts 10:46 – **they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God**; 1 Corinthians 14:15 – **I will sing praise with the spirit...**).
3. It enhances one's prayer life (1 Corinthians 14:2,14 – **for those who speak in a tongue do not speak to other people but to God; for nobody understands them, since they are speaking mysteries in the Spirit... if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays but my mind is unproductive**).

   - It prevents "selfish" praying.
   - It enables us to pray the will of God (cf. 1 John 5:14-45).
   - It enables us to know how to pray when we don't understand how to pray.

4. It enables us to most effectively resist the enemy (Ephesians 6:18 – **pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication**).
5. It helps "train our tongue in righteousness" (James 3:1-12).

LEADING BELIEVERS INTO AN INITIAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT TO RECEIVE THEIR PRAYER LANGUAGE

- Be sure they understand what is meant by the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.[36]
- Encourage them to come before Jesus in worship and confession of sin.
- Encourage them to ask Jesus to "baptize them with the Holy Spirit and release to them a prayer language."
- Caution them against expecting an emotional experience or immediate fluency of tongues.
- Encourage them, however, to expect the release of tongues. If "in their mind" they hear sounds, encourage them to vocalize them as best as possible. If "nothing" happens, encourage them to continue to privately seek Jesus for the baptism and for tongues. Assure them the Bible promises their language will be released. Don't hesitate to lay hands on them and pray over them, using your prayer language.

[36] Two books by Pastor Jack Hayford are recommended in dealing further with an understanding of "tongues as a prayer language" – *The Beauty of Spiritual Language* (Word Publishing) and *Praying in the Spirit* (Thomas Nelson Publishers). For those interested in a more scholarly exposition of the **baptism with the Holy Spirit**, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Hendrickson Publishers) by Roger Stronstad is recommended. There is also Faith Chapel's **Baptism with the Holy Spirit** class.

WHY DOES A LOVING AND OMNIPOTENT GOD ALLOW SUFFERING?

I. Is He loving?

A. He sent His own Son to die in our place (1 Timothy 2:3-6)

B. He blesses both the bad and the good (Matthew 5:45)

II. Is He all powerful?

A. *"But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases."* (Psalm 115:3)

B. Sparrows, hair, and you (Luke 12:4-7)

III. What possible reason(s) are there for all the suffering in the world?

A. Sin, ours and that of humanity, and its effect on all our relationships (Romans 6:23; Galatians 6:7)

B. We have an enemy who has declared war on us (John 10:10; Ephesians 6:11-12)

C. God's discipline (Hebrews 12:6; James 1:2-4)

D. For the glory of God (2 Corinthians 12:7; John 11:4; Job 1-2)

IV. God's view on two concepts is *very* different that ours

A. Time (2 Peter 3:8)

B. Death (Philippians 1:21)

V. The Bottom Line - God is loving, just, and righteous (Jeremiah 9:23-24), ***but*** **He is also *sovereign.*** (Romans 9:16-23; Job 13:15)

WATER BAPTISM

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"
Matthew 28: 18-20 NIV

- **What is water baptism?** Websters Dictionary indicates that it is a Christian sacrament signifying spiritual rebirth and admitting the recipient to the Christian community through the ritual use of water. (Gr. ***baptizma*** – the process of immersion, submersion, and emergence. To dip as in the dyeing of a garment.) (Acts 2:37-39)

- **Why is baptism practiced?** It is commanded by Jesus himself (Mark 16:15-16)

- **Who should be baptized?** All true believers in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19)

- **Who can participate in performing a water baptism?** Any true believer in Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:26-39)

- **How are water baptism and spiritual baptism linked?** Water baptism is the outward and visible sign of the spirit baptism that has already taken place in the life of a person who has yielded control of his life to Christ. (Romans 8:9)

- **What mode of baptism should be practiced?** While immersion is implied throughout the New Testament, sprinkling with water may also have been used. (Mark 1:9-10)

- **Does water baptism save a person?** No; eternal life is given by God to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ, and who gratefully yield control of their lives to Him. (Romans 10:9-10)

- **What does baptism really mean?** Like a marriage ceremony, water baptism is a public act of commitment. It signifies our belief in the resurrected Christ and our desire to depart from our old life and embark on a new, spirit filled life with Him. (Ephesians 4:4-6)

"Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?' And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him."
Acts 8:35-39 NIV

COMMUNION, THE LORD'S SUPPER, THE EUCHARIST

(Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; John 13:1-4; Acts 2:42-47; Acts 20:7)

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you.' This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Fathers kingdom.' When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

Matthew 26:26-30 NIV

"Jesus said to them, 'I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him."

John 6:53-56 NIV

"When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment."

1 Corinthians 11:20-34 NIV

The Lord's Supper

The bread and wine Christ's body and blood? What should the Lord's Supper mean to us? The answers to these questions are often grouped into four categories, although there are variations within these four broad views.

The Transubstantiation View: The first view is that of the Roman Catholic Church *(especially before the Second Vatican Council of 1962-1965)*. This view holds that the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ when the words of institution are spoken by the priest. This doctrine, known as transubstantiation, holds that while the physical properties (taste, appearance, etc.) of the bread and wine do not change, the inner reality of these elements undergoes a spiritual change. While this view may help to foster a serious attitude toward the Eucharist, it fails to grasp the figurative nature of Jesus' language. Jesus could not have been holding His actual body and blood in His hands. He probably meant, "*This bread represents My body*" and "*This wine represents My blood.*" Jesus often used figurative language (Luke 8:11, 21), just as a person does today when showing someone a photograph and saying, "*This is my father.*"

The Consubstantiation View: The second viewpoint, developed by Martin Luther, is that Christ's body and blood are truly present "*in with, and under*" the bread and wine. The elements do not actually change into Christ's body and blood. But in the same way that heat is present in a piece of hot iron, so Christ is present in the elements. The Lutheran position is often called consubstantiation. This position can encourage the recipient of the Eucharist with the realization that Christ is actually present at the Supper. But it also misses the figurative use of Jesus' words. It also may tend to draw more attention to the bread and wine than to Christ Himself.

The Symbolic View: The third position, known as the symbolic or memorial view, is derived from the teachings of the Swiss reformer, Ulrich Zwingli. Although his teaching is not completely clear, he basically held that the bread and wine were only symbols of the sacrificed body and blood of Christ. He taught that the Lord's Supper is primarily a memorial ceremony of Christ's finished work, but that it is also to be an occasion when God's people pledge their unity with one another and their loyalty to Christ. This is the viewpoint held by most Baptist and independent churches. While Zwingli's ideas are basically sound, this position tends to place more emphasis on what the Christian does and promises in the Supper than on what God does.

The Dynamic View: Finally, there is the view of John Calvin and the Reformed and Presbyterian churches which follow his teachings. Known as the dynamic or spiritual presence view, it stands somewhere between the positions of Luther and Zwingli. Calvin agreed with Zwingli that the bread and wine are to be understood symbolically. Christ is not physically present in the elements, because His risen, glorified body is in heaven (Hebrews 10:12-13). Still, He is dynamically and spiritually present in the Lord's Supper through the Holy Spirit. In the worship service *(but not at any one precise moment)*, when the Word of God is proclaimed and the Lord's Supper is received, the glorified Christ actually gives spiritual nourishment from His own glorified body to those who receive it. As bread nourishes the physical body, so Christ's glorified body enlivens the soul. Because of the organic union between Christ, the risen Head and the members of His body, the church (Ephesians 1:18-23; 4:15-l6; 5:23), this nourishment is conveyed to Christians by the Spirit who dwells in them (Romans 8:9-11). Calvin admits that the way the Spirit does this is a genuine mystery. Yet, it is not contrary to reason – just above reason. Calvin at times places more emphasis on Jesus' glorified flesh and blood than the Scriptures teach. But his position helps to explain why the Eucharist is so important for the Christian to observe, and why it is such a serious offense to misuse it. His view also corresponds well with those Scriptures that speak of God's nourishing and empowering work in His people (Ephesians 3:14-21; Colossians 2:6-10, 19). Biblical Teachings. In 1 Corinthians 10:16, the apostle Paul rebuked the Corinthians for their involvement with idolatry. He referred to the cup as "*the communion of the blood of Christ*" and the bread as "*the communion of the body of Christ.*" The Greek word for communion has the meaning of "*fellowship, participating, and sharing.*" From the context it appears that Paul is saying that when Christians partake of the cup and the bread, they are participating in the benefits of Christ's death *(referred to as His blood)* and resurrection life *(His glorified body)*. The most important of these benefits are the assurance of sins forgiven *(through Christ's blood)* and the assurance of Christ's presence and power *(through His body)*.

From Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright ©1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers - LORD'S SUPPER

HOLLYWOOD, SATAN, AND THE CHURCH

(Tinsel Town's Misrepresentation of the Devil)

"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them." The Screwtape Letters by CSL Lewis

THE BIG IDEA: Contemporary motion pictures often wrongly depict Satan as either a humorous but harmless, caricature with horns, red tights, and a pitchfork or as a malevolent, all-powerful being who can destroy anyone he wishes.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." Ephesians 6:10-12 NIV

A. What Satan is Limited to Doing to Human Beings (the battle for your mind)

1. Satan can blind us (cover with a callus; harden; dull the intellect) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4)
2. He can accuse us (charge; indict; lay blame) Revelation 12:10
3. He can deceive us (trick or mislead) John 8:44
4. He can inflame the hurts caused by others (stir up) Ephesians 4:25-27

B. What We can do to Thwart his Attacks

Put on the Armor of God!

"Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil come, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet filed with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:13-17 NIV

1. Walk in truth (John 8:32)
2. Be right with God (1 John 1:9)
3. Be right with Others (Romans 12:18-19)
4. Have faith in God (1 John 4:4)
5. Rejoice in your salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9)
6. Know and use God's Word; the Bible (James 4:7)

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT SATAN AND DEMONS

A. Facts about Satan (the devil, Lucifer)

1. He is a being with a personal name. Job 1:7

2. Satan fell from his position as an anointed cherub through pride over his own beauty. Ezekiel 28:11-17; 1 Timothy 3:16; and trying to exalt himself above God. Isaiah 14:12-14

3. He deceived Eve in the garden. Genesis 3:1-6

4. God put enmity between Satan and man. Genesis 3:15

5. He has access to heaven. Revelation 12:9-12

6. He is the accuser of the brethren. Revelation 12:10

7. He roams the earth seeking whom he can devour. 1 Peter 5:8

8. He hates good men. Job 2:3-6

9. He seeks to destroy fellowship between God and His children. Job 2:4-6

10. He seeks to cause men to curse God and deny Him. Job 2:5

11. He is limited by God in touching His children. Job 2:6

12. He destroys to the limit of this ability through the permission of God. Job 1:12-19

13. He has many agents on earth who do his bidding. Job 1:15, 17

14. He can control the elements and cause storms when God permits. Job 1:18, 19

15. He is the propagator of disease in the bodies of men. Job 2:7; Acts 10:38

16. Satan's ultimate abode is the "lake of fire" prepared for him, the demons, and those humans who do not believe in Christ. Revelation 20:10

B. Facts about the demons (fallen angels)

1. A third of God's angels rebelled with Satan and now compose his demon horde. Revelation 12:4

2. They are subject to Christ and to believers by the atonement, the Name of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 8:16-17

3. Demons have a hierarchy of rank with Satan as their commander and chief. Ephesians 6:12

4. Thousands of them can enter into and take possession of one man at the same time. Mark 5:9

5. They have more than ordinary intelligence. Matthew 8:29

6. Their rightful place at present is in the abyss. Luke 8:26-33

7. They can enter into and control both men and beasts, and they seek embodiment. Mark 5:1-8; Matthew 12:43-45; Luke 8:32

8. Demons know their fate (Matthew 8:31-32) and recognize those who have power over them. Acts 19:13-17

9. They inflict physical maladies. Matthew 12:22

10. They wage war on the saints. Ephesians 6:10-18

11. Our resources against them are prayer, bodily control, and the whole armor of God. Matthew 17:21; Ephesians 6:10-18

<u>Review Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-19</u>

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
James 4:7 NIV

"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." 1 John 4:4 NIV

NON-CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES THAT SATAN WILL USE TO BLIND US

(not a complete list)

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons." 1 Timothy 4:1 NIV

Because participation in these activities can open the doorway to Satan's influence in our lives and ultimately blind us, we need to confess any involvement with them as sin and renounce any future attachment to them.

Out-of-body experience
Light as a feather
Spells or curses
Trances
Tea leaves
Levitation
Satanism
Hypnosis
Fantasy games w/ occult images
Sexual spirits
Mormonism
Masons
The Way International
Church of the Living Word
Church of Scientology
Transcendental meditation
Native American spirit worship
Silva Mind Control
Other non-Christian religions

Ouija board
Table lifting
Mental telepathy
Spirit guides
Divination
Magic - The Gathering
Astrology/horoscopes
Black or white magic
Blood pacts
Superstitions
Jehovah's Witnesses
Christian Science
Unification Church
Children of God
Buddhism (including Zen)
Islam
Yoga
Bahai faith
Cults

Bloody Mary
Magic Eight Ball
Automatic writing
Fortune-telling
Tarot cards
Witchcraft/sorcery
Palm reading
Seances
Good luck charms
Violent video games
New Age
Mind Science
The Forum
Unitarianism
Hinduism
Black Muslim
Hare Krishna
Rosicrucianism
Martial arts (mysticism/devotion to sensei)

TV shows, movies, music, books, magazines, or comics that glorify Satan or our sinful nature

"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God."
Galatians 5:19-21 NLT

FALSE BELIEFS PROMOTED BY THE FATHER OF LIES

1. Believing that acquiring money and things will bring lasting happiness (1 Timothy 6:10)

2. Believing that excessive food and alcohol can relieve my stress and make me happy (Proverbs 20:1)

3. Believing that an attractive body and personality will get me what I want (Proverbs 31:30)

4. Believing that gratifying sexual lust will bring lasting satisfaction (Ephesians 4:22)

5. Believing that I can sin without any negative consequences (Hebrews 3:12-13)

6. Believing that I need more than what God has given me in Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2-4)

7. Believing that I can do whatever I want and no one can touch me (Proverbs 16:18)

8. Believing that unrighteous people who refuse to accept Christ go to heaven anyway (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

9. Believing that I can associate with bad company and not become corrupted (1 Corinthians 15:33-34)

10. Believing that I can read, see or listen to anything and not be corrupted (Proverbs 4:23-27)

11. Believing that there are no consequences on earth for my sin (Galatians 6:7-8)

12. Believing that I must gain the approval of certain people in order to be happy (Galatians 1:10)

13. Believing that I must measure up to certain standards in order to feel good about myself (Galatians 3:2-3)

From The Steps to Freedom in Christ by Neil T. Anderson

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE PRACTICE OF ASTROLOGY

(Scripture Passages from the NIV Translation)

Webster's Dictionary defines astrology as "the divination of the supposed influences of the stars and planets on human affairs and terrestrial events by their positions and aspects." It defines *divination* as "the art or practice that seeks to foresee or foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge usually by the interpretation of omens or by the aid of supernatural powers."

"Do not eat any meat with the blood still in it. Do not practice divination or sorcery." Leviticus 19:26

"Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft." Deuteronomy 18:10

"The nations you will dispossess listen to those who practice sorcery or divination. But as for you, the LORD your God has not permitted you to do so." Deuteronomy 18:14

"In addition to those slain in battle, the Israelites had put to the sword Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination." Joshua 13:22

"For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king." 1 Samuel 15:23

"They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sorcery and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger." 2 Kings 17:17

"He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger." 2 Kings 21:6

"He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger." 2 Chronicles 33:6

"You have abandoned your people, the house of Jacob. They are full of superstitions from the East; they practice divination like the Philistines and clasp hands with pagans." Isaiah 2:6

"All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. Here are no coals to warm anyone; here is no fire to sit by. That is all they can do for you—these you have labored with and trafficked with since childhood. Each of them goes on in his error; there is not one that can save you." Isaiah 47:13-15

"This is what the LORD says: 'Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them. For the customs of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel.'" Jeremiah 10:2-3

"Therefore you will no longer see false visions or practice divination. I will save my people from your hands. And then you will know that I am the LORD." Ezekiel 13:23

A COMPARISON OF HISTORIC COVENANT AND HISTORIC DISPENSATIONAL THEOLOGY

ISSUE	COVENANT POSITION	DISPENSATIONAL POSITION
PATTERN OF HISTORY	Covenant of Works with Adam; Covenant of Grace with Christ on behalf of elect (some distinguish between Covenant of Redemption with Christ and Covenant of Grace with the elect).	Divided into dispensations (usually seven); e.g. Innocence (pre-Fall), Conscience (Adam), Human Government (Noah), Promise (Abraham), Law (Moses), Grace (Christ's First Coming), Kingdom (Christ's Second Coming).
VIEW OF HISTORY	Optimistic: God is extending His kingdom.	Pessimistic: the Last Days are marked by increasingly worse wickedness in the world and by apostasy in the church.
GOD'S PURPOSE IN HISTORY	There is a unified, redemptive purpose.	There are two distinct purposes, one earthly (Israel), one heavenly (church).
VIEW OF THE BIBLICAL COVENANTS	They are different administrations of the Covenant of Grace.	They mark off periods of time during which God's specific demands of man differ.
RELATIONSHIP OF OLD TESTAMENT TO NEW TESTAMENT	Acceptance of Old Testament teaching required unless specifically abrogated by New Testament.	Old Testament prescriptions are not binding unless reaffirmed in New Testament.
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH	The church is spiritual Israel, in continuity with true Israel of Old Testament.	The church is the spiritual people of God, distinct from Israel, the physical people of God.
OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY	Refers to God's people, the church.	Refers to ethnic Israel.
CHURCH AGE	God's redemptive purpose continued to unfold.	There is a parenthesis between past and future manifestations of the kingdom.
ROLE OF HOLY SPIRIT	The Holy Spirit indwells God's people throughout history.	The Holy Spirit indwells God's people only from Pentecost to the Rapture.
BAPTISM	Unified covenant generally used to support infant baptism.	Israel/church distinction often (but not always) used to support believers' baptism.
SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Emphasizes "cultural mandate."	The only way to save the world is to save individuals; therefore evangelism takes precedence over "social action."
ESCHATOLOGY	Usually amillennial; rarely postmillennial; occasionally premillennial.	Premillennial, usually pretribulational.
MILLENNIUM	Symbolic, often identified with present age.	Literal, earthly 100-year reign after Second Coming.

THE FIVE POINTS OF CALVINISM

(Reformed or Augustinian Doctrine)

*The so-called Five Points, summarized under the acronym **TULIP**, were not chosen by the Calvinists as a summary of their teaching. They emerged as a response to the Arminians who chose these five points to oppose in the Remonstrance of 1610.

T - Total depravity (Romans 3:23; Romans 7:18)

U - Unconditional election (John 10:26; Ephesians 1:3-6)

L - Limited atonement (John 10:15; Romans 8:32)

I - Irresistible grace (John 6:44; Romans 9:14-20)

P - Perseverance of the saints (1 Corinthians 15:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:11-12)

*John Piper, a well known Reform theologian, finds that people grasp these five points more easily if they are presented in the order in which he believes they are experienced.

1. We experience first our depravity and need of salvation.
2. Then we experience the irresistible grace of God leading us toward faith.
3. Then we trust the sufficiency of the atoning death of Christ for our sins.
4. Then we discover that behind the work of God to atone for our sins and bring us to faith was the unconditional election of God.
5. And finally we rest in His electing grace to give us the strength and will to persevere to the end.

Key Names and Terms:

1. John Calvin (1509-1564) was a famous theologian and pastor of Geneva. Along with Martin Luther in Germany, he was the most influential force of the Protestant Reformation. His Commentaries and Institutes of the Christian Religion are still exerting tremendous influence on the Christian Church worldwide.

2. Jacob Arminius (1 560-1609), a professor of theology in Amsterdam, came to reject Calvinist teachings. From 1610 the controversy he began spread all over Holland and ultimately through Christendom.

3. Election - Eternal life is obtained for a man not by his choice but by God's.

4. Sovereignty - God exercises complete control.

5. Foreknowledge - God's ability to know everything beforehand.

6. Free will - man's ability to accept God's offer of salvation through Jesus Christ.

7. Absolute predestination - The Calvinist doctrine that states that God has absolutely decreed, from all eternity, to save such and such persons, and no others; and that Christ died for these, and none else.

8. Conditional predestination - The Arminian belief that God has decreed, from all eternity, touching all that have the written word, *"He that believeth shall be saved: He that believeth not, shall be condemned."*

Bible Passages to Consider
(NIV Translation)

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."
John 3:16-19

"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." Romans 8:29-30

"To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."
1 Corinthians 9:22-23

"This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
1 Timothy 2:3-7

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ. To God's elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance." 1 Peter 1:1-2

"But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."
2 Peter 3:8-9

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE "ETERNAL SECURITY" OF THE BELIEVER

(Passages taken from the New International Version)

"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved." Mark 13:12-13

"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32

"Jesus answered, 'I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.'" John 10:25-30

"I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way – in all your speaking and in all your knowledge – because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

"Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

"In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:4-6

"Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation – if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you beard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant." Colossians 1:21-23

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

"Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us." 2 Timothy 2:10-12

"It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace." Hebrews 6:4-6

"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:10-11

"If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them." 2 Peter 2:20-21

"Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us." 1 John 2:18-19

"I write these things to you who believe to the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life." 1 John 5:13-14

"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God. To the angel of the church in Smyrna write: These are the words of him who is the First and the Last, who died and came to life again. I know your afflictions and your poverty – yet you are rich! I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will pet some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." Revelation 2:7-10

The following seven theses, from John Piper, form an excellent summary of this crucial doctrine.

1. Our faith must endure to the end if we are to be saved.
2. Obedience, evidencing inner renewal from God, is necessary for final salvation.
3. God's elect cannot be lost.
4. There is a falling away of some believers, but if it persists, it shows that their faith was not genuine and they were not born of God.
5. God justifies us on the first genuine act of saving faith, but in doing so he has a view to all subsequent acts of faith contained; as it were, like a seed in that first act.
6. God works to cause his elect to persevere.
7. Therefore we should be zealous to make our calling and election sure.

THE GRACE TO ENDURE...

"Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Matthew 6:32

Matthew 6:25-34 is clearly a theme about anxiety. Four times in this passage Jesus says that His disciples should not be anxious:

1. Do not be anxious for your life... (v. 25)
2. Can being anxious add a single cubic to your life span? (v. 27)
3. Do not be anxious, saying, 'what shall we eat?' (v. 31)
4. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow. (v. 34)

The root cause of anxiety is a failure to trust all that God has promised to be for us in Jesus.

When anxiety strikes and blurs our vision of God's glory and the greatness of the future that He plans for us, this does not mean that we are faithless, or that we will not make it to Heaven. It means that our faith is bring attacked.

Psalm 56:3 (RSV) says "When I am afraid, I put my trust in thee." Notice it does not say, "I never struggle with fear." Fear strikes, and the battle beings. So the Bible does not assume that true believers will have no anxieties. Instead the Bible tells us how to fight when they strike. For example, 1 Peter 5:7 (RSV) says, "Cast all your anxieties on Him, for He cares about you." It does not say, you will never feel any anxieties. It says, "when you have them, cast them on God." We read the promises of God and we pray for the help of His Spirit.

God plans for us at least seven promises designed by Jesus to fight the good fight against unbelief and be free from anxiety:

* Since your body and your life are vastly more complex and difficult to provide, than food and clothing are, and yet God has, in fact, created and provided you with both, then surely He will be able and willing to provide you with food and clothing. Moreover, no matter what happens God will raise your body some day and preserve your life for His eternal fellowship.

* If God is willing and able to feed such insignificant creatures as birds who cannot do anything to bring their food into being – as you can by farming – then He will certainty provide what you need, became you are worth a lot more than birds.

- Anxiety will not do you any good. Sometimes we just have to get tough with ourselves and soy 'Soul, this fretting is absolutely useless. Leave it with God and get on with your work. Anxiety accomplishes nothing worthwhile.

- God has such an overflow of creative energy and care, He lavishes it on flowers that last only a matter of days. So He will certainly take that same energy and creative skill and use it for his children who will live forever.

- Do not think that God is ignorant of your needs. He knows all of them. And He is your "Heavenly Father." He does not look on, indifferently, from a distance. He cares. He will act to supply your need when the time is best

- If you will give yourself to Mis cause in the world, rather than fretting about your private material needs, He will make sure that you have all you need to do His will and give Him glory.

- God will see to it that you are not tested in any given day more than your can bear (1 Corinthians 10:13). He will work for you, so that "as [your] days, so shall [your] strength be" (Deuteronomy 33:25, KFJ). Every day will have no more trouble than you can bear, and every day will have mercies sufficient for that day's stress (Lamentations 3:22-23).

"My God Will Supply All Your Needs"

Paul learned these lessons from Jesus and applied them to the battle against anxiety in, the church at Philippi. In Philippians 4:6 he said "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God." And then in verse 19 he gives the liberating promise of future grace, just as Jesus did: "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." If we live by faith in this promise of future grace, it will be very hard for anxiety to survive. God's 'riches in glory' are inexhaustible. He realty means for us not to worry about our future."[1]

"Fear not for I am with you, be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you, with My victorious right hand." Isaiah 41:10

"My grace is sufficient for you, for [My] power is perfected in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9

"I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you." Psalm 32:8

"Even to your old age, I shall be the same, and even to your graying years I shall bear you! I have done it, and I shall carry you; and I shall bear you, and I shall delivery you." Isaiah 46:4

[1] The Purifying Power of Living by Faith in... Future Grace by John Piper

THE GOSPEL COMMANDMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

(Principles for those great souls who are engaged in the battle)

1. **People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered. Love and trust them anyway.**
   "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."

2. **If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.**
   "And Jesus told them, 'you are like children who don't know what they want. John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking and you said he had a demon. The Sort of Man comes eating and drinking, and you say I am a glutton, a friend of sinners."

3. **If you are successful you will win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.**
   "The crowds who cheered Him on Sunday and called Him King were the same who on Friday cried 'Crucify Him.' Even the priests said, 'We have no king but Caesar.'"

4. **The service you render today will be forgotten tomorrow. Serve people anyway.**
   "Were not ten lepers cleansed, and only one returned to give thanks? My words will bring division."

5. **Honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.**
   "And Jesus said, 'Do not think I've come to bring peace to the world.'"

6. **The biggest men with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men with the smallest ideas. Think big anyway.**
   "During the supper the Lord Jesus foretold that one of them would betray Him… the Disciples questions which one it might be, and a dispute rose among them as to which was the greatest."

7. **People pretend to love the "little" people anyway, but sell their souls to the "big" people. Fight for the "little" people anyway.**
   "Let little children come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of heaven."

8. **What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.**
   "Judas came, kissed Him, and they took hold of Him… then all the disciples forsook Him and fled."

9. **People really need help, but may attack you if you do help. Help people anyway.**
   "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me… to preach… but all who heard Him thrust Him out."

10. **Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.**
    "Pilate said, 'Who shall I give unto you… the murderer and robber, Barabbus, or Jesus, who is called the Christ?' And they cried Give us Barabbus!"

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would lave you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." John 15:18-19 NIV

GOOD QUESTIONS!

"Aren't all religions basically the same?"

BIG IDEA: All religions are <u>not</u> basically the same.

** Contrary beliefs are possible; contrary truths are not.*

I. Aren't all religions true?

A. Religious **<u>pluralism</u>** - Every religion is true.

B. An ancient Hindu parable.
- Each had a **<u>part</u>** of the truth, not the **<u>whole</u>** truth.

C. Religious Pluralism says that all religions are equally capable of bringing **<u>salvation</u>** and producing morally upright people.

II. What is Truth?

A. Truth is correspondence with **<u>reality</u>**. ***"Telling it like it is."***
- "Saying of what is that it is and of what is not that it is not." -Aristotle

B. Truth cannot violate the **<u>law</u>** of non-contradiction.
- Law of non-contradiction: "If opposites, even in **<u>religion</u>**, cannot both be true, one must be wrong."

C. Truth is **<u>absolute</u>**.
- **<u>Absolute truth</u>** says what is he for one person is true for **<u>all</u>** persons, times, and places.
- **<u>Relative truth</u>** says what may be true for one person, might **<u>not</u>** be true for another person, or might not be true at a different time or might not be true in a different place.

1. All truth claims are absolute, **<u>narrow</u>** and exclusive.
2. Truth is **<u>discovered</u>**, not invented.
3. Beliefs cannot **<u>change</u>** a fact no matter how sincere.
4. Truths are **<u>transcultural</u>**.
5. Truths are not affected by our **<u>attitudes</u>**.

COMPARATIVE CHART OF THE MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS

	GOD	JESUS	HUMANITY'S PROB.	SALVATION
ISLAM 1.2 billion	Allah is one. A severe judge, though sometimes merciful, not loving.	1 of 124,000 prophets sent by God. Not the Son of God. Not divine. Not crucified.	Under the judgment of Allah, due to failure to keep the law. Sin is thought of in terms of rejecting right guidance. No atonement necessary.	Deliverance from judgment is earned by works obedience to the law. Balance between good and bad deeds determines eternity in paradise or hell.
HINDUISM 830 million	God is a universal spirit. Everyone is a part of God (Brahman) like drops in the sea. People worship manifestations of Brahman (gods and goddesses). People are God, but are unaware of it.	A teacher, a guru, or an avatar (incarnation of Vishnu.) He is a son of God as are others. His death does not pay for sins and he did not rise from the dead.	People are ignorant of their divine nature – that people are extended from Brahman. Karma (basically you reap what you sow) follows the person from life to life through reincarnation.	Release from the cycles of reincarnation. Achieved through yoga, knowledge, works and meditation. Final salvation is absorption or union with Brahman.
BUDDHISM 1 billion	Mostly atheistic. Many Buddhists do not believe in a God. Others speak of the Buddha as a universal enlightened consciousness.	Jesus is not a part of Buddhism. Buddhists in the West view Jesus as an enlightened man.	Anger, temporal desires and cravings which cause us to continue in the illusion of the existence of the individual self. Trapped in reincarnations.	Goal of life is *nirvana* (not the band!), to eliminate all desires or cravings, and in this way escape suffering. Works. Eightfold path is the way.
JUDAISM 14 million	God is spirit. Orthodox Jews believe God is personal, all-powerful, eternal and compassionate. To others, God is impersonal and unknowable. No trinity.	Either an extremist false messiah or a good, but martyred, Jewish teacher. He was not the Son of God. Did not rise from the dead.	Three differing views: All humans are born good but sin is: 1. breaking the Law. 2. wrong moral/social actions. 3. the ills of society.	Prayer, repentance, and obeying the Law are necessary for salvation. Others believe that salvation is the improvement of society.
HUMANISM 230 million	No God. Atheistic.	A good guy.	Superstition and ignorance.	Rational thinking.
MORMONISM 11 million	God the Father was once a man, but became God. He has a physical body as does his wife. No Trinity. Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three separate gods. Worthy *men* may one day become gods themselves.	Spirit child of Father and Mother in Heaven. Elder brother of all men and Spirit beings. His body was created through sexual union between Elohim and Mary. He married. His death does not provide full payment for sin.	Man is on earth as part of a probationary experience which determines his future heavenly existence. Sin is not the problem.	Salvation is being exalted to godhood. Salvation is by works – faithfulness to church leaders, Mormon baptism, tithing, ordination, marriage, and secret temple rituals. No eternal life without Mormon membership.
"NEW AGE"	Everything and everyone is God. God is an impersonal force. People have unlimited inner power and need to discover it.	Not god. Not savior. A spiritual model, guru, and ascended master. Did not rise physically, but "rose" into a higher spiritual realm.	Perception. Humanity is ignorant that we are connected to and emanated from God.	Offset bad karma with good karma. Meditation self-awareness and "spirit guides" lead to supernatural power.
CHRISTIANITY 1.8 billion (any expression of)	God Triune. Spiritual being without a physical body. Personal and involved with people. Created universe out of nothing. Eternal. Changeless. Holy. Loving. Perfect.	Is God, 2nd person of Trinity. Not created. Fully God, fully man. Born of a virgin, sinless, crucified, resurrected. Physically ascended to heaven. Will return and establish God's kingdom. Only way to the Father, salvation, and eternal life.	Born sinful. Morally rebellious toward God and therefore separated and alienated from Him and under his judgment. We suffer because of the consequences of our sin.	Deliverance from judgment (salvation) is by grace, through faith – not by works. Person must believe (complete trust, commit, follow) that Jesus died for sins, and rose again. This is God's plan to forgive sinful people.

RELIGIOUS WORLD VIEWS IN CONFLICT

	MONOTHEISM (One God)	ATHEISM (No God)	PANTHEISM (All are Gods)
	Biblical Christianity	**Secular Humanism**	**Cosmic Humanism** (New Age Spiritualism)
Definition	One eternal, personal, loving, and infinite God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Reconciliation with God by means of Christ's atonement.	No belief in God. Philosophy that upholds the primacy of human beings rather than God, "man is the measure of all things." Embrace the denial of the transcendent and the eternal.	Becoming One with the universe/God. Gnosticism; refers to secret practices of mysticism whereby a person may come to realization that we are the same essence as God.
Origin	In the beginning, God. I AM – Exodus 3:14-15	In the beginning, no God.	Everything is God. "All is God, God is all" – I am God, You are God, Your pet dog is God.
Man's Creation	Creation – *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God. He created him, male and female he created them."* Genesis 1:26	Evolution Material universe began with the "Big Bang"	All Life is one. I am one with God and can embody Divine.
Salvation and After Life	Salvation is through Jesus Christ, son of God. *"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."* Acts 4:12	No beginning, no end.	Salvation comes from realizing his own divinity. Sometimes called self-realization or Christ-consciousness.
Morality and Authority	There is truth and error. Truth is absolute. God set standards for us to follow. Sin separated us from God. Sin is also disobedience to God. John 18:37	Nothing is true for everyone. There is no morality, if morality is relative.	No difference between good and bad. No right or wrong. "Whatever works for you is fine." Sin is ignorance of personal divinity. The universe is amoral.

The Gnostic Gospels

BIG IDEA: The secret or Gnostic gospels are not further revelation about Jesus and what it means to be His follower, instead they are untrustworthy documents, written under pseudonyms, that stand in direct opposition to the OT and the teachings of the 1st century authors who were witnesses to Jesus Christ and gave us our rule of faith and conduct.

A. Gnosis = knowledge

The Nag Hammadi Discovery

B. Gnosticism 101

Who were the Gnostics?

What is the basic Gnostic belief system?

- God is both feminine and masculine (androgynous) and he is so utterly spiritual he has no contact with anything material.
- God did not create the world but a lesser God, called a "demiurge," created the world and did it so poorly that the world was filled with evil, decay and death. (The Gnostic "demiurge" is the Bible's God – ignorant and arrogant and thinks He is the only God.) Lesser gods called "archons" created humans.
- Created things are despised including the human body, sexual distinctions, marriage and motherhood.
- Matter is evil so there is no way God could have become man. Hence, Jesus did not become man.

Jesus was not crucified (a substitute died in His place and Jesus laughed about it); He was not physically resurrected.

Salvation is within our power if we liberate ourselves from earthly constraints and embrace and fan into flame the spark of higher spiritual reality within us. "This happens through a process of self-discovery, in which you discover your divine identity, you separate from the world by 'stripping off ' the consciousness of the physical body, and you finally experience the kingdom of light, peace, and life." (Timothy Keller). No mediator/substitute (Jesus) is necessary.

There is no sin. Jesus came, not to free us and forgive us from our sin, but to free us from our ignorance. Jesus brings us gnosis: the knowledge that we are divine (god)!

SUMMARY OF SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR CREATION

By Duane Gish, Ph.D.

Abstract

Public schools in many localities are teaching two scientific models – the creation model and the evolution model of the origin of the universe, of life, and of man. There is apparent scientific evidence for creation, which is summarized in these pages, just as there is apparent scientific evidence for evolution.

This was written by a scientist, and a science educator, and reviewed by an attorney, to provide a brief summary of scientific evidence supporting creation. The text materials and references listed at the end together give a more thorough discussion of this scientific evidence.

Introduction

Public schools in many localities are teaching two scientific models – the creation model and the evolution model of the origin of the universe, of life, and of man. There is apparent scientific evidence for creation, which is summarized in these pages, just as there is apparent scientific evidence for evolution. The purpose of this is to summarize the evidence that shows that:

"The creation model is at least as scientific as the evolution model, and is at least as non-religious as the evolution model."

This scientific evidence for both models can be taught in public schools without any mention of religious doctrine, whether the Bible or the Humanist Manifesto. There are text materials and teacher handbooks that have been prepared for a fair presentation of both models, creation and evolution. There are also seminars and audiovisuals for training teachers to offer both models of origins.

"This scientific evidence both for creation and for evolution can and must be taught without and religious doctrine, whether the Bible or the Humanist Manifesto. Creation-science proponents want public schools to teach all the scientific data, censoring none, but do not want any religious doctrine to be brought into science classrooms."

Definitions of the Creation Model and the Evolution Model

The scientific model of creation, in summary, includes the scientific evidence for a sudden creation of complex and diversified kinds of life, with systematic gaps persisting between different kinds and with genetic variation occurring within each kind since that time. The scientific model of evolution, in summary, includes the scientific evidence for a gradual emergence of present life kinds over aeons of time, with emergence of complex and diversified kinds of life from simpler kinds and ultimately from non-living matter. The creation model questions vertical evolution, which is the emergence of complex from simple and change between kinds, but it does not challenge what is often called horizontal evolution or microevolution, which creationists call genetic variation or species or subspecies formation within created kinds. The following chart lists seven aspects of the scientific model of creation and of the scientific model of evolution:

The creation model includes the scientific evidence and the related inferences suggesting that:

I. The universe and the Solar system were suddenly created.
II. Life was suddenly created.
III. All present living kinds of animals and plants have remained fixed since creation, other than extinctions, and genetic variation in originally created kinds has only occurred within narrow limits.
IV. Mutation and natural selection are insufficient to have brought about any emergence of present living kinds from a simple primordial organism.
V. Man and apes have a separate ancestry.
VI. The earth's geologic features appear to have been fashioned largely by rapid, catastrophic processes that affected the earth on a global and regional scale (catastrophism).
VII. The inception of the earth and of living kinds may have been relatively recent.

The evolution model includes the scientific evidence and the related inferences suggesting that:

I. The universe and the solar system emerged by naturalistic processes.
II. Life emerged from nonlife by naturalistic processes.
III. All present kinds emerged from simpler earlier kinds, so that single-celled organisms evolved into invertebrates, then vertebrates, then amphibians, then reptiles, then mammals, then primates, including man.
IV. Mutation and natural selection have brought about the emergence of present complex kinds from a simple primordial organism.
V. Man and apes emerged from a common ancestor.
VI. The earth's geologic features were fashioned largely by slow, gradual processes, with infrequent catastrophic events restricted to a local scale (uniformitarianism).
VII. The inception of the earth and then of life must have occurred several billion years ago.

I. The Universe and the Solar System Were Suddenly Created.

The First Law of Thermodynamics states that the total quantity of matter and energy in the universe is constant. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that matter and energy always tend to change from complex and ordered states to disordered states. Therefore the universe could not have created itself, but could not have existed forever, or it would have run down long ago. Thus the universe, including matter and energy, apparently must have been created. The "big-bang" theory of the origin of the universe contradicts much physical evidence and seemingly can only be accepted by faith.[1] This was also the case with the past cosmogonies theories of evolutionists that have been

discarded, such as Hoyle's steady-state theory. The universe has "obvious manifestations of an ordered, structured plan or design." Similarly, the electron is materially inconceivable and yet it is so perfectly known through its effects," yet a "strange rationale makes some physicists accept the inconceivable electrons as real while refusing to accept the reality of a Designer." "The inconceivability of some ultimate issue (which will always lie outside scientific resolution) should not be allowed to rule out any theory that explains the interrelationship of observed data and is useful for prediction," in the words of Dr. Warner on Braun, the renowned late physicist in the NASA space program.

II. Life Was Suddenly Created.

Life appears abruptly and in complex forms in the fossil record,[2] and gaps appear systematically in the fossil record between various living kinds.[3] These facts indicate that basic kinds of plants and animals were created. The Second Law of Thermodynamics states that things tend to go from order to disorder (entropy tends to increase) unless added energy is directed by a conversion mechanism (such as photosynthesis), whether a system is open or closed. Thus simple molecules and complex protein, DNA, and RNA molecules seemingly could not have evolved spontaneously and naturalistically into a living cell;[4] such cells apparently were created. The laboratory experiments related to theories on the origin of life have not even remotely approached the synthesis of life from non-life, and the extremely limited results have depended on laboratory conditions that are artificially imposed and extremely improbable.[5] The extreme improbability of these conditions and the relatively insignificant results apparently show that life did not emerge by the process that evolutionists postulate.

"One example of the scientific evidence for creation is the sudden appearance of complex fossilized life in the fossil record, and the systematic gaps between fossilized kinds in that record. The most rational inference from this evidence seemingly is that life was created and did not evolve."

III. All Present Living Kinds of Animals and Plants Have Remained Fixed Since Creation, Other than Extinctions, and Genetic Variation in Originally Created Kinds Has Only Occurred within Narrow Limits.

Systematic gaps occur between kinds in the fossil record.[6] None of the intermediate fossils that would be expected on the basis of the evolution model have been found between single celled organisms and invertebrates, between invertebrates and vertebrates, between fish and amphibians, between amphibians and reptiles, between reptiles and birds or mammals, or between "lower" mammals and primates.[7] While evolutionists might assume that these intermediate forms existed at one time, none of the hundreds of millions of fossils found so far provide the missing links. The few suggested links such as Archoeopteryx and the horse series have been rendered questionable by more detailed data. Fossils and living organisms are readily subjected to the same criteria of classification. Thus present kinds of animals and plants apparently were created, as shown by the systematic fossil gaps and by the similarity of fossil forms to living forms. A kind may be defined as a generally interfertile group of organisms that possesses variant genes for a common set of traits but that does not interbreed with

other groups of organisms under normal circumstances. Any evolutionary change between kinds (necessary for the emergence of complex from simple organisms) would require addition of entirely new traits to the common set and enormous expansion of the gene pool over time, and could not occur from mere ecologically adaptive variations of a given trait set (which the creation model recognizes).

IV. Mutation and Natural Selection Are Insufficient To Have Brought About Any Emergence of Present Living Kinds from a Simple Primordial Organism.

The mathematical probability that random mutation and natural selection ultimately produced complex living kinds from a simpler kind is infinitesimally small even after many billions of years.[8] Thus mutation and natural selection apparently could not have brought about evolution of present living kinds from a simple first organism. Mutations are always harmful or at least nearly always harmful in an organism's natural environment.[9] Thus the mutation process apparently could not have provided the postulated millions of beneficial mutations required for progressive evolution in the supposed five billion years from the origin of the earth until now, and in fact would have produced an overwhelming genetic load over hundreds of millions of years that would have caused degeneration and extinction. Natural selection is a tautologous concept (circular reasoning), because it simply requires the fittest organisms to leave the most offspring and at the same time it identifies the fittest organisms as those that leave the most offspring. Thus natural selection seemingly does not provide a testable explanation of how mutations would produce more fit organisms.[10]

V. Man and Apes Have a Separate Ancestry.

Although highly imaginative "transitional forms" between man and ape-like creatures have been constructed by evolutionists based on very fragmentary evidence, the fossil record actually documents the separate origin of primates in general," monkeys,[12] apes,[13] and men. In fact, Ford Zuckerman (not a creationist) states that there are no "fossil traces" of a transformation from an ape-like creature to man.[14] The fossils of Neanderthal Man were once considered to represent a primitive subhuman (Homo neanderthalensis), but these "primitive" features are now known to have resulted from nutritional deficiencies and pathological conditions; he is now classified as fully human.[15] Ramapithecus was once considered to be partially manlike, but is now known to be fully ape-like.[16] Australopithecus, in the view of some leading evolutionists, was not inter- mediate between ape and man and did not walk upright.[17] The strong bias of many evolutionists in seeking a link between apes and man is shown by the near-universal acceptance of two "missing links" that were later proved to be a fraud in the case of Piltdown Man (Eoanthropus) and a pig's tooth in the case of Nebraska Man (Hesperopithecus).[18]

VI. The Earth's Geologic Features Were Fashioned Largely by Rapid, Catastrophic Processes that Affected the Earth on a Global and Regional Scale (Catastrophism).

Catastrophic events have characterized the earth's history. Huge floods, massive asteroid collisions, large volcanic eruptions, devastating landslides, and intense earthquakes have left their marks on the earth. Catastrophic events appear to explain the formation of mountain ranges, deposition of thick sequences of sedimentary rocks with fossils, initiation of the glacial age and extinction of dinosaurs and other animals. Catastrophism (catastrophic changes), rather than uniformitarianism (gradual changes), appears to be the best interpretation of a major portion of the earth's geology. Geologic data reflect catastrophic flooding. Evidences of rapid catastrophic water deposition include fossilized tree trunks that penetrate numerous sedimentary layers (such as at Joggins, Nova Scotia), widespread pebble and boulder layers (such as the Shinarump Conglomerate of the southwestern United States), fossilized logs in a single layer covering extensive areas (such as Petrified Forest National Park), and whole closed clams that were buried alive in mass graveyards in extensive sedimentary layers (such as at Glen Rose Texas). Uniform processes such as normal river sedimentation, small volcanoes, slow erosion, and small earthquakes appear insufficient to explain large portions of the geologic record. Even the conventional uniformitarian geologists are beginning to yield to evidences of rapid and catastrophic processes.[19]

VII. The Inception of the Earth and of Living Kinds May Have Been Relatively Recent.

Radiometric dating methods (such as the uranium-lead and potassium-argon methods) depend on three assumptions: (a) that no decay product (lead or argon) was present initially or that the initial quantities can be accurately estimated, (b) that the decay system was closed through the years (so that radioactive material or product did not move in or out of the rock), and (c) that the decay rate was constant overtime.[20] Each of these assumptions may be questionable: (a) some nonradiogenic lead or argon was perhaps present initially;[21] (b) the radioactive isotope (uranium or potassium iso topes) can perhaps migrate out of, and the decay product (lead or argon) can migrate into, many rocks over the years;[22] and (c) the decay rate can perhaps change by neutrino bombardment and other causes.[23] Numerous radiometric estimates have been hundreds of millions of years in excess of the true age. Thus ages estimated by the radiometric dating methods may very well be grossly in error. Alternate dating methods suggest much younger ages for the earth and life. Estimating by the rate of addition of helium to the atmosphere from radioactive decay, the age of the earth appears to be about 10,000 years, even allowing for moderate helium escape. Based on the present rate of the earth's cooling, the time required for the earth to have reached its present thermal structure seems to be only several tens of millions of years, even assuming that the earth was initially molten.[24] Extrapolating the observed rate of apparently exponential decay of the earth's magnetic field, the age of the earth or life seemingly could not exceed 20,000 year.[25] Thus the inception of the earth and the inception of life may have been relatively recent when all the evidence is considered.[26]

"There is scientific evidence for creation from cosmology, thermodynamics, paleontology, biology, mathematical probability, geology, and other sciences. There are many scientists in each field who conclude that the scientific data best support the creation model, not the evolution model."

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"There are text materials and teacher handbooks for public schools that have been prepared for a fair presentation of the scientific evidences for both the creation model and the evolution model. There are also seminars and audiovisuals for training teachers to offer both models of origins."

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"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." Exodus 20:11 NIV

TEN QUESTIONS FOR EVOLUTIONISTS

Chuck Colson's Ten Questions about Origins

1. What fossil record is there of any transitional fossils indicating that one order evolved into another order?
2. Is there any evidence of a order that was at one time a different order? I recognize that there is adaptation within an order, different breeds of dogs for example, but I don't know of any case where there is any evidence of a dog becoming a horse.
3. What scientific evidence is there to support a natural origin of life? (The evolutionist may point to the Miller-Urey experiments in 1953, much celebrated at the time. They initially said they had reproduced the precise conditions under which in the primordial soup life could have arisen. But after experts looked at it, it turned out that there was frequent human intervention and had the process been left to itself, it could not have worked. In short, there is no evidence.)
4. How does one support the conclusion of the American Society of Biological Teachers that evolution is "unsupervised, impersonal and random?" What *scientific* (as opposed to philosophical) basis is there for this statement?
5. (A follow-up question for 4) Is this not inconsistent with discoveries about DNA, which indicate that there is a mathematical formula determining the complexity of human beings? Do mathematical formulas have naturalistic origins?
6. How do we reconcile the second law of thermodynamics with the universe as we know it? If the universe is indeed winding down, does that not presuppose that sometime and by some means it was being wound up? By what means?
7. What is your answer to Dr. Michael Behe's findings (*Darwin's Black Box*) about the irreducible complexity of the cell structure, that is, his mousetrap example? All the parts of a cell had to work at once otherwise the cell doesn't work. Thus evolution of one part at a time is not reasonable.
8. What caused the Big Bang?
9. What did Einstein mean when he said, "God does not play dice with the cosmos?" If he considered evidence of intelligence in the universe, why shouldn't we?
10. What evidence is there for genetic mutations that increase the *biologically useful* information of the genome? Or to put it another way: What evidence is there for genetic mutations facilitating macroevolutionary change?

When you ask these questions, beware. Aggressive evolutionists will attempt to intimidate you, dismiss the questions, laugh at them, claim that they're ridiculous, or say that you're basing it on your faith. Stand your ground. This is not based on your faith. These are common sense inquiries that anybody in an academically free environment ought to pursue. They are not unreasonable questions, even though that is what your adversary will say. Or he will tell you that you really don't understand or that you have to be more into science to grasp this, or it's too complex a concept to explain. If it's too complex to explain, how could anyone teach it?

The one you must never let evolutionists run away from is Einstein. Naturalists in the evolutionist lobby do not allow anybody to talk about intelligent design because they say it comes from faith. It doesn't. There is a respectable school of science and Einstein raised these questions. So why should they be stricken out of inquiry?

If you can get a naturalist to acknowledge that they can be discussed, he's finished, which is why he'll fight so hard to reject the questions. He's finished because there is much more *scientific* evidence for design than there is for natural origin.

Everything we say about natural origin is speculation, just as the God hypothesis that we believe in is speculation because nobody was there at the creation. But we can look at the character of the universe and draw certain conclusions. Because of a prior *philosophical* Commitment to naturalism this is precisely what the naturalist refuses to do.

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ONE MAN'S APPROACH TO THE QUESTION:

"WHAT HAPPENS TO A PERSON AFTER THE PHYSICAL DEATH OF THEIR BODY?"

"All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you." 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10 NIV

Truth #1 - A human being is composed of three separate and distinct parts - 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12. Finis Dake describes these parts as follows:

The Body (sooma) of man - It is earthly, fleshly, and material. It is the house in which the soul and spirit dwell. At death to inner man - *the spiritual part, made up of ike soul and spirit- leaves the body to continue in a state of full consciousness either in heaven or hell (James 2:26)*, at which time the body goes back to dust again. In the resurrection, the body will be made immortal (1 Corinthians 15:35-58; Philippians 3:21).

The Soul (psuke) of man - It is the part which feels: the seat of the emotions, passions, appetites, and desires. It may be considered the battle-ground of the flesh and spirit (Romans 8:1-13; Galatians 5:16-26).

The Spirit (pneuma) of man - It is the part which knows: the seat of the intellect, will, and mind – all mental faculties (Corinthians 2:11). The spirit and soul are to be understood as separate and distinct parts of the inner man.

Truth #2 - From Adam to Jesus the immortal soul/spirits of those in relationship with God went to *Abraham's Side* (bosom) a place of comfort. The soul/spirits of the unrighteous dead went to torment in *hell* (hades). These two regions are separated by an impassable chasm Luke 16:19-31. (Eternal hell or the second death is usually indicated by the word G*ehenna*).

Truth #3 - When Jesus ascended to heaven, He led the soul/spirits of the righteous dead from Abraham's Side to the *third heaven* (2 Corinthians 12:2 the central dwelling place of God) Ephesians 4:1-10; Psalm 68:18. From this time forward Abraham's Side has been vacant, while hades continues to fill with the soul/spirits of the lost.

Truth #4 - Since Christ's resurrection, the soul/spirits of deceased *saints* (true believers) have gone immediately to heaven to reside with Christ (Philippians 1:21-24). The bodies of these believers *return to dust* (decompose).

Truth #5 - At the *rapture* (harpazoo-to catch up) Christ and the soul/spirits of all deceased believers will descend from heaven with a loud command and a trumpet call. Instantaneously, the bodies of the deceased believers will be transformed into *resurrection bodies* (like that of the risen Christ) and will be reunited with their respective soul/spirits. Then, all believers living on the earth will also be caught up with the Lord in the air to spend eternity with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-55; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4; Revelation 12:5).

Truth #6 - The judgment of all the saved will occur at The Judgment Seat of Christ which will take place sometime between the rapture and the Second Advent of Christ (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10). *Crowns* will be awarded here (1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Revelation 2:10).

Truth #7 - The rapture will stimulate a tremendous revival and many people will be saved during the persecution of the tribulation including many *Jews* (144,000 - Revelation 7:1-10) (Acts 2:16-21; Revelation 6:9-11, Revelation 7:1-21; Revelation 12:17).

Truth #8 - Because the restraining action of the Holy Spirit has been removed by the Lord through the rapture, *the man of lawlessness* (the antichrist) quickly ascends to power (2 Thessalonians 2:1-10), ushering in the 3 1/2 years of adversity called "the tribulation" and a second more horrible 3 1/2 years of horror called "the great tribulation" (Matthew 24:29; Revelation 7:13-14).

Truth #9 - "The Great Tribulation culminates with the *Battle of Armageddon* (Revelation 16:16-21) and the *Second Advent* (parousia-coming, arrival, advent) of Christ. Satan, the dragon, is bound in the Abyss (Zechariah 14:1-5; Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 25:31-46; Jude 14-15; Revelation 19:11-21; Revelation 20:1-4).

Truth #10 - Christ's Second Coming is followed by *His 1000 year reign on earth*. This period is called the "Millennium" and will end when Satan's last rebellion is crushed and he, the demons, and all unbelievers will *bend the knee and confess Jesus Christ as Lord* (Romans 14:9-10; Philippians 2:10-11) at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:1-10). They will then all be thrown in to the "lake of fire" the last death (Revelation 20:7-15).

Truth #11 - The heavens and earth will melt away and be replaced by a New Heaven and a New Earth which will be illuminated by God the Father and the Lamb (2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1-3).

Truth #12 - All of saved humanity will spend eternity in the presence of God Most High and experience a magnificent existence where there is no death, mourning, crying, pain, tears, or curse (Revelation 21:4; Revelation 22:3).

THE FINAL JUDGMENT OF BELIEVERS
(Accounting 101)

"If my man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames" 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 NIV

"So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad"
2 Corinthians 5:9-10 NIV

ACCOUNT

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."
Matthew 12:36-37 NIV

"So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God."
Romans 14:12 NIV

"For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account."
Philippians 4:16-17 NIV

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." Hebrews 4:12-13 NIV

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." Hebrews 13:17 NIV

"Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize."
1 Corinthians 9:25-27 NIV

CROWN

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will award to me on that day–and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing." 2 Timothy 4:7-8 NIV

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12 NIV

"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers–not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away." 1 Peter 5:2-4 NIV

"Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." Revelation 2:10 NIV

REWARD

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:11-12 NIV

"But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4 NIV

"'What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul,' For the Son of Man is going to came in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." Matthew 16:26-28 NIV

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:23-24 NIV

"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." Revelation 22:12-13 NIV

SLAVE

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke fits perfectly, and the burden I give you is light.'" Matthew 11:28-30 NLT

Unless you find your pain-relief from an intimate relationship with the God of the universe through His perfect Son, Jesus, you will eventually turn to one or more of the following idols (addictions) for consolation. Ultimately, you will become enslaved.

S tatus (popularity)

L overs (sex)

A ssets (materialism)

V engeance (anger & bitterness)

E scapism (alcohol, drugs, sports, entertainment, etc.)

"His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."
2 Peter 1:3-4 NIV

HOW A PERSON CAN EFFECT POSITIVE CHANGE IN THEIR LIFE
(6 Principles)

1. The person must desire to change - "the big yes!" (Matthew 13:44-46)
(generally this initial motivation for change will come when a person realizes that they are about to lose something of great value)

2. The person must possess an agent of change (2 Corinthians 5:17)
(we believe that the only true agent of change is the Holy Spirit received at conversion)

3. For positive change to occur and persist the person will generally need to attack three areas of weakness in their life:

a) the external (Matthew 6:33)
(changing one's priorities to obtain margin)

b) the physical (1 Corinthians 6:19)
(improving one's diet, exercise, and rest)

c) the spiritual (Psalm 139:23-24)
(addressing one's sin)

4. The person must be "intentional" (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
(there needs to be a plan with well defined goals)

5. The person must be "disciplined" (Matthew 5:37)
(he or she must have the integrity to follow through with their plan)

6. The person will need support (Ephesians 5:21)
(he or she will need the encouragement and accountability of Godly friends)

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 NLT

THE 12 STEPS OF AA AND THEIR BIBLICAL COMPARISONS

1. **WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL – THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.** *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* Romans 7:18

2. **CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.** *"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God."* Romans 13:1

3. **MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.** *"…present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."* Romans 12:1

4. **MADE A SEARCHING AND FEARLESS MORAL INVENTORY OF OURSELVES.** *"Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord."* Lamentations 3:40

5. **ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.** *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."* James 5:16

6. **WE'RE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.** *"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up."* James 4:10

7. **HUMBLY ASKED HIM TO REMOVE ALL OUR SHORTCOMINGS.** *"If we confess our sins (wrongs, shortcomings), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins (wrongs, shortcomings), and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (error, shortcomings)."* 1 John 1:9

8. **MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO THEM ALL.** *"Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."* Matthew 7:12

9. **MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.** *"Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift…; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."* Matthew 5:23-24

10. **CONTINUED TO TAKE PERSONAL INVENTORY AND WHEN WE WERE WRONG. PROMPTLY ADMITTED IT.** *"For I say, through grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly."* Romans 12:3

11. **SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM. PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.** *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."* James 1:5

12. **HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO ALCOHOLICS, AND PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.** *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."* Galatians 6:1

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES ABOUT ANGER

(Passages from the NIV)

"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell." Matthew 5:21-22

"For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factious, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder." Corinthians 12:20

"The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:19-21

"'In your anger do not sin:' Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry."
Ephesians 4:26

"Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice."
Ephesians 4:31

"But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips." Colossians 3:8

"I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing."
1 Timothy 2:8

"For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires."
James 1:20

Generally we become angry for one of three reasons: 1) someone hurt our feelings, 2) someone violated our rights, 3) someone interrupted our schedule.

Godly anger is controlled, directed at sinful behaviors, and always has as its purpose the restoration of the person to fellowship with God and others. The anger of man (ungodly anger) is unrestrained, directed at other people, and is always for the purpose of hurting another.

THE REMEDY FOR WORRY AND FEAR
(Passages from the NIV)

WORRY

NT:3309 merimnaoo, merimnoo
a. to be anxious; to be troubled with cares: absolutely, Matthew 6:27, 31
b. to care for, look out for (a thing); to seek to promote one's interests, Matthew 6:34

FEAR

NT:5399 fobeoo, foboo:
to terrify, frighten, to put to flight by terrifying
1. to be put to flight, to flee
2. to fear, be afraid; Matthew 10:31
3. to reverence, venerate, to treat with deference or reverential obedience: tina, Mark 6:20

(From Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database Copyright © 2000 by Biblesoft)

"Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall."
Psalm 55:22

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."
Proverbs 16:3

"But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream, It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."
Jeremiah 17:7-8

"Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them, Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."
Matthew 6:26-34

"Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom." Luke 12:22-32

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" Hebrews 13:5

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:6-7

***Remember the 4 P's of good theology:**

God is <u>perfect</u>; He is <u>powerful</u>; He is <u>paying</u> attention;
He is <u>passionate</u> about you.

THE STAGES OF GRIEF

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade–kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith–of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire–may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed"
1 Peter 1:3-7 NIV

1. **Numbness** - *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* Matthew 11:28-30 NIV

2. **Denial and Isolation** - *"The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. My eyes are ever on the LORD, for only he will release my feet from the snare. Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish. Look upon my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins. See how my enemies have increased and how fiercely they hate me! Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you."* Psalm 25:14-21 NIV

3. **Anger** - *"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin:' Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."* Ephesians 4:25-28 NIV

4. **Depression** - *"When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.' And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone."* Psalm 32:3-5 NLT

5. **Acceptance** - *"And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."* Romans 8:28 NLT

"I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy." John 16:20 NIV

HEALTHY GRIEVING

If you are grieving the loss of a friend or family member, you are facing many deep emotions. It may be difficult to untangle them all. Here are some basic suggestions on ways to face grief from a healthy outlook. Understand that each circumstance is different, and each person will approach grief from a unique and personal perspective. Even with this in mind, we think you will find these suggestions helpful.

1. **Acknowledge and understand your own grief.**
2. **Allow your grief to be recognized by others.**
3. **Feel free to grieve in your own unique way.**
4. **Tell your story to others (the honest account of your loss).**
5. **Learn life's lessons through your loss (becoming more humane, compassionate).**
6. **Commit to the journey. long or short, that leads back to the point where you can live with optimism and hope.**
7. **Share the comfort you have received with others in need.**
8. **Trust God and cling to Him. Bring all your questions and feelings honestly to Him.**

Grief recovery is simply feeling better. It is the ability to find joy in life again. It is to treasure the memory of loved ones, to miss them and to live better because of the time in your life that you spent with them.

Grief is not an enemy or a sign of weakness. It is a sign of being human. It is the cost of loving someone. It is inevitable that during such a loss we would be deeply impacted, shocked or wounded by it. Grief is the manner or process in which we work through this loss.

There is a goal in the grieving process. The emotions are seeking to reorganize themselves to cope with the loss and to reestablish healthy relationships.

GriefShare is a special grief recovery seminar and support group to help people as they grieve the death of a family member or friend. There is probably a group that meets near you (perhaps a sponsoring church has shared this information with you).

If you would like to find a *GriefShare* group, you can search an interactive database on the Internet at **www.griefshare.org** or call us at **1-800-395-5755**.

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GUILT (CONDEMNATION) VS. CONVICTION

	GUILT	CONVICTION
Basic Focus	The state of being condemned: I am unworthy.	Behavior: This act is unworthy of Christ and is destructive.
Primary Concern	Deals with the sinner's loss of self-worth and a wounded self-pride: What will others think of me?	Deals with the loss of our moment-by-moment communication with God: This act is destructive to me and interferes with my walk with God.
Primary Fear	Produces a fear of punishment: Now I'm going to get it!	Produces fear of the destructiveness of the act itself: This behavior is destructive to me and others, and it robs me of what God intends for me.
Agent	Satan: ...the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:4)	The Holy Spirit: ... but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:13)
Behavior Results	Leads to depression and more sin: I am just a low-down, dirty, rotten sinner; or to rebellion: I don't care! I'm going to do whatever I want to do!	Leads to repentance, the turning from sin to Christ: Lord, I agree with you that my sin is wrong and destructive. What do you want me to do?
Interpersonal Result	Alienation - a feeling of shame that drives one away from the person who has been wronged: I can't ever face him again.	Restoration - a desire to remedy the harm done to others: Father, what would You have me do to right this wrong and restore the relationship with the one I have offended?
Personal Results	Ends in depression, bitterness, and self-pity: I'm just no good.	Ends in comfort, the realization of forgiveness: I AM DEEPLY LOVED, COMPLETELY FORGIVEN, FULLY PLEASING, TOTALLY ACCEPTED AND COMPLETE IN CHRIST!
	Pushes you in the mud convincing you that you are a FROG!	Pulls you out of the mud convincing you that you are a PRINCESS FOREVER!

"Scorning the Shame"

From the passage in Hebrews 12 about Jesus' death on the cross.
(To scorn means: to count as having little or no value)

Shame is just an illusion. While feelings of shame are very real, they are truly only echoes or shadows of things like sin and guilt. Guilt and sin can be dealt with via the forgiveness God offers us. But what about the shame left over.. .the painful reminder of a judgment no longer there? We give it up and let it go for, just as Jesus counted shame to be of no value or substance once the guilt is dealt with, so should we. Shrug off the burden of shame and live in the reality that ***you are loved and cherished by the Father who is never less proud of you, but sees always the beauty of who you are.***

MY IDENTITY IN CHRIST

Colossians 2:10	I am complete in Christ.
Romans 8:1-2	I am free from condemnation (guilt).
Romans 8:27	I am a Saint.
John 1:12	I am God's Child.
Hebrews 4:16	I can find grace and mercy in time of need.
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Romans 8:37-39	I cannot be separated from the love of God.
John 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
Romans 8:28	I am assured that all things work together for good.
2 Timothy 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me.
Philippians 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven.
Matthew 5:13-14	I am the salt and light of the earth.
Ephesians 2:18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am God's temple.
Colossians 1:13-14	I have been redeemed and forgiven all of my sins.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22	I have been established, anointed and sealed by God.
John 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
1 Corinthians 6:20	I have been bought at a price, I belong to God.
Ephesians 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Hebrews 10:14	I am perfect.

Ephesians 1:4	I am holy and blameless in His sight.
1 John 4:16	I am able to know and rely on the love God has for me.
Romans 5:1	I have been justified.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord, and I am one Spirit with Him.
1 Corinthians 12:2	I am a member of Christ's body.
Ephesians 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child.
Philippians 1:6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.
Colossians 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God.
John 15:1, 5	I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:17-21	I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
Ephesians 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
2 Corinthians 5:17	I am a new creation.
Romans 8:17	I am a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance with Him.
Colossians 3:4	I am an expression of the life of Christ because He is my Life.
I Peter 2:11	I am an alien and stranger to this world in which I temporarily live.
1 Corinthians 2:16	I have been given the mind of Christ.
2 Corinthians 5:14-15	Since I have died, I no longer live for myself, but for Christ.
Ephesians 1:3	I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing.
2 Timothy 1:9	I have been saved and set apart according to God's doing.

KEY THOUGHTS FOR ENJOYING GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

(Accumulated over 31 years of comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable)

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is–his good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:3 NIV

A. On God and Us

1. "All sin is rooted in the suspicion that God is not good." Oswald Chambers

2. Life is not manageable. If it were, we would never return to God.

3. You certainly do not want what you deserve. If you received what you deserved, God would immediately drop-kick you into hell.

4. "Never take up another's offense." Oswald Chambers

5. "So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it." (2 Corinthians 5:9)

6. The only identity that cannot be taken from you in a matter of seconds is the identity you possess as a follower of Jesus Christ.

7. God is good and can be trusted. He is perfect; He is powerful; He is passionate about you, and He is paying attention.

8. Joy is very often a function of <u>high hopes</u> and <u>low expectations</u>.

9. You are a creature of habit. You get to choose whether you will be enslaved to good habits or to bad ones.

10. Little right things done over a long period of time pay big dividends.

11. You are wise if you concern yourself with only those things over which you have some control.

12. Obeying God may occasionally appear to be to your detriment, but obedience to Him is <u>never</u> truly to your detriment.

13. If you are either *offended* or *warned* you are in disobedience to God and will fail to enjoy many of the benefits of His Kingdom.

14. The only true tragedy in life is to die outside of Jesus Christ.

15. The secret of contentment in all circumstances is embracing the truth that *obeying* God is the only thing in life that matters.

16. Anger is the result of either: 1) being offended or 2) having "your plan" disrupted.

17. God never intended for you to take your own revenge.

18. When a person's level of desperation exceeds his level of embarrassment, he is a candidate for the Kingdom of God.

19. You have two great needs: 1) forgiveness and 2) goodness. Only God, through His Holy Spirit, can provide you with both.

20. You will become most useful and most content when you realize that life is not about you but about God.

21. You were not wired to *own* anything. You were created to be stewards of God's stuff.

22. Your "work" on earth is to believe (trust in, rely on, cling to, surrender to) in Jesus Christ.

23. How you think about God and yourself drastically effect your conduct

24. God wants you to be free from *grudges, guilt, grief, and fear.*

25. "Gratitude is the mother of all virtues." G.K. Chesterton

26. "Because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy." (Hebrews 10:14 NIV)

27. If your life is characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, you are likely among that happy minority who enjoy life in the Kingdom of God.

28. "Christ calls us to blessedness and goodness. The two enemies of blessedness and goodness are 1) the desire for the approval of others and 2) the desire to secure ourselves with material wealth." Dallas Willard

B. On Marriage

1. All good relationships are built upon: 1) kind words and 2) shared experiences.

2. Honor and obey God by treating your spouse extravagantly well with no concern for your spouse's response. Real life is found in pleasing God and not ourselves or others.

3. For a married disciple of Jesus Christ neither divorce nor a mediocre marriage is an option.

4 Understand that forgiveness is not about feelings or forgetting or saying that the offense did not matter. It is simply a decision that you make, based on God's incredible grace to you, not to use an offense against another.

5. As a husband and wife grow individually closer to God, they will inevitably grow closer to one another.

6. Functional relationships are those where *the truth* regarding any subject can be handled by all parties.

7. An affair is a conspiracy to create a fantasy.

8. Neither your *spouse* nor *your kids*; neither your *job* nor your *recreations* have the capacity to make you happy.

9. All human relationships function well when the *emotional deposits* exceed *emotional withdrawals*.

10. Couples who *pray* together *stay* together.

11. Good *prayer* and good *sex* "bullet-proof" a marriage.

12. Every married couple needs a mentor. *Submit* your relationship to the counsel of a Godly friend who knows the Bible well.

13. God will hold the husband accountable for being the prophet, the priest, and the warrior-king of his household. God will hold the wife accountable for being submitted to her husband's leadership.

C. On Raising Kids

1. The greatest thing you can do for your kids is to *love your spouse*.

2. Your children are really God's children; He loves them even more than you do and is far more capable of keeping them safe and of bringing them to maturity.

3. You become what the significant people in your life encourage you to become.

D. On Work and Play

1. Your Father, who is at hand, has no shortage of resources.

2. Everyone in the world either needs to know Jesus, or they need to know Him better.

3. "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." (Colossians 3:23 NIV)

4. God wants us to: *get saved, get well, and get going!*

5. You have 3 resources for which you will be held responsible; 1) your time, 2) your money, 3) your talents.

6. Your job is not to *fix* your neighbor but to *love* your neighbor.

7. "Prosperity knits a man to the world. He feels that he is 'finding his place in it,' while really it is finding its place in him. His increasing reputation, his widening circle of acquaintances, his sense of importance, the growing pressure of absorbing and agreeable work, build up in him a sense of being really at home on Earth, which is just what the devil wants." The Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis

8. I you pray and then wither worry or speak faithlessly, you might as well highlight your request and stroke the delete key.

"For we (those who are saved) must off appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10 NIV)

ATTITUDE

"The longer I live the more I realize the impact of attitude on my life. Attitude to me is more important than the past; than education, than money; than circumstances; than failure; than successes; than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance; giftedness; or skill. It will make or break a company; a church; a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is to play on the one string we have and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so, it is with you. We are in charge of our attitudes.

CHUCK SWINDOLL

"Be joyful always, pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

NINE THINGS YOU SIMPLY MUST DO TO SUCCEED IN LIFE AND LOVE

by Dr. Henry Cloud - A Summary - How the Principles Apply to Becoming a Disciple of Jesus

1. Dig it up - Proverbs 4:23
Determine your heart's desires and your aptitudes

2. Pull the tooth - Hebrews 12:14-15
Deal with whatever is crushing your spirit (the "brain drain" items)
ie. grudges, grief, guilt, fear, etc.

3. Play the movie - 1 Corinthians 9:26-27
Plot a movie - envision your relationships, your spiritual life, your career, your health, your finances.
See it, plan it, and then evaluate each scene you write everyday in light of how you want the movie to end.

4. Do something - Colossians 3:23-24
Be proactive - make things happen.

5. Act like an ant - Proverbs 6:6-8
Achieve your goals by taking tiny steps over time.

6. Hate well - Proverbs 6:16-19
Hate the things that God hates; pride, lying, murder, scheming, evil, perjury, divisiveness.

7. Don't play fair - Romans 12:17-19
Treat others better than they treat you.

8. Be humble - Psalm 18:27
Be willing to be known for who you are.

9. Upset the right people - Luke 6:26
If the controlling, hot and cold, irresponsible, mean or manipulative people in your life
are upset with you, be encouraged!

"For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. "To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. "Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. "In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more. But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. "Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. "The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, "Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' "His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'" Matthew 25:14-21 NASU

BITTERNESS VS. FORGIVENESS

We need to forgive others so Satan cannot take advantage of us (see 2 Corinthians 2:10, 11). We are commanded to get rid of all bitterness in our lives and forgive others as we have been forgiven (see Ephesians 4:31, 32). Ask God to bring to your mind the people you need to forgive by praying the following prayer aloud:

> **Dear Heavenly Father,**
> **I thank You for the riches of Your kindness, forbearance and patience toward me, knowing that Your kindness has led me to repentance.[2] I confess that I have not shown that same kindness and patience toward those who have hurt or offended me. Instead, I have held on to my anger, bitterness and resentment toward them. Please bring to my mind all the people I need to forgive in order that I may now do so. In Jesus' name, amen.**

On a separate sheet of paper, list the names of people who come to your mind. At this point don't question whether you need to forgive them or not. If a name comes to mind, write it down.

Often we hold things against ourselves as well, punishing ourselves for wrong choices we've made in the past. Write "Myself" at the bottom of your list if you need to forgive yourself. Forgiving yourself is accepting the truth that God has already forgiven you in Christ. If God forgives you, you can forgive yourself!

Also write down "Thoughts Against God" at the bottom of your list. Obviously, God has never done anything wrong so we don't have to forgive Him. Sometimes, however, we harbor angry thoughts against Him because He did not do what we wanted Him to do. Those feelings of anger or resentment against God can become a wall between us and Him, so we must let them go.

Before you begin working through the process of forgiving those on your list, take a few minutes to review what forgiveness is and what it is not.

Forgiveness Is Not Merely Forgetting

People who want to forget all that was done to them will find they cannot do it. Don't put off forgiving those who have hurt you, hoping the pain will one day go away. Once you choose to forgive someone, *then* Christ can come and begin to heal you of your hurts. But the healing cannot begin until you first forgive.

Forgiveness Is a Choice, a Decision of Your Will

Since God requires you to forgive, it is something you can do. Sometimes it is very hard to forgive someone because we naturally want revenge for the things we have suffered. Forgiveness seems to go against our sense of what is right and fair. So we hold on to our anger, punishing people over and over again in our minds for the pain they've caused us.

But we are told by God never to take our own revenge (see Romans 12:19). Let God deal with the person. Let him or her off your hook, because as long as you refuse to forgive someone, you are still hooked to that person. You are still chained to your past, bound up in your bitterness. By forgiving, you let the other person off your hook; but he or she is not off God's hook. You must trust that God will deal with the person justly and fairly, something you simply cannot do.

"But you don't know how much this person hurt me!" you say You're right. We don't, but Jesus does, and He tells you to forgive others for your sake. Until you let go of your anger and hatred, the person is still hurting you. You can't turn back the clock and change the past, but you can be free from it. You can stop the pain; but there is only one way to do it–forgive from your heart.

Forgive others for your sake so you can be free from your past.

Forgiveness Is Agreeing to Live with the Consequences of Another's Sin

You are going to live with those consequences whether you like it or not, so the only choice you have is whether you will do so in the bondage of bitterness or in the freedom of forgiveness. No one truly forgives without accepting and suffering the pain of another person's sin. That can seem unfair, and you may wonder, "Where is the justice?" The Cross makes forgiveness legally and morally right. Jesus died once for all our sins.

Jesus took the *eternal* consequences of sin upon Himself. God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). We, however, often suffer the temporary consequences of other people's sins. That is simply a harsh reality of life all of us have to face.

Do not wait for the other person to ask for your forgiveness. Remember, Jesus did not wait for those who were crucifying Him to apologize before He forgave them. Even while they mocked and jeered at Him, He prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34 NIV).

Forgiveness Comes from Your Heart

Allow God to bring the painful memories to the surface, and then acknowledge how you feel toward those who've hurt you. If your forgiveness doesn't touch the emotional core of your life, it will be incomplete. Too often we're afraid of the pain, so we bury our emotions deep down inside us. Let God bring them to the surface so He can begin to heal those damaged emotions.

Forgiveness Is Choosing Not to Hold Someone's Sin Against Him or Her Anymore

It is common for bitter people to bring up past issues with those who have hurt them. They want the other people to feel as bad as they do! But we must let go of the past and choose to reject any thought of revenge. This doesn't mean you continue to put up with the future sins of others. God does not tolerate sin and neither should you. Don't allow yourself to be continually abused by others. Take a stand against sin while continuing to exercise grace and forgiveness toward those who hurt you. If you need help setting scriptural boundaries to protect yourself from further abuse, talk to a trusted friend, counselor or pastor.

Forgiveness Cannot Wait Until You Feel like Forgiving

You will never get there. Make the hard choice to forgive even if you don't feel like it. Once you choose to forgive, Satan will lose his power over you in that area, and God will heal your damaged emotions. Freedom is what you will gain right now, not necessarily an immediate change in feelings.

Now you are ready to begin. Starting with the first person on your list, make the choice to forgive him or her for every painful memory that comes to your mind. Continue until you are sure you have dealt with all the remembered pain caused by that individual. Then work your way down the list in the same way.

As you begin forgiving people, God may bring to your mind painful memories you've totally forgotten. Let Him do this even if it hurts. God wants you to be free; forgiving those people is the only way. Don't try to excuse the offender's behavior, even if it is someone you are really close to.

Don't say, "Lord, please help me to forgive." He is already helping you and will be with you all the way through the process. Don't say, "Lord, I want to forgive..." because that bypasses the hard choice we have to make. Say, "Lord, I *choose* to forgive..."

For every painful memory you have for each person on your list, pray aloud:

Lord, I choose to forgive _____ (name the person) **for** _____ (what they did or failed to do), **which made me feel** _____ (share the painful feelings).

After you have forgiven each person for all the offenses that came to your mind, and after you have honestly expressed how you felt, conclude this step by praying aloud:

Lord, I choose not to hold on to my resentment. I thank You for setting me free from the bondage of my bitterness. I relinquish my right to seek revenge and ask You to heal my damaged emotions. I now ask You to bless those who have hurt me. In Jesus' name, amen.

GETTING SQUARE WITH YOUR FOLKS

Four Fundamental Truths

"Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. 'Honor you father and mother.' This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise. And this is the promise: If you honor your father and mother, 'you will live a long life, full of blessing.'"
Ephesians 6:1-3 NLT

In all probability your mother and father:

1. Loved you as much as they had the ability to love

2. Parented you as well as they were capable

3. Taught you by word or example some very wonderful things

4. Taught you some terrible lies about life and hurt you badly

If you want to enjoy "good mental health" and the benefits of God's Kingdom here and now, <u>be grateful</u> for your parents and the good they passed on to you. <u>Forgive</u> your mom and dad from your heart for *any* injury they have caused you and determine to embrace and pass on only the good things they imparted to you. Then <u>pray</u> that your own children will be so understanding and gracious.

"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins."
Matthew 6:14-15 NLT

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PEACEMAKING

From The Peacemaker by Ken Sande

I. The Fours G's (1 Peter 2:12)
- A. Glorify God
- B. Get the log out of your own eye
- C. Go and show your brother his fault
- D. Go and be reconciled

II. Three opportunities in conflict (1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1; Matthew 25:21)
- A. Glorify God
- B. Serve others
- C. Grow to be like Christ

III. Seven A's of confession (Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 7:3-5)
- A. Address everyone involved
- B. Avoid *if*, *but* and *maybe*
- C. Admit specifically
- D. Apologize
- E. Accept the consequences
- F. Alter your behavior
- G. Ask for forgiveness

IV. Five steps for resolving conflict (Proverbs 19:11; Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-20)
- A. Overlook minor offenses
- B. Talk in private
- C. Take one or two others along
- D. Tell it to the church
- E. Treat him as an unbeliever

V. Four promises of forgiveness (1 Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 4:32)
- A. I will not think about this incident.
- B. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
- C. I will not talk to others about this incident.
- D. I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our relationship.

VI. The PAUSE principle of negotiating (Philippians 2:3-4; Ecclesiastes 9:16)
- A. Prepare
- B. Affirm relationships
- C. Understand interests
- D. Search for creative solutions
- E. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably

MANS' DEPRAVITY

"The heart is the most deceitful thing there is and desperately wicked. No one can really know how bad it is! Only the Lord knows! He searches all hearts and examines deepest motives so he can give to each person his right reward, according to his deeds–how he has lived."
Jeremiah 17:9-10 TLB

Depraved: marked by corruption or evil; perverted, turned away from what is right or good, obstinate in opposing what is right, reasonable, or accepted

* *"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away."* Isaiah 64:6 NIV

* *"We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me.* ***I know that nothing good lives in me****, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do–this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my member. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from* ***this body of death****? Thanks be to God–through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin."*
Romans 7:14-25 NIV

* *"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."*
James 2:10-11 NIV

* *"To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: 'Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men–robbers, evildoers, adulterers–or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said 'God have mercy me a sinner.' I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.'"*
Luke 18:9-14 NIV

Sin: Hebrew - hatta'a; Greek - hamartia, a falling away from or missing the right path. Also numerous other Hebrew words. The underlying idea of sin that of law and of a lawgiver. The lawgiver is God. Hence sin is everything in the disposition and purpose and conduct of God's moral creatures that is contrary to the expressed will of God (Romans 3:20; 4:15; 7:7; James 4:12, 17)

The sinfulness of sin lies in the fact that it is against God, even when the wrong we do is to others or ourselves (Genesis 39:9, Psalm 51:4). The being and law of God are perfectly harmonious, for "God is love." The sum of all the commandments likewise is love; sin in its nature is egotism and selfishness. Self is put is put in the place of God (Romans 15:3; 1 Corinthians 13:5; 2 Timothy 3:2,4:2; Thessalonians 2:3-4). Selfishness (not pure self-love, or the exaggeration of it, but in opposition to it) it at the bottom of all disobedience, and it becomes hostility to God when it collides with His law. All sin therefore has a positive character, and the distinction between sins of commission and those of omission is only on the surface. In both cases sin is actual disobedience (see Matthew 23:23).

Original Sin: A term used to denote the effect of Adam's sin upon the moral life of his descendants. It is formally defined as "that whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil." The fact of sin in this sense is plainly declared in the Scriptures (Romans 5:12, 19; cf. Genesis 3:5; Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 John 3:4). In accord with this is the fact of the universality of sin, also proclaimed in Scripture (Matthew 7:11; 15:19; Romans 3:9, 23; 1 John 1:8; James 3:2; cf. 1 Kings 8:46; Job 14:4; Proverbs 20:9) and borne witness to by history and human self-consciousness.

The nature of the connection between the sin of Adam and the moral condition of his descendants is, however, a matter upon which opinions greatly differ. The chief forms of doctrine have been as follows:

Calvinist: Calvinists have held that the sin of Adam was immediately imputed to the whole human family. so that not only is the entire race depraved but also guilty on account of the first transgression. To sustain this opinion it is argued that Adam was not only the natural but also the representative, or federal, head of the human race. His fall involved the whole race in guilt.

Arminian: The view more generally held is that the effect of Adam's sin upon the moral state mankind is in accordance with and by virtue of the natural law of heredity. The race inherited proneness to sin. But this proneness to sin does not imply guilt, inasmuch as punishment can justly be inflicted only on account of actual sin, which consists in voluntary transgression. This view is held by many Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and universally by Methodists.

WHY WOULD GOD ALLOW MAN TO SIN?

1. God chose to create the universe with ***love*** as its foundational principle

2. Love requires ***choice***

3. Choice allows for ***sin***

4. Sin always causes ***suffering***

5. ***Suffering*** is most often the thing that drives us back to God

"Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man's sin:
The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation,
but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification.
For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man,
how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace
and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ"
Romans 5:16-17 NIV

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT "WORK"

(Scriptures from the NIV)

"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done." Genesis 2:2-3

"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15

"To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You mst not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." Genesis 3:17-19

"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son." Proverbs 10:4-5

"A little seep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest–and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man." Proverbs 24:33-34

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:22-24

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'If a man will not work, he shall not eat.'" 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10

"Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." 1 Timothy 5:7-8

HOW TO SELECT A CAREER

Some questions to ask yourself when considering a vocation

"Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." Colossians 3:23 NLT

***Rate each of the following areas in order of importance to you – "1" being the most important**

_____ 1. Salary (how much money can I earn in both the short term and the long haul?)

_____ 2. Benefits (are retirement and health benefits available?)

_____ 3. Geographic location (where can I live?)

_____ 4. Flexibility (can I select my hours?)

_____ 5. Internal satisfaction (does the work "flip my switch?")

_____ 6. Service to mankind (is the work important?)

_____ 7. Vacations (how much time is available away from work?)

_____ 8. Status (what do others think of my work?)

_____ 9. Co-workers (do I like and respect my fellow workers?)

_____ 10. Stability (is this job likely to be here 10 years from now?)

_____ 11. Potential for advancement (can I be promoted regularly?)

_____ 12. Potential for ownership (can I eventually "buy in?")

_____ 13. Expenses (what are the financial costs associated with having this job?)

_____ 14. Stress level (how emotionally draining is this work?)

_____ 15. After hours work (will I have to take work home at night and on the weekends?)

_____ 16. Physical concerns (will this job be hard on my body? is it dangerous work?)

_____ 17. Risk (does this job give me financial security?)

_____ 18. Travel (does the work take me away from home regularly?

"This should be your ambition: to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we commanded you before. As a result, people who are not Christians will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others to meet your financial needs."
1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 NLT

STEPS TO FREEDOM IN CHRIST

By Neil T. Anderson

1. The first step toward experiencing your freedom in Christ is to renounce (verbally reject) all past or present involvement with occult practices, cult teachings and rituals, and non-Christian religions. You must renounce any activity or group which denies Jesus Christ or offers guidance through any source other than the absolute authority of the Bible. Any group that requires dark or secret initiations, ceremonies, promises or pacts should also be renounced (1 John 4:1-3).

2. God's Word is true, and we need to accept His truth in the innermost part of our being (Psalm 51:6). Whether or not we feel it is true, we need to believe it is true! Jesus is the truth; the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth; the Word of God is truth; and we are admonished to speak the truth in love (John 14:6; Ephesians 4:15).

3. We need to forgive others so Satan cannot take advantage of us (2 Corinthians 2:10-11). We are commanded to get rid of all bitterness in our lives and forgive others as we have been forgiven (Ephesians 4:31-32).

4. We live in a rebellious age. Many people only obey laws and authorities when it is convenient for them. There is a general lack of respect for those in government, and Christians are often as guilty as the rest of society in fostering a critical, rebellious spirit. Certainly, we are not expected to agree with leaders' policies that are in violation of the Scripture, but we are to "honor all [people]; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king" (1 Peter 2:17).

5. Pride kills. It says, "I don't need God's or anyone else's help. I can handle it by myself." Oh, no, you can't! We absolutely need God, and we necessarily need each other. The Apostle Paul wisely wrote, "[we] worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and *put no confidence in the flesh*" (Philippians 3:3). That is a good definition of humility: putting no confidence in the flesh, that is in ourselves; but, rather, being *"strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might"* (Ephesians 6:10). Humility is confidence properly placed in God.

6. Many times we feel trapped in a vicious cycle of "sin-confess-sin-confess" that never seems to end. We can become very discouraged and end up just giving in to the sins of our flesh. To find freedom we must follow James 4:7: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." We submit to God by confession of sin and repentance (turning away from sin). We resist the devil by rejecting his lies. Instead, put on the full armor of God and walk in the truth (Ephesians 6:10-20). Sin that has become a habit often requires help from a trusted brother or sister in Christ. James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." Sometimes the assurance of 1 John 1:9 is enough: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

7. The final step to freedom is to renounce the sins of your ancestors as well as any satanic assignments directed toward you or your ministry (Exodus 20:4-6). The iniquities of one generation can adversely affect future generations unless the sins of the ancestors are confessed and renounced, and your spiritual heritage in Christ is claimed. You are not guilty for the sin of your ancestors, but because of their sin, you may be predisposed to certain strengths or weaknesses and influenced by the physical and spiritual atmosphere in which you were raise. These conditions can contribute to causing someone to struggle with a particular sin. Ask the Lord to show you specifically what sins are characteristic of your family.

SOME DOS AND DON'TS REGARDING APPLICATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW

(From How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth by Fee & Stewart)

Presented here is a brief list of hermeneutical guidelines that will serve you well whenever you read the Old Testament pentateuchal law. Keeping these principles in mind when you read may help you to avoid mistaken applications of the Law, while seeing in the Law its instructive and faith-building character.

1. **Do** see the OT law as God's fully inspired word for you. **Don't** see the OT law as God's direct command to you.

2. **Do** see the OT law as the basis for the Old Covenant, and therefore for Israel's history. **Don't** see the Old Testament law as binding on Christians in the New Covenant *except where specifically renewed*.

3. **Do** see God's justice, love, and high standards revealed in the OT law. **Don't** forget to see that God's mercy is made equal to the severity of the standards.

4. **Don't** see the OT law as complete. It is not technically comprehensive. **Do** see the OT law as a paradigm–providing examples for the full range of expected behavior.

5. **Don't** expect the OT law to be cited frequently by the OT prophets or in the New Testament. **Do** remember that the *essence* of the Law (Ten Commandments and the two chief laws) is repeated in the prophets and renewed in the NT.

6. **Do** see the OT law as a generous gift to Israel, bringing much blessing when obeyed. **Don't** see the OT law as a grouping of arbitrary, annoying regulations limiting people's freedom

The Old Testament Law did at least four things for Israel; 1) it provided the mechanism for God's chosen people, the Jews, to enjoy an abundant life 2) it separated the Jews from the pagan peoples that surrounded them, 3) it became the "straight edge " that confirmed their "crookedness," 4) and it foreshadowed the coming of the Messiah. -FMN

"These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come." 1 Corinthians 10:11 NIV

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Exodus 20:1-19 NIV (also recorded in Deuteronomy 5:1-22)

1 "And God spoke all these words: 2 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.'

I. 3 You shall have no other gods before me.

II. 4 You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

III. 7 You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

IV. 8 Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

V. 12 Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

VI. 13 You shall not murder.

VII. 14 You shall not commit adultery.

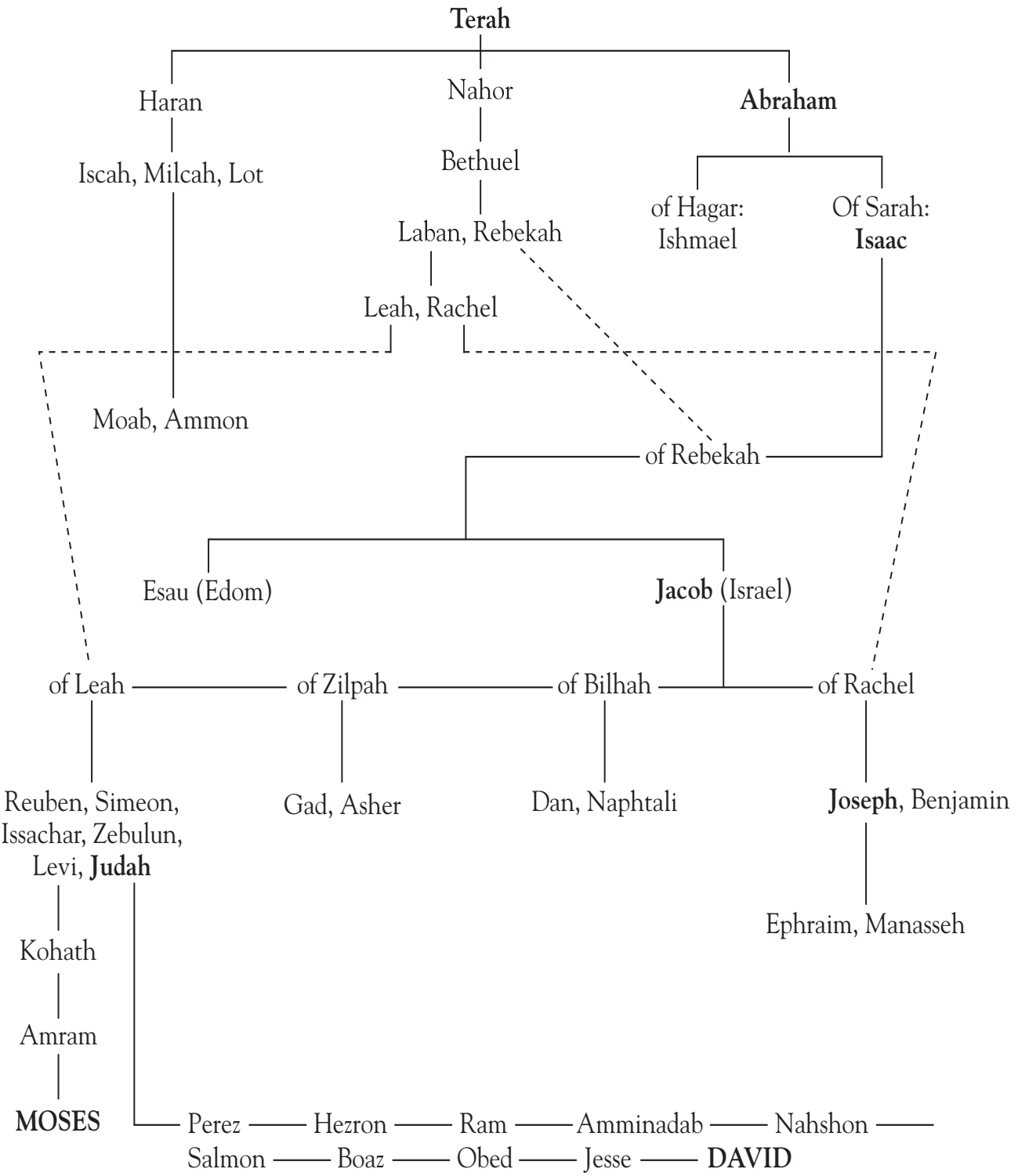
VIII. 15 You shall not steal.

IX. 16 You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

X. 17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. 18 When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance 19 and said to Moses, 'Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.'"

"Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law."
Galatians 3:23-25 NIV

PATRIARCHAL FAMILY TREE



TEMPLES, SACRIFICES, OFFERINGS AND FEASTS OF THE OT

John MacArthur

The Temples of the Bible

IDENTIFICATION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
The Tabernacle (mobile Temple)	about 1444 B.C.	Detailed plan received by Moses from the Lord Constructed by divinely appointed artisans Desecrated by Nadab and Abihu	Exodus 25-30; 35:30-40:38; Leviticus 10:1-7
Solomon's Temple	966-586 B.C.	Planned by David Constructed by Solomon Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar	2 Samuel 7:1-29; 1 Kings 8:1-66; Jeremiah 32:28-44
Zerubbabel's Temple	516-169 B.C.	Envisioned by Zerubbabel Constructed by Zerubbabel and the elders of the Jews Desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes	Ezra 6:1-22; 3:1-8; 4:1-14
Herod's Temple	19 B.C.-A.D. 70	Zerubbabel's temple restored by Herod the Great Destroyed by the Romans	Mark 13:2, 14-23; Luke 1:11-20; 2:22-38; 2:42-51; 4:21-24; Acts 21:27-33
The Present Temple	Present Age	Found in the heart of the believer The body of the believer is the Lords's only temple until the Messiah returns	1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
The Temple of Revelation 11	Tribulation Period	To be constructed during the Tribulation by the Antichrist To be desecrated and destroyed	Daniel 9:2; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 17:18
Ezekiel's (Millennial) **Temple**	Millennium	Envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel To be built by the Messiah during His millennial reign	Ezekiel 40:1-42:20 Zechariah 6:12, 13
The Eternal Temple of His Presence	The Eternal Kingdom	The greatest temple of all ("The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple") A spiritual temple	Revelation 21:22; 22:1-21

The temple (Gr. *hieron*) is a place of worship, a sacred or holy space built primarily for the national worship of God.

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Old Testament Sacrifices Compared to Christ's Sacrifice

LEVITICUS		HEBREWS
1. Old Covenant (temporary)	Hebrews 7:22; 8:6; 10:20	1. New Covenant (permanent)
2. Obsolete promises	Hebrews 8:6-13	2. Better promises
3. A shadow	Hebrews 8:5; 9:23, 24; 10:1	3. The reality
4. Aaronic priesthood (many)	Hebrews 6:19-7:25	4. Melchizedekian priesthood (one)
5. Sinful priesthood	Hebrews 7:26, 27; 9:7	5. Sinless priest
6. Limited-by-death priesthood	Hebrews 7:16, 17, 23, 24	6. Forever priesthood
7. Daily sacrifices	Hebrews 7:27; 9:12, 25, 26; 10:9, 10, 12	7. Once-for-all sacrifice
8. Animal sacrifices	Hebrews 9:11-15, 62; 10:4-10, 19	8. Sacrifice of God's Son
9. Ongoing sacrifices	Hebrews 10:11-14, 18	9. Sacrifices no longer needed
10. One year atonement	Hebrews 7:25; 9:12; 15; 10:1-4, 12	10. Eternal propitiation

Christ in the Levitical Offerings

OFFERING	CHRIST'S PROVISION	CHRIST'S CHARACTER
1. Burnt Offering (Leviticus 1:3-17; 6:8-13)	Atonement	Christ's sinless nature
2. Grain Offering (Leviticus 2:1-16; 6:14-23)	Dedication/Consecration	Christ was wholly devoted to the Father's purposes
3. Peace Offering (Leviticus 3:1-17; 7:11-36)	Reconciliation/Fellowship	Christ was at peace with God
4. Sin Offering (Leviticus 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30)	Propitiation	Christ's substitutionary death
5. Trespass Offering (Leviticus 5:14-6:7; 7:1-10)	Repentance	Christ paid it all for redemption

Jewish Feasts

FEAST OF	MONTH ON CALENDAR	DAY	CORRESPONDING MONTH	REFERENCES
Passover	Nisan	14	Mar-Apr	Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:17-20
*Unleavened Bread	Nisan	15-21	Mar-Apr	Exodus 12:15-20
Firstfruits	Nisan or Sivan	16 6	Mar-Apr May-June	Leviticus 23:9-14 Numbers 28:26
*Pentecost (Harvest or Weeks)	Sivan	6 (50 days after barley harvest)	May-June	Deuteronomy 16:9-12; Acts 2:1
Trumpets, Rosh Hashanah	Tishri	1,2	Sept-Oct	Numbers 29:1-6
Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur	Tishri	10	Sept-Oct	Leviticus 23:26-32; Hebrews 9:7
*Tabernacles (Booths or Ingathering)	Tishri	15-22	Sept-Oct	Nehemiah 8:13-18; John 7:2
Dedication (Lights), Hanukkah	Chislev	25 (8 days)	Nov-Dec	John 10:22
Purim (Lots)	Adar	14, 15	Feb-Mar	Esther 9:18-32

*The three major feasts for which all males of Israel were required to travel to the temple in Jerusalem (Exodus 23:14-19).

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Christ in the Levitical Offerings

THE FEASTS (LEVITICUS 23)	CHRIST'S FULFILLMENT
Passover (March/April)	Death of Christ (1 Corinthians 5:7)
Unleavened Bread (March/April)	Sinlessness of Christ (1 Corinthians 5:8)
Firstfruits (March/April)	Resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:23)
Pentecost (May/June)	Outpouring of Spirit of Christ (Acts 1:5; 2:4)
Trumpets (September/October)	Israel's Regathering by Christ (Matthew 24:31)
Atonement (September/October)	Substitutionary Sacrifice by Christ (Romans 11:26)
Tabernacles (September/October)	Rest and Reunion with Christ (Zechariah 14:16-19)

WHAT IS THE LAW?

(Life Application Study Bible)

Part of the Jewish law included those laws found in the Old Testament. When Paul says that non-Jews (Gentiles) are no longer bound by these laws, he is not saying that the Old Testament laws do not apply to us today. He is saying certain types of laws may not apply to us. In the Old Testament there were three categories of laws:

Ceremonial Law This kind of law relates specifically to Israel's worship (see, for example, Leviticus 1:1-13). Its primary purpose was to point forward to Jesus Christ. Therefore, these laws were no longer necessary after Jesus' death and resurrection. While we are no longer bound by ceremonial laws, the principles behind them–to worship and love a holy God–still apply. The Jewish Christians often accused the Gentile Christians of violating the ceremonial law.

Civil Law This type of law dictated lsrael's daily living (see Deuteronomy 24:10, 11, for example). Because modern society and culture are so radically different, some of these guidelines cannot be followed specifically. But the principles behind the commands should guide our conduct. At times, Paul asked Gentile Christians to follow some of these laws, not because they had to, but in order to promote unity.

Moral Law This sort of law is the direct command of God–for example, the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17). It requires strict obedience. It reveals the nature and will of God, and it still applies to us today. We are to obey this moral law, not to obtain salvation, but to live in ways pleasing to God.

* There are 613 commands in the Old Testament.

RAY VANDER LAAN ON GOD'S CALENDAR

(the land, the language, and the Jewish culture of Jesus)

1. Jewish people how how to *celebrate* God. Besides the weekly Sabbaths God gave the Jews 37 days of holidays to celebrate being His people. "Rejoice" means to *dance with joy before God.*

2. *Celebration* for those of us in the West may be more difficult because our relationship with God tends to be so "intellectual" rather than "emotional." We value truth in *information* form, i.e. words, bullet points, etc. Jews, being Eastern, think in terms of pictures. Thus, a Westerner may say that God is omniscient and omnipotent while a Jew might describe Him as "living water" or "the bread of life."

3. There are 3 sets of information regarding Old Testament times that we need to consider in their proper context: 1) those things that are specifically described in the Word of God, *i.e. the lamb for Passover had to be without defect Exodus 12:5,* 2) those customs and traditions from the time of Moses to AD 70 that the Jews developed to help them carry out God's commandments, *i.e. the Jews of Jesus day had determined that the Passover lambs must come from the flocks of Bethlehem where David had tended sheep,* 3) those customs and traditions that developed among the Jewish people after the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, *i.e. the Jews began to bake the unleavened bread "matzos" in such a way that it was "striped and bruised."*

4. At the Jewish feast of Pentecost the Jews gathered in the Temple to hear read the first 10 chapters of Ezekiel about "rushing wind:"

   "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." Acts 2:1-4 NIV

5. The Sabbath day (meaning Saturday) began at dusk on our Friday evening and ran through Saturday evening at dusk.

6. Daily sacrifices were required in the Temple for everyone–one was completed at 9:00 in the morning and one was completed at 3:00 in the afternoon. In the Bible, God does many powerful things at those two times of day. These daily sacrifices were called "prayer times"–a devout Jew saw these as times to worship. The tax collector of Luke 18:9-14 is actually saying "may this sacrifice be for me."

   VIP Principle - God acts when His people are in worship.

7. Three feasts of "rest" God required of Israel (an understanding of the Jewish feasts is incredibly important to a Christ-follower who wants to have a deeper knowledge and love of his Lord)

   a. Weekly feasts called Shabbat - God celebrated the creation of the world (Genesis 2:1-3)

   b. The Sabbath year - Leviticus 25:4-5 *Note below God's punishment of Israel for disobeying this commandment to "rest the land." (after the events of 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 Jewish rabbis taught that God would take from a man's life one day for every Sabbath he did not honor and keep as holy.)

"He carried into exile to Babylon the remnant, who escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah." 2 Chronicles 36:20-21 NIV

   c. The feast of Jubilee - Leviticus 25:8-55

"Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."
Colossians 2:16-17 NIV

Christ in the 7 Key Feasts of Israel (Leviticus 23)

The first 3 of these feasts were corporately called "Passover"

1. Passover (March/April) - deliverance from bondage (Jesus is our perfect lamb who delivers us from the bondage of sin)

2. Unleavened Bread (March/April) - thanking God for giving us bread out of the earth (Jesus was buried "planted" on this day)

3. Firstfiruits (March/April) - faith promise (Jesus raises from the dead and becomes the "first fruits from the dead")

4. Pentecost (May/June - 50 days after Passover) - Leviticus 23 - The day the Jews celebrated Moses coming down from Mount Sinai with the 10 Commandments, but because of the Israelite's idolatry with the Golden calf, about 3,000 were struck dead (Exodus 32:28). On the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection about 3,000 were saved (Acts 2:41).

5. Trumpets (September/October - Rosh Hashanah) - The Feast of Trumpets - Jesus will return and gather His chosen ones (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

6. Atonement (September/October - Yom Kippur) - God will Judge (2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

7. Tabernacles (September/October - Sukkot) - Living in Heaven - Jesus may have been born on Sukkot (Sukkot means "God tabernacled among us." Revelation 21)

VIP Time related differences in the culture of Jesus.

(why it is sometimes difficult to reconcile times and dates in New Testament accounts)

a. Jews used a *lunar calendar* rather than our current solar calendar. Consequently they lose approximately 11 days each year. They instituted a type of "leap month" approximately every 3 years to make up for the discrepancy. A Hebrew month began in the middle of a month on our calendar today.

b. In keeping with Genesis 1:5 *"And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."* KJV The Jewish day begins at dusk. Thus, if tonight at dusk begins our Sunday evening, a Jew of Jesus' day would have consider it Monday evening.

c. Jews consider that any part of a day is counted as a full day. They also consider a person who is age 32 to be 30 until he turns 40.

d. The original Jewish lunar calendar was lost with the destruction of Solomon's Temple; the Jews endeavored to reconstruct it years later.

e. Jews, being Eastern in their thought, are not as concerned about chronology as are we Western thinkers.

A Frame Work of Key dates in the OT History of Israel:

1. Abraham born 2166 BC 2. the Exodus rom Egypt 1446 BC 3. David becomes King 1050 BC
4. Solomon's Temple completed 959 BC 5. Judah fells to Babylon and Temple is destroyed 586 BC
6. New Temple completed in Jerusalem 515 BC 7. Malachi becomes a prophet 430 BC

WHAT THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES ABOUT ANGELS

(Passages from the NIV)

"Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life!" 1 Corinthians 6:3

"What, then, was the propose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator." Galatians3:19

"and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels." 2 Thessalonians 1:7

"So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs." Hebrews 1:4

"And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, 'Let all God's angels worship him.'" Hebrews 1:6

"In speaking of the angels he says, 'He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire.'" Hebrews 1:7

"To which of the angels did God ever say, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet'?" Hebrews 1:13

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?" Hebrews 1:14

"For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment," Hebrews 2:2

"It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking." Hebrews 2:5

"You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor." Hebrews 2:7

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone." Hebrews 2:9

"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly," Hebrews 12:22

"Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

1. What about the salvation of those who have never heard?
2. Do I have to go to church?
3. Is there really a hell?
4. Can I know that I am going to Heaven?
5. Do I have to give up drinking?
6. Isn't the Bible full of errors and contradictions?
7. Why does a loving God allow evil and suffering?
8. Won't we be judged at the end by the quality of our lives?
9. Isn't Christianity a crutch for weak people?
10. How can Jesus be who He said He was, when His followers are such hypocrites?
11. Can you prove that Jesus raised from the dead?
12. Are the Bible documents reliable?
13. How can you believe in something you can't see?
14. Why are there so many different churches?
15. Does Christianity differ from other religions?
16. What is Grace?
17. How can an intelligent person believe in miracles?
18. As a follower of Christ, do I have to publicly witness to my faith?
19. How can one follow a God if they fear Him?
20. How can we be certain the Bible is God's Word?

21. How did the devil/satan really fall?
22. Does everyone have at least one Spiritual Gift?
23. Can I loose my salvation?
24. How does one really know if they are saved?
25. What about those people who 'talk in tongues'?
26. Am I still at war with satan and his demons?
27. Don't some Christians teach that you have to have good works?
28. The story of creation – really – how possible is it?
29. What if someone has hurt you so bad that you cannot forgive them?
30. Can't I be a follower of Jesus and not tell anyone?
31. Why is the divorce rate so high, even among Christians?
32. Why does God have so many different names and what do they mean?
33. What is the real purpose of baptism?
34. Were there ever more disciples than the original 12?
35. Why is the 'Way I Think' so important?
36. Who exactly is the Holy Spirit? And what does He do?
37. How do I really know what God wants me to do?

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handle the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15 NIV

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their sander." 1 Peter 3:15-16 NIV

MAP OF ISRAEL



WHAT WAS GOD UP TO?

If you go anywhere in the Bible and ask, "What was God up to? " the answer will always be:

1. He was redeeming a people.

2. He was reconciling a people to Himself.

3. He was radiating His character through that people.

LESSONS FOR LIFE

A Few Things To Keep Your Eye On

January 8 & 9, 2005
Stan Simmons

1. I NEED TO KEEP AN EYE ON MY ATTITUDE.

- Develop your sense of humor
- Deal with anger constructively
- Face your fears and move forward with courage
- Don't give in to discouragement
- Live with an attitude of gratitude
- Focus on others
- Create small pleasures

2. I NEED TO KEEP MY EYE ON ENCOURAGING OTHERS.

3. I NEED TO KEEP AN EYE ON HOW GOD CREATED ME.

- When you have major output, increase input
- Gauge #1 - Keep in shape physically
- Gauge #2 - Good devotional life
- Gauge #3 - Get enough rest
- Gauge #4 - Recreation
- Gauge #5 - Eat well
- Gauge #6 - Drink lots of water
- Gauge #7 - Function in your gifts
- Gauge #8 - Honor the Sabbath

4. I NEED TO KEEP AN EYE ON MY RELATIONSHIPS.

Some suggestions for husbands and wives:

- Spend time together daily
- Have dinner together at the table
- Spend time together on your day off
- Sit down together and make a list of things you enjoy doing together
- Write a letter to each other once a year communicating your love and admiration

My kids – sit down and make a list of things we can do together.

My grandkids – sit down and make a list of things we can do together.

FRIENDSHIPS:

- Who would call me their best friend?
- Who do I have an accountability relationship with?
- Who would I call if I m in trouble?
- Who am I mentoring?
- Who is mentoring me?

5. I NEED TO KEEP MY EYE ON PACING MYSELF.

- Keep this outline
- Talk it over with people who will be honest with you
- Make the appropriate lifestyle adjustments

WHEELS OFF

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"
2 Corinthians 5:17

Generally the "wheels" in your life come off for one of three reasons. Either:

1. You have never made Jesus Christ the Lord "boss" of your life and are dead in your sins. God wants desperately to save you and has allowed difficult circumstances to enter your life to "get your attention."

2. You have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ but are ignorant of His Word, the Bible, and so continually make bad decisions.

3. You have a relationship with God and know His commands but are in disobedience and are consequently miserable.

The only thing in life that matters is *obeying* God;
***obeying* God is *always* in our best interest.**

WHY JESUS COMMANDED US TO "MAKE DISCIPLES"

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 NLT

Example #1: Jane at age 34 introduces two friends to Christ and devotes her life to them. She diligently teaches them Jesus' commandments and models His character to them through her own behavior. She prays for her students fervently. At the end of three years they are both able to introduce two new friends to our Lord and begin this powerful process. Jane does the same. This geometric progression continues until Jane joins the Lord in Heaven at age 70. How many people will she have influenced significantly for Christ at the time of her death?

1. Number of People Discipled Per Session (Number of Years Total) = Total Number Discipled
(Number of Years per Session)

2. 2 people, per session, 36 years total, 3 years per session

3. 2 raised to the 12th power (or on an HP12 C calculator - 2 enter 12 yx)

= **4096**

Example #2: Imagine the same scenario above except John begins at age 26 and serves the Lord until his death at age 80. He is blessed to disciple 4 at a time, but it takes 6 years before they are able to disciple others. How many souls would he influence?

= **262,144**

(*if one of the original 4 fails to become a disciple maker, this number is reduced by 65,536 souls)

Example #3: Bill, age 54, lives to be 78. Because he is retired, he is able to spend time with 6 friends and co-labor with God in discipling them so that in 3 years they are able to do the same for 6 friends each. How many people will Bill influence in his "winter" years if he continues this process?

= **1,679,616**

"You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others."
2 Timothy 2:2 NLT

CHOOSING WHOM YOU WILL SERVE AND INSTRUCT

(As Christ ones we need to be available to serve those who ask our help; but ultimately only a few truly want it!)

"Jesus told him, 'If you want to be perfect, go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.' But when the young man heard this, he went sadly away because he had many possessions." Matthew 19:21-22 NLT

1. It appears that some people are convinced that they **<u>can't</u>** obey the basic teachings of Jesus.

   The Reasons: "unresolved" demonic oppression, mental illness, chemical imbalances, etc.

   Our Remediation: refer them to a professional and invite them to one of our "Mind of Christ" groups.

2. A much larger group of people simply **<u>won't</u>** obey the commandments of our Lord.

   The Reasons: persecution; the worries of the world; the deceitfulness of riches; the desire for other things (Mark 4:14-20).

   Our Remediation: refer them to a professional and invite them to one of our "Mind of Christ" groups.

3. And a small but important group of people will work very hard to cooperate with Christ in obeying the laws of His Kingdom.

Our Plan: these FAT people become our focus. Pray fervently to know God's desire for your involvement with these disciples. Get them in a good church, a good small group under your leadership if possible, and meet with them occasionally "one on one" to addressed specific needs. Give them homework to complete and steadily raise the spiritual bar. Make sure to live life with them whenever possible. Remember "modeling" is our most effective method of education. I am always encouraged when I see three qualities developing: 1) a passion for God's Word, 2) a hatred of their own sin 3) an ability to accept criticism and use it to instigate positive change in their life.

CHRISTIAN EVENTS TIME LINE

(Dates listed are approximates)

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

The Old Kingdom Pyramids built - 2700-2200 BC (BC = before Christ's birth)
Abram (Abraham) born - 2166 BC
Ishmael born - 2080 BC
Isaac born - 2066 BC
Jacob (Israel) born - 2005 BC
Joseph born - 1914 BC
Jacob and his family migrate to Egypt - 1876 BC
Hammurabi reigns in Babylon - 1792-1750 BC
Moses born - 1526 BC
The first Passover - 1446 BC
The era of the Judges begins - 1350 BC
The Iron Age begins - 1200 BC
The Trojan War begins - 1190 BC
King Saul reigns - 1051- 1011 BC
King David reigns - 1011-971 BC
King Solomon reigns - 971- 931 BC
Solomon's Temple completed 960 BC
Israel is divided into Northern (Israel) and Southern (Judah) Kingdoms - 931 BC
Jeroboam reigns in the North - 931-910 BC
Rehoboam reigns in the South - 931-913 BC
Elijah prophesies - 870-845 BC
Elisha prophesies - 845-800 BC
Israel falls to the Assyrians - 722 BC
First recorded Olympic Games - 776
Rome founded - 753 BC
Nineveh, capital of Assyria, falls to the Babylonicans and Medes - 612 BC
The first exile of the Jews to Babylon - 605 BC
Judah falls to Babylon and Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed - 586 BC
Babylon falls to Persia - 539 BC
Cyrus, King of Persia, allows the Jews to return to their land - 538 BC
The Roman Republic established - 509 BC
Buddha born in India - 550 BC
Confucius born in China - 551 BC
The Rebuilding of the Temple is completed - 516 BC
Xerxes I (Ahasuerus) makes Esther queen - 478 BC
Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament is written - 433 BC
Alexander the Great conquers Palestine (Israel) - 332 BC
The Septuagint is completed (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) - 255 BC
The Dead Sea Scrolls are written by the Essenes - 220 BC-100 AD
The Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV, desecrates the temple 167 BC
Pompey conquers Jerusalem for Rome - 63 BC
Julius Caesar is assassinated - 44 BC
Hillel and Shammai are the leading rabbis in Israel - 30 BC-10AD
Herod the Great reigns as king of Judea 37-4 BC
This Herod begins refurbishing the Temple - 20 BC

*Note - AD is the abbreviation for (***Anno Domini*** - the day of our Lord) - it identifies years *after the birth* of Christ

John the Baptist born - 5 BC
Jesus, the Christ, born - 4 BC
Jesus amazes the teachers in the temple - AD 8
Jesus is baptized and begins His public ministry - AD 30
Jesus is crucified and is resurrected - AD 33
Stephen, the deacon, is martyred - AD 35
Paul is converted - AD 35
The Roman centurion, Cornelius, is won to Christ by Peter - AD 41
The Apostle James is martyred - AD 42
The New Testament books are written - AD 45-96
The Jerusalem council recognizes Paul's work with the gentiles - AD 50
Nero reigns - AD 54-68
James, the half brother of Jesus, is martyred - AD 62
The great fire in Rome is blamed on the Christians - AD 64
Paul and Peter are martyred in Rome - AD 64-68
The Jewish revolt begins - AD 66
Qumram destroyed by the Romans - AD 68
The Romans under General Titus destroy Jerusalem and the Temple - AD 70
The Coliseum in Rome is built and Christians are thrown to the beasts - AD 71-81
Masada falls to the Romans - AD 73
Domitian reigns and demands the title "Lord and God" - AD 81-96
Gnostic heresies rise within the Church - AD 90
The book of Revelations is written - AD 96
The Apostle John dies of natural causes - AD 100
The 2nd Jewish revolt is crushed. Most of the population dies or flees - AD 132-135
Tertullian writes "There is no nation indeed which is not Christian." - AD 197
First church buildings erected. (Previously Christians met in homes.) - AD 261
Constantine issues the Edict of Milan to end the persecution of Christians - AD 313
The Council of Nicaea condemns numerous heresies - AD 325
Constantine is baptized a few days before his death - AD 337
The Canon of the New Testament recognized by the Council of Carthage - AD 396
Jerome finishes translating the Latin Vulgate Bible - AD 404
Augustine is bishop of Hippo - AD 395-430
The monk, Dionysius Exiguus, dates history by the birth of Christ - AD 529
Muhammad declares himself to be Prophet of God - AD 610
The first Anglo/Saxon translations of the Bible are completed - AD 676-709
The Dome of the Rock is built on the Temple Mount - AD 688-691
The Great Schism occurs between the Western and Eastern churches - AD 1054
Soldiers of the First Crusade murder thousands of Jews and Muslims - AD 1097-1099
The Second Crusade against the Muslims fails - AD 1146
The Third Crusade wins access to Jerusalem for Christian pilgrims - AD 1189-1192
The Fourth (Children's) Crusade ends in disaster - AD 1212
The Firth Crusade to defeat Egypt fails - AD 1217
The Bubonic plague kills 33% of the people in Europe - AD 1348-1351
John Wycliffe translates the entire Bible from Latin into English - AD 1382
The Renaissance begins - AD 1450
Johann Gutenberg chooses the Latin Vulgate Bible to become the first book printed using his moveable metal type - AD 1456
Martin Luther posts his 95 *Theses* - AD 1517
William Tyndale translates the NT from Greek into English - AD 1525

NEW TESTAMENT PEOPLE GROUPS

"Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air."
1 Corinthians 9:25-26 NIV

Jewish Groups

(a Jew is a person who can trace his ancestry to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob)

1. Pharisees (Matthew 5:20; Luke 6:2) – a strict religious group with its roots in the Hasidim who advocated obedience to the most minute portions of the Jewish law and the traditions (the oral commentary of the Jewish sages.) They were very influential in the synagogues. They respected the entire Old Testament (Ta'nach), believed in the resurrection of the dead, and were committed to obeying God's will. Their teaching was more ethical than theological. But, they rejected Jesus' claim to be Messiah because he did not follow all their traditions, and He associated with notoriously wicked people.

2. Sadducees (Matthew 3:7; Mark 12:18) – a wealthy, upper class Jewish priestly party. They emphasized the authority of the first 5 books of the Old Testament (the Torah – meaning "guide.") By the time of Christ they had become quite secular and materialistic. They profited from business in the Temple and saw Jesus as a threat to their wealth. They denied the resurrection of the dead and the existence of angels and demons. They denied the authority of the oral tradition and interpreted Mosaic law more literally than did the Pharisees. They held the majority of the 72 seats on the Jewish ruling council called the Sanhedrin.

3. Zealots (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:14) – a fiercely dedicated group of Jewish patriots determined to end Roman rule in Israel. They believed that the Messiah must be a political leader who deliver Israel from Roman occupation.

4. Herodians (Matthew 22:16; Mark 3:6) – a Jewish political party of King Herod's supporters. They feared that Jesus was causing political instability and hurting their chances to regain some of their lost power from Rome.

5. Essenes (Matthew 5:43; John12:36) – a Jewish monastic group who separated from the Pharisees. They followed a strict observance of the purity laws of the Torah, owned property communally, and emphasized justice, honesty, and commitment. They avoid marriage for reasons of purity. They are not named in the Scripture, but many of their beliefs are addressed by John the Baptist and Jesus. They wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls which were found in the caves at Qumran in 1948.

Gentile Groups

(a gentile is any non-Jew)

1. Roman Citizens – Roman citizenship is of special interest to the Bible student because of the apostle Paul's relation to it. It was one of his qualifications as the apostle to the Gentiles. Luke shows him in Acts as a Roman citizen, who, though a Jew and Christian receives, for the most part, justice and courtesy from the Roman officials, and more than once successfully claims its privileges. He himself declares that he was a citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21:39). He was not only born in that city but had a citizen's rights in it. But this citizenship in Tarsus did not of itself confer upon Paul the higher dignity of Roman citizenship. Had it done so, Claudius Lysias would not have ordered him to be scourged, as he did, after having learned that he was a citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21:39; compare 22:25). So, over and above this Tarsian citizenship, was the Roman one, which availed for him not in one city only, but throughout the Roman world and secured for him everywhere certain great immunities and rights. Precisely what all of these were we are not certain, but we know that, by the Valerian and Porcian laws, exemption from shameful punishments, such as scourging with rods or whips, and especially crucifixion, was secured to every Roman citizen; also the right of appeal to the emperor with certain limitations. This sanctity of person had become almost a part of their religion, so that any violation was esteemed a sacrilege. Cicero's oration against Verres indicates the almost fanatical extreme to which

this feeling had been carried. Yet Paul had been thrice beaten with rods, and five times received from the Jews forty stripes save one (2 Corinthians 11:24-25). Perhaps it was as at Philippi before he made known his citizenship (Acts 16:22-23), or the Jews had the right to whip those who came before their own tribunals. Roman citizenship included also the right of appeal to the emperor in all cases, after sentence had been passed, and no needless impediment must be interposed against a trial. Furthermore, the citizen had the right to be sent to Rome for trial before the emperor himself, when charged with capital offences (Acts 16:37; 22:25-29; 25:11). How then had Paul, a Jew, acquired this valued dignity? He himself tells us. In contrast to the parvenu citizenship of the chief captain, who seems to have thought that Paul also must have purchased it, though apparently too poor, Paul quietly, says, "But I was free born" (Acts 22:28). Thus, either Paul's father or some other ancestor had acquired the right and had transmitted it to the son.

2. Greeks - natives of Greece or people of Greek descent. In the New Testament, Greek is sometimes a general term for all who are not Jews. Historically, the Greeks descended from four separate groups-the Acheans, Ionians, Aetolians, and Dorians-which immigrated into Greece and replaced the civilization that previously existed. Each group settled in different regions of Greece. Because these peoples did not mix very well, Greece developed into a group of city-states instead of a nation. They fought among one another for superiority, and even though they conquered isolated areas of the Mediterranean coastland, they were unable to establish a unified empire. Much later, Philip of Macedon conquered Greece, and his son, Alexander the Great, extended Greek culture throughout most of the Mediterranean world. When Alexander died, his generals continued this policy of forcing Greek culture upon the people of his empire. The way of life they enforced is known as "Hellenism."

3. Barbarians - a person who is different from the dominant class or group. Originally, this term (barbaros) had no negative connotation. The Greeks used it to describe anyone who did not speak the Greek language. Later, when Rome conquered Greece and absorbed its culture, the word barbarian signified those whose lives were not ordered by Greco-Roman culture. When the apostle Paul used the phrase "Greeks and barbarians" (Romans 1:14), he was speaking of all mankind. The "barbarians" (Acts 28:4, KJV) who aided the apostle Paul on the island of Melita do not appear to have been uncivilized. In this instance the word meant something very similar to the word foreigner. It is good to remember the apostle Paul's declaration that in Christ all human distinctions disappear (Galatians 3:26-29).

4. Samaritans (Matthew 10:5; John 4:9) - Sargon replaced the deported Israelites with foreign colonists (2 Kings 17:24). These newcomers intermarried among the Israelites who remained in Samaria. Later their numbers were increased when Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal (the biblical Osnapper; Ezra 4:10) sent more Assyrian colonists to the district of Samaria. These people took the name Samaritans from the territory and attempted to settle the land. However, "they did not fear the Lord, and the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them" (2 Kings 17:25). In despair they sent to Assyria for "one of the priests" who would "teach them the rituals of the God of the land" (2 Kings 17:27). Thereafter the Samaritans worshiped the God of Israel. But they also continued their idolatry, worshiping the pagan gods imported from foreign lands (2 Kings 17:29). So the Samaritans were a "mixed race" contaminated by foreign blood and false worship. The Jewish historian Josephus indicates that the Samaritans were also opportunists. When the Jews enjoyed prosperity, the Samaritans were quick to acknowledge their blood relationship. But when the Jews suffered hard times, the Samaritans disowned any such kinship, declaring that they were descendants of Assyrian immigrants.

Christian Groups

1. Jewish Christians (Messianic Jews) (Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4) - A New Testament group that traces its ancestry back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob but who embrace Jesus as the Messiah. Thousands of Jews responded to the Gospel in the early years of the Christian faith.

2. Gentile Christians - A group of Christ followers who have no Jewish roots. Cornelius and his family may have been the first Gentile converts to faith in Christ (Acts 10:30-48).

3. Judaizers - (the party of the Pharisees; the party of the Circumcision) (Acts 15:5) - Some Pharisees became Christians and brought their Judaic beliefs with them. They believed that Gentiles must first become converts to Judaism and be circumcised, and then they would be eligible to be saved by faith.

Important New Testament Titles

a. Teachers of the Law or Scribes (Matthew 7:29; Mark 2:6) – a group of professional interpreters of the law–who especially emphasize the traditions (this oral commentary on the Law was eventually recorded by Rabbi Judah haNasi in the Talmud around 200 AD.) Many of these teachers were Pharisees. When under Greek influence the Jewish priests of Jesus day, at least those of the higher strata, often applied themselves to pagan culture and more or less neglected the law, the scribes appeared as the zealous guardians of the law. From this time on they were the teachers of the people, over whose life they bore complete sway. In NT times the scribes formed a finely compacted class, holding undisputed supremacy over the people. Everywhere they appear as the mouthpiece and representative of the people; the scribe pushes to the front, the crowd respectfully giving way and eagerly hanging on his utterances as those of a recognized authority. The great respect paid them is expressed by the title of honor bestowed upon them, "my master" (Hebrew rabbi; Greek hrabbi, Matthew 23:7; etc.). From this respectful address the title rabbi was gradually formed; but its use cannot be proved before the time of Christ.

b. Rabbis - A respectful term applied by the Jews to their teachers and spiritual instructors (Matthew 23:7-8; John 1:38; 3:26; 6:25). The terms rabbi and rabboni both mean simply "master" (John 1:38; 20:16). The use of the title rabbi cannot be substantiated before the time of Christ. Later Jewish schools had three grades of honor: 1) rab, "master," the lowest; 2) rabbi, "my master," the second; and 3) rabboni, "my lord, my master," the most elevated.

c. Elders - members of the Sanhedrin, consisting of the chief priests, "elders" and scribes, learned in Jewish law, e. g., Matthew 16:21; 26:47; Synagogue leaders were also considered elders.

d. Chief Priests - By the New Testament period, the position of priests in the nation of Israel had changed considerably. The Temple functions were taken over by the "chief priests." Rank-and-file priests were also overshadowed by the SCRIBES and PHARISEES, two special groups that arose to present the Law and interpret its meaning for the people. But, in spite of the diminished role of priests, Jesus respected the office and called upon the priests to witness His healing of lepers in keeping with the Law of Moses (Mark 1:44; Luke 17:12-14). But the priests themselves were some of the most zealous opponents of Jesus. As leaders of the SANHEDRIN, the Jewish high court, they bore much of the responsibility for His crucifixion. They also led the opposition to the apostles and the early church.

e. Synagogue Rulers - The Ruler of the Synagogue (Greek `archisunagogos) had the care of external order in public worship and the supervision of the concerns of the synagogue in general. This officer was found in the entire sphere of Judaism, not only in Palestine, but also in Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and the Roman Empire in general. The Hebrew title ro'sh hakkeneset ("the minister of the synagogue") was undoubtedly synonymous with the Greek term. This office differed from that of an elder of the congregation, although the same person could fill the offices of both. The ruler of the synagogue was so called not as head of the community but as conductor of their assembly for public worship. Among his functions was that of appointing who should read the Scriptures and the prayer, of summoning fit persons to preach, of seeing that nothing improper took place in the synagogue (Luke 13:14); and of taking charge of the synagogue building. Although it was customary to have but one ruler for each synagogue, sometimes more are mentioned (Acts 13:15.)

f. Apostles - A special messenger of Jesus Christ; a person to whom Jesus delegated authority for certain tasks. The word apostle is used of those twelve disciples whom Jesus sent out, two by two, during His ministry in Galilee to expand His own ministry of preaching and healing. It was on that occasion, evidently, that they were first called "apostles" (Mark 3:14; 6:30). These same disciples, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, were recommissioned by Jesus after His resurrection to be His witnesses throughout the world (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8). After Jesus' ASCENSION, the apostles brought their number to twelve by choosing Matthias (Acts 1:23-26). The word apostle is sometimes used in the New Testament in a general sense of "messenger." For instance, when delegates of Christian communities were charged with conveying those churches' contributions to a charitable fund, they were described by Paul as "messengers [apostles] of the churches" (2 Corinthians 8:23). Jesus also used the word this way when He quoted the proverb, "A servant is not greater than his master, nor he who is sent [literally, "an apostle"] greater than he who sent him" (John 13:16). Jesus Himself is called "the Apostle... of our confession" (Hebrews 3:1), a reference to His function as God's special Messenger to the world.

g. Disciples - This term occurs in the OT as the rendering of Hebrew limmud, one "instructed," Isaiah 8:16; 50:4; rendered "taught" in 54:13. In the NT it is the rendering of the Greek mathetes, "learner," and occurs frequently. The meaning applies to one who professes to have learned certain principles from another and maintains them on that other's authority. It is applied principally to the followers of Jesus (Matthew 5:1; 8:21; etc.); sometimes to those of John the Baptist (9:14) and of the Pharisees (22:16). It is used in a special manner to indicate the twelve (10:1; 11:1; 20:17).