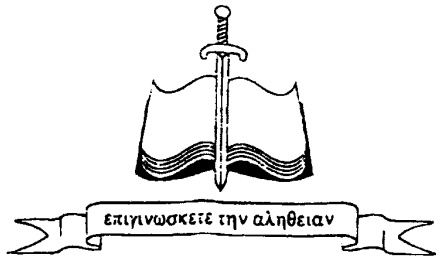


**EVANGELICAL BIBLE COLLEGE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**



**COURSE NOTES – THEOLOGY 112**

# **DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY.**

**by**

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**[BOOK 3 OF 13]**

**REVISED 4 July 2020**

## **WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?**

Professor Simon Greenleaf was one of the most eminent lawyers of all time. His "Laws of Evidence" for many years were accepted by all States in the United States as the standard methodology for evaluating cases. He was teaching law at a university in the United States when one of his students asked Professor Greenleaf if he would apply his "Laws of Evidence" to evaluate an historical figure. When Greenleaf agreed to the project he asked the student who was to be the subject of the review. The student replied that the person to be examined would be Jesus Christ. Professor Greenleaf agreed to undertake the examination of Jesus Christ and as a result, when he had finished the review, Simon Greenleaf personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Professor Greenleaf then sent an open letter to all jurists in the United States jurists saying in part "I personally have investigated one called Jesus Christ. I have found the evidence concerning him to be historically accurate. I have also discovered that Jesus Christ is more than a human being, he is either God or nothing and having examined the evidence it is impossible to conclude other than he is God. Having concluded that he is God I have accepted him as my personal Saviour. I urge all members of the legal profession to use the "Laws of Evidence" to investigate the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and if you find that he is wrong expose him as a faker but if not consider him as your Saviour and Lord"

## **HOW CAN I BE SAVED?**

### **Salvation is available for all members of the human race.**

Salvation is the most important undertaking in all of God's universe. The salvation of sinners is never on the basis of God's merely passing over or closing His eyes to sin. God saves sinners on a completely righteous basis consistent with the divine holiness of His character. This is called grace. It relies on God so man cannot work for salvation neither can he deserve it. We need to realise that the creation of this vast unmeasured universe was far less an undertaking than the working out of God's plan to save sinners.

However the acceptance of God's salvation by the sinner is the most simple thing in all of life. One need not be rich, nor wise nor educated. Age is no barrier nor the colour of one's skin. The reception of the enormous benefits of God's redemption is based upon the simplest of terms so that there is no one in all this wide universe who need be turned away.

### **How do I become a Christian?**

There is but one simple step divided into three parts. First of all I have to recognise that I am a sinner (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4; John 5:24).

Secondly, realising that if I want a relationship with Almighty God who is perfect, and recognising that I am not perfect, I need to look to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour (1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16).

Thirdly, by the exercise of my own free will I personally receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour, believing that He died personally for me and that He is what He claims to be in an individual, personal and living way (John 1:12; 3:36; Acts 16:31; 4:12).

### **The results of Salvation**

The results of this are unbelievably wonderful:

My sins are taken away (John 1:29),

I possess eternal life now (1 John 5:11,12),

I become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17),

The Holy Spirit takes up His residence in my life (1 Corinthians 6:19),

And I will never perish (John 10:28-30).

This truthfully is life's greatest transaction. This is the goal of all people; this is the ultimate of our existence. We invite and exhort any reader who has not become a Christian by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to follow these simple instructions and be born again eternally into God's family (Matthew 11:28; John 1:12; Acts 4:12; 16:31).

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**SECTION H – HAMARTIOLOGY**

**LESSON 39 - THE NATURE OF SIN**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
39	The Nature of Sin	Romans 3:23	Sin The Barrier

**INTRODUCTION**

**Romans 3:23** reminds us that we are as believers still sinners, and reminds us of our need. We have a Saviour as believers, and we need to be in moment by moment contact/fellowship with the Saviour. This passage says that, "All have sinned", and all have fallen short of the glory or essence of God. Every person is a sinner, both by action and nature. Let us remember some key points.

1. **1 John 1:1-10** reminds you that you will meet people who think that they have not sinned. If you have such a person in your congregation you have a problem in the church, for they are calling God a liar.
2. We have all sinned and therefore there is a universal requirement for a Saviour. Sin should automatically lead you towards the subject of salvation. When you are preaching on the subject of sin you should also couple this with preaching on salvation, or sanctification, or preferably both.
3. We have a good biblical starting point for the definition of sin. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin is all that is in our character which does not measure up to His glorious/holy character.

**MISCONCEPTIONS OF SIN**

1. Sin is a false conception of reality, based on the fact that there is a false concept of what is truly good and bad in the world. In this case it is considered that there are no absolutes, there is no right or wrong. The liberal theologian will say that a person is not sinful, that he/she just has "problems", or different standards to us. They rationalize it away as your environment, your parents and the like. This is rejected by scriptural revelation.
2. It is an inherent problem being the opposite of what God is and is related to the reality of the nature of the world. This is called dualism, with everything in the spiritual world being pure and wonderful whilst everything in the physical is bad and sinful. The body is evil and the spirit is pure in its nature. This is not true biblically; sin goes beyond the division between physical and spiritual. This false view is behind much eastern religion with it's yin and yang, in yoga, Indian origin religions, as well as some western monasticism.

In the Middle Ages monks would beat themselves and starve themselves into submission; by dominating their body they believed they tamed and controlled the OSN of the soul. The Bible however says the sin is in your soul as well as in your body. You cannot fight sin physically only; you must do it spiritually as well. Vegetarianism also, for other than medical reason, is another sign of attempting to fight sin and evil in the body, and like all works of the flesh it is foolish/wrong.

3. Sin is just selfishness. This is also one of the views that the liberals have grasped as an explanation of sin. Sin is truly selfish but it is not the definition that the Bible gives; it is an inadequate view.

We must always begin and end with God's Word, always go by what the Lord has said through the prophets.

**BIBLICAL RESEARCH**

How to research a subject systematically so that you can teach it.

**Firstly**, get a definition that makes sense in your culture/language and make it a Biblical one. Use this as a starting definition on a piece of paper, and then bring in others, from encyclopaedias and dictionaries, so that it can be enlarged and modified as necessary.

**Secondly**, look at the false views of the subject so that you know what the enemy is saying about the subject so that you do not fall unwittingly into the enemy's camp. Much of the false teaching that gets into churches disguises it's false concepts by using the same phraseology as the believers are using. Then the enemy can infiltrate and use that phraseology, and so believers who are not careful are led astray, because the words sound familiar

Every cult does this. They talk about things which are **almost** correct but there is a big chasm in between what they are appearing to say, and what they are really saying, and then the truth.

**Thirdly**, having given it definition, avoid and refute the enemy's views and their phraseology. Do not use their phrases otherwise people get confused. Explain what they say and what they actually mean so God's people see it.

**Fourthly**, do a complete word study. You think of all the words that may be relevant to the subject. This may lead to many verses that are important in your study. In the case of sin – other words like, transgression, evil, trespass, together with sin, are important. Having got your word list, do word studies of them as well, using Bible dictionaries and word study texts. Look up your concordance, and read every verse that has those words in it and see what the text says. Also read all entries that are relevant in word study books.

Tie everything together systematically in the form of the clear points that emerge from the biblical texts. You then have the major points indicating what the Bible is saying about these things. Once you have done that you have a doctrine similar to what is found in the Bible Topic Book. You cannot afford to cut corners here, for the Lord's people need systematic understanding of what the Bible teaches on topics, or their lives will not be ordered. Clarity of teaching through the Word leads to precision of application of the Word. In the present stage of the "Angelic Conflict" there is no room for misunderstanding or ignorance. To be ignorant is to be a target and a casualty.

## **WORD STUDY**

The Biblical concept of sin comes from a word study on words involving sin.

### **OLD TESTAMENT**

1. Chata - used 522 times, it has the concept of "missing the mark". By missing the mark, you by implication, hit another mark, but a wrong one. It is used for moral evil, idolatry and ceremonial sins. Exodus 20:20, Judges 20:16, Proverbs 8:36
2. Raa - used 444 times, this word has the concept of "breaking up or ruin" and is often translated "wicked". It may indicate something injurious as well as something morally wrong. - Genesis 3:5, Judges 11:27.
3. Pasha - has the general concept to "rebel against someone you should obey" although it is often translated transgression. - 1 Kings 12:19, 2 Kings 3:5, Isaiah 1:2.
4. Awon - includes both the ideas of "iniquity and guilt". It is used in connection with the suffering servant of Isaiah 53 and defiant sin in Numbers 15:30-31.
5. Shagag - this means to "wander off like a sheep or a drunkard". It means an error for which the one committing the error was responsible. Leviticus 4:2, Numbers 15:22.
6. Asham - this is found particularly in Leviticus, "guilt before God for which God holds you responsible". It designates the guilt and sin offerings and therefore can comprise both intentional and unintentional sins. Leviticus 4:13, 5:2-3.
7. Rasha - rarely used before the exile, it is used often in the Psalms and Ezekiel. It means "wicked". Psalm 9:16, Ezekiel 18:23.
8. Taah - means to "wander away" and the sin is deliberate though the enormity of it may not be realised at the time. Numbers 15:22, Isaiah 53:6, Psalm 119:21.

It is concluded from the above that -

[a] Sin takes many forms and by the different words used the Jewish believer could understand the varieties of sin involved, but see it's essential nature of wandering away from clear revelation from the Lord, and disobedience or rebellion against clear commands. It was choosing, by neglecting truth, or selecting Satan's lie to follow worldliness rather than holiness; being part of the world rather than separate unto God.

[b] Sin is that which is contrary to the norm and therefore in the ultimate disobedience to God.

[c] While disobedience involves both positive and negative ideas the emphasis is on the positive commission of wrong and not merely on the negative omission of good.

### **NEW TESTAMENT**

[a] Kaikos - is an adverb meaning "bad" is sometimes used for physical disease Mark 1:32. The adjective however indicates moral badness. Sin is disgusting not only to us but to God. Matthew 21:41, Acts 9:13, Romans 12:17, 1 Timothy 6:10.

[b] Ponerous - this is the basic term for evil and almost always indicates "moral evil" - Matthew 7:11, Romans 12:9, Hebrews 3:12. It is also used for Satan, 1 John 2:13-14, and demons who are called evil spirits, Luke 11:26, Acts 19:12.

[c] Asebes - means "godless" and appears mainly in 2 Peter and Jude. The unsaved are designated as godless. Romans 4:5. In other places it means sin. 1 Timothy 1:9.

[d] Enochos - means guilty and usually denotes that a person is "worthy of death". Sin has a death penalty attached to it. Matthew 5:21-22, James 2:10.

[e] Hamartia - is the most frequently used word for sin occurring 227 times in various forms. The concept here is "missing the mark" and in the New Testament is used in conjunction with the concept of forgiveness and salvation. Matthew 1:21, John 1:29.

[f] Adikia - reflects "unrighteousness" and is used for unsaved people Romans 1:18, of money Luke 16:9, parts of the human body, Romans 6:13, and of actions. 2 Thessalonians 2:10.

[g] Anomos - is often translated iniquity and means "lawless". Matthew 13:41, 1 Timothy 1:9. Eschatologically it refers to Antichrist, who is the "lawless (anti-God's Law) one". 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

[h] Parabates - means "transgression", which relate to the specific violations of the law. Romans 2:23, Galatians 3:19.

[i] Agnoein - relates to ignorant worship, this "willful ignorance" makes one guilty, for it is culpable, as you could have known, had you taken the demands of a holy God seriously, and so you are in need of atonement. Acts 17:23, Hebrews 9:7.

[j] Pianao - to "go astray" in a culpable sense. 1 Peter 2:25

[j] Deceived by others - Matthew 24:5-6

[jii] Deceived by yourself - 1 John 1:8

[jiii] Deceived by Satan Revelation 12:9

[k] Paraptoma - this has the idea of "falling away" and is usually deliberate. Romans 5:15-20, Galatians 6:1.

[l] Hypocrisy - to follow something that is false, to speak "from behind a mask". The most foolish deception is to try and kid God that you are holy when you are not.

### **CONCLUSIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT**

[a] There is always a clear standard against which sin is committed – it is God's standard, not our cultures.

[b] Ultimately all sin is a positive rebellion against God and a transgression of His standards.

[c] Evil may assume a variety of forms, and often is attractive, not obviously nasty.

[d] Man's responsibility is definite and clearly spelt out by God's revealed Word.

It is very important to review and refine the definition. Here is an "unauthorized" working definition by EBCWA.

"Sin is missing the mark, badness, rebellion, iniquity, going astray, wickedness, wandering, ungodliness, crime, lawlessness, transgression, ignorance and falling away. In its broadest sense it is any deviation from God's standards to which he calls all mankind after The Fall."

If you make sure that the definition of sin is adequate, then no one will go out of the church believing they have not sinned. All preaching is goal directed, and the goal of teaching about sin, is that all who hear might face their sins and deal with them before God, and live holy lives in the power of the Holy Spirit. Our goal is not self-righteousness, but true Holy Spirit filled joyful and fruitful living to the glory of the name of the Lord Jesus.

### **THREE CATEGORIES OF SINS**

There are three categories of sin; personal, the OSN, and imputed sin. We have a sin nature that we have inherited from Adam. We are born with a propensity to sin, and we all express that in specific sins from a very young age.

God has also **imputed the sin of Adam to every person**. This **may appear to be unfair**, as it means we enter the world as babies with two strikes against us, and in a hopeless place, which we then compound by specific sins. We very quickly have three strikes against us. The reason God places us in this place is **so he can also impute the perfect**

**sacrifice** of Christ for the sin of the world to everybody, so that all have the grace provided potential to be saved by belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Imputation of sin closes the door on everybody so that none can save themselves, in order that the Cross can open salvation up fully and finally for everybody.

Everybody starts the same in life, as a sinner in need of a Saviour. We are in the world with three strikes against us, with Adam's sin imputed to us, we are in a totally helpless, hopeless position. The Bible always talks about the devastating effect of sin on the person and the hopelessness of man solving his problem.

Sin is the status quo for mankind, it is the bricks in the barrier which separated us from God and it's impact is all encompassing. You cannot get away from this reality by asceticism, vegetarianism, or any other "ism". Martin Luther, as an unsaved Catholic priest before the reformation, was trying to deal with this by human works to be saved, but he found that there was still a burden on him. The only way to remove it was through the blood of Christ, not "monkery".

Satan's first strategy to deceive mankind is to give the lost a false definition of sin so that no one sees the need for a Saviour. This is still Satan's main thrust today, as in the past, trying to prove to people that they are good in themselves and do not need Christ.

However we must teach the truth, put men under conviction, paint the true reality of the darkness of sin, then give the gospel which is God's remedy. We should give the Biblical information on which a decision is to be made. Awareness of sin is important also for the believer who is going on in the Christian life.

Those living and walking closest to the Lord will be most aware of sin. As you mature you will be convicted of sin in areas that you did not recognise before. There is no spiritual growth without sensitivity to sin, and response daily to the Holy Spirit's work of conviction.

Do not let the sun go down on a conviction of sin in your life. The only remedy to spiritual decay through unconfessed sin in the life is systematic Holy Spirit led Bible study, and regular confession of all sin that the Holy Spirit convicts of. As you mature you spend more and more time in fellowship with the Lord, which is to live in the sphere of the fruit of the Spirit; this is what the scriptures call, "the beauty of holiness".

## **DOCTRINES**

### **SIN**

1. Sin means to fall short (like an arrow falling short of the target) of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
2. Therefore, anything which does not meet God's standard of righteousness and holiness is sin.
3. It is clear to see, then, that mankind, in his own strength, cannot achieve the righteousness of God. (Romans 3:9-10)
4. The sin of Adam
  - a) Sin entered the world with Adam. (Genesis 3:1-5, Romans 5:12)
  - b) The penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23)
    - i) spiritual death - separation from God in time (Genesis 3:8)
    - ii) physical death - separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 3:19, 5:5)
    - iii) eternal death - separation from God in the Lake of Fire Revelation 20:13-14)
  - c) The man, Adam, as head over the woman, was therefore held responsible for sin (Romans 5:12)
  - d) The penalty of sin is imputed to all people, and, apparently, passed down through the male in birth.
  - e) Because Jesus was born of a virgin, He did not inherit the sin nature from Adam.
  - f) As a sinless man, He was therefore qualified to offer Himself as a sacrifice to pay the penalty of sin (death - spiritual and physical).
  - g) Because Christ has paid the penalty for sin for us, those who trust in Him are no longer condemned (Rom 5:19, 8:1)
5. All of creation is corrupted as a result of sin (Genesis 3:16-19, Romans 8:20-22)
6. Three types of sin:-
  - a) Adam's sin is imputed to all mankind
  - b) As a result, we all inherit a sinful nature
  - c) As a result, we therefore commit personal sins
7. Sin manifests itself in three categories:
  - a) Sins of action/deed
    - i) Examples include murder, adultery, stealing
  - b) Sins of the tongue/spoken
    - i) Examples include lying, slander, gossip, blasphemy
    - ii) Out of the seven "worst" sins, three are sins of the tongue. (Proverbs 6:16-19)

- iii) Can result in the sin unto death. (Psalm 12:3)
  - iv) God protects and blesses the believer who is victimised by the sins of the tongue. (Matthew 5:11-12)
  - v) Troublemakers are always characterised by sins of the tongue. (Psalm 52:2)
  - c) Sins of the mind
  - i) Examples include pride, coveting, jealousy, bitterness, hatred, vindictiveness.
8. Recovery from sin
- a) When a believer sins his fellowship with God is disrupted. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and can no longer control your life.
  - b) Confess the known sin. (1 John 1:9, Psalm 66:18) God forgives these sins upon confession and cleanses from the unknown sins in the believer's life as well as known sins.
  - c) Examine your motivation - this involves full surrender to God. (Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 13:5)
  - d) Move on from the sin which you have confessed. Don't get tied up with guilt - this is another sin. (Philippians 3:13-14, Psalm 103:10-12)
  - e) Resume your active spiritual walk. Avoid areas where you might be tempted. (Hebrews 12:12-13)
  - f) Be reconciled to others once you have been reconciled to God. (James 5:16)
  - g) In human forgiveness we are told to forgive others even as God has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).
9. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples John 13:10
- a) The body is clean - we were eternally forgiven once and for all at the cross. (Hebrews 10:1-12).
  - b) The feet need regular washing - we must confess our sins to the Father to restore fellowship (1 John 1:9)
10. Satan constantly accuses us of our sins before God (Revelation 12:10). However, the Lord Jesus Christ is our Advocate/Lawyer in heaven (1 John 2:1). He pleads for us by saying that the penalty for that sin has been paid in full.
11. Names for sin include:-
- a) Unbelief - denial of the truth. (John 16:9, Hebrews 3:12)
  - b) Lawlessness - rejection of rules of life. (1 Timothy 1:9)
  - c) Iniquity - evil acts. (Acts 8:22, 23)
  - d) Trespass - encroachment on God's authority. (Ephesians 2:1)
  - e) Disobedience - refusal to obey. (Hebrews 2:2)
  - f) Transgression - violation of law. (Luke 15:29, Galatians 3:19)
12. The sin unto death is the physical death of a believer, due to habitual unconfessed sin or rebellion against God. (1 John 5:16, 17, 1 Corinthians 11:31, 32) Examples
- a) The Corinthian Pervert - (1 Corinthians 5)
  - b) The Corinthians who habitually came to the Lord's table in an unworthy manner. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)
  - c) Moses (Deuteronomy 32:48-52)
  - d) Achan (Joshua 7:16-26)
  - e) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
13. There is only one sin which can't be forgiven - the unpardonable sin - rejection of Jesus Christ.
- a) It is based upon rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. Genesis 6:3, John 16:7-11, Hebrews 10:29.
  - b) Synonyms for the unpardonable sin are: willful sin Hebrews 10:26-31, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit Matthew 12:31, resisting the Holy Spirit Acts 7:51, insulting the Holy Spirit Hebrews 10:29
14. The first recorded sin was that of Satan - pride (Isaiah 14:12-14)
15. God is not the author of sin or the author of temptation. It is incompatible with the nature of God for Him to create sin because of His divine character. (James 1:13).
16. Temptation comes from the world, the flesh (sin nature within man), or Satan. If he entertains the sin, man then chooses to sin - sin is therefore a result of man's own free will. (James 1:14)

**SIN: THE BARRIER BETWEEN MAN AND GOD**

**INTRODUCTION**

- 1. The Character of God:
  - a) God is sovereign, absolute righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, all powerful, all knowing everywhere, unchangeable and truth.
  - b) God is one in essence but three in personality: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three personalities have the same essence.
  - c) God the Father is the planner of man's salvation; God the Son is the executor of the plan of salvation, and God the Holy Spirit is the revealer of this plan.
- 2. God's Divine Plan:



- a) A conference was held in eternity past between God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Divine Planning) whereby it was made possible for man to have fellowship with God.
- b) God's foreknowledge recognized a barrier would exist in time and that all people would be behind this barrier. (Romans 3:23)
- c) Sin is a failure to measure up to God's perfect righteousness, a failure to possess "The perfect righteousness". Man cannot remove this barrier. God's Righteousness and Justice must be satisfied before His love can come to man.
- d) God the Father is the author of a plan whereby He decided to treat the human race on the basis of Grace (all the Father does for us). Grace is receiving a gift. It is undeserved and unmerited, and contrary to all human concepts.
- e) God the Son removed the barrier by His death on the cross. We receive Him as our personal Saviour, and perfect righteousness is credited to us. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

**AN EXPLANATION OF THE BARRIER AND ITS REMOVAL**

**1. Problem of Sin:**

- a) Sin exists in three categories: imputed sin, (all sinned when Adam sinned) inherent sin (the sinful nature) personal sin (sins committed).
- b) Man is a sinner because Adam sinned and passed down the sin nature to the human race. The penalty of sin is spiritual death (Romans 5:12, 6:23) Every member of the human race is a sinner as far as God is concerned. (Romans 3:23)
- c) In John 8:31-32 Jesus Christ addressed the Jews who believed on Him and told them to go on in truth and use what He provided. Truth sets us free from the Mosaic Law to serve the Lord and operate in grace.
- d) The unbelieving, religious Jews (v 33) said they were Abraham's seed and not in bondage. They were actually in bondage to the Roman Empire, their religious leaders, and the Mosaic Law. He told them about the bondage of sin.
- e) They are all born in the slavery of sin, for no member of the human race can free himself or other members of the human race. Jesus Christ became true humanity to liberate the human race. He was born outside the slavery of sin by the virgin birth as the God-Man. He paid the price for freedom of the human race - this is redemption.

**2. Solution to the Problem of Sin: Redemption and Atonement:**

- a) The "son abides in the house forever" (John 8:35), for Jesus Christ is "the son". He is eternal life and holy and when man believes on Him man is free and enters into union with Jesus Christ. Christianity is a relationship to Jesus Christ, not a religion.
- b) The purchase price of our redemption is His blood (1 Peter 1:18,19, Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 1:5, Hebrews 9:11-14, Galatians 3:13) , representing His death. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the whole world (past, present and future) on the cross.
- c) God is absolute righteousness and justice; the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23, Colossians 2:14). Jesus Christ cancelled the "IOU" the human race owed God. The human race owes God perfect righteousness.
- d) God is perfect righteousness and we cannot pay perfect righteousness. Jesus Christ died on the cross, paying the penalty of our sins. This is expiation (Romans 5:8)
- e) The doctrines of Redemption and Expiation are found in Psalm 22:1-6. God the Father and Holy Spirit left the Son because He was bearing our sins on the cross. (Matthew 27:46)

**3. The Problem of Physical Birth (John 3) and its Solution: Regeneration:(John 3:1-15)**

- a) Nicodemus (v 1) was a Pharisee. He was a very religious man, attending church three times a day and praying seven times a day. He was sincere and was a product of "salvation by works".
- b) He was also a ruler of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night because he was too busy during the day doing "good". (v 2)
- c) He called Jesus Rabbi or "Doctor". He admitted more than most Pharisees for he said they knew Jesus came from God, for no one could keep doing the miracles He did except God was with Him. (v 2)
- d) Jesus interrupted, knowing his problem. "Except a man be born again". Nicodemus needed to be born again. (v 3)
- e) Why is the new birth necessary? Man is born in this world with a soul (ability to understand and categorize human phenomena), a conscience (standard by which we judge right or wrong), and a sin nature (the source of all personal sins). The human spirit is unactivated. We are born physically alive and capable of having fellowship with members of the human race, but we are spiritually dead and cannot have fellowship with God (Ephesians 2:1). We need to be born again.
- f) Nicodemus' response (v 4). He cannot think in terms of spiritual things for he has no human spirit. He asked if he could be born again physically.
- g) The new birth is a spiritual birth (v 5), so Jesus Christ uses spiritual language, - water.
- i) The context determines the meaning of "water" (1) Salvation - (Isaiah 55:1, Revelation 22:17) (2) God the Holy Spirit - (John 7:37-39) (3) God's Word - (1 Peter 1:23, Ephesians 5:26, James 1:18)
- ii) Here "water" is used symbolically for God's Word. The new birth is a spiritual birth. The Kingdom of God is the kingdom of eternal relationship with God.
- h) Contrast of two births (v 6). "That which is born of the flesh is flesh (physical birth). That which is born of the Spirit is spirit (spiritual birth)." Nicodemus should not be surprised (v 7). He needed to be born again.
- i) The illustration (v 8) the wind. It can be heard but not seen. The new birth is not visible. Nicodemus still does not understand (v 9).
- j) Jesus Christ used sarcasm (v 10,11) to shock Nicodemus. He is a doctor of divinity and does not understand. The Trinity ("we") knows what they speak (all knowing). Nicodemus does not have an open mind.

k) No member of the human race (v 13) ever ascended, but Jesus Christ who came from heaven (as the God Man). As God He is everywhere, and as God and Man, Jesus Christ is on earth at the same time.

l) How to be born again (v 14,15). Jesus Christ refers to (Numbers 21:4-9) the incident of the brazen serpent which was raised on a pole. This pictures Jesus Christ hanging on the cross bearing the sins of the world. (Colossians 2:14,15)

m) The result (v 15). Whoever believes in Jesus Christ shall not perish but have eternal life. The problem of physical birth is removed by the new birth. We are born spiritually by regeneration or the new birth.

4. Problem of Human Righteousness and Its Solution: Justification and Imputation:

a) Man has no righteousness in himself as far as God's viewpoint is concerned although he may be more righteous than other members of the human race when he compares himself with them. (Isaiah 64:6)

b) God is absolute righteousness and He cannot have fellowship with us when we have human righteousness. Good deeds put us more in debt to God. (Romans 4:1-4)

c) Perfect or absolute righteousness is credited or imputed to us at the moment of salvation. (2 Corinthians 5:21) - imputation.

d) We are justified or made righteous on the basis of the absolute righteousness which God gives us.

5. Problem of the Character of God and Its Solution: Propitiation and Reconciliation.

a) Propitiation is an act of God whereby He is satisfied with the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus Christ satisfied the righteousness and justice of God.

b) Reconciliation looks at the cross from man's viewpoint. Man is reconciled to God. God is never said to be reconciled. Propitiation looks at the cross from God's viewpoint.

6. Problem of Position in Adam and Its Solution: Positional Truth:

a) At the moment of salvation we enter into union with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:38,39, 2 Corinthians 5:17). This is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13)

b) By our first birth we are "in Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:22). By the new birth we share Christ's eternal life, His righteousness, His destiny, His sonship, His priesthood. etc. Everything He is, we are-, and all He has, we have.

c) Christianity is a relationship to Jesus Christ that cannot change. The barrier between God and man has been removed by Jesus Christ on the cross.

d) The issue now is the person of Jesus Christ. He has solved the problem of sin in the human race.

**SUMMARY OF THE BARRIER AND ITS REMOVAL**

BARRIER	WORK OF CHRIST
SIN (Romans 3:23)	Redemption (1 Cor 1:29-30, Colossians 1:14) Unlimited Atonement (1 John 2:2, 2 Peter 2:1)
PENALTY (Romans 6:23)	Expiation (Colossians 2:14)
BIRTH (John 3:6)	Regeneration (John 3:3, Galatians 3:26, John 1:11-12)
CHARACTER OF GOD (Romans 3:23)	Propitiation (1 John 2:2, Romans 3:25)
RIGHTEOUSNESS OF MAN (Isaiah 64:6)	Justification (Romans 3:24, Romans 5:1) Imputation (Romans 3:22, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
LIFE (1 Corinthians 15:22)	Positional Truth (1 John 5:11-12)

**Notes**

**LESSON 40 – CHRIST'S TEACHING ON SIN**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
40	Christ's Teaching on Sin	Genesis 3:12-13 Matthew 15:10-20 John 1:29-36 John 3:13-18 Ephesians 4:30-32	World Leaven

**OLD SIN NATURE (OSN)**

Sin comes from within us all and is an important fact of human life since the Fall of Mankind. We need to come to terms Biblically with our own OSN so that we can live the Christian life without being constantly tripped up by our own OSN tendencies.

We need to examine sins in different areas, personal sins, specific sins, categories of sins, its universality, the source of sin, consequences and forgiveness, and sin in relation to eschatology, for the good news about sin, is that it's reign over us will one day be ended.

It is important to realise that one person's view of theology is not good enough. We are all fallible. We must see the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers we sit under and be biblical in our views and beliefs. Only the Lord gives perfect guidance regarding sin and its solution in our life, for He alone is our solution.

We must learn humility ourselves and realise that we are not always right also. In us all is a spring of polluted water. We cannot escape the universality of sin, nor our personal responsibility for it. **[James 1:13-15]**

Sin comes from within. It is our problem and responsibility. We cannot blame any one else. This is illustrated by Adam in **Genesis 3:12-13**. It is in this chapter, for the first time, that the buck was passed. It is not right to say that you were led astray by another person. You are responsible – take it and act on it. **1 John 1:5-10!**

In pastoral theology the most important step in mobilizing the church, is often to get people to recognise that it is not the other people in the church that are the problem, it is all of us with an OSN. It is sometimes necessary to show them that it is something within them that is holding the Ministry of the Holy Spirit up in the life of the church.

It is difficult at times, when people come to you with problems that they have caused by their own sin. **[Matthew 15:10-20]**. We must tell the truth in love to all people, but we must not explain their sin away for them, nor excuse them, for that is simply to ensure they will fail to face their own OSN and fall again into the same error later.

It is very important to realise that the Old and New Testament should not be separated, for both teach the same principles regarding sin and its solution. When you come across a doctrine in the New Testament you will almost always find it in its embryonic form in the Old Testament. It will be either in type or part. In the Garden of Eden it is seen that sin is always a matter of choice. Some people "chain sin"; they light one sin on another, like a chain smoker. They may be caught out in one sin and then lie about it and go on further into sins from there. We all make a choice, and we are responsible for that choice and what flows from it.

In Matthew 15 the disciples have gone into a house and started to eat a meal without formally and ritually washing their hands. Now they are not eating with dirty hands, it is just that they haven't completed the pharisaic ritual. Culturally this was very important as they had to go through not only hand washing but a complete ritual. But the Lord says that it is not that which goes into the mouth but that which comes out that is important. It is a man's nature that is wrong rather than what he is eating. What goes in can affect you but what comes out is of critical importance, as it shows what you truly are. Until people tackle their unique old sin nature all the ritual washing is to no avail. Jesus wants us to deal with sin in reality, not just have a ritual that makes us feel good, but isn't effective. **James 1:12-16, 22-25.**

The only people who really understood about what was going on early in the Lord's ministry were the women who followed Jesus; these were those like Mary and Martha, and they heard and understood quickly what he was teaching. The disciples didn't fully understand the things being taught. It was only after the resurrection that they understood this.

**TEACHING FROM THE LORD**

The first piece of teaching from the Lord is that sin is an affair of the heart. He uses the illustration of leaven.

When yeast is mixed into the flour you cannot get it out. It permeates the flour. Leaven is a picture of evil throughout the Scripture. We always need to pick up the symbols in Scripture.

In **Matthew 13:33** the leaven of the Pharisees is seen in the fact that they had the truth but did not recognise it. They practiced ritual but did not have reality. This is the sin of a religious person. These Pharisees are like people who are pretending that they are Christians but they have never accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.

The leaven of the Sadducees is like the false religion of the rationalists, and represents the philosophical sinner. These are people who do not think that they need a Saviour. The modern day Sadducees might be into Zen Buddhism or the martial arts. They would be in one of the cults, or liberalism.

Both these are in danger of going to hell, one religiously, one philosophically. One may be going in as a self righteous unsaved Presbyterian whilst the other falls in as a self righteous Buddhist, or rationalist.

The leaven of the Herodians that Jesus also refers to here had uncontrolled power lust; they were politicians and believed in power and money. In any church there are people who come in with false doctrine, human viewpoints, and cause problems. These things are in the church as well as outside. The Lord is blunt with a lot of these things. The Lord knows us better than we know ourselves. James says do not look in the mirror and walk away but see yourself as you really are. As we read the words of Jesus we will receive the Spirit's condemnation. **James 1:22-27**.

### **THREE SOURCES OF TEMPTATION**

There are three sources of temptation to sin; they are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

We start with Satan himself, the prince of this world. Satan's policy is to do everything against God's policy. There is a distinction between sin and evil. Sin is everything against God's holiness; evil is everything against God's policy.

The category of sin called "worldliness" is referred to as evil as well as sin, but many things in the evil category are not sinful, but they are following Satan's policy rather than God's. Satan is the angel of light and an arch deceiver. His policy is evil and he tries to out do God in goodness. Many people who are doing good are following Satan's policy. This helps the enemy of man "cover over" truths, and helps keep men in ignorance of the fact that they are sinners needing a Saviour. Satan wants people to do so many good things that they do not realise that they need a Saviour. However all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags in God's sight. **Isaiah 64:5-8**.

Satan wants to make people think that 51 per cent is a pass mark with God, whereas it is one hundred per cent. This complete pass mark is represented by the blood of Christ, and we are "awarded" it by grace, through faith. **Ephesians 2:1-10**. The world is Satan's cosmos system. This is everything that is organised in opposition to the plan of God. His desire is anything other than God's Plan being done....or for grace to be seen in all its glory.

The second category is referred to as the flesh; it is the Old Sin Nature. You are surrounded by organizations that want to get you away from God's purpose and plan, but our biggest problem is our OSN.

One of the things that are causing problems in some of the Pentecostal churches is the emphasis on the casting out of demons, which in some cases is absolutely nonsensical. If the issue is our own sin, then casting out mythical demons is going to stop us facing our own sinful nature and blaming demons. **James 1:13-15**. It gets people to ignore their own fleshly life and pass the buck. They say that it is the demon of "such and such" that means they cannot give up smoking. If there is a problem we need to face it, confess the sin, and fight temptation to it, not blame a demon. The Bible clearly states that we are led away by our own lusts; and we don't need demonic help to sin most of the time.

If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and therefore indwelt by the Holy Spirit the one thing you cannot have is the indwelling of demons. What the Lord teaches on sin is absolutely basic. We should look in the mirror and deal with it, not pass the buck. Face it and confess it sister/brother – stop blaming Satan or your friends.... **1 John 4:4, 1:5-10**.

### **THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN**

It affects everything. It affects our destiny. For the unbeliever it is the ultimate "black hole"- the Lake of Fire, but as a believer it affects your eternal rewards; what God is wanting to give you in eternity. Sin affects your will and flows along the path of least resistance, so that each time you give in to a sin, the tendency to it becomes stronger. Sin must be opposed in the power of the Holy Spirit or it grows in power within.

If you sin in one area and you do not face it there will sin in that area and in another by tomorrow. It overflows into your body. Sin will cause sickness. Many psychoses and neuroses overflow into the body and cause problems, and many of them have their roots in some sin. Depression is physical, it is a body overflow of a mental state, and it too may be caused by sin.

There is no limit to the foolishness and ignorance of young Christians, and the pastoral responsibility is to solve their problems with clear teaching of the truth. If you do not deal with sin and the guilt that may flow from it, it will drive those deceived and you mad. Everyone NOTE - If you do not deal with sin it will drive you mad! It will fester away inside you and rip you apart. It overflows to others and defiles them. The prodigal son is an example. Many people are hurt by our sin. No one gets away with anything; God's plan is that it be solved before it causes disaster in your life and other's.

King David committed adultery and accompanied that with lies and murder, and spent up to a year out of fellowship with the Lord God as a result. He finally confessed his sin, and in Psalm 51 we see his passionate appeal and assurance of forgiveness. There was forgiveness from the Lord but the terrible consequences of the sin continued through his life. The Lord will bring you through, but if the sin has hurt as many as David's sin had, it will be done under extreme pressure.

God's Word has a lot to say about sex. These are things that you need to know as a youth leader or pastor. You put the teaching of the Word across in a systematic way so that people hear what you are saying and see the sense of it. To save a person the pain that David went through as a result of his adultery is to save them great sorrow – preaching the truth is trying to stop others from suffering unnecessarily.

There are a number of categories of sin. The Bible shows that prayerlessness is sinful. Christians have a funny idea about sin. Their view is not the same as God's. God's view of sins is wide; essentially it is anything that violates His holiness. **Romans 14:23**. We are following God's rules - not ours. It does not matter what you think it only matters what God says.

Whilst sins are many, forgiveness is only obtained in one place - at the Cross. The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. There is no other name given among men whereby we might be saved. **Acts 4:12**. **John 1:29-36** is John the Baptist's testimony. **John 3:13-18** - the Lord confirming the facts. **Ephesians 4:30-32** our standards are set out after the Cross.

By application sin separates us from God. It is an insult to the holiness of God. As believers we should hate it and deal with it quickly. **1 John 1:9** - We must be aware of our responsibility towards others not to allow our sins to overflow on to them.

You are to forgive others as Christ has forgiven you. We can be a lot harder on others than we are on ourselves. The Lord says that we should be hard on ourselves. We need to sort our own life out without criticising others. If you are criticising others are you full of hatred anger and pride? Great faith cannot operate unless there is great forgiveness first; God acts and we respond. **Mark 11:22-26**.

Is there unforgiveness in my heart? What is my motivation for actions? Ninety percent of the time it may be pride, and if this is true, then there is sin in my life. Your OSN likes to listen to Satan. Satan does not like you listening to God. As the Lord teaches you regarding sin you will be more gracious, careful, and humble.

One way of seeing growth is becoming aware of wrong things in your life. You need to seek the Lord's help to deal with these areas. Growth is learning more and more about the personal sins that easily trip us up and dealing with them faster and more ruthlessly.

God wants you to sort yourself out. When you have dealt with one area there will be a another one there. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God and you need to use that on your life. We are soldiers of Christ. This is guerrilla warfare, and we are fighting against the enemy within. The Lord knows all about us so why try and fool Him.

The context for service is eternity. It is not important as to what happens to you here, but what the Lord says of you and gives to you in eternity. It is important that you are greeted with, "well done good and faithful servant". As a believer everything you do is an act of war. We must have on the armour of God, and we should be walking in the Spirit and using the sword which is the Word of God.

## DOCTRINES

### WORLD

1. World under control of Satan:
  - a) ruler of this world. (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11).
  - b) god of this world. (2 Corinthians 4:4).
  - c) he deceives the world. (Revelation 12:9).Satan is filling the world with his propaganda. (1 Timothy 4:1)
2. Jesus Christ created earth. (Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 45:18). He gave control to original mankind (Gen 1:28) but man lost it at the fall. (Genesis 3:6)
3. Sin and spiritual death are the basis of Satan's rule over this world. Therefore, God so loved the world that He gave a Saviour (John 3:16), hence Christ as a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5).
4. Therefore Christ is the saviour of the world. (John 3:17; 4:42; 1 John 4:14). The Saviour who gave His life for the world. (John 6:33); hence Christ has a title in this connection. Christ is the light of the world. (John 8:12; 9:5).
5. Therefore Christ has overcome the world.(John 16:33) so that the believer can overcome the world. (1 John 5:4,5).

6. Consequently believers in Christ must not love the world. (1 John 2:15,16) Nor must believers conform to the world (Rom 12:2). Worldliness is what you think, which may be demonstrated by what you do.
7. World control by Satan will stop at the Second Advent.. However, believers will continue forever. (1 John 2:17)
8. Also, the Word of God abides forever. (1 Peter 1:23,25) and is designed to overcome the ruler of this world. (1 John 2:14). Therefore, not conforming to the world and overcoming the world are accomplished through Bible doctrine, by which God has made foolish the wisdom of the world. (1 Corinthians 1:20; 3:19).
9. It is therefore of greatest importance that the believer's attitude is based on the Word of God. (Philippians 2:5; 2Timothy 1:7; Isaiah 26:3,4; Philippians 4:7; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5; 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 1:5,6,8).
10. Backsliding is characterised as friendship with the world. (James 4:4).

**LEAVEN**

1. Leaven in Principle: Denotes any substance used to induce fermentation as in a dough or liquid.
2. First mention in Scripture: Genesis 19:3 in connection with the angelic visitors to Lot's house prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot served them "unleavened bread".
3. First mention in Scripture relative to the Observation of a Feast: Exodus 12:8, 15-20 - Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
  - a) Leaven was undesirable and became a symbol of evil.
  - b) Unleavened bread is a type of Christ and refers to His impeccability.
4. Leaven in Matthew 13:33 represents the infiltration of religious apostasy during the Tribulation.
5. The Leaven of the Sadducees is rationalism, the sin of human viewpoint, resulting in gospel rejection. (Matthew 16:6)
6. The Leaven of the Pharisees is the Satanic counterattack against sound doctrine by religion, legalism and ritualism. (Mark 8:15, Luke 12:1)
7. The Leaven of Herod is the sin of worldliness (Romans 12:2) and power lust within a local congregation. (Mark 8:15)
8. The Leaven of the Corinthians is the sin of licentiousness and perversion. (1 Corinthians 5:6, 7, 1 Corinthians 5:1,2)
9. The Leaven of the Galatians is the sin of legalism, specifically their insistence upon circumcision for salvation. (Galatians 5:9)

**LESSON 41 – SIN – INHERITANCE AND IMPUTATION**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
41	Sin - Inheritance and Imputation	Romans 7:14-25 1 John 1:5-10 Ephesians 2:1-5, 6-10	Imputation Heirship Attitude

**PAUL AND SIN**

Paul is facing a spiritual-soulish battle in his life in **Romans chapter 7:14-25**. He is very aware of his Old Sin Nature. He is aware that he is tempted to sin within himself. Here is the apostle Paul writing one of the great letters of the New Testament. If you are a Christian you can take heart with a passage like this.

As Paul faces this battle so will we. He faced his problem Biblically and he overcame. Paul had the same problems as we have. The temptation to sin was very strong. If Paul had not reported this problem we might have taken him as a spiritual giant and there would be no hope for us, but thank God he reports his struggles and encourages us when we struggle. Note that he struggles and yet he keeps on writing Romans!

He relied on the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Feeling pressed down, depressed, doubting, worried, and chasing temptations is not a sign of evil winning the battle inside us, it is simply the sign of being human. It is what we do with the inner struggles that determine victory or defeat spiritually, and especially it is what we do with our temptations to sin. We are not able to deal with sin by the power that is within us, but by the power of the Holy Spirit in us.

Some people say that they have not sinned for years but the Bible refutes this. You can have this concept only if you have a very loose definition of sin or are seriously in denial about the reality of your inner life. In an extreme case you can become convinced (deceived) that you have not sinned. **1 John 1:1-10** indicates clearly that you have sinned.

Anything that falls short of the perfection of the Character of God is sin whether of commission or of omission. If you are sitting under the Word of God you will come under the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He will show the light into the darkened areas of your life and show those things that need to be dealt with.

Many Christians think they cannot start serving God unless they have cleaned up their life to perfection. This is false and hinders many from valuable service for the Lord. Perfection will not happen this side of eternity but great things can be done for the Lord under the control of the Holy Spirit while you are maturing and while you resist and fight sinful tendencies. The Lord does not need us to be perfect before using us, simply repentant and then obedient to him!

Paul here is very much aware of his imperfections and rests upon God's solution and provision. If however you are doing things in your own power you are on a dangerous path. 1 John 1-2 ties in with Romans 7 and 8.

In 1 John 1:5-10 John says that God is light, which means that He is totally Holy. The standard against which man is judged is the perfect righteousness of God not the relative righteousness of man. If you have relative righteousness your whole theology and life will fall apart as you progress, for only God's standard has lasting power and meaning.....

This passage also shows that it is possible to walk in the light and have His righteousness through the Spirit.

However, if you say that you have not sinned, you call God a liar, and so you are blaspheming God's name. If you do not confess your sins you are also "blaspheming the name of God". This is why so many Christians have powerless lives, for they do not deal with their sin and they are actively insulting the holiness of God.

### **THREE REASONS**

There are three reasons why you are not able to satisfy God and gain entrance to heaven by your own works.

1. You have inherited sin, you have an Old Sin Nature from your Father, and you commit personal sins. The inherited sin and Old Sin Nature comes through the male line from Adam. This is why the Virgin Birth is so important, because it meant that Jesus Christ could be born without the inherited sin of Adam or an Old Sin Nature.

The Old Sin Nature has areas of strength and areas of weakness; both of which lead to sin, evil, or both.

Man alone is in a hopeless condition with sin; with imputed, inherited and personal sins there is no chance a person can save themselves. This gives us what has been called the doctrine of the total depravity of man. We may be quite nice but against God's standard we are not righteous and we need God's help. Praise God He provides victory in the Spirit.

**Ephesians 2:1-10** shows man's hopeless position in sin and the grace and hope that is only in Jesus Christ. Man gets out of sin by getting into relationship with Christ. There is no solution to man's problem outside God's solution.

2. Adam's Sin is imputed to us all. Inherited Sin is sometimes called the Old Sin Nature. Different writers have different ways of saying the same thing. As a result of the Old Sin Nature we are born living with our understanding darkened, we are living in the dark rather than the light. The emotions are degraded and defiled and the will is enslaved.

By talking about the total depravity of man it does not mean that everybody is going to be a depraved culture-less animal. It does not mean that they will not reach great heights with literature, music or art but means that man is unable to save himself. Many times unbelievers are more trust worthy, pleasant, cultured, lovely, and even more moral than some Christians. However there is nothing in anyone that can commend him/her to a righteous God.

In **Romans 1:28** we have the Greek word "adokimos" which means "not approved". This was used to describe pottery which had been inspected, and if a pot was designated "a" (adokimos) it was second rate or rejected. The Greeks used to put old pots together with wax and try to sell them as antiques. The Romans would put the pots out in the sun and test them with heat. If there was wax involved it would melt and the pot would fall apart, and so be considered to be adokimos. We are all "adokimos" in our birth nature in Adam, but in Christ through being born again we are "approved" "d" (dokimos) in Christ.

The transmission of the Old Sin Nature is at birth. It is inherited from our human father. If you want to know what your weaknesses are look at your father. This is particularly important if your father is an alcoholic. If he is you should be vigilant with alcohol. If your father has fallen into gross sin you should avoid the very appearance of that sin, for it may be your weakness also. The remedy is redemption through the blood of Christ. It is through this that we are able to escape from the power of sin; both the legacy of Adam's sin through our OSN and resist personal sins.

This doctrine of **inherited sin** was soon attacked through Pelagius, a British monk who preached around 400 AD, who taught that God would not ask us to do anything that was not possible and therefore everybody can live a life free from

sin. Most liberal churches are almost Pelagian in their views, as they think the “blood” is a gross doctrine. The new heresies are simply old heresies that are reworked, often with little change in wording. They talk about sin but will not say that man is totally depraved. False doctrine always tries to make man feel better than the truth is about our nature! Satan wants us to relax and do very little, whereas God wants us to be 100% honest and put all our heart and mind into obedience.

By **imputing Adam’s sin** to all the human race, and then imputing all the sin of mankind to the sinless person of Christ, and for Christ to deal with it once and do all, then God was able to impute the righteousness of Christ to mankind. This is the doctrine of “Unlimited Atonement”. What was required by man for him to live with God forever was provided by this means. It opens the door to Grace. These principles are referred to as the “divine decrees” – namely they are God’s decisions taken before space-time to deal with the sin problem in time and eternity.

Man cannot take any of the credit for this solution. All credit goes to God. The wonder of it is beyond words. It all interrelates; you cannot take pieces out of salvation. We are redeemed; we are purchased back from the slave market of sin. This is an illustration from the ancient world where redemption money was paid to the temple, and the so called god in the temple then released the slave. A slave had no rights and so could not obtain freedom himself, but by paying the money to the “god” of the temple, then the “god” could pay the slave’s master, and he was set free by the god!

Note that this subject puts a lot of stress on the historicity of Genesis, because if Adam and the fall is not true the whole doctrine of sin-salvation is not able to be sustained.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ There are **sins of omission and sins of commission** with the latter being divided into three:- overt, mental attitude and verbal sins. See **Proverbs 6:16-19**.

There is also the “sin unto death” where the Lord takes a Christian home early, **1 John 5:16-20**, and there is what is called the “unforgivable sin”, which the believer cannot commit, as it is the act of maximum rejection of the light to the moment of death, and those who are children of light cannot commit that.

If you go home to heaven under the sin unto death you have lost your eternal rewards, lost time when you could serve the Lord on earth, and lost joy. If you stay in places where you should not have been, you can be called home early under the Sin Unto death, but you are “home”. Refer to the Omnibus edition of the Bible Topic Book for complete studies of all aspects of SIN.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **IMPUTATION**

1. Divine righteousness is imputed only on the basis of faith in Christ. (Romans 3:22)
2. Many Gentiles of Old Testament times found God’s righteousness by believing in Christ while many Jews, relying on the Law, missed imputation. (Romans 9:30-33)
3. Imputation is the basis of Justification. (Romans 4:22, 5:1)
4. Imputation encourages faith in Christ. (Romans 4:24, 25)
5. Imputation is based on the work of Christ on the Cross. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

### **HEIRSHIP**

1. Believers are heirs of God and based on sonship and union with Christ (Romans 8:17).
2. Heirship demands and guarantees eternal life. Titus 3:7
3. The Christian’s inheritance is:-
  - a) in Christ (Ephesians 1:11)
  - b) in light (Colossians 1:12)
  - c) guaranteed by the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13,14)
  - d) in heaven (1 Peter 1:4)
  - e) incorruptible (1 Peter 1:4)
  - f) everlasting (1 Peter 1:4)
  - g) pure (1 Peter 1:4)
  - h) for believers only (1 Peter 1:5)
  - i) kept safe for us (1 Peter 1:5).



**ATTITUDE**

1. Every believer faces the inner conflict of divine versus human viewpoint (Isaiah 55:7-9)
2. Mental attitude determines both the life and character of a person - what you think is what you are (Proverbs 23:7)
3. As Christians we are commanded to have our thinking in tune with the mind of Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5 Romans 12:2, Philippians 2:5, 2 Timothy 1:7)
4. Knowledge of the Bible (the mind of Christ, 1 Corinthians 2:16) and control by the Holy Spirit renews the mind of the believer, giving divine viewpoint. (Romans 12:2)
5. The right mental attitude produces joy (Philippians 2:2), confidence (2 Corinthians 5:1,6,8), stability (Isaiah 26:3-4, Philippians 4:7, 2 Thessalonians 2:2), true giving (2 Corinthians 9:7), love (1 Corinthians 13:5)
6. Human viewpoint is called worldliness. (Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:2)
7. Evil is something you think rather than something you do. Doing results from thinking. (Matthew 9:4, Galatians 6:3)
8. Mental attitude sins produce self induced misery. (Proverbs 15:13)
9. Without clear thinking there is conflict in the mind of the believer. Isaiah 55:6-9, James 1:7-8.

**SECTION I - SOTERIOLOGY**

**LESSON 42 – SALVATION FROM THE PENALTY OF SIN**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
42	Salvation from the Penalty of Sin	2 Timothy 1:12 Galatians 1:6-9 Ephesians 2:8-9 John 19:28-32	Salvation Lamb Propitiation

**INTRODUCTION**

In **2 Timothy 1:12, 4:6-8**, we see salvation from the penalty of sin. Paul is writing this just a couple of months before the end of his life. Here he expresses his confidence in his salvation. He was a saved sinner, saved by grace through faith. This should be the testimony of all believers but it is not, for many do not have a firm grip on the doctrines of God's grace. They do not know the wonder of the one who saved them.

Most Christians cannot say what Paul said here and mean it. They do not know enough about salvation from their sin either by scope or nature. In addition most Christians have not built significantly from what they had at salvation. Sadly they have not grown spiritually nor learnt about the character of God, that He can be trusted. This is our challenge as pastors, to build up the Lord's people in their most holy faith. This means teaching the words of scripture often.

Most Christians when they get into trouble panic and say, "Why me Lord?" This shows that we are foolish and ignorant and that we do not realise that God is absolutely dependable. His love never falters. We are under the "much more" care of God. It is a good Bible study to look up the phrase, "much more".

Paul is absolutely confident; he knows he is going to be executed and that he is not going to get off this time. He knows who he has believed and is persuaded. He is ready for his death as the release from time and entry into eternity.

**CURSES ON BELIEVERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**

There are only two curses placed on believers in the New Testament.

[a] The first is in **1 Corinthians 16:22**, and involves believers who are not loving the Lord Jesus Christ. By implication in this verse if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord you are under His judgment.

[b] The second is in **Galatians 1:6-9**, where we have people preaching another gospel. There is only one message that is eternal good news, which is the completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. The alternative to the good news is the lie of the enemy.

Anybody teaching another gospel, irrespective of what dramatic experience they have as evidence of reality is to be anathema. If you come with any other gospel you are under God's curse/judgment.

When unbelievers die without accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour they are facing judgment; the reason is their arrogance, in that, they believed they were good enough without Jesus' sacrifice for them on the cross.

#### DEFINITION

According to its largest meaning in Scripture, the word salvation represents the whole work of God, by which He rescues man from the eternal ruin and doom of sin, and bestows on him the riches of His grace, including everlasting life now and eternal glory in heaven.

Salvation is of the Lord. Only God can do this. Jonah 2:9 shows it is in every aspect a work of God on behalf of man and is in no sense a work of man on behalf of God.

We are talking about the message of grace, what God has been able to do for man. You can go to an unbeliever and say to them that God has done something for you which even if you were the best person in the world they could not do for themselves.

#### SALVATION AND GRACE

Many people have the idea that it is things that man has to do to impress God. Christianity is not a religion in the sense of people doing things to impress God, but a relationship with God through Christ established by the Work of God for us. Most unbelievers who are going to hell believe that they have done sufficient good works to persuade St Peter to let them into heaven.

There is no gate into heaven with St Peter there, for there was one Cross that opened the door to all who have bowed before it. God does not compromise His holiness. It does not matter what you think of yourself, it is what God thinks of you. God says that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that he alone is the door to heaven.

**Ephesians 2:8-12** tells us that we are saved by grace through faith not by works that any man should boast. We should be amazed by the greatness of the Lord's grace towards us. You are not ready to give the gospel until you are at that stage and can speak of faith-grace-love and mercy in Holy Spirit filled joy – you need to have lived it.

The formula for evangelism is, by faith, through God's grace, not by any works of man.

#### EXPRESSIONS OF FAITH DURING HISTORY

The expression of man's faith has altered during the ages; we can now express it by direct faith in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, while up to the time of the Cross they expressed it in the lamb slain on the altar, which spoke of Christ. They had to believe that that lamb stood in their place.

In the sacrifice outside the Garden of Eden, God killed animals and clothed Adam and Eve in the skins. Adam had to learn what sin costs the creation. His blood should have been shed but the blood of an animal was shed in his place. These animals had been his friends in the Garden! The cost of sin was high, the animals standing in for man to underline the seriousness of the fact of sin. Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as are people in the Church age and the Millennium, it is just that their expression of faith was in the type of Christ, the lamb, and their understanding of the transaction was incomplete.

The blood sacrifice was a gory and awful thing and it was meant to be. If you kill an animal it is a gory and awful thing. This was God's way, in blood red technicolour to illustrate the cost/payment for sin. You were not made to sin, you were made to serve and glorify God. Sin is rebellion against God and is serious in His sight. There is only one solution and that is through the blood of the Lamb. It was not your life it was the Lord's for you. If you want cleansing it must be by God's rules. Sin is this awful and the horror that we ought to feel at sin is mostly lacking in man!

There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. **Isaiah 43:11, Acts 4:12, 16:31**. The problems with the liberals is that they start with the lack of the concept of the absolute holiness of God and the absolute depravity of man, and so they end up with an inferior view of sin and an inadequate concept of salvation.

The developing topic of the lamb shows how Jesus Christ is the central figure in all the Scriptures and how the inspired writers of the Bible gradually revealed, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, the revelation of his character, work and glorification, from a lamb to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Liberalism undermines the doctrine of the substitutionary death of Christ. This is one of the five fundamentals of the faith. The death of Christ on the Cross took sins away once and for all and the Resurrection proves it was 100% effective.

### **Salvation Before and After the Cross**

God's method of dealing with sin before the cross is said to have been by "atonement". This word means simply "to cover". The blood of bulls and goats could not, and did not, take away sin (**Hebrews, 10:1-10**), it covered it over, until the Lord's sacrifice could finally and fully take it away.

The offering of sacrificial blood indicated on the part of the sinner the admittance of the just penalty of death (Leviticus, 1:4), and, on the part of God, the sacrifice anticipated the effectiveness of the blood of Christ.

By symbolizing the shed blood of Christ, the atoning blood of the sacrifices served to cover sin until that day when Christ would deal in finality with the sin of the world.

Two New Testament passages throw light upon the meaning of the Old Testament word "atonement or covering".

In **Romans 3:25** the word "remission" has the meaning of "passing over", and in this connection it is stated that when Christ died He proved God to have been righteous in passing over the sins which were committed before the cross and for which the atoning blood of the sacrifices had been shed.

God had promised a sufficient Lamb and had forgiven sin on the strength of that promise. Therefore, by the death of Christ, God was proven to have been righteous in all that He had promised.

In **Acts 17:30** it is stated that, before the Cross, God "winked at" sin. This word should be translated "overlooked". From our earlier discussion you can see what that means; sin was "covered" by the blood of animal sacrifices, because God knew that Jesus would come to take it away. It could be left, as if solved, because it would be, the sacrifice standing for the completed work to come.

### **Salvation After The Cross**

God's method of dealing with sin since the cross is stated in **Romans 3:26**. Christ has died. No longer is the value of His sacrifice a matter of expectation, to be taken as a promise, and symbolized by the blood of animals; the blood of Christ has been shed, and now all that can be asked of any person, regardless of his degree of guilt, is that he believe in the work which, in infinite grace, has been accomplished for him.

This passage declares that Christ upon the cross so answered the divine judgment against every sinner that God can remain just, or uncompromised in His holiness, when at the same time and apart from all penalties, He justifies the sinner who does no more than believe in Jesus.

The word "atonement" which occurs properly only in the Old Testament, indicated the "passing over" "overlooking" and "covering" of sin; but Christ in dealing with sin on the cross did not pass it over or cover it. Of His sufficient sacrifice it is said: "Behold the Lamb of God, which **taketh away the sin of the world**". (John 1:29; cf. Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 10:4; 1 John 3:5.)

He in His own self bore our sins in His own body on the tree. There was nothing temporary or partial in his dealing with sin on the Cross. This problem was dealt with in full at the Cross in a manner which is satisfying even to the infinite holiness of God. The only question that remains is whether man is willing to accept the sacrifice. The question is whether or not you are going to accept the Lord Jesus Christ for the saving of the soul.

Jesus said that the work for our salvation was "finished" and the proof that God was satisfied was by the fact that Christ rose from the dead three days later. The day of worship was changed from Saturday to Sunday to celebrate that fact. The historicity of the bodily resurrection of Christ is also critical as far as the concept of sin is concerned. It is only the nature of the atonement allows you to understand salvation and the gospel. God has perfectly provided salvation.

The apostles talked about the blood of Christ shed for us. They were talking about the perfect sacrifice of the Lord on the Cross. The phrase, "the blood of Messiah/Christ" was a very powerful one for evangelizing the Jews. When the blood of Christ was mentioned the apostles were indicating to their Jewish hearers that Jesus was the Christ, and that he was the Lamb of God, "Messiah Ben Joseph", the fulfillment of all the lambs that had been sacrificed over the centuries.

The phrase "the blood of Christ" was a shorthand way that the apostles used to make a relationship between the Cross and the Levitical and Patriarchal sacrifices. When we talk about the blood of Christ shed for us it talks about the awfulness of sin and the greatness of the plan and grace of God. It speaks of how far God went to provide gracious salvation for all who will come and cast themselves before the Cross.

### **Tenses of Salvation**

There are three tenses of salvation. Some people make the mistake of claiming a gradual salvation as a result of the three tenses, but this is a false interpretation of the truth. The three tenses are past, present and future.

In the **past tense** you **have been saved** when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are saved in the past and are still saved now. [1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Corinthians 2:15, Ephesians 2:5,8]. In the **present tense** we **are being saved** from the power of sin. This is not talking about salvation itself, but about being delivered from the power of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit. [Romans 6:14, 8:2, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Galatians 2:19,20]. In the **future tense** the believer **will be saved** in full conformity to Christ in resurrection body. [Romans 8:29, 13:11, 1 Peter 1:5, 1 John 3:2]. We will be like him.

Salvation is used two ways in the Scriptures. **Firstly** it means to be saved from sin, to be born again, and **secondly**, to be protected from danger, or testing, or delivered from them through his resurrection power.

For instance the Scripture says that, "they which remain to the end shall be saved". This means that the believers of the Great Tribulation period will be delivered by the Lord's return at the end of the Great Tribulation period. It is a text that applies to believers in that terrible time, and is "out of context" if we apply it today in terms of assurance of salvation, for it doesn't refer to that.

We are being delivered from the power of sin in our lives, but we are yet to be fully delivered in our bodies when Christ comes for us. What God has begun He is still doing and will do for us. All the provisions are there, it is just the utilization of the provisions that are in question. Often we do not live in the sphere of life where our victory in Christ is being enjoyed and utilized. God's objective for us is to have stability in what God has done, confidence in what He is doing, and confident hope in what He will do.

Evangelism is not a problem in the church when people know these Bible doctrines, for the "good news" is indeed good and all need to hear it. An evangelist should be keen, for they have the truth that will set people free from evil and sin's power. We have been saved from the penalty of sin and the biblical evangelist realizes that this is what they can tell the unbeliever who is still living as if under the penalty.

In **John 19:28-30** the Lord bowed His head and dismissed His Spirit. He is still alive when He says that it is finished. The work of salvation is in a very real sense finished before Christ physically dies. The work of atonement has finished before his physical death. The Lord's physical death was a triumph not a tragedy, for he robbed the "angel of death" of any victory in taking him. He had defeated both sin and death at that point and the resurrection would set his seal upon his victory. His death completes this phase of the process. John does not record all this as he knows that it was recorded in the other gospels. Note Jesus words, "Father into thy hands I dismiss my Spirit". These words are the evidence of the completion of the transaction to pay for our sins before this point, and then the resurrection completes the process as it is public evidence for all to see that his sacrifice has been accepted.

Do not separate the death of the Lord from the process of sin bearing, nor separate the cross from the resurrection, for they are all part of the one process, the winning of the grounds for your salvation and mine. It was not his physical death alone that effected salvation. He died spiritually on the Cross as Adam and Eve died spiritually in the garden, then he died physically, and then he rose physically from the dead. See it all as part of the one event; the cross, his bearing our sins on his own sinless body (spiritual death), his physical death, and resurrection; all together forming the firm ground for our salvation. He has defeated sin and death totally and for all eternity we benefit from the results.

He was separated from God because of his becoming sin for us; bearing our sins in his sinless body. For three hours He was separated from the Father and from the Holy Spirit for the only time in eternity. He screamed, "My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me?" - Psalm 22:1. This is in a continuous tense - He kept on screaming and screaming it. Even more than the blood sacrifice of animals the Cross was a horrible thing. It was so horrible because the perfect Son of Glory took upon Himself your sin and mine. Your sin and mine is horrible in God's sight.

The Lord Jesus was separated from the Father and the Holy Spirit because of this, in order that the wall of separation between us and God might be pulled down. He said it twice, "My God, My God", because the third person was on the Cross. We received our position in Christ due to His work on the Cross. We are to be finally removed from sin's power and dominion forever. By grace through faith, not of works, lest anyone should boast. **Ephesians 2:4-13**.

Salvation is by faith alone. You only need to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Bow down before him as a sinner in need of a Saviour. God the Son has done the work to break down the Sin Barrier that separates us from a holy God.

## DOCTRINES

### SALVATION

1. Salvation is the gift of God by grace through faith.

2. We cannot work for salvation - we must receive it as a gift. (Ephesians 2:8, 9, Romans 4:4-5)
3. The only means of salvation is by trusting that Jesus Christ died for your sins, was buried and raised from the dead. He therefore paid the penalty for sin, and conquered death. (Acts 16:30-31, John 3:16, 14:6, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
4. We are saved so that we can serve God. (Ephesians 2:8-10) Our good works show that we have been saved.
5. Salvation includes many other doctrines such as Imputation, Justification, Redemption, Propitiation, Reconciliation and Sanctification.

**LAMB**

1. Genesis 4:3-5a
  - a) Abel brought a lamb from his flock.
  - b) Propitiation emphasised - covering.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for sin.
2. Genesis 22:7-14
  - a) Abraham was provided with a ram.
  - b) Substitution emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for one person.
3. Exodus 12:3-7
  - a) The lamb had to be slain.
  - b) Protection emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for one family.
4. Leviticus 1:10-13, 16:15
  - a) The lamb without spot or blemish.
  - b) Character of the lamb emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for the nation Israel.
5. Isaiah 53:4-8
  - a) Shows that the lamb to be provided is a person.
  - b) Expiation emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for the elect.
6. John 1:29
  - a) Shows that the lamb was Jesus.
  - b) Complete removal of sin emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for the whole world.
7. Acts 8:30-37
  - a) Shows that Jesus is the Christ the promised Messiah.
  - b) Individual salvation emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for whosoever.
8. 1 Peter 1:18-21
  - a) Shows the resurrection of the lamb.
  - b) Redemption emphasised.
  - c) The lamb was an offering for all generations.
9. Revelation 5:6-10
  - a) Shows the glorification of the lamb.
  - b) Government of the lamb emphasised.
  - c) The lamb of the whole universe.
10. Revelation 22:1-5
  - a) Shows the everlasting kingship of the lamb.
  - b) Eternal glory of the lamb emphasised.
  - c) The lamb for all eternity.

The developing topic of the lamb shows how Jesus Christ is the central figure in all the Scriptures and how the inspired writers of the Bible gradually developed the revelation of his character, work and glorification from a lamb to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

**PROPITIATION**

1. The Mercy Seat (the top of the Ark of the Covenant) in the Tabernacle was the place of propitiation.
2. The concept of the mercy seat must be understood in the light of the ark of the covenant. (Exodus 25:10-22, 37:1-9)
3. The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden box (45" x 27" x 27") constructed of acacia wood (the humanity of Christ) overlaid with gold (the Deity of Christ)
4. Contents of the ark, the golden pot of manna, the tablets of stone and Aaron's rod that budded. (Hebrews 9:4). The tablets of stone represented man's transgressions against God's perfect standard, the rod that budded stood for man's rebellion against established authority, the pot of manna showed man's rejection of divine provision.
5. The content of the ark is a picture of Christ bearing our sins in His body on the tree. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
6. The mercy seat was a solid gold lid which fitted over the ark and bore two golden cherubs, one on each end representing God's holiness. (Hebrews 9:5)
7. Once every year, on the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered twice into the Holy of Holies with a bowl of blood (once for his own sins and once for the sins of the people) (Hebrews 9:7). He sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. God's righteousness and justice were satisfied.
8. Because of propitiation, or satisfaction of His holy character, God is free to love the believer.
9. The mercy seat represented propitiation with emphasis on the person of Jesus Christ, our own great High Priest.
10. "Mercy seat" in Hebrews 9:5 has the same concept as the word propitiation (Gk, hilasterion) in Romans 3:25.
11. Propitiation is used to express the true and perfect love of God for all believers regardless of their status. (1 John 4:10)
12. Propitiation is used to relate the person of Christ and the "covering" of God's character. (Romans 3:25)

**LESSON 43 – SALVATION FROM THE POWER OF SIN**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
43	Salvation from the Power of Sin	Romans 8:1-4 2 Peter 1:3-11, 18 Galatians 5:16-18 Galatians 5:1-4 1 John 4:17-19	Expiation Redemption Legalism

**INTRODUCTION**

In **Romans 8:1-4** we see we need to live by walking in the filling of the Holy Spirit. This is a vital doctrine of how to live once you are saved. Many churches have set up legalistic systems to keep their people on the straight and narrow, but God has given us his system and it is walking in the Spirit.

If people ask you as the pastor your opinion on certain things it is often a case of them wanting to get your sanction to do things that they may be doubtful of. The question is not so much what to do as how to do it without the guilt they feel. They want you to take the blame for their temptation, rather than following the Spirit and the Word of God. The key to the Christian life is the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the pastor's task is to ensure the flock of God follows the spirit of truth, through obedience to the Word and the indwelling Holy Spirit, not him!

The question is not so much as to what I can do, or what I feel I can get away with doing, but how can I serve him who gave His life for me? Such questions as many ask give a clue that they have an inadequate view of God. The difference

between the questions people ask will indicate whether a person is a grace orientated believer or whether they have a potential for legalism (this is an OSN area of weakness for some with OCD especially). **Galatians 5:1-4, 16-18.**

### **GRACE OR WORKS?**

Many young believers do not realise that once they are saved they will still face temptation and sin. We therefore have to deal with the reality of God's holy demands on us, temptation to sin, and the sinful nature that we still have, and that daily must be controlled by the filling of the Holy Spirit. A person in a legalistic church will say that they have a system of rules which if followed will make your Christian life great. By this they mean you will be safe, but that is not what sanctification is all about as this moves people away from genuine Christian life as seen in the apostle's pattern which they recorded in the Scriptures. God doesn't want us "safe" and spiritually dead – He wants us spiritually dangerous to the enemy.

If you fall into a system based on human works and rules you will try harder and harder in your human strength and get discouraged. We need to be walking in the power of the Holy Spirit in the light of God's Word, and not to be trying to struggle to live in conformity with any system of man or woman. In the false system of works based sanctification people start to doubt their salvation, and they will be tempted to more and more legalism rather than going back to the scriptures to be corrected at their foundational error. Once this sort of error occurs they become easy prey for the cults. As a pastor you need to protect your people in this area, by ensuring they learn dependence upon "**Grace through Faith**" - upon **the living Word and Holy Spirit**, never on men.

This human works system is very prevalent in evangelical churches and is the source of the loss of many converts. Many believers having been saved for a while, then feel sin coming back in, and so feel crushed. If in the first few days after conversion they have been told about walking in the Spirit they have an answer when this problem comes along and they are more likely to remain in the Word and away from legalism which will otherwise kill their spiritual life. When the spirit is quenched within them, they will either drift back into moral sin, or drift into legalism and self righteous systems.

### **HELPING THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN**

**2 Peter 1:3 -11** deals with growth in the young Christian where people start being able to deal with things. The procedure is to add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, knowledge self control, self control patience and to patience godliness. You do not become godly overnight any more than you go to the gym and become fit overnight. We are not set apart for God's service instantaneously, it is a growing process. God has provided everything that you require to undertake the task, but it involves walking in the Spirit daily.

As a mature Christian you are to tell the young Christian what God has provided for them and how to use it. God has provided everything, by grace through faith, to deal with our sinful nature and Satan.

God's provision is in two parts, firstly what he has given in the Word and then the power to apply it. We have the Holy Spirit in us to teach us, as a person who convicts, and we have God's Word at our fingertips. This is so that we might know what he wants us to do, do it in God's provided power, in order that we might be victorious.

In 2 Peter 1 we note that God has the power - v 3, the promises - v 4, that we might become Christ like - v 4, that we might grow systematically - v 5-7, so that we can produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit - v 8. This is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives over a long period of time if you allow Him to work in us.

The term salvation here refers to moment by moment deliverance from the power of sin. This is a battle which will continue until the day you die. It is however a thing which the Lord has provided every asset already for so that the believer can win the battle. Salvation is a Grace concept; depending on God not man.

As long as we know the one who we are going to take our problems to, then we can have confidence in finding a solution to them. When our children have a problem they know to come to us, we in a similar manner should go to our Heavenly Father. We come to the Lord in prayer **1 Peter 5:7**. We walk in the Spirit relying on God's provision rather than relying on the schemes and plans of men.

In a legalistic church you have man made systems that do not allow people to have a look in. We are either walking in God's Word or we are walking with men. Do not depend on men, but depend on the Spirit through the Word. Let the Holy Spirit beat you all around the room if needed, but do not depend upon the legalistic systems of men for correction of behaviours – the Holy Spirit will always do best for you. We take our burdens to the Lord and leave them there.

### **THE WORD OF GOD AND SIN**

As you saturate your mind in the Word of God you will be encouraged. Write down all the promises you come across in God's Word. So many Christians get so dependent on men that they rob themselves of their joy that comes from the Lord solving your problems for you.

In the case of studying the Word of God the answer will come quickly through the Word, which is very exciting. It brings walking in the Spirit to life. Do not be surprised when you see things working together, this should be the normal Christian life.

If you spend as much time feeding your spirit through the Word as you do feeding your body with physical food you will be spiritually fit, as you apply what you read and hear to daily life. If this concept can be conveyed to young believers they can move into a place of vitality and power. These young believers will then not be hindered by people and their opinions but will be led by the Word of God. The Word will always make sense when we are Holy Spirit filled, and we live in the Word daily. We must get used to walking with Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

### **BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT**

**Galatians 5:16** says that if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the Law. You can either follow the Holy Spirit in your life or some other system of man. We must remember that the Mosaic Law is not for today. You are to heed the inner convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. He wants you to be responsive to Him and not to anyone else.

We should respond to the Holy Spirit in the same way as we responded to the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Believe on the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life and you will be sanctified. Let Him go to work within you. If you are doubtful about something in your life do not do it. Be sensitive to conviction. You can do that by giving your spirit plenty of spiritual food.

Legalism and lasciviousness are cousins. Fornication and immorality are the results of lasciviousness in the soul. Legalism and lasciviousness are both results of having ignored the Spirit. The legalist is a person who will not trust the Holy Spirit to show her/him what to do, preferring their own rules, whilst the lascivious person does not want anyone to tell them what to do. One will often lead to the other. God has a standard for you to work to and that is grace. Your desire should be to do what pleases Him.

### **TWO AREAS OF HELP**

There are two areas which the Lord has provided to assist you with sanctification; they are the completed canon of Scripture, and the teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit. As a grace orientated believer you are walking in relation to the Word and relying on the Holy Spirit. God has His standard of grace to follow; but the legalist will give you rules and regulations to work to. Legalism encourages both anxiety and pride. Pride leads to arrogance and arrogance leads to further temptations, which the proud person believes he/she can get away with, and so becomes a hypocrite, saying one thing in church and sinning outside it. If legalism creates anxiety the believer so deceived is spiritually disabled for life!

True motivation is the approbation of God and not man. We are to seek the Lord's "well done", not man's praises. The motivation is to serve the Lord in love. This is the only gift that He will accept. He wants your obedience to flow from your love for him, in exactly the same way as he wanted the love of Adam and Eve.

As a Christian you have to spiritually and behaviourally "go for gold", as per **1 Corinthians 3:11-15**. God is not as interested in what you are doing, as he is interested in the motivation behind it. He wants you to do things because he loves you, and your love for him moves you to service. When you realise fully the many grace gifts that He has given you, you will be moved to love Him, and serve him in gratitude. As pastors our role is to tell people of the wonderful grace of God; we are the motivators of the church through our telling of the wonderful truth.

### **LAW AND GRACE AND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM**

#### **Mosaic Law As A Rule Of Life**

In understanding God's program for our deliverance from the power of sin, it is important to distinguish between law and grace as rules of life. The word "law" is used in many different senses in Scripture. Sometimes it is used as a rule of life. When used in this way, the word has various meanings.

1. The Ten Commandments, which were written by the finger of God on tables of stone (Exodus. 31:18),
2. The whole system of government for Israel when in the land which included the commandments (Exodus. 20:1-26), the judgments (Exodus. 21:1-24:11), and the ordinances (Exodus. 24:12 - 31:18).
3. The governing principles of the yet future kingdom of the Messiah in the earth, which are said to be the fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets (Matthew. 5:17-18; 7:12).
4. Any aspect of the revealed will of God for men (Romans 7:22, 25; 8:4).
5. Any rule of conduct prescribed by men for their own government (Matthew. 20: 15; Luke 20:22; 2 Timothy 2:5). The word "law" is also used a few times of a force in operation (Romans. 7:21; 8:2).
6. In the Old Testament especially, law is also presented as a conditional covenant of works.
7. Law is also introduced as a principle of dependence on the flesh. The law provided power for its observance.



**Grace As A Rule Of Life**

For the child of God under grace, every aspect of the law is now done away (John 1:16,17; Romans. 6:14; 7:1-6; 2 Corinthians. 3:1-18; Galatians. 3:19-25; Ephesians. 2:15; Colossians 2:14), replaced by Holy Spirit filled holy living.

1. The legal commands of the Mosaic system and the commands which are to govern in the kingdom are not now the guiding principles of the Christian. They have been superseded by a new and gracious rule of conduct which includes in itself all that is vital in the law, but restates it under the peculiar order and character of grace.
2. The child of God under grace has been delivered from the burden of a covenant of works. He is not now striving to be accepted, but rather is free to live as one who is accepted in Christ (Ephesians. 1:6).
3. The child of God is not now called upon to live by the energy of his own flesh.
4. In contrast with law, the word "grace" refers to the unmerited favour, which represents the divine method of dealing with man that was introduced with Adam after his fall. Under grace, God does not treat us as we deserve, but He treats us in infinite mercy and grace without reference to our desserts. This He is free to do on the ground that the righteous punishment for sin, which His holiness would otherwise impose upon sinners as their just dessert, was borne for the sinner by the Son of God on the Cross. The penalty of sin is removed forever!
5. In contrast with law, grace is revealed in three different aspects: (a) salvation by grace, (b) safekeeping through grace, and (c) grace as a rule of life for the saved.

The challenge is to constantly put before people their attitude to their service to the Lord. We should not need to ask a person to bring a friend to a service, for their love of the Lord should move them to desire for the lost. We should magnify Christ.

John the Baptist went to the most obscure place to preach, where there was no water, and no food. John was sitting out in the desert magnifying God's Word. God led the people to Him. We do not have to use gimmicks if we are serving the Lord in spirit and truth. People didn't come to see a "show", they came because they knew he was a holy man and preached the Word of Truth. This must be our aim; to be known as the women and men who teach God's truth.

Paul says that, "the Lord Jesus Christ has been shown before you all". Paul did not have any problem getting a crowd. He never sought a crowd; he sought the path the Lord wanted him to walk in each place he went. Study the book of ACTS using the EBCWA disc/flash-drive or web site and see how Paul walked in the power of the Spirit alone. This is the means of blessing for you as the pastor-teacher and the people you teach. It is not hard to serve the Lord when you are excited about him and want to give a message and are obedient to the Holy Spirit. You have to have enthusiasm, a joy that comes from within.

We all have different weaknesses. We deal with them in the same way as we deal with anything in the Christian life, we put the Cross between us and our Old Sin Nature, and we look at temptation through what God has done for us. We want to associate with a strong warm group of spirit filled believers, not any dour, straight laced groups of legalists.

Let your people fall in love with God, and grow in love for Jesus. The study leaders need to show people Jesus Christ. Philip and Andrew led people to Jesus. If you love someone you do not go five minutes without thinking of them. As a young Christian you may tend to forget He is near to us at all times. Well taught young believers learn just how great is the Lord's love for them and that he never leaves them; this is the comfort in knowledge we all need every day.

We are told in **1 John 4:17-19** that we love Him because He first loved us. In this verse we have the motivation for Christian service. If this verse is not true in your life you are not ready to serve Him. We have very limited time on the earth and we should live it all, "as unto the Lord".

**DOCTRINES**

**EXPIATION**

Solution to the Problem of Sin: Redemption and Atonement:

1. The "son abides in the house forever" (John 8:35), for Jesus Christ is "the son". He is eternal life and holy and when man believes on Him man is free and enters into union with Jesus Christ. Christianity is a relationship to Jesus Christ, not a religion.
2. The purchase price of our redemption is His blood (1 Peter 1:18,19, Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 1:5, Hebrews 9:11-14, Galatians 3:13) , representing His death. Jesus Christ bore the sins of the whole world (past, present and future) on the cross.

3. God is absolute righteousness and justice; the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23, Colossians 2:14). Jesus Christ cancelled the "IOU" the human race owed God. The human race owes God perfect righteousness.
4. God is perfect righteousness and we cannot pay perfect righteousness. Jesus Christ died on the cross, paying the penalty of our sins. This is expiation. (Romans 5:8)
5. The doctrines of Redemption and Expiation are found in Psalm 22:1-6. God the Father and Holy Spirit left the Son because He was bearing our sins on the cross. (Matthew 27:46)

PENALTY OF SIN = solved by Expiation. (Colossians 2:14)(Romans 6:23)

### **REDEMPTION**

1. The purchase of a slave from the slave market of sin and the act of setting him free.
2. The principle of redemption is found in (John 8:31-36).
3. Christ paid the ransom for sin on the cross. In other words, He purchased our redemption. (Psalm 34:22; Galatians 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 1:18,19).
4. Redemption is a doctrine which the believer can apply in times of pressure and catastrophe (Job 19:25,26), thereby finding both blessing and happiness.
5. Redemption results in adoption. Slavery without relationship becomes family for eternity. (Galatians 4:4-6).
6. Redemption provides the basis for the believer's eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9:15).
7. The blood of Christ is the ransom money or the purchase price of redemption. (Ephesians 1:7; Col 1:14; 1 Peter 1:13,19; 1 John 1:7).
8. Redemption includes forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22).
9. Redemption provides the basis of justification and immediate cleansing at salvation (Romans 3:24).
10. Redemption is the basis of our cleansing from sin during our Christian walk. (Leviticus 4:5; 6:1-6; 1 John 1:7,9).

### **LEGALISM**

1. There are some areas of God's law which the believer would never violate because it is his area of strength.
2. No two people have the same area of strength, no two people have the same area of weakness in their human nature.
3. Violation of one part of the law makes a person a sinner just as another part of the law - all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)
4. Legalism and self righteousness is prone to forget that all sin comes from the sinful nature.
5. Everyone has a sinful nature. Violation of law demonstrates its existence.
6. The legalist emphasises the commandments he keeps. The honest person recognises the commandments he breaks.
7. Doctrine removes legalism and self righteousness on the basis of grace.
8. Legalism minimises the weakness or besetting sin of the sinful nature while emphasising the weakness or besetting sin of someone else.
9. Legalism condemns those who fail in their own area of strength but legalism does not recognise that all have sinned.
10. Sometimes legalism is so strong that it fulfills both categories of 1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10.
11. To be guilty one only has to sin once not the thousands of times one does. (James 2:10)

**LESSON 44 – GOD'S IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
44	God's Imputed Righteousness	Romans 3:9-20 Genesis 3:21 Romans 3:21-28	Reconciliation Salvation Gifts

**INTRODUCTION**

In **Romans 3:9-28** salvation is seen as the “crossing/breaking through” of the sin barrier by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. One part of the barrier is the perfect righteousness of God in contrast to the relative righteousness of man.

Unsaved man can only be unrighteous when you compare him to the perfect righteousness of God. The Bible tells us that all our works of righteousness are as “filthy rags” in God’s sight. In our human strength we cannot impress God at all, but in grace God has provided for us to receive his righteousness by faith. **Isaiah 64:1-9**.

**LIBERALISM**

This is where liberal theology, and most new age cults come in very strongly to challenge the need for righteousness. For instance, in common with the cults of the Roman world, the Bahai faith majors on personal righteousness by keeping laws/principles which they feel eliminates the need for a personal Saviour. The concept of this worldly viewpoint is, that if we all just tried a little harder, with better mentoring, then it would be alright. They teach that God isn’t that fussy, for He made us and knows our weaknesses, and so he “excuses” our faults and will judge us on the “best we can do”.

Liberalism preaches this as well. They say that God will pat them on the back and say that they tried hard and so they can enter into their reward. This is a Satanic lie. The requirements of a totally righteous God can only be solved fully and completely, and that is only by faith in the work of the perfect work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, as only Christ is totally righteous. There is no other way to be saved. Acts 4:12, 16:31. There are no other “ways up the mountain”!

**RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD**

God’s assessment of us is made clear in **Romans 3 where in verses 9-20** we are told that all are under sin and that there are none righteous and none seek after God. In this passage Paul joins together a number of passages; Psalm 14,10,36 and Isaiah 59. These verses make the point that God has an absolute standard and man falls short of that standard absolutely. God gave them the Mosaic Law to point out to them that they stand guilty. Because they did not see the inner conviction of the Holy Spirit they are given the opportunity to be convicted by the Law.

God is righteous, man is unrighteous, but by faith in Christ Jesus we get in Him and clothed with His righteousness - **2 Corinthians 5:21**. God gives to man through the Lord Jesus Christ what man could never earn or deserve, the absolute righteousness of God. The righteousness of God is unchanging and unchangeable. He is absolutely righteous in His own being and righteous in all His ways.

However the righteousness of God has inevitable consequences. Because all men are sinners by nature and practice, the divine judgment has come upon all to condemnation. Acceptance of this truth is required for the understanding of divine grace. All people are condemned, the gospel of grace commences with this bad news. The “Good News” now follows. He condemns all so that He is able to die for us all, in order that all might be saved through HIS grace.

**THE GOSPEL**

The triumph of the gospel is not in the belittling of sin by God, it is based on the fact that the condemnation that has been imposed on the sinner has been borne by the Lord on the Cross. This is a plan of God conforming to His own standard of righteousness. It is sufficient to all who believe. By this plan His holiness is satisfied by His act of love, as He can save the sinner without infringing on His unchangeable righteousness. This is the good news of the gospel to helpless mankind.

This magnifies the grace, mercy and love of God. The one who pays the price did the work and earns all praise. We share all that he has won in our saved relationship with Him. The importance of our decision to trust in Him cannot be overemphasized.

**THE SELF RIGHTEOUS MAN**

The self righteous person is the most difficult to talk to. They think that they are good enough to satisfy God and often you can only reach these people on their death bed, or when something happens to prove to them that they are totally

bereft of hope and need a Saviour. It should be noted that every incidence of sin that is recorded in the Bible is there so that we can understand how God sees our sin, so that satanic lies can be exposed.

Man has compiled suitable standards for the family, for the society, for the state, but this is not a basis on which man will stand and be judged before God. In our relationship with God we are not wise when we compare ourselves with others, for it is not other's standards that count, but God's standard alone. 2 Corinthians 10:12. A lot of people think that they are all right when compared to other people, but we are all sinners in God's sight, and stand in need of a Saviour.

All psychology nowadays overlooks man's sinful nature. The basis of most pagan psychology is that people are good, and that if you give them sufficient love, money, shelter, food, etc.... then they will respond in a loving manner. They say it is not true that man has a sin problem. This is the heart of the flaw in much of modern psychology – it overlooks sin and will not recognize and name evil. Unsaved people look for any way around this problem except salvation!

If your faith system does not deal with the old sin nature you have a false system that will not answer the deeper needs of fallen mankind. In the rat race of sinful man you either have lean rats, or fat rats, but they are still rats and are all going to join Satan forever. Most of the cults and isms are self righteous, and operate on a works system, but it is simply deluded people on a one way road to destruction pretending they are on a picnic. **Matthew 7:13-23.**

### **IMPUTATION**

Imputation is the receiving of something that is not your own, something that you did not earn or deserve but that is given to you. The first imputation in the human race is negative – it is Adam's sin which was imputed to all, for as a result of the fall of man, in Adam all die. The "Good News" of grace however is that God did not leave us there, as the penalty of sin was imputed fully and totally to Christ on the Cross. Jesus our Lord freely took the entire penalty upon himself to cancel out the free will decision to sin of the first Adam.

God works in absolute justice. Everything has to be fair and just and based on freedom. You did not earn or deserve Adam's sin, The Lord did not earn or deserve our sin, neither do you earn or deserve the grace of the Lord, but as he freely took our sin, so we can freely bow at the foot of his Cross and receive the benefit of all he did.

We now see the characteristics of God in highlight. Biblical imputation is the basis of our justification. We receive what we didn't earn or deserve, by grace through faith. **Ephesians 2:4-10.**

### **JUSTIFICATION**

To justify in Biblical usage signifies not to make righteousness, but to declare or show to be righteous. A man is reckoned justified before God because he is declared righteous on the basis of what Christ has done for him, not on what he has done for himself.

Justification is not "just as if I have never sinned". It is far greater than that. You have sinned, God cannot look at us as if we have never sinned. His holiness will not over look our sin, it must resolve the sin problem, and he has done so through the Cross. Justification comes in the full knowledge that you have sinned. It is because you have sinned that the plan of God puts your sin on Christ, and in exchange you receive His righteousness. This satisfies the holiness of God. Even if you pray about nothing else you can thank God for what he has done for you here.

Many people who end up in the cults have been in liberal Christian churches or Sunday School, but they have no doctrine. They do not know where they stand in relationship with God in relation to these major doctrines of salvation. You need to have full knowledge of the doctrines of imputation, propitiation and the others that relate to the work of the Cross. You have not only absolute righteousness in Christ, but absolute blessedness as well. No one is justified by the works of the Law [Galatians 3:10]. We are justified by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. The Lord paid the redemption price to save us from the slave market of sin. The price is the blood of Christ.

We are justified as a free gift, and we are counted, or declared righteous, in and through Him and his work that we share in by grace, through faith. The Father is perfectly satisfied with the Son. The Ark of the Covenant with its two angels representing the holiness, (righteousness and justice), of God pictures this. He is satisfied with the death of the Lord, represented in the old Law by the blood spilt once a year on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement. This of course represents the cross. It is the blood of Christ (his perfect work) which solves sin forever, and guarantees our salvation.

### **MAN AND JUSTIFICATION**

We are justified on the condition of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The faith that leads to justification is one that comes from the whole person. Intellectual assent to the facts is not enough; it is the act of will and involves the whole person or you have no greater "faith" than the devils. They believe Jesus died for the sins of mankind – they know what it means fully for them, and they tremble at the thought. You must have a more dynamic faith that this! The faith which one verbalizes but is not confirmed with actions of some sort will not justify, for it is not real unless expressed in more than words. **James 2:14-20.** Real faith works out in life, worship and service, but it begins in bowing before grace.

Great theologians have rightly said, "faith alone saves but the faith that saves does not abide alone, it produces godly and good works". This is the message of James and Galatians. If you say you love him but ignore certain issues in your life and remain unchanged, then you are a liar, your faith is in vain. Faith will produce works in your life; works will not produce faith. Caiaphas and Annas believed that He rose from the dead, they saw the miracles and knew they were real, they knew that He was born of a virgin yet rejected Him, and made up lies to mask the truth that they knew. Satan knows that Jesus Christ is Lord and trembles. Just assenting to the facts means nothing, for the devil does that! James 2:19. It is letting the facts change your whole life that proves you have bowed the knee of your heart, your will and your mind to your Lord and God.

Our roots are in Christ, but all need to see the fruit. It is the fruit not the gifts that show our Christianity, as all the gifts can be counterfeited by Satan, and are, but he cannot counterfeit the Fruit of the Spirit. It is the transformed life that proves the reality of saving faith, not the words alone.

Theology is practical and should keep you humble. There are people who are said by some to be spiritual heavy weights, but who may well be babies, for they are full of their own power and they advertise themselves. Proud men and arrogant self centered men have not met Jesus in spirit and in truth. Man comes to God with nothing but His sins and neediness. He leaves the Cross with nothing but the righteousness of Christ in him. The Father sees you now in the beloved. You may come before the Lord daily not feeling very spiritual. If this is the case, just sit with the Holy Spirit's presence in the Word, and stay at the foot of the Cross long enough to remember who you are in Christ Jesus. You should remember just how God sees you, he sees us through the clothing of righteousness that He gave us in Christ Jesus. The Lord was raised for our justification.

The result of justification is that, being justified by faith we have peace with God. In addition no one can lay anything to the charge of a justified man. Romans 8:28-33. We are heirs to Christ in eternal life, and so in relationship with Him we are saved from judgment. We are sure that we will reign with Him. We should be eternally thankful; worship is the result of all genuine theological study.

### **JUSTIFICATION, IMPUTATION AND FORGIVENESS**

Justification is more than forgiveness, as forgiveness is the cancellation of sin, whilst justification is the imputation of God's righteousness. Imputation therefore has a much wider scope than forgiveness. He has not only forgiven us but put the righteousness of Christ over us. Most Christians never take full possession of what the Lord has given us. We are living on the front lawn rather than in the house. Enter into these truths with worship.

With the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit the righteousness of God received by you allows you to perform works compatible with God's plan.

Many of the areas such as imputation, propitiation, atonement and justification were finalized before Christ died physically; as he said, "It is finished, Father into thy hand I dismiss my Spirit". As you learn more of these doctrines you will truly appreciate the work of the Lord Jesus Christ and His provision for you to live the Christian life.

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **RECONCILIATION**

1. Reconciliation is the removal of the barrier between God and man, or peace between God and man. While redemption is sin ward and propitiation is Godward, reconciliation is man ward. (2 Corinthians 5:18, Ephesians 2:16, Colossians 1:20, 21)
2. Reconciliation and the blood of Christ.
  - a) The blood of Christ is a synonym for the saving work of Christ on the Cross and the basis for reconciliation. (Colossians 1:20)
  - b) Hence the work of the Cross is associated with reconciliation. (Ephesians 2:16)
3. Reconciliation and Mankind: mankind is regarded as the enemy of God, and needs to be reconciled to God. (Romans 5:10, Colossians 1:2 1)
4. Peace, a synonym for reconciliation, reconciliation finds man the enemy of God, but the saving work of Christ on the Cross gives peace between God and man. (Ephesians 2:14 cf. 2:16 cf. Colossians 1:20)
5. Reconciliation portrayed in the Levitical Offerings: the peace offering of Leviticus 3 depicts reconciliation or Christ's removing the barrier between God and man. (Leviticus 7:11-38, 8:15)
6. Application of reconciliation to the Church Age believer: every member of the Body of Christ is an ambassador representing Christ on earth. Therefore each member of the Body of Christ has the ministry of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

7. The prophecy of reconciliation. (Isaiah 57:19)
8. The means of reconciliation - the removal of the barrier:
  - a) Sin removed by unlimited atonement. (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 18, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, Titus 2:11, Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:2)
  - b) Penalty of Sin removed by expiation. (Psalm 22:1-6, Colossians 2:14)
  - c) Problem of physical birth removed by regeneration. (John 3:1-18, Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 1:23)
  - d) Relative righteousness removed by imputation. (Romans 3:22, 9:30, 10:10, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9, Hebrews 10:14) and justification (Romans 4:1-5, 4:25, 5:1, 8:29, 30, Galatians 2:16, Titus 3:7)
9. The barrier of God's perfect character removed by propitiation. (Romans 3:22-26, 1 John 2:1, 2)
10. Problem of position in Adam removed by positional sanctification. (1 Corinthians 15:22, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 1:3-6)

**GIFTS GIVEN AT SALVATION**

Listed below are the 34 things God provides for every believer at the point of salvation.

1. In the eternal plan of God. (Sharing the destiny of Christ)
  - a) Foreknown (Acts 2:23, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:2)
  - b) Elect (Romans 8:33, Colossians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 1:4, Titus 1:1)
  - c) Predestined (Romans 8:29, 30, Ephesians 1:5, 11)
  - d) Chosen (Matthew 22:14, 1 Peter 2:4)
  - e) Called (1 Thessalonians 5:24)
2. Reconciled
  - a) By God (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19, Colossians 1:20)
  - b) To God. (Romans 5:10, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 2:14-17)
3. Redeemed (Romans 3:24, Colossians 1:14, 1 Peter 1:18)
4. Condemnation removed. (John 3:18, 5:24, Romans 8:1)
5. Under Grace instead of judgment; God is satisfied with the death of His Son. (Romans 3:24-26, 1 John 2:2)
6. All sins judged by the death of Christ. (Romans 4:25, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 2:24)
7. Dead to old life - alive to God.
  - a) Crucified with Christ. (Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20)
  - b) Dead with Christ. (Romans 6:8, Colossians 3:3, 1 Peter 2:24)
  - c) Buried with him. (Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12)
  - d) Raised with Christ. (Romans 6:4, Colossians 3:1)
8. Free from the law.
  - a) Dead. (Romans 7:4)
  - b) Delivered. (Romans 6:14, 7:6, 2 Corinthians 3:11, Galatians 3:25)
9. Regenerated. (John 13:10, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Titus 3:5)
  - a) Born again. (John 3:7, 1 Peter 1:23)
  - b) Children of God. (Galatians 3:26)
  - c) Sons of God. (John 1:12, 2 Corinthians 6:18, 1 John 3:2)
  - d) A new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Ephesians 2:10)
10. Adopted. (Romans 8:15, 8:23 (future) Ephesians 1:5)
11. Acceptable to God. (Ephesians 1:6, 1 Peter 2:5)
  - a) Made righteous (Romans 3:22, 1 Corinthians 1:30, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9)
  - b) Sanctified positionally. (1 Corinthians 1:30, 6:11)
  - c) Perfected forever. (Hebrews 10:14)
  - d) Made meet (qualified) (Colossians 1:12)
12. Justified (declared righteous). (Romans 3:24, 5:1, 5:9, 8:30, 1 Corinthians 6:11, Titus 3:7)
13. Forgiven all trespasses. (Ephesians 1:7, 4:32, Colossians 1:14, 2:13, 3:13)

14. Made nigh. (Heavenly citizenship based on reconciliation) (Luke 10:20, Ephesians 2:13, 19)
15. Delivered from the kingdom of Satan. (Colossians 1:13, 2:15)
16. Transferred into God's kingdom. (Colossians 1:13)
17. On a secure foundation. (1 Corinthians 3:11, 10:4, Ephesians 2:20)
18. A gift from God the Father to Christ. (John 10:29, 17:2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 24)
19. Delivered from the power of the sin nature. (Romans 2:29, Colossians 2:11)
20. Appointed priests unto God.
  - a) Holy priesthood. (1 Peter 2:5)
  - b) Royal priesthood. (1 Peter 2:9, Revelation 1:6)
21. Under the care of God as a chosen generation and a peculiar people. (Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 2:9)
22. Given access to God. (Romans 5:2, Ephesians 2:18, Hebrews 4:14, 10:19, 20)
23. Within the "much more" care of God. (Romans 5:9, 10)
  - a) Objects of His love. (Ephesians 2:4, 5:2)
  - b) Objects of His grace:
    - i) For salvation (Ephesians 2:8, 9)
    - ii) For keeping (1 Peter 1:5)
    - iii) For service (John 17:18)
    - iv) For instruction (Titus 2:12).
  - c) Objects of His power. (Ephesians 1:19, Philippians 2:13)
  - d) Objects of His faithfulness. (Philippians 1:6, Hebrews 13:5,6)
  - e) Objects of His peace. (John 14:27)
  - f) Objects of His consolation. (2 Thessalonians 2:16)
  - g) Objects of His intercession. (Romans 8:34, Hebrews 7:25)
24. God's inheritance (Possession). (Ephesians 1:18)
25. Beneficiaries of an inheritance as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17, Ephesians 1:14, Colossians 3:24, Hebrews 9:15, 1 Peter 1:4)
26. A new position. (Ephesians 2:6)
  - a) Partners with Christ in life. (Colossians 3:4)
  - b) Partners with Christ in service. (1 Corinthians 1:9)
  - c) Workers together with God. (1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 6:1)
  - d) Ministers of the New Testament. (2 Corinthians 3:6)
  - e) Ambassadors. (2 Corinthians 5:20)
  - f) Living epistles. (2 Corinthians 3:3)
  - g) Ministers of God. (2 Corinthians 6:4)
27. Recipients of eternal life. (John 3:15, 10:28, 20:31, 1 John 5:11, 12)
28. Members of the family and household of God. (Galatians 6:10, Ephesians 2:19)
29. Light in the Lord. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:4)
30. United to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
  - a) In God. (1 Thessalonians 1:1) of "God in you" (Ephesians 4:6)
  - b) In Christ. (John 14:20 of "Christ in you" Colossians 1:27)
    - i) A member in His body. (1 Corinthians 12:13)
    - ii) A branch in the vine. (John 15:5)
    - iii) A stone in the building. (Ephesians 2:21, 22, 1 Peter 2:5)
    - iv) A sheep in the flock. (John 10:27-29)
    - v) A part of His bride. (Ephesians 5:25)
    - vi) A priest of the kingdom of priests. (1 Peter 2:9)
    - vii) A saint of the "new species". (2 Corinthians 5:17)
  - c) In the Spirit. (Romans 8:9) of "the Spirit in you"
31. Recipients of the ministries of the Holy Spirit.
  - a) Born of the Spirit. (John 3:6)
  - b) Baptized with the Spirit. (Acts 1:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13)

- c) Indwelt by the Spirit. (John 7:39, Romans 5:5, 8:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, Galatians 4:6, 1 John 3:24)
  - d) Sealed by the Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 4:30)
  - e) Given spiritual gifts. (1 Corinthians 12:11, 27-31, 13:1, 2)
32. Glorified. (Romans 8:30)
  33. Complete in Him. (Colossians 2:10)
  34. Possessors of every spiritual blessing provided in eternity past. (Ephesians 1:3)

**LESSON 45 – SPIRITUAL GROWTH OF THE BELIEVER**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
45	Spiritual Growth of the Believer	John 17:14-19 Galatians 5 :16-23	Sanctification Ambassador

**INTRODUCTION**

**John 17:14-19** gives the true “Lord’s Prayer”. Here we have both the Lord’s petitions and desires for us in this prayer. With this last Lord’s Prayer for us, we know that both his petition and desire are answered. John 17 is extremely important to all Christians as it tell you what the Lord prayed for you the night before He went to the Cross.

He is telling us that he is praying for us, and that we will be sanctified as believers in and through the Word of God. This prayer reminds us that the Holy Spirit takes the Word and works it out in our life. The truth of the Word is able to transform us as we allow the Holy Spirit to go to work within our lives.

**SANCTIFICATION**

Sanctification is divided into three main phases:-

- [a] Positional Sanctification
- [b] Experiential Sanctification
- [c] Ultimate Sanctification – related doctrine “Dying Grace”

This is a vital topic for spiritual growth and must be taught. It is the subject that allows a person to grow spiritually.

**LAWS OF INTERPRETATION (Hermeneutics)**

There are four laws of interpretation that we follow at EBCWA.

**Rule 1**

You have to **look at the whole of Scripture**. If you want to learn to pray you do not go just to the “Our Father” prayer in Matthew, you have to study prayer from the beginning to the end of His ministry, and see what the Holy Spirit said about prayer all through scripture, and to put it all together. We must remember that all Scripture is God breathed, and all the teachings about prayer are to be woven together by the Holy Spirit into the fabric of our daily life - 2 Timothy 3:16.

**Rule 2**

The second rule is that you **cannot interpret any doctrine by your experience**. We do not deal with our feelings as the standard for truth; we need to see what God’s Word says, and be ready to have our feelings “corrected”. A Bible study does not consist of sitting around and discussing what you think or feel, it is finding out what God says. Jesus said that, “thy Word is truth”. Many people want to know what God said because they are tired of hearing what others thought. We must stick to the truth and exegete it so that people understand it. Let the text correct your experience.

If you want to grow spiritually God’s Word must be more real to you than your experiences. If you have a great experience that lights up your life and God’s Word says something different, you follow God’s Word and disregard the experience, or see it as simply “interesting” but not “normative”. Only when you are in the Word of God can you cope with suffering and grow. In that case you can claim God’s Word even though you may not feel well.



The very time you do not feel “spiritual” you should be into studying God's Word to see spiritually what the Lord has to say through that experience. The Word will encourage you and lift you up higher in joy and higher in suffering or depression. You will start seeing things God's way and you will start to move ahead on the path of life. Searching for experiences leads to the “picnic mentality”, rather than the “soldier's mentality” of Scripture.

**Rule 3**

The third principle is when you take a doctrine from Scripture it **must be related to other doctrines**, and if your interpretation of a subject puts you in conflict with another major doctrine, then there is something wrong with your interpretation.

**Rule 4**

**All truth will make us more like Jesus and the apostles in our life and practice.**

**APPLICATION OF SANCTIFICATION**

Sanctified is used 106 times in the Old Testament and 31 times in the New Testament.

It means to be “set apart for holy/godly service”; to be set apart specifically for priestly service. This then, is the way we are to start; with a word study. The words saints and sanctuary are from the same root as sanctified and so each must be studied and understood to lead us to a full understanding of the meaning of “sanctification”.

Having found the verses in which each word occurs, you should read each verse to see what the Bible has to say about the subject. The Hebrew word is QDSH. It means that people are set aside for a purpose, that purpose is always related to serving the Lord. This concept is not self centered; it is God and other centered.

Remember the principle. That anything an unbeliever can do is not the Christian way of life. The other factor in the Christian life is that if the Holy Spirit is not the power behind the life something else is. The Christian way of life is the Holy Spirit empowered life. If you have fear you do not have the empowered life as the Scriptures say that perfect love casts out fear. If you are fearful you are not under the control of the Holy Spirit and therefore must deal with whatever sin, or ignorance is stopping/hindering the Spirit from moving through you. Being fearful is showing a lack of faith in God and His promises. You are not casting your cares on Him as per 1 Peter 5:7. Christianity is dealing with sin and leading a Bible obedient, Spirit filled life.

The Greek word for holy or sanctified, is “hagios”. We should set ourselves apart for God. We should live our life his way. We should come to God saying, “Lord here am I, a sinner, to be saved by your grace alone, and set aside by this grace gift as your servant forever”. Once saved we should say, “Lord here am I a saved sinner; guide me and lead me in your power, that in your power, in the light of your Word, I might be able to undertake your will”.

We are totally dependent on the Holy Spirit. Sanctuary is a set apart place, saint is a set apart person and sanctification is the action of being set apart. You are setting yourself apart for Holy, or God-centered purposes; setting yourself apart from unholy purposes. You are recognizing that there is a policy of God that you are setting yourself apart for.

This is called Christ likeness. We are called and set apart to be like him. When we reject sin and evil we set ourselves apart from sin, and for God, His plan and his purpose for our life. Sinless perfection is not implied in this. Until the day you die you will be fighting your enemy within and without. It does not imply finality either. There is a need for change and growth daily; it is a process you are embarking on.

Loveliness of appearance is not necessary either. The vessels in the Temple were called Holy vessels but with use had become dented and were not pristine. Many Christians become worn around the edges in their Christian life. We do not need to claim to be sinless and perfect. 1 John 1:10 says that if you claim to have sinless perfection you are a liar and you are calling God a liar because He calls you a sinner. All believers are not going to be lovely to look at or to be with. However if they are set apart for service; they are all holy vessels. We are all on a path, the road to service and we need to keep our eyes on Him. God loves us dents and all, but totally dedicated to Him.

All believers are at a different level of maturity and therefore different levels of service. The more you grow spiritually the more you are able to grow spiritually. God's rewards are on the basis of growth and the service that becomes possible through the growth. You need to grow so that you can glorify the Lord in time. The only way you can do that is by being controlled by the Holy Spirit. You are all saints but some of you are more mature than others and spend more time in fellowship. Those who grow in “saintliness” gain great rewards whilst those who do not miss out on what God has for them.

The more yielded you become to the Holy Spirit the more “saintly” you become. Remember the concept of saintly does not mean proud, arrogant, self righteous, but totally devoted to the love and service of the Lord and focused upon his glory working through every aspect of your life. If you are going to function as a member of the royal family of God (**1 Peter 2:9-10**) you need training as to how you are going to function and that training comes through the Holy Spirit's work upon the Word in your life. You must learn the lessons so that you can apply them in private and public.

When you are born again you become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. You enter into his royal family as a baby. The command is to grow in grace and the knowledge and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Unfortunately many just stay babies and do not grow up into full Christian adulthood. The Lord uses the baby, and uses the adolescent, but most of all he can use the mature adult Christian. You mature as you keep on feeding on God's Word and applying it into your life.

**THREE MAJOR AREAS OF SANCTIFICATION**

There are three main areas of sanctification:-

(a) **Positional Sanctification** - we have a position as a believer. We are in Christ Jesus. When you accept Him as your Saviour you are in God's sight a saint. You are baptised into Christ Jesus, you are a baby saint but you are still a saint. Now the question is, are you going to grow or stay a baby?

(b) **Experiential Sanctification** - as you grow in experience. This is as a result of yieldedness to God - Romans 12:1. We must separate from sin and commit ourselves to God. Sanctification is a state of freedom from sin as you focus on the work of the Holy Spirit within. As you learn to deal with sin in your soul you can commit yourself to God and study his Word and apply it more and more. It is a walk, not a destination.

God can use you as you dedicate more and more time to him. We are all in full time Christian service. Everything should be dedicated to God. Time is time you never have again. It is the little things that are to be done in a Christ like way. We should set every part of our Christian life aside for the Lord. We have to ask when we are confronted with any decision as to whether we can set that function aside for the Lord, or use this for the Lord. Everything is brought into captivity to worship and service. If you cannot bring glory to God through a thing in your life, you should challenge yourself regarding it, as all bona fide things are able to be done to the glory of God.

(c) **Ultimate Sanctification** occurs in eternity where the Lord sets us apart in resurrection body to be his servants forever. We get a new body and lose our old sinful nature.

The Holy Spirit enters us into union with Christ at the point of salvation. He also does the work in experiential sanctification. We are given the fruit of the Spirit as a result of His control on our life. In Ultimate sanctification God does the work and we are able to enjoy it forever. It is a grace path all the way.

We have some thing to praise the Lord for every day. Most Christians are unaware of this because it is not taught systematically. We need to become mature sons and daughters of God. We should praise Him for what he has done, what He is doing and what He will do. In Sanctification we have the combination of salvation and spiritual growth.

If you decide not to go the sanctification way and grow spiritually you will come under divine discipline as per Hebrews 12 and you miss out on the best God has for you now and forever.

**DOCTRINES**

**SANCTIFICATION**

1. Sanctification means to be made holy - to be set apart unto God. One who is sanctified is called a saint.
2. We are sanctified (made holy) in Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 1:2)
3. Sanctification is in three stages:
  - a) Stage 1 At salvation - union with Christ - positional sanctification. (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 1:1-7)
  - b) Stage 2 Christian way of life - filling of the Holy Spirit - spirituality. (Romans 16:2; 1 Corinthians 1-2)
  - c) Stage 3 Resurrection body - In heaven - Ultimate sanctification. (1 John 3:2)
4. Our position in Christ entitles us to share Christ's righteousness. It therefore
  - a) protects us from divine judgment. (Romans 8:1)
  - b) qualifies us to live with God forever.
  - c) makes us a new creature in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
  - d) guarantees eternal security for every believer. (Romans 8:38, 39)
5. However, because we still have the old sin nature, we will still sin during this life (Romans 7:21) When controlled by his carnal nature, however the believer is positionally sanctified but experientially carnal.
6. When we receive the resurrection body, we no longer sin - our sanctification will be complete (1 Corinthians 15:56, Philippians 3:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:23)

**AMBASSADORSHIP**

1. An Ambassador does not appoint themselves, they are appointed by the nation they represent, the king represented. We are appointed by God. (2 Corinthians 5:20).
2. An Ambassador does not support himself. We are sustained and protected by God (Philippians 4:19).
3. An Ambassador does not represent himself. We represent God on earth. (Matthew 28:19-20).
4. An Ambassador does not belong to the nation to which he is sent. Positionally we are in heaven, experientially we are in the world. (Philippians 3:20, John 15:19).
5. All Ambassadors have instructions in written form. We have the Word of God. (1 Thessalonians 4:1-2).
6. An Ambassador representing his country does not treat any insult as personal. (Matthew 5:11-12).
7. When an Ambassador is recalled from a country it is tantamount to declaration of war. After the Rapture there will be massive warfare on earth. All Christians will be recalled at the Rapture. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

**LESSON 46-47 – ASSURANCE OF THE BELIEVER**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
46/47	Assurance and the Believer	1 John 5:1-15	Grace Eternal Security

**INTRODUCTION**

In **1 John 5:1-15**, it is of interest that the apostles are not hesitant about their position, they boldly assert their position. They stand on certitudes, the certainty of all aspects of their faith in God's Word. We must have the same assurance as the apostles had.

In this passage one thing that comes through all the way is confidence. There is final and full assurance here. If you love the Lord you love those who love the Lord. If you do not there is something wrong with your Christian life.

If you ask for things from the Lord in faith you know that you have got these prayer promises. **Mark 11:22-26**. This is based on God's Holy Word and what the Holy Spirit has said through the Old Testament. We also have the inner testimony of the life. The Word is God breathed, and your life is Holy Spirit empowered, and the life that God gives is characterized by love for God and the brethren. **Galatians 5:22-26**.

**SALVATION AND ASSURANCE**

If you know God's Word then you know the true nature of your salvation and so you have stability. Everything in the Christian life depends on the confidence you have in the true nature of your salvation. If you do not know whether you are saved or not you cannot do anything because your feet are on the sand and not on the rock.

Assurance begins with confidence in your salvation. You must know that you are saved and you continue to be. We are in Christ, He is in us; we believe this on the basis of Scripture and therefore we have a basis of stability to face trouble. We are built upon the Rock and that Rock is the person and work of Christ.

We need to look at the nature of salvation, the importance of the testimony of the light that God has given us in the Word, the promises of God's Word, and why do people fail, and then look at God's remedy for such failure.

In the Word it is pointed out that everything depends on the all sufficiency of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross for you. All the work for salvation is God's. If you understand that Jesus Christ died for you, and all the work is God's, you can have assurance of your eternal salvation, for you see it depends upon Him and he is dependable. As soon as a person trusts the Lord as their Saviour they are resting upon the Rock of Ages.

Often doubt regarding the assurance of salvation is based on the lack of complete understanding of what the Lord has done for them. There are over 85 New Testament passages regarding God's saving grace. You believe in Him, you receive the benefits that salvation gives you because it depends on him.

**BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.**

You have to cast yourself at the Saviour's feet. You can do nothing for your salvation. It is a grace action as our salvation depends on Him. He is the one who is worthy. "Holy, holy, holy thou alone art worthy". In the book of the Revelation it is clear that the Lamb alone is worthy and this blessing is given many times.

Where people lack assurance it is because they get their eyes off the one who is worthy, and on to the one who is not worthy, you. You must be born again. Once you are born you cannot be unborn. This is the same with your salvation; you cannot "unborn yourself".

You need to do a stock check of your life against the Scriptures. Is there unconfessed sin in your life? Is there depression? Is there something which is robbing you of your spiritual joy? These things do not change your salvation status, any more than being sick changes the fact that you are born of your earthly parents. These things rob you of the joy of your salvation, but not the reality of it.

The first question to get the worried believer to ask them self is, are you saved? Did you at one point in your life accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? If they say "no", then of course they have to be saved and they need to bow now before the Cross and accept the Lord as their Saviour. If they are still depressed, ask them, are you aware of conviction of sin in your life? If there is clear sin to be dealt with, then Confession of sin under the concept of 1 John 1:9 is the answer.

Another question to ask the worried believer is, whether there is any fruit in their life? In Galatians 5 we have a quick "check list" the fruit of the OSN as well as the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We all either have a testimony to the power of the OSN or the Holy Spirit in our life. What are the dominant traits of your life? **Galatians 5:16-26, Romans 9:16-23, Philippians 1:9-11, James 3:17-18, 5:1-6.** We need to walk in the Spirit and talk to the Lord through each and every day. The result of ignoring prayer and the Word is powerlessness, with doubts and sin, but the result of walking in the Holy Spirit's power in the Word and prayer daily is sanctification.

#### **EIGHT RESULTS OF GENUINE LIVING FAITH IN THE LIFE**

The presence of the fruits of the Spirit is evidence of spirituality, and demonstrates to all the fact that you are saved. Ninety percent of people who come to you for guidance will be depressed. They may blame it on the family, your sermons, or the children. However it is far more likely to be in the area of carnality, or ignorance in their own life. Encourage them back into the habit of prayer and bible study and get them to allow the Holy Spirit to have free reign within them.

The eight results of faith in the life are:-

- [1] The knowledge of God as our heavenly Father, and a new depth in prayer as a result.
- [2] A new reality in prayer, for you pray with assurance and confidence to God thanking him for his answers.
- [3] A new ability to understand Scripture, the Word of God leaps out of the page at you.
- [4] A new sense of sinfulness. The Holy Spirit is shining as light in the corners of your life. He has a broom and wants to clean it out. It is up to you to let him.
- [5] A desire for the lost. You will have a burden for your unsaved relatives and friends. Sometimes the Lord has to take some of them to hell before you realise the full implications of this.
- [6] A new love for the saved and a desire for corporate as well as private worship.
- [7] The manifestation of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- [8] A combined experience of the Christian life brings a realisation of salvation through faith in Christ.

As you mature you will be able to say with the apostle Paul that you are confident that He is able to keep that which you have committed against that day. Unfortunately most churches have not got the Bible teaching that is going to ground the Lord's people and stabilize them. We need to be saturated in the Word. Paul was a sick man for much of his life but he was not depressed about that, nor finally worried when he was to be executed. Had he believed the so called "prosperity gospel" he would have been truly depressed, but he saw such a thing as a lie, and he held to the truth; so must we!

You must accept the truth of God's Word. The Word is a title deed for eternity. God's Word is what He has promised to do for you forever. The people that do not know what is going to happen to them in the future have a low view of Scripture. We need to have a high view of Scripture and the person who has written it. We need to have the view that this is God's title deed over our life. God has put His seal on it. Is it true? You can bet your eternal life on it, as the Word of God lasts forever. It is critical to trust the Lord rather than your changeable feelings.

#### **CHRISTIANS AND DECISIONS**

Christians make decisions all the time. You determine the value of each day by the commitment of that day to God or other purposes. Lack of Assurance is common among slack, lazy or undisciplined Christians. If they are not sure if they have been born again, explain the gospel to them again. Get them to sign a "title deed" (Affirmation of Faith) again. This is not good theology, but it is effective practice. Often people add things to salvation such as coming to the front or casting yourself at the foot of the altar. This is not required; belief in Christ and his work for you is all that is required, but if coming to the front of the church helps, let them do that. You can express that belief any way that helps you move forward.

Some groups have a theological system, which says that you can be saved and lost. How can you prepare a sermon if you do not know if you are saved or not, or will be saved at the time of the message? They get doubts and confusion out of the theology. When your theology throws open your status with the Lord Jesus Christ then there is something wrong with your theology. Ground yourself on the Biblical assurance of your salvation and work from there.

If you walk in disobedience you can do some very bad things. Encourage your people to use 1 John 1:9. David had murdered, lied, committed adultery and had been out of fellowship for a year, yet he was forgiven. His confession is given in Psalm 51, and Psalm 103. The Lord forgives and restores. He does not cast us away!

Assurance gives people opportunity to trust God again even if they cannot trust themselves. The believer's assurance is based on the Scriptures - 1 John 5:13 - those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ know that they have eternal life. We know that we have eternal life because it is written; we have his word on it. We know that we have passed out of death into life. John 8:51-58. We know that we are the children of God due to the witness of the Spirit. We obtain assurance by taking God's Word seriously.

We believe by God's testimony – by faith in the Word, not our shifting feelings. Hebrews 4:1-12. In assurance we should live out a life of love not only in witness, but in living it. This is one of the things that Satan does not want believers to understand. When you understand how great your salvation is you are going to be stable. Some are unstable however because they have never really done business with God in salvation, they have just played at church for years. Such religious unbelievers need the Gospel indeed, but sadly their religion has often hardened their heart. As Dr McGee said, he believed in the eternal security of the believer, and the eternal insecurity of the make believer. Let us be real!

This subject generates a lot of heat and very little light between the Calvinists and Arminians. The Bible states that you and your salvation are absolutely secure forever; that having accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour you have eternal life. It began at the moment you were saved and it will go on forever. The Calvinist maintains that this is the case, whereas the Arminians do not believe the doctrine. Even within the two camps there are variations with the five point Calvinists differing from the moderate Calvinists who are also different to the moderate Arminian.

The greatest of all the Arminians were the two Wesleys, John and Charles, and they were godly and powerfully used of the Lord, far more than any of us have ever been! We at EBCWA believe however, that it is confusion for you if you believe you go in and out of salvation when you sin, rather than in and out of spirituality. The need is to deal with sin, not get re-saved every day. Having differed with both camps, we still believe that we can learn from the great men and women on both sides! Remember that spiritual superiority and arrogance are signs of sin, not correctness! We may differ with these people but we recognize them as our brethren and we hold our position between them in humility.

## **ETERNAL SECURITY**

Eternal security is the work of God which guarantees that the gift of salvation once received is forever and cannot be lost. The concept of eternal security emphasises the eternal possession of the gift of eternal life.

Eternal security emphasises God's activity in guaranteeing the possession of the gift and relates to those who the Holy Spirit regenerates, and it is truth that does not rest on feelings or experience. Preservation is quite similar to eternal security in emphasising the work of God in preserving the believer in salvation, and keeping them thereafter.

## **CALVIN AND ARMINIUS**

The hard Calvinist emphasises the perseverance of the saints. Some people who approach the subject in this way reject the concept of the Christian ever being carnal, and as we have seen that brings in dangerous perfectionism and denial of sinfulness, that can make a person hard and critical. We aim at Christ-likeness, with its godly fruits, not harshness.

The moderate Calvinist however stresses the work of God in the life of the saints. It is clear that the believer can sin and be carnal, but not lose their salvation. We would agree mostly with their position.

Jacob Arminius was born four years before Calvin died. He was asked to defend the concept that the Christian cannot fall or lapse. But as a result he became a person who believed that the Christian can fall and lose their salvation. His theology formed the basis of the Methodist Church as well as many of the Pentecostal denominations.

He believed that God in His fore knowledge saw who was going to accept the Lord Jesus Christ in time and fore knew and chose them. Here Arminius said that foreknowledge preceded election whilst John Calvin said that election came

first. Arminius believed that the human race had been polluted by Adam, but that they had not received imputed guilt. He therefore denied the doctrine of total depravity and imputation.

Calvin however said that man was incapable of turning to God without the work of God, whilst Arminius believed that we could become perfect. Arminians often equate the doctrine of eternal security with the view that those who hold this feel that they have a licence to sin. He was very concerned about holiness in the life, but sadly did not see that gratitude to the Lord and love will be better motives for purity than fear of losing your salvation. As we have already discussed before, both camps fall into a philosophical "category mistake"; they speak of the character and decisions of God in eternity past in terms that are applicable to creatures of space and time, when God is the creator of space and time.

### **THE CHRISTIAN AND SIN**

We are all liable to sin. If you, knowing what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the Cross, can look the Lord in the eye and say, that you will see the Lord in eternity but that you are going to live a sin filled life now, you must question your knowledge of the Cross, or you may not be saved at all. You cannot throw yourself into a sinful life if you know what He has done for you. From a biblical perspective sin is an insult to love; God's love for you, demonstrated on the Cross.

If you are a pastor you must have a position on this subject of sin, forgiveness, and eternal security. Also you must preach it clearly from the pulpit, or you will have someone teaching weird things in the church and it will split the church in half. When you have a new convert you have to let them know if they are saved eternally or not so that they can be stabilized in the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. Alternatively you can tell them that they are saved now but will lose their salvation unless they follow your instructions. Such a thing is wrong, but sadly it is done by too many pastors.

### **REASONS FOR ETERNAL SECURITY:**

Eternal security is based on the grace of God and the fact that eternal life is a gift. When a person is born again they are put into a relationship with the Godhead which by its very nature means that it is secure. The reality of salvation is that we possess eternal life in Christ Jesus. Now there are those who profess they believe in Jesus but do not, and so do not possess life. The test of reality for the Christian is the fruitful life, a life that is imitating Christ. When we see what sin is and what it does to a relationship with God we will hate sin, flee from it, and utilize 1 John 1:9 to confess it so that our precious fellowship is broken for no longer than possible. We have to look closer at the doctrines of the Character of God and the nature of sin to really understand this principle of Christian living.

The Calvinistic approach is that sin does not affect your salvation but it affects your sanctification, so confession is required to restore fellowship. This is our position. Whereas Arminians say that every sin affects your salvation, and so you have to confess the sin to again receive your salvation status.

While most believers in Christ accept the doctrine that they can have assurance of salvation at any given moment in their experience, the question is often raised, "Can a person once saved become lost again?" Since the fear of losing salvation could seriously affect a believer's peace of mind, and because our future is so vital, this question is a most important aspect of the doctrine of salvation.

The claim that one who is once saved may be lost again is based on certain biblical passages that seem to raise questions concerning the continuance of salvation. In the history of the church, there have been opposing systems of interpretation known as Calvinism, in support of eternal security, and Arminianism, in opposition to eternal security (each named after its foremost proponent, John Calvin or Jacob Arminius).

### **Arminian View of Security**

As many as eighty-five passages are listed by those holding the Arminian view as establishing the doctrine of conditional security. Among these, the more important passages are as follows:

Matthew 5:13; 6:23; 7:16-19; 13:1-8; 18:23-35; 24:4-5, 11, 13, 23,26; 25:1-13; Luke 8:11-15; 11:24-28; Luke 12:42-46; John 6:66-71; 8:31-32, 51; 13:8; 15:1-6; Acts 5:32; 11:21-23; 13:43; 14:21-22; Romans 6:11-23; 8:12-17; 11:20-22; 14:15-23; 1 Corinthians 9:23-27; 10:1-21; 11:29-32; 15:1-2; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 11:2-4; 12:21 - 13:5; Galatians 2:12-16; 3:4 - 4:1; 5:1-4; 6: 7-9; Colossians 1:21-23; 2:4-8,18-19; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Timothy 1:3-7,18-20; 2:11-15; 4:1-16; 5:5-15; 6:9-12,17-21; 2 Timothy 2:11-18, 22-26; 3:13-15; Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:6-19; 4:1-16; 5:8-9; 6:4-20; 10:19-39; 11:13-16; 12:1-17, 25-29; 13:7-17; James 1:12- 26; 2:14-26; 4:4-10; 5:19-20; 1 Peter 5:9,13; 2 Peter 1:5-11; 2:1-22; 3:16-17; 1 John 1:5-3:11; 5:4-16; 2 John 6-9; Jude 5-12, 20-21; Revelation 2:7,10-11,17-26; 3:4-5, 8-22; 12:11; 17:14; 21:7- 8; 22:18-19.

A study of these passages involves a number of important questions.

1. The most important question facing a Christian is, who is a true believer? Many of the passages quoted as apparently "losing salvation" deal with human works, or the lack of evidence of salvation. If you are saved there should be spiritual results, so if there are no results it will mean that either you are either not saved, or you are habitually carnal. You can be in Christ, yet through an unfaced and unconfessed sin be temporarily in carnality.

2. Many of the passages quoted by those who oppose eternal security deal with human works or the evidence of genuine salvation - Luke 11:24-26, John 8:31, 15:6, 1 Corinthians 15:1-2, Hebrews 3:6-14, James 2:14-26, 2 Peter 1:10.
3. Many of the passages quoted are in the form of warnings against a superficial belief in Christ - Hebrews 10:26, Matthew 25:1-13, Romans 11:21, Many of the warnings regarding insecurity are warnings against superficiality. Satan believes and he trembles. He knows that Jesus is the Christ and that his judgment is sure. Salvation is not a matter of accepting a series of propositions. It is a matter of accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as loved Saviour and Lord.
4. Some of the passages deal with the matter of reward rather than the question of salvation - 1 Corinthians 3:15, Colossians 1:21-23, 1 Corinthians 9:27. Rewards are not related to salvation but to sanctification. The Bible tells us that we will be rewarded in heaven for what we have done on earth in time. The Bible tells that you can lose rewards but that you will still be in heaven in a resurrection body, just minus the rewards that your spirituality could have won.
5. A genuine Christian may also lose his fellowship with God because of sin [1 John 1:6] and be deprived of some of the present benefits of being saved, such as having the fruit of the spirit [Galatians 5:22-23], and enjoying the satisfaction of effective service for Christ. When a Christian loses fellowship such a loss will not cause you to lose salvation, but will result in loss of joy.
6. A true believer because of his waywardness may be disciplined, just as a child is disciplined by his father [John 15:2, 1 Corinthians 11:29-32, 1 John 5:16] and this may even be to the point of the sin unto death. Once a child you are always a child. Chastening as stated in the Bible would indicate discipline within the family, not rejection from the family; loss of reward and fruit, rather than loss of salvation. You may not be the type of son that God would like you to be but nevertheless you remain a child of God – as no child can be unborn.
7. According to Scripture it is also possible for a Christian to fall from grace. Galatians 5:1-4. It is possible to fall from grace; that is from a grace standard of living, to a legalistic type of living. Your life is inferior, but you are still a child.
8. The verses relating to other dispensations than the Church Age are the most difficult ones. The Old Testament does not give a clear view of eternal security although based on the New Testament texts it is clear that the Old Testament saint was as secure as their New Testament sister/brother.
9. Other passages refer to false and unregenerate teachers of the last days - 1 Timothy 4:1-2, 2 Peter 2:1-22, Jude 17-19.
10. There is also simple misinterpretation. For example, "He who remains to the end will be saved". Here in context we have the period of the Great Tribulation period leading up to the Second Advent, and this salvation talks about physical deliverance rather than spiritual regeneration.

These verses above are quoted in most of the Pentecostal and Wesleyan groups. You need to look at this subject very systematically and mull over it. You need to be able to defend your position. If you are not ready to do so you are not ready to be a pastor-teacher. You should defend your position in a spirit of love and tolerance also = fruit of the Spirit.

In the ancient world the seal was a guarantee for protection. We are sealed by the work of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit guarantees our security. We can grieve the Spirit, we can quench the Spirit, but we believe we can never lose the Holy Spirit.

### **THE ULTIMATE QUESTION**

The ultimate question is, who is responsible for your salvation? Is it you or is it God? If you have done something for your salvation you can lose it, but if it is God who provided it, earned it, and in grace gave it, then you cannot lose it. We are weak sinners saved by grace. What God does works, what I do sometimes does not. God's covenant on salvation is unconditional. He is infinite in his power to love and to keep. He died for the whole world. Your salvation rests on the righteousness and justice of God, and as such, rests on safe ground. **Romans 8:38,39.**

The Son went to the Cross as the absolute sacrifice for all of us. Did his death work 100% or didn't it?

Your attitude here will determine your attitude to anxiety and also evangelism. What was the effect of the resurrection, his advocacy in heaven? Why would he take your case if you were going to be lost in five minutes time? If you are born again you cannot be unborn. You are born again "from above" in the Greek, and this means God's power does it not yours. You also have the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit together with baptism of the Spirit and his sealing to the day of redemption.

Taken as a whole salvation is a work of God and not of man. It rests on the power and faithfulness of God, not on the faith and strength of man.

It should be noted that the Arminian view, that a person can be perfect, is the basis of the Prosperity doctrine of some Pentecostal churches. This can also give the pastor huge control over the congregation. It also tends to give a very

narrow view and definition of sin. We should look at the Cross and what was done there as central in all this subject. If that does not stimulate us to stability and service nothing will.

Let us be very careful in our understanding and teaching of the above things, and recognize that good people differ on these things. Have a position and teach it clearly, and judge yourself by the godly fruit amongst your people. Disagree with others, but never fall out with godly people over this – remember Wesley and Whitfield. Refer to book 270, "The Fruit of the Great Awakening".

## **DOCTRINES**

### **GRACE**

1. Grace is all that God is free to do for man on the basis of the cross. Therefore Grace is unmerited favour from God.
2. Grace depends on the character of God therefore Grace depends on who and what God is. Grace is what God can do for man and still be true to his own character.
3. The believer must recognise the difference between legalism and grace. Legalism is man's work intruding upon the plan of God.
4. The greatest thing God can do for the saved person is to make him exactly like His Son Jesus Christ. This is accomplished in three stages of sanctification.
5. Positional Sanctification: At Salvation every believer enters into union with Christ. (Hebrews 1:2) Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father and is therefore superior to all angels in his humanity. At the point of salvation we are entered into union with Christ thus we are positionally higher than angels. We are positionally seated with Christ at God's right hand.
6. Experiential Sanctification: During the Christian's life on the earth the time spent under the power of the Holy Spirit. During this time we produce the character of God in our lives - gold, silver, precious stones. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
7. Ultimate Sanctification: When the believer receives a resurrection body he loses the sin nature and all human good. At this point the believer is physically superior to all angels. He remains in this perfect state eternally.
8. All believers have tasted of Grace at least once (1 Peter 2:3). This refers to the point of Salvation at which the believer receives at least 34 things which he did not earn or deserve. (Ephesians 2:8, 9) Disorientation to grace is the believer's greatest occupational hazard in his Christian life. (Galatians 5:4, Hebrews 12:15)
9. The divine attitude to grace is expressed in (Isaiah 30:18, 19) God is constantly waiting to pour out his blessing on all believers in the Christian life.
10. Grace in salvation is expressed in many ways. It is always the same - believing in Jesus Christ (Psalm 103:8-12, Romans 3:23-4, Romans 4:4, 5:20, Ephesians 2:8, 9)
11. There are many ways in which the Christian life expresses GRACE:
  - a) Prayer (Hebrews 4:16)
  - b) Suffering (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10)
  - c) Growth (2 Peter 3:18)
  - d) Stability (1 Peter 5:12)
  - e) Lifestyle (Hebrews 12:28, 2 Corinthians 1:12)
  - f) Production of Divine Good (1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 6:1)
12. Grace is the correct attitude in relation to giving. (2 Corinthians 8 & 9)
13. Grace is the only means of coping with suffering in the Christian life. (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) Through Grace God is able to bless the believer in the midst of the pressures and adversities of life. (1 Peter 1:6,7)
14. Implications of grace:
  - a) God is perfect, his plan is perfect.
  - b) A perfect plan can only originate from a perfect God.
  - c) If man could do anything in the plan of God the plan would no longer be perfect.
  - d) A plan is no stronger than its weakest link. Grace therefore excludes all human merit, all human ability.
  - e) Legalism, human works is the enemy of Grace.
  - f) The works of human righteousness have therefore no place in the plan of God. (Isaiah 64:6)



**ETERNAL SECURITY**

1. When a person truly trusts Jesus Christ for salvation, he is saved forever. He cannot lose his salvation.
2. **POSITIONAL APPROACH** (Romans 8:38-39)  
We are united with Christ ("in Christ"). Absolutely nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ.
3. **LOGICAL APPROACH** (Romans 8:32, Romans 5)  
As unbelievers we are enemies of God (Romans 5), as believers we are his children. If he did the most for his enemies what will he do for his children? This excludes loss of salvation for he saved us while we were his enemies.
4. **GOD'S HANDS APPROACH** (John 10:28, Psalm 37:24)  
Neither shall anyone seize them out of my hand. God is all powerful.
5. **EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH** (2 Timothy 2:12-13)  
If we deny Christ He is going to deny us rewards (context=suffering and rewards). If we renounce Him, HE REMAINS FAITHFUL. The believer is in Christ and Christ indwells the believer. He cannot deny Himself.
6. **THE FAMILY APPROACH** (Galatians 3:26, John 1:12)  
When you believe in Christ you are born again as a child of God. You cannot be unborn, once a child always a child.
7. **THE INHERITANCE APPROACH** (1 Peter 1:4-5)  
We have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God. Perfect tense - it will always be reserved, since it is kept by God, not us.
8. **THE SOVEREIGNTY APPROACH** (2 Peter 3:9, Jude 24)  
He is not willing that any should perish - refers to the whole human race (2 Peter 3:9) Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling (from perishing). Once you are saved, it is His will that you don't perish.
9. **THE BODY APPROACH** (1 Corinthians 12:21, Colossians 1:18)  
Christ is the head, we are the members of the body. If any are lost, the body of Christ is incomplete.
10. **THE GREEK TENSE APPROACH** (Ephesians 2:8-9)  
"For by Grace are ye saved". Perfect tense of the verb "sozo". For by Grace have you been saved in the past so that you go on being saved forever.
11. **THE SEALING MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT APPROACH** (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30)  
In the ancient world the seal was a guarantee for protection. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit guarantees our security.

**LESSON 48 – THE FUTURE DESTINY OF BELIEVERS**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
48	Future Destiny of Believers	1 Thess 4:13-18 1 Cor15:16-23, 39-54 2 Cor 5:1-11, 18-20 1 Cor 3:10-17	Rewards and Crowns Destiny of Believers Eternal Life

**INTRODUCTION**

Every time you open God's Word it is to be a worship service. In **Matthew 11:28-30**, we have the commitment of the Christian. In salvation there is an offer for forgiveness from the penalty of sin but also the requirement of accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord of your life. We are told to take his yoke upon us and serve Him in worship and helping others.

**THE YOKE**

In the ancient world when an army was defeated the survivors could be required to pass under the yoke of an Oxen to show that they were slaves forever. They were in bondage to the people group that had defeated them in war. Christ is saying that you must recognise Him as your Lord. Paul in his letters often recognized himself as the "doulos" or bond slave of Christ. Such a slave was never free again.

The Lord Jesus Christ says that His "yoke is easy and his burden is light". Matthew 11:28-30. In this relationship you will find rest in your soul. If you have Jesus Christ as your Lord you will find that His yoke is a perfect fit for you.

In the ancient world the carpenter made yokes. The farmer would bring his oxen in for measurement by the carpenter so that the yoke that was made was individually suited to the particular ox. The ox in the ancient world was a very valuable item for farming, the equivalent of a tractor on a modern farm. By implication the Lord is saying that if you are a slave for Him, the yoke or burden which you have to bear is both light and perfectly suited to you. His plan for us is a perfect plan for us. This also supports the concept of security and when taught will strengthen the believer's sense of stability.

1 Corinthians 10:13 shows that there is nothing in your life as a Christian which is too burdensome for you or that you will not have resources provided to cope with. We therefore have to bow before Him in relation to salvation but also in regards to the Lordship of Christ.

Theology is learning just how simple the Lordship of Christ is. If you understand the character of God you will realise just how wonderful the Lord Jesus Christ is. "Learn of me", he says.

**THE CHRISTIAN'S DESTINY**

What is your destiny when you die; where are you going? There is a possibility that you may not die, as there will be a day when the Lord will come for His church. You will then be raised incorruptible having not passed through death. The other possibility is that you will die. The early church lived in this awareness as they thought their generation would be the one that saw the return of the Lord. Later as time passed, they lost the concept of the imminence of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Some Christians started dying and the question then arose as to whether these people would miss out on the resurrection. Their questions were answered, so that believers can now, with doctrine to guide them, face death or the Rapture of the Church – whatever it is for them. We should be living our lives in the light and expectancy that the Lord may return for us today or tomorrow, or that death may take us at any time. God's purpose is that either option for us is relaxing into the arms of Jesus.

The early church had a living awareness of the imminence of the Rapture, which is why they turned the world upside down in a generation. A study of prophecy in the church is still very valuable as long as it has this application. Every point that is made should be able to be applied in your life. Do you believe that the Lord is coming? What would you do if you knew he was coming back tomorrow? If you wish to argue about prophecy you know nothing about prophecy. Prophecy purifies the heart and life, and brings focus and urgency to your work for the Lord.

In **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** the Rapture of the Church is described. If your view of this topic is a strengthener of your faith you are likely to be on the right track. If however your understanding destroys your faith you are likely to be wrong. All true doctrine will comfort, encourage, and strengthen you for more service. Paul says, not to worry about those who have died, they are going to be raised, and they are going to be first. Do not think that they are missing out, as the dead have precedence in the Rapture.

Rapture is the anglicized word of the Latin word "rapere", which is from the Vulgate translation of this passage. It is the word for "caught up". That passage to the Thessalonian church answered their question, but it was not long before other problems arose. To the Greeks the body was bad and the spirit of man alone was good. The Greek attitude was that they looked forward to death so that they would leave the body and enter the spirit world. Greece, Cyprus and Crete as well as a lot of Asia Minor was influenced by this Greek culture. Many of the people were looking forward to their body going into the ground. They didn't want any bodily resurrection – such an idea was abhorrent to them.

The liberals teach the spiritual resurrection of Christ which is a Greek philosophical idea. As those who follow the apostolic faith however we believe in a physical bodily resurrection. Paul explained that as the Lord rose physically we will rise physically as well. We will have a body just like the Son of God had, and when he first taught this to the Corinthians they were not happy about it.

**THE REALITY OF THE RESURRECTION**

The second problem raised by the Greeks is covered by **1 Corinthians 15:16ff** in that if the dead rise not, then we are among men the most miserable, as the most deceived. Study this passage in the EBCWA Corinthians study.

Paul very bluntly tells the Corinthians that if they do not believe in the physical resurrection from the dead, then they do not believe in the physical bodily resurrection of Christ, and consequently Paul doubts if they are saved at all. This is just how foundational the resurrection doctrine is. If the Lord did not rise, then you are still in your sin, for only the resurrection proves the success of the work upon the Cross. If he is not raised he didn't defeat sin and death, and so He is not your Saviour; if you have no Saviour there is no salvation for you.

The liberals today state that the Lord died as an example on the Cross giving the principle of sacrifice on the Cross. This is false. The truth is that the Lord died on the Cross, being made sin for us. He died as the substitutionary sacrifice for us all. The resurrection proved that the death was efficacious = that it had worked and sin and death were defeated.

He died as our substitute, and we believe the sacrifice worked, and it all hinges on the reality of the resurrection. The reality of what is going to happen to you is already tied to the reality of what has happened to the Lord Jesus Christ.

If Satan can rob the believer of the faith that they have in the resurrection of Christ it will undermine their faith. When they begin to deny the resurrection they start to drift into all sorts of heresies and problems.

**“SOUL SLEEP” NOT CORRECT AFTER DEATH**

People that have just died often look as if they are asleep. When you go to bed at night you look to get up in the morning. Paul uses the concept of sleep right the way through his discussion of death/resurrection. He notes that when you die you expect a resurrection body at the resurrection/rapture of the Church. Very quickly however we see that the dead person is not “asleep”, for they go cold and rigid, then rot away, but their body will be brought back in a new form at the resurrection.

Good older books on this subject include "Evidence that Demands a Verdict", by Josh McDowell (Revised) and, "Who Moved the Stone", by Frank Morrison, or Lee Strobel's books. We follow the faith of the apostles who believed in the literal bodily resurrection of Christ and the future resurrection of all believers to everlasting life, and the unbeliever to judgment.

**“REST IN PEACE” (RIP)**

One of the concepts in modern day cults is “soul sleep”. This doctrine is included in many groups such as the Christadelphians, Seventh Day Adventists, and even some amongst the Roman Catholics. Many tombstones have the words RIP on them. What is “resting in peace” under the tombstone, it is a body which is rotting away, often in acidic soils to nothing left except dispersed minerals in the earth. If it is a believer the body is “sowed” awaiting the resurrection of the dead to receive their new body to enjoy God forever, if an unbeliever they are waiting the resurrection of the damned. Their body's are under the ground decaying, but where are “they” waiting? Paul uses sleep as an analogy for death, but only referring to the body. If the body of the Christian is laid down in the grave you lay it down so that you might “get up again” in the morning of resurrection, but as a conscious being, where are you one moment after death?

In both **Philippians 1:23-24** and **2 Corinthians 5:6-8**, Paul records that he expected the moment he died to see the Lord. “Absent from the body, face to face with the Lord”. The moment you die that very moment you are face to face with Him. All the grave marks is where the old body lays and where the new body will be received, but the moment you die you are in heaven with the Lord, it is just that there is a delay until you receive the full resurrection body, for that comes with the Lord's return to earth. It is a practical doctrine. What should this do for our behaviour?

We should always think of the Lord at our side. This cuts out a lot of things. If you have the Lord with you, you have a “built in” radar against evil and sin. When you are in fellowship with Jesus sin and evil are felt differently and in the Holy Spirit's power they can be resisted. If you were going to have tea with the Lord today what sort of day would you like to have led up to it? It wouldn't be a day filled with sin!

Our future state in resurrection body like our Lord's is clearly very much better than our present state. What form are we in with the Lord while we wait for that? If we are to receive our resurrection bodies, like the Lord's body at his return what form are we going to be in until that moment? Are the believers in heaven in the form of ghosts? Paul has been in heaven for 1900 years, so what form is he in?

**2 Corinthians 5** tells us that they are there in some form of body in eternity. No problem that a member of your church can raise for an answer has not been raised before. The Scriptures make it clear that we will be “clothed” at all times. You have an interim body in heaven to fellowship with others and the Lord until you receive an eternal body at the moment of the rapture/resurrection of the church.

In **2 Corinthians 5:1-5** the Corinthians want to know that we are going to recognise others up there. We do not want to be little ghosts floating around without knowing our loved ones or ancestors. God has prepared a resurrection body and prepared something in the interim as well. There will be recognition of others according to Paul's revelation.

**2 Corinthians 5:6 and following** shows that however long we have to wait, we will have an interim body while we wait in heaven for the day of resurrection. We will eventually receive a resurrection body in the geographic location where the physical body had been laid, or was destroyed.

Where you are buried is therefore important, if you can select it, as you are deciding the company you are going to keep in the resurrection. Abraham and his family made sure that they were buried together. If you are a minister at a funeral this is a mighty preaching point if the person is a Christian.

**THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**

At the judgment seat of Christ there are special rewards. In the Roman Empire the receipt of a crown meant several hundred acres of land and a vast fortune, as well as a title that you took to your grave with you. A reference to “Crowns” as rewards is a very special thing for us to consider – and it is what they meant in Paul's day that is to guide us.

The Crown of Righteousness is for those who are expectantly awaiting his appearing - 2 Timothy 4:8.

The Crown of Glory - 1 Peter 5:1-4 - this is for ministers, Bible teachers and others who faithfully teach the flock that has been given them.

Kingdom blessings is another category – John 14:1-6, James 2:5, Luke 22:28,29; 12:32 - God has vast estates which he wants believers to share in forever. Biblical language indicates areas of responsibility and blessing eternally.

When we come to the Lord we will cast the crowns at his feet and He will tell us to pick them up and wear them for eternity to proclaim His glory.

We have been given the opportunity to win the crown of life. The Christians who were about to die for their faith used to thank God that they had been given the opportunity to be a martyr for Him and so win the crown of life. Christians have the challenge of all athletes and soldiers, to serve, to run our earthly race in a manner that is worthy to win the prizes which are the crowns. We have to do all things for his honour and so we will spend eternity testifying to his grace.

For a believer it is better to be buried than cremated, as cremation is associated in the past with paganism, but even cremation does not hinder in any way the resurrection. After a few hundred years all bodies disappear into the earth; there is no difference between burial and cremation regarding the remains that may be left there. Don't get hung up on things that would limit you as if you were organizing the resurrection; **you are not**, God is! It doesn't matter how a body is disposed of, God will raise that person from the dead re-assembling the atoms in a new and exciting way, and none will escape the resurrection – be it for glory, or for judgment. Revelation 20:10-15.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **REWARDS AND CROWNS**

1. Rewards and Salvation are carefully separated in the scriptures. Salvation is a free gift from God, rewards are for meritorious service in the power of the Spirit.
2. Salvation - a free gift to the lost. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23, John 4:10) - an everlasting possession. (John 3:36, John 5:24, John 6:47)
3. Rewards - to the saved who faithfully work for the Lord. (1 Corinthians 9:24, 25, Revelation 22:12) - distributed at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:10)
4. Rewards as Crowns:-
  - a) The incorruptible crown - for faithfulness in exercising self control. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
  - b) The crown of glory - for faithfulness in suffering. (1 Peter 5:4)
  - c) The crown of life - for faithfulness under trial. (James 1:12, Revelation 2:10)
  - d) The crown of righteousness - for faithful testimony. (2 Timothy 4:8)
  - e) The crown of rejoicing - for faithful service. (1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Philipians 4:1)

### **DESTINY OF BELIEVERS**

1. He who believes in Jesus Christ has eternal life now. (1 John 5:11-13). He will never die. (John 11:25,26, John 8:51).
2. Believers are said to "fall asleep" at their death (1 Thessalonians 4:14). The soul departs to be consciously present with Christ, but the body "sleeps" in the grave until the resurrection. (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).
3. When Christ comes at the Rapture, the bodies of those in Christ shall be raised from the dead. (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 1 Corinthians 15:20-23).
4. Our physical bodies will be replaced by immortal bodies (2 Corinthians 5:1-4) - conformed to the body of Christ (Philipians 3:20-21).
5. We shall be like him (1 John 3:2) seeing His glory and reflecting it in ourselves (Colossians 3:4, John 17:22).
6. We will be rewarded because of works of faith (Luke 19:12-19) which will vary in proportion to our faithfulness in serving God (Matthew 6:20, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15).
7. In the Millennial Kingdom, we shall reign with Christ as priests of God and Christ (Revelation 20:6).
8. To the overcomer (1 John 5:4-5) Christ will give to eat of the tree of life (Revelation 2:7) and shall not be hurt by the second death - the lake of fire (Revelation 2:11). He will be given authority to rule over nations (Revelation 2.26-27)

Jesus will acknowledge the believer before God (Revelation 3:4-5) who will be made a pillar in the temple of God. (Revelation 3:12) and will be seated with Christ in His own throne. (Revelation 3:21).

9. God will wipe away all tears from his eyes; sorrow, crying, pain, and death shall be no more (Revelation 21:4).
10. We shall know all things perfectly (1 Corinthians 13:12).
11. We will receive an incorruptible inheritance. (1 Peter 1:3-5) We are kept by our all powerful God in heaven.

**ETERNAL LIFE**

1. Mankind was created by God to enjoy fellowship with Him forever. 2 Peter 3:9.
2. Entry into eternal life is by faith in Christ John 3:36, 5:24, Acts 13:46, Galatians 6 :8, Matthew 25 :46.
3. Those who are serious about life and death ask about it. Matthew 13:40-43, 19:16, Mark 10:17, Luke 10:25, 18:18.
4. The Lord provides the answer to questions about life and death. John 6:68, Romans 5:20, 21, Romans 6:22, 23.
5. It is the Lord who gives eternal life, John 5:39, 40, John 12:50.
6. Believers have eternal life now, as a present possession. 1 John 5:11-13. This guarantees our salvation.
7. Eternal life is received in full at the rapture/resurrection when we all receive our new bodies from the Lord.
8. We are all urged to live each day with the eternal life perspective in mind, thinking of our place with the Lord forever. Matthew 19:29, 30, Mark 10:29-31, John 12:25, John 4:36, Romans 2:6,7.

**LESSON 49, 50 – ELECTION**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
49/50	Election	1 Peter 1:1-9 Colossians 3:12-25 Romans 11:33-36	Plan of God Election & Predestination

**INTRODUCTION**

Election is one of the hardest of all theological subjects because we are speaking about things that are from beyond space and time from within our present space-time universe. It is a frightening doctrine to people as many have not been taught it, or it has been taught wrongly. You have to teach it according to the Scriptures rather than the wisdom of men. You cannot avoid this. You either teach it, or some one else will do so and lead many of your people astray and divide your church. It must be taught in light of our limits as creatures of space and time. This is a doctrine where eternity touches time and space and so we need to approach this subject with the humility of limited men and women.

**TEST FOR THEOLOGY**

The tests for correctness in theology that we use are given below; we ask the question, does my understanding of this doctrine?

- [a] Does it produce a spirit of worship?
- [b] Does it increase my desire to undertake the great commission?
- [c] Does it produce a desire to serve my Lord, and my brethren, in the local church and beyond?

If the answer is "yes" to all three questions then it is likely that we are on the right track, we certainly are not 100% wrong.

**ELECTION**

Election should never be discussed until you have fully explained the topic of salvation as God's work for the lost, the work of the Holy Spirit for the lost, the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, the work of the Father in planning our wonderful salvation. It ought also to be taught after you have taught the doctrine of eternal security, and helped the students understand and recognize their position in Christ Jesus. It rests upon a thorough knowledge of the Character of God. We need to have the whole character of God before us when thinking of this subject, rather than emphasising one specific characteristic of the divine nature.

The Calvinist stresses the sovereignty of God, the Arminian the Omniscience of God, whilst the liberals the love of God. The doctrine of election brings the entire character of God under the microscope and causes us to ask, what kind of God do we have, and what temporal and eternal form does our salvation take?

The doctrine of election has its home in eternity – before this temporary space and time universe was made. Election of the saints was established before time was created, in eternity past. This is an area where man must trust humbly. Arrogant confidence is not appropriate here. A lot of people think that they can understand God and forget that they are mere limited creatures in the midst of the creation in which we cannot even have a thought that isn't limited by space and time – for they are the categories of our present existence. Many doctors of theology think they know far more than they can in reality know at this point – we cannot even comprehend the mind of God, and elections is a doctrine that comes from the mind of God, and flows from God's mind in eternity past.

### **THE CLASSIC CATEGORY MISTAKE**

We must beware of neat systems that make sense to us simply because they are simple and limited to space-time thinking. Calvinism when viewed internally is totally logical, just as are the views of Arminius, but neither are consistent when viewed in the light of the full Scriptures, and with an eternal life perspective. We are to judge all things in accordance with the counsel of the whole Word of God, as all Scripture is God breathed. If you start ignoring Scriptures that don't suit your viewpoint you will go off on a tangent of some sort.

Most theologians fall into what Philosophers call "a category mistake", which is where you talk about something in terms of something else. Philosophers often ask the question whether God elected the ones who would be saved before looking down the corridors of time, or "after". "Before and after" are concepts which apply to us alone in space and time and cannot apply to God before time and space were created, and therefore the question itself is called in philosophy a category mistake. The whole basis of Calvin and Arminius' viewpoints are based of this category mistake; they both speak of God as if he were a man like them, limited to space and time thinking.

When God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit planned salvation, they did not think as man thinks. "My thoughts are not your thoughts", says God. **Isaiah 55:6-11**. God does not think as we think, He is not limited as we are. God is our Creator and here we are talking about a doctrine which goes beyond time to a place where He planned our creation and that of the entire space-time universe.

### **CALVIN AND ARMINIUS**

We need to be humble. Both Peter and Paul talk a lot about election and predestination and they worship and sing over it. We will examine what effect these doctrines had on them. We will see Peter and Paul singing about the doctrines. In the times of Calvin and Arminius people were killed over this doctrine. Followers of Calvin burnt or drowned people who would not subscribe to the five points of Calvinism. What are the fruits in their life? Were they singing about it? Let us be careful here.....

**1 Peter 1:1-9** tells us that we are elect according to the foreknowledge of God, chosen ones in accordance with God's omniscience. We have the entire character of God on the line in this doctrine, not just omniscience. The results of your biblically correct understanding of election will be sanctification and obedience, holiness of life and obedience to God's Holy Word. If people are proud about their election but do not show obedience to the dictates of God's Word it is fairly clear that they do not see election as Peter did. We are born again according to God's abundant mercy and those not showing the fruits of the Spirit likely do not have the Spirit within them. **Romans 8:9**.

Peter also had a lively hope v 3, an encouraging thing, a life giving confidence, it is integrally related - v 4, it is related to the Spirit keeping you - v 5. It is something that makes you praise His name and greatly rejoice even in the midst of temptation. It is the guarantee of the salvation of your soul and a final deliverance to everlasting life with Him forever.

We follow the apostolic tradition as instructed in Jude 3. We follow the fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the apostles, not to Calvin or Arminius.

### **COLOSSIANS 3**

Colossians 3 gives Paul's commentary on Romans 9, which is one of the hardest chapter in the Bible. **Colossians 3:12-25** shows what the effect the doctrines covered there should have on your life. Pious self righteousness is too often present in theology, but it has no place here. **Romans 11:33-36**.

If you understand what Paul said about theology you would be warmer towards other believers, you would be more grateful for the grace of God; biblical understanding of this doctrine will motivate you to give the gospel to every creature. Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is another area where Satan divides us if we don't think and pray.

## VIEWS OF ELECTION

### Foresight Election

Foresight election is a view held by most evangelical Christians who haven't studied the topic, or have not studied it in sufficient depth – they have not factored in space-time/eternity. Election is the sovereign act of God in grace whereby he chose in Jesus Christ to save those whom He foreknew would in their own free will accept Him. Election is based on knowing all the facts and electing as His own those who he saw down the corridors of time would accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord. However is this a true view that honours God or even accurately describes Him?

We cannot avoid the philosophical “category mistake” as we say these things above, as we have to use words which we can understand, but in truth we do not know how God made the decision, and the very concept of priority in God's decision making is a category mistake. We know that God elected believers and knew all the facts in history, and knows how they are inter-related. We also know that God is totally fair and just and that he has given men free will because he demands choices from man all the time. But even though the above may be your opinion, please hold it with humility because we are, this side of eternity, guessing. There are some things we need to bow our heads before, not raise our voices in debate; this is one such topic!

### Corporate Election

Another concept held by some theologians is corporate election, where all are elect in Christ, although the unbelievers do not know it. This is not true, as in passages such as John 3:16, 18, 36, the Lord made it quite clear that not all are elect in Christ. He makes it clear that there are those who are elect, and there are the unbelievers, who reject God's provision, who are under the wrath of God, but that this judgment does not violate the concepts of personal freedom of choice, God's justice and righteousness.

## CHRIST'S ELECTION

In this theological concept Christ is the elect one. He is the elect one and the one chosen from eternity past who would go to the Cross and bear the sins of the world. All those who would accept Him by the work of the Holy Spirit are entered into the body of Christ and are chosen in the beloved in Him. It honours grace, it honours God's character and His plan. This is a middle way between the extremes, but is still man's attempt to explain the unexplainable.

## CALVINIST VIEW

The Calvinist view is that it is the eternal act of God whereby HE at his sovereign desire and on account of no foreseen merit in men chooses a certain number of men to be recipients of his grace and his salvation. Thus election is not conditional and there is no free will here. This appears to be incompatible with God's character of being totally just/fair.

When one makes choices it is done on all of one's character not just one facet. Election is grace all the way but we believe the Calvinist may go too far in this viewpoint. Notice how careful I am being in my disagreement!

The Bible tells us that the Spirit is moving on mankind and the only thing that is preventing acceptance is man's pride. The Lord says that he will draw all men to him when he is lifted up, but that some will reject grace, mercy and love.

### Definition

We would hold to the view that election is God's sovereign act in grace whereby he chooses those in Christ Jesus for salvation all those whom He foreknew before time would accept Him. God had all the facts in eternity past and he made His decision on all the facts, on the basis of his holy character. He does not violate our free will. No one is dragged kicking and screaming into the kingdom. There is no reason for arrogance or over-confidence – only gratitude and love.

Satan uses the topic of election to distract some believers from getting the gospel out to the lost. He attacks evangelism from two sides; he blinds the minds of the unbeliever and stops evangelists. It is important to put election into a statement of faith so that the people know where you stand. My prayer is that you end up singing about it, not arguing about it with other believers.

The subject of Election occurs quite frequently in the Scriptures and allows you, if you are teaching verse by verse, to go through the doctrine every few months. It is therefore important to have a position on it. The biblical doctrine of election is a source of comfort to believers.

Positional election. We are not only positionally elect but we are elect in him. We are chosen in the beloved in Christ. We share his election because the Lord was His chosen one. 1 Peter 2:4,5; Ephesians 1:4. Ephesians 1:4 is a key passage. It is of interest that 1 Peter 1:1,2 deals with unlimited atonement and then follows on with election. There is corporate election mentioned here also, the concept that the church is a chosen people as Israel is referred to in the Old Testament as the chosen nation.

In **1 Peter 2:8,9** and **Romans 9:25-26** we're shown that God's plan is perfect and takes into account all the facts.

#### FOUR ISSUES OF ELECTION

[1] The whole Bible must be kept in view when you look at this subject. If your concept of election interferes with the Great commission it is wrong.

[2] We have people differing in extremes. You tend to find that both extremes are wrong, and the truth is somewhere down the middle.

[3] There is danger in proof texting. A text out of its context will always form a pretext for anything. You need to put the doctrine up against the whole of the Character of God.

[4] The doctrine of election must take into account the plan of God and his glory. God's plan is not limited to the salvation of man. It is His glory that is behind His plan.

#### SIX PRINCIPLES

[1] Unlimited Atonement 1 John 2:2, 2 Peter 2:1,2.

[2] "Whosoever wills may come"; this means that there is a bone fide offer of salvation for all. - John 3:16-36. The "whosoever will not" are held responsible for their decision by the Word of God

[3] In eternity past a group of people were elected to form the bride of Christ. Ephesians 1:4, 1 Peter 1:2.

[4] The choice of God in electing people was in accord with his perfect character in harmony with the free will of the people involved because His plan calls for man to have free will. 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14.

[5] God is not willing that anyone should perish - 2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 3:23.

[6] Man who does not believe is judged before the Great White Throne on the basis of the evidence against them. The evidence is the blood of Christ shed for them and their deliberate choice to stand upon the basis of their own works rather than accept Jesus work for them on the Cross. Revelation 20:10-15. None are condemned for not being elect!

Some say that there is a literal bowl of blood in heaven that is the evidence for the prosecution. The literal blood may well be at the Great White Throne as evidence against them, but we cannot be sure of that. Read Hebrews 2:3, 10:28,29; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Revelation 20:11-15; Romans 2:1-11 in that order. The reality of the Lord's work (blood of Christ) is the evidence of salvation as well as that of condemnation. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" Hebrews 2:3.

Satan and the unbelievers end up in the Lake of Fire only because they say that they **will not** live God's way. The Lord however is not willing that any should perish but has provided the possibility of salvation for all. God in justice will give that person a chance and they have it in time. That opportunity runs out for each person at the point of their death. Pray for people under the concept of John 16:8-11.

The tragedy is when you find that an unbeliever has died in unbelief. God has done so much but they have ignored it. If you understand where the person is going it should galvanize you into action praying that the Holy Spirit will guide you to give the message, so that the Holy Spirit might break through the Satanic blindness.

You should then look for the opportunity to look at giving the gospel as free will cuts both ways. Man can decide and set their wills to go to hell. Psalm 81:11, Isaiah 28, 30. God's will is that all should be saved and enter into rest. There are numerous examples of this.

Romans 10 deals with Israel and their disobedience. Christ died for the sins of all men.

#### DOCTRINES



1. In eternity past, God designed a plan for every believer, which takes into account every event and decision in human history.
2. The plan centres around the person of Jesus Christ. (1 John 3:23, Ephesians 1:4-6).
3. Entrance into the plan is based on the principle of grace. (Ephesians 2:8, 9) where the sovereignty of God and the free will of Man meet at the cross. God brings salvation which is complete, Man brings his faith.
4. God's plan was so designed so as to include all events and actions. (1 Peter 1:2).
5. Under his plan God has decreed to do some things directly and some through agencies, Israel, the Church.
6. Without interfering with human free will in any way God has designed a plan so perfect that it includes cause and effect, as well as provision, preservation and function.
7. There are many functions in the Plan of God. They all constitute one whole comprehensive plan which is perfect, eternal and unchangeable.
8. The plan of God is consistent with human freedom and does not limit or coerce human free will. Distinction should be made between what God causes and what God permits. God causes the Cross but permits sin. God is neither the author of sin nor sponsors sin.
9. His plan portrays that man has free will. God never condones sin in the human race. Man started in perfect environment and innocence. Man sinned of his own free will. Man will sin in the perfect environment of the Millennium.
10. Distinction should be made between the divine plans which are related to the plan of God and divine laws which regulate human conduct on the earth. Divine laws occur in time, divine plans occur in eternity.
11. God's plans derive from His foreknowledge. He recognised in eternity past those things which are certain. The foreknowledge of God makes no things certain, but only perceives in eternity past those things that are certain.
12. There is a difference between foreknowledge and fore ordination. Fore ordination establishes certainty but does not provide for the certainty which is established. It is the plan that provides. (Romans 8:29, Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:2.)
13. Therefore the elect are foreknown and the foreknown are elect. God knew in eternity past what way each free will would go for each particular problem in life. God does not coerce human free will but he does know what way each freewill will choose at any given time. As free will decides so God provides.
14. Since God cannot contradict his own character he plans the best for the believer. God is perfect, his plan and provisions are therefore perfect.
15. The cross was planned in eternity past but the human free will of Christ decided for the cross at Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:39-42.) God has provided salvation through the cross and it is a free will decision as to whether one accepts it or not.
16. No plan in itself opposes human freedom but once a choice is made from the free will then the plan limits your human freedom. At the same time it gives you the freedom to love and appreciate God. God lays down the means of living the Christian life.

**ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION**

1. The Biblical concept of predestination does not conflict with human freewill.
2. Christ was predestined for a specific purpose from eternity past - to go to the cross and be raised to glory (Isaiah 42:1, 1 Peter 2:4-6, Acts 2:23).
3. All members of the human race are potentially elect by the Father under the concept of unlimited atonement. (2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 2:2).
4. When a person trusts in Christ for salvation, he is united with Christ and therefore shares His election and destiny (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30, Romans 8:28, 32, Ephesians 1-4).
5. Election is closely linked with foreknowledge. In eternity past, God knew who would believe, He therefore predestined them, called them, and they were saved (Romans 8:29-30, 2 Timothy 1:9).
6. Therefore, election and predestination applies to the believer only. No person is predestined for hell - it is a choice of freewill (John 3:18, John 3:36).

7. Election is a present and future possession of every believer. (John 15:16, Colossians 3:12).
8. Election is also the foundation of the universal church. (1 Thessalonians 1:4)
9. There are five Greek words used in conjunction with predestination.
  - a) Pro Orizo - to predesign (Romans 8:28, 29, Ephesians 1:5, 11)
  - b) Protithemi - to predetermine (Romans 3:25, Ephesians 1:9)
  - c) Prothesis - a predetermined plan (Romans 8:28, 9:11, Ephesians 1:11, 3:11, 2 Timothy 1:9)
  - d) Proginosko - to foreordain, to preordain. (Romans 8:29, 11:2, 1 Peter 1:20)
  - e) Prognosis - foreknowledge or predetermined purpose (Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:2)
10. The life of Judas is a good illustration of predestination and freewill.
  - a) God's call is to all people, His desire is that all will be saved. (Matthew 28:18-20, John 3:16 1 John 2:2, 3:23)
  - b) God is long suffering towards the lost, not willing that any should perish. (2 Peter 3:9)
  - c) God's call is to all, but people must respond. (John 3:36, 16:8-11)
  - d) God's call is of love. (Jeremiah 31:3, John 3:16)
  - e) Those who resist become hardened in their souls and open to Satanic influence or possession. (Romans 1:20-32, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12)
  - f) Judas was chosen in love by the Lord (Matthew 10:1-4, John 13:18) and received the sop of the honoured guest and sat at the Lord's right hand at supper.
  - g) However Judas was a thief and a traitor. (John 12:6, 13:18)
  - h) As an unsaved man he was involved in evangelism. Others were probably saved through his reading of the word but he was not. (Matthew 10:1-8)
  - i) He became the Son of Perdition by his decision, he could not blame anyone else (John 17:12)

**LESSON 51 – THE ATONEMENT**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
51	The Atonement	1 John 2:1-2 2 Peter 2:1-2	Atonement Free Will

**LIMITED OR UNLIMITED**

A major question to start with - "Is atonement limited or unlimited?" Did the blood of Christ cover all sin or just the sins of the elect? This is a vital truth to be clear upon, for it affects our attitude to the gospel message, to the lost and what is possible to achieve with them, and to each other. This subject should be considered with the concept of God's Character, and the eternal plan of God, which is for each individual as well. He knew each and every one of us prior to the foundation of the world. God's care and provision for us comes from before time and space were created – so the Atonement is a doctrine of eternity touching time and so is one we must approach in humility and with awe, for in this truth is our salvation's provision.

Election does not save but it is the truth that is related to our salvation as we have previously seen. The doctrine of election is highly motivating and should not be deadening to spiritual life. The fruit of your understanding is the evidence of the truth of the revelation. Just as we have seen the impact of the Doctrine of Election upon our evangelism, so we need to see what effect this doctrine of the Atonement has on worship, witness, and our daily lives.

**THREE PROBLEMS WITH THE CONCEPT OF A LIMITED ATONMENT**

The **first objection** is that if God is making all the decisions in eternity past without reference to man we have a situation of "what will be will be". From this you can get fatalism - which will kill evangelism in the church. It is clearly not what we see being applied in the early churches!

**Secondly** - there is the problem of human freedom. How can God elect in eternity past and man still be free to make a choice? Romans 9:18. From this objection comes the question that men can ask, "If God made me this way how can He fault me if I decide against his plan?"

The **foundation for the suggested answer follows**. God's choice in eternity past is based on the totality of His own character. He knows all the facts of all the choices that we would make and God's plan is big enough to allow for all this. But how can we understand it and explain it? Remember again all through this debate that we are creatures of space and time, and we are discussing events that the bible reveals occur "before" this entire creation was even made. We cannot get our heads fully around this, and so the only people who will argue that they are 100% right are people whose minds have not fully grasped the awesomeness of this!

Election is based upon the fact of the whole nature of the character of God. He is working before space and time. The Plan of God is worked out in total harmony with the free will of His created beings. We must concentrate on this issue of theology now, but the correct understanding of it will always result in the apostolic faith; which has at its heart, the evangelism of the lost, and a deep desire for holiness in our lives. If these two things are not the fruit of our theological understanding of this subject, then our theology is not "apostolic". Jude 3.

Is God the author of sin? This is the **third objection** to the viewpoint of limited atonement. If God made man like this and He knew everything in advance, He knew about sin and therefore is the author of sin, and therefore surely He cannot hold people responsible. However the plan of God is based on His whole character and not just His sovereignty. He took into account the free will of His created beings. God's plan is therefore in complete harmony with the free will of all His creatures, both angelic and human.

### **HOW FAR THEN DOES THE ATONEMENT GO?**

The Atonement - how far does the atonement go? In **1 John 2:1-2** and **2 Peter 2:1-2** both Peter and John are emphasising the concept of an unlimited atonement, and we stand upon that truth.

Calvinistic commentaries on these passages have great difficulty maneuvering around these verses. This atonement even covers the heretic who is preaching Satanic lies. Even their sins have been paid for but they have rejected the work of Jesus and his person. This has profound significance for the condemnation of the unsaved. We believe that the blood of Christ is the ground for the salvation of the saint, and the evidence against the "aint", demonstrating the greatness of the grace, mercy and love that they have rejected. The "Blood of Christ" is the ground of both salvation and condemnation for all eternity. Every knee will bow before this fact and none condemned will challenge the justice of it!

### **SINS AND THE UNBELIEVER**

In **Revelation 20:11-15** the unbeliever goes into the lake of fire, joining the angelic rebels(demons) against God's Character. The unbeliever is condemned because he/she trusted their own good works, rather than the blood of Christ; she/he has in effect trampled underfoot the blood of Christ, considering he/she was good enough without it to be entered into heaven. We believe that the sins of the unbeliever were poured out on Christ and judged, just as the sins of all those who would believe later.

The ground for the unbeliever's condemnation is their rejection of the greatest love, mercy and grace that is able to be imagined. The unbeliever has rejected God's gracious provision and has made it of no account by their arrogant selection of their righteousness rather than God's provided righteousness in Christ Jesus. It is this sin against grace, mercy and love that puts them in the lake of fire. The problem is that unbelievers despise the one who loved them that much. When you turn your back on the cross the sin that truly makes you lost is that sin against love. Ephesians 2:4, Hebrews 2:3.

If you take the Calvinistic view you emphasise the sins of the lost as their reason for being in hell. If you look at it in the way that we do however you emphasise the love of God, the grace of God, the merciful provision of God through the work on the Cross and the sin of rejecting it. In this case the unbeliever should be counseled to repent, and there are excellent reasons to do so, and for them to continue rejecting is to dig themselves into judgment. We believe that our view enhances evangelism and magnifies the holy Character of God in the eyes of the lost, and as such is more likely to be correct than the Calvinistic viewpoint.

Lewis Burkoff the Calvinist, asks the question, "Did the Father in sending Christ to come into the world to make atonement for sin do that with the design for the purpose of saving only the elect or all men?" This is we would argue, the wrong question. Once you have accepted his question you are on the wrong path. This question emphasises the sovereignty of God rather than the total character and plan of God.

The true question that should be asked is, "Did Christ's coming into the world make provision for the salvation of all people?" It is a subtle difference but it is a significant difference. Some rejection of the provision of God does not mean that the provision was not appropriately made, or not made. The provision was for all, and so it can become the ground for both salvation and condemnation, for it is the evidence of the grace, love and mercy of God. It demonstrates the greatness of his plan, that the lost can be judged for rejecting, without them having any just objection to the condemnation.

### **GOD'S PLAN - HIS GLORY**

God's plan is not focused only on the salvation of the elect, it has as its objective his eternal glory. Part of His glory is the provision for the salvation for all men. The elect are saved through grace by faith. Those who refuse cannot say that they were not provided for. The main object of the plan of God is the glory of God. The glory of God is seen both in the salvation of believers, and also by the just and rightful presence of the unbelievers in the lake of fire. When you look at this topic you need to look at the whole character of God rather than concentrating on the sovereignty of God. The fact of salvation is part of the plan of God but it is only part of it. Salvation and condemnation both illustrate God's character; his grace, love, mercy, justice and righteousness.

In what is called in theology the subject of “the divine decrees” we are asking what order God decided to make the decisions. In many ways this very question is a “category mistake”, but it is important to understand the schools of theology that divide over it. There are three schools of thought. **Firstly** the supra-lapsurian said that God elected people first and everything flowed from his sovereignty. The infra-lapsurian said that after the fall provisions were made for man. The sub-lapsurian says that the provision for salvation was for all but acceptance was by only some.

Each school of thought here is not thinking far enough! They tend to talk about God as if he is “a big man” here but, hear the words of the Lord, “my ways are not your ways says the Lord”. **Isaiah 55:6-9, Jeremiah 10:23-24**. We do not need to accept any of these positions for they all walk into the “category mistake” of speaking about God as if he is a man. Unlimited atonement is not universalist; believing all will be saved.

People that believe the blood of Christ was sufficient to cover all sins do not necessarily believe that all will be saved, although some may do. However we believe that there was sufficient provision so that all could be saved. However they must accept by faith Him as Saviour and Lord. The blood shed for the others was not “wasted” for it becomes the precious evidence against them; that they truly sinned against the greatest love that could ever have been showed for them.

### **OTHER CONCEPTS REGARDING ATONEMENT**

Roman Catholicism has traditionally emphasized the magical/holy element of the blood of Christ. In the Renaissance paintings you had angels collecting the blood of Christ. The Catholic Church believes that the wine and bread become the literal blood and body of the Lord, therefore the priest has to drink all of the wine so that none is spilt. The Calvinists tend to have a theological viewpoint that is close to this type of attitude to the blood also.

Sacredotalism is the term that describes this belief – it is where the priest mediates God's grace to other believers. Those who hold this viewpoint of the special status of the clergy believe that the sacrament saves you and that it is through taking the emblems/sacraments at the hands of an ordained priest that you are spiritually preserved. This is why you must have the last rites in such churches to guarantee entry directly into heaven.

Many of the reformers took that concept into the Reformation, with both Calvin and Luther carrying it into their State churches that simply took over the existing Catholic Churches. The very high viewpoint of the communion wine as the literal blood of Christ owes more to Early Church Father's doctrine than to the Scripture. Calvin got his idea of election from Augustine (400s AD) and certain medieval philosophers. The theologians of the early Middle Ages believed that the blood was a magical thing which as soon as it touched you, then you were saved. We do not follow them in this, although we will see in Church History that many of these men were great believers in many ways that we will admire.

[a] We do not worship the communion cup; we look on it as an emblem and do it in “remembrance of Him” and as a testimony that we believe he is coming again.

[b] We are all born lost – and we must by faith enter the family of God.

[c] Anybody who will be saved must believe. The Father will draw, the Holy Spirit will convict but if someone is to be saved they must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved. By belief we mean saving faith, a commitment of the heart and the soul to the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

[d] Some Scriptures do relate atonement to the elect. These passages make direct reference to the elect, but this does not mean that it is excluded from others.

[e] We would claim that to preach the apostolic gospel, Christ must have died for all. It is not compatible with the Lord's command to go out and preach the gospel to every creature for the Lord to have died for only some.

[f] Others say that the value of the blood of Christ is devalued if all are not saved. However there is value in the potential for all to be saved as well as those responding to the efficacious calling of the Spirit. Both bring glory to God, the blood being the evidence for the glory of the character and plan of God in both cases.

[g] Do the non elect have their sins paid for twice? Some limited Calvinists say that this happens as the unbeliever's sins are paid for by them in the Lake of Fire. However examination of Scripture shows that the sins of all were paid for by Christ, and it is the rejection of that grace gift that ends up with the unbelievers going to the Lake of Fire. The Lake of Fire isn't punishment or atonement for their sins, its simple consequence of rejecting the only way to live with God forever. The demons don't punish the lost; they are all lost together in their rejection of the truth about sin and salvation. They human lost are all in there for the one and only unforgivable sin; the sin of unbelief, the sin of rejection of the love of God demonstrated to them by the blood of Christ shed for them. They are not paying for their sins in the Lake of Fire – but experiencing the consequences of their rejection of the one who paid for all their sins! Their torment is increased by this – for they see that their rejection was culpable and stupid to an eternal degree! **Revelation 20:11-5**.

Unsaved people do not think that they need a Saviour. They have an arrogant pride filled rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot have a light hearted view of this rejection for it is an insult to the blood of Christ, and that insult is why the unbeliever is going to the Lake of Fire. They need to understand this ground of their condemnation.

This should give you an impetus to worship and to evangelism. Remember that God, being all knowing, sees past, present and future, all at once not in a linear system like we do. Do not make the category mistake, the error of the "lapsarian" arguers who speak of God as if he was a human creature, limited to a linear approach to time.

Election is God's choice of the elect in accordance with His whole character, in accordance with His foreknowledge, but in accordance with his righteousness and justice and every other aspect of his character also. He knows all the facts, and the plan is also in harmony with the free will of His creatures who he created. Remember – we are creatures...

Peter, Paul and John are praising God. They are in between the Arminians and Calvinists, just as we should be.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **ATONEMENT: UNLIMITED ATONEMENT**

1. Definition:
  - a) The totally effective work of Christ on the cross to pay the penalty of sin on behalf of mankind.
  - b) Atonement as a noun means reconciliation after enmity and includes reparation made for wrong or injury.
  - c) The verb has several related meanings such as to be at one, to be in accordance, to make reparation or amends, to make up for errors or deficiencies, to reconcile.
  - d) In the Old Testament, the true meaning of atonement is related to the Hebrew verb "to pass over, to cover" - it is also the word for 'pitch' used to seal Noah's Ark.
  
2. In Old Testament times, animal sacrifices were used to cover sin.
  - a) God forgave and restored where sin was covered by the blood of animal sacrifices.
  - b) However, the true basis for atonement was not found in these animal sacrifices. This is why the sacrifices needed to be repeated time and time again.
  - c) Animal sacrifices were used as a cover for sin until the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, could be offered on the cross.
  - d) Atonement in the Old Testament refers to the use of animal sacrifices to picture the saving work of Christ.
  - e) The two concepts of atonement (Old and New Testament) are brought together in Romans 3:23-26)
  
3. Atonement is unlimited
  - a) When Jesus Christ was judged on the cross for sins he paid for the sins of the entire human race, not just the elect. (Romans 5:6, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 1 Timothy 2:6, 4:10, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:2)
  - b) "Limited Atonement", the concept that Christ died for believers only is incorrect.
  
4. Unlimited Atonement eliminates sin in the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgment.
  - a) When Christ died on the cross, He was judged for all sins of the human race.
  - b) Therefore the issue in salvation is not sin, but faith in Christ. People choose either to accept the work of Christ (John 3:18,36), or their own "good" works to gain the approval of God.
  - c) Therefore, human good will be the basis of the unbelievers' indictment at the Last Judgment. (Revelation 20:12)

### **FREE WILL**

1. Free will is the responsibility before God to choose a course of action.
2. God gave Adam choice in the garden (Genesis 2:16-17).
3. Free will exists in both believer and unbeliever. (John 7:17)
4. In Christianity free will cannot be coerced - it is a matter of obedience. (2 Corinthians 5:10)
5. Man is responsible for his actions, and must give an account to God. (Revelation 20:11-15)
6. Because man is subject to judgment there is an age at which children become accountable before God for their actions.
  
7. Three problems which the Bible solves regarding free will -
  - a) What about babies who die before they hear the gospel or those who are mentally not able to decide?  
Solution - (2 Samuel 12:18) where a child born to David and Bathsheba dies on the 7th day, the day before circumcision which would have brought the child into a covenant relationship. David says that he will go to be with the child indicating the child has been automatically saved without a covenant requirement.
  - b) What about the physical damage which hinders the person causing a restriction of free will?  
Solution - (John 9:1-7) where a man blind from birth is healed. Jesus did not bypass the free will but made up for the blindness. He breaks down the barriers for a person to do God's will but the free will of the person is not manipulated.
  - c) What about spiritual damage to free will?

Solution - (Genesis 3:8) where after the fall God sought out Adam and Eve in the garden where they had hidden from him. God will seek out all men and give them the opportunity of salvation.

8. It is possible to harden your heart that it becomes impossible to believe or repent. Examples in Scripture:

- a) the Amorites and Canaanites of Joshua's day (Genesis 15:16)
- b) the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Exodus 7- 11)
- c) those who choose to worship the creation rather than the Creation (Romans 1:1-32)
- d) those who accept the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:8)
- e) the reaction of unbelievers at the second advent (Revelation 6:16).

9. The person who desires to know God will find Him. (John 7:17)

10. If God is truly sovereign how can man have genuine free choice?

In eternity past, God foreknew every decision and event which would occur in all creation. He worked all things to work together to achieve His sovereign purpose. God uses His sovereign will as planner and creator, man uses his free will as a part of the creation.

- a) Paul as a prisoner on a ship bound for Rome predicts, having received advice from the angel of God, that there will be no loss of life but the ship will become a wreck. The guarantee is a sovereign guarantee and therefore absolute. Paul however tells the soldiers that they must stay on the boat to be saved. They do and they are saved. Sovereign decrees by God therefore contain free will decisions by man. (Acts 27)
- b) The sovereign decree is that all things work together for good towards the goal of predestination and eventual glorification. We have a guarantee that we will be in heaven. Yet we continually make free will decisions in the process. (Romans 8:28)
- c) Daniel understood the time of "desolations" as seventy years as prophesied by Jeremiah and knew that it would end on time. He now seeks by supplication with sackcloth and ashes forgiveness for Israel's sin on the basis that no discipline is going to be removed without the sin having been forgiven. (Daniel 9:2)

11. Free will can never be neutral - you are either obedient or disobedient to God. (Isaiah 55:7-9)

**LESSON 52 – GIVING THE GOSPEL**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
52	Giving the Gospel	Matthew 28:19-20 Luke 24:44-48 John 16:8-11 Ephesians 6:19 Colossians 4:3 Luke 14:16-24	Gospel of Salvation Gospels: The Four Gospels – Harmony of

**THE GOSPEL**

**Matthew 28:18-20 and Luke 24:46-48** are the great commission.

The gospel is the English for "euaggalion" which means "good news". What is the good news? It is that God became man and dwelt among us as one of us. It was God that became man and went to the Cross and paid the penalty for sin. He removed the sin barrier which separated the holiness of God from the sinfulness of man. He bodily rose from the dead to prove that what he had done on the Cross was satisfactory and that the way of acceptance was now open for all who come to Him in faith.

Because of these things all men everywhere are commanded to repent and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have to recognise who he is and what he has done. They have to repent from their sins and accept Him as their Lord and Saviour. It is a door opened by God's grace, and it must be accepted by faith. **Ephesians 2:4-10, 6:19.**

All men and women need to recognise who He is and what He did, and to turn from our sin and accept Him as our Saviour. Anytime the gospel is preached in ACTS these facts are emphasized, often to different degrees. Salvation is the work of God, it is the plan of the Father, the work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross, the work of the Holy Spirit on the believer's life, working, leading and enabling. **John 16:8-11.**

Everything we do as evangelists must be in harmony with these facts. Salvation is by grace through faith; it is the work of God for man, not man's work for God, as we cannot save ourselves, only God's power can do that. If you are going to present the gospel as an evangelist you have to take into account all these factors.

You have to work with His plan, as the conviction of the Holy Spirit is essential in the arrival at the point for the unbeliever to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot save someone yourself, but the work of the Godhead ensures they can be saved, by freely, with Holy Spirit encouragement, responding to God's grace gift through faith.

The second thing to be very clear of is the importance of prayer. Prayer is vital in the gospel message – for it is our connection to the person, power, plan and purposes of God regarding the lost.

## REPENTANCE

There must be repentance preached intelligently as a part of the gospel message. Repentance is a two fold thing. It is not just feeling sorry for sin; it is action in regard to sinfulness. You turn from your sin to your Saviour. Genuine repentance is a change of heart/mind, and this is achieved by the work of the Holy Spirit. The unbeliever needs to believe those facts as true and commit themselves to those facts, but it is more than simple intellectual assent. James tells us that the devils believe and they tremble **James 2:18-20**, and we must have better "faith" than the devils do. He challenges us to let our beliefs work out into actions that truly reflect what has genuinely occurred within.

## CONVICTION

In the concept of conviction, **John 16:8-11** is a key passage. Do a word study on the word conversion - epistrophe. Conversion means to turn from something to something. This was used by Plato in the Republic where men living in a dark cave were told by those who had seen the sun to turn away from the light of their fire to the light of the sun itself. Some did and escaped from the cave, others continued on living in the darkness. We turn from self and self righteousness to God and His righteousness. Conversion must start with conviction of sin, and we all play out part in the Holy Spirit's work of grace through prayer for the lost.

## PRAYER AND EVANGELISM

Two examples in the epistles of Paul are **Ephesians 6:19** and **Colossians 4:3**, where he asks other Christians to pray for him that he might be given an open door for utterance to talk to unbelievers. You need to have a mighty prayer barrage for those who are the object of your evangelistic thrust. In his book regarding evangelism "True Evangelism", Lewis Sperry Chafer spends 90% of his time speaking of the importance of prayer. He is right in this!

## REPROOF OF THE SPIRIT

Notice in John 16 that the Spirit will reprove the world of sin (in the singular), the sin of unbelief because they do not believe on him. The unbelievers will be in the lake of fire because of their unbelief, not because of their sins plural. In your preaching you must emphasise how we cannot escape judgment if we ignore "so great a salvation". Hebrews 2:3. The key text on the Spirit's work is **John 16:8-11**, which your prayer partners in evangelism are claiming.

You hold up before the unbeliever the awfulness of the cross, and the gracious wonder of it, so that they can see how enormous is the rejection of it. When they turn their back on the cross they turn their back on love, turn their back on the Creator and that they are going to have nothing apart from what is coming to Satan.

The second thing that the unbeliever is convicted of is that they are convicted of righteousness. They had a visible presence of righteousness while the Lord is here but now that He has is no longer present the Holy Spirit convicts them of the need of perfect righteousness. He convicts them of their absolute ability to look God in the eye, that they need a Saviour. There is a barrier of righteousness between them and God. The barrier is removed by the Blood of Christ. They stand there as a person deserving of judgment. They are going to be held accountable just as Satan is going to be held accountable and will be under judgment just as he will be.

Jonathan Edwards started what is called "The Great Awakening" in America in the early 1700s with the sermon, "Sinners in the hand of an angry God". It is a scary sermon and not to be copied, for we follow apostolic patterns not 18<sup>th</sup> century ones, but Jonathan Edwards' heart was right; he desired that none find themselves under God's judgment for rejecting the Cross. In your preaching you too should magnify the focus of your hearers upon the Cross, and the offence of ignoring the Cross, but don't stop there. Sin was defeated at the Cross, and death at the Resurrection. The apostolic preaching was more centered on the resurrection than the Cross. Evangelism is announcing victory!

Raise the Cross of Christ up, but even more strongly uplift the resurrection and then underline what they both accomplished and that rejection of such a grace provision of salvation and eternal life surely means judgment. As far as Satan is concerned the judgment is spoken of as in the perfect, passive, indicative, which means that Satan received judgment in eternity past to the lake of fire, and that his doom is settled. However the judgment has not been executed as yet on him, or those who may join him. For the human beings there is hope, but for Satan/demons there is none.

The third thing the unbeliever is convicted of is of the future judgment of Satan and the sharing of his condemnation by those who do not believe. What are they convicted of? The order is a logical one, man needs to see his sin, have proof of the righteousness which the Saviour provides, and be reminded that if we refuse to receive Him as Saviour we receive certain condemnation with the one who began the rebellion against the legitimate claims of the Lord God.

## **CALLING AND FAITH**

What do we mean by Calling; there are two calls that go out from God to mankind - there is a general call to all people at some time in their lives, and then there is what has been called an "effective call", which is the specific call in the soul to the one who has responded to the general call in faith. A general call goes to all so none can ever say, "we never knew", but only some respond and so hear and respond to the second call.

Faith means confidence, trust, to hold something that is true. For faith to have content you must have faith or trust about something; in this case to have faith in Christ unto salvation. In this case we must have confidence that He can remove the guilt of sin and grant eternal life.

You have to have a commitment of your soul and a decision as to what you are going to do with that information which you have received about Christ. If you put them together you get more than a sum of their parts. It means to commit yourself to Him as Saviour and Lord. It means totally casting yourself on the Lord. It means the deep inner acknowledgement that says, "I am a lost soul in need of a Saviour, and the true Lord and King for my wayward soul".

## **WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?**

What is the gospel? There must be an absolute view on sin, but it must be preached about against the background of the cross and resurrection and what they mean for our sin filled lives.

There is a fallacy that there are different gospels for different age and even cultural groups. There is only one Gospel, different vocabulary can be used, but the same gospel. The fallacy that the truth is in anything other than the Word of God, is a dangerous one. Like the apostles we must preach the gospel from the Scriptures.

There is a fallacy that cleverness or charm will ensure results; only the Holy Spirit moves men. The Cross is offensive, it is awful, but with the resurrection it is absolute majesty proclaimed. That Biblical procedures ensures success. It is important to follow the Scriptures but this does not guarantee success for the free will of man is involved.

The fallacy of adding baptism to the gospel. Baptism follows rather than having a part in the gospel. Repentance means a change of mind that affects the life. It does not mean feeling sorry for sins. It must affect your behaviour, by bringing you to your knees before the cross and the empty tomb. Baptism will be one of the results of the expression of faith and from the book of Acts, it should follow salvation quite quickly.

The fallacy of making "surrender of life" a factor is also disagreed with, although we can see that in essence salvation is the total surrender of your self to Jesus for salvation.

Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour requires you being a disciple. Luke 14.

The Pentecostals in the South of the United States had benches on which people came forward to weep and weep before accepting the Lord. Many Bible teachers quite rightly have tended to react to that, for we do not see this concept within the early church, but this does not mean that weeping over sins is wrong, nor thinking through your decision is wrong, for both are biblical concepts. So do not mock the concept of the "sorry benches" of the old South, for they capture a truth, but are not necessary for all people, but may be very helpful for some.

For some coming to the Lord may experience powerful catharsis, such a many deep sobs and powerful tears, and they may be part of their process, but your tears do not save you, faith in Jesus saves. Don't mock other's process, reflect upon your own, and accept others way may be different to your own. When you give the gospel do not demand people meet the Lord the way you did – allow the Holy Spirit to do different things with different people. He will not follow you!

We are turning from self to the Lord and have to take up our Cross and follow Him; this means considered commitment to a path of life that is different to the one we have walked to date. You have to emphasise this otherwise you will be asking people to make an emotional response without counting the cost. You need to have depth to your gospel presentation.

The Philippian jailer was putting his life on the line. He knew it and his family knew it, just as people in the Moslem world do today when accepting baptism. Believing involved all these things, it involved the commitment of the life. It involved the intellectual, emotional and volitional response. Thought through response is part of the biblical meaning of repentance, with or without tears we are asking for the commitment of the whole person to the Lord as Saviour.

## **THE FUTURE OF UNBELIEVERS**

The unbeliever is an unbeliever because they do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and reject the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. They are lost to begin with. The only question is, will they be saved? They are already lost!

There are a number of ways of expressing unbelief in the scriptures. Unbelievers are referred to as, those who do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, those who have done ill, those who are disobedient to God. Also they are



referred to as those who obey not the gospel, those whose names are not found in the book of life, those who neglect Christ because they neglect the brethren, those who are fearful and unbelieving.

Is the fire of hell literal or not? Torrey believes it is, but not the type of fire that you light at home. The word fire is used far too many times not to be considered seriously. It is torment, the torment of the soul of the lost. The Bible also teaches that it is not annihilation; there is a concept here that is of destruction which does not mean the same as annihilation. The horror of the Lake of Fire is that the unbeliever exists in that torment forever.

The ones who have taken the mark of the beast are in unrelenting, unceasing torment, as are all who have turned away from the grace, mercy and love of God, for there is no other outcome possible for those having made such a decision. The torment is spoken of as "for ever". In the new heavens and the new earth the Lake of Fire will still exist there in some form, but without distress as we see it. Revelation 20:14, 21:3-8, 27. Study Revelation in the "Last Words" Commentary series. We suspect from Peter's words in his last letter that the Lake of Fire is the "black hole" that contains the detritus of the entire space-time creation, for the new heavens and earth are more awesome than this creation.

#### **WHEN ARE THE ISSUES OF ETERNITY SETTLED?**

Those who die in their sins cannot go to where Jesus is. It is appointed for each of us once to die, and after that the judgment; **Hebrews 9:27-28**. All who are in graves who have done evil and ignored the challenge of Jesus shall be raised in resurrection bodies, for life once given by God is eternal, but they are raised for judgment. Between those who pass out of this world lost and those who pass out accepted of God, there is a great gulf fixed, and no passing from one side to the other. The destinies of eternity are settled in the life that now is. This is the urgency of the evangelism that we are tasked with.

#### **MAY THOSE WHO HAVE NOT HEARD IN THIS WORLD HAVE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY?**

There is no line of Scripture on which to build such a hope. All people have sufficient light to condemn them if they do not obey it. The future state of those who reject the redemption offered to them in Christ is plainly declared to be a state of conscious, unutterable, endless torment and anguish. If you think God is unfair regarding this look long and hard at the Cross, and identify that to reject Christ, or mock him, is to insult such suffering and declare it as if it is nothing!

This concept is an awful and appalling one. It is however the Scriptural concept and is also a reasonable one when we come to see the appalling nature of sin, especially that of trampling underfoot God's mercy towards sinners, and rejecting God's glorious Son, whom His love had provided as a Saviour.

God in perfect righteousness and judgment will judge the lost because they have willfully rejected his offer. When you consider the evil of the rejection of the Cross, and the awfulness of sin, combined with the concept of the righteousness of God, one can see the justice of the future of the unbeliever.

When you are giving the gospel to someone you ought to make it clear what the alternative is. Do not be put off by blunt unbelievers, for they are a soul for whom Christ died, and you have to hit them with the gospel. It is open to them until the day they die, but tell them the "flip side" of the good news; that they are joining with those who insult such a death and for such there is no hope.

A shallow view of sin, the righteousness of Christ and God's glory and His claim upon us lays at the bottom of weak theories of the impenitent. God cannot let off the sinner because of the awfulness of sin and what happened on the Cross, and the evil of anyone turning their back on it as if it is nothing.

#### **WHAT ABOUT OUR UNBELIEVING FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES?**

We need to give the gospel to them. If you are dealing with the gospel, you start with where the unbeliever is and where they are going. It is interesting that if you look at the liberal churches and those who are going liberal will not talk about Hell/the Lake of Fire. Who talks about hell more than anyone else in the Scriptures? - The Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **WHAT IS THE NEW BIRTH?**

It is a new creation, you must be born again, you must be born again spiritually from above, departing from death to life. It is renewing your mind, making a new nature, God's nature in your life, God changing you.

#### **RESULTS OF THE NEW BIRTH;**

The result of the new birth, is that the regenerated person becomes the temple of God. You are not in the flesh but in the spirit, a new sphere of life. You are delivered from the law of sin and death and inwardly changed by the renewal of your mind. **1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Romans 8:1-2, 12:1-2.**

You are given the seed which is the Word of God. The amount you are obedient to the Scriptures will be reflected in how much the outer man changes. **Matthew 7:13-23, Galatians 5:22-26.**

Regenerated people begin to think about things of the Spirit. We then believe that Jesus is the Christ and we then can be over-comers. We do not practice sin habitually. We love the brethren. If you do not love the brethren there is a question mark as to whether you love God. **1 John 4:17 – 5:5.** Old things have passed away; all things are become new. The regenerated person is already saved. It is the work of the Spirit at salvation making you new.

### **THE NECESSITY OF NEW BIRTH**

The necessity of the new birth is in the fact that without it you will not see the kingdom of God. You cannot enter God's plan in your flesh. How are you born again? - Not by works but by the Spirit of God. It is not by our blood sweat and tears, it is the work of God.

### **THE MANNER OF THE NEW BIRTH**

The cleansing convicting work of the Holy Spirit is also in view John 16:8-11. The gospel is used by the Holy Spirit in regeneration. The Spirit is the agent of regeneration. We need to give the gospel under the power of the Holy Spirit praying for His guidance and His convicting ministry. You were saved, you are now involved in the salvation of others as a believer.

### **REPENTANCE**

This parallels almost entirely the manner of the new birth. There are five sections to this subject-

#### **1. THE IMPORTANCE OF REPENTANCE**

Repentance towards God, faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ is a prerequisite of salvation. Both the Hebrew and Greek words indicate godly sorrow, full recognition of the awfulness of sin, and total change of mind and then life pattern/style.

#### **2. WHAT IS REPENTANCE**

Repentance does not just indicate sorrow; being sorry for your sins is not enough. Judas felt sorry for his sins, he made restitution for his sins but he was not saved; his sorrow did not move him to a change of position/purpose. He did not go to the Lord, he felt sorry for himself for what he had done. Judas was filled with regret, but not repentance. You have to be careful that people do not just feel better by feeling sorry for their sins, and getting their guilt off their chest.

Simple catharsis and ventilation of emotion is not salvation, but it may prepare for repentance that may lead to salvation as the person responds to the work of the Spirit in faith; feeling better is not salvation. Paul never "felt better" about what he had done as a persecutor of the church. He knew he was forgiven but he always felt bad about what he had done, and rightly so! Feelings may be excessive at times, and they may also be a guide to the truth; we must accept them and assess them, not take them as "evidence" of anything without study.

Holy Spirit created "godly sorrow" works you towards a change of mind; you change your mind about the Lord Jesus Christ, and express your volition and come to Him as your Saviour and Lord. Weeping for your sins is not necessarily a Christian act; you can get unbelieving psychiatrists getting their patients to weep for their sins. Salvation is not in how you feel about your sins alone; it is in your faith in Christ. Salvation is God's work for you, not any tear work you do!

#### **3. ADMINISTRATION OF REPENTANCE**

It is the preaching of the Cross that puts the awfulness of sin in the right perspective. It is realizing what the payment for sin cost the Lord Jesus Christ which brings you to repentance under the Holy Spirit's conviction. John 16:8-11.

#### **4. THE RESULTS OF REPENTANCE**

How is repentance manifested? Many and varied ways may be appropriate for different people; each will be different. For some there will be, deep sorrow for sin, many tears, deep reflection, lost in thoughts of past evils and present grace from God's Saviour, humiliation, self abhorrence; seeing yourself as God sees you, before the Cross and after it. It is manifested in the confession of sin to God and prayer for mercy, turning away from past evil and turning to God to trust Him and serve Him.

It can be demonstrated in water baptism, which is then an illustration of putting your old life aside and rising again to newness of Holy Spirit controlled life. All these things may be a part of the experience of repentance, yet salvation is simply the result of trusting in Jesus to save you from your sins.

## **5. EFFECT OF REPENTANCE**

The effect of repentance is that there is joy in heaven when a sinner truly repents. Holy Spirit created repentance allows volition to operate, and opens the door for the receiving of the gifts of the Holy Spirit at the point of salvation. We are also joined into union with Christ. Repentance is the work of God in the soul working Godly sorrow and "clearing the deck".

## **FAITH**

Faith is to rely upon or to have unhesitating assurance of the truth of God's testimony, even if it is not supported by any other evidence, and to rely upon, or have full assurance of the fulfillment of His promises, even though everything seen seems against that fulfillment. "God's Word says it, and I believe it, so that ends it". You have to get to the stage where whatever is happening to you, you can give thanks. In everything give thanks, says Paul.

What is saving faith? It is commitment of the heart, the life, or essence of man to the truth that Christ is their only Saviour and Lord. It is a faith that works out doing what the one you believe in tells you to do. Jesus says, "If you love me keep my commandments", and the person expresses their love in obedience. Faith works by love and commits itself to Christ.

What must we do to be saved? We must believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. The gospel is that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, was buried and rose again, and we respond to that through the Holy Spirit's work.

We must believe to be born again. Faith that He died for us brings pardon, and faith that He rose again brings deliverance from fear of death and sin's power. True faith in Christ involves confession and forsaking the old path of sin. True repentance and faith are mutually dependant on each other. By ourselves we are incapable of this, but the Holy Spirit does the work within to allow volition to be expressed either way, just as it was in the Garden of Eden. The issue for the unbeliever is what will they do with the person and work of Jesus? The Holy Spirit's convicting work is the only thing that removes the satanic blindness, and opens the door for them to express volition for Jesus, but if they harden their heart that time, they re-enter the darkness. We have entered the path of light!

The gospel is the gracious work of God for our salvation, as part of His plan for which the Lord Jesus Christ came as the God man to pay for the penalty of sin, winning the victory through the Cross and His Resurrection over the enemy of mankind. As victor over sin/death he claims the world as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We as evangelists should call all people everywhere to face the Lord, as their Saviour and King, knowing the Spirit will convict them within.

There is only one gospel and only one hope. **Acts 4:12, 16:31**. We must recognise that we are heralds of the King. The gospel is eternal in its scope and consequences. If you accept it you will receive eternal life, if you reject you receive eternal condemnation. It is a spiritual gospel and only the Holy Spirit can open the heart's door to lead to its acceptance.

There are not two gospels. The first commission to the then disciples was to go to Israel; the latter one was to go to the whole world, but still to go to Israel first. Later orders modify the earlier orders, but they don't negate them. The King of Kings is also the King of Israel. Biblical Evangelism will continue to recognize that there is special application of the gospel message to Jewish people, and true discipleship will continue to be a sign of regeneration. Do not let ultra-dispensationalists rob you of the Scriptures. Do not forget the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit in the giving of the gospel message, for without the Spirit's conviction in the soul/heart the unbeliever is incapable of response.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **GOSPEL OF SALVATION**

1. Gospel means "good news" - there are four gospels are found in the New Testament.
2. Gospel of the Kingdom.
  - a) Preached by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 2) the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 4:23) and his disciples (Matthew 10:7) Thy Kingdom come (Matthew 6:10).
  - b) It consists of the setting up on earth of Christ's 1,000 year Kingdom thus fulfilling the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:16)
  - c) There will be another preaching of the gospel by the Jewish remnant in the days of the Great Tribulation before the 2nd Advent. (Matthew 24:14, Revelation 7) After the 2nd Advent the 1,000 year reign commences. (Revelation 20:1-6)
3. Gospel of Grace - the gospel of personal salvation by grace through faith. This gospel appears under many names and is the means of salvation throughout the history of mankind.
  - a) Gospel of God (Romans 1:1, 1 Thessalonians 2:2)
  - b) Gospel of Christ - (Mark 1:1, Romans 1:16)
  - c) Gospel of the Grace of God - (Acts 20:24)

- d) Gospel of Peace - (Ephesians 6:15)
- e) Gospel of your salvation - (Ephesians 1:13)
- f) Glorious Gospel - (2 Corinthians 4:4)

4. The Everlasting Gospel - (Revelation 14:6) -the good news is everlasting. This gospel will be preached on earth just before Christ's return in glory (Matthew 25:31, 32). This gospel is the means of salvation to countless thousands both Jews and Gentiles (Revelation 7:9-14).

5. Paul's "My Gospel" - (Romans 2:16). This is the same gospel of salvation by grace through faith but includes the mystery doctrines of the church age not previously revealed. The gospel in the Old Testament was revealed by the Tabernacle, Feasts, Levitical Offerings etc.

6. "Another Gospel" which is not another (Galatians 1:6, 7, 2 Corinthians 11:4). This is a perversion of the Gospel of Christ (Galatians 1:8, 9). The curse is proclaimed on any who preach it. There have been many perversions - legalism in Galatia, angel worship in Colossae (Colossians 2:18) among others.

**GOSPELS: MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, JOHN**

1. The four gospels are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
2. All were written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. (2 Timothy 3:16), but each writer saw things from a different perspective, and therefore have variations in the things they wrote about.
3. All the gospels are compatible but the emphasis of the writers is on different characteristics of Jesus Christ.
  - a) Matthew Christ the King
  - b) Mark Christ the Servant
  - c) Luke Christ the Perfect Man
  - d) John Christ the Son of God
4. The gospels have equivalents in the four wing creatures in (Revelation 4:7) - the living creatures. (cf. Ezekiel 1:10)
  - a) Matthew King Head of a Lion
  - b) Mark Servant Head of an Ox
  - c) Luke Man Head of a Man
  - d) John God Head of an Eagle
5. The gospels have equivalents in the four colours of the material of the entrance into the tabernacle. (Exodus 26:36)
  - a) Matthew King Purple of Royalty
  - b) Mark Servant Scarlet of Sacrifice
  - c) Luke Man White of Purity
  - d) John God Blue of Deity

e) It should be noted that the colours of the robe of the ephod of the High Priest were purple, scarlet, white and blue.
6. The gospels have equivalents in the Branch.
  - a) Matthew Branch of David (Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15)
  - b) Mark Servant the Branch (Zechariah 3:8)
  - c) Luke Man whose name is the branch (Zechariah 6:12,13)
  - d) John Branch of Jehovah (Isaiah 4:2)

**GOSPELS: HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**

INCIDENT	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
1. Introductory Verses			1:1-4	
2. Prologue to the 4th Gospel				1:1-18
3. Genealogy of Christ	1:1-17		3:23b-38	
4. Zacharias, of John the Baptist's Birth			1:5-25	
5. Annunciation to Mary of Christ's Birth			1:26-38	
6. Mary's Visit to Elizabeth			1:39-56	
7. Birth of John the Baptist			1:57-58	
8. Circumcision and Naming of John			1:59-80	
9. Annunciation to Joseph of Christ's Birth	1:18-23			

10. The Birth of Jesus at Bethlehem	1:24-25		2:1-7	
11. Annunciation to the Shepherds			2:8-14	
12. Visit of the Shepherds To Adore Christ			2:15-20	
13. Circumcision of Jesus at Bethlehem			2:21	
14. Temple, Prophecies of Simeon & Anna			2:22-38	
15. Visit of the Magi	2:1-12			
16. Flight into Egypt	2:13-15			
17. Slaughter of the Children By Herod	2:16-18			
18. Return From Egypt to Nazareth	2:19,23		2:39	
19. Life of Jesus at Nazareth	2:23		2:40-52	
20. The Public Ministry of John the Baptist	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-18	1:19-28
21. Jesus Baptised and Witnessed to by John	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-23	1:15,29-34
22. The Temptation of Jesus	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	
23. Andrew and Peter Meet Jesus				1:43-51
24. The First Miracle - Water Into Wine				2:1-11
25. Christ Goes to Capernaum				2:12

**EARLY JUDEAN MINISTRY**

26. 1st Passover - Moneychangers in Temple				2:13-25
27. Instructions of Nicodemus				3:1-21
28. Jesus Preaches in Judea				3:22
29. Renewed Testimony of John to Jesus				3:23-36
30. Jesus Goes to Galilee	4:12	1:14	4:14	4:1-5
31. Interview With Woman From Samaria				4:6-42
32. Cure of Nobleman's Son				4:43-54
33. Imprisonment of John the Baptist	14:3-5	6:17-20	3:19-20	

**EARLY GALILEAN MINISTRY**

34. Start of Christ's Ministry in Galilee	4:12-17	1:14, 15	4:14, 15	
35. First Rejection at Nazareth				4:16-30
36. Call of Simon, Andrew, James and John	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11	
37. Cure of Demoniac in the Synagogue		1:21-28	4:31-37	
38. Cure of Peter's Wife's Mother	8:14-15	1:29-31	4:38-39	
39. Cure of Many on the Same Evening	8:16-17	1:32-34	4:40-41	
40. Circuit Through Galilee	4:23-25	1:35-39	4:42-44	
41. Cure of a Leper	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16	
42. Healing of a Paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26	
43. Call of Matthew (Levi):His Feast	9:9-13	2:13-17	5:27-32	
44. 2nd Passover; Healing at Bethesda Pool				5:1-47
45. Picking corn on Sabbath	12:1-8	2:23-28	6:1-5	
46. Cure on Sabbath, withered hand	12:9-13	3:1-5	6:6-10	
47. Plot against Jesus	12:14-21	3:6-12	6:11,17-19	
48. Selection of Twelve Apostles		3:13-19	6:12-16	
49. Sermon on the Mount	5:1-7:29		6:20-49	
50. Healing of the Centurion's Servant	8:5-13		7:1-10	
51. Circuit Through Galilee	11:1			
52. Raising of Widow's Son at Nain			7:11-17	
53. Inquiry of John the Baptist	11:2-19		7:18-35	
54. Jesus Anointed by a Sinful Woman			7:36-50	
55. Circuit through Galilee with Disciples			8:1-3	
56. Curse against Bethsaida and Capernaum	11:20-30			
57. Cure of Demoniac: Pharisees Reproved	12:22-37	3:20-30	11:14,15,17-28	
58. Pharisees' Desire For a Sign	12:38-45		11:16,29-32	6:29-36
59. Christ's Mother and Brothers	12:46-50	3:31-35	8:19-21	
60. Woes Against Pharisees			11:37-54	
61. Trusting God, Against Worldliness			12:1-59	
62. Remarks on Slaughter of the Galileans			13:1-5	
63. Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven	13:1-53	4:1-34	13:18-21;8:4-18	
64. The Three Inquirers	8:18-22		9:57-62	
65. The Tempest Stilled on Galilee	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25	
66. The Demoniacs of Gadara	8:28-34	5:1-20	8:26-39	
67. John's Disciples & Pharisees re Fasting	9:4-17	2:18-22	5:33-39	
68. Raising of Jairus' Daughter,	9:18-26	5:21-43	8:40-56	
69. Cure of Two Blind Men	9:27-31			
70. Cure of Dumb Demoniac	9:32-34			

71. Second Rejection at Nazareth	13:54-58	6:1-6a		
72. The Twelve Sent Out	9:35-11:1	6:6b-13	9:1-6	
73. Herod About John the Baptist's Death	14:1,2,6-12	6:14-16,21-29	9:7-9	
74. The Twelve Return, Feeding of 5,000	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17	6:1-14
75. Jesus Walks on Water at Galilee	14:22-33	6:45-52		6:15-21
76. Triumphal March Through Gennesaret	14:34-36	6:53-56		
77. Discourse of the Bread of Life				6:22-71
78. Reproof of Pharisaic Traditions	15:1-20	7:1-23		
79. Daughter of Syro-Phoenician Healed	15:21-28	7:24-30	7:31-37	
80. Lame, Deaf and Dumb Man Healed	15:29-31	7:31-37		
81. The 4,000 Fed at the Decapolis	15:32-38	8:1-9		
82. Pharisees and Sadducees Signs	15:39-16:4	8:10-12		
83. Warned Against the Leaven of Pharisees	16:5-12	8:13-21		
84. Blind Man Healed		8:22-26		
85. Peter's Confession	16:13-20	8:27-30	9:18-21	
86. Christ Foretells Death & Resurrection	16:21-28	8:31-9:1	9:22-27	
87. The Transfiguration	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36	
88. Healing of the Demoniac Boy	17:14-21	9:14-29	9:37-43a	
89. Christ Again Foretells The Crucifixion	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43b-45	
90. The Tribute Money	17:24-27			
91. Instructions to Disciples on Humility	18:1-35	9:33-50	9:46-50	

**THE LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM (JUDEAN AND PEREAN MINISTRY)**

92. Final Departure From Galilee	19:1a	10:1a	9:51-56	7:1
93. The 72 Instructed and Sent out			10:1-16	
94. Christ Attends The Feast of Tabernacles				7:2-52
95. Woman Taken in Adultery				7:53-8:11
96. Discussion With Jews During Feast				8:12-59
97. Jesus goes from Jerusalem - Return of 70			10:17-24	
98. Lawyer Instructed, Good Samaritan			10:25-37	
99. Jesus At the House of Martha and Mary			10:38-42	
100. Disciples Taught How To Pray			11:1-13	
101. Feast of Dedication				9:1-10:38
102. Ministry in Perea	19:1b,2	10:1b		10:39-42
103. Parable of Barren Fig Tree			13:6-9	
104. Healing Infirm Woman on Sabbath			13:10-17	
105. Journeying Toward Jerusalem			13:22-35	
106. Dines With Pharisee, Heals Dropsy			14:1-24	
107. Requirements of a True Disciple			14:25-35	
108. Parables: Lost Sheep, Coin, Prodigal Son			15:1-32	
109. Parable of Unjust Steward			16:1-18	
110. The Rich Man and Lazarus			16:19-31	
111. Instructs in Forbearance, Faith			17:1-10	
112. The Ten Lepers			17:11-19	
113. The Suddenness of His Advent			17:20-37	
114. Parable of Importunate Widow			18:1-8	
115. Parable of Pharisee and Publican			18:9-14	
116. The Raising of Lazarus at Bethany				11:1-46
117. Counsel of Caiaphas - Jesus Retires				11:47-54
118. Precepts Concerning Divorce	19:3-12	10:2-12		
119. Christ Blesses Little Children	19:13-15	10:13-16	18:15-17	
120. The Rich Young Ruler	19:16-30	10:17-31	18:18-30	
121. Parable of Vineyard	20:1-16			
122. Third Prediction of Death & Resurrection	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34	
123. The Ambition of James and John	20:20-28	10:35-45		
124. Two Blind Men Healed at Jericho	20:29-34	10:46-52	18:35-43	
125. Conversion of Zacchaeus			19:1-10	
126. Parable of the Pounds			19:11-28	
127. Arrival At Bethany				11:55-12:1

**THE LAST WEEK**

128. Supper at Bethany, Mary Anoints Jesus	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:2-11
129. Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem	21:1-11	11:1-11	19:29-44	12:12-19
130. Cursing of Fig Tree, Temple Cleansing	21:12-16	11:12-18	19:45-48	
131. Lesson of the Fig Tree	21:17-22	11:19-26		
132. The Sanhedrin Demands Jesus' Authority	21:23-22:14	11:27-12:12	20:1-19	

133. Question of Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes	22:15-46	12:13-37	20:20-44	
134. Warnings Against Scribes and Pharisees	23:1-39	12:38-40	20:45-47	
135. The Widow's Mite		12:41-44	21:1-4	
136. Visit of the Greeks				12:20-50
137. Christ's Prediction of Fall of Jerusalem	24:1-31	13:1-27	21:5-28	
138. Parable Ten Virgins, Talents	24:32-25:46	13:28-37	21:29-38	
139. Conspiracy of the Rulers and Judas	26:1-5,14-16	14:1-2,10-11	22:1-6	
140. Preparation for the Passover	26:17-19	14:12-16	22:7-13	
141. The Last Passover Jerusalem	26:20	14:17	22:14-18,24-30	
142. The Feet Washing				13:1-20
143. Judas Withdraws	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23	13:21-35
144. The Lord's Supper	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19-20	
145. Prediction of Peter's Fall			22:31-34	13:36-38
146. Last Discourse with Disciples, Prayer				14:1-17:26
147. Renewed Prediction of Peter's Fall	26:31-35	14:27-31	22:35-38	
148. The Agony in the Garden	26:30,36-46	14:26,32-42	22:39-46	18:1
149. Arrest of Christ, Dispersion of Disciples	26:47-56	14:43-52	22:47-53	18:2-12
150. Preliminary Examination of Annas				18:13,14,19-24
151. Examination Before Sanhedrin	26:57,59-68	14:53,55-65	22:54a, 63-65	
152. Peter's Denial	26:58,69-75	14:54,66-72	22:54b-62	18:15-18,25-27
153. Judgement of Jesus by Sanhedrin	27:1	15:1a	22:66-71	
154. Jesus Led To Pilate	27:2,11-14	15:1b-5	23:1-5	18:28-38
155. Jesus Before Herod			23:6-12	
156. Pilate Further Seeks To Release Jesus	27:15-26a	15:6-15a	23:13-25	18:39-40
157. Pilate Delivers Jesus to Death, Scourging	27:26b-30	15:15b-19		19:1-3
158. Pilate Again Seeks Jesus' Release				19:4-16a
159. Judas' Remorse and Suicide	27:3-10			
160. Jesus Led to Crucifixion	27:31-34	15:20-2	23:26-33a	19:16b-17
161. The Crucifixion	27:35-38	15:24-28	23:33b-34:38	19:18-24
162. Incidents at the Cross	27:39-49	15:29-36	23:35-37	19:25-29,39-45a
163. The Death of Jesus	27:50	15:37	23:46	19:30
164. Incidents Following His Death	27:51-56	15:38-41	23:45b,47-49	
165. Taking Down From Cross, Burial	27:57-61	15:42-47	23:50-56	19:31-42
166. The Watch at the Tomb	27:62-66			
167. Visit of the Women	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-11	
168. Visit of John & Peter, Christ's Appearance		16:9-11	24:12	20:1-18
169. Report of the Guard	28:11-15			
170. Interview With Two Disciples		16:12-13	24:13-35	
171. Christ Appears to the Eleven	16:14		24:36-49	20:19-24
172. Christ Appears Again To Them				20:25-29
173. Appears to Disciples, Peter's Restoration				21:15-23
174. Service in the Christian life				21:1-14
175. The Great Commission	28:16-20	16:15-18		
176. The Ascension at the Mount of Olives		16:19-20	24:50-53	
177. John's Closing Words				20:30-31;21:24-25

**SECTION J – ECCLESIOLOGY**

**LESSON 53 – THE CHURCH**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
53	The Church	Ephesians 5:25-32 Acts 19:39,41, Acts 7:38 Ephesians 1:22-23 Romans 16:5 1 Cor 12:12-13 Ephesians 3:1-12 1 Cor 10:31-33	In Christ Body and Bride of Christ.

**THE CHURCH**

Church life and functions are extremely important. The nature, the function, and the purpose of the church, both as the church universal and the local church, are all important things that need to be understood.

In **Ephesians 5:25-32** we see the care and love expressed by our Lord as head of the church for believers, his body.

### **DEFINITION**

The meaning of the word church -

[a] The English-Scottish word "Kirk" derived from the Greek word "kyriakon" which means belonging to the Lord. It is used twice in the New Testament in 1 Corinthians 11:20 and Revelation 1:10. The Kirk was the building where the people of the Lord gathered together.

[b] Hebrew word - "gahal" which means assembly but does not necessarily refer to a religious assembly. It would also refer to a synagogue. When it was translated into the Greek in the Septuagint the word used was "ekklesia".

[c] Greek word - "ekklesia" means assembly and does not take on a supposed meaning of a "called out" people. In fact from a basis of etymology they should be translated the "called together" people. This can also be a secular assembly, as in **Acts 19:32,41**. It covered an assembly of pagans [**Acts 19:39,41**], an assembly of judges, an assembly of believers in a synagogue in Israel [**Acts 7:38**] and an assembly of the Christian church. [**Ephesians 1:22-23**]

### **THE CHURCH AND ABRAHAM**

There are reformed theologians who say that the church started in Abraham's tent. This is due to confusion between the concept of the people of God, and the particular people at each time/age/period in history. Israel as a called out/set apart people begins in Abraham's tent (but finally Israel becomes a nation in Egyptian Bondage), but the church begins at Pentecost, we are all together in "one body" only in heaven, and even there it appears there is a distinction between the groups.

So the Church started at the time of Pentecost and not in Abraham's tent. This is because the church comprises all the members of the body of Christ. It was only established at Pentecost where there were no longer Jew and Gentile but one in Christ Jesus. **Galatians 3:26-29**. There is fellowship with the faith of Abraham, but a new group has been established which follows that established by Abraham.

The universal church is every person who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ from the feast of Pentecost in 32 AD to the Rapture together with any believers who were alive at Pentecost and were baptised by the Holy Spirit. Refer to **Hebrews 12:23-29**, where we see the church universal, the church triumphant.

### **THE LOCAL CHURCH**

The local church has four types of concept to its identity.

[a] - **A geographical concept** - The church at Corinth, Philippi, and Laodicea.

[b] - **A fellowship concept** - It is made up of members who have expressed personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a worship and fellowship centre.

[c] - **A sacramental concept** - The practicing of the Lord's Supper and Baptism, there was a fellowship around the Lord's Table.

[d] - **A functional concept** - The exercise of group responsibilities like teaching in order to witness and serve the Lord.

The emphasis was on the people and what they were doing together not any reference to the building they met in. We should have a Biblical attitude towards the church, and that means it is according to its function, not its physical assets. Let the Bible interpret this to you as you study the early churches in action and follow their example.

### **OTHER CONCEPTS OF THE CHURCH**

Other concepts of the church include the following historic definitions:

[a] Roman Catholic - "It is a divinely constituted society consisting of members from every race and nation, all holding one faith, all using the same sacraments as means of holiness and salvation, and all governed benignly by the successor of St Peter, the Vicar of Christ, the Pope". [The New Catholic Dictionary, 1929].

The Catholics have backed away from this definition and have added a lot more words but in reality this is where they still stand. We do not believe this fully ourselves, because we do not believe in Sacramentalism, salvation or spirituality by sacraments. Neither do we believe in Sacerdotalism where a priest has the right to give or withhold salvation or



spirituality by means of giving or withholding the sacraments. While we differ in this we embrace the believers in this and the other churches as our brothers and sisters in Christ.

[b] Anglican – “The visible church is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance”. [Article 19 of the 39 articles of the Church of England].

The Anglicans believe that only the person who has been accredited or ordained has the right to provide communion. This is also a form of sacerdotalism. The Anglican Church is what they call a “broad church”, and covers a lot of distance from the Church Army, with whom we can relate well, right to the High Church which is quasi Roman Catholic. They have had the concept that if you are christened as a baby you are a Christian, you are then confirmed, and as long as you have communion once a week you are alright. As long as you are in the church you are in heaven. This viewpoint flows from sacerdotalism and it is a reason why we reject it, while still embracing the people.

[c] Reformed – “the catholic and universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect. The visible church, which is also catholic and universal under the Gospel, consist of all those who throughout the world profess the true religion, together with their children...”

Everything is right except the last four words. How do you enter into the body of Christ? By personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Your children are not automatically members of the body of Christ. However, we know that those who die before reaching the age of accountability are automatically saved. **2 Samuel 12:13-23**. Children are not members of the church. This can only be attained by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. You are not saved by your father's, mother's, or grandparent's faith.

[d] Baptist – “the church is a company of visible saints, called and separated from the world by the Word and Spirit of God, to the visible profession of the faith of the Gospel; being baptised into the faith”. [Article XXXIII 1646]. Once again the denominational distinction ruins the definition – water baptism doesn't define the believer, it is an expression of belief after salvation. The baptism of the Holy Spirit enters us into the universal church forever, water baptism illustrates and expresses this union and new life, so it makes nothing except “Baptists....”

**SO HOW DO WE DEFINE THE CHURCH?**

We must each consider how we might define the church; both universal and our own local congregation. Who forms the church? The Holy Spirit forms the church according to **1 Corinthians 12:13** by baptizing believers into unity within the body of Christ. This is why we differ from the Reformed position; who see the church in Abraham's tent.

The church requires the baptism of the Holy Spirit to begin it, and that begins on the Day of Pentecost. It is unique to our age of history. There is in the church neither Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male nor female, we are all one in Christ Jesus. This was a great shock to believers at the time, as evidenced by Peter having to have a vision to convince him, and thus see Cornelius as a Gentile Roman become a Christian without having to be circumcised and become a Jew first. Peter was very surprised by the salvation of Gentiles as equals to Jews. (It also surprised Satan!)

When Paul wrote “neither Jew or Gentile, bond or free, rich or poor”, jaws dropped, as this was very different to what they had been brought up to believe would occur. For the first time in history God was dealing with all people the same, Israel was no longer “special”. He gave total equality. The way to spiritually grow was then the same for both Jew and Gentile, for slave and freeman, and for men and women – it was walking in the leading of the Holy Spirit and life in the Spirit through feeding on the Word and fellowship with each other.

It is impossible to live as the Lord intended in the church, without moment by moment fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Many Christians do not know what it is to walk in obedience, and the reason is never hard to find; it is lack of prayerful feeding on the Word, lack of confession of sin, and lack of obedience to what the spirit reveals through the Word. We should read the Word and chew it over with the Lord daily.

Ephesians is called the church epistle, for it is in this letter that Paul tells us about using the things that God has provided for the members of the church. The challenge to us all is to make use of what the prophets longed to see. The prophets longed to see our day, for we have in Christ Jesus far more spiritual assets than they had earlier and they envied our blessing. 1 Peter 1:10-13. Are you living in God's provision today, is the Spirit able to have His way in your life? We have in Christ Jesus wealth and riches in the spiritual realm that are beyond compare.

Because the concept of a church, formed of Jews and Gentiles alike, all of whom are saved and joined together by eternal life, is not found in the Old Testament, it is referred to as a “mystery doctrine”. The mystery doctrine was something that was kept from Satan in the Old Testament period, so that it would knock him back when it occurred. He was not expecting what God did at Pentecost.

There are many prophecies for Israel that are yet unfulfilled. In order for the Church to have “fulfilled” them you need to twist and pervert Scripture. The uniqueness of the body of which we are a part is something we need to concentrate on. We have temporarily, apparently supplanted Israel, but they will be taken up again. Romans 11:1ff.

The church is now comprised of the Jew, Gentile and all together formed the Church of God. We are all equal in Christ as we were all equal in condemnation under the curse of sin.

### **SALVATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

Can a person be saved and not be a church member? They certainly can be saved and not be a member of a local church, but all saints are members of the universal church. It is normal for a person to join a local church of one kind or another, because every child of God will, following the Holy Spirit's leading, seeks fellowship with other children of God. If they do not, we must question their true identity in the family.

The local church must meet regularly in a geographical place; it must have an evangelical thrust and be a place where worship and fellowship are fostered. It should be an organisation that encourages the teaching of God's Word systematically so that the whole council of God is taught.

Any person should be able to come and worship, fellowship, and be taught. People should respect each other and not look down on one another. No-one should be threatened by any other person, nor should privacy be violated – it should be the safest place in town! The health of a church can be calibrated against these criteria. You cannot be a born again believer and not wish to get together in worship and service with others and love them and desire their best.

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **IN CHRIST**

1. At the point of salvation, every believer in the Church Age is entered into the Body of Christ, and is therefore united with Christ. Our position is now, "in Christ".
2. The baptism of the Spirit is how we are united with Christ. (Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 4:5) The Holy Spirit places the believer in union with Christ.
3. Positional truth belongs to the carnal as well as the spiritual believer, to the apostate believer as well as to the mature believer. (1 Corinthians 1:2,30)
4. Positional truth protects the believer from divine judgment in eternity. (Romans 8:1)
5. Positional truth qualifies the believer to live with God forever.
  - a) Eternal life (1 John 5:11,12)
  - b) Imputation of God's righteousness. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
6. Positional truth is the key to both election and predestination. (Ephesians 1:3-6)
7. Positional truth creates a new creature. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10) based on who and what Christ is, therefore what grace accomplishes - not what changes we make - at salvation or thereafter.
8. Positional truth guarantees the eternal security of the believer. (Romans 8:38,39)
9. Positional truth has two aspects.
  - a) Past - identification with Christ in His death. (Romans 6; Colossians 2:12; 3:3)
  - b) Present (and Future) - identification with Christ in His "new resurrection life".
10. Current positional truth implies that the believer shares certain things in union with Christ.
  - a) Eternal life (1 John 5:11,12)
  - b) Righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)
  - c) Election (Ephesians 1:4)
  - d) Destiny (Ephesians 1:5)
  - e) Sonship (John 1:12; 1 John 3:1,2)
  - f) Heirship (Romans 8:16,17)
  - g) Sanctification (1 Corinthians 1:2,30)
  - h) Kingdom (2 Peter 1:11)
  - i) Priesthood (Hebrews 10:10-14; 1 Peter 2:5,9).
11. Our new position in Christ means we are and must be separated from the world (Ephesians 2:6).
12. As new creatures in Christ, we have a new ministry as ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17-21, 1 Corinthians 3:6, 6:4).

13. In Christ, we are never alone (Colossians 3:4, John 17); we have communion with Him, and with His body (other Christians).
14. We are united with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit forever – we are in the Father, He is in us (Ephesians 4:6), we are in Christ, He is in us (John 14:20, Colossians 1:26), we are in the Spirit, He is in us (Romans 8:9).
15. We are members of His body, branches of His vine, living stones of His building, sheep of His fold, part of his Bride, priests in his kingdom, saints set apart for his glory.
16. The characteristics of positional truth are six-fold:
  - a) It is not an experience - neither emotional nor ecstatic.
  - b) It is not progressive - cannot be improved in time or eternity.
  - c) It is not related to human merit, ability, or human good. Here are the implications of retroactive positional truth. There is no place in the plan of God for human good.
  - d) It is eternal in nature, it cannot be changed by God, angels or mankind.
  - e) It is known only through the Word of God.
  - f) It is obtained in total at the point of salvation.

**BODY AND BRIDE OF CHRIST**

1. The Body of Christ is being formed on the earth during the Church Age. (Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:16, 4:4-5, 5:23, Colossians 1:18, 1:24, 2:19).
2. It is being completed by entering every believer of the Church Age into union with Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)
3. When the body is completed the Rapture occurs. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, 1 Corinthians 15:51-7, compared with Revelation 19:6-8, Zechariah 13:2 and 1 Thessalonians 3:13.)
4. During the tribulation on earth the bride is being dressed in heaven.
  - a) For ultimate sanctification - the resurrection body. (1 Corinthians 15:51-7, Philippians 3:21, 1 John 3:1,2).
  - b) The bride is prepared by being cleansed from all human good. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)
  - c) The bride no longer possesses a sinful nature (Revelation 19:7-8)
5. The Bride returns in triumph with Christ at the Second Advent. (1 Thessalonians 3:13)
6. Upon the return of the bride and groom judgment occurs. (Psalm 110:1)
  - a) Disarming of demons (Colossians 2:15)
  - b) Satan is imprisoned for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20:1-3)
  - c) Jesus Christ casts demons into prison Zechariah 13:2, Colossians 2:15, 1 Corinthians 15:24,25)
7. Coronation of the Groom, Jesus Christ is Crowned King of the World. (Revelation 19:6)
8. Wedding Supper of the Lamb. (Revelation 19:7-9)
  - a) Marriage occurred in heaven, supper to take place on earth. (Matthew 25:1-13)
  - b) Wedding supper described in detail (Revelation 19:6-9)
  - c) Four groups involved in this supper:-
    - i) The Groom - Jesus Christ.
    - ii) The Friends of the Groom - Old Testament Saints (John 3:29)
    - iii) The Bride - Church Age Believers.
    - iv) The Friends of the Bride - Tribulation believers, i.e. those who have known the Bride and become believers (Matthew 25:1-13).

**LESSON 54 – CHURCH – PURPOSE AND COMMISSION**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
54	Church - Purpose & Commission	Acts 15:1-19 Matthew 13:1-47 Matthew 28:18-20 Matthew 16:13-18	Abiding in God

**THE COMMISSION OF THE CHURCH**

Your attitude to the church and what it is going to be is going to be coloured by your understanding of what the church represents and its commission. What is the commission of the church?

In **Acts 15:1-19** we have the first debate on the nature of the church at the Jerusalem conference. Here the question was, "Is the church going to be built on the Mosaic Law or is it to be based on the concept of grace?" Is the church a replacement of old Israel, or is it a new thing altogether? It is the difference in the answer to these questions that will give one's attitude to evangelism, and to Israel's destiny.

The debate about the nature of the church continues through to today, where we have the post millennial view in reformed theology, in association with a replacement theology regarding Israel, and the pre-millennial view of the evangelical viewpoint, which is associated with a belief that Israel does have a future in the plan of God.

In this conference at Jerusalem some say that you can be saved by faith in Christ, others say that faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord is not enough but you are required to keep the Mosaic Law as well. Both groups in Acts 15, and today, are born again believers, and this fact must be borne in mind today when we disagree. We can have major disagreements and still be brethren.

### **JEWES AND GENTILES IN THE CHURCH - ACTS 15**

In verse 4 and following Paul gives his testimony to the apostles, as to what the Lord has done through his ministry with the Gentiles. Peter backs Paul up, in the conference itself, with his account of the time when he went to Cornelius; that he had to receive a special vision from the Lord to overcome his resistance, in order to give the gospel to the Gentiles. Peter says, "let us go back to the beginning where Jesus Christ has testified that Gentile and Jew are one in Christ Jesus".

There is a new equality in the human race due to what the Lord has done. There is therefore a difference between old Israel and the church. With the church however there is a point of equality for all mankind in the Spirit. We are brought into this new relationship with God and our fellow man by faith in the complete work of Jesus Christ.

As Jewish believers they were aware that they could never be righteous before God through the Mosaic Law. It was a great burden, and so they ask the apostles, will you test God by asking him to put a yoke on the new believers, which as Jews they were unable to keep? They saw and proclaimed that Law and Grace cannot be mixed without loss of the plan!

Silas and Paul now get up and share with them the way that God has been working with them in a similar way to the way He is working through Peter. Peter says that God has "taken a people out of the Gentiles for His name" – that is, God is doing a new thing here and they must pause and reflect upon where to go from here. The Church is therefore now seen as a people taken out of the Jews and Gentiles for His name; it is a Holy Spirit called out group, a totally new thing.

**Verses 9-11** - There is now absolute unity of Jew and Gentile in Christ Jesus whereas in the Old Testament period when a Gentile became a believer he would need to be circumcised and enter Judaism as a proselyte, a second class Jew. James states that salvation no longer comes through Israel but comes through Christ and that no one now needs to become a Jew first in order to become a Christian.

This is the beginning of what Paul is going to state later, when he says that there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither male or female, neither bond or free. The Pharisees still prayed each morning, thanking God that, "I thank you I was not born a woman nor a Gentile", but no believer in the Lord could ever say such a thing, for all distinctions are gone in Christ.

### **THE CHURCH AS A NEW BODY**

In **verse 14** the church is seen as a new body, it is a "taken out" people. Peter takes this up in his letter many years after this conference, the fact that we are a chosen people, a royal nation, a royal priesthood. **1 Peter 2:6-10**. He has called us out of our darkness into His glorious light. It did not matter whether we were Gentiles or Jews we were all in the darkness of sin until the Lord called us out. The emphasis is that God is doing something for us in the church. At the Jerusalem conference there was a newness and excitement about what God was doing. Later both Paul and Peter would receive further revelation about this subject and add to it in their later letters.

### **ISRAEL HAS A FUTURE**

However that did not mean that Israel was finished, as a part of God's plan. When James quotes from Amos 9:11 in Acts 15 **verse 16** this must be referring to a future time as at the time that James was speaking the Tabernacle was not broken down it was still standing. This theme is taken up by Paul in **Romans 11** where he makes it quite clear that God has not finished with Israel.

Israel is unique in the fact that they are the only nation to come back into their land after a very long time of dispersion. In their case they have been out for 1900 years and have come back. Israel has come back in unbelief but God said that

this would happen. The church is a different thing from Israel. Let us rejoice in the difference. The church is the work of the Spirit with an emphasis of grace and faith. It is something that is illustrated by many people in the Old Testament.

**MATTHEW 13**

The church was prophesied in **Matthew 13:1ff**. There are seven parables here:- the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the treasure in the field, the pearl, and the net. Each parable represents what the Church is going to be and to do in the coming age. Detailed study of this chapter is essential to understanding the nature of the church in this age.

**PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH**

The purpose of the church is not the conversion of the world but the calling out of the world those who will believe in Christ to form the body of Christ which is the church. It is true that the world is still to be transformed, and that there is still going to be a kingdom of righteousness, as the Scriptures prophesied, but this is to follow rather than precede the second coming of Christ.

Jude says that the role we have to play is the plucking of the brands from the fire. **Jude 20-23**. We should not expect that we are going to get heaven on earth in this present Church Age, as the only person who can bring in such an age is the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will in his power, only after he returns to judge and rule at the Second Advent. Our task now is to be useful to the Lord, so that those who can be saved, are saved through the power of the Holy Spirit. Obey!!!

In Matthew 13 our Lord describes pictorially the peculiar features of this age:

**Firstly** Israel's presence in the world will be like a treasure hid in a field waiting for the Lord to dig it up.

**Secondly** evil will continue to the end of the age.

**Thirdly**, the children of the kingdom who are likened to wheat, or a pearl of great price, or good fish, who will be gathered out from amongst the evil ones. So the Church Age believers are gathered out from amongst evil, while Israel is hidden, ready to be found at the right moment at the end of this age. Zechariah 12:10ff.

Does that now make sense of Matthew 13? Our commission in the Church is different to Israel's commission before Jesus comes, and to the commissions given the disciples before the Cross while it was still possible for Israel to accept their Messiah. The purpose of the church is not the correction of the evil of the world, but the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all who will believe. It is the calling out of a people from the evil world to be a separate people within it and to have destiny beyond it, but still to minister to it the message of salvation.

Israel's covenants will still be fulfilled, as shown in Romans 11, and evil will be banned on the earth, as stated in Revelation 21, but the thing that this awaits is the completion of the Church as His body, or in other words, with another image, to the perfection of His bride [**Jude 20-25, Revelation 19-20**].

We should be strengthening ourselves spiritually, walking in love, looking for the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ and on all having compassion for the lost state of man, with discernment towards them, for we know the truth of their state and their destiny. As Jude reminds us, "others save with fear pulling them out of the fire looking for the Lord who is coming for you and looking in love towards those who are perishing". Hate sin but love the sinner, and give them the truth that they might be saved.

**OUR PURPOSE - THE GREAT COMMISSION**

What is the purpose of the church? Do you not see that it is to bring glory to God, and that is achieved by fulfilling the orders of the Lord, to personally grow in grace, and to proclaim the truth to save the lost who will respond. Our task is to grow spiritually ourselves, and so be more earnest in the task of plucking brands from the fire. We are on a rescue mission on the brink of hell. We need to be challenged regarding this. Do you see the church as an association who are going to bring heaven on earth, or do you see it as people who are going out to preach the gospel to a lost and dying world to save from hell those who will be saved?

You cannot, if you wish to be like the early church, talk to unbelievers and ask them to keep Christian standards when you show them the Cross. They must be born again first! The tragedy with this legalistic approach is that if you spend sufficient time you might just succeed in getting people to act in a biblical way, but they are still unsaved. What have you gained by reforming a person's behaviour without saving their soul? You have gained nothing. Instead of an obnoxious sinner going to hell you have a more refined sinner going to hell. This sort of attitude also will affect you and your view of life. You will not be looking unto Jesus for the Second Advent or his soon return. Is there anticipation of his return?

**Matthew 28:18-20** ties in with Jude and we find the same emphasis in Peter and John. Paul says that the church is a missionary agency, not a political agency. It is not like the nation Israel which had a state organisation. The church is not to be a nationalistic or political entity. It is a spiritual body with a spiritual purpose, not a political one, and it is not to

be distracted by political/social/local agendas. Our purpose is to go into **all the world** and preach the gospel to every creature. It is a spiritual body with a spiritual rather than political or even social purpose.

We need to preach the gospel to the unsaved and teach the believers the commandments in the Gospels and Epistles for with the Holy Spirit's filling and power they can respond to them and bring glory to God. If we preach "unto the end" it is because we are confident that there is an end. We don't stop reading at the end of the Gospels, for the Lord kept teaching through the Holy Spirit by means of the Apostles. You go from Luke into Acts which tells us that the Lord is coming again and that there are things to do until he comes. "Even so come Lord Jesus", as John says in the closing words of the book of the Revelation.

We should be looking at all things in this world in light of the reality and expectation of the Lord's return today. You as a servant should be well briefed on this, be prepared for it, and you should be looking at everything you do in light of this expectation. The Lord is coming back for you, and as his steward you are to give an account for your service.

The reformed theologians are trying to change the world rather than save those who will respond to the gospel. Rather than planning for a long time here, if we follow apostolic expectation, we should be expecting the Lord daily. Does your understanding of this point of theology make you hot, does it make you want to serve Him today? If it does you have the right perspective. The disciples were committed to evangelism, they had the right attitude, and we are called to stand with them not with ivory tower theologians, or legalistic politicians.

### **THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM**

The distinctiveness of the church and its relation to the coming, but later kingdom is an important area to understand.

The Lord Jesus Christ is going to set up a kingdom on this earth in the Millennium. Revelation 20-21. We preach the kingship of the Lord in our hearts, his rulership over our life, and dominion over us. We do not go further however where the reformed people do to the dominion of the church over society. We do not believe we can set up the kingdom here, for we expect the Lord to do this one day. We do not want people through human effort living by Christian standards, without saving faith in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Although it is a good thing for people to be acting in a Christ like manner, we want them saved from hell fire, and then living as Christians, now and forever!

### **CONCEPTS OF THE KINGDOM**

The **universal kingdom** - The Scriptures reveal God as the ruler over the whole world. [Psalm 145:13] As such he exercises jurisdiction over the whole world including the appointing of rulers of His own choosing and judging. [Daniel 2:37] In Jewish thought this viewpoint of the kingdom began with Adam. God therefore reigns in time and eternity over the world; he is in charge of the universe, and its final destiny, even while Satan, by permission, has power for a time.

The **Davidic or Messianic Kingdom** - This is the 1000 year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth followed by an eternal reign over Israel in conformity with the Davidic Covenant [2 Samuel 7:12-16]. It is the Messianic kingdom and Christ will rule as the Messiah. This rule will commence after the Second Advent of Christ.

The **mystery form of the Kingdom** - In Matthew 13:11 Christ revealed new things [mysteries]. The mystery form of the kingdom would commence with His teaching during his First Advent and end at the Second Advent. [Matthew 13:39-40] This form of the kingdom covers the period between the first and second advents with God as the ruler of the hearts and lives of his own called out people, wherever they are in Satan's kingdom. In this phase of history the mystery kingdom of God has victory over Satan's system of world rulership by acting as a beacon of light in a dark place; like a commando force we follow the King of Heaven while operating in the kingdom of this world, demonstrating through our witness to the victory he will have finally when he returns and rules.

The **present spiritual form of the Kingdom** is one which refers to new birth. [Colossians 1:13] The Ruler is Christ and it is his relationship with believers transferred from the kingdom of this world into His heavenly Kingdom. We are citizens of our nations here, but in Christ we have been "born again spiritually", and become citizens of God's Kingdom of heaven right here and now, and we now act as his ambassadors on the earth to the kingdom of "this present world".

**Matthew 16:18** is a crucial quote as it shows that the church is still future at the point the Lord says these words to Peter. It is translated as a future, active, indicative, a future reality. The reformed people try to have ingenious ways around this statement but there is no way round the language there. There is no debate on the facts - the church started at Pentecost.

The church could only function after the ascension, as it needed the filling of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts to be operational, and to fulfill its full mission. Acts 2 - the coming of the Holy Spirit is the key. The uniqueness of the church is that it is the spiritual form of the kingdom. The physical form will be accomplished by the Lord's Second Advent in the Millennial Kingdom. At the Coming of the Lord for his Church at the Rapture, the body of Christ is transformed into the bride of Christ, but until that day we serve as his representative spiritual body upon the earth. The church has unique gifts given to it to enable it to serve this way. The indwelling power and resultant fruits of the Holy Spirit allow you to demonstrate the character of God by walking in the Spirit.

## THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

We believe that we are here on a rescue mission on the brink of hell, to rescue the lost and sanctify the saints. We are fishers of men, not ecologists; we are here to fish, not clean up the fish pond. Now we do not trash the earth, for it is the Lord's, not Satan's, but we leave the clean up to the Lord at His Second Advent. The Christian is to be the salt of the earth. Salt is used pre-eminently in the ancient world as a preservative, and it is spiritual preservation.

We do share with the reformed theologians a desire to live in a better society here on earth if we can. If you serve through the Gospel and see the salvation of the lost you will see a changed society, and there are many examples of that from Church History. The best thing to do for your nation's peace and prosperity is to evangelize the lost. This salvation mission also does not prevent you from standing up and saying that this or that is wrong morally or politically. You should stand against abortion on demand, the normalization of homosexuality, the sexual exploitation of women and children, and euthanasia. We have seen this dramatically where the prisons have used our material – they are transformed!

Also, we recognize that environmental Pollution is another evil outworking of man's greed, and believers must be known for telling the truth about the legacy of sin and evil in society, but we must not get distracted from our key mission. The prime issue must always remain the preaching of the truth of the Cross and the Empty Tomb – The power of the blood of Christ and the relationship of people to the Lord. You are also going to need to teach believers so that the message of the gospel is clear. People deep down know that they are sinners in need of a Saviour, for they are made by God for fellowship with God. Our job is to let the Holy Spirit loose in their life through the truth of the Gospel message.

## CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IN THE CHURCH

The theology of the church is tied in with Christian character. We are not only looking at the structure of the church but also the power of the church, which is love, from the transforming power of the Holy Spirit within each believer.

In **1 John 5:1-3** and **1 John 4:15-21** love is the basis of the Christian's life and witness. As shown in **1 John 4:11-12**, God's love towards us has changed us and motivated us to love others, or it should have. So many people say that they love Jesus but they do not love their fellow Christians. If you do not love those who are begotten of God there is a big question over your status as a believer.

There is a story told by the early church in Ephesus about the Apostle John. Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna knew John as a very old man. He recorded in his letters to the churches that John was so frail in his nineties that he could not walk, and used to be carried around in a litter. When he arrived at a meeting he would use his last strength to sit up and say, "little children love one another". That is how John was remembered by Polycarp – who later gave his life as a martyr for the Gospel message. Be concerned about your brothers and sisters in Christ, Pray for them, share God's Word with them. Love is not just a hug, it is to sit with them, pray with them, and if required to share your goods with them.

If you say that you love God but do not love your brother in Christ, James and John say that you are a liar. The touchstone of your faith is the attitude to your fellow believer. If you are ministers of God's Word you have to let the Holy Spirit loose in your church by systematic teaching of the Word so that they learn of God's love for them, and his clear commands to them all.

The love of God for them will then overflow in their love for others. If you can get that happening in your assembly a lot of the problems that plague churches will disappear. Let love be the catch cry of your church. Encourage deep concern for others. People in love with Jesus will do the right thing, for they look up to Him at all times, and are filled in and led by the Holy Spirit.

There are problems however caused by "super spiritual" saints who consider themselves one cut above the others. These are pride filled people, not Spirit filled, who have caused great evil in the church because they have acted in an unloving way to others. (By their fruit they are known. **Matthew 7:13-23** applies.) There needs to be a restoration of love within by their opening themselves to the ministries of the Holy Spirit. These people are either deceived or deceivers; you must quickly identify which, for either way they are dangerous to the health of the saints around them.

## LOVE

Love means that people must be confronted with the problems they are causing. When you have a person who is causing problems the natural way to deal with them is to grab them and shake them, but anger must not guide us, concern for the sheep and lambs must guide us. We get angry when we see sheep getting hurt. If it is a sheep causing the hurt however we need to help that sheep as well. Our behaviour will be different if it is a wolf!

Love is not just warm and fuzzy feelings. Sometimes you have to be very firm with love. Sometimes you have to be tough with children in love so that they do not get hurt. Love is something that covers everything that is happening in the church.

There are three aspects of love in the church; love to God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and love to mankind. What will happen if this is preached and demonstrated in your life, will be that people will see how God has loved them through the Lord Jesus Christ? Your witness and teaching should change the attitude of others towards the Lord. This should result

in service to the Lord and practical concern to others. First however there must be appreciation in the hearts of the believer as to what the Lord has done for them. The Holy Spirit through the Word will change the hearers of the Scriptures. Our love needs to be practical as well as biblical!

How important is love? Love is paramount in importance = a hallmark fruit of the Holy Spirit. **1 John 3:11-24**. The first commandment is to love the Lord with all your heart, mind and soul. There is nothing more important than love for God. How is it demonstrated? It is demonstrated by keeping His commandments. John 15:9-17. To keep means to set a military guard over. Total concentration is required of us, towards the keeping of the Lord's instructions to us.

### ATTITUDE TO THE WORD

What is your attitude to God's Word? If you love his Word do you guard it in your soul? Is it so precious that you would put an armed guard over it in your soul? Do you treasure it that much? If you love it you will desire to keep it. Is obedience to God the most important thing in your life?

It manifests itself in serving Him, in hating evil, in hating sin. If you do not hate sin there is a question as to whether you are spiritual at all. The young believer as she/he grows sees so much evil in themselves, that they can be discouraged, but in Christ, through confession, there is hope. When you gain powerful conviction of sin within yourself or your people, there should be rejoicing because you are where Paul was when he wrote to the Romans 7, ("wretched man that I am"). The closer you get to the light the greater the hatred of the darkness will be. He will convict you of sins which you were not aware were sins before. The challenge is like Paul to move through self loathing to worship – Romans 7 to 8.

What are the results of loving God? The crown of life is promised to those who love God as is normal in the kingdom of God. We have no idea of the riches that the Lord has prepared for those who love Him. - 1 Corinthians 2:9. Do you love Him? John 15:9-17 again!!!! By our fruit we are known as the trees of God's orchard! **Matthew 7:13-23**.

"All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purposes". Many people claim Romans 8:28 but have no right to, as they do not love God, nor are their lives lived according to his purpose for them. If they are out of fellowship, or fakes, they cannot claim that promise. There are great promises for the believer in fellowship. Remember Jesus words, "Abide in me and I in you and so you will bear much fruit" - **John 15:4-17**.

How do we show our love for the Lord as born again children of his? We do it by meditating on His Word, by praying and looking for answers to prayer. Are you fellowshipping with your Lord today? The Lord wants to share things from His Word. Let the Lord show you things from His Word. Open it daily and open your heart to the Spirit's work.

### LOVE FOR THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Love for the Lord Jesus Christ - this is the primary condition of Christian discipleship. As a child you will have a feeling of belonging, because His work has made you belong. It will come from your soul as you have been obedient to His Word. You do not work up the feeling of sonship by singing a few choruses, although you may express it that way.

Many times you know you are a child of God in your disobedience, when you are under conviction of sin. You are miserable as a Christian under discipline. **Hebrews 12:5-15**. We know we are children because we feel our Father's wrath against our sins. We know now that we need to confess our sins. What is the objective of divine discipline? Bringing us back to loving the Lord Jesus Christ. He loves you, so he will not see you walk from Him into sin without conviction.

Sometimes you must show your love for a child by a light tap on their arm, sometimes it is by a cuddle. It is still love - Hebrews 12. He will keep on knocking on the door of your heart, and if you continue to ignore his pleading He will bring you home, by the sin unto death. Each step of discipline is a step of love! Discipline proves you are in the family, but the better way to live in a family is by full and regular fellowship with each other. Will it be the fruit of the Spirit or the rod of the Father?

The "sin unto death" is the saddest side of God's love. When this occurs he in effect has said that he will not allow you to hurt yourself or any others, and so you are to come home early. God's love for us is a serious subject. God says that He wants to bless us but so often we say that we want to have time on our own and we wander off.

The results of loving God are great. The cost of not loving Him as He has loved us is terrible. Our love for the Lord is manifested by keeping His Word and commands, not looking unto ourselves but unto Him who for our sakes loved us and gave Himself for us. John 15:10-14.

What is the most important thing as far as our relationship to people is concerned. What you can get or what you can give. This is important in marriage. Often if our partner does not respond in a way which we would expect we get angry. A lot of counseling in marriage is as a result of one or both parties having an attitude that they just want to take. They are not prepared to give. If you have both parties doing as much as they can to please each other you have a tremendous marriage. The way to satisfaction in marriage is to look to meeting the others needs before you look to yourself. It will result in giving you great blessing in time and in eternity.



## **THE PASTOR AND TEACHER**

Love for the Lord in the life of the pastor is manifested by feeding the Lord's sheep and tending his lambs. If you are a pastor you will teach God's children His Word whether you are a pastor, a Sunday School teacher, a Bible College teacher, or home group leader. It is also manifested by the willingness to suffer and die for His name. It is also shown by longing for the Coming of the Lord, and his glory in all things until He comes. The Lord should be the most important person in the world for you. It is dangerous to be a Christian in many places in the world. We prepare for danger by each day meditating on His Word, each day drawing closer to Him and talking to Him.

## **ATTAINING THIS LOVE – THE CHALLENGES**

How can we attain to this love? Let the Cross come between you and everything, and this will cause you to see the Lord's love to others. So often people are like the Pharisees, who were so tied up with their theology and praising God that they treated their fellow citizens like dirt. You will find that many people treat their fellow Christians abominably.

There are some in self righteousness who are so "super spiritual", read arrogant and self important, that they trample over some poor saint. There are many people also, who do not fully understand what it means to be involved in the angelic conflict, and so are causing problems by thinking they know more than they do. They think they know how to deal with Satan by commanding the demon of anger, alcohol or tobacco, rather than facing their own OSN and dealing with personal sin. James 1:12-18. These people sin against love. When little lambs and sheep are hurt, it is Satan at work through deception, and the Lord is not glorified, but hurt. Fruit in the life gives you evidence of that life!

If you understand what God's Word says you will want to pray and bless others with truth, not argue and abuse. You will want to serve Him, worship Him, and help others. This is a problem with all extreme positions in theology, the people fight rather than pray, they express their pride rather than any Christ likeness. We are called to love our enemies.

Some problems in the church will come from your social workers. Watch out for the ones who are as busy as termites, for they might be having the same effect as termites; their houses may fall down! They can be so active in the church their own families are falling apart. They are so absorbed in the lives of others, their own are collapsing. People can be patrons of everything except their family. This type of person is in danger of becoming a hypocrite. 1 Timothy 5:8. Help them get the right balance back into their lives, for their weakness is manic drivenness, and that is common with people who have addictive natures. Instead of being alcoholics they are workaholics! God is not ever honored by a person's service if they are neglecting their own families! Challenge, encourage and strengthen with truth.

Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church. Love the children, and do not frustrate them. Love your neighbour as yourself. No Christians should deliberately get offside with their neighbours. Love your neighbours with all your heart doing good, loving them as we love ourselves.

Sit down and let the Word of God penetrate into your soul so that you recognise where you are and where you should be and where in the strength of the Spirit you can be.

You must allow the Holy Spirit to have rulership in your life so that you may love one another. "By this shall all men know you are my disciples if you have love, one for another". If you are able to do this you have won the victory over pride, over Satan's sin. You need to have the attitude. Our attitude should be, let there be Jesus love in my life and not pride.

## **DOCTRINE**

### **ABIDING IN GOD**

1. The word "abide" speaks of perfect provision, supply, sustenance and fellowship (Deuteronomy 33:27-28).
2. The key to "abiding" is living in the reality of God's provision (John 13:17).
3. "Abiding" means there is total provision for every need for every believer at every point in his life (Psalm 23:1,5; 91:1-10; John 15:4; James 1:2-4).
4. Earthly problems are temporal and variable but divine solutions are absolute (Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28).
5. The only time Jesus Christ is at home in us is when we abide in Him (Ephesians 3:16,17; Colossians 3:15,16).

## **LESSON 55 – CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IN CHURCH**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
55	Christian Character in Church	1John 5:1-3 1 John 4:15-21 Matthew 22:37-38	Christian Life Love

**INTRODUCTION**

A study of **1 Peter 2:1-10** gives a very good definition of what the church should be and a good starting point for the stewardship and service of the church. Everything depends on how the Lord sees us; we are a peculiar people a chosen race. It is also critical as stated at verse 8 that we do not stumble at God's Word. We must be obedient in love, **1 John 4:15-21, 5:1-3**.

We have become a people of God and have received grace. We are a chosen people, we are a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, and we have possessions in him. We are to show the praises of God in our life and are to be obedient. The onus is on us to express our membership of the family through obedience to the head of the family.

**KINGS AND PRIESTS**

**Revelation 1:4-6** - the Lord also calls us kings and priests. Satan is called the prince of this world. In Christ we have a superior position to Satan, for he is a usurper while we have been given our position by God directly in Christ Jesus. In time he has more power than us but in the context of your eternal position in Christ you need not fear Satan. Every believer is in this high position. If you are going to be a minister you have to realise that you and your people are individually Kings and Priests. You are not to be a tyrant, you are not bullying some lower group, for you are a king over kings by God's gracious choice of you as his pastor with leadership responsibilities. **Matthew 20:25-28**.

Most of the sheep will not be acting like King-Priests. Our task as pastors is to bring believers into dynamic function in accord with their high position in Christ. The fact of that high spiritual position has to be taken into consideration at the time of ascertaining the stewardship and service of the local church. Everybody has a place and function, all have service and stewardship and dignity in their position in Christ Jesus.

This shows up the error of the situation where ministers are called priests and the rest are referred to as laity. This is wrong. Every born again believer is of equal standing before God. We are all priests and kings in God's eyes

**THE PRIESTLY FUNCTIONS OF THE BELIEVER**

We do not offer lambs on altars, we are told to offer ourselves. **Romans 12:1-2**. The service of sacrifice is similar in both Testaments in the fact that in both cases the priest was set apart and was with due ceremony inducted into the priestly office which continued as long as he lived. Our difference is that we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, we do not offer up another lamb.

A member of the tribe of Levi was born into the priesthood of the nation of Israel. In a similar way we are born again into the body of Christ after the order of Melchizedec. Our appointment, unlike that of Aaron as a priest, is not just until we die, for we serve the Lord forever.

The priests were involved in sacrifice and in **Romans 12:1-2** we are told to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our spiritual service. We are told to remake our thinking. We stand before the Father as the priests of old did. We are God's witness and we stand between God and the unbelieving world.

The priest offered sacrifices on the altar; we offer ourselves; our time, effort and energy. We must be on the altar of study of obedience and prayer. We need to be committed to the Lord's service. When a person accepts the Lord as Saviour they enter the priesthood, and begin a sacrificial life. "Give your life away and I will give it back to you", says the Lord.

**FOUR SACRIFICES**

This can be divided as follows -

- [a] Dedication of self which is reasonable spiritual service, the giving of your talent/time to the Lord.
- [b] The sacrifice of the lips in the voice of praise
- [c] The sacrifice of substance in the giving of what the Lord has given us
- [d] The sacrifice of good works - doing what you can for the Lord in His name.

**WORSHIP**

This must be characterized by a number of things. When we look at the Torah we remember the false leaders, Dathan, Abiram, Corah and even Aaron's disobedient sons, Nadab and Abihu. Leviticus 10:1ff, Numbers 16:1ff. These men all thought that they could do something for God in a way that the Lord had said nothing about, or forbidden. God said that certain people would have certain functions, but these people ignored it. They were sincere, but it was in their arrogance, and they assumed that God would not judge their worship. They were sincerely wrong. They were adding to Scripture. They are saying that they have had an experience, and could ignore the revelation. Many still say, "do not confuse us with the Scriptures – our experiences teach us otherwise....".

Many people are sincere but they are sincerely wrong. They say their viewpoint is God's will but there is no Scripture to back it up that isn't twisted out of its context. You do not do things that God has not given you the gift and direct orders to do.

You do not have the gift of teaching unless you have a burning desire to study. You will get into trouble if you "burn unholy fire before the Lord". You have to do all things in His way. The real fire, that of the indwelling Holy Spirit, should be used in all service of the Lord, for without the power of the Spirit you can do nothing of everlasting value. There are many people who are ministering in many areas where they should not be and this is the reason for powerlessness and confusion in some churches. Heed the Holy Spirit alone and follow the direct orders of Scripture – or see carnage and chaos unfold in the local church.

When people are doing things in their own strength you get the rule of the OSN rather than the Holy Spirit. When believers walk in the Spirit they do not fight for any position in the church, nor politic for church office. If the Lord wants us to serve spiritual believers will humble themselves and God will lift you up to it. If you get it in your own strength by politics you are in great danger, for you will lack the power to perform the task in a godly manner and all you will have achieved is a place of great judgment.

In order to worship you must be doing what God wants you to do in His strength. It is a serious matter to get your source of power wrong, for everything will then be wrong in your life and the local church.

### **INTERCESSION AND PRAYER**

This is a natural function of the priest, praying for others. **Hebrews 10:19-22**. Love causes your attention to be on others. Your prayer is first for salvation that they might know the Saviour, then for sanctification that they may grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ.

In this passage we enter the Holy of Holies. When we say "Father" we enter into heaven. We enter through the blood of Christ [v19]. You can only say Father because the Lord has made us sons and daughters through the blood of Christ. Your prayer should be with boldness, full assurance of faith. You should have dealt with sin. There must be no unconfessed sin in your life. Do not try and make points with God, you must be straight with him, and obedient to his demands.

You come before God saying that the Word says this and coming confidently. You need to be taught by God's Word. As the Bible teachers we need to teach the flock the doctrines of the Bible so that they can apply them to their prayers. We should be able to pray accurately.

We should not plead with God. He is tapping his foot waiting to bless us; the Scriptures say so. **Ezekiel 18:32, 33:11**. We should know that we are in Christ Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit. You need to have an agenda, but it is his prayer agenda. We should have Scripture to back up what we ask for. God answers prayer, by "yes", "no", or "wait". Most people miss the power of prayer because they do not do a good job. Prayer is not an optional extra for a Christian; it is your job/duty to speak to and hear from your Commanding Officer.

Before you pray deal with your sins which is the sprinkling of blood and bodies washed with pure water. If you are going to function as a priest you must walk in accordance with God's pattern for a priest.

### **ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS**

**Romans 12:1-8**. This is the Spirit performing a service and using the believer as an instrument. In no sense is it something that is wrought by the believer alone or even by a believer when assisted by the Spirit. Christian service is said to be a manifestation of the Spirit just as the Christian character is considered to be the fruit of the Spirit. We should act towards others in a spirit filled manner. You are to be daily walking with Him and sensitive to His leading.

### **GIVING**

This can be divided into three sections: earning the money, possessing the money, and then giving the money.

Since money earned by toil is human life in concrete form it has great significance in our spiritual life. In our use of money we see our real values. For the child of God when we have money above and beyond what we need to live, we face our responsibility as a steward. All we earn is what the Lord has positioned us in our life to earn, and so we owe all

to the Lord. Giving is one aspect of life for which we will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ. **Romans 14:10-12, 2 Corinthians 5:6-15.**

As believers we are to get our eyes off what we are putting in the offering plate, and examining our whole relationship to money, to earning, banking, keeping and using it. Most Christians think about how much we are giving, but equally important is what we are holding onto and what we are doing with it. It is important that you think the whole process through. God is going to judge your use of money. We must also earn money in God honouring ways. God is looking at our attitude at the workplace as well as what we do with what we earn.

The possessing of money or property should be only as God directs and subject to his control. There are lots of demands on your money. You cannot say that you are going to give money to the church unless the Lord directs that, and he will expect you to fulfill your responsibilities to your God given earthly family first. We must also render to Caesar; if taxes are to be paid, then they are to be paid. It is also not wrong to save against the day of need, but it is also good to help others, but we must be sensitive to what the Lord wants us personally to do.

You are a believer-priest and as such are responsible to God alone. You must do what the Lord dictates. We need to listen to the Lord. We walk in the Spirit and we do not move into any action until we know that it is the Lord's will to do so.

### **PRINCIPLES OF GIVING**

Money is not the root of evil, "The love of money is the root of all evil". 1 Timothy 6:10. Those who want to be wealthy must pause, for it is not necessarily in accordance to what the Lord wants for them. We are stewards of money in accordance with God's will for us. What is the best use of God's money? The correct attitude is the key. Often believers ask, what should I give, whereas the real question for the Lord's servants is, what should I keep?

The grace principle is to be used in spiritual giving. God will never demand a tenth. The tithe in Israel was income tax. We should not take up tithes in the church. God demands readiness to give 100% of your available money. The real question is what God wants you to do with it. You are the priest of the family. It is what you are doing with your money that is important. The priest owns nothing, our focus is on heaven, and the service we can do now.

You are responsible individually before the Lord and the Lord will individually guide you. If you bring tithing in you have brought in legalism and robbed the church of grace. The widow's mite was all she had, 100%, we are to be like the widow, looking upon all we have as God's, to be used for his glory. Be careful here however, the widow had fed herself first, she was fit and able to get to the temple to give, so don't be foolish here, be guided by the Lord.

Your relationship with the Lord, and allocation of your talents, time and possessions to God, will together determine the quality of your Christian life. Acceptance of grace as the basis of giving should become the basis of generous giving. (2 Corinthians 9:6) It is the Christ centered, the Holy Spirit led and filled life that matters.

Hebrews 10 tells us that the law was a shadow of good things to come. From a shadow on the wall you are able to see an outline. In the Levitical offerings for instance we have a shadow of the Cross. The physical tasks which the priests undertook in the Old Testament gives us a clue as to how we should act in a spiritual way in Christ. We have examples from these saints of the past, but walk in the Spirit and fulfill what the Lord requires of you – it will probably be more than was required of those in the past.

How well are you doing your job in this area of giving pastor? How well are your flock being challenged to fulfill their responsibilities before the Lord?

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **CHRISTIAN LIFE**

1. God is pleased with believers
  - a) By asking for the right things. (1 Kings 3:9, 10)
  - b) By living a separated life. (2 Timothy 2:4)
  - c) By doing his will. (Hebrews 13:20, 21)
  - d) Walking in fellowship with him. (Hebrews 11:5, Genesis 5:24)
  - e) By praising God. (Psalm 69:30, 31)
  - f) By resting by faith in God's provision. (Hebrews 11:6)
  
2. The Christian life involves walking.
  - a) in the Truth (2 John 4)
  - b) by means of faith in wisdom. (2 Corinthians 5:7, Colossians 4:5)
  - c) in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25)
  - d) in Love. (Ephesians 5:2)
  - e) in newness of Life. (Romans 6:4)

- f) worthy of our vocation. (Ephesians 4:1)
- g) worthy of the Lord. (Colossians 1:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12)
- h) honestly as in the day. (Romans 13:13)
- i) in good works. (Ephesians 2:10)
- j) in light. (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7)
- k) in Christ Jesus. (Colossians 2:6)
- l) circumspectly. (Ephesians 5:15,16)
- m) as ye ought. (1 Thessalonians 4:1)

3. The Christian life demands honourable conduct:

- a) Believers have freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1), but our conduct must not
  - i) harm the weak. (1 Corinthians 8:9);
  - ii) be hypocritical (1 Peter 2:16);
  - iii) does not edify (1 Corinthians 10:23);
  - iv) lead to habits which enslave (1 Corinthians 6:12);
  - v) lead to self-indulgence (Galatians 5:13);
  - vi) offend personal conscience (Romans 14:5).
- b) Our conduct towards God.
  - i) Done in His Name. (1 Timothy 6:1)
  - ii) As unto Him. (Colossians 3:23)
  - iii) For His glory. (1 Corinthians 10:31)
  - iv) To be worthy of Him. (1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5)
- c) Our conduct towards others.
  - i) Be a good example. (Romans 14:7; 1 Timothy 4:12)
  - ii) Worthy of our calling. (Ephesians 4:1)
  - iii) Honest. (2 Corinthians 8:21)
  - iv) Free from the appearance of evil. (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
  - v) Helpful to a neighbour. (Romans 12:18; 15:2)
  - vi) Not a cause of stumbling. (Romans 14:13)
  - vii) Honouring one's parents. (Colossians 3:20)
  - viii) Honouring to the government. (Titus 3:1)
  - ix) Must not entail unequal yoking. (2 Corinthians 6:14)
  - x) Not to judge others (Romans 14:10-13)
  - xi) Not to cause others to stumble by our actions (Romans 14:15,21-23)
- d) Our conduct towards self.
  - i) Pure and not lustful. (1 Timothy 5:22; 1 Peter 2:11)
  - ii) Must not defile. (1 Corinthians 3:17; Titus 1:15)
  - iii) Must not condemn. (Romans 14:22)
  - iv) Must do good works. (Titus 3:8)
- e) This conduct is only obtainable under the filling of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 1:9).

4. The Christian life demands diligence:

- a) Love towards others. (Galatians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 8:8). We should be eager to help those who are less fortunate than ourselves especially by giving them the gospel.
- b) We should be keen to take care of the saints (other believers) (Hebrews 6:11, 2 Corinthians 7:12, 2 Corinthians 8:16,17, 2 Timothy 1:17)
- c) We should be eager to rest in the promises and principles of God. Happiness comes from this. An example of not resting in the promises is the Exodus generation. (Hebrews 4:11)
- d) Confirmation of our calling (2 Peter 1:5, 2 Peter 1:10) We should witness for Christ eagerly, zealously.
- e) Unity of the body. (Ephesians 4:3) We should be zealous in maintaining the unity of the body.
- f) For the commendation of God. (2 Timothy 2:15). Be eager to show yourself approved by God.
- g) To have a life without spot or blemish. (2 Peter 3:14) We should walk close to the Lord and not expose ourselves to unnecessary areas of temptation.

5. Priorities in the Christian life:

- a) The First Person - Jesus Christ has ultimate priority (Colossians 1:16-18)
- b) The First Possessions - The kingdom of God, the greatest gift (Matthew 6:33)
- c) The First Offering - the giving of oneself (2 Corinthians 8:5)
- d) The First Denial - the denial of self (Matthew 7:5)
- e) The First Discipline - the discipline of prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-4)
- f) The First Commandment - to love God supremely (Matthew 22:37-38).
- g) The First Excuse - too busy to have time for God (Matthew 8:21-22)

6. The Christian life has a number of deposits:

- a) First Deposit - at salvation the believer entrusts his life with the Lord (2 Timothy 1:12).
- b) Second Deposit - the Lord deposits the Word of God with the believer - teaching and study (2 Timothy 1:14).
- c) Third Deposit - the believer deposits his fears, problems, pressures (1 Peter 4:19, 5:7, Psalm 55:22).
- d) Fourth Deposit - the believer deposits the gospel with the unbeliever (Romans 1:14).

**LOVE**

1. Love for God is total appreciation for all He is and has done.
2. Words for love in Greek language:
  - a) eros (sexual love) not used in the New Testament
  - b) storge (comradeship) not used in New Testament
  - c) agape (concerned love for others, great esteem for the loved one, reverence, a love that springs from adoration and veneration, and is a love of the will that chooses the loved one and devotes self to them to the exclusion of lesser objects. It may mean a self denying and compassionate devotion to the loved one)
  - d) phile (a love that embraces and kisses. This love is that of the affections and speaks of friendship and all one will do for a friend).
3. Our Lord makes it clear to Peter in John 21: 15-19 that he wants Peter to love him with agape love that flows from a deep occupation with the Lord. Agape, as a love of the will, must work out in service of the Lord, and this will express the believers love (agape) for other believers also.
4. Do not love of the things the world has to offer (1 John 2:15-17).
5. True love of God will always lead to love of the brethren (1 John 2:3 -11; 1 John 3:1-3, 10, 4:7 -12, 19).
6. Love is expressed in worship and in service (1 John 5:1-5).
7. Love for God will flow and grow from knowledge of his word (1 Corinthians 2:9).
8. This deep love will be expressed in witness for the Lord to others (2 Corinthians 5:14).
9. God loves every believer with perfect and unchanging love because we are united with His beloved Son.

**LESSON 56 – SERVICE AND STEWARDSHIP**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
56	Service and Stewardship	1 Peter 2:1-10 Revelation 1:4-6 Romans 12:1,2 Hebrews 10:19-22 2 Corinthians 8:1-9, 2 Corinthians 8:15	Stewardship Service Giving

**INTRODUCTION**

Worship is one of the services of the priesthood. In the tabernacle and temple the priest was a leader in worship. We are all as believer priests leaders in worship and able to take active part in all services. We need to clarify what a worship service is in today's church, and identify the various forms it may take. Your attitude as to what worship is, is going to colour what you are going to do in your worship services in the local church ministry.

**THE WOMAN AT THE WELL**

In John 4:5-27 we see the Samaritan woman, an unsaved religious woman who has set ideas of what worship is and where it needs to be held. The Lord tells her that God is a spirit and those that worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth. **John 4:24**. External items in worship are of no consequence in God's sight, it only matters what they mean to you and to the Lord. It does not matter where you are worshipping in God's sight. It is not the method, it is the heart of the worshipper that God is interested in. It is not your tradition but your spiritual status and attitude that matters, and the outflow of that worship into service in the community for the glory of the Lord.

Jesus cuts through the tradition and says that we all must worship in spirit and in truth. It has to be worship in accordance with God's Word and not the tradition of man, and that means it must be Holy Spirit empowered worship. What is your mental attitude, what are you thinking? God is looking at your soul and asking, do you love me? John 21:15-25. Worship is firstly to be one of many expressions of love for our Lord.

Is it appropriate to talk about a worship service, or are all services worship services? Is there a difference between a worship service, a gospel service and other services such as a teaching service? True worship is the attitude of the soul of the person, with the spirit filled believer expressing their love for their Lord, so worship appears to be any time a believer actively expresses their love for the Lord. Worship services involve spirit filled people only, expressing love for their Lord. Where-ever two or three gather together there can be corporate worship. **Matthew 18:20**. It could even be said that one person can have a worship service – although they will be drawn to others to share the love of the Lord together if there are any others present who love the Lord.

Worship is not confined to sacred services in great cathedrals, but is the adoration of the heart of a Christian as they express their praise and intercession to their Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ. Prayer, preaching, giving, and praise are the principle elements of worship and are acts of direct communion of men with God. Worship involves spirit filled people in communion with the God they love. "We love Him because he first loved us...." **1 John 4:7-19**.

The worship service need not necessarily be in a church or with a large number of believers. It can be an individual worshipping at home. Every time you listen to the Word of God under the control of the Holy Spirit it can be a worship service. Worship is something in a family, in a church, in the open fields, on the streets. It is in your soul as you are right with God and praising Him, praying to Him, and fellowshiping with Him around His Word. Worship is the fellowship of a believer with the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the celebration of the bond of love between them.

#### **WORDS FOR WORSHIP**

"Proskuneo" in the Greek means, "kissing the earth". This was the body posture when the worshippers fell to their knees and touched the earth with their faces, exactly like the Moslems in their mosques.

"Latreuo" represents the priestly function of worship, which indicates the commitment of the whole person to the Lord.

The body posture indicates that the person is completely at the mercy of the Lord. In the ancient world a person who did this would show that they were totally helpless and were throwing themselves at the mercy of the king before whom they bowed this way. The person was saying, "Do what ever you will with me". You do not tell the Lord what to do from such a posture, you are throwing yourself on his love and mercy, seeking His pleasure to do further. You are under His orders. You do not say, God give me this or that, but here I am Lord, please use me as you will. We are in no position to demand anything from God but in worship we can ask anything of God. **Mark 11:22-26**.

#### **ATTITUDE**

We should have the same attitude as Job who said, "Though he slay me yet will I praise Him". Job 13:15.

Under the health, wealth and prosperity gospel many of our Pentecostal brethren think that they are worshipping by jumping around, yelling and screaming and telling God what He should do. They are missing the depth of the relationship with their Father. We must be faithful in pointing out the truth in love to them, but equally point the truth out to those who hold cold legalistic services in cold cathedrals with no fruit of the Spirit present at all.

We should bow before him as helpless, hopeless and defiled people, but yet in joy as His loved son or daughter. There are too many people lifting themselves up today and calling it worship. We are to take up our cross and follow Him, and worship involves heart fellowship, so it may involve praise, but also times of humble sorrow at sin, and serious searches for guidance. Worship involves both joy and sadness, praise and prayer, song and silence.

Part of the reason that this theological course is tough in its time demands on you, is so that you can learn to use every moment of your day for His glory. We have to realise that moment by moment we are working for Him. As a priest you have a total commitment to the Lord first. It is hard to be ruthless with time management, but it brings its rewards so we should persist. It is this attitude of total priestly service that is at the heart of worship and that speaks of true humility.

Worship is the soul bowing before God. If you spend a time in prayer telling the Lord all your problems it is not worship, it is half a good prayer session, without the thanksgiving yet. It becomes worship when you concentrate on Him, not your requests of him! Worship is concentrating on His character, His work, and His word. A person's prayer life can be tied up with self rather than God. The subject of worship is the challenge to balance our spiritual life and be occupied with God.

Worship needs to begin with unburdening ourselves of our sins and worries, so that having cast our cares upon Him, we can concentrate on worshipping Him. **1 Peter 5:5-10.**

**FACETS OF WORSHIP**

Meditating on the Word can be worship. We should start with John 4:24. Those that worship the Lord must worship Him in spirit and in truth. If the man who is teaching is spirit filled, and all of you listening are spirit filled, and you are all meditating on God's Word, that is worship and it will overflow to other facets of worship. Listening to a sermon can be worship, as you praise God for who he is, and what he has said, and done. If it makes you a better son or daughter of God and draws you to contemplate his wonderful character and desire more to serve him, it makes it worship.

Singing can be worship, but it can be also be just a loud noise made unto the Lord. When is singing worship? When it is spirit filled, when you are singing praise to God, when you are reflecting His Word and singing in love and appreciation of Him. If you are giving praise to the Lord you need to sing well and clearly. You must also be right in your life, having dealt with sin first, 1 John 1:5-10, and the lyrics must be in accordance with His Word. Singing becomes worship when it's focus is the glory of God and occupation of the soul with Him.

You have to be very careful in the choice of your songs/hymns. You need to get a good hymn book. You should be spending as much time choosing your hymns as you do choosing your Bible readings. Hymns can make or kill a service, but let me challenge you pastor. What about asking the music director to select all the songs/hymns; all he/she should need is the bible passage to be preached upon, and then prayer, and the Holy Spirit will bless and guide them.

So, biblical Worship is a definite act of a person bowing before God and showing his adoration. It is an attitude of soul and spirit. You should be having a little worship service in your home every day, at work, and when walking in the park or on holiday. It does not need to be a long period. It can be a minute, it can be five minutes, or it can be two hours. Worship is the communion of your soul with the Lord as you bow before Him and commit yourself to Him as to what He would have you do.

**WHAT FORM DOES WORSHIP TAKE?**

Is worship the same as praise? Is praise part of worship? The minister has to ask the question as to whether she/he is allowing the Lord's people to worship in a variety of ways. How are you going to express worship? Are you going to do it both passively and actively? Are you going to lie on the ground with your face on the ground? The thing to do is what expresses love for the Lord your way, in your culture, and what to avoid is play acting and generating a great deal of hypocrisy. Each culture will have a slightly different way of worshipping the Lord.

The position of worship with the face to the ground is in contrast with anyone who laid on their back in the Old Testament. Those who laid on their backs were either covered to preserve their dignity if they had collapsed, or run through with a sword. It was a disgrace to God to fall backwards as it was associated with the sexual practises of the pagan religions and God's people should not act as pagans. There are some who practise this falling over backwards often and call it being "slain in the spirit". This is not found in the New Testament and we must be cautious of things that the apostles didn't do, Jude 3. As it is practised in many pagan religions, and is associated with ecstasy that is emotional or demonic, it is to be seriously doubted – unless there is genuine fruit of the Spirit following in the believers so affected.

When the Lord moves on people in the biblical accounts they fall on their face before him, the enemy fall backwards. We must beware of emotionalism as a criteria for anything. It is not how a person "feels" that determines the truth of any situation, but the spiritual "fruit" that results. Rock or classical concerts can give people ecstatic experiences that have no spiritual value at all. They are bone fide emotional enjoyment; just not "worship". Some of what goes on in churches is not evil, it is simply emotionalism; people are having a good time but there is no spiritual value in it. Let us stay with the apostolic pattern! We want the Lord's people leaving any worship service having had a lot more than "a great time".

In your soul you should be on your knees, or your face. How can you provide such a situation for people? Think about how you plan your worship service, I suggest that you can start quietly and end loudly. Is a song service the way to start or do you have a time of quietness? I prefer to start with quiet music so that in their souls the people get on their knees and bow before the Lord in their souls, then move to praise and song after they have drawn near to the Lord and heard his Word and have something to rejoice about clearly in their minds, but that is just me! Each of us will have a different way to express ourselves before the Lord and each is fine if the spirit is filling us and the attitude is right.

We actively worship the Lord by prayer, by song, by reading God's Word, by giving, by listening to God's Word, by rejoicing in God's revelation. You have to be actively listening and concentrating on what is being said. You should be opening your soul to it. You should be drawing close to the Lord and praising Him for what He has done for you. In song you must be expressing your joy for what He is doing and what He has done.

Counting your blessings, naming them one by one, would be worship. Worship and praise can be the same thing. We need to be drawing close to the Cross the Resurrection, and the Second Coming, rather than thinking about the person beside you, or other outside things. Anything that hinders a worshipful attitude or spirit, remove it from the service.



We can only worship the Lord through the shed blood of Christ. Only Holy Spirit filled believers can worship. In Psalm 66:18 we are told, "if I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me". You need to have time for people to confess their sins. Where unbelievers are praying it is hypocrisy. They are like the Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites as the Lord says in Matthew 23. You cannot worship one you do not know, or one with whom you are not in fellowship.

Your worship may have many forms. Prayer, both private and corporate, joyful or serious singing, contemplative or wordless prayers will all be a part of the mix. If you really draw close to the Lord you will not be singing repetitive choruses, you will be singing meaningful songs and hymns. We should have the attitude that every service is a worship service. The basis of worship is spirituality. Real worship must begin in prayer, self examination, and confession. True worship must begin passively and then move to activity, or all you have is a lot of carnal people singing. You need to allow time for people to deal with God so that they can approach him with clean hands lifted up in praise.

Be constructively critical of your worship service. Is what you are doing enhancing people's understanding of the glory of God, and is it allowing all to worship God to His Glory? Analyze what you do on Sunday morning; it will probably reveal that what you do on the whole is not as good a level of worship that it could be.

**CORPORATE WORSHIP**

John 4:24 makes it clear that without worship in the Spirit there is no worship in the church either as a group or individually. If you are not in fellowship with the Lord and spiritual there is no worship.

The **first** aspect of biblical worship is the Bible itself. God's Word must be uplifted in worship, we know the Living Word through the Written Word. The teaching of the Word of God is a vital part of worship. Bible doctrine must be central in worship.

The **second** aspect of worship is prayer, both private and silent and corporate and pastor led. If you have a believer who is embarrassed about their prayer life and wont pray aloud you have a carnal believer on your hands – help them deal with whatever it is that stops their worship. There will be sin in their life, or an inadequate view of what God has done to transform them. No Christian can have low self esteem and know the Word and the work of Jesus in their life – something is wrong with the brother/sister who is embarrassed of themselves – deal with it by bible doctrine and prayer. When you have heard His Word it will make you want to pray and chew the Word over with Him in prayer.

The **third** aspect is singing the praises of God and expressing that in words. It is critical that you or the music director choose hymns carefully so that the lyrics tie in with the scriptural message. It is an act of worship when you long to do something for the Lord, you long to praise Him and honour Him.

A **fourth** aspect is fellowship. Fellowship is not just the tea and biscuits after. Fellowship should be before the service, in the service, and after the service, and through the week.

**THE COMMUNION TABLE**

The greatest form of fellowship is round the communion table. In the ancient world there was what was called "an agape meal", which was a "bring and share" (pot-luck supper) meal followed by a communion meal remembering the death and resurrection of Christ on the day of the resurrection. In the ancient church they celebrated communion weekly. After the communion service the teacher would teach. Sunday evening was the longest service of the early church, and with Paul as the preacher it could go all night! Acts 20:6-12.

**WHEN DID THEY MEET?**

They met on a Sunday for corporate worship in homes. They often went to the synagogue on Saturday to reason with the Jews rather than worship. They worshipped on Sunday - Resurrection Day. It is of interest that six post resurrection appearances occurred on Sunday. The day of Pentecost was always on a Sunday (Feast of First fruits was also always on a Sunday). The early church met twice on Sundays – the first meeting was before dawn to remember the resurrection and hear the Word read, pray and sing a psalm or hymn. It was a short service. The longer service was in the evening after work and involved a shared meal, communion and formal teaching from the Old Testament, a Letter or Gospel passage. The Roman working day was 6am to 6pm.

**Activities On A Sunday**

We need to gather together for corporate worship, to give and observe the Lord's Supper. In recent years we have increasingly the secularisation of Sunday rather than making it a day of rest. Genuine Christians are only about 10% of the population, if that, in most countries of the Western world, so we are heading back to what pertained in the pre Constantine era where Sunday was just another working day.

We need to meet on Sunday to announce that Sunday is not just another day, even if it becomes just another working day in our "post Christian" world. It will always be the "Lord's Day" because it is the day that our Lord rose from the dead, the day that we celebrate the victory of the Cross, and also the coming of the Holy Spirit. Resurrection proves that Christ was victorious at the Cross, and Pentecost is the arrival of permanent power to walk as we are all called to walk.

To ignore Sunday is to slight him and to ignore His victory. We therefore have to magnify Sunday. We are celebrating something, while no longer new, that is special. The Christian pattern therefore is at some time in the day a shared meal, the Lord's Supper, prayer, praise, song, and teaching in a spirit of worship.

### Prayer In The Worship Service

It is important to look at all the teaching on prayer. Do not base your prayer life on one item. Right the way through from the "Sermon On The Mount" to the discourse that begins in the upper room, the Lord is talking about prayer. It is in John 17 that we have the real Lord's Prayer. There is a lot about prayer in the last night of the Lord's life and this sets our pattern.

In what we know as the Lord's Prayer we have the basics of the "believer's prayer" life. **Matthew 6:7-15**. If you forgive others their trespasses, God will forgive yours, if not, he will not. You cannot pray with an unforgiving spirit or you have sin in your life. If you have sin in your life you can sound as holy as you like but your prayers will not go far. It is critical to be in fellowship; to be spiritual and not carnal. **1 Corinthians 3:1-17**.

The so called "Lord's Prayer" or in fact, the disciple's prayer, looks forward to the reign of the Lord on the earth. When the believers pray this prayer, they say that they want the Lord Jesus Christ to reign on earth, and they commit to beginning to allow the Lord to reign in their own heart right here and now. The critical question for each of us is always whether he rules in our life. Are you trusting in him for your eternal future? Do you depend on Him? Do you want to be delivered from temptation or do you relish it? The disciple's prayer is a valuable one, challenging us in all the important areas of spirituality, doctrine and worship.

**John 14:12-14** shows that prayer is to be offered in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ so that you need to be in fellowship when you offer it. There needs to be relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ as well. If you are asking for something in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ it is because you have a relationship with Him not because it is a magic phrase. You will ask according to His will.

**John 15:7** shows that it must be in accordance with his Word, whilst **John 16:23-24** gives a third aspect. If all three are tied together you get the whole aspect of prayer "in the Spirit".

### FOUR FACETS OF PRAYER

There are then four facets of prayer - **Confession, thanksgiving, intercession - praying for others, and requests-praying for yourself**. In the last category you tell the Lord, "these are the problems that I have Lord, and I bring them to you for solution". **1 Peter 5:5-10**. One of the greatest things that man has ever been known to say is, "Heavenly Father in the name of my Lord and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ I come before you".

We can boldly come before the throne of grace. **Hebrews 4:16, 10:19-22**. The Old Testament saints with trembling stayed outside the Holy of Holies, but we are able to enter there with boldness gained through the blood of Jesus shed for us. We can call God "Our Father" on the basis of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

George Mueller, the great faith missionary to orphans, functioned on prayer. He did not tell people about what he required he just told it to the Lord. He survived on prayer. The great missionary to China, Hudson Taylor survived on prayer. Also Carey and Judson the missionary pioneers, depended on prayer. It is inspiring to read about their lives. We, like them, are to learn to trust God and express that faith in our prayer life. **Mark 11:22-26**.

In **1 Thessalonians 5:16-25** we are told that prayer should be without ceasing, giving thanks to the Lord.

We should pray for a wide variety of things. These should include the sick, the pastor, those to be converted, ourselves, the saints, and for one another.

When should we pray? From the biblical examples of the saints the answer is varied; day and night, at every meal, when in trouble, early morning, late in the evening, the day of battle, in extremity, when human help fails. We should call on the Lord while He is near, and he is always near to us. We should pray all the time.

Where should you pray, the Scriptures say that we should pray everywhere. God is everywhere so that we are able to pray wherever we are. How should we pray? We pray earnestly, without vain repetition, with fasting, with thanksgiving. We pray with others, we pray believing, we pray in the spirit.

### Hindrances To Prayer

Six reasons for unanswered prayer:- selfishness, Isaiah 59:1,2, sin which separates us from the Lord Ezekiel 14:3, when you take idols into your heart, Mark 11:25-26, lack of forgiveness James 1:5-7, because of unbelief, 1Peter 3:6,7, and because of poor relationship between husband and wife.

In order to encourage all the Lord's people to pray, divide the regular church prayer meeting at some point into small groups and give people specific things to pray for. Talk about them as to what they are going to pray for and why. Prayer is sharing with God your concerns as well as your thanks and worship. Get the Lord's people used to praying together simply and powerfully.

You cannot say "Amen" to a prayer in tongues unless there is a bone fide interpretation of the tongues, for you may be saying "amen" to something rude/wrong. You have to encourage the tongues speaker to pray with their mind active. Often it is an automatic response for them. Tell them that they, and you are missing out, because you cannot join them in prayer if you don't know what they are saying. Ask them to pray as Paul suggested and pray out loud in their own language. Quoting Scripture in prayer is often quite useful as well. Let each speak in his/her own way with no "style" of prayer being established as the "right" way for the Lord accepts us all and all prayers in the Spirit are acceptable to him.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **STEWARDSHIP**

1. There are a number of promises related to good stewardship. (Luke 6:38, Acts 20:35, 2 Corinthians 9:6, Hebrews 6:10, 13:16)
2. We are to distribute to the saints: (Romans 12:13)
  - a) cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7)
  - b) simply (Romans 12:8)
  - c) to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)
  - d) faithfully (1 Corinthians 4:2, Luke 21:1-4).
3. Stewardship in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Psalm 112:9; Proverbs 11:24,25; Ecclesiastes 11:1; Malachi 3:10).
4. Stewardship for the rich is given in (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

### **SERVICE**

1. Our duty is to surrender our entire lives to God (Romans 12:1).
2. Willingness is essential (Judges 5:2, 8:25, Isaiah 1:19, 2 Corinthians 8:3).
3. Service in the big things requires by faithfulness in the small things.
4. Monotony and difficulties are transformed into the opportunities with the correct attitude (Matthew 6:33).
5. Everything we do should be "as unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:17).
6. Service to Christ is acceptable to God and approved of men (Romans 14:18).
7. Our work should be completed (John 4:34, 17:4, Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7).
8. The example of Christ (Matthew 20:28, Luke 22:27, Philippians 2:7).
9. Qualities of our service:-
  - a) It is demanded (Hebrews 12:28)
  - b) It should be immediate (Matthew 21:28)
  - c) It is abundant (1 Corinthians 15:58)
  - d) It is according to ability (Matthew 25:22, Luke 12:48)
  - e) It is in co-operation with God (2 Corinthians 6:1)
  - f) Must be exclusive (Luke 16:13)
  - g) In the power of the spirit (Romans 1:9)
  - h) Undertaken in Godly fear (Hebrews 12:28)
  - i) Motivated by love (Galatians 5:13)
10. It is:-
  - a) following Christ (John 12:26)
  - b) for him whom all Christians serve (Colossians 3:24)
  - c) service to God (Acts 27:23).
11. It requires:-
  - a) turning from idols (1 Thessalonians 1:9)

- b) fasting and prayer (Luke 2:37)
- c) ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-4).

12. Benefits of Service:-

- a) It glorifies God (Matthew 5:16, John 15:8)
- b) It enriches life (1 Timothy 6:18-19)
- c) It gives a pattern for imitation (Titus 2:7)
- d) It encourages others in their tasks (Hebrews 10:24)
- e) It shows neighbourliness (Luke 10:36-37)
- f) It lightens life's burdens (Galatians 6:2,16)
- g) It demonstrates love (John 21:15-17)
- h) It demonstrates faith (James 2:17-18, 1 Peter 2:12)
- i) It is Christlike (John 13:12-15).

13. The model servant (Genesis 24)

- a) Does not pre-empt his master (v2-9). We should wait upon the Lord and not run ahead of time.
- b) Goes where he is sent (v4,10). We should be in the geographical will of God.
- c) Does nothing else. God has specific tasks for every believer to perform. We should concentrate on our own area and not get sidetracked.
- d) Is prayerful and thankful. We should always realise where our power comes from and not get proud when we have spiritual blessings and prosperity.
- e) Is keen to succeed (v 17-18, 21). We should be keen to evangelise (Romans 1:14-16).
- f) Speaks not of himself but of his master. Who and what we are is not important; who and what Christ is of the greatest importance (v 22, 34-36).
- g) Presents the true issue and requires a clear decision (v49). We should present the gospel and other doctrine clearly and expect results.

**GIVING**

1. Giving is an important part of spiritual life. It includes your attitude, the giving of yourself, your capacity as well as your possessions. Giving is as much a part of worship as praying, singing, listening to teaching, observing the Lord's Table, reading the Word.

2. Basic Principles of Giving

- a) Old Testament Giving - this giving was a freewill offering. (Proverbs 11:24,25)
- b) New Testament Giving - also a freewill offering. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- c) Tithing (meaning "ten percent") - was a form of income tax for all Jews.
- d) The time to give - the first day of the week, Sunday. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
- e) How much - as God has prospered (1 Corinthians 16:2)

3. General Scripture on Giving. (2 Corinthians chapters 8 & 9)

- a) 2 Corinthians 8:1-8. Contrasts the Macedonian givers to the Corinthian givers, the former having been made poor by Roman oppression gave liberally. The Corinthians, the richest Church in Greece, gave sparingly.
- b) Giving is an attitude of grace and inner happiness rather than the amount donated (2 Corinthians 8:2)
- c) Before money is given you must give yourself - a surrendered life to God. (2 Corinthians 8:5)
- d) Giving is as important an act as any other act in the fellowship. (2 Corinthians 8:7)
- e) Giving is love giving not law giving (2 Corinthians 8:8)
- f) Giving is a response to grace, the prime example being the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 8:9)
- g) Money given in the Lord's service must be properly administered. (2 Corinthians 8:19-21)
- h) If you give in grace you reap bountifully, if you give with a wrong attitude you reap sparingly (2 Corinthians 9:6)
- i) Giving is a reflection of your character. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- j) God has given unto us his indescribable Gift. (2 Corinthians 9:15)

4. Giving to the work of the Lord

- a) There are five reasons for giving to the work of the Lord.
- b) That God's work might be supported. (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- c) That God might be glorified. (2 Corinthians 9:12)
- d) That needy saints might be provided for. (Acts 2:44-45, 11:29)
- e) That other Christians might be challenged. (2 Corinthians 9:2)
- f) That the giver's life might be blessed. (2 Corinthians 9:6)

5. Giving alms to the poor:

- a) In the Bible, almsgiving means giving to the poor.
- b) The Pharisees distorted the principle of giving by making a public display. The Lord Jesus rejected this pride (Matthew 6:1-4).
- c) When we give alms we have to do it in secret, so that we honour God and not ourselves (Matthew 6:1-4).
- d) The giving of alms to the poor is encouraged (Luke 12:33; Acts 10:2,4,31), and will be rewarded (Matthew 6:1-4).

6. Tithes: There were three tithes in Israel:
- a) Tithe 1 - Annually for the maintenance of the Levites (Numbers 18:21,24). The Levites were equivalent to "civil servants" in a theocratic nation.
  - b) Tithe 2 - Annually for national feasts and sacrifices (Deuteronomy 14:22-26).
  - c) Tithe 3 - Every third year a third tithe was required for the poor of the land (Deuteronomy 14:28-29) - equivalent to "social security".
  - d) In Malachi 3:8-10, it mentions tithes and offerings: the tithes to be brought to the storehouse or treasury; offerings were freewill gifts in addition to tithes.

**LESSONS 57 & 58 – WORSHIP PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
57/58	Worship, Prayer, Thanksgiving	John 4:19-26 John 14:12-17 John 15:7 John 16:23,24	Worship and Praise Cain and Abel Worldliness Separation Prayer Thankfulness

**CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

If you are a church pastor and you ignore this you rob yourself and the Lord's people of great blessing. These principles from the early synagogue were applied into the young church. In **Matthew 18:15-35** our Lord talks about dealing with discipline in the church. This parable tells us of the mental attitude that we should have.

Regarding forgiveness Peter thinks that he is doing a great thing forgiving his brother seven times. He will count the seven times and then hit the errant brother. This is a wrong attitude, but is very common with us all. We can be forgiving but bearing grudges in our heart and just waiting for the Lord to judge the person we feel wronged by. God looks at the heart, not just what you say. One of the most destructive things for worship and Christian service is the unforgiving spirit deep in the soul.

If you want revenge for a wrong you have suffered you have not dealt with the issue God's way. We have to look at the Cross and think how the Lord forgave us, and then look at the actions of the errant person. The passage we begin with today makes it clear that if they sincerely ask for forgiveness we must give it to them.

Note, they must ask. There is not a demand to forgive a person who has never confessed their evil nor asked for it. For such people we have the demand from the Lord to pray for them that they might be convicted and dealt with by God, we leave them to the work of the spirit, **John 16:8 - 11**. Having prayed this prayer for them you will find that your desire for revenge, or even for justice, drops away from your heart, and you will no longer seek their destruction but their transformation in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the heart of God towards all the lost, all the evil people, and as we draw closer to the heart of God we will desire the lost for God more, even if they have betrayed or hurt us.

It is quite easy to forgive an acquaintance for what they have done because you will not need to see them again, or for a long time, but it is much harder to forgive your father, mother, or sibling for the ruined years of your life because of what they may have done to you as a child. All things need to be brought before the Lord – and if the person who did great evil to you is unrepentant, then you are still called to pray for their conviction. John 16:8-11. This is praying for their blessing, rather than their judgment in the Lake of Fire. As you do that God will heal your heart, even if the evil person is determined never to be transformed by the Holy Spirit. They may go to the Lake of Fire, but don't you allow yourself to be burned by the fire of hatred and unforgiveness in your soul! They may have eternal misery, don't have temporal misery yourself! Pray for the evil people who have hurt you; that you might draw closer to the heart of God.

The Lord's message here is that if you need to deal with something you should do so quickly. You cannot move forward in life yourself unless you have fully faced the impact of the evil person's sin on you and others, and have come to terms with their actions in God's way. If you love the Lord you will be hurt by what a number of others do to you or others, but you must take them to the Lord in prayer, asking for their soul to be won for God, not their body to burn in the lake of fire

or be broken in court. By "casting this care" upon the Lord you cease carrying any energy towards the evil done, and will be "lighter" and more focused forward in the Lord's will for your life.

### PROBLEMS BETWEEN CHURCH MEMBERS

In a church if a person has a problem they should discuss that problem with the person concerned. They must go to the person who has offended them, and not the minister initially.

If someone complains to the pastor about someone else in the congregation they should be told to go to Matthew 18:15 and then go and see the person.

If that does not solve the problem they should follow through with Matthew 18:16, taking a witness with them, and see the person, noting down those things that have been said.

If you as a minister wish to have peace in your time you teach your flock to apply God's Word as per Matthew 18. If you listen to people who are having problems with other members of the congregation you are foolish and disobedient to the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a great danger in the ministry doing counseling, when you should not be dealing with the problem, but rather urging the application of scripture. The Holy Spirit is a better counselor than you. Let the Word work! There is the time for the ministry of counselling/encouragement, but disputes between people is not one of them.

It should be noted that in the first case the person is to, "tell him his fault between thee and him alone", so it is one on one; privacy is then maintained. Do not tell others what you are doing; no gossip at all is allowed to build. If it is done in this way most problems in your church will disappear. You must go with a forgiving heart and see if it can be solved.

If they order you off the premises, then verse 16 applies. You get two or three witnesses and try again. You then have independent witness that report everything that is said in writing to the pastor and church board.

If this does not work then they go before the church. The church then says that this person has been wronged and tells the errant member, "you must put it right".

The Lord's message here is that if you need to deal with something you should do so quickly and with personal accountability applying to all persons in the process. You cannot discipline others unless you have fully faced the impact of their sin on you and others, and have come to terms with their actions in God's way. If you love the Lord you will be hurt by what a number of Christians do, but you then deal with that God's way.

One part in the church constitution should be about personal disputes and procedures regarding discipline. Some churches get this wrong and become battlefields when Matthew 18 is not applied. The way to deal with this is through good Bible teaching, and good communication, with the grass never allowed to grow under the feet of those creating disputes. Even with this you will get the trouble makers within the church, for this is the easiest way for Satan's crew to upset the work of the Holy Spirit.

**James 4:7-10** is the answer to this problem. James tells these people that they have nothing to laugh about in this church. He is very blunt – "Humble yourself and deal with your sins, individually and as a body". Let us take his blunt encouragement as our apostolic instruction, for so it is.

### PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The purpose of discipline is four fold:-

[a] To remove the defilement of sin. This is whether it is the pastor acting directly, or instructing them through Matthew 18. This objective is always the same in discipline; it is to restore the spirit of Christ in the fellowship through confronting sin and restoring fellowship. People who do not like church discipline do not have a high view of sin, nor a high view of the family of God.

[b] To protect others from sin and guide them in godliness. If your youth leader is into any form of immorality, your youth will soon follow.

[c] To provide soundness in their faith. They need to know what they believe.

[d] To reclaim and restore the erring brother, to win the person back by shock/truth facing.

### ATTITUDE IN DISCIPLINING

What must your attitude be, to have a support giving spirit and meekness as per **Galatians 6:1**. You must not go in an arrogant manner to the person who has sinned. You need to go humbly but maintain an uncompromising stance against sin. This is what God's Word says about it, saying bluntly in love, "you need to change, how can we help you to change?" There must be loving concern but also holiness with honesty.

Do not comfort a sinner in their sins. Your commitment to tell the truth in love is important. Love will mean that you will tell the truth, the whole truth even though it hurts, as you want to see the person get to a solution. There must be honesty in facing up to reality. There must be a forgiving spirit. You must be willing to accept their repentance when it occurs and not before. There must be a certain attitude change on their part, and your example assists that process.

There should be no partiality; do not favour certain people. Do not let the sun go down on the problems. You must move deliberately. There are steps set down in scripture. The day that any believer hears about a problem that person should see the other person involved.

**WHO SHOULD BE DISCIPLINED?**

[a] An accused elder - **1 Timothy 5:19-20**. All investigation of evidence based accusations of sin against an office holder needs to be public, transparent, and before the whole eldership, with the principles of fairness and truth applied, not the criminal law of the State. If the elder is guilty of sin he/she must be publicly rebuked in front of the church of a sin that puts them outside the criteria of eldership. They should be removed from the eldership if the sin is proved, or publicly confirmed in office if the "sin" is proved to be a case of false accusation. They can stay in the church if there is repentance of any proven sin, but cannot serve as an elder again if the sin is one that places them outside the biblical criteria.

[b] The persistently sinning brother/sister - the private rebuke for lasting change - **Matthew 18:15-22**.

[c] The overtaken sister/brother - **Galatians 6:1** - this is someone who is tripped up in an unguarded moment in sin rather than a persistent sinner.

[d] The unruly sister/brother - **2 Thessalonians 3:6-10** - these are people who are unemployed and not looking for work but causing trouble. This in an extreme case and should be dealt with by the church. The entire congregation should be involved. It could be the subject of an entire Sunday service. Discipline has to happen, as we cannot afford to be known in this community for slothfulness. We must distance ourselves from the lazy and disruptive sinner.

[e] The false teacher needs to be dealt with immediately whether it is in ignorance or deliberate. You can go to them to win a brother/sister but they need to be dealt with quickly.

[f] The factious sister/brother who causes divisions within the church. You warn them twice. You will have people that bring up problems at every meeting and they may need to be warned if their "problems" are pride based and they play politics.

[g] The immoral brother/sister is covered in 1 and 2 Corinthians. John Wesley's people were known as "holy people", but that often meant they would question each other's private lives without any reason to do so. This is an invasion of privacy. It is sitting around telling others what you have been doing over recent times and is a technique that has been used by the communists in "brain washing". It is not recommended; it is not biblical. This is a cultic type thing.

We are to be concerned about people who have sinned against us, but we should be in prayer for them to be changed by God, not be tied up in cultic type activities to try to control them by human effort. Life is too short for such things. Beware of the "accountability" type systems that put other people in the place that the Holy Spirit wants to be.

**WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS**

In **1 Timothy 5:1-16** we see that the widows and widowers are of great value in the church because they are going to be the key people in the church as your prayer warriors. The key people in the church are the over 60's, some of whom will be prayer warriors. Those who are godly and old have time to pray. Those with a family with young children, with a full time job will not have sufficient time to pray. Those who can pray and do so will be the power house of the church.

In verse 5 you have people praying day and night. My strong encouragement is to gather the elderly people aside one morning and ask each of them to consider becoming a prayer warrior. The church was told, "Do not let the widow get on to charity from the church if they have not lived a spiritual life". In the ancient world they were given charity as there was no retirement pension. The only people who had retirement funds were members of artisan clubs or guilds such as masons or bricklayers. All the others had to keep working until they died. It was very hard for a widow unless she had children to support her. The church supported the widows and elderly, but only those who committed to daily prayer for the church, and such prayer was coordinated by a deacon, and it still should be.

**PRAYER CO ORDINATOR**

The best way to get over loneliness in the elderly is to enroll them in the prayer warrior group. You need to have a prayer warrior deacon, deaconess or elder who contacts each of them every week and gives them things on that weekly, or "more often - as required", basis to pray about. This may be by telephone, email or at regular fellowship morning tea meetings.

They are to be visited every week if they are "shut in" by infirmity or illness, and are to be told about answers to prayer that will be of great encouragement to the prayer warriors, and then given more topics for prayer. The coordinator of this group probably should be a retired person themselves. This will be their whole job, so they must feel the Holy Spirit's call to do this work – for great work it is. I believe the spiritual power of the church depends upon this working out.

All the prayer requests go through this prayer deacon. By doing this you have brought the elderly into the heart of the church. The prayer requests should be handed to them personally in their own home. If there is any help required that can be ascertained and organised at that time. You can depend on a dedicated group of people like this to pray for you. Many old people feel left out of the church. By this you can use them more in this situation than you can before. The church is not an area for bludgers. You will find nowhere in the New Testament where people got money for nothing. The old people work at prayer, the young people work in the community.

In the New Testament churches, there is no charity to those who are not involved in the spiritual life of the church. It is the Lord's money, and it is up to Him to tell you where you are able to spend it. You will get criticised for dealing with people in a Biblical way but you stand with the Lord, and so you can relax. If any person will not be biblically counselled by the pastor, take that as a warning, as they are probably deceitful people who will attempt to get monies from a church.

No money that is raised by the Lord's people is to be given to any pagan, or any pagan cause. The early church manual, The Didache, spelt out that any person asking for money was to be treated as a deceiver; this was especially so regarding visiting prophets. People asking for "support" = crooks!

## **DOCTRINES**

### **WORSHIP AND PRAISE**

1. The Hebrew word used in worship is "Shachah" - to prostrate, pay homage, humbly beseech, bow down.
2. The Greek words are as follows:-
  - a) proskueo - prostrate yourself. (1 Corinthians 14:5)
  - b) sebomai - lack of arrogance. (Matthew 15:9)
  - c) sebazomai - stand in awe. (Romans 1:25)
  - d) eusebeo - act with devotion. (Acts 17:23)
3. Worship is the attitude of the believer when he approaches God in awe, fear and respect. (1 Chronicles 29:20, Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:17)
4. We should never be casual or flippant with God. (John 13:13, Hebrew 10:19-21)
5. Worship is an expression of bible doctrine that a believer has in him and is applying. All expression of doctrine is worship. (Nehemiah 8:6-10, 9:3)
6. We must worship the Lord in spirit, controlled by the Spirit, and in truth, reflecting doctrine accurately. (John 4:23-24)
7. It is therefore of critical importance that we worship in accordance with biblical doctrines. This is especially important in singing as because of pleasant music it is easy to forget or ignore the meaning of the words being sung.
8. People worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 2:11, 9:38)
9. People who do not worship God will worship demons. (Deuteronomy 8:19-20, 11:16, 30:17-20, Romans 1:25)
10. All will eventually bow before Jesus Christ and acknowledge Him as Lord, either for blessing or before they are judged eternally. (Isaiah 45:23, Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:10)
11. In eternity there will be perfect worship as there will be perfect knowledge of doctrine. (Revelation 4:8-11)
12. Worship begins at salvation. (Mark 5:1-10, 18-20)
13. Worship expresses a believer's concentration on his Lord. (Psalms 29, 66, 96, John 12:1-11)
14. The song of worship. (1 Chronicles 16:7-36)
15. We worship through:-
  - a) Reading God's Word. (Colossians 4:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:27, 1 Timothy 4:13)
  - b) Studying God's Word. (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:15)
  - c) Teaching God's Word. (Acts 2:42, 6:7, 12:24, 18:28, 1 Timothy 4:6, 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2)
  - d) Preaching God's Word. (2 Timothy 4:2)



- e) The sacrifice of our praise. (Hebrews 13:15)
- f) The sacrifice of our good works. (Hebrews 13:16)
- g) The sacrifice of our bodies. (Romans 12:1)
- h) The sacrifice of our substance. (Philippians 4:18)
- i) The receiving of His Son. (John 1:11-12)
- j) The keeping of the Ordinances. (1 Corinthians 11:2)
- k) Through the singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs. (Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, James 5:13)
- l) Prayers, Intercessions, Supplications and Thanksgiving. (Acts 2:42, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, 8)

**CAIN AND ABEL**

1. Salvation and Worship in Pre Flood time. The only way to have a relationship with God in early times is the same as we have today - the blood of Christ - they looked forward to the Cross, we look back historically. (Hebrews 9:22, Ephesians 1:7, 1 Peter 1:18,19)

The way of Cain: The way of Cain is false religion - no blood - no regeneration - no salvation - the way of good works - good deeds.

The Family: The family was set up in the beginning to teach what is wrong, what is right, and how to approach God. Adam and Eve, who were born again, would have taught their children about spiritual things.

2. **WORSHIP**

a) Where to worship

In (Genesis 4:3) and (4:16) they were taught that there was a place to worship - they both brought their offering to a specific place. Evaluation of (Genesis 3:24) would appear to show that the place of worship was at the entrance to the garden of Eden which was guarded by the cherubim. Abel came with the blood of the animal. Cain approached with produce - his own good works.

b) When to Worship

In (Genesis 4:3) we read "in the process of time " which means at the proper time or at the end of a specified number of days. It could have been the Sabbath, it could have been Sunday.

c) Means of Worship

In (Genesis 4:4) Abel brought a lamb, sacrificed it, and God was satisfied.

3. **Cain and Abel**

a) Cain - means acquired. Eve was a little confused when she named her sons. Eve knew there were two lines - the line of the fig leaves - the line of the skins, the seed of Satan and the seed of woman. She thought Cain was the seed of the woman. He was however the first of the seed of Satan.

b) Abel - means 'nothingness' - he was orientated to grace and first in line of regeneration.

c) Occupations: Cain was a farmer whereas Abel was a shepherd. (John 1:29 cf. Genesis 3:21)

4. **Cain's Offering**

Cain was an excellent farmer who brought the best vegetables and fruit from the ground.

a) Type

i) it was bloodless (Hebrews 9:22)

ii) in the sweat of thy brow - it was a result of Cain's own hard work - human good. (Isaiah 64:6)

iii) it was cursed (Genesis 3:17)

iv) not acceptable to God. (Titus 3:5)

b) Implications

i) Cain failed to recognise sin and the penalty of sin and his own need.

ii) He denied the curse of man.

iii) Cain refused God's offer for help.

iv) Cain's attitude - I have done this. Self righteousness.

v) Cain wanted a cover not a cure. (Matthew 23:27,28).

c) Religion ignores the blood of Christ, it is characterized by good deeds.

5. **Abel's Offering**

Abel was a shepherd and brought of the firstlings of the flock and fat thereof. (Hebrews 11:4, 1 John 3:12)

Grace Principle - the approach through the blood of an innocent victim. It wasn't that Abel had a nice personality or Cain a bad personality, the principle is divine truth. The blood versus no blood. Divine works versus human works.

6. **v 5. God deals with Cain**

Human rejection of divine salvation means divine rejection of that individual. Cain's reaction - he was very angry to the point of a tantrum and his face fell. Abel was accepted. Cain became jealous of Abel and lusted for precedence in the second generation.

v 6&7. God puts the alternative to Cain

God asked why are you angry and look sad. "If you do well" (totally good) believe in Christ "shalt thou not be accepted", if not (human good) "the sin offering (Jesus Christ) lieth at the door. (Salvation is still available while the door remains

open. (Revelation 3:20). It is God's will that you be saved. (2 Peter 3:9) " thou shalt rule over him " - Cain was the first-born and had certain rights:- a) rulership; b) priesthood; c) double portion. Cain is about to be disinherited because he is not acceptable to God. He again rejects God's approach, his jealousy turns to hatred and hatred to murder.

7. Cain and Abel stand as representatives of the human race. Cain the unbeliever, Abel the believer. (John 3:36)

**WORLDLINESS**

1. Worldliness means to follow the beliefs and philosophy of man rather than that of God
2. Worldliness is the opposite to Godliness; it is thinking/doing in opposition to God's revealed word. Titus 2:11-14.
3. All people are faced with the constant choice of following God's way or the world's. Romans 5:12, 3:19; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Ephesians 2:12; James 1:27; 2 Peter 1:4, 2:20.
4. Satan is the "prince of this world", and has power to deceive those who are negative to God's plans. John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11; 1 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Peter 5:8,9.
5. We must not love the world - 1 John 2:15-17.
6. We must hate all the world stands for, in thought and in deed. 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 11:30-32; Galatians 6:14; James 1:27, James 4:4; 2 Peter 1:3,4; 1 Corinthians 3:18, 19.
7. We must not return to our old behaviour patterns - Ephesians 2:1-7.
8. This evil world system and the prince of this world will be condemned. Matthew 18:7; John 12:31, 16:11, 1 Corinthians 6:2; 2 Peter 3:7, 2 Peter 2:1ff.

**SEPARATION**

1. Believers are instructed to be separated from habitually carnal believers (1 Corinthians 5:10, 11).
2. Separation is ordered from apostate religious organisations (2 Corinthians 6:17).
3. Separation is commanded from unbelievers where scripture is compromised by the relationship or marriage, business partners (2 Corinthians 6:14 ff).
4. Separation is commanded from the human viewpoint (Romans 12:2, Romans 16:17, 18).
5. Separation is commanded from pseudo spirituality (Romans 16:17, 18).
6. Separation is commanded from those who seek pleasure in fast living - pursuit of parties, immoral situations (1 Peter 4:4).
7. Separation is commanded from other believers who reject Bible doctrine (2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15).

**PRAYER**

1. We may know the provision of God but we must communicate with Him in order to obtain this provision.
  - a) Prayer is the believer's means of communicating with God.
  - b) The Bible is God's way of communicating with man.
2. Promises Involving Prayer
  - a) Matthew 21:22 – We should ask believing.
  - b) Matthew 18:19 – The power of corporate prayer.
  - c) Psalm 116:1, 2 – God is always available to hear our prayer.
  - d) Isaiah 65:24 – God will answer while we are yet praying.
  - e) Matthew 7:7 – We are commanded to pray.
  - f) John 14:13-14 – We can ask for anything in His name.
  - g) Philippians 4:6 – The prayer should be with thanksgiving.
  - h) 1 Thessalonians 5:17 – We should pray without ceasing.
  - i) Hebrews 4:16 – We can come boldly to the throne of Grace.
3. Prayer Divided into 4 Segments
  - a) Confession of sins (1 John 1:9)

- b) Thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
- c) Intercession for others. (Ephesians 6:18)
- d) Petitions for one's own needs (Hebrews 4:16)

4. Power of Prayer

- a) Individual - Elijah and the burnt offering. (1 Kings 18:36-39)
- b) Corporate - the release of Peter from prison. (Acts 12:1-18)

5. One Prayer that could not be Answered: The prayer of our Lord on the Cross (Psalm 22:1-18).

6. To Whom are Prayers Addressed?

- a) Directed to the Father - (Matthew 6:5-9)
  - b) In the name of the Son - (Hebrews 7:25)
  - c) In the power of the Spirit - (Romans 8:26-27)
- The Son (Jesus) and Spirit are interceding for us.

7. Prayers can be Divided into Petition and Desire

- a) Petition - What you ask God for (e.g. a new car)
- b) Desire - The desire behind the petition (e.g. happiness because you have a new car).

8. Four Possible Combinations

- a) Petition answered - Desire not answered. (Psalm 106:15 - The quails of the Exodus generation. (1 Samuel 8:5) - A King to reign over Israel.
- b) Petition not answered - Desire answered. (Genesis 18:23) The preservation of Sodom. (2 Corinthians 12:7) - Removal of the thorn in Paul's side.
- c) Petition answered - Desire answered (1 Kings 18:36-37) - Elijah requests fire for the offering. (Luke 23:42) -The penitent thief's prayer. Type c) represents the perfect prayer.
- d) Petition not answered -Desire not answered. Type d) unanswered prayer has 9 main reasons which are shown in paragraph 10.

9. Reasons for Unanswered Prayer

- a) Lack of belief. (Matthew 21:22)
- b) Selfishness (James 4:3)
- c) Unconfessed sin (Psalm 66:18)
- d) Lack of compassion (Proverbs 21:13)
- e) Pride and self righteousness (Job 35:12-13)
- f) Lack of filling of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18)
- g) Lack of obedience (1 John 3:22)
- h) Not in the Divine will (1 John 5:14)

Most of the reasons for unanswered prayer, is some form of sin in the life, which can be solved by confession of known sins as per paragraph 4 a) under the concept of 1John 1:9.

10. Intercessory Prayer

- a) This is one of the four factors in a prayer which are:-
- b) Confession of sins.
- c) Thanksgiving
- d) Intercession
- e) Own needs.
- f) The power of intercessory prayer is taught in (1 Kings 18:42-46) the principle being found in (James 5:16-18)
- g) The power of prevailing prayer is shown in (Acts 12)
- h) The prayer for the unbeliever (Romans 10:1)
- i) Prayer for an unknown believer (Colossians 1:3-11)
- j) Prayer for the known believer (Ephesians 1:15-23)

11. The True Lord's Prayer (John 17)

- a) That Jesus might be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father. (v 1 of Philippians 2:9-11)
- b) That He might be restored to glory which He had prior to the foundation of the world. (v 5)
- c) For safety of believers from the world and the devil. (v 11, 15)
- d) For the sanctification of believers. (v 17)
- e) For the spiritual unity of believers. (v 21)
- f) That the world might believe. (v 21)
- g) That believers may be with Him in heaven to see and share His glory. (v 24)

**THANKFULNESS**

1. In everything we are told to give thanks. Philippians 3:1, 4:4, 10-13. In (1 Corinthians Chapter 1) Paul gives thanks for a number of items concerning God's provision.

2. Thanksgiving for grace (v 4)
3. Thanksgiving for spiritual wealth (v 5).
4. Thanksgiving for witnessing (v 6).
5. Thanksgiving for spiritual gifts (v 7).
6. Thanksgiving for ultimate sanctification (v 8).
7. Thanksgiving for divine faithfulness (v 9):
  - a) Faithful to forgive us our sins (1 John 1:9)
  - b) Faithful in not allowing too great a temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13)
  - c) Faithful is He who calls you (1 Thessalonians 5:24)
  - d) Faithful in keeping us from evil (2 Thessalonians 3:3)
  - e) Faithful even when we are unfaithful (2 Timothy 2:13).

**LESSON 59 & 60 - OTHER MINISTRIES**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
59/60	Other Ministries	Matthew 18:15-22 James 4:1-8 1 Timothy 5:3-16 2 Corinthians 6:14-18	Charity Marriage Family Widows Death

**CHARITY**

Let us look at what some call “Circles of responsibility” - charity spreads out from the local church but it did not spread out from the early churches to unbelievers. The church saw that it was responsible for the care of its own, and responsible to love/care for one another. This is the way that Christianity was shown; that they have practical love for the brethren. The unbeliever requires the gospel not charity, for money might muddy the waters of the gospel message.

The believer shows the love of God for the unbeliever by giving them the gospel message that will save them eternally, not by giving charity that may prolong their life temporarily here. The believer also requires the encouragement of God's Word, just as the unbeliever requires the gospel from the Word. Now this is an area where good men differ, but I want to challenge you to think in an apostolic manner towards the subject of charity.

I believe it is dangerous to give an unbeliever money rather than the gospel, as it could allow them to get through their present problems; problems which may be specifically put on them by the Lord to bring them to the place where they will hear the Gospel. By your charitable support they may not come to the place of hopelessness where they have to face up to the challenge of the Lord Jesus Christ in their life. We are not here to make unbelievers comfortable on the path to hell, but to give them the message they need to hear about the Saviour from their sin.

As unbelievers they are worshipping other gods, and by charity you may be financially encouraging them in their paganism. If a pagan prays to their gods and asks for help, and then you deliver them help, who will get the credit? It will not be the Lord, unless you have given them the charity in Jesus name, and even then they can be confused. Charity was practised only towards other believers in the first church, and that is where we should be targeting our attention.

Men risked their lives to take donations across the seas to other churches in the ancient world. These donations were then given to the elders of the needy church, to the deacons, and thence used for the Lord to support God's people in need. That remains the pattern. Now my next comment is just my observation, but I want you to reflect upon this in your own nation and city. I believe we will be judged harshly by the Lord because we give money to unrepentant criminals at home as “charity” in the so called “city mission”, when our brethren in other countries are suffering and have great needs. The apostolic church is our pattern and they carried money across continents to help their brethren in need, but never gave to unrepentant local criminals, lazy people who will not work, drug dealers, and “layabouts”.

In 1 Timothy 5 those who had not lived Christian lives did not enjoy the benefit of charity from the church, even when they were old. In addition, in Thessalonians, it was made quite clear that no money would be given to the lazy, criminal, or the idle even if they were Christians, and in the church. If they were disobedient to God's Word they were not to receive the Lord's money, but they were to receive pastoral rebuke. **1 Thessalonians 5:6-15, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12.**

Many churches have a policy that they will give money to anybody “in need”, but that is totally wrong according to apostolic practice and teaching. Money given is to aid and assist the Lord's work. It is not to be given to the unbeliever who is determined to remain pagan, or even to help meet physical needs of those in carnality. The unbeliever could think that his prayers are being answered through the Christian God and so stay in paganism. The criminal simply sees Christians as an “easy touch” at the city mission, and so despises the Gospel message and never responds to it.

There are many people who are in homeless shelters, and so called “City Missions”, who are receiving moneys and goods from churches, but who remain unrepentant towards their sinful life style and evil beliefs, and do not want to hear the gospel. At the same time there are believers who are in grave need, who are not receiving that money to glorify the Lord with. In such a situation, you have a godless man being fed by the Lord's money, and not realizing his need for a Saviour, because he is not being forced to come to terms with the natural consequences of his own sin.

This sinful person always thinks he is going to be baled out by the “stupid Christians” at the “city mission” and therefore never bows before the Lord. Is it better that a person goes hungry than goes to hell well fed and clothed by Christians? Now I remind you, good people have differing opinions on this matter of charity, but I want you to think about how the clear apostolic policy should be today. Believers are in great need overseas – the apostles are clear – they are our task.

The churches in the ancient world were not in the habit of establishing homes and shelters for the down and outs, they supported their own godly members in need. It is therefore, I believe, not appropriate for apostolic churches to give anything other than the gospel to the unbeliever. If they are in strife it may well be from their own lifestyle and the misfortune associated with it that you are saving them from. Their troubles may simply be the consequence of their sin so that they can consider God's claims on their life. Challenge yourself – what is the Holy Spirit trying to do in their life?

Sometimes you will be able to assist the innocent in this area, the wife/children who is a victim of a vicious, violent, and alcoholic husband. It is always important as a church to help children and support their removal from a dangerous situation, and to shelter them in love and confidence in a safe Christian home if you can. Jesus words, Matthew 18:5-6, 19:13-15. Help is not ever to be given to keep people in danger however. We do not assist the victim to remain with the abuser, or we are party to their later abuse or murder!

The money that is that given to the church by believers, for the Lord's work is the Lord's money, and his people have first call upon it. If there is a foreign church in need we must move heaven and earth to get help to them, but if we follow the apostles we do not use the Lord's money to help pagans at home. Pray about this issue.

## **WEDDINGS**

In **2 Corinthians 6:14-18** it is very clear that you should not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. This principle applies to close business relationships where there is a moral issue at any time, and especially in marriage. The concept comes from the days of ploughing a field with two animals in a yoke pulling the plough. A donkey and an ox were never to be put in the same yoke to pull one plough. Deuteronomy 22:10.

If such a thing was done there was danger to both animals, for they both pull different weights and the plough will not run a straight line and may jump out of the furrow injuring the animals or the person guiding them. In exactly the same way a believer and an unbeliever have different values; they pull different weights in life, and are meant to be ploughing different fields! If they are yoked together they will likely injure each other and the people close to them.

As the local pastor you are **not to be** the paid “marriage merchant” of the town. If there is to be a marriage conducted by you it should be a Christian wedding that does not violate the principles of scripture. Weddings are for everyone to enjoy, and marriage is a divine institution for the stability of all societies but marrying a believer and an unbeliever is forbidden. There is very little opportunity for evangelism at a wedding, so do not be fooled by this viewpoint.

This biblical standard for Christian marriage is a very strong point of separation from the world, and recent changes in many nation's laws may make it impossible to conduct Christian Marriages. We have the standards of God that must be obeyed over the standards of the unbelieving world. It is important to draw up the local church policy in regard to your holding of wedding services; can they be “legal”, or simply believing church members being blessed in the church after their legal-state marriage. Further discussion of this topic occurs in our study of Pastoral Theology.

This has become vital in countries where they allow legal homosexual and lesbian marriages, and condemn any who oppose them! This is a thing forbidden by the Word, as is the “mixed” believer/unbeliever marriage. Be also aware if one believer is spiritually on fire for the Lord and their planned partner is carnal most of the time, then that also is “unequally yoked”. The easiest way for Satan to disable any believer is to get them with the wrong marriage partner!

## **POLICY FOR WEDDINGS/BLESSING SERVICES – some points for prayerful thought.**

1. When you have an initial approach by a couple, you must have discussions with the couple about what marriage means to them. You tell them bluntly, that you want them to think about what marriage means to them both and why they want to get married. “Where are you going in your life? Are you on the same path, and what are your plans for

the future?" Are they on the same path and ploughing in the same field? Are they equals, pulling the same weight in the field of life, or are they unequally yoked in any major area of life?

These are questions that you can ask on the phone and save time at the meeting. You need to set up an agenda before the people arrive. Think about what you want them to discuss together and with you. If they cannot discuss these matters regarding their Christian walk, their plans, and God's call on their lives, they are not ready for marriage. If they are pagans wanting to be "married properly" in the church it is evangelism that is needed. What is the church policy?

Name a time and the place for any meeting. It should be at the church. Do not visit them in their home, get them to come and visit you and if they do not keep their appointment, do not wait for them. Weed out those who are just going to use you or the "venue". As government rules for marriage become more pagan the local church may have to consider withdrawing from the State "Marriage Act", and not even conducting State services at all, holding non-legal Christian marriages for church members only, after they have done their legal "paper work" at the Government office.

2. You should discuss those things that you have given them information about. There should be a handout for those considering marriage. Start a file accumulating good articles on marriage. Give them copies of those articles for homework. You need to get them to talk to each other at a level above what they have done before, even if they have lived together. You then invite them back to discuss it further. Talk about marriage and what it is for a Christian to be married.

People must not get married because their family wants them to get married, ..... "because you think you are on the shelf, you want to get away from home, because everybody else is, or because you are pregnant". There are many people who have committed sin in a sexual relationship that they should not have entered into, and you as the pastor add evil to it by binding them together before God, when their sinful lust simply led them to create the child they carry. Ezra 10:10ff.

It is not your job as a minister to join together in wedlock those who God did not intend getting married and who have no business being together, even if they have made a child. It is far better to counsel the girl who is pregnant to give birth to her child and adopt it out to Christian parents, or bring it up as a now repentant godly single solo mother, rather than be married to the wrong person. Satan will destroy the potential ministry of any Christian man or woman who ends up marrying the wrong person. Don't be in any hurry to sanctify adultery or fornication.

A man who has had sexual relations with a woman who is not his wife has become low and evil. He has taken her for his own sexual pleasure. Such a man is not a candidate for a husband until he is transformed. He might mature and having seen and dealt with the enormity of his sin, may become a candidate for her husband. You can destroy the lives of people by making the wrong decision here, so walk slowly and ensure the couple are prayerfully walking with God.

3. At the third meeting after the discussions on the things that you have handed out, if you then believe that this couple should marry, you start planning the service. If you do not believe you can in good conscience marry them, then say so, and refer them away for thought and prayer. Only if you believe it is right, go ahead. At the wedding make your talk short, sharp and to the point, something that is honouring to God. The service should not be more than 40 minutes. The minutes count. The songs should be good with everybody who participates doing so in the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. The next thing is the practice service with all the key players in the service to ensure that people know what they will be doing. The service can be on a Saturday or Sunday. You can have an evening wedding too. Make sure that the legal side is tied up. The groom should visit the State registrar to get the forms to be signed. They should be obtained at least a week before in case the groom forgets. I believe we need to keep the legal and the spiritual aspects of the service separate, and in some States this will be vital due to immoral or evil State rules.

The minister should give a gift, perhaps a book/bible to the couple, which is going to be of value to them in their marriage. Do not accept any help from the "in laws". Always meet in the church. When people have pressure put on them by family and friends take the pressure off, and encourage them not to marry until they can stand alone and make decisions to honour God in strength before the Lord alone. Some cultures have massive in-law control of this, and you must work within your culture here, but the biblical concept of marriage is one man and one women, not a family!

If you, as a Christian get the wrong partner, you as a Christian, are not allowed to divorce unless the other person commits adultery against you. Divorce would disqualify you from further service in the Lord's work in a number of areas.

The Scriptures are very strong on marriage, divorce and the like. Anyone who is going to serve the Lord in the church cannot afford to make a mistake with their life partner. Divorce is failure, even if it is the other person who commits adultery, and any other view of divorce is biblically erroneous. It is a serious thing, and many today are taking it casually.

Do not encourage people to live together, as that is sin in God's sight, as sexual relationship before marriage is either an adulterous situation, or it is marriage anyway in God's sight. Be sure it is going to be a God honouring event so that people can look back on the wedding and be able to say that it is the right thing.

You as a minister must be prepared to have a pregnant young woman sit in the congregation with the man who got her pregnant sitting beside her in church, so that they can confront their sin, take responsibility for their child, and take God's Word in, and possibly even go their separate ways, until they are ready to face the correct marriage for them both.

## **FUNERALS**

Unlike weddings, this is a great time for evangelism. The truth must be told in love however. This is a time when many people will hear the gospel who will not at any other time face the reality of death.

As soon as you hear that a death of a person in the church has occurred, go to the house immediately to pray with the people, to comfort them. Do not offer to take the service there and then, unless you are asked to do so. Offer to help. Leave them a verse of Scripture to help them at this time.

There may be a room full of people so unless you are invited to do so, do not stay. Leave your card with them and show yourself out. If they want to talk more go back the next day. You can speak about the Christian hope and always end with prayer. Go back and have prayer with them each day until they are ready to decide what they want to do with funeral arrangements, then see whether you can assist them in this, or do they need to arrange a pagan "celebrant". You cannot mix the truth with paganism – do not stand by while evil is preached.

Be clear on your thinking here – if they will not allow you to tell the truth about the dead and the final fate of all mankind standing before their maker, then you may not be able to take the service. You cannot lie about the fate of the dead, for in so doing you lie to the living, and they may think they do not need the gospel.

You should have your service prepared by your second visit if they want you to take it and you go through it with them. If it is evangelistic you have to make it clear what the thrust of the service will be. The family must be behind you in the service. If the family are not prepared for you to tell the truth, then I repeat my point, let them get someone else to take the service. You cannot, in all situations, look people in the eye and say, your husband is in hell. It may be necessary to say, "we cannot discuss where he is at the moment because we do not know what his thoughts were in his last moments". But then ask them directly, "What would he say about his life now?" Luke 16:19-31.

If you give personal offence it loses you an opportunity to evangelize, but if you fail to tell the truth you also rob people of the gospel and the hope of eternal life. There is an offence in the gospel. If you do not accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour there is no hope. You must talk to the family before the service so that they can pray with you and there are no surprises at the funeral. They need to know the secret of eternal life and so do all who come to the service. It is never honoring to God to lie about "hope" if there was none for the person.

The follow up is as important as the service. You must visit them two weeks after the service and four to six weeks after the service. If they are members of the church encourage them in study groups, prayer meetings, in women's/men's groups. You need to really look after them and surround them with fellowship. If they are outside the church you should go back one or two times in case the door is open to the gospel message. Quite often you will find that people get close to a decision at the point of the death but after a while they get back into their pagan rut. Hunt for souls here – leave them without excuse before the throne of God.

You should be at the wake after the burial because often people will bring up things from the message at that time which they will not bring up again. Give them an opening question and see if there is a possibility of following them up.

## **OTHER SERVICES**

There are also services of dedication and ordination, which may give good opportunities for evangelism to visitors who will come to such services. You can dedicate churches, projects, people, places, or a business. Plan prayerfully and speak Biblically. However do not go off in a "pagan priest" mode. You must not be the "lucky rabbit's foot" peddler, offering a prayer of blessing in return for a donation to the church steeple building fund!

If you can have business cards so that you have a professional means of maintaining contact with people you meet. Take every opportunity of magnifying Christ and lifting up his gospel. Honour him by following Biblical patterns. If you have any question about an action you ask the question as to whether the Lord Jesus Christ will be magnified in it or will he be brought into derision. Refer to the Pastoral Theology Notes in the Diploma File on the USB/CD or website for much more on these topics. Also look at the Post-Graduate books in the Diploma File.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **CHARITY**

1. God has always been concerned for the needy poor, the weak and the oppressed. Exodus 22:21-27, Deuteronomy 15:11, 24:14, 15.
2. Orphans and widows were especially concerns of the Lord from the beginning. Deuteronomy 10:18, Ezekiel 22:7.

3. The Lord addressed the poor, and met their physical and spiritual needs. Matthew 11:28-30, Luke 4:18, 6:20.
4. The Lord recognized that there will always be people who are poor in a fallen World. Matthew 26:11, Mark 14:7.
5. Many in the early church sold their worldly wealth to provide for the needs Of Other Christians. Acts 4:32-37
6. The churches cared for the poor by regular giving, through the deacons. Romans 15:26, Galatians 2:10, James 2:2-7
7. If people could work they were expected to; such were not needy poor! 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12.
8. The requirements for a widow to receive charity is given in 1 Timothy 5
  - a) She should not receive charity if she has children or grandchildren. Relatives are to look after their own families v 4
  - b) If she is spending time in the Lord's work and praying she is eligible. - v 5
  - c) However, she is not given charity if she is living for pleasure and not willing to take responsibility. v 8
  - d) She should be over 60 years of age, having lived in the faith a blameless life and the wife of one man. - v 9

**MARRIAGE**

1. Man and angels have personality but only men and animals have "nephesh" and experience physical death. Angels do not die because they are spirits.
2. Marriage requires both personality and life, therefore it is only applicable to man. There is no marriage in the angelic realm. (Matthew 22:30)
3. Definition:- the personal relationship between a male and female member of the human race which typifies the saving relationship between Christ and believers.
4. God's instruction - "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish and the fowl and every living thing". This shows that man should subdue and have dominion over the animal kingdom.
5. If God was a solitary personality there would be no divine example of relationships, however with the three personalities in the Godhead relationships are demonstrated. He is a personal God and we can therefore have a relationship with him.
6. Marriage typifies the relationship between Christ and the church.
  - a) in the form of grace and faith (Ephesians 5:22), the word submit meaning to fall into line to the law of God which the carnal mind cannot do. (Romans 8:7; 10:3)
  - b) you submit yourself by an act of freewill.
  - c) a family can strain marriage relationships if they are not submissive. (Romans 13:1,5)
7. Grace is typified by the male and faith by the female. If this pattern is not adhered to it results in misery and suffering.
8. Grace and the man.
  - a) the man is in the role of an initiator.
  - b) the man provides information to which the woman can respond but must not coerce her free will.
  - c) the man has to show his character to the woman.
  - d) the man has to be patient, a form of grace.
9. Faith and the woman.
  - a) the woman is in the role of a responder.
  - b) the woman makes the choice of her free will.
  - c) she is the one who uses faith.
  - d) the woman needs time to grow.
10. Glory revealed.
  - a) The glory of God is shown in the man in the form of a changed life through regeneration.
  - b) The glory of the man is shown in the woman by changes in the woman.
11. Compatibility.



- a) The important area of compatibility is that in the spiritual realm as one can be psychologically compatible with many people. 1 Corinthians 6:15-20 means "pulling the same weight equally. It means that a couple are equal in their work, their focus forward and their determination to advance in the Lord's task before them in this life.
- b) Spiritual compatibility is indicated by the phrase "one flesh" and is a picture of the union of Christ and the church.

12. Satan will attempt to blur the differences between man and woman and cause role reversals. The degree to which this occurs reflects the level of decadence in a society.

13. Legitimate reasons for the termination of marriage :-

- a) the death of one of the partners.
- b) the desertion of a believer by an unbelieving spouse where one of the two partners has become a Christian after marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:10-16)
- c) inappropriate marriage partners such as close relations as specified in (Leviticus 18).
- d) adultery or fornication as this causes the destruction of the one flesh principle by forming another one flesh. (Matthew 5:32; 19:9)

**FAMILY**

1. God instituted families and marriage from the start of mankind on earth (Genesis 2:24).
2. Marriage was to be monogamous (Genesis 2:24). They are classified as 'one flesh'. They must leave mother and father and set up their own house. (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31; Matthew 19:4-5).
3. Adultery or breakdown of marriage was so serious a matter that it was included in the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:14).
4. The husband is the head of the family (Genesis 3:16).
- a) He should be willing to die for her (Ephesians 5:22-23).
- b) He provides for his family (Genesis 3:19; 1 Timothy 5:8).
- c) He should rear the children in the fear of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6,7).
- d) He should not provoke his children (Colossians 3:21).
5. Wives are subject to their husbands (Genesis 3:16; Ephesians 5:22,23. 1 Peter 3:1-6).
- a) She has the place of honour in the home. (1 Peter 3:7).
- b) She has a deep desire for her husband (Genesis 3:16).
6. Children should be obedient to both parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; Proverbs 22:15; 23:13).
- a) They must honour (Ephesians 6:2; 1 Timothy 5:4; John 19:26).
- b) If they honour their father and mother they will have long lives (Exodus 20:12).
7. Three ways in which normal family life parallels the relationship that God the Father has with "The Christ"
- a) It is grounded from one head - (1 Corinthians 15:45-50).
- i) In the garden of Eden Adam was created first and Eve was taken from Adam's side. Eve had to be taken from Adam. The second Adam was Jesus Christ and out of Him will come a new spiritual race.
- ii) I am my father's child because I have received from him his image. Similarly when we are born again we receive the image of God.
- b) The family is subject to discipline - (Hebrews 12:3-15)
- i) It is important to train your children to live righteously.
- ii) God's discipline trains us to walk in His will, in the place of blessing.
- iii) The child must learn wisdom from the parents.(Exodus 12:24-28, Deuteronomy 6:6-25, Joshua 4:5-8) God is wisdom.
- c) The parents are responsible for their family's conduct, morally and legally. Our witness reflects on God.
8. In a survey in the U.S.A. eight reasons were given as to why the family unit was being weakened in that country.
- a) The rise of promiscuity.
- b) Transfer of the protection of the family from the head of the family to the State.
- c) Transfer of the education of the child from the parents.
- d) Movement of family recreation from the family to outside including television..
- e) Transfer of the place of production from the home to the factory.
- f) The use of aged accommodation for senior members of the family rather than them staying in the home.
- g) The loss of traditional homemaking skills and the rise of the supermarket society.
- h) Transfer of religious instruction from the home to outside.

**WIDOWS**

1. In the ancient world the widow was very vulnerable. If a woman did not have a husband or family to care for her, she would starve to death on the streets.
2. God is very concerned for widows and children (Psalms 68:5, 6, 146:9, Exodus 22:22).
3. God punishes those who abuse the widow and children (Psalms 94:6-12, Malachi 3:5).
4. In Israel, if a man died without producing a son to carry on his family name, his brother was to marry the widow (Deuteronomy 25:5-10, Genesis 38:6-11, Matthew 22:23-33).
5. The Pharisees abuse of the widows led to a major attack upon them by the Lord (Matthew 23:14, Mark 12:40).
6. Care for widows became a hallmark of the church, since many early Christians were martyred, leaving their families as widows and orphans.
7. The office of Deacon was created to look after the widows and their children (Acts 6:1-6).
8. To qualify for the support of the church a widow would have to fulfill certain requirements - 1Timothy 5:3-16
  - a) had to be over sixty years of age
  - b) married only to one husband, and faithful to him as long as he lived (if a woman had two husbands it was likely she would have others to support her)
  - c) she had to have supported good works in the church, and had to commit herself to praying daily for the church and its ministries.
9. Paul advised the older widows to remain unmarried, so that they could devote themselves fully to the God's service (1Corinthians 7:8-9,32).

**DEATH**

1. In essence, death means "separation".
2. Types of death:
  - a) Physical death - is the separation of the soul from the body (Genesis 35:18).
  - b) Spiritual death - is separation from God, having no relationship with God (Ephesians 2:1,12, Genesis 2:17,3:8)
  - c) The second death - this is the Great White Throne judgment followed by the lake of fire for unbelievers - separation from the presence of God, punished forever (revelation 20:12-15, 21:8)
  - d) Positional death - Christians are identified with Jesus Christ in His death (separation from sin) and in His resurrection (living in righteousness) Romans 6:3-14 Colossians 2:12-14
  - e) Sexual death - inability to procreate (Romans 4:17-21, Hebrews 11:11-12)
  - f) Operational death - faith without works is non operational (James 2:26)
  - g) Temporal death - a carnal believer, out of fellowship with God (Romans 8:6-8,13, Ephesians 5:14, 1 Timothy 5:6, James 1:15, Revelation 3:1)
3. Reasons for death:
  - a) The work is finished. (John 19:30 cf Luke 23:46, 2 Timothy 4:7)
  - b) For the glory of God - martyrdom (John 21:19, Acts 7:55-60)
  - c) The sin unto death - extreme discipline for believers with hardened hearts against God (1 John 5:16)
  - d) Suicide - superimposing your will over God's will for your life (1 Samuel 31:4, Matthew 27:5)
  - e) The unique death of Christ - committing His own spirit to the Father (Luke 23:46)
  - f) The death of a believer is precious in the sight of the Lord, Psalms 68:20, 116:15, Jeremiah 15:1, 24:4-7.

**LESSON 61 – CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
61	Church Government	Titus 1:1-9	Church Government Church Discipline

**INTRODUCTION**

Why is it, that if there is a divinely set pattern in the New Testament, that all churches are not the same in church government? If you are in an independent church, or you founded a new church, what is the format that you use, and

what should your inter relationship be with other churches? These are the questions we need to confront with biblical examples and precedent from apostolic days. Jude 3.

In **Titus 1:1-9** Paul refers to a number of points of doctrine; election, godliness, eternal life, the Character of God and the Revelation of Jesus Christ. These doctrines have been taught by Paul to the local churches that Titus is now ordered to organize and structure for future growth and stability. These doctrines become fruitful through the ministry of the local church which is to be organised and directed by godly Holy Spirit filled and led men. These doctrines come to full fruition in the lives of godly Christians in the local church, and so the local church is to be organized on a pattern that best enables each and every member to fulfill their destiny.

The purpose of apostolic church government is to produce a safe and stable environment for the filling of the Holy Spirit to operate, so that all gifts can function, and Jesus Christ is glorified in the ministries of all the believers. The platform for evangelism and for the care of souls is found by following the apostolic instructions – if you don't find the pattern in the New Testament it is probably not the best to use.

## ORGANISATION

There is to be Christ honouring organization, not a business model. We are not left to our own devices as to how the local church should be organized; Paul will set out the Holy Spirit inspired offices that are to be utilized. In Titus it is clear that the church centres around, and it is to be protected by the elders, who are responsible to the Lord for the spiritual oversight, training, and protection of the believers. Titus is to ordain elders in every city as the church's leadership. Here we have the plurality of elders in each congregation, as spiritual leaders/protectors of the local church.

## LEADERSHIP

The word elder and bishop are used interchangeably at this early time, referring to the same people. The elder is the bishop; each word referring to a different aspect of their role before the Lord. We have different words for the function and title for the people who are going to lead the church. Titus was told to choose the right "men" in every city. Get the right people in the eldership and you will not have problems, or at least minimize them in the church. You can have a variety of structures and organizations if you have the right people (male or female) in the right places.

Questions to think about today. Does the New Testament lay down principles to be followed which can be modified for your own local situation or do you have absolute standards laid down which must be followed everywhere? Is it guideline or absolute policy? The early church took a lot of its structure from the Jewish synagogue structure of the day. In it there would be an elder that ruled; but as the first amongst equals. He did not rule as a tyrant but by consent of the other elders and in association with them. With them were the second group, the men and women set aside to do the social work; the deacons and deaconesses. This was a Holy Spirit led development and I believe it is "normative" for us today, but good commentators differ here, and I challenge each of you to think this through and pray carefully if you deviate from the apostolic pattern. The role of men or women here needs to be prayed/thought through.

The third group, were the people who encouraged and supported the elders and deacons, and incorporated the prayer warriors, and all support people. This was not properly called "the laity" at this point, for they were not passive recipients of ministry, but were all active in ministries themselves, but they accepted the spiritual leadership of the eldership, and over time, as a result of the great persecutions, acknowledged the headship of the senior elder, who eventually gained the title of bishop over the city congregations in each city or district.

## THE SYNAGOGUE AND THE CHURCH

The title and role of "elders" came from the Jewish synagogue organization (though Gentile communities also had them). That the idea of deacons was taken over from the synagogue is much less clear, although it is most likely, as we see in Acts 6. Baptism was practiced as one of the requirements for proselytes to Judaism and also in the Greek and Roman mystery religions. The Lord's Supper was new to the church, though it too grew out of the Passover feast. Instruction in the Jewish synagogue and instruction in the Christian church were similar. There was then, both continuity and discontinuity in the New Church from its Jewish roots in the local synagogue. I believe the Holy Spirit led the apostles to select and continue the things that were to be continued, although I am happy with Holy Spirit led women at all levels. Women couldn't lead in the first century, but as our spiritual equals, can now in many places, but be prayerful on all leadership appointments – its not male or female differences that matter, but the Holy Spirit filled/led life that matters.

Excommunication was practiced by both synagogue and church. Unquestionably many practices which the church used had their antecedents in Ezra's form of synagogue based Judaism. This is to be expected. But the question still remains: when the church took over these practices, did they become divinely sanctioned to be followed today, or are they simply divinely directed for the immediate time, and not necessarily to be followed today in every detail? The historical argument really does not settle the matter, and each congregation needs to think this whole thing through, and before the Lord be ready to give reasons for what you practice.

Any group that does not practice discipleship, or helping young believers to grow is out of line, for growth and service in Christ is the purpose for the structure of the local church. Church government/structure is to provide a safe place to grow, worship, and serve the Lord, whose blood and resurrection is the ground of the church. People are converted and

are expected to sit in, and partake in the services, pick up what they can, serve as they are led by the Holy Spirit, and because of good government, feel safe as they learn more about, and worship and serve their Lord.

The Jewish synagogue did many different things to the early church. Now I want to challenge you from Church History now. Do we follow the pattern of the earliest believers around 50AD, or those of the church at 100AD, or 320AD? If we are true to the Bible we should follow the faith and doctrines, "once given to the apostles", but that covers the period 32-97AD and by the end of the period there are ruling "bishops" over each city, with elders in charge of local house churches. Don't jump to the conclusion that the government of the early church was "fixed" by 45 AD, for it was flexible and it changed again as persecution bit hard later in the century. It has changed in missionary situations also.

If we have doubts about faith or practise, at EBCWA we believe that we should go back and find out what the Lord said to the apostles, and then be asking, what did the Holy Spirit show the apostles later, and what did the earliest church practice? The closer we are to the apostolic pattern, we believe, the closer we are to what the Lord provided for us. Now this is my opinion and so be ready to study this and come to your own conclusions, and I will not break fellowship with you if you differ with me! There are two distinct "apostolic patterns" – the early multiple eldership model, and then the later first century bishop, and elder model, which developed to deal with persecution.

Some say that they had just taken over patterns from Jewish experience and so they are not binding on us today. The danger is that you cast off the robe of historical continuity. When do you stop doing it the New Testament way? You are in great danger of doing something wrong if you cast yourself off from the practice of the earliest church. If you stick to the pattern of the earliest church, we believe you are on the best and safest ground.

The New Testament gives clear guidance in many areas of church government. It is one thing to differ on interpretation but another entirely to say that the Biblical account is not important today. It is therefore very important to follow as many of the patterns of church administration and function as outlined in the Bible as possible. Otherwise there are no satisfactory answers to why the patterns are there in the Bible. We have a pattern of church government in the Scriptures, and if we believe that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God then we ought to be following it. We have a pattern of church government revealed in the New Testament. We at EBCWA believe, we should follow it.

The New Testament does not contain a formal definition of a local church but it does formulate a definition of a local assembly. From the evidence of the New Testament, especially the Acts of the Apostles, it is an assembly of professing believers in Christ who have been baptised and are organised in the apostolic pattern, to carry out God's will individually and corporately in their local community.

[a] Those who do not make a profession of faith are excluded.

[b] Without discussing the mode of baptism at this point, the New Testament church did not recognise unbaptized believers as members of the assembly.

[c] The church has always had some form of organisation. Administration was introduced as soon as possible - Acts 14:23. An unorganised church is not a church at all; it is a group of sheep clustered in a paddock without a shepherd.

[d] A church exists to do God's will; to undertake the ordinances, the Lord's Supper, evangelism, building up believers in the faith, worship, giving and ministering to all age groups. A specialized ministry to a specific age group cannot be a church even though it may have features similar to a church. If they do not practice the above they are not a church.

### **TYPES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENTS**

There are certain groups that have minimal church government; these are the church's anarchist wing. Most of the time sadly this form of government was due to pride. You will tend to find that they will not go anywhere or do anything. The Brethren in some areas tend to operate in that area as well as the Quakers. Where the Brethren have had impact, they have been locally led by godly, Spirit filled elders. The history of the Quakers on the other hand is the history, after the first years, of powerlessness, lack of evangelism and emotional self-centeredness in worship.

We must examine each structure and ask the hard questions regarding the presence of the fruit of the Spirit; for if it does not exist in that place, then there is something wrong with the structure or the people in it.

The main groups following the Hierarchical form of government, would be the Catholic, Anglican, and some Protestant churches. The Congregational form is the third kind; such as in many Independent Churches. The fourth form of government is the Federal form, which is the form of many Protestant denominations.

**The Hierarchical system** has a series of bishops and priests, deacons and archdeacons. It has a hierarchical structure. Often the national government tends to have a close relationship to such churches such as the Anglican Church in England and the Lutheran in Northern Europe. These churches have certain structures in recognized ranks. Most of a person's success in rising up the structure requires active involvement in church politics, holding the party line and being a good churchman, not necessarily a strong and evangelical believer with Holy Spirit power.

Both the Catholic and Anglican churches trace their bishops back to apostolic succession. Peter or Paul appointed a person a Bishop and he is the only person who has the authority to appoint the next man and so on to today.

These are the only ones they say that are entitled to be Bishops. The ministers also tend to call themselves priests and are the only ones authorized to celebrate communion. In such a church you have hands laid on you by someone who has had hands laid on him and so on right the way back, they argue, to the apostles. Is this Biblical? In the earliest church, all leadership was apostolic appointed, in the sense that it had some delegated authority derived from an apostle, but today such a connection is tenuous, but this does not stop people being very worried about it. In this type of church government you have a priesthood separated from a laity, which we believe strikes at the heart of the concept of the universal priesthood of the believer. **1 Peter 2:9-10.**

**The Congregational system** is one where the congregation is the source of the power of the church. If there is a decision to be made, the believer priests gather together to discuss the matter and make a decision. The eldership will not rule the people autocratically. The congregation will demand to be consulted and collectively make the decisions under the guidance of the eldership, but under the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit, the inner guide for each believer priest.

The elder has the pressure on to lead, to instruct and to bring the congregation with them. This type of government does not necessarily mean that each church is independent, and does not have relationship with other like minded churches, although often each church will be fiercely independent. Some say that this type of government destroys the unity in the body of Christ. It does not, where the people follow the Holy Spirit's leading, for He will always bring about unity and cooperation between churches that love the Lord.

It says that there is authority inside the church and no authority outside it. The Lord is considered to be head of the Church and He has his under shepherds in the church. You may join with other churches in a fellowship but the church itself is responsible for policy and answerable unto the Lord alone. Most churches holding to the apostolic practises would follow this form of church government, yet it is clearly NOT apostolic, for the apostles appointed elders to rule under their own authority given them by the Lord. Those holding the congregational form of government believe that right died with the apostles, and the "rule" of the Holy Spirit, following the apostolic instructions, now takes precedence over apostolic succession, as taught by the hierarchical model.

**The Federal system** is a modification of the congregational system. This is associated with denominations. It is represented by the Presbyterian, Methodist, and some of the Baptist churches. The Federal church gives over many of the governing functions to a representative group on a large committee or leadership of a denominational group. The local church then accepts the policy of the denomination. We have for instance the Baptist Union. In some federal systems a minister may be sent to a church but in most the individual church has the right of refusal, or even the right to call. You have however to toe the party line in many doctrinal areas, and the denomination may own the property and expel the church members that built the building from it if there is a dispute.

If a congregation decides to leave a federal structure it can be a very expensive because quite often the local church is in a denominational property trust. If you want to secede from the denomination you can take the congregation but you normally cannot take the building even though that congregation has put all their money into the church, and is supporting the denominational offices as well.

Remember, without Bible knowledge and spiritual maturity, the gifts will not be exercised, irrespective of the governmental structure. Be wary of federal systems, as a few extremists can get control of the national assembly and vote in politically correct, but biblically wrongful policies. This has happened with churches in New Zealand, with the right to Lesbian and Homosexual marriage being demanded by several denominations, with ministers required to carry out wrongful marriages or be dismissed. If an individual church disagrees they have had their property sold out from under them.

**BIBLICAL FORMATS**

The hierarchical church came into being in the late first and early second century, as the church faced persecution and bishops led the city wide churches to survive the attacks of the Roman Empire. In the early church, although they co-operated with each other, they were not organizationally linked together, until this first great time of empire wide persecution. A federal system is not in the Bible as a pattern either, but develops by the fourth century, with the government of Rome falling to the bishop of Rome by the fifth century as the Western Empire collapses.

The apostolic position is each congregation operating independently, with the congregation having a say, although responding to apostolic direction, and responding to leadership gifts the Lord has given to the church through godly elders. All believers looking for mentorship and leadership to a leading elder who will be seen as the local pastor (shepherd of the sheep). It is the spirit filled status of all the people in the church that matters not the organisation. This is why all the systems actually work if there are godly women and men at the top as the Pastors, Elders, or Bishops.

**CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

The words that describe the leaders in the church - pastor teacher in the Greek is, "poimenos kai didaskalos" (shepherd and teacher). If the spirit is leading a church there will be at least one person with this gift in the assembly. They care for, as a shepherd, and teach or feed the sheep. They may be called the senior pastor, the minister, the priest, the Elder....

Another Greek word is the one translated "elder" – presbuteros. This describes the position of the leader of the church. It is plural and therefore there is more than one in each church. These were the older men, or the ones with clear leadership gifting who others would follow. This is a position of dignity and respect.

The pastor is the leader of the elders. The early church accepted all spirit gifted people to roles, but by the second century the church taught that a person should not become a pastor unless he was at least thirty years of age. There were exceptions, but they were rare. The churches wanted a mature man to lead, as under persecution they wanted one who had been tried and tested and they knew was ready to die for the group, not betray them.

The word for bishop is "episkopos". The bishop was the senior elder in the early church. In Titus 1:7 the bishop is the same as the elder. This is the person who God holds responsible for the church. Note that such a person as the elder, who has rulership, must have previously had their families under control, be respected as a leader and mentor in the community, and be doctrinally sound. If they have not demonstrated their ability to lead in their own homes, nor have respect in the local community, they cannot lead in the church!

Some of your elders will not be pastors and teachers, but all need to fulfill the criteria of respect, and proven track record in authority. They must be responsible, have impeccable characters and be both willing, and proven ability to administer the things of society-business, and God.

Deacons are often called ministers, for they minister. They are practical servants of the church. They may have the gift of evangelist, teacher, administrator, or counsellor. The deaconate was seen by the early church as the training area for the elders of tomorrow. The congregation chooses the deacons, the elders then formally appointed or anointed them for service. Remember - It is important to keep gifts and offices separate.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

1. There is no evidence in the scriptures for denominations.
2. Where denominations have formed there has been a tendency for apostasy and degeneration.
3. God the Holy Spirit has given at least one spiritual gift to all believers in the church.
4. The correct use of these gifts will cause the efficient function of the body of Christ (church). People should not be fill roles if they do not have the appropriate gift, or if they fail to meet the qualifications listed in Scripture.
5. Each local church should be independent, with its own leadership (pastor/elders), administration (deacons) and all other members functioning in their spiritual gifts.

### **PASTORS/ELDERS**

1. Acts 20:17,28 shows that the elder/pastor/bishop/overseer are the same. Each word simply emphasizes a different role.
2. Greek words used of the pastoral role and responsibility.
  - a) Presbuteros (elder) - the authority in the church (cf the elders were the wise judges who sat at the gates of ancient cities). Acts 20:17
  - b) Poimenos didaskalos (pastor-teacher) - the shepherd, to feed the flock and protect them. Jeremiah 3:15
  - c) Episkopos (bishop/overseer) - the leader/overseer of the church. Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7
  - d) Diakonos (servant/minister) - the servant in humility.
3. It is therefore concluded that an elder is a pastor holding the office of bishop, overseer or shepherd in the Church. They deal with spiritual matters within the church, shepherding, feeding and protecting the flock.
4. An elder should have the spiritual gift of Pastor/Teacher or Evangelist.
5. Function
  - a) To rule. (1 Timothy 3:4,5; 1 Timothy 5:17) - the pastor/elders in a church are the authority in the church, under God.
  - b) To guard the body of revealed truth from error and perversion. (Titus 1:9).
  - c) To oversee the Church as a shepherd of his flock. (Acts 20:28; John 21:16; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
  - d) Elders are given to the church by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28).

- e) Great stress is laid upon their due appointment. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)  
f) At first they were ordained by an apostle. (Acts 14:23)  
g) Later Church guidance was required in such appointments. (Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 3:1-7)
6. Qualifications (1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1)  
a) blameless - you will be blamed for many things - make sure they are not true. You must deal with sin in your life.  
b) be the husband of one wife or a one-woman man (i.e. faithful, not lusting after other women) - v 11 He may have been legitimately divorced according to scripture.  
c) be vigilant - clear headed or cool  
d) be sober - has self control  
e) be of good behaviour - orderly and well co-ordinated, respectable  
f) be hospitable - always ready to invite people into your home  
g) be keen to teach - keen to share the Word of God with them.  
h) not given to wine - he should not be addicted to alcohol.  
i) not be a striker - he must not be a hot head  
j) must not be greedy of filthy lucre - he must not be greedy for money.  
k) must not be a contentious arguer  
l) must not be covetous -  
m) if married, his wife and children must be dignified and under control.  
n) not a new convert. Train candidates for ministry as deacons, in Sunday Schools and youth groups before appointing them.  
o) he must have a good witness to the unbelieving world.
7. The appointment of pastors is described in (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11).
8. The gift of pastor-teacher is given to men only - it is not the role of the woman to teach or exercise authority over men in the church 1 Timothy 2:12, 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.
9. Pastoral authority is not a cause for boasting, it is based on service with all humility John 13:5 -17 2 Corinthians 10:8, Galatians 6:3-5. The pastor's authority is to teach the Word of God so that all will see the truth clearly.
10. Age is not a barrier to any position. 1 Timothy 4:9-12.
11. If the pastor does not fulfill his responsibilities  
a) He is to be warned, then rebuked by the elders if he continues. Titus 2:15, 2 Corinthians 13:10, 2 Timothy 4:2.  
b) The Lord will discipline him. 1 Timothy 6:3-5, James 5:19-20.
12. The reward of the pastor. (Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 5:4).
13. Key verses for the pastoral role 1 Peter 5:4, Ephesians 3:7-13, 1 Timothy 2:24-26, 3:1-9, Colossians 1:23-29, Titus 1:6-9, 1 Thessalonians 2:19, 20, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 6:10.

## **DEACONS**

1. The Greek word (DIAKONOS or DIAKONEO) means "servant". The function of the deacons is to serve in the church so that the elders to deal with spiritual matters Acts 6:1-7
2. Deacons are the administrators of the Church, including such functions as secretary, treasurer.
3. A deacon should have the gift of administration, helps or service.
4. Qualifications (1 Timothy 3)  
a) be honest regarding money,  
b) be morally pure as they are dealing with people who have lost their husbands,  
c) be spiritual and walking with the Lord  
d) be wise - full of doctrine  
e) be endorsed by the eldership (the apostles laid their hands on them to give them authority)  
f) be grave - they must be serious, mature and dignified  
g) not be double tongued or two faced - what they say must be what they mean  
h) not be given to wine, not a drinker who sits over his drinks. He does not need to be a tee totaller.  
i) not be greedy for money because the deacon is the person who deals with money.  
j) hold doctrine in purity, thus being a conservative as far as doctrine is concerned.  
k) have a pure conscience or a tender conscience, a person who feels sin deeply.  
l) be proved. He should be proved in other areas before he becomes a deacon.- v 10  
m) be a faithful worker in the church if he is to be considered as a deacon.  
n) be the husband of one wife or a one-woman man (i.e. faithful, not lusting after other women) - v 11 He may have been legitimately divorced according to scripture.  
o) if married, have a wife who was dignified, not a gossip, since the deacon may share sensitive matters with his wife.

**CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

1. Those who will not heed the Word of God within the church are to be first warned and then rebuked (privately if the error is private, or publicly if their error is public). 2 Thessalonians 3:14, Titus 1:13, 14.
2. If they still will not listen to the truth then the individuals are to be isolated from the fellowship and others are to separate themselves from them. 1 Timothy 6:3-5.
3. If they still refuse to change they are to be expelled from the fellowship. Titus 3:10 Galatians 1:6 -10.
4. Paul warns about false doctrine 1 Timothy 1: 4, 11. Then he expels the two false teachers, Hymeneus, and Alexander, that they might learn the truth and stop blaspheming. 1 Timothy 1:18-20.
5. Any expulsion is only temporary, it applies only so long as the person is unrepentant. When they repent they are to be received back again as was the prodigal son, Luke 15:11-32, and the man in adultery. 1 Corinthians 5:1-13. 2 Corinthians 2:5-11.

NOTE - Pastoral Theology covers these subjects in practical detail and challenges you to think further.

**LESSON 62 – THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
62	The Ordinances of the Church	Luke 22:15-20 1Corinthians 11:23-24	Communion Baptism Baptismal Regeneration

**ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

There are two ordinances of the Early Church; the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Some churches put so much emphasis on the ordinances that they call them sacraments. Refer to book 114 – Minister's Handbook for "how to" run services.

**The Roman Catholic View**

For the Roman Catholics the priest is the mediator of power for salvation. They believe that you cannot be saved through faith without the sacrament of the Mass, without taking the wafer, without taking the wine, and following the other "sacraments". Marriage is one of the sacraments according to this viewpoint, as are infant baptism and the last rites. They are all seen as something which looks after, or acts as, the channel of grace/salvation. They are very focused and concerned as to whether the minister is entitled to fulfill the sacramental service, for if he is not in the apostolic succession and properly appointed, you can have no sacrament, and you are not saved and secure.

**Other Sacramental Views**

Other churches practice the sacramental view, but in a modified form. Some Baptist churches do a similar thing with Baptism, that you are not truly regenerated unless you have been water baptized by them. Some Baptist churches will say that unless you have been baptised you cannot have communion, with some going to the extent that if you have not been baptised by them, it does not count. Some teach that your salvation is in jeopardy if you have not been properly baptized.

**Ordinances (Baptism and Communion)**

The ordinances are either memorial practices or they are sacramental. By the way you answer this question determines your theology and your church preference. Do they change the nature of the people partaking in them, or are they remembrances, which reflect/express/proclaim the changed reality of life for the people involved?

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are generally referred to as ordinances today, though some groups prefer to call them sacraments. The word "sacrament" means to make sacred, to dedicate to a god or to sacred use. The Latin word was used in the Vulgate to translate the Greek word "mysterion" which gave it the idea of something mysterious or magical.



Thus groups that prefer to call these rites of the church sacraments usually connect with them some mysterious power or actual conveying of grace. The Council of Trent defined a sacrament as, "something presented to the sense, which has the power, by divine institution, not only of signifying, but also of efficiently conveying grace".

By contrast, "ordinance" (though a synonym of sacrament in the dictionary) does not incorporate the idea of conveying grace but only the idea of a symbol, expressing grace. Thus the ordinance itself has no inherent power to change those observing it, though God may use it to minister to them. The Holy Spirit changes believers, not things they "do".

**Luke 22:15-20** shows clearly that the Lord's Supper is from the Scriptures themselves. The Lord makes it clear in this passage that this is going to be a remembrance feast, because He is going to be absent from them. He says that until He comes in His Kingdom He is not going to celebrate this meal again, but they are to do this in memory of Him.

We cannot have a memorial feast standing for Him in the sense that it becomes Him. At the first Lord's Table there is no change in the bread and wine into his body and blood, for he was right there reclining with them all. There is no transubstantiation or consubstantiation, but he does establish a ritual he clearly wanted followed until he returns. We are simply told to do it in remembrance of Him "until He comes".

In **1 Corinthians 11:23-34** Paul says that we do this in a holy way and thereby we show the Lord's death until He comes. Paul is emphasising the remembrance factor. He is emphasising the symbolic feature of the feast, and that it represents the completed work of the cross. Whilst it is a serious thing it is also a joyous feast. By partaking of the Lord's Table we are remembering that He is coming again. We remember His death until He comes. There is however a warning at the end in the fact that it is a serious feast, there is something very important about the bread and the wine.

If you do not discern the spiritual meaning of the bread and wine you are likely to receive judgment. To fail to celebrate this feast as the Lord intended it is to insult his person and work, and not discern his plan and return. The Lord can use various methods to judge including sickness and death. It is spiritual sickness as well as perhaps physical sickness. Refer to the EBCWA study of Corinthians. The reason people were sick was that they were too casual at the communion table. If you participate in communion in a light hearted vein it is very serious offence against the person and work of Jesus. You need to approach it with reverence and respect. You are in danger of divine discipline from Him. Paul warns us not to be guilty of the blood and body of Christ. You can see why many believe in "the real presence".

#### **TRANSUBSTANTIATION, CONSUBSTANTIATION AND MEMORIAL**

There are three different concepts referred to here:- transubstantiation, consubstantiation and memorial. Does the communion actually involve the elements becoming the Lord's body and blood, becoming like them, or just standing as a memorial of them? When you take all the references of the Scripture together we believe it is clear that the Lord's Table stands as a memorial feast. In 1 Corinthians however Paul tells us just how important this memorial feast is.

There appears to be an apparent difference or contradiction between the Synoptic Gospels and John. John apparently says that the Passover was the day the Lord died, whilst the Synoptic Gospels indicate that Passover was on the day that the meal was held. With the Synoptic Gospels, because they did not celebrate the Passover that year, they took that last meal as standing for their Passover. The Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world was killed at the same time as the first lamb was slaughtered to commemorate the, at that moment, replaced Passover. Refer to the EBCWA study of John, and to the Harmony of the Gospels for a full study of this.

#### **THE LORD'S TABLE IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

From the early church fathers such as Justin Martyr, and from the Roman governors, like Pliny, who persecuted the church, we have information as to how the early church operated, and what the soon to be martyred believers believed. The communion service was a very extended one and tended to be in the evening.

Before they had the Lord's Table they met for the agape meal; what we would call a "pot luck" supper, where each family brings along food to share with the group. In Corinth it was a disgrace when Paul wrote. Many of the rich people were bringing good food but were not sharing. Some were going hungry whilst others were drunk with the wine they had brought along to have with their food. Some were so full that they were burping through the service.

While they were supposed to be sharing with others many were gluttonous and drank a lot of wine, which was a disgusting spectacle. Paul corrects them strongly in his letters to the Corinthians. They were being judged for being disgraceful as they approached the Communion Table – and some have suffered the Sin Unto Death. After Communion the church would have a teaching session and end with Psalms and songs.

On the Sunday morning (before dawn – as dawn - 6am, meant the start of the working day), they had a shorter service that celebrated the resurrection. There was some Bible teaching then, but the main teaching was in the evening. 2 Peter 2:13, Jude 12, 1 Corinthians and Acts applied. Pagans and Jews did this food fellowship also as part of religious worship services in the evenings.

In Jewish restaurants they, in some places, still have what is known as "Jewish soup", and as long as you have brought something for the pot you were able to take a bowl of soup. The soup was constantly bubbling, you just added the

offerings of donated food and water to supply a continuous supply of soup. As a fore runner to a church service this practice is a good one so that none are hungry heading into a teaching service.

After the meal they would go into the service, praying and sharing the bread and wine. They would chew on the bread and this would take a while, so you start to get an idea of the informality of the early churches meetings until the communion was held and the teaching began.

The communion service was based around The Passover Celebration, and the Passover time was a time when all leaven was removed from the house.

The Jews looked on anything that was fermented as leaven. The argument for unleavened wine and bread at the Communion table is very strong, although the Corinthians church certainly had real wine at their agape feast, otherwise some would not have been drunk! This is not an argument for alcohol at the church love feast or pot luck suppers, but it certainly is not banned by scripture. However the Communion table was very likely with unleavened bread and unfermented wine/grape juice. If you are going to have a symbol, at least have an accurate one.

In the ancient world the Lord's Supper was celebrated once a week. It should never be felt to be "tacked on" to another service. We should probably follow the early church and have an evening meal followed by communion and then teaching. It should be special and not necessarily have it at the end of a long service. They made sure that everyone had eaten and then went into the service (Note – they didn't fast before it). The communion service took about half an hour and then they had Bible teaching. It was to be a time of prayer and reflection upon the sacrifice of the Cross for them all.

#### **WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF IT?**

- [a] It is a remembrance of Christ and the proclamation of his death.
- [b] It demonstrates assurance of the Second Coming.
- [c] It is a time of fellowship that only comes about between people because of the work of the Lord on the Cross for us all.

The Roman Catholics teach that the literal blood and body are in the elements. According to Church dogma, in the Mass the priest will raise the goblet and the bread and the altar boy will ring the Angelis bell and the transubstantiation takes place at that time.

The Lutheran church teaches that the bread and wine, with the prayer of consecration, clearly indicates the person of Christ to the participants. This is half way position; spiritually the bread and wine are the body and blood of Jesus. Most people in the Anglican Church would say that whilst Christ is not really there physically, He is in a way in the form of consecration. They would say that by partaking of the elements, they are partaking in the presence, in the spiritual fellowship of His presence, and if you are in the spirit you are thinking about communion as spiritual food/fellowship.

Zwingli taught that the supper was only a memorial, but it is a service where we have the presence of Christ in His people, and it creates a real fellowship. Christ is in the people and not in the elements, but the people must honour him in the taking of the elements. This is an interesting and challenging viewpoint.

Historically very quickly the church moved towards a transubstantiation point of view and were looking for real presence in the elements. Within 150 years from the death of Christ the view held by the Roman Catholics today predominated, and it gave power to the clergy. The "fruit" of this dogma is not good fruit as it confuses several key doctrines.

When you take over a church you should challenge and encourage people to do things as they did in apostolic times but understand the way the church went through the centuries, so they do not condemn and criticize others for practices that our spiritual forefathers fell into quite early. If there is a sin in doing something wrong, there is a greater sin in falling out with your brother over their practice if they love the Lord.

#### **BAPTISM**

Our Lord commanded people that all new believers be baptised. It is part of the Great Commission. Part of the believer's discipleship is believer's baptism. We have to see what the Lord said, for what the Lord said through the Holy Spirit to the apostles, and what the early church practiced. If you put it altogether you get an absolute case for water baptism by immersion as the best possible way of putting the ordinance into action.

Baptism symbolizes many important features of Biblical truth. It means being buried with Christ in His death, being raised with Him in His resurrection.

#### **BAPTISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH**

The believer had new clothes for their baptism. To wear your baptismal robes was a great honour. To get a new set of clothes in the ancient world was very expensive. A suit of clothes would cost the equivalent of several thousand dollars.

Many of the people wore the white robes of baptism from that point on and they became the robes of the monks. If you were not baptised you were not a full member of the church.

In the book of Acts we saw baptism practiced immediately after salvation. Later in the second and third centuries the converts were instructed at length, because due to persecution, to be baptised was the equivalent of committing suicide for many. You were called a pupil until such time as you were baptised. In Acts they hear, they hear thoroughly, they know exactly what it means, they even know what it is to be a disciple, and they were baptised straight away.

Very early in the church the practice of infant baptism was established. The Jewish boys were circumcised on the eighth day. Converted Gentiles however said that they would not circumcise as they had when they became members of the Synagogue as "god fearers", so rather than that, they would baptize the infants. They would sprinkle the baby three times or in some places they would immerse, a practice that is followed in the Eastern Orthodox Church to this day.

Some say the whole household were baptised and some would have been children, but you cannot argue on the basis of silence, as only those able to understand were baptized in earliest days. The Scriptural order is always, believe and be baptised. Babies do not believe anything. While the age of the children is not mentioned those that were baptised were believers which excludes very young children.

In Acts 19 there is evidence of rebaptism of those who had been baptised by John the Baptist were re-baptized by Paul after they had heard the Christian message. Rebaptism is bone fide if the person was originally baptised in unbelief. The focus is on the faith of the person being baptized, and the specific purpose/focus of their previous baptism. Be careful here, as for Jewish people there were many times when they practised water baptism as a sign of a change in life or a natural life cycle, so all Jewish believers would have been baptised at some point in their lives before being saved.

The early church practised both immersion and sprinkling with the latter occurring where there was insufficient water for immersion. You immersed once or sprinkled three times, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The best visual representation and following of the dominant apostolic pattern is by immersion. Many of the earliest Roman Catholic Churches in Italy (eg at Ravenna - 5<sup>th</sup> century) have baptisteries in them from the first centuries, but fonts dominate after the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The important thing about any ritual is that it reflects a reality, and what the Lord wants to see is life change in the converted person.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **COMMUNION: THE LORD'S SUPPER**

1. There are three suppers which man is invited to:-
  - a) The gospel supper (Luke 14:15-24)
  - b) Marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9)
  - c) Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-29).
2. Those who accept the gospel supper will eventually appear at the wedding supper and in the meantime, whilst on earth, should partake of the Lord's supper.
3. At the Lord's Supper the believer meditates on:-
  - a) The death of Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour.
  - b) The risen Lord who makes intercession for him.
  - c) The coming Lord who will return for His church and set up His reign on the earth.
4. The Lord's Supper is derived from the Passover meal (Exodus 12:1-11, 1 Corinthians 11:23-32). Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (1 Corinthians 5:7)
5. The bread represents the body of Christ which was broken for us when He bore our sins on the cross (1 Corinthians 11:24)  
The wine represents the blood of Christ which is the guarantee of our salvation. For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. (1 Corinthians 11:25)
6. The Lord's Table is prepared for believers in the presence of their enemies (Psalm 23:5)
7. The believer must be in fellowship to discern the meaning of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:29). This is accomplished by self judgment (1 Corinthians 11:31, 1 John 1:9)
8. Partaking of the Lord's Supper without fellowship with the Lord can result in sickness or death. (1 Corinthians 11:30)

### **BAPTISM**

1. Usage of word "baptism" prior to the Koine (common) Greek (pre. 350 BC).
  - a) The English word "baptism" is a transliteration of the Greek verb BAPTIZO meaning to identify. This word was used by Greek poets, dramatists and historians to portray identification of one object with a second so that the nature or characteristic of the first object is changed.
  - b) For example Xenophon (fourth century BC) tells of Spartan soldiers dipping their spears into pigs' blood before going into battle. By identifying the spears with blood, the nature of the spears was supposed to have been changed from a hunting to a warrior spear.
  - c) Euripedes (fifth century BC) used the word to describe a sinking ship. As it sinks, the character or nature of the ship is changed. It is so identified or "baptised" with the water that it no longer floats - it becomes a wreck.
  
2. Meanings of the Koine Greek.
  - a) Verb - BAPTO - to dip (John 13:26, Luke 16:24), to dye (Revelation 19:13)
  - b) Verb - BAPTIZO - to dip, to immerse, to cleanse by washing.
  - c) Noun - BAPTISMOS - washing of dishes (Mark 7:4), doctrine of baptisms (Hebrews 6:2)
  - d) Noun - BAPTISMA - ritual baptism (Matthew 3:7, 21:25), spiritual baptism (Romans 6:4), figure of martyrdom (Mark 10:38, Luke 12:50)
  - e) Noun - BAPTISTES - one who baptises like John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 11:11, Mark 6:25)
  
3. Real baptisms: an actual identification - a person identified with something real. These are dry baptisms, and do not involve water. There are four real baptisms -
  - a) Baptism of Moses - a double identification of the children of Israel at Red Sea. (1 Corinthians 10:2)
    - i) With Moses - the people were identified with Moses in his faith, leadership and deliverance. They had victory "in Moses".
    - ii) With cloud - the people were identified with God (the cloud) as He delivered them through the dry seabed and destroyed their enemies behind them. They had victory "in God".
  - b) Baptism of Fire - unbelievers are identified with judgment. (Matthew 3:11, 13:24-30, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
  - c) Baptism of the Cup - identifies the Church Age believer with the victory of Christ after the cross - Christ identified himself with our sins (Matthew 26:39, 2 Corinthians 5:21)
  - d) Baptism of the Holy Spirit - enters Church Age believers into the Body of Christ, and therefore identifies them with everything that Christ is (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 6, Ephesians 1:3)
  
4. Ritual Baptisms: involve literal water, which represents something else.
  - a) Baptism of Jesus - unique (Matthew 3:13-17). Water represented Father's Plan. Christ identified himself with the Father's will in going to the cross.
  - b) Baptism of John (Matthew 3:1-11, John 1:25-33, Acts 18:25). Water represented the kingdom. Identification of John's converts with Jesus and His Kingdom.
  - c) Believer's (Christian) baptism (Acts 2:38,41, 8:36-38, 9:18, 10:47-48, 16:33).
    - i) Water represents the work of Christ.
    - ii) Identification of Church Age believer, with Christ in his death (going into the water), burial (under the water) and resurrection to "newness of life" (coming up out of the water).
    - iii) Water baptism is a testimony to personal faith in Christ.
  - d) Two ordinances for the Church:
    - i) Water baptism - once; represents salvation.
    - ii) Communion - repeated; represents fellowship.

**BAPTISMAL REGENERATION: DOES WATER BAPTISM SAVE YOU?**

1. SCRIPTURE Acts 2:38  
"Then Peter said unto them repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost"
  
2. Apparent Problem - Water baptism is necessary in salvation, i.e. baptismal regeneration.
  
3. Evaluation
  - a) Salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone, without any human works or merit. Faith excludes merit - it is merely a decision to believe what is true. (Titus 3:5, Ephesians 2:8,9)
  - b) Repent is equivalent to faith. To repent (METANOEO) means to change one's mind - we once thought that our own works were good and worthy of salvation - we now know that we are sinners and need Jesus Christ as Saviour.
  - c) Baptism involves doing something, and therefore can be classed as works, if we rely upon it for salvation.
  
4. Grammar
  - a) "Repent" - aorist active imperative, 2nd person plural - METANOEO  
aorist - point of time  
active - you do the repenting  
imperative - it's an order.  
2nd person plural - you all.

Literal translation - you all have to repent at a point of time.

b) "be baptised" - BAPTIZO - aorist passive imperative 3rd person singular. This is an individual order that at a point of time you receive baptism. The imperative mood indicates water baptism not spirit baptism which is given at the point of salvation. Water baptism shows reliance on the Good Work of Christ and not our own good works.

c) The difference between the 2nd person plural active of REPENT and the 3rd person singular passive of BAPTISM forms a strong syntactical break in the Greek which shows that BAPTISM follows BELIEF but not at the same time.

d) An exactly parallel passage is 1 John 3:23 "And this is his commandment. That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another as he gave us commandment. "

Believe - salvation

Love one another - part of your Christian walk after salvation.

e) "for" - EIS - because of or upon

Examples

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance. Literal "I indeed baptise you with water because of repentance".

Matthew 12:41 "because of (EIS) repentance"

Romans 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief but was strong in (EIS) "because of" faith.

5. Literal Translation of Acts 2:38

All of you repent and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ (EIS) because of the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

6. Conclusion: Faith in the work of Christ is necessary for salvation. Water baptism and other good works in the Christian walk are the result of salvation, not part of it.

7. The Repentant Gangster: One of the thieves believed in Christ (Luke 23:42-43). All he could do was believe. He could not be baptised nor do any other good work.

**LESSON 63 – THE DESTINY OF THE CHURCH**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
63	The Destiny of the Church	1Cor 12:12-27 Ephesians 4:11-16, Ephesians 5:21-29 Revelation 19:6-9 Romans 14:10-13 1 Cor 3:10-15, 1 Cor 9:15-27	Body and Bride of Christ Brotherhood of Believers Eternal Life Heavenlies in Christ

**CHRIST AND THE CHURCH**

Our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and His relationship with us is the main theme of the New Testament. The Lord uses a number of metaphors to show His relationship between himself and the church.

1. The first of these is "The shepherd and the sheep" - in the ancient world the shepherd was with the sheep all the time and in the evening they went into the sheep fold, a fortress made out of stone. In many cases the sheep fold was 2-3 metres high with only one way in and out.

There were several shepherds who would share a sheepfold for their various flocks and take it in turns to guard it. The shepherd would have a little fire at the entrance of the sheepfold. Nobody came in and no sheep got out. It is only by one door; that is by faith, knowing the shepherd, that you become a member of his flock.

2. We have the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as the door. David the Psalmist sings of this, the shepherd of the sheep, noting that He is the true shepherd and the sheep follow him if they are truly his. He is the only way of salvation and the carer/protector of the sheep. There is also fellowship between the shepherd and the sheep. He is the door to fellowship, and the door of access; none can violate our safety, for he keeps the door of our life.

In the ancient world the sheep were milked and shorn and only eaten as food when occasion demanded it. The shepherd cared for each and every individual sheep, each one was valuable for the wool and the milk. Our shepherd, the Lord, cares for His sheep. With the Lord Jesus Christ as the shepherd of the flock you have no concern to be worried about.

3. Christ is the true vine. Here we have the concept of the branches and the vine being organically linked. We are the branches and you can do nothing except through Christ.

4. He is seen as the cornerstone of the building. This brings out the concept of the raising of an edifice. He has a plan, and we are living stones in his building, resting on Him, the corner stone. The church is not a haphazard thing. The Lord is involved in binding the whole thing together.

**THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

5. In **1 Corinthians 12:12-30**. Paul says to the Corinthians that they should not be fighting with one another, maligning one another because they are all one in Christ. You are all one part of the same body, as the Holy Spirit has baptised you into the body of Christ whether you were Jew or Gentile, bond or free, men or women.

The church is based on the Cross, the resurrection, ascension and session, and Pentecost. This covered a 50 day period, that was the time of preparation for the apostles for understanding of the message that changed the world. Believers are from that day of Pentecost to walk in the Spirit. It is in the Holy Spirit's power, and under his direct guidance that we must minister together. **1 Corinthians 3:10-17, 9:15-27**.

If you find that you are not getting along with a genuine fellow Christian, then it is caused by some sin - either one or both of you are not under the control of the Holy Spirit. Church unity is empowered by the Holy Spirit; all disharmony and factionalism is the fruit of the Old Sin Nature or the enemy. Let the Holy Spirit loose in your life and the church's life through Bible Study and prayer. This is like the nervous system of the church body. If the nervous system is disrupted you cannot control your limbs. When the Christian is carnal in the spiritual sphere the Holy Spirit is unable to control you. Be filled and be powerful and effective! **Ephesians 4:11-16, 5:18-21**.

**SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

Paul scorns people who think they are all eyes or mouth, and say, "unless I am a minister and have the title and dignity given I am not going to do anything in the church". It is as stupid as if the hand says that it wants to be an ear. Paul mocks them, and quite rightly, for we should concentrate on our own gifts and serve the Lord as we are called, not be looking at others. We all should be working under the power of the Holy Spirit or we are in sin and disobedience.

It is actually very wrong to seek your own gifts, as they are sovereignly bestowed on you by the Holy Spirit, as He wills to meet the needs of the whole body. **1 Corinthians 12:7-13**. We are "under orders" in all aspects of our life and especially in equipping, for the Lord alone knows the path we have to walk, and what we need to fulfill our mission here on earth, and so in accordance with his plan he provides us all we need. Our job is to accept the Lord's bounty and advance rejoicing. In **1 Corinthians 12:31** people are told as a whole in an assembly to seek the best gifts for the benefit of the assembled group (second person plural – "you all"). It is the Holy Spirit who decides who gets what gift so that the entire church might be empowered. Refer to the EBCWA study on Corinthians here.

If you have the gift of pastor teacher there is nothing that you can do about it except grow spiritually and serve as the Lord opens opportunity. You have not received the gifting because you are any more special than anyone else; it is grace all the way. God is running the body. If you are a hand do not try and act as a tongue. If you are a foot, get up and move the gospel message out. If you have the gift of prayer get alongside a pastor who needs prayer. Often those who are old have a special gift of prayer. They may not be able to walk but they can pray for the feet and encourage them in that way. If you do not know what gift you have, grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and walk in the Spirit and you will be shown.

We talk about the body of Christ quite glibly but we do not think about its application. If you have the gift of pastor teacher you do not have to pray about it or surrender to preach. The Lord will open up the way where you will be able to exercise that gift. You exercise it in the small things, in the Bible Class, in the Sunday School. You study and prepare and train. If you are an arm you have to strengthen your arm so that you can work in the church. If you are a person with the gift of helps do the work you are able to do to "help" the ministry, and so use your spiritual gift.

**CHURCH AS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST**

6. The church is the bride of Christ with Christ as the bridegroom. In Ephesians 4 it is the measure of the fullness of Christ. To grow in the body is to go towards Christian maturity so that in your service in the church you become more like Christ. He is the measure. Do not measure yourself against the pastor or another prominent Christian. We grow so that we are no longer children: we grow to become useful as adult rather than child workers. We are moving towards the standard of the character and behaviour of the person of Christ. If you want stability you have to put Him at the centre of your life and let the doctrines of truth radiate from Him through the details of your daily life.

We should study so that everything focuses on Him, so that you are holding to the Head through the power of the Holy Spirit, which is given by Christ. Love for one another, love for Him.

From the concept of the body Paul moves on to the concept of the bride. In **Ephesians 5:21-33** we have the requirement to submit our self to one another in the fear of God. This requires mutual submission. As Christians you should be willing to respect one another and submit one to another. Before he talks about marriage Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, talks about mutual submission. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is the start of all relationships.

There is no such thing as dictatorship in marriage. The husband is the head, he is finally responsible. Wives should respect that and should submit to their own right man, just as he submits to their needs and meets them. We should all submit one to another, husband should love their wives as Christ loved the church, and remember, He gave himself for it.

Your attitude to others is given in verse 21. What is your attitude towards your wife? The pressure is on the men not the women. We are to love our wives to such an extent that we would die for her. This is a further inducement to Christians to have a good attitude one to another. He wants us to be sanctified by washing of water through the Word. (Verse 26). Holiness is separation to God, putting yourself aside for God. The church should be presented, not having spot or wrinkle. We should be holy and without blemish, so ought men to love their wives. He that loves his wife loves himself.

Contrast your attitude to the attitude of Christ and be rebuked. Recognise that we are going to live with the Lord forever and we are answerable to Him, not those who watch over us here. As you are part of the body of Christ so you are the bride of Christ. He brings in the picture of the bride to bring in the picture of the love and care of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### THE WORK OF THE LORD IN THE CHURCH

In **Ephesians 5:18-23** we have illustrations of the threefold work of the Lord.

- [a] His death and the love in which He gave Himself for it
- [b] In the Christian walk He is able to cleanse the church from the defilement of sin through the washing of the Word and that they might grow in the knowledge of Christ.
- [c] That a glorious church might be presented to Him without spot or blemish.

This represents the past, present and future work of our Lord.

### CHRIST AND HIS BRIDE

The constant battle for the Christian is that the bride needs to be sanctified - to be purified. The Spirit wants to cleanse you and me to make us fit for the wedding. A bride spends infinite care and spends hours making sure that they are perfect for the wedding. She wants to look her best for the wedding.

When we are running around it is often necessary for the Lord to slow us down by pressure and testing so that we have time to deal with things. There is no rose strewn path to sanctification – rather it is the “narrow way” pushing past the thorns and with the cliffs to our side. **Matthew 7:13-23**. There are many that look to the prosperity gospel as an answer, when it is in fact a Satanic lie.

The purpose God has for the church is to sanctify it for service here and eternal glory. To achieve this he has to deal with the blemishes in all our lives. We all have blemishes but we must be obedient to the Lord. If you want to be clean when you meet the Lord you need to sort out your sin. The sin is like the foxes in the ancient world that used to come into the vineyards and spoil the new young grapes, the production. Just so our spiritual fruit is destroyed by the unresolved repetitive sins in our life. **1 John 4:7 – 5:17**.

The marriage feast and the relationship of the bridegroom and the bride to be is in focus, in the eternal love that God has for the bride. He loves us forever. It is not like our earthly marriages, where argument and divorce soils God's plan, nor can we say, "until death do us part", for death is our meeting with our groom face to face. In addition, the Lord never stops praying and providing for us until we meet him, and then the glory really begins.

The love of God has transparent purity, has limitless intensity; it is the “much more” love of God. The love of God has an inexhaustible benevolence. Greater love has no man that he lay down his life for his friends. **John 15:13-14**. Christ died not for His friends, but while we were yet sinners, before by faith we became his friends. **Romans 5:1-11**. There is however God's holy hatred for sin. He wants you to be perfect/complete; ready to serve him in any area he calls. If he calls, then we can be sure he has already, in grace, provided all we need for service. Let us rejoice as we serve.

### DOCTRINES

#### BODY AND BRIDE OF CHRIST [See page 62 above]

#### BROTHERHOOD OF BELIEVERS

1. All believers are referred to as brothers (gk adelphos), the Greek word used indicating family relationship with both male and female included. As members of the same family who will rule throughout all eternity together it is of the greatest importance to have a special attitude towards our fellow believers. (1 Peter 2:5, 9-10, Revelation 5:10)

2. This attitude should be one of agape love or caring for the ultimate well being of others. (1 Peter 2:17, 3:8, 1 John 3:23, 4:12)
3. We are our brothers keepers, not by way of interference but by being active and alert for their good. (Genesis 4:9 of James 5:20, 2 Thessalonians 3:15)
4. Because of family closeness there is a danger that one member may lead another astray, so discipline is required. (1 Corinthians 5:11)
5. In our family there must be a readiness to forgive. (Matthew 18:21)
6. The world has its own brotherhood of evil and sin. (John 15:19)
7. The soul and fruit of a person shows the family to which they belong. (Matthew 12:33)
8. All of us were born into Adam's family. (1 Corinthians 15:22)
9. We either stay there in sin or become a member of the Lord's family. (John 8:42-44)

**ETERNAL LIFE [See page 42 above]**

**HEAVENLIES IN CHRIST JESUS**

1. Believers are said to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).
2. The same Greek word is used in (John 3:12) where the word 'things' is mentioned.
3. The heavenlies is the area of the believer's spiritual experience as identified with Christ in various ways:-
  - a) divine nature (2 Peter 1:4)
  - b) life (Colossians 3:4; 1 John 5:12)
  - c) relationships (John 20:17; Hebrews 2:11)
  - d) inheritance (Romans 6:16,17)
  - e) service (John 17:18; Matthew 28:20)
  - f) suffering (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; Colossians 1:24)
  - g) future glory (Romans 8:18-21; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10).
4. The believer is a heavenly man and a stranger or pilgrim on the earth (Hebrews 3:1; 1 Peter 2:11).
5. The believer is an ambassador from Heaven (2 Corinthians 5:20).

**Notes**

**LESSON 64 – THE CHURCH'S NEW DAY OF WORSHIP**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
64	Church's New Day of Worship	Genesis 2:1-3 Exodus 16:29, Exodus 20:8-11 Exodus 31:12-18 Ezekiel 20:10-14	Sabbath and the Lords Day



		Mark 2:23-28 Hebrews 4:1-12 Ephesians 4:1-3 Romans 12:1-2	
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**THE SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY**

In the early days of the Church the Judaisers tried to get the Christians to go back under the Mosaic Law. In the early days in Judea the issue was circumcision. The law system of Israel was of course, since Pentecost not necessary for salvation, nor for Christian growth. It was understandable for the early believers to think it was however, for they were all Jewish, and until this point all men who wanted to be holy had to be circumcised and enter into Judaism and keep the Mosaic Law.

Today we have people who say we need to keep certain parts of the Mosaic Law. One of these groups is the Seventh Day Adventist movement. There are also Seventh Day Baptists and Seventh Day Reformed. Most of these people do not keep all of the Law, yet when they go back to **Genesis 2:1-3**, where they say that God set Sabbath observance down for all time, they select that element out of the Law (from before the Law) and observe it. It is important and basic to worship on the "right" day, if there is such a thing, but it is also important not to despise a brother who does things differently. So let us be careful here and study this thoroughly – for why did the early church move away from Sabbath observance?

**DEFINITION**

The Hebrew word for Rest is "Shabbat" which means to cease from labour. When the Lord blesses the Sabbath day, this word is "Baruch" - a blessing of happiness and joy, prosperity and satisfaction. The word translated "sanctify" then means to set apart or dedicate a thing to himself for divine glory. The concept of the Sabbath, as seen here, and it is far more glorious and positive than most understand today.

There is no evidence here or elsewhere in the Bible, that the Sabbath day is the only day for all mankind to worship. It's meant to be primarily the day of rest; it is the day of joy where you enjoy the prosperity and life given to you by the Lord. If in Genesis 2 the Lord is setting down the concept of the Sabbath being associated with worship, all the Patriarchs ignored it, and I do not think that this makes sense. They worshipped on any and every day, but set aside the Sabbath as a day of rest and refreshment. Later however the day was set aside for the Israelites both to worship and rest from work on that day.

The Jews however were sent into Captivity (605-535 BC) because they failed to keep the Sabbaths. It was therefore a thing considered by God to be very serious. It is therefore obvious that God takes the Sabbath seriously for Israel. The Israelites had been given it as solemn day for worship/rest as a nation by Moses at Sinai. The Patriarchs were not judged in a similar way however. This therefore forms a good argument against taking Genesis 2 as a religious Sabbath, and tells us that there is a lot more than what the Sabbath keepers argue for going on here. **Exodus 16:29, 20:8-11, 31:12-18**.

**THE WORKING WEEK**

In the Genesis passage God is setting down the ergonomic principle to guide all mankind; a principle of the right proportion for work and rest. If you rest one day in seven your bodies will recover from the work on the other six. In the Soviet Union of the 1930s, where Stalin, wanted to abolish all vestiges of religion, he abolished Sunday as a day of rest. His scientists tried a number of different days for a week, for maximum worker efficiency but eventually came back to the seven day week with one day completely off to recharge. Man is made by God for a seven day week. You need to relax one day a week to recharge your body. This is a created cycle and we ignore it at the cost of our health.

**THE SABBATH AND ISRAEL**

In **Exodus 16:29** the Sabbath is given as a religious day, in addition as a day of rest. With the manna they would collect twice as much on Friday and it would last over Saturday, the only day of the week where it would keep after nightfall. God wanted the Jews to do nothing on the Sabbath day except to think on Him.

In **Exodus 20:8-11** they were to keep it holy. The argument that the Sabbath was holy from the beginning appears quite strong from this passage but the problem we have is that the Patriarchs did not keep it holy. Moses is the author of the Torah. He is the one through whom God set down the principle of the Sabbath day for Israel. If Moses had known that the Patriarchs had kept the Sabbath he would have alluded to that when he gave the Jews instruction. As he did not, it indicates that they did not.

It was for Israel only. In **Exodus 31:12-18** the Religious Sabbath was given for worship as a **covenant sign** between God and the children of Israel alone. This is the institution of the Sabbath as a worship covenant sign even though before this the seven day week had been established for rest and recreation.

In **Nehemiah 9:13-17**, Nehemiah referred back to this covenant as a specific covenant between God and Israel from Mt Sinai onwards.

In **Ezekiel 20:10-14** the Lord said that He gave the children of Israel his Sabbaths but they rebelled against him. It is Sabbaths plural, because if you want to keep the Sabbath day in accordance with the covenant sign to Israel, then you also need to keep the Sabbatical year. In addition every fifty years you keep the year of Jubilee, which means two years off work and through this time you must be trusting the Lord to provide.

### **THE LORD'S TEACHING**

In **Mark 2:23-28** we have the Lord's teaching on the Sabbath day. Here the disciples were technically breaking the Law by making food. The Lord cited the case of David when he ate the showbread. By this the Lord indicated that the law could be broken when necessity demanded it. This indicates to the people that the "Lord of the Sabbath" (God become man – Messiah) had come, for only God could change what God had given to Moses.

The person they were talking to was the Lord of the Sabbath, the person who had given the Law to Moses at Sinai. He gave it on Sinai and is going to change it on another mountain Calvary. The Lord did certain things on the Sabbath to indicate to the Scribes and Pharisees, that changes were ahead. The change was that every day was going to be kept as a Sabbath in the future.

**Hebrews 4:1-12** talks about the Christian Shabbat/rest. **Every day is to be a Sabbath rest of faith** in the Lord for the believer of the Church Age. As the Sabbath in the old covenant was to remind them that God had created everything, then we should rest in the new covenant on the basis of his new creation – solving sin and death on the Cross. His victory at the Cross for our salvation and sanctification is the turning point of history – it is the point that the Mosaic Law looked forward to. We must use all that the Lord has provided for us for the glory of God, and we must recognize when he does a new thing and follow him into that new thing. He set up the "old thing" on Mt Horeb, and he establishes the "new thing" on Calvary and on the Day of Pentecost provides for mankind to live in the power of this "new thing".

Study of **Ephesians 4:1-3, Romans 12:1,2** also show that every day is a spiritual Sabbath.

### **DOCTRINES**

#### **SABBATH AND THE LORD'S DAY**

1. Sabbath means Rest.
2. Salvation is the eternal Sabbath. (Matthew 11:28) - we must trust in God to save us, apart from our own works.
3. Trusting in the promises is the daily Sabbath. (Hebrews 3:11) - we must trust in God to provide all our needs.
4. The original Sabbath (Genesis 2:2, 3) God finished His work of creation on the sixth day and rested on the seventh.
5. The Sabbath of Israel. (Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15)
  - a) In the Old Testament, the Jews were commanded not to work on the seventh day. They were to trust in the finished work of God to supply their needs.
  - b) The Sabbath (Saturday) was the remembrance day of the old creation, of the old covenant. (Exodus 20:10-11, 31:12-17, Hebrews 4:4)
  - c) Legalists burdened the Sabbath with many hundreds of extra-biblical commandments and regulations.
  - d) Under the Mosaic Law the Jews had a sabbatical year; they were supposed to rest every seventh year. (Exodus 23:10, 11)
  - e) Because they did not take their sabbaticals they endured the 70 years of Babylonian captivity. (Leviticus 26:33-35, 2Chronicles 36:20, 21, Daniel 9:2, Jeremiah 25:11, 12, Jeremiah 29:10)
6. The Lord's Day
  - a) The Lord's Day (Sunday) is the remembrance of the new creation, the resurrection life of the Church in Christ (2Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 6:15, Hebrews 9:15, 10:20).
  - b) In the New Testament, all days are as unto the Lord. (Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:1-3)
  - c) There is a moment by moment Sabbath for the believer in the Church Age. (Hebrews 4:1-3)
  - d) The Lord's Day is:-
    - i) the day of the resurrection. (Matthew 28:1)
    - ii) the day of the first meeting of the disciples (John 20:19)
    - iii) the day for new instructions. (Luke 24:36-39)
    - iv) the day the early church met. (Acts 20:6-7)
    - v) the day they gave offerings. (1 Corinthians 16:2)
    - vi) the day of the Ascension (John 20:17)
    - vii) the day the church began (Pentecost) (Acts 2)

7. The concept of the moment by moment Sabbath is illustrated in four passages in the Old Testament
- a) Moses at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:10-14)
  - b) Abraham (Romans 4:17-21, Genesis 22, Hebrews 11:17-19)
  - c) The bones of Joseph (Hebrews 11:22)
  - d) Caleb and the Giants (Numbers 13,14, Joshua 14:6-14, 15:14, Judges 1:20)

**Notes**

**SECTION K – ESCHATOLOGY**

**LESSON 65 – GENTILES IN PROPHECY AND HISTORY**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
65	Gentiles in Prophecy and History	2 Peter 3:10-14 Luke 21:5-24, 29-31 Daniel 2:1-6, 2:27-30 Daniel 2:31-45 Daniel 4:34-37 Daniel 7,8,9 Daniel 9:22-27 Deuteronomy 29:29	Dispensations Daniel's 70 weeks

**INTRODUCTION**

A lot of people get excited about the idea of prophecy and become unbalanced – such an attitude means the OSN is in control rather than the Holy Spirit. Let us get excited about the program the Lord has for this world, but keep walking in the filling of the Holy Spirit, with spiritual fruit visible. In **2 Peter 3:9-14** we have perhaps the most dramatic event of all, the end of time itself. Here Peter is talking about the end of the world, and it forms a good starting point for our study, as it reminds us of the temporary nature of this entire world and the universe in which it spins.

We forget that this universe was made, and space and time are categories of this universe and they “end” also. We are destined for eternity, and that is a totally different category of existence than here and now. All that appears solid is simply energy in arrangement – there is actually no solidity at all in this universe and all can be “folded up” and put away, and Peter sees in this vision that it will be one day. John builds on this in Revelation 21-22. Everything that is solid in this universe is to go, but Peter does not dwell on that at all. He focuses on the resultant personal behaviour of the believer who understands this fact, showing that holy conversation and godliness should be the result of the reception and study of prophecy. **2 Peter 3:15-18.**

We should know that the world is going to end one day, and the resulting attitude we should have towards all the details of life should be with that fact in mind. We need to recognise that the world is going to pass away and that we need to look to the one who is going to make it pass away. Our eyes should be on Christ the author and finisher of the universe. We should look through this to a new creation. God's Word should be more real to us than the present physical creation. He tells us to be careful and thoughtful, in light of this reality, and determine how we live on the basis of this fact.

If the study of prophecy does not tend to holiness of life, and a sense of calm and peace facing the future, then we do not understand biblical prophecy. If you have a person who is talking a lot about prophecy but is not demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit in their life, then their interpretation is clearly wrong. When you know what God is going to do to this world it should change your behaviour and your attitude to this world and all who are in it.

### **APPLICATION OF PROPHECY**

Prophecy is not an optional extra. It is very important – almost a third (27%) of the Bible was prophetic when given. Paul was in Thessalonica for only a couple of weeks and he talked about the Rapture, the Second Advent and the new heavens and new earth to the Thessalonians in those two weeks. If in such a short time frame he spent so much time speaking of these events, then we ought to pay attention to prophetic truth, and discern what is truth, and what is nonsense.

**Luke 21:5-27** is another important prophetic passage. The important verse for our study is verse 24. It was very important for the Jews in Jerusalem, and they also later remembered his words as recorded in **Matthew 24:15-21**.

When the Romans surrounded Jerusalem from 67 to 70 AD all the Christians remembered these passages and applied them to their situation. During the initial stage of the siege there was a short time when the siege was lifted while the Romans went and dealt with the Galilee; on their return the siege was re-established and never lifted until the city fell.

At that time when the legions left, all the Christians got out of Jerusalem on the basis of their faith in the Word of God and they headed for the mountains of what is now Jordan. The Romans eventually returned to Jerusalem and in August of AD 70 they took the city and destroyed the Temple and every stone was pulled down except the Western Wall (now the Wailing Wall). There were no Christians left in the city when it fell. They were saved by obedience to prophetic truth.

These chapters that record the Olivet Discourse go beyond the 70 AD incident. The Lord makes it clear that this state of political chaos will occur until the “time of the Gentiles” is fulfilled/ended. He said that Jerusalem would be under Gentile domination (at the whim of non-Jews) until the times of the end. Daniel 2:34-35. We have seen the first shift away from that since 1967 when Jews once again control the city (although they did not take/exercise control of the Temple Mount).

The Lord was quite correct when he said that the pregnant women who had to run from the Roman army had a hard job. This happened in the siege but the whole Christian community left remembering the Lord's words and all escaped to the East Bank of the Jordan and dispersed from there. The apostle John and the Lord's mother Mary heading for Ephesus where both died and are buried.

In Luke 21:24 the Lord said that those not obeying his words would fall by the edge of the sword and they did, and that the survivors of that siege would go into captivity and they did. The Romans knocked down every wall with the exception of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, now known as the Wailing Wall. The Wailing Wall was left so that the people could see how great the city had been and yet what the Romans had done to it.

Jerusalem was literally trodden down by the Gentiles from 605 BC through until 1967. For the first time in history since the time of our Lord Jerusalem in our lifetime has again come under Israeli rule, yet even now it is still at the whim of Gentiles, with most nations not recognizing it as the Jewish Capital that it has been since 1980. The change continues in the Year of Jubilee, 2017, when the USA recognized Jerusalem as the Capital.

### **THE AGE OF THE GENTILES**

The beginning of the “Age of the Gentiles” is given in Daniel 2, and through the visions he had Daniel had it spelt out to him the history of what would happen in his own day, and what would be the history of the time of the history of the Gentiles, as well as the return of the Lord which ends this period.

In Daniel 2 Nebuchadnezzar expressed his belief that if there was a prophet of the one true God in the court, then he would be able to describe the dream Nebuchadnezzar had dreamed, without being told, and give an interpretation of it.

In the ancient world people had books of dream interpretations. Such a collection of books was with the wise men of Babylon, the religious courtiers of the day knew these things. These people waited for the king to tell them the dream so that they could interpret it from the books. He did not however let them know what the dream was, as he knew it was from God and was vital to understand for him self and subsequent generations. He threatened the wise men with death if they did not come up with both the dream and the interpretation.

The wise men felt that was a rather tall order, for only the one true God that gave him the dream could give them both the dream and the interpretation of it. Nebuchadnezzar was correctly convinced that if a person interpreted and stated what the dream was he would be from God. He knew that he had to find a man of God, not just a PhD in dream interpretation who had read all the books! We need to remember that even Satan is not smart enough to get inside your head and know what you are thinking/dreaming. This incident answers a lot of questions about ourselves, the limited power of Satan, and the way God moves in history through visions/dreams and prophetic words.

Daniel is called and immediately states that there is a true God in heaven that knows all of history and has made known to the king what is going to happen in the latter days. Daniel makes it clear to the King that he is worshipping the false gods whilst Daniel is worshipping the real God and has the true information. The prophet puts his life on the line through truth and tells the king bluntly all the truth, holding nothing back.

Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar that he has all these Magi religious PhDs surrounding him, and they do not know the truth, then tells them all what God's message is. He tells the king that he has dreamt about history right the way to the Second Advent. Daniel says that this is not revealed to him by any wisdom that he has, but that God had revealed it to him so that the king could see something within himself and all men might know these things through Daniel's written work. He says that clearly God is working in Nebuchadnezzar's life, as He wants to do something with him for he is the first great Gentile "world ruler".

Nebuchadnezzar is going to become a believer but he is going first of all to have a breakdown and act as an animal for seven years before he deals with his sin of personal pride. Daniel Chapter 4.

Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that God has allowed him to be the first and greatest of all kings. Nebuchadnezzar will however forget this later, and say to the people in his great earthly pride, to look at what he has constructed. Daniel 4:30. For this he is disciplined and it is not until seven years later he becomes a believer, after the greatest king in the world has been out in the fields grazing like an animal for that time.

In both of Nebuchadnezzar's great history dream, recorded in Daniel 2 and the parallel passage in Daniel 7, man-made empires are destroyed by God. Worldwide empires tend to elevate man to a place of self-glorification, whilst all glory should go to God. God both uses and judges the various nations through history, and the Satanic attack on the Plan of God through evil will finally be undone by the direct intervention of the Lord Jesus at his Second Advent.

From the dream it is clear that the whole pride basis of man's empires collapses with the advent in power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The return of Christ is going to finally make all the empires of the world rubble and only the power of Christ will fill the earth. "The cities of men will fall". **Revelation 16:17-20**. God is going to be the victor no matter how great man thinks he is.

## DANIEL CHAPTER 2

**Daniel 2:31-45** gives us the history the Age of the Gentiles. The Jews were controlled by the Gentile nations in order; Babylon, Media - Persia with Esther becoming the Queen of Persia, then the Greeks with Antiochus Epiphanes, then the Romans who they rebelled against and were crushed. For 1900 years the Jew has been the wandering Jew. The Jews have not been lasting masters of their own destiny from the time of Nebuchadnezzar to the current day.

We also have the prophecies of Daniel 7, where the nature of the persecuting Gentile empires are seen. They are called wild animals because they have consistently behaved like wild animals towards the people of God. They were rough, tough, and brutal. Daniel is looking at world history from his day to the Second Advent of Christ.

Whilst the Jews are now in control of Jerusalem, if they are in trouble they have to go to Gentile nations for help. Israel survives today because it is in covenant relationships with the United States and some nations of Europe. The Lord is going to terminate all this one day, and as we will see as we advance in the study, it is the very Western Nations who now support Israel who will become their greatest enemy of history and the Arabs to the East, their one ally and friend.

The Holy Spirit allows Daniel to look at Alexander the Great and the detailed history of the Greek Empires. This was a very useful prophecy when Alexander the Great actually approached Jerusalem, with the plan to pay his troops by giving them the booty of Jerusalem, and reducing Jerusalem to ashes. The High Priest brought out this prophecy, read it to Alexander, and the city was spared. Josephus, the Jewish historian of the late first century AD records that it was the prophetic words of Daniel that saved the city and gained the Jewish people "favoured people" status under the Macedonian Empire, with many joining their army and supply corps. The Jews joined Alexander's Army and settled all over the Greek world establishing the very synagogues in cities that would later be used by Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Peter, and many others.

Much of the prophecy of Daniel has been fulfilled but there is still much to be fulfilled. Those points remaining to be fulfilled will all be fulfilled literally, just as the first prophecies were. Revelation adds to these more precision/detail.

In **Daniel 9:22-27** we have Daniel's 70 weeks which shows that there is limited time for all these events to play out. Gabriel was very specific in his prophecy that Messiah would be cut off at the end of 69 weeks of years with his kingdom incomplete. WE will see in subsequent lectures just how exciting this is.

## DOCTRINES

### DISPENSATIONS

1. General Scripture (Ephesians 3:1-5) Key words -

Verse 2 - dispensation - stewardship or administration.

Verse 3 - mystery - Church age.

Verse 5 - other ages - Gentile and Jewish ages.

2. Definition: A dispensation is a period of time expressing the viewpoint of God in relation to the history of man. During each dispensation God entrusts the spreading of the Gospel to specific people. Failure to fulfil their responsibility causes God to end a Dispensation and usher in a new one.

3. Human history is divided biblically into 4 Dispensations.

(a) Gentile or Family.

(b) Jews.

(c) Church or Grace.

(d) Christ or the Millennium.

4. In all cases salvation is the same - faith in Jesus Christ but due to the position of the cross varies in its viewpoint of the sacrifice from prophetic to historic.

(a) The Gentile and Jewish ages looked forward to the cross by means of animal sacrifices, the Tabernacle and Old Testament scriptures.

(b) The Church age looks back at the cross as an accomplished fact in history.

(c) The Millennial Age looks at the present person of Christ on earth.

5. Greek words related to time.

(a) Chronos - a succession of events - chronology - a history of Israel. e.g. reign of Saul, reign of David, reign of Solomon.

(b) Kairos - an epoch or period of time which is used for categories of times - dispensations.

(c) Oikonomia - translated dispensation - means to administer an estate, be a responsible steward of an important item.

(d) Aion - age - very similar to Kairos but allows for a break in an epoch such as occurs in the Jewish age with the Tribulation occurring after the Church age.

6. Diagrammatic layout of Dispensations.

Gentiles	Jews	Church	Jews	Millennium
Adam	Abraham	Pentecost	Rapture	2nd Advent

7. Responsible Agents for the Gospel.

(a) Gentiles - the head of the family responsible for the gospel.

(b) Jews - a special race based on regeneration responsible for the gospel. The Jews are often called the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all 'born again' believers.

(c) Church - a spiritual race based on regeneration responsible for the gospel.

(d) Christ - the God/Man himself responsible for the gospel.

8. Civilisations

As a parallel system to dispensations are civilisations of which there are three. In all cases the civilisation starts with believers only and finishes with judgment.

(a) Civilisation		
Pre Flood	Post Flood	Millennial
Adam	Noah	2nd Advent

(b) Dispensation		
Gentile	Jews & Church	Millennium
Adam	Abraham	2nd Advent

We are thus in the Church Age dispensation and Post Flood Civilisation.

**DISPENSATION OF THE GENTILES OR FAMILY**

1. Scripture: Genesis 1-11

2. Limits: Adam to Abraham.

3. Divided into Three Sections

a) The Age of Innocence (Genesis 1:28-3:22)

b) The Age of Rebellion (Genesis 3:23-8:20)

c) The Age of Nations (Genesis 8:21-11:32)

4. Characteristics

a) One Language. (Genesis 11:6)

- b) One race - the Gentiles (Genesis 11:6)
- c) No written scripture
- d) No missionary agency; every believer responsible for the gospel - particularly the father.
- e) Means of salvation - belief in Christ. (Romans 4:3)
- f) Time span - approximately 2,000 years
- g) Major judgments - Noah (flood) (Genesis 7)
- h) At death believers went to Paradise.
- i) At death unbelievers went to Torments.
- j) Priesthood - specialized - particularly the father.
- k) The Law - no Mosaic Law.
- l) Holy Spirit - assisted a selected few believers
- m) Environment - perfect in the garden, progressively worse after sin (Genesis 1:31, 3:17-18).
- n) Satan - In heaven and on earth.
- o) Rebellion. Adam and Eve. Tower of Babel. (Genesis 11:1-9)

5. During this Age, God established four institutions for mankind to live by:-

- a) Free Will (Genesis 2:16,17)
- b) Marriage (Genesis 2:22-24)
- c) Family (Genesis 4:1)
- d) Human government and Nations (Genesis 9-11)

6. During this Age, Satan attacked these frameworks.

- a) Free Will (Genesis 3) - the fall of Adam and Eve.
- b) Marriage and Family (Genesis 6)- the angelic infiltration.
- c) Nationalism (Genesis 11:1-9) - Internationalism in the tower of Babel.

#### **DISPENSATION OF THE JEWS OR ISRAEL**

1. Scripture: Genesis 12 - Acts.

2. Limits: Abraham to Second Advent.

3. Divided into Three Sections

- a) The Patriarchs - Abraham - Moses.
- b) The Law. Moses - Pentecost.
- c) The Tribulation - Rapture - 2nd Advent.

4. Characteristics

- a) Length of Age - approximately 2,000 years.
- b) Means of salvation - faith in Christ (James 2:23)
- c) Written Scripture - Old Testament completed 425 BC
- d) Evangelists - The Jews
- e) Four Unconditional Covenants:-
  - i) Abrahamic (Genesis 12:1-3)
  - ii) Davidic (2 Samuel 7:8-16)
  - iii) Palestinian (Genesis 15:18-21)
  - iv) New. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

These are fulfilled at the Second Advent, when Jesus, the Messiah returns to earth to reign as King.

f) Specific discipline for failure to comply with Divine Direction include:-

- i) Where a foreign country rules the Jews (e.g. Rome from 60 BC. to 70 AD.)
- ii) Where the Jews are removed from the land (e.g. Babylonian captivity 586 to 516 BC)
- g) Major judgments - Babylonian captivity.
- h) At death believers - Paradise (Abraham's Bosom) (Luke 16:19-31)
- i) At death unbelievers - Torments (Luke 16:19-31)
- j) Priesthood - Levitical (Exodus 28-29)
- k) The Law - given to Moses (Exodus 19-24)
- l) Holy Spirit - assisted a selected few believers - eg Gideon, David, Samson.
- m) Environment - sinful.
- n) Satan - in heaven and on earth.
- o) Rebellion - Idolatry, rejection of the Law of God.
- p) Many languages -(Genesis 11:9)
- q) Many races of people (Genesis 11:9)
- r) Spirituality - resting in the promise of God. (Hebrews 11:8-40)

5. The Jewish Age is interrupted at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Daniel 9:26a). Instead of accepting their Messiah, the Jews rejected and crucified Him.

God therefore has temporarily set the Jews aside and ordained the Church as His ambassadors on earth Romans 11:17-25.

When the Church is removed from the earth (known as the Rapture), God will re-institute the Jews as His ambassadors. This will last for a period of seven years (Daniel 9:26b-27), known as the Tribulation (see below), during which time the Jews will repent and call upon their Messiah. The Lord Jesus Christ will then come back to earth at the Second Advent to regather Israel and establish His kingdom on earth.

6. "The Tribulation" below.

**DISPENSATION OF THE CHURCH**

1. Limits: Pentecost to Rapture
2. Divided into Two Sections
  - a) Pre Canon to 100 AD Period of temporary and permanent gifts. (1 Corinthians 13:10)
  - b) Post Canon - period of permanent gifts only where the whole Bible is complete.
3. Characteristics
  - a) Length of Age - Unknown - but possibly about 2,000 years.
  - b) Means of Salvation - Faith in Christ. (Acts 16:31)
  - c) Written Scripture - Old Testament - Pre Canon; Whole Bible - Post Canon.
  - d) Evangelists - all believers (Matthew 28:18-20 2 Corinthians 5:20)
  - e) Major Judgment -- Nil
  - f) At death (believers) - Heaven, face to face with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8)
  - g) At death (unbelievers) - Torments, Hades.
  - h) Priesthood - all believers as priests (1 Peter 2:9)
  - i) The Law - grace, the law having been fulfilled by Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:17)
  - j) Holy Spirit - indwells all believers (John 7:39, 1 Corinthians 6:19)
  - k) Environment - sinful.
  - l) Satan - in Heaven or on earth
  - m) Rebellion - Apostasy (2 Timothy 3:1-6)
  - n) Many languages - (Genesis 11:9)
  - o) Many races of people - (Genesis 11:9)
  - p) Spirituality - filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)
  - q) Every believer in union with Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:13)
  - r) Every believer indwelt by Christ. (John 14:20)
4. The Church Age is not mentioned in the Old Testament.
  - a) The Church was a mystery to Old Testament writers.(Colossians 1:25-26)
  - b) The Old Testament Scriptures include everything such as the Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection, Ascension and Session of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament Scriptures then skip over the Church Age to the Tribulation, Second Advent and Millennium.
  - c) Examples of scriptures in the Old Testament where the great parenthesis occurs are Daniel 2:40,41, 7:23,24, 9:26a,26b, 11:35,36, Hosea 3:4,5 , Isaiah 61:2a,2b

**DISPENSATION – CHURCH AGE – INTERCALATION OR INSERTION**

1. The CHURCH AGE is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It has been inserted later by God.
2. Since the Church is a mystery it was not revealed to Old Testament writers. (Colossians 1:25,26)

The Old Testament Scriptures include everything such as the Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection, Ascension and Session of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament Scriptures then skip over the Church Age to the Tribulation, Second Advent and Millennium.

3. Therefore all doctrine pertinent to the Church Age is intercalated or inserted.
4. Scriptures in the Old Testament where the Great Parenthesis occurs are:

Daniel 2:40 and 41  
 Daniel 7:23 and 24  
 Daniel 9:26a and 26b,

Daniel 11:35 and 36



Isaiah 61:2a and 2b

The period of the great parenthesis is a period of the intensified state of the angelic conflict. It was not included in the Old Testament Scriptures because it would have confused believers of that age. They would have been quite probably envious of church age benefits such as the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, universal priesthood, indwelling of Christ, etc.

5. All believers in the period of intercalation are called into full time Christian service.

**DISPENSATION: THE TRIBULATION OR THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE**

1. The Tribulation is actually the last seven years of the Age of Israel (see above)
2. General Scripture (Revelation 4-19)
3. Limits: Rapture to Second Advent
4. Characteristics:
  - a) Length of Age - 7 years. (Daniel 9:27)
  - b) Means of Salvation - faith in Christ.
  - c) Scripture - completed Canon.
  - d) Evangelists - 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Revelation 7). Also angelic evangelists (Revelation 14:6-7)
  - e) Major judgments - a succession of judgments upon the unbelieving world (Matthew 24:21)
  - f) At death believers - Heaven (Revelation 15:12)
  - g) At death unbelievers - Torments, Hades.
  - h) Priesthood - specialised priesthood - Jews.
  - i) The Law - no Law (Matthew 5:17)
  - j) Holy Spirit - assists believers but does not indwell.
  - k) Environment - sinful - Antichrist and Satan rule the whole world.
  - l) Satan - in Heaven or on earth for first 3 1/2 years; cast down to earth for second 3 1/2 years (Revelation 12:9)
  - m) Rebellion - Armageddon, one world political and religious system
  - n) Spirituality- resting in the promises of God.
  - o) Three sets of Judgments - seals (Revelation 6), trumpets (Revelation 8), judgments (Revelation 15,16)

**DISPENSATION OF THE MILLENNIUM**

1. General Scripture: Many Old Testament passages, Revelation 20
2. Limits: Second Advent to Great White Throne Judgment
3. Characteristics:
  - a) Length of Age - 1,000 years.
  - b) Means of Salvation - Faith in Christ.
  - c) Scripture - the person of Christ.
  - d) Evangelists - the person of Christ.
  - e) Major Judgments
    - i) Baptism of Fire (Matthew 3:12, 24:36-41)
    - ii) Last Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)
    - iii) Destruction of Universe (2 Peter 3:7-13)
  - f) Death extremely rare in the Millennium. Extended life span. (Isaiah 65:20)
  - g) At death, unbelievers - Torments.
  - h) Priesthood - Christ.
  - i) The Law - no Law, Jesus Christ has fulfilled the law. (Matthew 5:17)
  - j) Holy Spirit - universal indwelling of the believer. (Joel 2:28-29)
  - k) Environment - perfect (Isaiah 11:1-9)
  - l) Satan - chained in the abyss until the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:2-3)
  - m) Rebellion - unbelievers at the end of the Age. (Revelation 20:7-9)
  - n) Spirituality - filling of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28,29)
  - o) No human religion - Satan bound - no influence on the earth. (Isaiah 2:3, John 8:44 cf Rev 20:1-3)
  - p) Israel -restored (Isaiah 35:3-10)
  - q) Universal peace (Psalm 46:9, Hosea 2:18, Micah 4:3)
  - r) Perfect government with Christ as King (Isaiah 11:1-5, Zechariah 14:9)
  - s) Universal prosperity (Psalm 72:7)
  - t) Universal knowledge of God. (Isaiah 11:9)
  - u) Radical changes in nature - restored to perfection as in the Garden of Eden
    - i) Mankind loosened from the bondage of sin. (Romans 8:19-22)

- ii) Sin has no adverse effect on nature (Genesis 3:17-18 cf Isaiah 35:1-2,7)
- iii) Animals will lose their ferocity (Isaiah 11:6-8, 65:25)
- v) Millennium - begins with believers only.

**PROPHECY: DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS**

1. Scripture:- Daniel 9:24-27

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. " (Daniel 9:24)

2. What is a week? In the ancient world both Greek and Latin philosophers knew the week, as the week of years. In this system one week equals 7 years. Thus seventy weeks equal  $70 \times 7 \text{ years} = 490 \text{ years}$ .

3. What Type of Year? The year used in scripture of Daniel's time was the Jewish year which Abraham had preserved from his Chaldean home. Abraham's year was the lunar year and consisted of 360 days. The period stated then is  $70 \times 7 \times 360 \text{ days}$  giving a total of 176 400 days.

4. Who are Involved? 'Thy people, thy holy city' refer to the Jews and Jerusalem or Judea. We therefore have a period of 490 years involving the Jews and Jerusalem.

5. When Does this Period End?

a) In the second half of verse 24 the end of the period is given by six separate events:

i) to finish the transgression - the start of the Millennium at the 2nd advent.

ii) make an end to sins - perfect environment starts at the 2nd advent and continues for a thousand years. (Romans 8:19-21)

iii) make reconciliation - since AD 70 the Jews have been dispersed amongst the nations, they will continue to be dispersed until Jesus Christ calls them back to their land at the 2nd advent.

iv) bring in everlasting righteousness - the millennium starts a period of everlasting righteousness with the reign of Christ, this everlasting righteousness continues into the eternal future. This period starts at the 2nd advent.

v) to seal up the vision and prophecy - the 2nd advent fulfils the Abrahamic, Palestinian and Davidic covenant and this prophecy.

vi) to anoint the most Holy - at the 2nd advent Jesus is anointed King of Israel.

b) The terminal point in all six statements can therefore be said to be the 2nd advent of the Lord Jesus Christ or the midnight hour of (Matthew 25:6). We thus have a period from (Daniel 9:24) of 490 Jewish years each having 360 days terminating at the 2nd Advent.

c) In the next three verses the period of 70 weeks is carefully divided into three sections.

d) "Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks (49 years) and three score and two weeks (434 years):the streets shall be built again, and the wall even in troubled times. " (Daniel 9:25)

e) We have therefore three periods into which the 70 weeks is split - 7 weeks + 62 weeks leaving a balance of 1 week. Expressed in years we have 49 years + 434 years + 7 years.

6. What is the Starting Point?

There were three edicts issued by Persian princes dating after the time of Daniel and relating to the Jews returning to their homeland, they were:-

i) The edict of Cyrus in 538 BC to rebuild the house of the Lord (Temple) (Ezra 1).

ii) The edict of Darius in 520 BC to rebuild the temple which is found in (Ezra 6) Darius' edict was to confirm Cyrus' previous order, the temple works having been stopped after the death of Cyrus.

iii) The edict of Artaxerxes Longimanus to rebuild Jerusalem in 445 BC (Nehemiah 2)

b) Inspection of Daniel 9:25 shows that the critical commandment which starts the 70 weeks clock ticking was the order to rebuild Jerusalem not the temple. The correct order was the edict of Artaxerxes in 445 BC. The practice of Persian Kings was to issue such orders on their New Years day, the 1st of the month of Nisan. Using the services of the Astronomer Royal in London, Sir Robert Anderson, was able to determine that the 1st Nisan of 445 BC occurred on 14th March 445 BC. We therefore have the following date:-

c) 14th March 445 BC -- 490 years -- 2nd Advent

d) It also states that Jerusalem will be rebuilt with its walls completed after 49 years (7 weeks) in difficult circumstances. There is considerable biblical evidence that Jerusalem was rebuilt under very difficult circumstances.

e) "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself. " (Daniel 9:26a)

7. Who is the Messiah? - Jesus Christ!

In Luke's gospel on entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, just prior to his crucifixion, the crowd welcomed Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah (Luke 19:38) this being the only time when he was so called by the mass of the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

8. When was He cut off?

According to (Luke 3:1) Jesus Christ was baptised in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar. As his ministry was three years in length, the entry into Jerusalem occurred in the 18th year of Tiberius. Searches of literature including, 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' by Gibbon, has shown that Tiberius became Caesar in 14 AD. Entrance into Jerusalem was therefore on Palm Sunday 32 AD. Again by computation the date of Palm Sunday 32 AD was 10th Nisan or 6th April AD 32, the crucifixion occurring on 9th April AD 32.

9. If this is correct, we should find correlation between the 483 Jewish years to the cutting off of the Messiah and the time between 14th March 445 BC and 6th April AD 32. The time between these two dates is 476 years and 24 days.

Total number of days are therefore as follows:-

476 years x 365 days = 173,740

14/3 to 6/4 = 24

Leap years = 116

TOTAL = 173,880 days.

Jewish time: 483 x 360 = 173,880 days

10. Our scale now shows:-

14th March 445 BC -- 483 years -- 6th April 32 AD

11. The following questions now arise:

Has the second advent of Jesus Christ occurred? - No.

Is it longer than 7 years since Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem? - Yes.

Therefore there must be a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.

445 BC -- 483 years -- 32 AD -- GAP -- 7 years -- 2nd Advent

12. This gap has been filled in God's view of history by the church age. (see topic of Intercalation).

The 70th week which is 7 years in length therefore starts at the end of the church age - at the Rapture. These 7 years of the 70th week are the worst 7 years in the history of man - the tribulation.

13. CONCLUSION The course of this 70th week is denoted in (Daniel 9:26b, 27).

a) "and the people of the prince (the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire) that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and until the end of the war, desolations are determined.

b) And he (the dictator) shall confirm the covenant (mutual defence pact) with the many (the Jews) for one week (7 years) and in the midst of the week (3 1/2 years) he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, (this refers to the erection of a statue in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, see Revelation 13:11-15). even until the consummation (the 2nd advent) and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (the dictator will be judged and cast into hell, see Revelation 19:20)."

c) We thus have Daniel's 70 weeks divided as shown:-

d) 445 BC -- 483 years -- 32 AD -- CHURCH -- unspecified period of time -- RAPTURE -- 7 years -- 2nd Advent

**LESSON 66 – ISRAEL IN PROPHECY AND HISTORY**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
66	Israel in Prophecy and History	Daniel 9:24-27 Luke 4:18-21 Isaiah 61:1-3 1 Peter 1:10-11	Israel The Church

**INTRODUCTION**

This subject and that of the Gentiles and Prophecy relate to truth revealed to Paul and communicated in 1 and 2 Thessalonians. We are looking at the Second Advent of Christ. What effect does this truth have on your life here and now? If you subscribe to the literal interpretation of Scripture then you must believe in the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ for his church. In the ancient world the study of prophecy always made people more motivated. Prophetic truth was meant to have immediate and longer term application – this is no academic study – it is life changing.

**ISRAEL AND PROPHECY**

Because the early reformers had a lot of problems from the Roman Catholic authorities, few of them dealt with prophecy. It has only been in the last 200 years that prophecy has come under scrutiny as a subject again. Many of those of the Calvinistic tradition believe that Israel has no future in God's plan and this colours their view of prophecy. We need to strip away the neglect of centuries and allow the text to speak directly to our day, for Israel is back in the land for the first time since 70AD. All that Daniel foretold is nearly in place, and we await the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39, which will set in place the final piece – the tribulation temple where the Anti-Christ will set up his image.

The view that rejects Israel having any part to play today started with Origen in Alexandria in the 3rd century, over 100 years after Israel had ceased to be a nation. They went into the prophecies of the Bible and realised that there was no Jewish state any more, and had therefore to get around that, and so they substituted the church as a spiritual Israel. The prophecies were to be taken symbolically by all those who followed this group of theologians from that time on. This proves the importance of the little word “yet”. Israel had not been re-established “yet”, but it would be in 1948!

Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation. How do you know if a passage is to be interpreted literally, or where do you spiritualize the Word? Calvin went back to Augustine and the later Egyptian fathers of the old Catholic Church like Origen and Clement. Calvin put it all brilliantly but was not innovative; it was actually Catholic doctrine from the days before Constantine that later became Calvinism. We now see things that make sense of Daniel's words, and Calvin would be staggered at world wide instantaneous communication and the re-establishment of a nation Israel!

The view that Israel will play a major part in the future plan of God was a view put by the earliest fathers of the church and by the apostles. Israel they believed is “put on the shelf” for a while so that the Gentiles can come in and fulfill the Word, and prepare the people of Israel for a second chance to accept their Messiah. The O.T prophecies that tell of a Millennium and a future for Israel will all be fulfilled literally, they believed. After the collapse of the Second “Bar Kochba” Jewish Rebellion in the late 130s AD many felt Israel was actually “over”, and rather than just sitting with their Bibles and saying, “we can't see it but Israel as a nation must come back”, they explained away the text symbolically.

Others stuck with the plain sense of the Word, even though there wasn't any evidence amongst the nations. Well before the establishment of the Jewish State, L S Chafer said that Israel, although very small, has yet a prominent part in the plan of God until the end. Israel is, he and the others who hold this view stated, the centre of all history. What goes on in Israel is very important. We at EBCWA also believe Israel has a vital part to play in God's plan for the future. Sadly that time is characterized by great evil against God's people – it is a time of greatest sorrow, and the rebirth of Israel is just the “beginning of sorrows”, and sadly the worst is yet to come. Matthew 24:8, Mark 13:8. We are living in serious times!

**COVENANTS**

What has Israel got going for it to be famous in world history? It is a small nation and always has been, and yet it is the focal point of history. It is the spiritual history of the nation which alone makes it important. Israel's history is related to all five covenants in the scriptures. It was not formed solely on the Mosaic covenant. There are four real and one potential or future covenant. The covenants are:-

The Abrahamic Covenant - a seed, posterity and blessing.

The Palestinian Covenant - the promise of a land

The Mosaic Covenant - the Law

The Davidic Covenant - the promise of a king

The New Covenant - a future covenant with a restored purpose in a restored world.

To say that they are related to one covenant only shows your ignorance as to the relationship of Israel with history, for they are central to all the great covenants.

## **THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL**

The history of Israel divides into about five stages:-

### **Their "Pre-history" - From Abraham to Moses**

The Patriarchs. The importance of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is shown in the fact that chapters 12-50 of Genesis is taken up with them. This is leading to Messiah and these men and their families are the progenitors of the light bearers of history, the nation Israel.

### **Moses to Messiah**

The Law. -This divides into two periods - the time from Moses to Nebuchadnezzar (the Exile), and the time from the Babylonian captivity to the dispersion under the Romans.

### **The time of the Gentiles -**

This is Israel "trodden down", or at the whim and favour of the Gentile Nations. It begins in 605 BC – and ends at some later time to our own in 2020. The nation Israel now exists again, but under Gentile nation's whim. Jerusalem is still "trodden down" by the nations, and they survive only courtesy of the USA and others.

### **The restoration of Israel**

Firstly in unbelief terminating in the Tribulation and the second the rescue of Israel by the Lord Jesus Christ after their acceptance of him. Zechariah 12:10ff.

### **Israel in the Millennium**

The final section is the Millennium with the Messianic rule of Christ on earth where the Lord will rule as David's greater son.

We live in the shoulder between ages 3 and 4. In 1948 we have Israel born but in unbelief, Jerusalem captured in 1967, and becoming its capital in 1980, but still under threat and subject to even more UN resolutions than any dictatorial dangerous country like North Korea. However you will be arrested in Israel today if you give the gospel openly, just as you will be also in Greece at this time (2020).

## **LITERAL INTERPRETATION**

If the rules of language means that a passage should be taken literally then you should do so. There were about three hundred fulfilled prophecies at the time of the first advent, all of which were fulfilled literally.

If they came true literally it is very likely that the rest, which are still to be fulfilled, will also be fulfilled literally.

The Word indicates three dispossessions of the Jewish people from the land of Israel and three returns -

[A] The Egyptian captivity and release,

[B] The Babylonian captivity and release and

[C] The dispossession of 70 AD. There will be a final restoration when they look on Him who they have they have pierced. Zechariah Chapters 12- 14. The Lord will deliver them for the last time and set up his earthly kingdom.

## **ATTITUDE TO PROPHECY**

You must, as a pastor-teacher, have an openly expressed attitude towards eschatology. It is always important to lead the people from the front, and teach all the Scriptures. The people from the pew are likely to go elsewhere to find out what the bible says about these things if you do not teach it, and they may be lead astray. They certainly will be led into error by the door knocking cults that teach weird and strange prophetic things – the truth alone inoculates against nuttury!

Prophecies are not necessarily being fulfilled at this point, but things are being set up for their fulfillment. We live in a day when the Lord is moving the chess pieces on the chess board, and the end is very close as I rewrite these words.

**DANIEL'S 70<sup>TH</sup> WEEK**

**Daniel 9:24-27** are key verses for Israel as they are for the Gentile nations. When the fig tree has figs on it or leaves appear you know that things are coming to fruition. The birth of the nation Israel is depicted by the sprouting of the fig tree, and in the late 1940s this occurs, then 1967 Jerusalem is taken, and 1980 it becomes their capital. This world is becoming ripe for picking/judgment – and that is how this time period ends. We are close....the days count now.

It is significant that the first 69 weeks have been fulfilled 100% - literally. Jerusalem was rebuilt in the first 49 years, the Messiah was cut off after 483 years (32AD). The events of the last week are yet future, but the fig tree has budded.

Israel's destiny is intimately related to their attitude to their Messiah and the Saviour of the world. It is of interest that in the Old Testament there are two references to the advents of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jewish rabbis referred to this as Messiah son of Joseph and Messiah Son of David, the sufferer and the king. Some rabbis included both in one but stopped doing so after the early church argued this way. Rabbinic interpretation reacted to the messianic movement.

**ISAIAH 61:1-2A, 2B**

In **Luke 4:16-21** Jesus reads a passage about himself from **Isaiah 61:1-2a**. The Lord quoted only part of a verse. Isaiah has combined the first and second advents, as from his viewpoint 700 years before the first advent he saw them sequentially. In Isaiah 61:2a we have the first advent and 2b deals with the Second Advent.

Does this mean that if the first half of a verse has been fulfilled that the second will not? No. As the first half was fulfilled so the second will. If the first half of the verse was fulfilled literally, then the second half will be also.

In **1 Peter 1:10-11** Peter starts to understand the "not yet" concept; that the things spoken of will be fulfilled completely, but "not yet" in Peter's life time. Peter sees that he was living in the era of the suffering of Messiah, and there is a time of glory to come. Peter got a glimpse of glory in the Mount of Transfiguration and in his resurrection Peter had glimpses of the glory of God which is to come. He had hoped to live to see it, but by the time he writes his letters in the 50s and 60s he has seen, under the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, that he will not live to see it. In both Acts 15 and Romans 11 James and Paul both break through to this understanding also.

The apostles all believed they were the ones to see Jesus reign as king, but over the decades after the day of Pentecost they realized that there were ages to come before they would reign with him. They were corrected over time from their most passionate desire regarding the Lord's person and work – to reign with him right then. The question for us, is are we going to let the language speak to us from the Bible, be corrected from our old positions, or will we twist and spiritualize it? **2 Peter 3:14-18**.

What place does Israel have in future history? When will the time of the Gentiles end? The end will come with the crushing of the armies of the unsaved Gentiles by the Lord outside the besieged city of Jerusalem. Daniel 2, 7, 9, 11....

**THE INTERCALATION OR INSERTION OF THE CHURCH AGE (Called by theologians - "The Great Parenthesis")**

The CHURCH AGE is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It has been inserted into revealed history by God and was a surprise to the apostles themselves. The first Church Council at Jerusalem met because of the shock that God was doing something quite new and unexpected in saving Gentiles as gentiles, with them not being required to become Jews first! Acts 15.

Since the Church is a mystery it was not revealed to Old Testament writers. (**Colossians 1:25-26**.)

The Old Testament Scriptures include everything such as the Incarnation, the Cross, the Resurrection, Ascension and Session of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament Scriptures then skip over the Church Age, making no mention of what the Day of Pentecost would mean (although it is equally a Jewish-Mosaic Feast), and take up the story again at the Great Tribulation, Second Advent and Millennium.

Therefore all doctrine pertinent to the Church Age is "intercalated or inserted" by the Lord, and then later, through the Holy Spirit's direct revealing the details to the apostles for recording in the New Testament only. In the Scriptures of the Old Testament where what is called the "Great Parenthesis" occurs, there is the space where the church is going to occur, but the writers didn't know about it. This occurs between verses in; Daniel 2:40,41 Daniel 7:23,24 Hosea 3:4,5 Daniel 9:26a,26b , Daniel 11:35,36, Isaiah 61:2a,2b

The period of this great parenthesis, the Church Age, is a period of the intensified state of the angelic conflict. It was not included in the Old Testament Scriptures because it would have confused believers of that age, and given away a key part of God's plan that he did not want Satan to know about. Remember, Satan is not God like, he is not all knowing – he has to learn by observation and study. Satan was caught completely by surprise by the full impact of the Day of Pentecost and it took him a long time to develop his counter attack strategy – and so the early church had time to grow, spread and strengthen before his counter attack was launched in all its malice. Satan hates Christians greatly because

of this surprise and the fact that we have the Holy Spirit within us, making us superior in available power to him. **John 15:18ff, 1 John 4:4.**

The believers of Israel longed for things like the universal indwelling of the Holy Spirit, universal priesthood, rulership of messiah, and thought that they would occur when Messiah ruled – but they didn't see that he would rule in the heart of believers in the Church Age. It took several decades for the early apostles to “get their heads around” these amazing things. In Israel there are, and even in the Millennium there will be specialized priesthoods, but in the Church Age all believers in this period of intercalation are called into full time Christian service; we are all priests, ambassadors, kings, and servants of the most high. **1 Peter 2:9-12.**

### ISRAEL'S FUTURE

Israel has a future - which was given to them at their beginning. Abraham's Covenant. (Genesis 12:1-3.)

Israel's future is based on regeneration, and it is prophecied to certainly occur. (Romans 9:6-14, Zechariah 12:10ff.)

Israel's future is related to a piece of land. The Palestinian Covenant is certain. (Genesis 15:18, Numbers 34:1-12, Deuteronomy 30:1-9, Ezekiel 40ff.)

Israel has a ruling house forever - the Davidic dynasty. The last ruler will be the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennium. (2 Samuel 7:8-16, Psalm 89:20-37.)

Just before Judah went out under the Babylonian Captivity, Jeremiah was allowed to restate the promise. (Jeremiah 31:31 etc.) This is called the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:8-13). Even though Exile occurs for gross disobedience the promises made by God will be kept by Him 100%, it is just timing.

Israel's future begins as a nation at the Second Advent of Christ. (Zechariah 14:1-9.)

Israel's future is not hindered by their prior national discipline. (Isaiah 5:26-30, 14:1-3, 10:20-23, 11:11-16, Zechariah 10:6-12). Divine Discipline never ends the blessing of God for Israel or the Church, nor removes God's holy character – that can be depended upon to keep all promises made. **Hebrews 12:4-15.**

### DOCTRINES

#### ISRAEL

1. Israel has a future which was promised to Abraham. (Genesis 12:1-3)
2. Israel's future is based on regeneration. (Romans 9:6-14)
3. Israel's future is related to the land of Palestine. (Genesis 15:18, Numbers 34:1-12, Deuteronomy 30:1-9)
4. Israel has a King forever - the Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennium. (2 Samuel 7:8-16, Psalm 89:20-37)
5. The promises were confirmed to Jeremiah in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31ff, Hebrews 8:8-13)
6. Israel's future begins as a nation at the Second Advent of Christ. (Zechariah 14:1-9)
7. Israel's future is guaranteed, even though the nation is now in dispersion under the discipline of God. (Isaiah 5:26-30, 14:1-3, 10:20-23, 11:11-16, Zechariah 10:6-12)
8. Israel had a purpose
  - a) To witness to the holiness of the one true God. (Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 43:10,12)
  - b) To illustrate to the nations the blessings derived from serving the one true God. (Deuteronomy 33:26-29, 1 Chronicles 17:20-21, Psalm 144:15)
  - c) To receive, record and broadcast the Scriptures. (Deuteronomy 4:5-8, Romans 3:1-2)
  - d) To receive and proclaim the promised Messiah. (Genesis 3:15, 12:3, 2 Samuel 7:12-16, Isaiah 7:14, 9:6)
9. The nation Israel is now in dispersion under the discipline of God. The Church has replaced the mission of Israel during the Church Age. (Romans 11) When the Church is removed in the Rapture, Israel will again take up its purpose during the Tribulation (Revelation 7:4-8)

#### THE CHURCH

1. Greek EKKLESIA (literally "the called out ones")

This word is used four different ways in scripture.

- a) Citizen Assembly (Acts 19:32)
  - b) Assembly of Israel (Acts 7:38)
  - c) Synagogue (Matthew 18:17)
  - d) Body of Christ (all believers) (Ephesians 1:22,23, 5:25-7, Colossians 1:18)
2. The church is said to be a mystery. (Ephesians 3:1-6, Colossians 1:25,26, Romans 16:25,26). Mystery - something that was hidden in the past in the Old Testament period but is now revealed.
3. The Church began at Pentecost 32 AD (Acts 2) and will be removed from the earth at the Rapture (1Thessalonians 4:17)
4. Believers in the Church Age are unique, having spiritual blessings which did not exist in the Old Testament.
- a) Every believer is united with Christ, in the Body of Christ.
  - b) Jesus Christ indwells every believer.
  - c) The Holy Spirit indwells every believer.
  - d) Every believer is a priest, praying and serving directly to God.
  - e) We have a completed canon of scripture.
  - f) Believers are commanded to live by the Spirit, not by Law.
  - g) Every believer is an ambassador of Christ.
5. The Church is different to Israel.
- a) The Jews started with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). The Church started at Pentecost. (Acts 2; Galatians 3:26-28)
  - b) Israel was promised blessings on earth (Deuteronomy 28:1-14). The Church is promised blessings in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3; Hebrews 3:1).
  - c) Israel's relationship to God was based on a Covenant (Genesis 17:7,8). The Church's relationship to God is based on new birth (John 1:12;13; 1 Peter 1:23).
  - d) Israel's prophecy is mainly in the Old Testament. Prophecy of the Church is only in the New Testament.
  - e) Israel worshipped at Jerusalem (Psalm 122:1-4). The Church worships where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name (Matthew 18:20).
  - f) Israel lived under the law (Ezekiel 20:10-12). The Church is under grace (John 1:17; Romans 6:14).
  - g) Israel's destiny is with Palestine (Isaiah 60:18-21). The Church will be removed from the earth (I Thessalonians 4:13-18).
  - h) Christ is King and Messiah to Israel. Christ is Head and Bridegroom to the Church.
  - i) Israel contained Jews only. The Church is made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

**LESSON 67 – PROPHECY SURVEY**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
67	Prophecy Survey	1 Peter 1:10-12	Sequence end time events Fulfilled Prophecy

**INTRODUCTION**

We must have a humble approach to this subject not one of arrogance, as the angels themselves desire to look into this subject yet do not fully understand it. Remember the words of the angel to Daniel, in **Daniel 12:9-13**, and be humble. The final revelation of what is actually to happen will be given to people at the time. There is a good reason for that. It is simply that Satan and the demons don't at this point know these things either and must guess, so they cannot out-plan the plan! It is a reminder that Satan is not all knowing; God alone is all knowing. Satan is a creature – the only limitless thing about him is his arrogance!

We also don't know the final out working of these things, but suggest the following scheme in these lectures in humility. We do not expect you all to accept this viewpoint, and it is not required for the course that you do accept our suggestions here. We take the words of the angel to Daniel seriously, and we certainly wont argue with you over these things. We take Daniel very seriously - right to the last verses!

The scope of eschatology is a study of last things, those that are future from our viewpoint. It includes understanding the intermediate state as to where people go between their death and the Lord's return and the full resurrection of the body. It deals with our resurrection, the Great Tribulation period, the Second Advent of Christ, the Millennium, and the eternal state as revealed to John and others.

**METHODS OF APPROACH**

There are different methods of approach to the subject of prophetic revelation -



- [i] Topical approach such as the Rapture, the Second Advent and the Millennium
- [ii] The Biblical Theology approach
- [iii] The Systematic Theological approach, or what the biblical writers said about the future.

It is therefore of the utmost importance to make sure you know where a teacher is coming from when you look to that person in their teaching on prophetic revelation. A writer/lecturer's attitudes and beliefs will determine how they take prophetic passages. You need to ascertain what their attitude is to Scripture, and their hermeneutic methodology. Do they have a high view of Scripture or a low view? Are they spiritualizers or literalists?

**APPROACHES TO THE MILLENNIUM**

There are three types of approach to the Bible's teaching on the Millennium

- [i] The **Pre Millennial** approach, which sees the Millennium as future and that it requires the Lord to return to commence it.
- [ii] The **Post Millennialist** believes that the Millennium has already begun, or is about to begin, and does not need the Second Advent of Christ to commence it.
- [iii] The **Amillennialists** do not believe in a Millennium at all. They do not believe in the rule of Christ on earth at all. They spiritualize all the passages that refer to the Millennium applying them to the eternal state.

All theologians will fall into one of those three camps. You need to find out what one you are dealing with in any author on this subject before you can evaluate their total theological position. Our college at EBCWA holds to the pre millennial position as we believe it does the best job of consistent hermeneutics and comes to a conclusion that appears most correct. I repeat however – that in this area we are walking in places that God has specifically kept obscure to protect believers at future times from Satan knowing enough to be able to kill them all too easily. In such a situation, where we have incomplete knowledge, all sensible and Holy Spirit filled people are humble, and do not argue about things.

**EFFECT OF PROPHECY ON THE BELIEVER**

For the believer knowledge of biblical prophecy will have biblical fruit. If the "fruit" below does not exist in a prophetic student's life then you can be sure they are wrong in their viewpoint.....

- [a] It provides joy in the midst of affliction - 2 Corinthians 4:17.
- [b] It cleanses and encourages holy living - 1 John 3:3.
- [c] Is profitable like all Scripture for a number of important needs in the Christian life 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
- [d] Gives facts about life after death - 2 Corinthians 5:8.
- [e] Gives truth about the end of history to rest in and worship about.
- [f] Gives proof of the reliability of all Scripture due to fulfilled prophecy.
- [g] It will draw our hearts out in worship to God who is in control of history.

If your understanding of Bible prophetic doctrine does not produce a new sense of worship, a desire to evangelize, a determination to serve the Lord in the local church, then you have a wrong attitude towards prophecy. The understanding of the return of Christ was one of the driving forces in the early church and is in the last days of the believing church also.

**POST MILLENNIALISM**

Postmillennialism has been defined as, "That view of last things which holds that the kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, that the world is eventually to become Christianized, and that the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the Millennium.....the second coming of Christ will be followed immediately by the general resurrection, the general judgment and the introduction of heaven and hell in their fullness".

This has the concept that you do not need the Second Advent of Christ to herald in the Millennium. What is needed is the work of the Holy Spirit and through evangelism the majority of the world to become converted. One of the groups that subscribe to this concept are those who follow the so called modern "kingdom theology" viewpoint.

Most of the post-millennialists are fundamentalists, in relation to other doctrines, like ourselves. This viewpoint also contains liberals as well as those of the evangelical wing who do not have a high view of Scripture. These include people who see errors in the Bible in relation to science.

They tend to be Calvinistic. Most of the TULIP reformed people would be in this camp. They believe that the church is the instrument to bring about the Millennium. They believe that the Lord will return at the end of the Millennium and therefore the coming of the Lord is a long way away.

Some say that Satan is bound at the moment whilst others think that he is restricted. In the Charismatic wing of the church they do not tend to believe that he is bound, but believe that their prayer binds him in some way. While we will differ with many of these things, most in this camp are our brothers and sisters and our behaviour towards them needs to be gracious and loving. We "agree to differ" on these things with them, but we recognize them as family.

#### AREAS TO BE PERSONALLY CHALLENGED

[i] That Christ's coming is a long way away. The early church quite clearly did not believe that. The attitude of the early believers was, "even so come Lord Jesus". Revelation 22:20.

[ii] There is no evidence that the world is getting better. At no time in history has the world been getting better. Neither has the growth of Christianity ever out stripped the world population.

[iii] If you accept the post millennial view you have to interpret passages in a certain way and often divorce them from their larger context or cross references. It is often found that a lot of heat is generated with eschatology and precious little light.

The earliest post millennial view probably comes from the 11th century. This is the view recently of Rushdoony and North in what they call "Reconstructionalism" and its theological ally "Kingdom Theology". These men and their allies are fundamental in their faith and so are "family" to us – but we disagree politely on these matters. Do not expect them to be as polite however, as sadly Calvinism is associated with arrogance/superiority of viewpoint.

Many liberals will come into this area with social action or the so called "liberation theology". They believe that they can bring in peace on earth and good will towards all men. We have no company with such as these who reject historic truths about Jesus, for they serve a different Jesus to the real Jesus of history who we worship.

#### AMILLENNIALISM

Subscribers to this view do not believe that there will be a physical Millennium, or that Christ will rule on earth. Many in this camp will however be dedicated to the Word of God and many will argue for a high view of Scripture against the liberals.

They however take everything that is prophetic as spiritual rather than physical and look down on those who literally accept the physical/literal viewpoint as uneducated and naive. Their concept is that God's plan cannot be physical - it must be spiritual so that they take it all spiritually. They see the nation Israel as an irrelevance.

These people have a double hermeneutics and will take the Bible as it is with the exception of prophecy passages. They believe that they are in "heavenly places" and therefore prophecy today requires to be interpreted spiritually.

#### THE COVENANTS AND PROPHECY

The Amillennialists do not believe that the Covenants are yet to be fulfilled. How you interpret things depends on what the item says in context, but their view means that prophecy is always taken out of its context and put into a category of its own – as spiritual messages to all ages, or ours alone.

The Pre Millennialists adopt the "plain language hermeneutic approach" and evaluate in relation to it. If the language says that it is "like" or "as" you can see that there is a symbol involved, but unless there is a clear pointer to a symbolic meaning the meaning is taken literally by us.

The Pre Millennialists like ourselves believe that all the covenants will be literally fulfilled. There are passages in Romans 11 and Acts 15 which clearly show that the apostles believed that Israel has a future. Your attitude to what place Israel has in the plan of God is critical to your interpretation of the Scriptures as far as eschatology is concerned. If you believe that Israel has no spiritual significance today then you will be in the postmillennial or Amillennial camp. However if those prophecies and covenants must be fulfilled then you must be in the pre millennial camp.

There are several hundred Biblical prophecies to be fulfilled. Israel as a nation is unique in that they have reemerged after 1900 years to be reestablished as a nation. It has therefore demonstrated its importance and reinforced the literal view of fulfillment.

Unmistakably different millennial views result from different hermeneutical principles; that is, different interpretive principles. Premillennial views use literal or normal interpretation in all areas of Biblical truth whereas the Amillennial employ non literal or spiritual hermeneutics to eschatology alone.

All conservatives use a normal type of interpretation for the Scriptures in all areas, except prophecy. If you take all the Scriptures literally we believe you will always come up with a pre millennial view – but that is us, and we agree to differ with you if you reject this.

### **Amillennialism**

This view is quite ancient and goes back to Origen in the third century. He spiritualized the whole of the Old Testament and applied it to the church whilst Augustine spiritualized the concept of the kingdom. Most of the reformers criticised the Anabaptists who had a pre millennial view. This was easy to do because of some of the crazy things that the Anabaptists did. The residual belief by many in the Reformer's tradition is that "Pre-Millennialism is a bit nutty" goes back to some of the very strange views of the early Anabaptists in the 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Don't judge any movement by the "nuts" associated with their fringes, always go beyond to the theory and check it with scripture, and look for the lasting fruit in the membership. The satanic loves extremists – he delights in their destruction, but in their mockery of truth also.

### **Pre-millennialism**

This holds that the Second Coming of Christ will occur prior to the Millennium, which will see the kingdom of Christ on this earth for a literal 1000 years. In addition there will be several sequential resurrections and judgments. Eternity opens up for mankind at the end of the Millennial period.

This view stresses all the covenants. The pre millennial camp has no liberals at all in it, as it is based in a literal reading of scripture and a foundational faith in the literal return of Jesus to rule as King over all the earth. It stresses the coming of the Lord at any time for the church saints, and that it is Christ that will bring in the kingdom. A high view and the inerrancy of Scripture goes very strongly with the pre millennial view of Scripture. In this view Israel and the Church are separate and both have eternal destinies – but they differ and compliment each other.

Whilst there are several covenants to be fulfilled for the Jews it is acknowledged that there is individually no difference to those now "in Christ Jesus", be they Jew or Gentile, Bond or Free. The Jew is no longer under the law but under grace within the church, but in the Great Tribulation period the situation changes and Israel and its Law becomes the standard again.

All early church Fathers up to the time of Origen held this view, but after him the spiritualizing of scripture and removal of Israel as a future reality becomes the norm. Augustine adopted Origen's view which in turn was adopted by the Roman Catholic theologians of the Middle Ages. Both Calvin and Luther still had this view. However all the Ante Nicene Fathers were of the pre-millennial view as were the apostles. They all looked forward to the rule of Christ on the earth.

The pre-millennial view came back in the last 200 years through the Greek scholars who went back to the original. The Brethren and Baptist movement both held this view in the United States but the Baptists in England tended not to do so. This is an area of great differences – so tread carefully, prayerfully and really apply yourself to every biblical passage.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **PROPHECY: PRE-MILLENNIAL SEQUENCE OF END TIME EVENTS**

1. Note: Some of the events in the Tribulation may occur in a slightly different sequence.
2. CHURCH AGE
  - a) Rapture of the Church (1 Corinthians 15:51-58, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).
  - b) Judgment Seat of Christ (believers only - purpose is rewards) (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).
3. TRIBULATION (first 3 1/2 years)
  - a) Revival of Roman Empire, Ten Nation Confederacy (Daniel 7:7, 24, Revelation 13:1, 17:3, 12, 13).
  - b) Rise of Middle East Dictator (Daniel 7:8, Revelation 13:1-8).
  - c) Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem
  - d) Seven seals judgments (Revelation 6:1ff) and seven trumpets judgments (Revelation 8:7ff).
  - e) Two witnesses preach from Jerusalem until killed.
  - f) Peace treaty with Israel (Daniel 9:27).
  - g) World church established (Revelation 17:1-15).
  - h) Russia attacks Israel about four years before the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 38, 39).
4. GREAT TRIBULATION (second 3 1/2 years)

- a) Peace treaty with Israel broken
- b) Antichrist sets up Abomination of Desolation and demands worship (Matthew 24:15,21).
- c) World government, world economic system, world religion begins (Daniel 7:23, Revelation 13:5-8, 17:16, 17).
- d) Seven bowl judgments (Revelation 16:2ff).
- e) Martyrdom of many Tribulation Saints and Jews (Revelation 7:9-17, 13:15).
- f) Catastrophic divine judgments poured out on the earth (Revelation 6:17).
- g) World war breaks out in Middle East; battle of Armageddon (Daniel 11:40-45, Revelation 9:13-21, 16:12-16).

5. **SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST**

- a) Second coming of Christ (Matthew 24:27-31, Revelation 19:11).
- b) Tribulation surviving believers proceed into the Millennium (Matthew 3:12).
- c) Unbelievers cast off the earth (Ezekiel 20:33-38, Matthew 3,12, 25:31-46, Jude 14, 15, Revelation 19:15-21, 20:1-4).
- d) Satan bound (Revelation 20:1-3).
- e) Resurrection of Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs (Revelation 20:4).

6. **MILLENNIUM**

- a) Millennial kingdom begins (Revelation 20:5, 6).
- b) Christ reigns on earth for 1,000 years in perfect environment and peace (Revelation 20:4-6).
- c) Satan released at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-9).
- d) Rebellion of Gog and Magog at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:7-10).
- e) Resurrection of all unbelievers (Revelation 20:5a).
- f) Great White Throne Judgment (unbelievers only - purpose is judgment) (Revelation 20:11-15).

7. **ETERNITY**

- a) New heaven, new earth, new Jerusalem (Revelation 21, 22).
- b) Believers blessed forever with Christ (Revelation 21 - 22:5).
- c) Unbelievers punished forever with Satan (Matthew 25:41).

**PROPHECY: FULFILLED PROPHECY PROOF OF INSPIRATION**

All scripture is inspired by God (2 Peter 1:19-21) Therefore, all Biblical prophecies must come true. This is demonstrated in prophecies already fulfilled.

- 1. Reuben would be unstable and lose his rights as firstborn. Prophecy (Genesis 49:3-4) - Fulfillment (Numbers 26:5-11)
- 2. Simeon would not have land allotted in the Promised Land. Prophecy (Genesis 49:5-7) - Fulfillment (Joshua 19:1-9)
- 3. Levi would not have land allotted in the Promised Land. Prophecy (Genesis 49:5-7) - Fulfillment (Joshua 21:4-7)
- 4. Judah would become the ruler over the nation of Israel. Prophecy (Genesis 49:8-12) - Fulfillment (Numbers 10:14, Joshua 15:1 Revelation 5:5)
- 5. Zebulun would receive an allotment of land on the coast and it would reach down to Sidon. Prophecy (Genesis 49:13) - Fulfillment (Joshua 19:10-16) as well as history when they took the land to the south of their area previously allocated to Asher and their influence reached right down to Sidon.
- 6. Issachar would be given a fertile area between two mountains and would be a servant. Prophecy (Genesis 49:14-15) - Fulfillment (Joshua 19:17-22)
- 7. Dan would be a full member of Israel but would lead the nation away in idolatry. Prophecy (Genesis 49:16-18) - Fulfillment (Joshua 19:40-48) and the fact that idolatry in the nation was led by this tribe. It is also of interest that his tribe is not mentioned as having any part in the 144,000 witnesses in (Revelation 7).
- 8. Gad would be a warrior tribe. Prophecy (Genesis 49:19) - Fulfillment (1 Chronicles 5:18-20, 12:8)
- 9. Asher would have a rich and fertile land. Prophecy (Genesis 49:20, Deuteronomy 33:24-25) - Fulfillment - History - Asher enjoyed a rich and fertile area together in more recent times successful oil exploration.
- 10. Naphtali would be quick to spread good news Prophecy (Genesis 49:21) - Fulfillment (Matthew 4:13-15) as Jesus began his ministry in Naphtali and most of the disciples who gave the good news came from that region.
- 11. Joseph would receive great blessing. Prophecy (Genesis 49:22-26) - Fulfillment (Deut 33:13-17)
- 12. Benjamin would be a ferocious group Prophecy. (Genesis 49:27) - Fulfillment (Judges 19, 20:21-47)

13. Joshua and Caleb to enter into the Promised Land after 40 years wandering. Prophecy (Numbers 14:24, 30) - Fulfillment (Joshua 3:7,17 14:6-12)
14. Sisera would be defeated by a woman. Prophecy (Judges 4:9) - Fulfillment (Judges 4:21)
15. Hophni and Phineas would die on the same day. Prophecy (1 Samuel 2:34) - Fulfillment (1 Samuel 4:11)
16. The priesthood would be removed from the family of Eli. Prophecy (1 Samuel 2:27-36, 3:11-14) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 2:26-27)
17. Saul was to be the first king of Israel and would save the nation from the Philistines. Prophecy (1 Samuel 9:15-16) - Fulfillment (1 Samuel 11;14)
18. Saul's kingdom would not continue. Prophecy (1 Samuel 13:14, 15:28, 24:20) - Fulfillment (2 Samuel 3:1, 5:1-3)
19. Saul to die in battle on a certain day. Prophecy (1 Samuel 28:19) - Fulfillment (1 Samuel 31:1-6)
20. Solomon to build the Temple not David. Prophecy (1 Chronicles 17:1-12) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 7:51)
21. The sword not to depart from David's house because of sin. Prophecy (2 Samuel 12:10-12) - Fulfillment (2 Samuel 13:28-29, 16:21-22)
22. The bones of Jeroboam's pagan priests to be burnt upon the false altar that Jeroboam had constructed. Prophecy (1 Kings 13:1-3) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 23:4-6)
23. Jeroboam's dynasty to be destroyed. Prophecy (1 Kings 14:10-11) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 15:27-28)
24. Ahab to be victorious over the Syrians. Prophecy (1 Kings 20:28) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 20:29-30)
25. Ahab to die in battle for killing Naboth. Prophecy (1 Kings 21:19, 22:17) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 22:37)
26. The dogs would then lick his blood from his chariot. Prophecy (1 Kings 21:19) - Fulfillment (1 Kings 22:38)
27. Jezebel to be eaten by wild dogs. Prophecy (1 Kings 21:23, 2 Kings 9:10) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 9:30-37)
28. Elisha to receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Prophecy (2 Kings 2:9) - Fulfillment demonstrated by the fact that the Bible records that Elisha performed twice as many miracles as Elijah.
29. Naaman to recover from his leprosy. Prophecy (2 Kings 5:3,8,10) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 5:14)
30. The starving inhabitants of Samaria to receive an abundance of food in twenty four hours. Prophecy (2 Kings 7:1) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 7:16-17)
31. An arrogant aide to the king to see the miracle but not to eat of the food. Prophecy (2 Kings 7:2,19) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 7:17,20)
32. Beb-Hadad, a Syrian king to recover from his sickness, but die anyway.. Prophecy (2 Kings 8:10) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 8:15)
33. Jehu to have four generations on the throne of northern kingdom. Prophecy (2 Kings 10:30) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 15:12)
34. Jehu's dynasty to then be destroyed. Prophecy (Hosea 1:4) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 15:8-12)
35. Joash to defeat the Syrians on three occasions. Prophecy (2 Kings 13:18-19) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 13:25)
36. Jehoram to suffer with a disease because of sin. Prophecy (2 Chronicles 21:15) - Fulfillment (2 Chronicles 21:18-19)
37. Amaziah to die because of his idolatry. Prophecy (2 Chronicles 25:16) - Fulfillment (2 Chronicles 25:20-27)
38. Sennacherib to be assassinated in his own land. Prophecy (Isaiah 37:7) - Fulfillment (Isaiah 37:37-38)
39. Sennacherib's attempt to invade Jerusalem not to be successful. Prophecy (Isaiah 37::33-35) - Fulfillment (Isaiah 37:36-37)
40. Hezekiah to be healed of a terminal disease. Prophecy (Isaiah 38:5) - Fulfillment (Isaiah 38:9)
41. Cyrus to allow the Jews to go back to Jerusalem. Prophecy (Isaiah 44:28) - Fulfillment (Ezra 1:1-2)

42. Zedekiah to be captured by Nebuchadnezzar. Prophecy (Jeremiah 21:7) - Fulfillment (Jeremiah 52:8-11)
43. Jehoahaz to die in Egyptian captivity and not return to Judah. Prophecy (Jeremiah 22:10-12) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 23:33-34)
44. Jehoiachin to be captured by Nebuchadnezzar. Prophecy (Jeremiah 22:25) - Fulfillment (2 Kings 24:15)
45. Coniah was told that no seed of his would sit on the throne of David. Prophecy (Jeremiah 22:28-30) - Fulfillment - historical. This prophecy is in apparent contradiction to the Davidic Covenant of (2 Samuel 7:8-16) where David was promised a "son" who would reign forever on his throne. This apparent contradiction is solved by the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ as Mary was descended from David via Nathan. (Luke 3:23-31)
46. Hananiah, a false prophet to die within a year. Prophecy (Jeremiah 28:15-16) - Fulfillment (Jeremiah 28:17)
47. Nebuchadnezzar to invade Egypt. Prophecy (Jeremiah 43:9-13) - Fulfillment - history
48. Nebuchadnezzar to defeat the Egyptians at Carchemish. Prophecy (Jeremiah 46) - Fulfillment - history.
49. Nebuchadnezzar to be given the mind of an animal because of pride. Prophecy (Daniel 4:19-27) - Fulfillment (Daniel 4:28-37)
50. Belshazzar to have his kingdom removed from him. Prophecy (Daniel 5:5, 25-28) - Fulfillment (Daniel 5:30)
51. Alexander the Great to establish a world empire in a very short time. Prophecy (Daniel 2:32-39, 7:6, 8:5-8, 21, 11:3) - Fulfillment - history.
52. Alexander to defeat the Persians - Prophecy (Daniel 8:5-8) - Fulfillment - history
53. Alexander to die at the height of his power and his kingdom to be divided into four parts. Prophecy (Daniel 8:8, 22, 11:4) - Fulfillment - history tells us that at the height of his power Alexander died of a fever in Babylon at the age of 33. After a period of some twenty years of internal struggle and fighting the eleven generals of the Greek army who had survived Alexander were reduced to four called in Scripture the four winds of heaven, Ptolemy, Seluchus, Cassander and Lysimachus.
54. Antiochus Epiphanes to persecute the Jews and desecrate their Temple. Prophecy (Daniel 8:11-25) - Fulfillment - history. The whole of (Daniel 11) represents historical prophecies of the Greek dynasties based on Ptolemy and Seluchus which lasted until the time of Julius Caesar with Cleopatra being the last Greek ruler of Egypt.
55. Zacharias would be mute until the birth of John the Baptist. Prophecy (Luke 1:20) - Fulfillment (Luke 1:57-64)
56. John the Baptist to be the herald for the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophecy (Luke 1:76-77) - Fulfillment (Matthew 3:1-11, Luke 3:2-6)
57. Simeon to live until he had seen the Messiah. Prophecy (Luke 2:25-26) - Fulfillment (Luke 2:28-30)
58. Peter would deny Jesus Christ. Prophecy (John 13:38) - Fulfillment (John 18:24-27)
59. Peter to die as a martyr. Prophecy (John 21:18-19, 2 Peter 1 :12-14) - Fulfillment - history
60. Judas to give himself over to Satan. Prophecy (John 6:70) - Fulfillment (John 13:27)
61. Judas to betray Jesus. Prophecy (John 13:21) - Fulfillment (John 18:2-5)
62. Paul would suffer a lot for the Lord Jesus Christ. Prophecy (Acts 9:16) - Fulfillment (2 Corinthians 11:23-28, 12:7-10, Philippians 1:29-30)
63. Paul would be a minister to the Gentiles. Prophecy (Acts 9:15) - Fulfillment (Romans 11:13, Ephesians 3:1)
64. Paul would preach before kings. Prophecy (Acts 9:15) - Fulfillment (Acts 24-26)
65. Paul would go to Rome. Prophecy (Acts 23:11) - Fulfillment (Acts 28:16)

**LESSON 68 – MAJOR COVENANTS**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
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68	Major Covenants	Genesis 12:1-4 Genesis 15:18-21 2 Sam 7:8-17, 18-29 Isaiah 9:6,7 11:1-12 Luke 1:26-33 Acts 1:1-8	Covenants
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**INTRODUCTION**

**Genesis 12:1-4** introduces the Abrahamic Covenant. There are three parts to the Abrahamic Covenant, that he will make a great nation, that they will be the recipients of great blessing, and will share the blessing with all those who bless Abraham, and that he will make a name for him, and his name will be great among the nations.

We need to ask what each of these things mean. When were they fulfilled, or have they been fulfilled? Also to whom do they apply?

In **Genesis 15:18-21** the Palestinian Covenant is tied in as well. In this covenant there is an absolute promise of a land. God says that “unto thy seed” I have given a large area of real estate. In **Genesis 15:9-17** the covenant is seen as unconditional. We call it the “Palestinian Covenant”, but remember when we use this term that the name “Palestine” was developed by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the destruction of the second Jewish Revolt as a way of removing all reference to Israel/Jews from the land, so the best title for this covenant should be, “The Land Covenant”.

The standard way of making a covenant in the ancient world was to sacrifice an animal, divide it and those who made the covenant would walk between the divided pieces of the sacrifice. It is noted in this passage that it is made with God only. Abraham is asleep; It is God who does the promising. Abraham does not walk with God between the pieces. God is saying in effect, “This is your land, I have given it to you and your seed unconditionally and forever in time”.

The Palestinian/Land Covenant is a personal promise to Abraham. There is a universal promise of blessing, a national promise of land. It is of great importance, that to the time we live in, the Jews have never occupied the land that was promised to them in this covenant. This indicates clearly that God has a future plan for the nation Israel. We need to let the text teach us and not try and tell the text what it should say to fit into concepts. Here you have a prophecy on the behalf of God which is a promised inheritance, and it has not been fulfilled to date 2020.

The liberals will attempt to attack the very thought that all these covenants and prophecies are literal, for acceptance of that view will inevitably lead to a pre millennial viewpoint. Each time it is tested however against the Hebrew grammar the Bible supports a literal interpretation, and that these covenants have not yet been fulfilled, but certainly will be.

Solomon tried to inhabit the land but did not succeed either in occupying the land or by having a kingdom, which lasted forever as promised in the Davidic Covenant. It is important to see that portions of the Abrahamic covenants have been fulfilled, and always literally, and that logically the other parts will be fulfilled literally in due course.

**THE DAVIDIC COVENANT**

Solomon’s descendants reigned only until 586 BC - the start of the Babylonian Captivity. After the Babylonian Captivity a man called Zerubbabel, a descendent of David, became the leader under the Persians - but did not become king. It is therefore seen that Solomon and his descendants did not provide a fulfillment of the Rulership Covenants.

In the promise about the land, they were not going to roam any more. Over the last 2,000 years the Jews have been called the “wandering Jew”. The Jews are now back in the land but “the wicked do afflict them”. Over half the total Jewish population is now back in the land of Israel as at the end of 2019. The promises of peace and prosperity that were partially fulfilled in Solomon’s reign still have to be fulfilled fully and literally.

**OUR WORK FOR THE LORD**

David wanted to build the Temple but it was his son who was permitted by God to do it. David sinned against the Lord but his life showed that the individual’s sin does not prevent a person serving God in the future. In the Church Age some sins may exclude you from certain areas of service however as you no longer fulfill the high character requirements for pastoral service. 1 Timothy 3:3-13, Titus 1:7-11.

Many people are discontent about the jobs that the Lord has given them and David is a real mentor for mental attitude in such things. God told David that he was not going to build the Temple. 2 Samuel 7:1ff. He therefore did the work that had been assigned to him. He was a great warrior, a great Psalmist, and he prepared the way for Solomon to build the temple. We should discern what we are to do and get on with it – we have a great mentor in David for this.

If you take notice of people, and value them ahead of the opinion of you of the Lord then they will lift you up or pull you down. If you over value your own abilities you will lift yourself up. The Christian way however is to allow the Lord to lift you up to where he wants you to be - **1 Peter 5:6-9**. When you lift up a child it is your decision as to how high. So it

should be with God. We should be content where he lifts us to and walk the path he has prepared for us from eternity past.

David turned from his sin, which had caused him a great deal of sorrow and pain. When you sin you get on your knees and repent, turn away from it, pour your heart out to the Lord and get on with the work that he has for you. Through dealing with his great sin David understood that the Plan of God for his life rested on the person and Character of God in grace and mercy rather than trusting himself. Psalm 51, 103.

In **1 Samuel 7:8-16** - the kingdom David is given is said to be everlasting. David is told that he is not going to build the Temple but his son will. Solomon fulfilled this. David even lost his kingdom to one of his sons for a while. All these things however will be fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Millennium.

### IS THE KINGDOM ON EARTH OR IN HEAVEN?

The question is whether the reign will be in heaven or on earth. What did the prophets of old say? **Isaiah 9:6-7** showed that he was not in two minds about it. The one who is coming is the Prince of Peace, the son of David. He was going to reign on David's throne, which was/is in Jerusalem, not New York.

In **Isaiah 11:1-2**, he says that the person is a root from the root of Jesse and the seven spirits showing a combination of the first and second advents.

**Isaiah 11:3-9** - In this passage we have the Lamb and it shows the Second Advent and the Millennium. There is a change in nature and in the animal kingdom with changes in the habits of wild animals, which likely speak again.

**Isaiah 11:10-11** - this shows that the outcasts of Israel will come back from the four corners of the earth This again has not been fulfilled yet.

In **Luke 1:31-33** Gabriel tells Mary of the forthcoming ministry and destiny of the Lord Jesus Christ both for the first and second advents with a final statement that of His Kingdom there will be no end.

In Acts 1 when the Lord returned to heaven the angel said that this same Jesus will return in like manner to this spot. The disciples had asked if He is going to reign on the throne of David now that He is risen. The Lord says that this is not the time but indicates that there will be a time at the Father's pleasure. This will be when history has run its course. The apostles are left with the expectation of a literal fulfillment of their expectation – but delayed from their day to a latter one.

Some promises of his return and His fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant are - Jeremiah 30, 33, Ezekiel 37,38, Daniel 7, Hosea 3, Amos 8, 9, Zechariah 12-14.

All the prophets recognized that this had not been fulfilled in their day. They came right the way through to John the Baptist who was called the last prophet - and it still had not been fulfilled in his day.

The Lord shows that He is in control and gives us the great commission in **Matthew 28:19-20**. Our job is not to bring in the new kingdom. Our Lord will bring in a kingdom in his own time in accord with the divine plan. We need to "redeem the time" given for our short lives. **Ephesians 5:16**. When he returns it will be with the sword of judgment rather than the offer of grace. We should live in the light of His coming again. "Even so come Lord Jesus".

### DOCTRINES

#### COVENANTS

1. A covenant is a contract or agreement between God and man.
2. Some covenants are unconditional - God will fulfil them, irrespective of man's obedience. Other covenants are conditional upon man's obedience.
3. Christ is central to all of the covenants in Scripture:
  - a) EDENIC - Christ is the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-47).
  - b) ADAMIC - Christ is the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15).
  - c) NOAHIC - Christ is the greatest son of Shem (Luke 3:36; Genesis 9:23-27).
  - d) ABRAHAMIC - The seed to whom the promises were made (Genesis 22:18).
  - e) MOSAIC - He fulfilled this covenant (Matthew 5:17).



- f) PALESTINIAN - He lived as a Jew in the land and will inherit the land
- g) DAVIDIC - Christ is the King of the Jews and will rule forever (Luke 1:31-33; John 19:19-22).
- h) NEW - Christ's sacrifice is its foundation and focus in the Millennium (1 Corinthians 11:25).

**EDENIC COVENANT**

- 1. The covenant in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 1:28-30; 2:8-17).
- 2. Main points:
  - a) To be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28).
  - b) To subdue the earth (Genesis 1:28).
  - c) To have dominion of the animal creation (Genesis 1:28).
  - d) To eat the herbs and fruit (Genesis 1:29).
  - e) To till and keep the garden (Genesis 2:15).
  - f) Not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:17).

**ADAMIC COVENANT**

- 1. The Adamic covenant deals with the fall and restoration of mankind and creation. When Christ returns creation is removed from its bondage. (Romans. 8:21)
- 2. Satan's means of bringing sin into the world, the serpent, is cursed (Genesis 3:14) and goes from being the most beautiful of God's creatures to the most repugnant. The brazen serpent raised by Moses in the wilderness (Numbers. 21:5-9) becomes a picture of Christ being made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21 ), the brass representing judgment; the serpent sin.
- 3. The promise of a redeemer (Genesis 3:15). The seed of the woman descends through Seth (Genesis 5:3-7), Noah (Genesis 6:8-10) Shem (Genesis 9:26,27) Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4) Isaac (Genesis 17:19-21) Jacob (Genesis 28:10-14) Judah (Genesis 49:10) David (2 Samuel 7:5-17), ultimately fulfilled in Jesus Christ (Isaiah 7:9-14; Matthew 1:20-23).
- 4. The judgment on the woman (Genesis 3:16) in four areas.
  - a) Increase in sorrow and pain regarding conception.
  - b) Sorrow in relation to children
  - c) The woman would be attracted to the man
  - d) The woman would be subject to the man (1 Timothy 2:11-14, Ephesians. 5:22-25, 1 Corinthians 11:7-9)
- 5. The judgment on man (Genesis 3:17-19)
  - a) The ground is cursed
  - b) Sorrow is inevitable in this life.
  - c) Man is to work for a living rather than having it provided (Genesis 3:17-19)
  - d) Man will eventually die (Genesis 3:19)

**NOAHIC (EVERLASTING) COVENANT**

- 1. The covenant with Noah never to flood the earth again (Genesis 8:20- 9:27)
- 2. The relation of man to the earth is confirmed (Genesis 8:21).
- 3. Seasons, day and night and harvesting confirmed (Genesis 8:22).
- 4. Human government introduced (Genesis 9:1-6).
- 5. A curse is given to the Hamitic races (Genesis 9:24,25).
- 6. The Semitic races will be the source of spiritual wealth (Genesis 9:26,27).
- 7. The Japhetic groups will be dominant (Genesis 9:27).
- 8. The earth will never be judged with water again (Genesis 8:21; 9:11).
- 9. The rainbow given as the sign of the promise

**ABRAHAMIC COVENANT**

1. Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) founds the nation of Israel
2. It is confirmed with Abraham with emphasis on the land (Genesis 13:14-18), the spiritual seed (Genesis 15:1-6) and its everlasting quality (Genesis 17:6-8).
3. It is an unconditional covenant - God will fulfil it. (God caused Abraham to fall asleep as He ratified the covenant alone Genesis 15:12-18)
4. The seven-fold covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) is fulfilled as follows:-
  - a) PROMISE "And I will make of thee a great nation.  
FULFILLMENT Jews (Genesis. 13:16; John 8:37), Arabs (Genesis. 17:20), In Christ (Romans 4:16-17, 9:7-8; Galatians 3:7,29).
  - b) PROMISE "I will bless thee".  
FULFILLMENT To Abraham (Genesis 13:14-17, 15:18-21. 24:35), To believers in Christ (Genesis 15:6; John 8:56)
  - c) PROMISE "And make thy name great.  
FULFILLMENT Abraham is renowned, not only in Christianity but also in Judaism and with the Moslems.
  - d) PROMISE "And thou shalt be a blessing.  
FULFILLMENT With the work of fulfilment of Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ, he was a blessing. (Galatians 3:13,14).
  - e) PROMISE "And I will bless them that bless thee.  
FULFILLMENT This is seen in the rise of many nations eg Britain in the 19th century, the rise of the USA.
  - f) PROMISE "And curse him that curseth thee.  
FULFILLMENT The decline of nations such as the Spanish Empire after the Armada, the fall of Nazi Germany, the fall of the Czars of Russia, the decline of Egypt at the Exodus. Scriptural examples:(Deuteronomy 30:7; Isaiah 14:1-2; Joel 3:1-8; Micah 5:7-9; Haggai 2:22; Zechariah 14. 1-3; Matthew 25:40-46).
  - g) PROMISE "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.  
FULFILLMENT The whole world can be blessed through Jesus, the son of Abraham. (John 8:56-58; Galatians 3:16).
5. It is clear that we should support the Jews, as it is a sure means of enjoying divine blessing.

**PALESTINIAN (Anti-Semitic term – by pagan Hadrian) better “LAND COVENANT”**

1. The Land Covenant deals with the Jews controlling an area of land in the Middle East which was unconditionally given to Abraham. It should be noted that the Jews have never possessed the land as specified, but will do so during the Millennium. (Deuteronomy 30:1-9, Isaiah 11:10-12, Jeremiah 23:3-8, Ezekiel 37:21-25).
2. The Palestinian/Land Covenant gives:
  - a) Dispersion for disobedience (v 1) (Deuteronomy 28:63-68).
  - b) The future repentance of Israel (v 2).
  - c) The return of the Lord (v 3) (Amos 9:9-14; Acts 15:14-17).
  - d) Restoration to the land (v 5) (Isaiah 11:11,12; Jeremiah 23:3-8; Ezekiel 37:21-25).
  - e) National conversion (v 6) (Romans 11:26-27; Joel 2:14-16).
  - f) Judgment of Israel's enemies (v 7) Joel 3:1 -8).
  - g) National prosperity (v 9) (Amos 9:11-15).
3. It is unconditional - God will fulfil it.

**DAVIDIC COVENANT**

1. Israel will have a king forever 2 Samuel 7:8-17.
  - a) A descendant of David in the Davidic line (v 12)
  - b) He will have a kingdom to rule over. (v 12)
  - c) God will provide a throne. (v 13)
  - d) The throne will be forever. (vs 13,16)
  - e) The Davidic Covenant is restated in (v 16)

2. The covenant has one condition - disobedience will be rewarded with discipline but will not cause the cancellation of the covenant. (2 Samuel 7:15; Psalm 89:20-37)
3. Discipline came with the division of the kingdom under Rehoboam. (1 Kings 12:16-20)
4. Discipline continued with the captivity of Samaria in 721 BC and Judah in 586 BC.
5. Since then the only King of David crowned in Jerusalem has been crowned with a crown of thorns. (Matthew 27:29).
6. The Davidic Covenant was confirmed to Mary. (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:29-31).
7. The Davidic Covenant will be fulfilled at the Second Advent of Christ when He will commence His everlasting rule with the 1,000 year reign of the Millennium. ((Luke 1:32, Acts 2:29-30, Revelation 20:4-6)

**MOSAIC COVENANT**

1. The covenant between God and Israel, given through the Law of Moses (Exodus - Deuteronomy)
2. It was a conditional covenant - it depended on man's obedience (Deuteronomy 28:1,15)
3. It had three main parts:
  - a) Section 1 - The Commandments - proves that no man can keep the Law. All men are proven sinners, and therefore need a Saviour.
  - b) Section 2 - The Tabernacle and Sacrifices - Pictures Christ as the Saviour, the only sacrifice which can pay the eternal penalty of sin.
  - c) Section 3 - Social Code - Laws to preserve the nation Israel - law, hygiene, morals, taxation, etc.

**NEW COVENANT**

1. The New Covenant guarantees eternal blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-37, Hebrews 8:7-9).
2. It is unconditional - God will fulfil it. "I will" (Hebrews 8:10,12) rather than "If ye will" (Exodus 19:5).
3. The New Covenant is said to be better than the Mosaic Covenant. (Hebrews 7:19; Romans 8:3,4).
4. Obedience is from a willing heart (Hebrews 8:10) whilst that for the Mosaic Law was fear (Hebrews 2:2; 12:25-27).
5. In the New Covenant all shall know God, from the least to the greatest (Hebrews 8:11).
6. The sins are forgotten under the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:12).
7. The New Covenant relies on the completed sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:11-12).

**LESSON 69 – EVENTS BEFORE THE SECOND ADVENT**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
69	Events Before the 2nd Advent	Matthew 13 Matthew 24:32-33 Titus 2:13 James 5:7-8	Tribulation in Matthew 24

**SIGNS OF THE COMING OF THE LORD**

Your concept and beliefs about the future have an effect on the way you live here and now. If you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back for you any day you are going to have a completely different attitude to evangelism and life priorities than if you think that he will not return for many years to come, if at all.

If you study eschatology you need to study all the other "ologies" before doing so. This is an area of great controversy both within and without the Christian community. If you are going to be a Christian teacher you cannot sidestep anything within the Scriptures, and there are issues here that must be understood and taught well in humility, or you open the door to false teachers capturing the Lord's people under your care.

One third of the Bible was prophecy when it was written. Some of it has been fulfilled literally whilst other passages have yet to be fulfilled **literally**, if one takes a consistent approach.

For instance the angels words in Acts 1 still awaits fulfillment. In **Acts 1:8** we are told that this Jesus will return in exactly the same way as he has left. As he left physically it can be expected that he will return physically. The early church preached the early return of the Lord for his church. "He is coming today", was their catch cry and the impetus for evangelism and every part of the work of the early Christian church. Those who follow the apostles, as we are told to do so in Jude 3, are to expect the sudden/early and imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What does this mean for our planning and looking forward? If you are doing biblical studies now to be useful later, then do your best with enthusiasm, right up to the day the Lord leads you elsewhere, whether it is in time or into eternity. We are called to be useful and obedient until the Lord's return for us, or his call home to us in death. The Lord commands you to work right up until the end of your earthly service, and not give up things that are legitimate, but you should question those things that are doubtful, because it might be a waste of your limited time and money.

Your concept of the Rapture, Tribulation, and Second Coming will affect everything that you do. The EBCWA Bible College believes that the Lord is coming for us (Rapture), and until he comes we are to be found doing what we have been called to with passionate worshipful focus. In your cases, at this point in time, that means to study and prepare for greater service as you serve today in your local church and study by night.

### **MATTHEW 13**

The seven parables in Matthew 13 show the main features in the present age. We have a mixture of different people in the church with the tares or weeds, the make believers being there just as much as the wheat, the true believer is. This is shown with the weeds sown among the wheat. Israel is seen like the treasure hidden in the field, it is still there awaiting the return of their Messiah. We have a picture here of a mixed group being part of the greater body of Christ. You do not have a picture here of things getting better and better, nor getting worse, although the Lord will warn that things will get far worse as the days speed towards the end.

Evil is left side by side with good, until the time of harvest. In the fullness of time however there will be a judging of evil and a reaping of what all have sown into their own lives. **2 Corinthians 5:9-15**. The Lord is going to judge not only the church but also the whole world. An in depth study of Matthew 13 shows that the post millennial view is fatally flawed. Refer to the EBCWA Harmony of the Gospels for further study of this topic.

This is clearly a pastorally significant passage. When you go into any local church you will find both wheat and tares growing together. The wheat will be producing at various rates. Some will be on good ground, some on stony others on ground affected by weeds. Some people in the church will do great things for the Lord. Some will be a cause of trouble, some will be spiritual a couple of times a year and that will be all. Right up to the time of the Lord's return you will have a mixture of people in every church; both spiritual and carnal, fake and confused. Matthew 25. Things are not going to get better and better. Do not expect a perfect church until the end when the Lord comes to sort out the sheep and the goats.

### **SIGNS OF THE RETURN OF THE LORD**

There are nine signs of the "soon coming" return of the Lord. These are signs that the "beginning of troubles" has begun.

[a] wars and rumours of wars,

[b] famines,

[c] pestilences,

[d] earthquakes,

[e] martyrs,

[f] false prophets,

[g] abounding iniquity,

[h] a cooling ardour for Christ,

[i] the gospel of the kingdom to be preached to the whole world.

**APOSTACY IN THE CHURCH**

Another feature will be the growing and aggressive apostasy by the make believers in the church. These people will:-

[a] deny the person and deity of Christ,

[b] deny the work of Christ on the Cross,

[c] there will be a significant decline in morals to a state of relative morality among them,

[d] encourage a departure from the teaching of the Second Coming of the Lord and the judgments involved with that event.

These are all being characterized by events of our own day. The other religions are talking more about Christ than many Christians are. Many Buddhists say that Christ was the greatest man who ever lived. The Hindus have removed His deity yet honour him, as do the Moslems. We are all like Jesus they say, simple servants of the great God/spirit.

Satan is aggressive in his bid for a one world religion, so that, as he will initially say through his Anti-Christ, "all can worship god in the way they understand it and reject the intolerant God of Christianity as unique". The satanic philosophy says that Christ is everyone who is in touch with the god within them. Satanic religion argues that we are all potentially "christ's". This is little different from the so called "New Age" (actually old Eastern demonic) or Liberal Christian attitude.

This is why the liberal world religious leaders can meet and pray together. Satan has a surprise for them however, for his Anti-Christ figure will con them all into following his "one world religion", and then he will kill them all when he sets up his satanic worship system in the tribulation temple in Jerusalem.

There is a watering down of what true Christianity is in our own day and it will continue until the enemy is able to move fully against the church, after the Rapture, with all the genuine believers removed. The fake "Christians" attack the deity of Christ now, they pull Him down, and raise man up, and all the Anti-Christ will do is take their fake faith to its logical man-worshipping extreme. This has all happened before. People such as the Gnostics of the first century said very similar things to what are done today; Satan hasn't had an original thought for centuries!

There will be wars and rumours of wars until the end. There have been more wars since the end of the Second World War than there has been before in any similar time span in history. Its is just a sign that we draw near the end.

**WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?**

There is a down playing of the need of people to come before their Creator as their Saviour. Satanic religion states that there is no need for a blood sacrifice to solve their sin problem, for they don't have a sin problem. Satanic religion may always be spotted, for they have no sin, no saviour, no hell, no judgment and no morality!

Attitudes to sexual conduct have never been so low as they are in the Western World today. Down playing the Second Advent is also a characteristic of today where people are pushing this far away, or rejecting it outright. New Age teaching has come right through the eastern religions and into the liberal Christian churches.

The Lord Jesus Christ is either the unique person of the universe the God-Man, a liar or mentally deranged, as shown by his claims. He cannot, by the evidence be classified as a good man. He is either God, a liar, or an imposter.

**THE LAST DAYS**

Remember the bible makes clear that "the last days" are all the days since Pentecost. They do not refer to just the last days of the church. The last days refers to God giving days of grace through the church to the world. Grace comes with the warning of judgment also. Unsaved mankind needs to attend to the message of the Cross or they will pay the penalty.

The coming of the Lord for the church is imminent; it could happen at any time. There is no major prophecy to be fulfilled before the Lord comes for his church. The only exception to this well accepted statement is that Ezekiel 38-39 may need to be fulfilled before the Tribulation, as it will take seven years to bury the dead and clean up. These chapters may also explain the shift in Middle Eastern politics that will open the door for the Sunni Arabs and the Israelis to cooperate and build a temple alongside the mosques after the battles described in Ezekiel 38-39.

There are however a number of things that clearly need to be fulfilled before the Lord comes back to judge and reign. The Apostle John's attitude however is clearly seen in that at the end of the book of the Revelation; he says, "even so come Lord Jesus". There are now, in 2020, clear indicators that the time is near and that we may be the generation who will see the return of Jesus Christ. No one knows the day or the hour. You cannot name a date but you can say that everything in Scripture is lining up, and nearly all things required have already lined up in recent years including CV19.

Some of the signs are given in Matthew 24, Luke 21 and the parallel passage in Mark. One can say that some of these items were possibly fulfilled in 70 AD but there were many that were not. The generation that sees the fig tree blossom is going to be the generation that is going to see the coming of Christ. It is very significant that Israel is back in the land, that the Fig Tree has started to show leaves. This indicates that we are possibly the last generation and that around 80 years is a full biblical generation.

There are four power blocks mentioned, the North, South, East and West which are either being formed or have a good potential to be. If all the Christians in the world disappeared overnight there would be a crisis which could easily lead to a one world system, and the technology now exists for controlling movement of people and all monetary transactions. Politically the world scene is setting itself for the events that the Bible describes, especially Revelation.

In the International Defence Review (IDR) in 1989 it was stated that the battle for Africa would occur in the late 1990's when AIDS had so depleted the mature population of that continent to leave a political and military vacuum. This was precisely what the Scriptures tell us about the Armageddon Campaign. The journal **was wrong** but the Bible isn't going to be, and the battle will be fought. This is because Israel is the land bridge between Europe and Africa. Africa is becoming ripe for the second imperial invasion; this time to exploit it's resources and people. It has already begun economically with China leading the "gold rush" to get control of and exploit natural resources.

The Bible talks about the sun increasing in burning intensity and burning people. The scientists are saying that this already happening. The oceans are so polluted that we can now see that they will at some near point "turn into blood". This may be a sign of algae blooms – and even pagans who hate the scriptures are warning of this as reality. The Mediterranean is dying due to pollution. We are destroying this planet but we wont succeed in doing so, and the Lord will clean it all up and restore the world to how it was made for Adam and Eve.

The church should be looking for the coming of the Lord. We should be motivated by this. We have not got time to waste. We should do everything as unto the Lord. What will you be remembered for in your life as it has been lived to date? If after the Rapture people come into your house what would they find? Would they be convicted? This is potentially one value of even this course on the Internet as it will be here long after we are all gone.

**DOCTRINES**

**TRIBULATION IN MATTHEW 24**

The second half of the Tribulation or Great Tribulation is portrayed in (Matthew 24)

1. It commences with the erection of the abomination of desolation, the statue of the Antichrist being erected in the Temple in Jerusalem. (v 15)
2. Believers in Jerusalem are told to flee to the mountains of Ammon, Edom and Moab (v 16-20)
3. It will be a time of maximum terror and pressure with many false Christs, signs and wonders. They are not to be led astray as believers as they know that when the Lord returns He will be seen by all. (v 21-26)
4. The next item seen is the smiting of the armies by the Lord Jesus Christ as He returns. (v 27-28)
5. The glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, visible to all, and the gathering of Israel from the four corners of the earth to the land now occurs. (v 29-31)
6. The fig tree prophecy shows that with the emergence of Israel and many other nations we are the generation that will see the Second Coming of Christ. (v 32-35)
7. The passage concludes with a warning to be prepared for the return of the Lord in glory. (v 36-51)

**LESSON 70 – GREAT TRIBULATION**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
70	Great Tribulation	Romans 5:9 1 Thess 1:10, 2:16, 1 Thess 5:9 Revelation 6:16 Daniel 9:24-27, Daniel 11:29ff Daniel 12:1-13 2 Thess 2:1-12	Tribulation signs Anti- Christ Abomination of Desolation

## THE GREAT TRIBULATION

The Bible deals with the difference between the Great Tribulation and normal tribulations. The latter is seen in 1 Corinthians 10:13. The Great Tribulation is a certain period of time leading up to the second coming of Christ.

This is a doctrine which divides conservative believers. Some say that this is a period of refinement of the church, others say that the church will go half way through the Tribulation period, whilst yet others believe that we will be removed prior to that period. We adopt the last view, which is a **Pre-Tribulation** view. Refer to the Post-graduate study on Israelology in the post-grad file within the Diploma file.

We do not believe that the Lord will send his bride [the Church] through the Tribulation. Part of this concept is that the Church and Israel are different entities in God's plan; and the tribulation is for the nation Israel, not for the Church.

There is also the concept of mystery doctrines; doctrines which are pertinent to the church only. These concepts were kept secret until Pentecost. It was then that perhaps Satan's greatest surprise took place with the universal indwelling of the believers by the Holy Spirit. One of the mystery doctrines is the Rapture, yet the tribulation is found in the Old Testament. This is a significant clue that the two groups have two different destinies at this time.

The concept of all believers being indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit was absolutely new. This is given first by the Lord himself in John 14:16,17. It was longed for in the Old Testament but never sought for, as the believers then understood that the Holy Spirit only indwelt them when needed for specific roles. You cannot say the things that are normal in the church about Old Testament Israel, for the work of the Spirit was different then to what it would be in the New Testament church. The church in itself is a mystery doctrine. The Day of Pentecost caught Satan by surprise and as the Church unfolded he was surprised further.

## THE MYSTERY

**Definition:-** The secret, specialized practices, or ritual, peculiar to an occupation, or a body of people. The Greek word MUSTERION, or "mystery", is derived from the Greek MUSTES meaning an initiate of a secret fraternity of the ancient world. This was the way the word was used by Jesus in Matthew 13:11, Mark 4:10-11.

In the New Testament epistles, the technical use of the word "mystery" refers to some aspects of the Church Age. (Ephesians 3:2-6)

Mystery doctrines of the Church Age were not revealed in the Old Testament. (Romans 16:25, 26, Colossians 1:26, 27)

Part of the mystery doctrine, including the blindness and hardness of Israel during the Church Age was also part of the dispersion of Israel after the period of grace following their rejection of Messiah. (Daniel 9:26, Romans 11:25)

The mystery was a part of the divine plan ordained in eternity past. (1 Corinthians 2:7)

The church age pastor is responsible for communication of the Word of God. This is called the stewardship of the mysteries of God. (1 Corinthians 4:1)

The Rapture of the Church is part of the mystery. (1 Corinthians 15:51)

The mystery is always related to the Dispensation of the Church and only the Church Age. (Ephesians 1:9, 3:2)

This tribulation period is known as the "time of Jacob's Trouble", and is called this right the way from Deuteronomy through Daniel and then into the New Testament, Thessalonians and the Revelation.

The language is uniform all the way through. It is ridiculous to have the concept of the Lord Jesus Christ putting his bride the church through the Great Tribulation in preparation for the Wedding Supper of the Lamb right before she arrives at the wedding. It is almost equivalent to saying that a bridegroom prepares his bride for their wedding by means of a violent rape and assault process. Those who speak of this do not really read and understand the awfulness of this time.

The Tribulation is world shatteringly violent. It is a ridiculous concept that the Church goes through it, and does not mix with Romans 5:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 2:16, 5:9. The Church is the "Bride of Christ", and think for a second, what father allows the bride to be beaten to a pulp before calling her to be married to his son? Paul hammers this point that the believers will be saved from "the wrath to come". Why does Israel go through this terrible time? It is sadly the only way that as a nation they confront the awfulness of their rejection of Jesus as Messiah when he came first, and fully embrace the truth. Zechariah 12:10ff.

## THE TRIBULATION - A TIME OF WORLD WIDE TESTING

The Tribulation is the point when the Lord pours his wrath on the world. The Bride is delivered from the wrath to come and Israel will be delivered through the wrath that comes upon them. He disciplines his children to correct them; he does not beat his children to death! When you realise the number of people that die during this period of the Tribulation you will realise that it only a small number of people survive it.

There is warming of the oceans changing the bulk of them into a stinking mess. There is major tectonic plate activity with many Richter Scale 9-10 earthquakes. There is atomic warfare. The sun and moon change. At times the sun appears to lose its heat, at others it is increased a lot; explainable by the clouds of volcanic material in the atmosphere. By not understanding these things there is a tendency to allegorize them. If you take any other view of the Book of the Revelation than futurist, you have to analogize and spiritualize away the majority of the text of that book.

It is of interest that even unbelieving scientists are saying that the things stated in the Revelation are possible now. The fact that one third of the fish of the sea could be killed by pollution is not considered unlikely any longer. In describing the period of the Great Tribulation, the Lord said it will be a time, "such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall" (Matthew. 24: 11). It will be a time of trouble **unique** in the history of the world.

There have been many difficult times since the Lord spoke these words, and He Himself warned the disciples, "In the world you will have tribulation". (John 16:33). What is it then, that makes this future period different? How will the Great Tribulation be unique? Two characteristics will distinguish the "Great Tribulation" from all other hard times that the world has seen.

**First**, it will be worldwide, not localized, as stated in the promise of deliverance (Revelation 3:10) and as described in detail in the judgments of the Revelation. The intense local persecutions and calamities of this present day cannot be the beginning of the Tribulation, for that time will affect the entire world.

**Secondly** the Tribulation will be unique because of the way men act. In one of the early judgments, men will hide themselves in the dens and caves of the mountains and say, "Fall on us, and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Revelation 6:16). When the Great Tribulation comes, people will act as if they think the world is coming to an end. The people who ask for the rocks to fall on them have had a mental breakdown.

The thing that is happening is so bad that there is a world wide mental collapse within the world population. Those who have rejected and persist in rejecting Jesus must face their choice of evil in all its consequences alone and most collapse under the weight of Satan's true hatred of mankind. They have been deceived to death by Anti-Christ, but that is only because they have previously rejected the true Saviour.

It is quite clear that this is a destruction which is going to surpass in fierceness Noah's Flood. There have been troublous times since the Lord spoke these words but none will come any where near the terrible times during this period when Satan has his last fling with those who have rejected Jesus.

We even have unbelievers today talking about Armageddon. It is of interest that the valley of Megiddo is one where the Israeli Air Force practice strafing at this time. For a time in the Tribulation even suicide will be difficult, for man is forced to face their choice that at least some might repent before the end comes for them and they are cast into Hell to await the Great White Throne Judgment. **Revelation 20:10-15.**

The Tribulation will not necessarily begin immediately at the Rapture of the church. Technically the Tribulation commences with the signing of the treaty between Israel and the leader of the Western Union of nations. This may take place well after the Rapture, as we are told that the leader who signs the treaty will not be revealed until the "restrainer" is removed, but we do not know how long between there is. Clearly by implication all those who are permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, that is all believers in the Church Age will be removed by this time as well. There could be days, weeks or even years between the removal of the church and the signing of this treaty. It is certain however that with the removal of the restrainer, (felt by many to be the Holy Spirit and/or Michael the Arch-Angel who protects Israel), there will be a very rapid political change with the deterioration in the world social and security system.

Some good Bible scholars have argued that the one removed is the Archangel Michael, who has responsibility for protecting Israel. This argument has much merit, as people are saved in the Great Tribulation and the manner of salvation is only ever through the working of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of men and women. The Holy Spirit is clearly still active in the world during the great tribulation period, but as he was during the Age of Israel. Michael finally "stands up" again and defends Israel when she accepts Jesus as Messiah. Zechariah 12:10ff, Daniel 12:1.

The Holy Spirit is "restrained" through this period, unlike the present Church Age. Only the Church Age believer is permanently indwelt by the Spirit, those saved in the Tribulation period will have the blessings of Israelite believers only. Most will become martyrs as a result of the terrible dangers of those times. Only at the time will believers be sure of what many of these things fully mean (Daniel 12:7ff).

**DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS**



This pivotal prophecy deals in many ways with the Millennial Reign of Christ. You have certain things however fulfilled in the 4th century BC, some partially fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes in approximately 160 BC, some fulfilled in 70 AD but much totally unfulfilled. It should be remembered that Daniel is writing a century before the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.

This prophecy said that the Lord/Messiah will be killed, but not for himself. He died for the sins of the world exactly to the day which Daniel said it would happen. [See "The Coming Prince" by Sir Robert Anderson]. Then in 70 AD the Romans came in and destroyed the City of Jerusalem just as Daniel had said it would happen. The destruction occurs after a forty year period of grace for Israel. In another 70 years the second rebellion occurs and ends with more bloodshed.

After this there are very few Jews left in the land, and there is no nation to have a covenant with, as no nation Israel existed until 1948. The Jews to date have never been able to recommence the Temple sacrifices because the Temple which is a prerequisite for offerings had been destroyed. One of the next stages of preparing for the return of the Lord will be the erection of a Temple. It is of interest that many believe that the Temple apparently can be rebuilt without disturbing the two mosques which currently occupy the Temple Mount, given that the Holy of Holies is due west through the Golden Gate, and that is the "Cupola of Moses".

Note also in Ezekiel 38:19-20, that a great earthquake will flatten all walls in the land of Israel and surrounding lands – the mosques may need rebuilding! The entire land is a building site for at least seven years after this attack! A Treaty to enable the three great monotheistic faiths to have their worship centers side by side would certainly indicate power and influence on the part of the man to pull such a deal off. It may also occur before these times as a result of the war between Iran and the Arab and Israeli nations as foretold in Ezekiel 38-39.

A treaty/covenant will be made by Israel with the New Roman Empire (Western Power base of the Anti-Christ) and this starts the Tribulation "last week" of Daniel, and it will be broken half way through the period of the last seven year period of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The last three and one half years is the "Great Tribulation", as until then the evil force is masked, but when he demands worship of himself in the rebuilt temple the covers are off naked evil and all see it clearly.

Daniel 11 gives more information regarding the end times from verse 29. This was fulfilled in part by Judas Maccabeus and the Syrian-Greek King Antiochus Epiphanes, but once again, not in full. Later, in chapter 12, Daniel says that some will eventually rise to everlasting life whilst others will rise to condemnation. The Lord Jesus Christ uses very similar phrases regarding the end times. The Lord of course used them after the life of Antiochus. It is clear that Daniel 11 was not fully fulfilled in the time of Antiochus.

#### **TRIBULATION AND "GREAT TRIBULATION"**

There is a great contrast between the Great Tribulation and all normal tribulation, and even the first 3 ½ years that lead up to it. The Great Tribulation is a period of 42 months, or three and a half years immediately preceding the Second Coming of Christ to the earth to set up His kingdom. The Bible tells us that we will all have at various times and in varied ways, tribulation or testing. According to Job 5:7, "Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upwards". But there is trouble, and there is the GREAT TRIBULATION and it is unique in its power and destructiveness.

In the New Testament Christ told his disciples that in the world they would have tribulation John 16:33, but that doesn't mean the great tribulation, just many times of trouble/testing.

#### **OLD TESTAMENT TEACHING ON THE GREAT TRIBULATION**

In **Deuteronomy 4:29-30** Israel was warned to turn to the Lord when she was in her tribulation in the latter days. The prophet Zechariah tells us that they will, in Zechariah 12:10ff.

In **Jeremiah 30:1-10** he predicts that the time of trouble will be preceded by the partial return of the people to the land. [v 3] In verses 4-7 a period of trouble is predicted on their return to the land after which will be the time of "Jacob's Trouble" which is another name for the Great Tribulation.

According to **Daniel 11:36-39** the end time will be characterized by an atheistic, or deistic religion headed by a world ruler; who will have brought together the great religions to a place where there is enough unity, for the majority of them all to see in him the "voice of God" for man. The exceptions to this are the Arabs and the Jews, who are "on prophetic alert" since the invasion of the Middle East by the Iranian-Russian armies (Ezekiel 38-39).

The importance of teaching prophecy is shown in the fact that Paul was only with the Thessalonian church for about 14 days, however when he taught these young believers he taught them prophecy [1 Thessalonians 4 and 2 Thessalonians 2.] It is also of interest that when Paul wrote those books the Temple was still standing in Jerusalem.

In 2 Thessalonians the removal of the restrainer (Michael and/or the change to the ministry of the Holy Spirit, or both) is related to the public emergence of the world dictator. With no strong and doctrine saturated Christians about, he has a brief time to establish himself and do the things that win the majority of mankind over to support him before unleashing his great evil when he sets up his image in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. This time of greatest testing that is going to

occur on the earth will be terminated by the Second Coming of Christ. The Rapture of the Church and the Second Advent of Christ are two very different events, and are not to be combined into one.

As one goes through the Book of the Revelation we find that chapters 6-19 gives a large amount of material on the Tribulation period from various aspects. Prior to this the church is seen already arrived in heaven.

**OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION**

The book of the Revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ is seen as a chronological outline of the future history of mankind from Pentecost through to eternity future. The outline is as follows.

Chapter 1	The Person of Christ
Chapters 2 & 3	The Church on Earth
Chapters 4 & 5	The Church in Heaven
Chapter 6	The Tribulation - Seal Judgements
Chapter 7	The Tribulation - Evangelism
Chapter 8 & 9	The Tribulation - Trumpet Judgments
Chapter 10	The Tribulation -The Little Scroll
Chapter 11	The Tribulation -The Two Witnesses
Chapter 12	The Tribulation -Satan And Israel
Chapter 13	The Tribulation -The Two Dictators
Chapter 14	The Tribulation -Heavenly Warnings
Chapter 15	The Tribulation -Prelude To Judgment
Chapter 16	The Tribulation -Bowl Judgments
Chapter 17	The Tribulation -Religious Babylon
Chapter 18	The Tribulation - Financial Babylon
Chapter 19	The Second Coming Of Christ
Chapter 20	The Millennial Reign Of Christ
Chapters 21 & 22	Eternity Future

We know what is going to happen because God has revealed it! Refer to the EBCWA study of the book of Revelation.

Many are saved during this time and ask for vengeance from the Lord. When John writes in AD 96 he points out what the forms of judgment are. He writes after the destruction of the temple, which occurred 70 AD, and so he clearly states things that could only be fulfilled after a long time. These judgments will fill with terror those who are left. These events cannot be stated to have occurred in history to date.

Liberal Christianity preaches a “gentle Jesus, meek and mild”, but these people are frightened of the wrath of the Lamb. Jesus wants every knee to bow, every heart to be submissive. He wants to be Lord and King of their life and Saviour from sin, and will not accept any half measures. The Anti-Christ is the one who preaches the “half way house” – that opens the door to finally demand even more than the Lord, and claim worship for himself as he murders his worshippers.

The Lord Jesus Christ preached on the dangers of hell more than love. Hell is the alternative to heaven; the waiting place for those destined by their choices to the Lake of Fire. In John 3:36 the gospel is made clear, that unbelief causes the wrath of God to remain on them forever.

In Revelation 7 we have the 144,000 Jewish Witnesses. Many people will be saved. Many people today see no urgency in becoming a Christian but in those days they will see the urgency. Many people will be converted as a result of the 144,000 witnesses and angelic missions also. Also material that we have left behind will be found and used.

If someone entered your house after the Rapture would they find enough material to be saved? Would they find any thing that could help them “know their times” and do things to save their lives? Matthew 16:3, Luke 12:54-59.

Two witnesses are set up and are killed in Revelation 11 and all eyes, all around the world, will see their bodies in Jerusalem. This has only just become possible, through television, internet, and mobile phone technology. The whole world will be pleased that these two annoying witnesses have been eliminated and be able to watch the “live updates” on their phones, TVs, or computers at work or home, and then all be shocked as they see the resurrection of these two men live and unable to be cut by the authorities!!!

In the end, after all the problems and evils done, the Lord will return to sort out the problems. In this he removes all unbelievers from the earth and establishes his kingdom in righteousness and justice.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **TRIBULATION: SIGNS**

1. One World
  - a) One Worldism (Revelation 13:7, 16-18)
  - b) One World Church (1 Timothy 4:1, Revelation 17)
  - c) One World Economy (1 Timothy 6:10, Revelation 13:16, 17)
2. Political Signs
  - a) Israel (Luke 21:29-32)
  - b) King of the North (Ezekiel 38:1, 12)
  - c) King of the East (Revelation 16:12, 9:16)
  - d) King of the West (Daniel 11:40-45)
  - e) King of the South (Daniel 11:40-45)
3. Natural Signs
  - a) Earthquakes (Luke 21:11)
  - b) Famines (Matthew 24:7)
  - c) Weather (Luke 21:25)
  - d) Diseases (Luke 21:11a)
4. Man made Signs
  - a) Wars Hot and Cold (Matthew 24:6, 7)
  - b) Preparation for War (Joel 3:9, 10)
  - c) Knowledge and Technology (Daniel 12:4)
  - d) Travel (Daniel 12:4)
  - e) Pollution (Revelation 8:10-11)
  - f) Moral Decline (Luke 17:26, 2 Tim 3:3)
  - g) Homosexuality (Luke 17:28-30)
  - h) Apostasy and False Prophets (Matthew 24:5, 24)
  - i) Witchcraft and Occultism (1 Timothy 4:1, 2)
  - j) Drugs (Revelation 9:21)

### **ANTICHRIST – WORLD RULER**

1. SCRIPTURE - Daniel 7:8,21-26; 8:23-25; 9:26,27; 11:36-45; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Revelation 13:1-18; 17:16,17; 19:19,20.

#### **2. BIOGRAPHY**

The Antichrist is the world ruler who will emerge as a violently anti-God despot, who will emerge after the removal of God's church. He comes from the gentile nations (the sea) in the last times. His power base will be a ten nation empire closely related to the old Roman Empire known as the Revived Roman Empire. The Antichrist is very clever and infiltrates by means of a peace campaign. He is, however, very hungry for power and once he wrests power from his subjects, he destroys the apostate religious system which has been working closely with him until then. He makes a covenant with Israel, allowing them to sacrifice in the temple, but eventually sets himself up to be worshipped as God in the temple. His reign of almost seven years duration becomes increasingly and openly anti-God, involving signs and wonders. He has a close relationship with the false prophet, the leader of Israel at that time. At the end of his empire he moves on Jerusalem, which is being held by believers. Jesus Christ returns at the Second Advent to deliver those in Jerusalem and capture the Antichrist and false prophet, throwing them into the lake of fire.

#### **3. EVALUATION**

- a) The Antichrist arises out of the Gentile nations with the final empire of ten nations (Revelation 13:1).
- b) The seven heads are seven mountains which speaks of Rome (Revelation 17:9).

- c) There are seven kings: five are fallen, one is, and one is to come (Revelation 17:10). These are empires - the five that are fallen are Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Persia and Greece. The one in existence in 96 AD (when John wrote Revelation) was Rome, and the one to come is the Revived Roman Empire.
- d) The ten horns are ten future kingdoms which receive power for a short time. (Revelation 17:12).
- e) He rules empires (Revelation 13:2; cf. Daniel 7:4-6).
- f) His power is from Satan (Revelation 13:2; cf. Revelation 20:2).
- g) Satan gives Antichrist the world empire (Revelation 13:2).
- h) Satanic worship is a key part of Antichrist's regime (Revelation 13:4,8).
- i) He is a great orator. He is anti-God and has power for 3 1/2 years (Revelation 13:5).
- j) His empire becomes a world empire (Revelation 13:7).
  
- k) The dictator of Palestine who is demon possessed ("the false prophet") promotes him (Revelation 13:11).
- l) Great wonders and miracles are a feature of this empire (Revelation 13:13).
- m) A statue of the Antichrist is constructed. It has the ability to speak. Worship of it is compulsory on the pain of death (Revelation 13:14,15).
- n) The Antichrist controls the world economy by marking members of the human race on the forehead or on the right hand (Revelation 13:16,17; cf. Revelation 14:9-11).
- o) His number is 666, a number which represents "perfect man" or "perfect sin" (Revelation 13:18).
- p) He will not be revealed until the restrainer is removed (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7)
- q) The Antichrist's rule features power, signs and lying wonders from Satan himself (2 Thessalonians 2:9).
- r) He deceives the unbeliever (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).
- s) The Antichrist is destroyed and thrown into the lake of fire at the second advent (Revelation 19:19,20).

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

- a) Satan is the ruler of this world (John 16:11).
- b) World domination and internationalism is Satanic in origin (Genesis 11:6-9).
- c) Miracles, signs and lying wonders are strategies employed by Satan to deceive (John 8:44).
- d) Economic control of the individual enslaves that individual (Proverbs 22:7).
- e) Ultimately vast power creates the delusion that the person in control is God (Genesis 3:5; Isaiah 14:13,14).
- f) The antichrist will not be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church when the Holy Spirit who restrains him (and indwells all Christians) will be removed from the world (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7)
- g) A few years of power is not worth an eternity of suffering.
- h) Eventually man must account to Jesus Christ as his judge if he does not accept Jesus Christ as Saviour (Revelation 20:12-15).
- i) At a point, people become so hardened to God that God gives them over to their own delusions (2 Thessalonians 2:11, Romans 1:28).
- j) The Antichrist is a person, not to be confused with the many antichrists of (1 John 2:18) or the "spirit of antichrist" of (1 John 4:3)

5. In the Tribulation there will be a counterfeit trinity with Satan (father), the Antichrist (son) and False Prophet (spirit).

#### 6. Names given to the Antichrist:-

- a) The seed of Satan (Genesis 3:15)
- b) The little horn (Daniel 7:8)
- c) The king of fierce countenance (Daniel 8:23)
- d) The prince that shall come (Daniel 9:26)
- e) The desolater (Daniel 9:27)
- f) The wilful king (Daniel 11:36)
- g) The man of sin (2 Thessalonians 2:3)
- h) The son of perdition (2 Thessalonians 2:3)
- i) The lawless one (2 Thessalonians 2:8)
- j) The Antichrist (1 John 2:22)
- k) The beast (Revelation 11:7)

#### 7. Characteristics

- a) He is called the seed of Satan (Genesis 3:15). Just as Jesus Christ had a supernatural birth being born of a virgin, it may be that there will be something supernatural about the birth of the Antichrist. It is likely that Satan will impregnate a human woman and thus be the father of the Antichrist in a similar way to the angelic infiltration of (Genesis 6:2)
- b) In (Daniel 9:26) he is said to be of the people who destroyed the Temple. The Roman Empire destroyed the Temple in 70 AD. The Antichrist may therefore be of Roman origin.
- c) The identity of the man of sin will not be clear until the start of the Tribulation, although he may be fairly prominent in politics prior to that period. He will not be revealed until after the Rapture of the Church when the Holy Spirit who restrains him (and indwells all Christians) will be removed from the world (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7). In the middle of the Tribulation, he sets himself in the Temple calling himself God (v4-8).
- d) In (Daniel 9:27) the start of the Tribulation is marked by the signing of a seven year covenant between the Antichrist and the nation of Israel. When Israel signs the covenant, God issues a decree of destruction against the whole earth (Isaiah 28:14-22) - the judgments of the book of Revelation. The Antichrist is shown as the rider on the white horse of (Revelation 6:1) who brings the promise of (false) peace.

e) The rise of the Antichrist to power:-

- i) In (Daniel 8:23-25) he is seen as a skilful leader, involved in the occult power (v23), will war against the Jews (v24), and will rise to power through deceit (v25).
- ii) In (Daniel 11:36-39) he shall do what he wants, claiming to be God and exalting himself (v36), he will repudiate all religious practices from his ancestors (v37). He however will honour a god whom his ancestors did not know (v38) who assists him to power (v39), this god being Satan. He will accept the offer of the kingdoms of the world which our Lord refused in the wilderness.
- iii) In (2 Thessalonians 2:8-9) we are told that his coming is according to the energising of Satan accompanied by miracles, signs and wonders.
- iv) During the first half of the Tribulation, he gains political control of the ten groups that make up a One World Government. This includes the removal of three of the ten leaders (Daniel 7:23-24, Revelation 17:12-17)
- v) He also destroys the One World Church ("Mystery Babylon") that has operated in the first half of the Tribulation (Revelation 17:5,16.) In (Revelation 11) he is able to kill the two witnesses who have been causing him major problems. They however will be resurrected much to his dismay.

f) The death and resurrection of the Antichrist .In (Daniel 11:40-45) he kills the Kings of the North, South and East. and in (v 45) he will come to his end and none shall help him. However in (Revelation 13:3) he receives a fatal wound but the fatal wound is healed. This suggests that the Antichrist dies and is resurrected by the power of Satan. This miracle deceives the world that the Antichrist is god and the world now worships him.

**ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION**

1. The Abomination of Desolation is an image erected by the Antichrist in the Temple during the Tribulation. This occurs in the middle of the Tribulation when the covenant with Israel is broken (Daniel 9:27) At this point he violates the temple and begins desolating the people of the remnant
2. It continues for a period of 1290 days (Daniel 12:11). (Apparently staying for 30 days after the end of the Tribulation, since the second half of the Tribulation lasts for 1260 days). These 30 days are involved in the judgment of nations, etc
3. "Abomination of Desolation" begins with the setting up of the image of the beast Daniel 11:31, Revelation 13:14-15.
4. It is a warning sign for the believing Jews to flee to the mountains of southern Jordan (Matthew 24:15-16).
5. It is said to be standing in the Holy Place.
6. It is associated with the Gentile takeover of temple in Jerusalem (Revelation 11:1-2).
7. The Antichrist will sit in the Temple of God claiming to be God in (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4) 2. It is based on the pride of Antichrist who seeks to "alter times and law" by starting his false millennium. - Daniel 7:8,25.
8. The Antichrist does not stay in the Temple but he is replaced by a living image of him by the False Prophet (Revelation 13:11-15).
9. Two historical prototypes are:
  - a) Antiochus Epiphanes King of Syria (BC 168 June to 165 Dec.) places a statue of Zeus Olympus in the temple having violated the Temple in Jerusalem with pigs blood followed by the blood of the priests.
  - b) Also Caligula (AD 37-41) the Roman Emperor attempted to set up his image in the temple.

**LESSON 71- 73 – RAPTURE**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
71-3	Rapture	John 14:1-3 1 Corinthians 15 I Thess 4:13-18 Revelation 3:10 1 Thess 5:1-11 Revelation 7:1-8 Matthew 24:39-41 Luke 17:34-37 Matthew 25:31-46	Faithfulness of God Hope Rapture

		Joel 3:11-17 Zech 14:1-5, 6-21 2 Timothy 3:10-17	
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**THE RAPTURE**

The word Rapture does not occur in the English Bible but is taken into the theological vocabulary through the Latin translation of the Bible, the Vulgate, and specifically that of **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**. “Rapere” in Latin means to be “caught up” which is what is stated in that passage.

The main passages regarding the Rapture are **John 14:1-3**, **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**, **1 Corinthians 15** as well as several passages in the book of the Revelation. The Rapture is intimately related to the Lord’s return, the Great Tribulation, and the Millennium. They are all related and your attitude towards where the Rapture occurs in the history of man will determine your attitude as to what view you have on eschatology generally.

There have been many attacks recently on the doctrine of the Rapture with such groups as the Chalcedon group being very active in this regard. They tend to mock people who believe in the Rapture and say that Christians should be ready for the Tribulation and that the “escapist doctrine of the Rapture” produces slovenly and lazy Christians. There are many in the Kingdom Theology movement who deny this doctrine altogether, but it will certainly not produce laziness.

**FOUR VIEWS**

The four views on the Rapture are :-

**[a] The Pre-Tribulational View**

This is the view of this course and College and is the view of classic fundamentalism, and of the early church. This has the Rapture occurring before the Tribulation, which is then followed by the Millennium. The Church as the Bride of Christ goes to be with the Lord, being taken up from the earth, before the Tribulation proper starts.

The preparation for the marriage supper of the Lamb is occurring in heaven while the Tribulation is occurring on earth. The saints return with Christ at the Second Advent and this ushers in the Millennial Kingdom.

**[b] Mid Tribulational View**

In this view the Rapture occurs half way through the seven year period, before the start of the “Great Tribulation”. The rest of this viewpoint conforms with the Pre Tribulational view as stated above. Many in the fundamental camp will have this view. They believe the Lord’s first advent ministry of three and a half years fulfills the first half of the tribulation.

**[c] Post Millennial View**

This is popular in the United States and is common in the Bible Institutes in Britain. In this view the Church goes through the Tribulation period. In this view the Rapture occurs at the same time as the Second Advent so that the believers go up to be with the Lord and then immediately come back to judge with Him in the Kingdom.

**[d] Partial Rapture**

This is favoured by some Pentecostal churches and was popularized by Watchman Lee, where at the Rapture only spiritual believers will be involved and taken to be with the Lord. This tends to go together with the Arminian view of salvation, and is an evangelistic viewpoint. Those believing this also tend to have an exclusive view of who is baptised by the Holy Spirit. They believe that only spiritual believers will go, and those who are carnal will remain to go into the Tribulation and be truly “born again and spirit filled” at that time, and be the evangelists of this terrible period.

**Examination of the Partial Rapture Position**

The Scriptures make it clear that all will be changed in the twinkling of the eye - **1 Corinthians 15:52**, and then **1 Corinthians 12:13** says that all are baptized by the Holy Spirit. In **Romans 8:9** it says that if you do not have the Spirit you are not of His. Baptism of the Spirit is not necessarily an emotional experience, but occurs to all believers at salvation where they are so identified with the Lord Jesus Christ, that they become new creatures in Christ.

If the body of Christ is been taken to be with Him, it is not logical to think that He is going to leave part of the body behind; the Bride of Christ will be complete. The Tribulation is a time of Jacob’s troubles not that of the church. The Lord disciplines the church saints here and now – he does not delay this. Hebrews 12:1-12. The Tribulation is punishment on an unbelieving world and a final calling out of Israel – it simply does not relate to the church.

The Rapture is looked upon by some as a reward, but the Bible makes it very clear that there are rewards for believers quite apart from the Rapture – which is simply the end point for the Church mission upon the earth. The rewards for

believers are given out at the judgment seat of Christ **1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:9-15**. With the Rapture you have got assembled together for the first time, the whole body, dead and alive, the complete Church together at one time for all time.

**Examination of the Pre Tribulation Position**

This was reintroduced to the church by J N Darby, a Brethren pastor, who was studying the books of the Early Church Fathers and discovered that they had taught this. The early church believed that the Lord was coming back for them. This lasted for the first two hundred years. In the third and fourth century the Church theologians could not see Israel being a nation again, as it was totally dispersed in 138 AD after the Bar-Kokhba Revolt, and the Romans hated the Jewish people as a result of the great massacres perpetrated by the Jewish rebels throughout the eastern Mediterranean, and so the view of Amillennialism had taken hold through the theologians from Alexandria. Jewish rebels loyal to Bar-Kochba conducted what we would call a “terror” campaign all around the Mediterranean in ports with Jewish populations, murdering many local people, and so any thought of Israel coming back as a nation was anathema.

The pre tribulation position is therefore the oldest of the views, but it is difficult to find the church fathers dealing systematically with this matter. It remained lost from church history until Darby rediscovers it. After Darby categorized the viewpoint, it was popularized by C.I. Schofield at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in his study bible.

A recent study in the United States shows, that of those entering the ministry by going to seminaries, 80% reject the deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Physical Resurrection, and so logically, most do not expect Him to come again.

We, as a Bible believing group, are like the church at Philadelphia, Revelation 3:10, whilst the Laodicean church is the new liberal majority, and is growing today like never before. Remember Jesus sad question, **Luke 18:8**, when the time draws near for his return, will he find faith upon the earth? The expectation of the answer is “NO” – very very little.

Post Tribulationists will say that the church will be “kept” in the Tribulation but by the normal rules of grammar this cannot be so in any of the texts relating to the subject. We do not want self delusion – comfort is only in truth.

In **1 Thessalonians 5:1-11** we would argue that here the Lord will be coming to deliver the church. What he says here is a comfort and encouragement. If you think you are going to go through the Tribulation you cannot comfort one another with these things, especially seeing that there is a vast number of martyrs in that period. We need to have the entire counsel of Scripture, and rightly divide the “Word of truth”, or we will certainly receive no comfort.

**SECOND ADVENT AND THE MILLENNIUM**

At the Second Advent it is a time of judgment at which all unbelievers are removed from the earth, so that the Millennial reign of Christ commences with believers only, either in their resurrection bodies, or in their physical bodies, having survived the Tribulation period. This is a harsh concept, but it is the Biblical one that we must understand; the Lord will judge evil women/men who have rejected him after this terrible period of Satanic domination. Grace has limits.

Under a mid Tribulational or pre tribulational rapture there is no problem with the Millennial population but there is in the post tribulational position. If all saved people are removed and receive resurrection bodies – there are no people left on earth to populate the Millennial Kingdom and have children then. Resurrected people do not have more children!

The Millennial population includes both Jewish and Gentile people - Isaiah 19:24-25. The first population must be made up from both groups and they must not have their resurrection bodies at that point.

The post tribulationists do not comment on this, and they do not put things together in an orderly way for their system cannot. If you have a system that does not answer one major area it is a poor system. The Millennial teaching is real in the Scriptures and it requires you to either take it literally or spiritualize it away, which is always a dangerous practice.

Some say that the 144,000 of Revelation 7 are not converted people but examination of the passage reveals that they clearly are as they are servants of God who have been sealed on their forehead. They cannot be Church Age believers but they can be Jews who are saved after the Church is removed.

In **Matthew 24:36-41** we have a passage of judgment analogous to the Flood. The Lord is coming to save the believers at a time of judgment. The one taken is the unbeliever in judgment – removed form the earth. A pre-tribulational view is that this is a Second Advent passage. The post-tribulational view is that the ones taken are the believers with the one left on the earth for judgment.

In **Luke 17:34-37** we see the vultures at the Second Advent in judgment. These are the taken ones, the unbelievers. We also see the Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25 showing judgment. Here we have the king coming in glory, we have those who are accepted going into the kingdom and then into eternity. We have others who are going to eternal fire and damnation.

We also need to compare the similarities in **Joel 3:11-17, Zechariah 14:1-5, 6-21**. There are things which happen to those who support evangelism and support Israel's place amongst the nations. This is something which needs to be addressed and while we may differ we need to know what we believe, but hold our position with grace and humility.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **FAITHFULNESS OF GOD**

1. God's faithfulness is based on his unchangeability - Hebrews 13:8.
2. God's faithfulness is renewed "every day" - Lamentations 3:21-24.
3. His promises are sure. - Hebrews 10:23.
4. The faithfulness of Christ continues even when we are unfaithful. - 2 Timothy 2:13.
5. Christ is a faithful and merciful high priest - Hebrews 2:17.
6. God is faithful to forgive sins - 1 John 1:9.
7. God is faithful to keep us saved - 2 Timothy 2:13.
8. God is faithful to deliver us through temptation - 1 Corinthians 10:13.
9. God is faithful to keep His promises to us - Hebrews 10:23.
10. God is faithful to us in suffering - 1 Peter 4:19.
11. God is faithful in fulfilling His plan for us - I Thessalonians 5:24.
12. God is faithful to strengthen us - 2 Thessalonians 3:3.
13. God is the faithful partner of our union with Christ - 1 Corinthians 1:9.
14. Christ is a faithful and merciful high priest - Hebrews 2:17.
15. Jesus Christ is synonymous with faithfulness - Revelation 19:11.

### **HOPE**

1. Our hope is based on the reality of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ and His message. (Romans 5:4-6, 1 Timothy 1:1)
2. Our hope is also of our resurrection (Acts 24:15). This hope influences our conduct here and now. (1 John 3:3)
3. The hope of resurrection was longed for and believed in, in the Old Testament but after the Lord's resurrection we can be totally confident. (Acts 26:6-8)
4. Hope of resurrection is a "lively hope" which influences every aspect of the soul who truly knows what we have (1 Peter 1:3).
5. We also have hope of eternal life. (Titus 3:7)
6. It is a key doctrine of the church, without it our faith is a sham. (1 Corinthians 15:19)
7. We have the sure hope of deliverance from the Tribulation by the Rapture of the Church which occurs before the Tribulation (Romans 8:24-25, 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18)
8. The coming of the Lord to save us from coming catastrophe is a "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13)
9. We all have the hope of blessing in time if we reach maturity. (Galatians 5:5)
10. We all have one hope in maturity. (Ephesians 4:4-6)
11. All true pastors hope that their flock will go on to maturity to the greater glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)



12. As we see and know what the Lord did for us we can take confidence from it. (1 Peter 1:21)
13. Confidence comes as we hear what God has for us through His word. (Romans 15:4)
14. The way to know hope is to be firmly grounded in God's word. (Colossians 1:23)
15. We are told to grow in hope. (Hebrews 6:11-12)
16. We are to hold fast our hope, firm in doctrine. (Hebrews 3:6)
17. All hope is anchored in doctrine in the soul. (Hebrew 6:18-19)
18. God's grace provisions for us here in time provide the basis for hope and confidence. (2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)
19. The purpose of the pastor - teacher teaching the Word of God is to pass on God's information so that all believers can be partakers of this hope. (1 Corinthians 9:10, 2 Corinthians 3:12)
20. The pastor's prayer for his people will always be that they should know the hope of their calling (Ephesians 1:18) This would include salvation, resurrection, eternal security, eternal reward, eternal life, blessing and maturity and deliverance from the problems of life.
21. Unbelievers have no hope. This should be the motivation for evangelism. (Ephesians 2:12, 1 Thessalonians 4:13)
22. We should be ready to give a defence to our hope. (1 Peter 3:15)
23. "Now abides faith hope and charity and the greatest of these is charity" (1 Corinthians 13:13)

**RAPTURE**

1. The Rapture of the Church is the termination of the Church Age and is the taking of all believers since Pentecost to Heaven by the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. General Scripture (John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
3. The Rapture and the 2nd Advent should not be confused, they are 7 years apart being separated by the Tribulation and have different characteristics.
4. Rapture
  - a) Not revealed in Old Testament.
  - b) Promises to the Church fulfilled.
  - c) Judgment seat of Christ rewards (1 Corinthians 3:12-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11, 2 Timothy 2:11)
  - d) Christ the Bridegroom and Head
  - e) Believers body changed (not creation) (1 Corinthians 15:51-58, Philippians 3:21)
  - f) Church goes to heaven. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
  - g) Imminent - no signs to be fulfilled before the Church can be removed.
  - h) Time of comfort for believer. (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
  - i) Christ will meet the Church in the air. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
  - j) Private (only believers will see)
  - k) Before tribulation
  - l) Believers go out of the world. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
  - m) Removal of the Holy Spirit. (2 Thessalonians 2:7)
5. Second Advent
  - a) Spoken of by all major Old Testament prophets. (Zechariah 14:4)
  - b) Promises to Israel fulfilled.
  - c) Great White Throne Judgment (after Millennium) - unbelievers. (Matthew 25:31, Revelation 20:12-15).
  - d) Christ the Messiah to Israel (Daniel 9:25)
  - e) Radical changes in nature. (Romans 8:19-22)
  - f) Church comes back to earth (1 Thessalonians 3:13) 4:17)
  - g) Many details of prophecy yet to be fulfilled. (Revelation Chapters 6-19)
  - h) Time of terror for unbeliever. (Revelation 6:15-17)
  - i) Christ will come back to earth (Zechariah 14:4)
  - j) Public - every eye shall see him (Revelation 1-7)
  - k) After tribulation.

- l) Unbelievers taken off the earth (Matthew 24:37-42)
- m) Removal of Satan (Revelation 20:1-3)

6. The Rapture is before the Tribulation. Thus the Pre Tribulation Rapture position is shown by nine factors.

- a) The worried Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 2:1-6)
- b) The Restrainer removed (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12)
- c) The lack of the word 'Church' in (Revelation 13:9)
- d) The verb Tereo in (Revelation 3:10)
- e) Grace before judgment (John 14:3)
- f) Resurrections in their order. (1 Corinthians 15:22-26)
- g) The Covenant approach. The Abrahamic, Davidic and Palestinian covenant fulfilled at 2nd Advent.
- h) The Church is in heaven before the Seal Judgments (Revelation 4,5)
- i) The contrast between the 2nd Advent and the Rapture

**PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE:**

(Why the Church will not go through the Tribulation)

1. On the basis of the distinction between Israel and the Church:

- a) God never deals with Israel and the Church at the same time.
- b) Because of the promises to Israel, yet unfulfilled, Israel must have a future. Evangelistic and missionary responsibility of Israel will be completed in the Tribulation.
- c) The nation Israel has not been completed.
- d) "Daniel's 70 weeks" not completed. (Jeremiah 25:11, 12, 29:10, Daniel 9:2, 24, 25)

2. Statement and Structure of Revelation:

- a) The statement (Revelation 3:10) "Tereo ek" (to keep out), not "Aireo" (to take out) used in context.
- b) The structure: Church Age/Tribulation/Millennium/Eternity. (Revelation 2-3, 7-19, 20, 21:1-8)

3. The Statement of Thessalonians:

- a) Removal of the restraining presence of the Holy Spirit is impossible without removing the Church at the same time. 2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7.

b) In 2 Thessalonians 2:2 the incorrect translation in the A.V. confuses the entire passage. "Day of Christ" should read "Day of the Lord". (False teachers came with a forged letter supposedly from Paul which implied that the Day of the Lord, or the Tribulation, had already come).

c) In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 the phrase "in Christ" refers to believers in the Church Age. Verse 18 emphasises a comfort which could not exist if the Church went through the Tribulation.

4. Remnant of the Tribulation:

- a) Christ returns to the earth with His saints. (1 Thessalonians 3-13, Jude 1 4).
- b) Jesus at the same time delivers saints at the Second Advent. (Zechariah 14:1-5)
- c) Christ cannot come with saints and deliver saints unless there are two groups of saints - Church and Tribulation. Obviously, both groups exist and both groups of saints are separated.

5. Grace before Judgment: God gives grace before judging.

- a) Warning - Noah was rescued by heeding God's warning.
- b) Rescue - Lot was rescued by God.

6. Imminence of the Rapture:

- a) No prophecy of Scripture has to be fulfilled before the Rapture can take place. (1 Corinthians 1:7, Colossians 3:4, 2Thessalonians 2:1, Titus 2:13)
- b) Hence, the Rapture can take place at any time.
- c) Not so the Second Advent: much prophecy must be fulfilled before Second Advent.

7. Nature of the Tribulation:

- a) Purpose of the Tribulation: to bring judgment on a Christ-rejecting world. God demonstrates that man cannot provide a perfect environment when Satan has full control and restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit is removed.
- b) God completes His dealings with Israel, which allows the Jews to fulfil their missionary ministry begun after the Babylonian Captivity.
- c) God prepares Israel for the fulfilment of the Unconditional Covenants by the return of Christ during Israel's darkest hour and the low point of human history Tribulation).

8. Activity of the Church in Heaven (Revelation 4,5)

- a) Before the Church returns to the earth with Christ, they must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ for evaluation of production in the Christian walk - rewards. (2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

- b) Hence, some interval is necessary (7 years) before the Bride of the Lamb can be prepared.
- c) The marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven. (Revelation 19:6-8) after which the Bride returns to the earth with the Groom. (Revelation 19:14). The wedding feast is held on earth. (Revelation 19:9)

**LESSON 74 – SECOND COMING OF THE LORD**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
74	Second Coming of the Lord	Acts 1:6-11 Deuteronomy 30:1-4 Psalm 2:1-12 Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7 Isaiah 11:1-12 Revelation 19:11-16	Mystery of God Christ's 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Advent

**THE SECOND COMING**

In **Acts 1:6-11** we have the prophecy of the Second Coming of Christ is the climax of world history. It is the focal point of God's plan. Is this the Lord's coming for His saints in the clouds, or is it His return to set up His kingdom, or both?

Is the Church involved in this? These are important questions. Depending on your answers to these questions depends on your view of interpretation of Scripture itself. This is one area where there are major differences among conservative scholars who are all genuinely your brothers and sisters, so disagreements must be gracious here.

The doctrine of the Second Coming is in the whole Bible, but revelation of the Rapture of the Church is restricted to the New Testament only. The specific Church Age doctrines were hidden from Old Testament people and presented as mysteries, whereas the Second Coming goes from Old Testament to New Testament, which gives an indication of the difference, and shows that the Church is not necessarily involved in this on the earth (we may be coming from heaven).

You cannot go further than the Scriptures allow you, but it is a fact that many of the books in the Bible major on the fact that the Lord is going to return to reign and judge the earth. If you are going to understand the Scriptures without understanding the Second Coming of Christ you are going to fall short in this area. There are several hundred passages in both the new and old Testaments that relate to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and his final triumph over evil. Sin and death were defeated at the First Advent, and evil is defeated at the Second Advent.

**DEUTERONOMY**

**Deuteronomy 30:1-4** shows us that God will intervene in history. The Lord Jesus Christ will return and gather the children of Israel back into the Land after their scattering. The return that occurred after the Babylonian Captivity did not fulfill this, as only thirty or forty thousand Jews were brought back under Zerubbabel, and more later by Ezra and Nehemiah of the many hundreds of thousands who stayed behind in Babylon. This was therefore only a partial fulfillment. The even greater dispersion has been that which occurred from 70/138 AD and lasted until 1948. The dispersal has just turned in 2019, with more Jews in the land of Israel than out of it. This is the first time since the first century, and some would argue since the year 605 BC! The "Age of the Gentiles" is however not over at this point – only with Jesus return!

In verses 4 and 5 this passage continues discussing the re-gathering of Israel. In Deuteronomy 29 we have the Palestinian Covenant and the drawing back out of dispersion is part of the fulfillment of this. Here we have the promise that the Lord will return Israel to the Land and will bless them as they respond to Him. It also shows that there will be a conversion of Israel before their return. As He has scattered them so he will gather them when the reason for scattering no longer exists; they were scattered in unbelief, they will be re-gathered in belief.

**PSALMS**

**Psalms 2:1-12** shows that when the Son reigns in Zion there will be a blessing on Israel. Whilst a number of prophecies about the Lord were fulfilled in the first advent there are many, including His reign as King, which are yet to be fulfilled. The fact that he will execute justice and judgment from Jerusalem still awaits fulfillment.

In Psalm 22 we have the suffering Shepherd, in Psalm 23 we have the Good Shepherd, and in Psalm 24 the Eternal Shepherd. From Hebrews 1 we know that all these Psalms are talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. In Psalm 24 we have the Lord coming into His inheritance and His throne on Zion. This is all yet to come today.

The Jews recognise this as the Psalm that talks about the rulership of Messiah over the whole earth from Jerusalem. It is of interest that the most efficient place on earth to rule from, in the sense of minimizing distances is Jerusalem. Psalm

50, 72, 89, 96, 110 are others dealing with this subject of rulership. When you look at the number of references to this subject it is incredible that people still argue that there will be no Millennial Kingdom.

### **ISAIAH**

**Isaiah 9:1-7** talks initially about the first advent, and about the places where he ministered. The darkness of unregenerate Judaism saw the presence of the light of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 6 we see the child or humanity of Christ is born whilst the eternal Son is given. This has only been partially fulfilled with the promised reign still to be fulfilled in the future. In verse 7 we note that He will do this forever which implies eternal life and an eternal kingdom. These judgments are going to involve the Lord ruling over the entire earth.

In **Isaiah 11:1-12** we see the bringing back again of the dispersed nation. The first re-gathering was from the Assyrian and Babylonian Empire areas, the true fulfillment will be the re-gathering of Israel from the four quarters of the earth. The Scriptures also tell of a major change in environment together with the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea. This has not happened at any point to the present day.

In **Zechariah 14:4** we have the feet of the Lord coming to rest on the Mount of Olives, and it is exactly what the angels say is to be expected in Acts 1. When this happens this will signal a change in the topography in the whole area.

The unbeliever will have nothing to do with the Lord as his/her lord. Biblical revelation is clear - if you do not have the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, you will have him as your Judge. When His feet touch the earth there will be earthquakes and radical changes in nature. If you look at these things in normal grammatical context you cannot come to any other conclusion that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to physically and dramatically return, and will do so to rule, and that the environment is going to be changed physically, socially and spiritually.

In **Revelation 19:11-16** we have the Second Advent of Christ with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is faithful and true and the righteous judge. Here we have the picture of the eternity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His rulership and judgment. We know that the Lord is going to set the world right when he returns so that we do not need to be like the reconstructionists and try and make the world right by our own means. We need to be out preaching the gospel to take the only message of salvation to the lost in obedience to Jesus words, Matthew 28:18-20.

The post Tribulationists believe that there is only a short time between the Rapture and the Second Advent whereas we pre Tribulationists believe there is at least seven years, possibly much more. His second advent will also destroy the army that is trying to eliminate the Jewish and Arab believers in and around Jerusalem and Bozrah. Isaiah 61ff.

Taken as a whole, the second coming of Christ is a tremendous event, occurring at the close of the Great Tribulation and introducing the Millennial Kingdom. It will be a personal and bodily return, which will be visible to the entire world and will be the manifestation of the glory of God. It will be related to the earth rather than to heaven and specifically to Jerusalem and right on top of the Mount of Olives. Christ in His return will be accompanied by the holy angels and the saints. His purpose in His return is to judge the world, to deliver those who have trusted in Him whether Jews or Gentiles, to bring spiritual revival to Israel and the world, to re-establish the kingdom of David and to introduce the final dispensation of His kingdom on earth for a thousand years.

### **DOCTRINES**

**MYSTERY OF GOD**

1. The mystery of God mentioned in Revelation 10:7 will be finished at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. It declares and fulfils the ultimate purpose of God in human history - to establish His Son as Saviour and King.
2. The mystery of God involves:
  - a) The resolution of the problem of evil which was first manifested in the Garden of Eden. The fall of Adam brought a curse on man and creation. The curse on creation will be removed at the Second Advent. Revelation 22:3, Isaiah 11:6-9, 6:21, Zechariah 14:11, Acts 3:19-21
  - b) The cooperation between God and man in establishing the Davidic theocratic kingdom - Isaiah 54:1, Matthew 22:41-46, John 1:51, 1 Corinthians 15:50, 1 Timothy 3:16, Ephesians 1:10
  - c) The completion of our redemption and the establishment of our inheritance Matthew 19:27-30, Romans 8:23, Ephesians 1:11, 4:30, 1 John 3:2
  - d) The pre-tribulational, pre millennial appearance of Christ to prepare the kingdom before its open public manifestation - Deuteronomy 33:2, Isaiah 11:11, 1 Corinthians 15:51, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18
  - e) The completion of divine vengeance and retribution in the day of the Lord. Isaiah 61:2, 63:4, Revelation 1:10

f) The open revelation of Jesus Christ as Messiah and King at the Second Advent, involving the overthrow of Satan, Antichrist and the kings of the earth, and the start of the Millennial Kingdom and the exultation of the saints - Daniel 7:13,14, Luke 10:18, Colossians 3:4, 2 Thessalonians 1:10, Revelation 20:10

3. Because this occurs at the beginning of the Second Trumpet which is clearly pre millennial, the finishing is necessarily pre millennial. The statements of the prophets all point to the fulfilment of the covenants made by God with Israel and the establishment of a divine kingdom on earth. Isaiah 55:3, Matthew 5:5, Acts 1:3,6, 13:34, 15:14-18, Romans 4:13, 8:17

**CHRIST: FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS**

1. Old Testament saints had difficulty in distinguishing between the two advents of Christ. (1 Peter 1:10,11)
2. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as a gentle lamb led to the slaughter. (Isaiah 53:7)
3. Old Testament prophecy has Christ coming as the conquering King and Lion of the tribe of Judah. (Isaiah 11:1-12)
4. Jesus commenced his ministry announcing the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. (Matthew 4:17) This connects the first and second advents.
5. Old Testament Prophecy showed that the Messiah would:-
  - a) be born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14)
  - b) be of the tribe of Judah. (Genesis 49:10)
  - c) be of the house of David. (Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 33:21)
  - d) die as a sacrifice. (Isaiah 53:1-12)
  - e) be crucified. (Psalm 22:1-21)
  - f) be resurrected from the dead. (Psalm 16:8-11)
  - g) return to earth at his second advent. (Zechariah 8:3)
  - h) be seated at the right hand of God. (Psalm 110:1)
6. It should be noted that the return of Christ for the Church (the Rapture) as given in (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18) was not revealed in the Old Testament - it is a mystery doctrine of the Church (Colossians 3:4-6)
7. The day of the Second Advent is characterised by supernatural darkness
  - a) When Christ returns every eye shall see him (Matthew 24:29-30) Christ is the light of the world and he will return to a world covered in darkness (symbolic of sin).
  - b) The darkness is similar to the darkness of the day of our Lord's crucifixion which hid the Lord Jesus Christ from man's sight whilst he was bearing our sins. (Mark 15:33)
  - c) The Second Advent delivers the Jewish believers besieged in Jerusalem by the King of the North. (Daniel 11, Zechariah 12:1-3, 14:1-4)
  - d) Other passages indicating that the day of the Second Advent is a day of total darkness on the earth. (Isaiah 13:9-10, Ezekiel 32:7-8, Joel 2:10-11, Joel 3:14-15, Amos 5:18, Zechariah 14:6, Matthew 24:29-30, Luke 21:25-27, Revelation 6:12-17)
8. Heralds of the Two Advents of Christ  
 A herald is a person who preceded' a King in ancient times to announce his arrival. The King that we study is the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - a) First Advent
    - i) Human herald - John the Baptist (Matthew 3)
    - ii) Angelic heralds - Angels (Luke 2:1-15)
  - b) Second Advent
    - i) Human heralds - Moses, Elijah (Revelation 11)
    - ii) Angelic herald - The mighty angel (Revelation 10)

**THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST**

<b>Rapture - (Translation of the Church)</b>	<b>Revelation - (Second Coming of Christ)</b>
Not revealed in Old Testament (only illustrated)	Spoken of by all major prophets. (Zechariah 14:4)
Promises to Church fulfilled.	Promises to Israel fulfilled.
Judgment seat of Christ (rewards) <sup>1</sup> Corinthians 3:12-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 11, 2 Timothy 2:11)	Great white throne (after millennium):unbelievers - Matthew 25:31, Revelation 20:11-15

Christ the Bridegroom and Head	Christ Messiah to Israel (God keeping His word to Israel) - (Daniel 9:25)
Believer's body changed (not creation) 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, Philippians 3:21	Radical changes in nature. Romans 8:19-22
Church goes to heaven. 1 Thessalonians 4:17	Church comes back to earth. 1 Thessalonians 3:13
Imminent (no signs to be fulfilled before Church can be removed)	Many details of prophecy yet to be fulfilled. Revelation 6-19
Time of comfort for believer 1 Thessalonians 4:18	Time of terror for unbeliever. Revelation 6:15-17
Christ will meet Church in air 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	Christ will come back to earth. Zechariah 14:4
Private (only believers will see)	Public (every eye shall see Him) - Revelation 1:7
Before Tribulation - Revelation 3:10	After Tribulation.
Removal of Holy Spirit 2 Thessalonians 2:7	Removal of Satan. Revelation 20:1-3
Believer goes out of the world 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18	Unbeliever taken off the earth Matthew 24:37-42

**Notes**

**LESSON 75 – THE RESURRECTIONS**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
75	The Resurrections	1Cor 15:16-26 1 Thess 4:13-18 1 Cor 15:58 Matthew 27:52-53 Leviticus 23:9-14 Job 19:25-27 Daniel 12:1-2 Isaiah 26:19-21 Rev 20:4-6, 11-15	Immortality Resurrection

**THE RESURRECTIONS**

There is more than one resurrection mentioned in the Bible. There is going to be the resurrection of the saved as well as the lost. Further, the resurrection of the saved will be in a certain sequence. It is very important for Christians to understand where they are going and what the Lord has in store for his people in the future. We should always consider where we are going and what we are doing to ensure that we are doing works of eternal worth. Whitfield had asthma and yet preached literally until he died. He and others were looking beyond the present to a future with the Lord. They were looking through to the Judgment Seat of Christ. **2 Corinthians 5:10-20.**

We see failure in our life all too often. We let other things cloud our vision of what is truly important in situations. We forget that we are going to have to account for every minute we spent on earth. We miss opportunities. The Lord is coming for you whether you have died or are still alive. Every person is going to be raised either to commendation or judgment.

**1 CORINTHIANS 15:16-26**

This chapter is the great chapter on the resurrection. In verses 16 and following Paul says that if the Lord was not raised from the dead then your sins are not sorted out. He however conquered death. He was the man God who was sent from God as the sin bearer. Those who reject the Lord as Saviour, have not eliminated the reality of their future resurrection – for life is eternal – it is just where you spend eternity that is at stake. The resurrection is a key doctrine. If there is no resurrection there is no judgment, but also no hope and Christians are of all groups the most miserable, for they have lived a lie. It would be foolish, if you are persecuted for your faith, if your faith is in vain, built on delusions.

In verses 20-23 we have the resurrections described in their order. Firstly we have Christ as the first fruits, then they that are Christ's at his coming and every man in his own order. The Greek word for order "tagma", means an organised group or battalion. Here Paul is saying that Christ is the first of a number of battalions. There are orders of resurrection. The second group is the church age believers. In verses 46 -58 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 we are given confidence in the fact of our future resurrection.

The four groups or battalions in the first resurrection are

- 1 Christ as the First Fruits
- 2 The Church Age believers at the Rapture
3. Old Testament Saints and martyrs from the Tribulation at the Second Advent
4. The saints from the Millennium at the end of the Millennium

### **THE SECOND RESURRECTION**

The other group is the defeated/rebel group; the unbelievers who are resurrected to condemnation, and eternal judgment. It is passing in front of a reviewing stage of the Lord's victorious parade. Revelation 20:10-15.

Paul may have in mind the Roman review of a victorious army. The leader would be the victorious general who would go first to be followed by the victorious army, which would be followed by the prisoners or defeated army. This is the picture the Holy Spirit led Paul to use when he described the resurrections. The victorious general, in this picture the Lord, heralds in the victory. The destiny of the defeated in Rome was death at the field of Mars, in our passage it is the Lake of Fire. The citizens of Rome were then allowed to kill them, and from other passages in the scripture it appears we are the ones who throw the demons, at least, into the Lake Of Fire.

Paul also says that some will celebrate victory while others would be killed with the smell of the flowers beneath the feet of the army beautiful for the victors but the smell of death to the defeated. Some are to everlasting life with their Lord while others are raised to everlasting torment in the Lake of Fire.

### **THE RAPTURE**

In **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18** we see that this is a doctrine of comfort and should have a purifying effect on the life. In the next chapter we have the twenty commandments. From Paul's placement of this doctrine it is clear he expected it to have the double function in the believers life; to give them hope and confidence, and be a purifier of their lives. If you have this hope, you will purify yourself. You should be keeping your life pure. You should have a holy hatred of sin. We do not treat sin seriously enough. This hope that this mortality is to change to immortality should encourage you to act in a more worthy manner here and now. **1 Corinthians 15:58**. Refer to the EBCWA studies of these passages.

The power that it takes to live the Christian life is resurrection power. Unless the reality of where you are going grips your heart, you are not going to be able to come to grips with your life now. It is interesting to see history unfolding in the light of the Bible and what God says is going to happen. If we understand what is going to happen in the future we should be able to apply it to our situation here and now.

### **THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD**

In **Matthew 27:51-53** we see the Lord rising from the dead that night with the stone rolled away from the tomb. An earthquake shook the earth. On the day that the Lord rose from the dead many people came out of their graves and started knocking on doors and witnessing. The authorities had a great deal to deal with that night. Are these people the first fruits? No, they were simply an example of resurrection power. There is no evidence that they had resurrection bodies, any more than Lazarus did. All later died, but their resuscitation proved the Lord's power to do far more when it was time. He was proved to be "Lord over Death".

**Leviticus 23:9-14** describes the Feast of First Fruits which happened the day that the Lord rose from the dead. The Lord died on Passover eve and rose on the feast of First Fruits. Many people were raised from the dead that night. These have been dead for many days, weeks and possibly even for years. Earlier in Jesus ministry we had seen him raise people from the dead, the little girl who had just died, the boy who had been dead a day, Lazarus had been dead for four days, and had been buried. In all cases there is tradition that they all died subsequently. These were resuscitated, which means that they would eventually die again, but their coming back to life proved Jesus power over all things.

The Lord is the First Fruits. He was resurrected from the dead and will never die again which proves that the Lord is able to bring life out of death. The effect of long dead friends and relatives arriving to talk to you on that Feast of Firstfruits morning in 32 AD would have been dramatic in the households where it occurred, and it certainly meant that the authorities had their hands full that day.

The liberal view of a spiritual resurrection does not add up. There were people who had been dead for years now up and talking. The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to many witnesses including a group of 500 people at one time to prove he had conquered death. These were events that were real and physical – people knew something unique and strange had occurred that night.

Everybody knew that he was raised from the dead. It was their attitude about it that comes under the spotlight by the events. The people at Peter's sermon at Pentecost knew the facts, and 3000 were saved but even knowing these same facts, the unbelievers decided to reject it. They did not want to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour or Lord.

We have this illustrated in the parable of the beggar Lazarus and the Rich Man. **Luke 16:19-31**. In this parable Jesus has Abraham say truthfully, that even if people came back from the dead those determined to reject God's claims over them, would not accept him.

The Feast of First Fruits shows this as a reality. People will be in hell because they want to be. They do not want to be with God; they do not want God to rule over them.

#### **OLD TESTAMENT VIEW OF THE RESURRECTION**

A good example is given in the book of Job where Job said that, he knew that his Redeemer lives and said, "even though worms destroy my body yet in my flesh will I see God" - **Job 19:25-27**.

Job says that he will see God though his body rots away. Even though these eyes are going to rot and there will only be a skull, and later just dust, God will raise me up and I will see again. The Creator who made me can put me back again. This was all said over 3500 years ago.

In **Daniel 12:1-2** we have not only the resurrection but we have one to glory and another to judgment ties in with the Tribulation period also. In **Isaiah 26:19-21** we have the resurrection of the saints and the Second Advent of Christ tied in with judgment.

It is clear that while the Church will be raised in resurrection bodies at the Rapture of the Church, the Old Testament saints will be raised in conjunction with the Second Advent of Christ.

If you mix them all together, as the Post Tribulationists do, you can have the resurrection of all at the Second Advent but in 1 Corinthians it says that every one is raised "in their own order". We need to study systematically. In the area of eschatology we need to start tentatively, study carefully, speak graciously, and look at the whole teaching of Scripture.

#### **THE CHURCH AND ISRAEL**

We need to see Israel and Church as different. Christians should be occupied with the fact that your Lord is coming for us. If you have a disagreement with someone on these issues however, ensure you have agreement on the fundamentals, and charity on the differences. You separate from other people only because of fundamentally false doctrine and false/evil behaviour, not because of a difference in prophetic interpretation. You are told to separate, pray for them that they might be restored to you by repentance, and that certainly cannot be prayed if you separate from a good brother or sister due to a difference in prophetic understanding. The only sin in such separation is yours!

There are a number of "non negotiable" matters of fundamental doctrines, and one such is the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the deity of Christ; as these are basic and critical. We are all looking for the Lord's coming, even if we differ on the means and manner of his arrival. We need to see the good rather than the differences in Christian people providing they have the fundamentals correct, for in these matters there is much confusion, because we are all creatures of space and time and as such we make mistakes and are limited in our thinking. We ought never to fall out with people on the basis of eschatology, for we may all be wrong as the angel mentioned to Daniel at the end of Daniel 12.

#### **THE TRIBULATIONAL AND MILLENNIAL SAINTS.**

In Revelation 20 we have the resurrection of the saints at the Second Advent who have given their lives for the Lord during the Tribulation. There is apparently no specific mention in the Word of the resurrection of the Millennial saints, although they are to go into eternity with everyone else, and so must have their resurrection/eternal body to do so.

The Scriptures are silent about a rapture/resurrection of the living saints at the end of the Millennial kingdom. This item of prophecy is of no immediate concern to saints living today, and truth relating to it can be disclosed after Christ's return to set up His Kingdom. It is not a matter to speculate upon in this Age. It is an example of things which we, "do not need to know", and so they are not revealed to us. We must not expect to know everything, nor understand everything.

Apply what you know now to your life. If you do not apply what you know in your attitude to the lost, or your own life, then the word of God is not being applied correctly to your life.



In **Revelation 20:11-15** we see that the end for the unbeliever is terrible and eternal, yet absolutely what they wished for; they rejected Jesus, wanted nothing to do with him, and must face the terrible consequences of their evil rejection of their rightful king.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **IMMORTALITY**

1. Immortality means exemption from physical death and should not be confused with eternal life.
2. Immortality is used only with reference to the body (Romans 6:12; 8:11).
3. At this time only Jesus Christ has immortality as He alone has a resurrection body (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).
4. All men are currently mortal (Job 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:22).
5. At the rapture, our mortal body will put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:51-54).
6. Death is then conquered and mortality is "swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4).

### **RESURRECTION**

1. The resurrection of Christ is central to the gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
  - a) Had there been no resurrection then we would all still be in our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:17).
  - b) Resurrection indicates completion of justification. (Romans 4:25, 2 Corinthians 5:2 1)
  - c) Resurrection is a guarantee of ultimate sanctification. (1 Corinthians 15:20-23)
  - d) The resurrection is the Father's seal on Christ's completed work, and the public declaration of its acceptance.
  - e) Without the resurrection it is impossible for Christ to be glorified. The humanity of Christ is glorified higher than the angels. (John 7:39, John 16:14)
2. Historical proof of the resurrection:
  - a) The empty tomb. (Matthew 28)
  - b) Many of witnesses died rather than change their testimony.
  - c) Subsequent changes and confidence of the disciples after the resurrection.
  - d) The day of Pentecost. The reality of the resurrection was so well known that when Peter preached the first two sermons in Jerusalem over 8000 people were saved. (Acts 2:41, Acts 4:3-4)
  - e) The observance of the first day of the week as the worship day. (Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10)
  - f) The historic existence of the church. The church worships a literal risen Saviour, and not merely the memory of a dead martyr. (Romans 5:12,14,17, 6:3-9, 8:2, 1 Corinthians 15:26,54-55, Hebrews 2:14)
3. Baptism is a sign of the new resurrection life. (Romans 6:3-11, Colossians 2:12).
4. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of the expected return of the risen Lord. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)
5. Order of the resurrections:-
  - a) The first for believers only including Jesus Christ which is divided into four parts.
    - i) The resurrection of Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:23, Romans 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 1 Peter 1:3)
    - ii) The Rapture of the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-57, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
    - iii) The Old Testament saints and tribulation martyrs at the end of the Tribulation. (Daniel 12:13, Isaiah 26:19-20, Revelation 20:4)
    - iv) The Millennial saints and those who survive the Tribulation to enter the Millennium in their physical bodies.
  - b) The second resurrection occurs at the end of the Millennium and is for unbelievers only. They are judged and cast into the lake of fire forever. (1 John 5:28, 29, Revelation 20:12-15, 2 Peter 3:7, Matthew 25:41)
  - c) Jesus, who must be the first eternally resurrected human., was not raised until three days after the crucifixion.
  - d) People in the Old Testament who were "raised from the dead" were merely resuscitated, and later died.
  - e) Matthew 27:52-53 is a transfer scene not a resurrection scene. The transfer is one of saints from paradise to the third heaven (Ephesians 4:8). Some were given resuscitated bodies to witness to the Jews.
6. The sequence of events at the Lord's resurrection is as follows:-
  - a) Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James and Joses head towards the tomb followed by other women carrying embalming spices.
  - b) The three find the stone rolled away. Mary Magdalene goes back to tell the disciples. (Luke 23:55-24:9, John 20:1-2)
  - c) Mary the mother of James and Joses draws near to the tomb and sees the angel. (Matthew 28:2)
  - d) She goes back to the women carrying the spices.
  - e) Peter and John who have been advised by Mary Magdalene arrive, look inside the empty tomb and go away.(John 20:3-10)

- f) Mary Magdalene returns weeping, sees two angels and then Jesus. (John 20:11-18)
- g) As instructed by the Lord she goes to tell the disciples.
- h) Mary the mother of James and Joses meets the women with the spices and returning with them they see the two angels. (Luke 24:4-5, Mark 16:5)
- i) They also receive advice from the angels and, going to seek the disciples, are met by Jesus. (Matthew 28:8-10)

**LESSON 76 – THE JUDGEMENTS**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
76	The Judgements	2 Corinthians 5:10 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 1 John 2:28 2 John 7-11 Daniel 12:1-3 Revelation 20:4-6 Matthew 25:31-46	Judgment Seat of Christ Great White Throne

**THE FIRST JUDGEMENT - THE BEMA SEAT OF CHRIST**

In **2 Corinthians 5:10** we, the believers, come before our Lord in judgment. It is not the judgment of condemnation, but the assessment of rewards. **Romans 8:1-2**. We are told that we must all appear before the judgment seat or "bema seat" of Christ. In **1 Corinthians 3:11-15** we get a view of this judgment seat where our good deeds are evaluated to see whether the works we did in this life were of divine (Holy Spirit) or human good (Old Sin Nature) origin.

In the ancient world the "bema" was a place where people came before the civic magistrate to receive rewards for duties they had done for the public good. It should be emphasised that this was not a criminal court, it is a place to decide what rewards were appropriate for the public service. The scriptures make it clear that God seeks to bless us, not place us under condemnation, for Judgment to condemn is always God's "strange work". Isaiah 28:21.

Many believers think that they are going to walk into heaven to receive rewards for what they have done for God. However when they get to the judgment seat of Christ all the rubbish [good works undertaken in their own strength] will be burnt away and they will be left with a very small pile of gold silver and precious stones [works undertaken under the control of the Holy Spirit alone]. It is only Holy Spirit led and powered production that is rewardable in/for eternity.

They will however all enter into heaven, for it is your productivity that is being assessed not your salvation. - **1 John 2:28** - your life will be assessed personally by the Lord who loves you and gave himself for you. There is no fear here, just blessing and rewards forever. You are rewarded for everything that you have done in the power of the Holy Spirit.

In **2 John 7-11** we have works that have been undertaken in the power of the Spirit. We ask ourselves how much have we done in the power of the Spirit and how much has been done in the power of the Old Sin Nature? - Colossians 2:18, Matthew 6:4, 18. This throws light on our attitude towards every moment of our too often wasted days. So many days we have allowed to slip by, or we have worked in our own human strength, whereas God had provided the power of the Holy Spirit to utilize every day to the glory of the Lord. Be filled with the Holy Spirit and be rewarded forever!

**THE SECOND JUDGEMENT**

The second judgment/assessment for rewards, is the judgment of the Old Testament saints - **Daniel 12:1-3**. Here Daniel brings together the judgment on both the believing and unbelieving groups in Israel. **Revelation 20:4-6** makes it quite clear that there is a thousand years between them. In the Old Testament the first and second advents of Christ always went together. The book that we have here is the Lamb's book of life in which all our lives are written, for we have accepted the "Lamb of God" as taking away our sins. The only people facing the judgment of damnation are those who rejected the Lamb of God in time, and stood on their own merit.

**THE THIRD JUDGEMENT**

The third judgment occurs in Revelation 20:4-6. It deals with the Tribulational martyrs. Revelation 20 and 21 comments again on the things revealed to Daniel. The Tribulational martyrs are rewarded at the Second Advent, at the same time as the Old Testament saints. They, with the church age believers, are raised incorruptible and are given eternal rewards. These three judgments are for those involved in the first resurrection, that has then occurred in its three phases, before the Millennial Kingdom begins.

It should be remembered that there is no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. **Romans 8:1-2**.

The rewards to the church age believers and those of the Old Testament saints and Tribulational martyrs are separated by seven years, if you hold to a pre Tribulational rapture position. Your interpretation on how the giving of rewards will work out will depend on what your view is of the relationship between the Rapture and the Second Advent.

**THE FOURTH AND FIFTH JUDGEMENT**

**Matthew 25:30-46** deals with the survivors of the Tribulation period, which comprise both Jews and Gentiles. There is evidence that they will be treated differently, as the Gentiles are judged on the basis of their support for the Jewish people through the time that the Anti-Christ tries to kill them all. The Jewish people are judged on their belief in, or rejection of Jesus as their Messiah.

When the Lord comes to judge at the Second Advent only the believers will be allowed to remain on the earth. They will enter into the Millennium in their earthly bodies to enjoy the kingdom age.

**Jewish Survivors Of The Tribulation**

The judgment of Jewish survivors is described in **Ezekiel 20:34-38** and illustrated again in **Matthew 25:1-30**. Ezekiel states that their judgment/assessment for rewards will occur after all surviving Israelites have been re-gathered from the ends of the earth to the land of Palestine. Christ will cause them to "pass under the rod" (see **Leviticus. 27:32**) to purge out the rebels.

As a result, those rebels (unsaved) will not enter the land of Israel (Ezek. 20:38) but will be cast into the outer darkness (Matthew. 25:30). In contrast, those who successfully pass through this judgment will enter the millennial kingdom to enjoy the blessings of the New Covenant (Ezekiel. 20:37).

This group will not be given resurrection bodies at this time, but will go into the kingdom in their earthly bodies and will become the parents of the first millennial Jewish babies. The climatic conditions are changed back to Edenic times and so life times return back to what they were, with many living for the entire thousand years.

**Gentile Survivors Of The Tribulation**

Also at the second advent of Christ, Gentile survivors of the Tribulation will be judged by Him. **Matthew 25:31-46** describes this in detail. Joel predicted that it would take place in the "valley of Jehoshaphat" (Joel 3:2) which may refer to the Kidron Valley on the east side of Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat simply means "Yahweh judges". Both passages say that these Gentiles will be judged for their treatment of Israelis and dispersed Jews during the Tribulation period. These will be individual Gentiles, and not Gentile nations as wholes, and their treatment of the Jews during the Tribulation is what is under God's scrutiny. For a Gentile to treat any Jewish person with kindness during the Tribulation will place his life in jeopardy; it will demonstrate the faith that Rahab showed the Jewish spies of the Exodus generation. James 2:16-26.

**THE SIXTH JUDGEMENT**

The sixth judgment is the judgment of Satan. This is described in **Revelation 20:7-10**. He was bound in Revelation 20:1 of that chapter. In verse 7 after the passage of a thousand years, after a period of great spiritual and ecological blessing, Satan will be loosed for a short while. There will have been many people who have been born to the survivors of the Tribulation and when they hear Satan's message they will follow him to their destruction. This is the final sifting of the volition of mankind – for God will force no-one to enter eternity with Him. The children who are born in the Millennial Kingdom now can worship Jesus as King, or accept the satanic alternative and join him forever in the Lake of Fire.

The children of the people who survive the Tribulation and enter the Millennium are shown in many places in the Old Testament. They are said to be able to play with the cobra, and that during that time the lamb and the lion will lie down together. These people will live a long time. After a thousand years of perfect environment, with the perfect telling of the message of salvation without satanic interference, yet many will run to Satan when he is released for a time. The first humans were tested and failed in a perfect environment, so will many of the last generation. They will all be judged.

Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire that had been prepared for him and his angels. Verse 10 represents the end of Satan permanently. He is thrown into the Lake of Fire where the false prophet and the beast (the Anti-Christ) have already been for a thousand years.

**THE SEVETH JUDGEMENT**

The seventh judgment is the Great White Throne judgment. This is given in **Revelation 20:11-15**. This is the destiny of the unsaved and it is unchangeable/permanent, and appears to continue in some form into eternity. In this passage the people who are judged are those who do not have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

**THE LAMBS BOOK OF LIFE**

The Lamb's Book of Life contains the names of those who have personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. From a study of all texts referring to this, it would appear that all people are born with their name in this book, but it is removed if they die having rejected the Lord as their Saviour. Young children are covered, as they have not reached the age of accountability. **Numbers 14:29, 2 Samuel 12:17-23, 2 Peter 3:9**. God is not willing that any should perish, but if people who have reached the age of accountability have not accepted the Lord Jesus Christ by the time that they die their name is expunged from the book and they rely on their own good deeds for salvation.

It is as if there is a video replay of your life showing your deeds. The passage also refers to "books" being opened which detail the works of the unbelievers, and all their good works are recorded there. Their sins are not recorded, because these were dealt with by the blood of Jesus and are gone forever. It is then demonstrated that the unbelievers have not satisfied the absolute righteousness of Christ that is required by God, and so they are sentenced eternally to the Lake of Fire by the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Lamb on the Throne. The reason for their judgment is actually the same arrogance that Satan showed in rejecting God's rulership over him – the followers of Satan have chosen their own works over that done for them on the Cross. The people before the Lord on that terrible day are the people who have arrogantly ignored his claims, and rejected Him as Saviour and King, selecting their own works instead as of value.

The chances for the unbeliever to enter heaven are zero. The wrath of God abides on them forever, for that is what they choose in space-time. The last judgment is absolutely fair as the Lord knows all the facts. The unbeliever will be judged out of their very mouths; they will get forever exactly what they selected in time. The greatest sadness of the last judgment is that these people go into eternal judgment because they rejected their Saviour, and yet their sins are all dealt with by his blood, and they will know that forever. They are punished because in arrogance they rejected Him and chose their own works above the blood shed for them on the Cross.

## **DOCTRINES**

### **JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST**

1. There are three types of judgment for believers in the Church Age.
  - a) Judgment of Sins:- The Lord Jesus Christ on the cross substituted the payment of all man's sins. The penalty of sin is death. (Romans 6:23) There is therefore no judgment for those in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1). The substitutionary death is given in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21, Galatians 3:13.
  - b) Judgment of Self:- We are told that if we judge ourselves we shall not be judged. Failure to do so brings discipline. (1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11:31, 32, 2 Corinthians 2:5-7, Hebrews 12:7, 1 John 1:9)
  - c) Judgment Seat of Christ:- This is the evaluation of the production of believers for the purpose of reward (2 Corinthians 5:10)
2. The Judgment Seat of Christ is a time of reward. Our human works (wood, hay, stubble) will be burned, our works in the power of the Spirit (gold, silver, precious stones) will be rewarded. (1 Corinthians 3:11-16).
3. At the Judgment Seat of Christ the believer can be denied reward but can never lose his salvation. (2 Timothy 2:12-13)
4. Backslidden believers have no reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (Hebrews 6:7-12)
5. The Judgment Seat of Christ is illustrated by the famous athletic games in the ancient world. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
6. Rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ is based on grace. (James 2:12, 13)
7. Since we will be judged by Christ, we are not to judge each other (Matthew 7:1-2)

### **JUDGEMENT: GREAT WHITE THRONE**

1. The judgment of the Great White Throne is the last judgment. (Revelation 20:11, 15)
2. Only the unsaved are judged at the last judgment as there is no judgment for Christians. (Romans 8:1)
3. The last judgment occurs at the end of the Millennium. (Revelation 20:7-15)
4. The unsaved are judged according to their works from the Books of Works (Revelation 20:12)

5. The judgment is to show that the Human works of man cannot satisfy the justice of God. God is totally fair and shows that he is only satisfied by "The Good Work". The death of Christ on the Cross.
6. Having shown the unsaved they have failed to satisfy the holiness of God, the condemned are cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:15)

**LESSON 77 – THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
77	The Millennial Kingdom	Revelation 20:1-10 Psalm 2:7,8	Kingdom

**THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

**Revelation 20:1-10** is the only place in the Bible where the length of time involved with the Lord’s Kingdom on earth is given. Here he rules as King of Kings and Lord of Lords on the earth.

Here we have, without great detail (for it is elsewhere in the Old Testament), the Millennial Kingdom given with 1000 years mentioned six times. Originally the church believed in the millennial reign, but during the theological dominance during Roman-medieval times by those who followed Origen, Clement and Augustine of Hippo and their spiritualizing interpretation, the church leadership said one thousand was ten to the power of three or the symbolic rulership of God over man, and that this is something that they believed was/is done through the church.

This position was formalized by Augustine of Hippo in the early fifth century, who went back to Origen and Clement of Alexandria. However with John saying “one thousand years” six times, and with no other clues as to it being symbolic, we at EBCWA take it as a literal period of years. We take the Millennial Kingdom as a perfect theocratic kingdom, which at the start is entered into by believers only.

Children are born over time to the believing remnant of survivors of the Tribulation, and they are eventually tested by Satan, to be sure they are actually “believers” or are just going along with the majority. This period of perfection however shows the effect of God’s rule on earth with the elimination of Satanic influence. Here we have the dominion over the earth which Adam lost restored. The world is polluted at the moment and also the sin of man disturbs its peace. For a thousand years man will know the way that the earth should have been, and can be when God’s rules are followed.

**THE RULE OF GOD ON EARTH**

A major passage emphasizing the earthly character of the kingdom is **Isaiah 11:1-16**, where Jesus Christ as a descendant of David is described as bringing righteous judgment on the earth and punishing the wicked. Isaiah 11:4 states, "but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked". Frequently in the passage, the earth is mentioned (as in Isaiah 11:9), and God's dealings with the nations in recovering Israel from all over the earth are described.

Many other verses either state or imply that the kingdom will be on earth (cf. **Isaiah 42:4; Jeremiah 23:3-6; Daniel 2:35-45; Zechariah 14:1-9**). The description of the rule of Christ on earth in the Millennial Kingdom in these passages certainly does not describe the present age, nor does it describe heaven. Any reasonable fulfillment would require a literal kingdom on earth following Christ’s Second Advent. There are more than 30 major Old Testament passages or chapters which cover the subject of the rulership of Messiah on earth.

If you read the passages in the Old Testament dealing with the Millennium, you can ask yourself whether they have been fulfilled yet. When will they be fulfilled? They will, we believe, be fulfilled after the Second Advent. We should expect the prophecies to be fulfilled, **just like all others have been fulfilled, and that is literally**. Often the prophecy which was fulfilled at the First Advent is in the same verse as that to be fulfilled at the Second, so the hermeneutical principles applied to the First Advent prophecies must be applied to the Second Advent prophecies. As the first was fulfilled literally, so we believe it is logical the second will be fulfilled literally.

**CHRIST AS KING**

Many Old and New Testament passages combine their testimony that Christ will be the supreme ruler over the earth. Christ, as David’s son, will sit upon the throne of David (2 Samuel. 7:16; Psalm. 89:20-37; Isaiah 11; Jeremiah 33:19-21). When Christ was born He came as a King, as announced by the Angel Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:32-33). As a King He was rejected (Mark 15:12-13; Luke 19:14). When He was crucified He died as the King of the Jews (Matthew. 27:37). In His second advent He is described as "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS". (Revelation, 19:16).

One of the features of the millennial kingdom is that David will be resurrected and rule as a prince under Christ (Jeremiah 30:9; 33:15-17; Ezekiel. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea. 3:5).

All these verses, as well as some in the Psalms, indicate that these conditions described will certainly exist on earth at some future point. David will be the Prime Minister/Prince with the Lord as King. This requires the Second Coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, before the prophecy can be fulfilled.

### **TRIBULATIONAL MARTYRS**

In Revelation 20:4 the martyrs who have died and are referred to there, are not Church Age believers, as they have been martyred because they did not worship the beast or his image. The church is gone at Revelation chapter 4. In Daniel 12 we noted that the Old Testament saints will be raised in resurrection bodies to rule with Him. These passages clearly show that the Old Testament saints will rise to rule over the area given to Israel in the Millennium.

You have a major problem with the Character of God if you believe that there is no earthly rule of Christ on the earth because the hope of Old Testament saints was to be involved in an earthly kingdom. Job, David, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph all had this hope. Even Orthodox Jews today, and Arabs who genuinely try to worship God as they are taught within Islam, all want to be buried in Jerusalem. The Old Testament hope is that Messiah will come to Jerusalem and that the believers of the past will be raised to enter into a kingdom based on Jerusalem. God is not wrong. The key figures in the Old Testament did not get it wrong. So we believe – what about you believer?

### **THE GOVERNMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM**

Many passages testify to the fact that the rule of Christ will be over the entire earth, far beyond the boundaries of any previous earthly kingdom or the kingdom of David himself. In establishing this worldwide government, God fulfilled His purpose that man should rule the earth. Although Adam was disqualified, Christ as the Last Adam is able to fulfill this goal as mentioned in **Psalms 2:6-9**.

According to **Daniel 7:14**, the Son of Man was given dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom is finally one that shall not be destroyed.

The universality of the kingdom is also mentioned in **Psalms 72:1-19**. This rulership is going to commence on the earth and will last forever – through the end of time into eternity. Satan is going to have a final attack on God and mankind but he is simply being used by God to sift the volition of that last generation, and they have had 1000 years of teaching before he has his attack permitted – only those who desperately hate God will follow Satan at that time. Satan does a good job of gathering all the unbelievers together and marches them all together to Jerusalem where they are destroyed by God – it is a pathetic rebellion – for all have had ample opportunity to worship the Lord and be saved forever, but their volition must be tested, and they have the freedom to opt out of God's Plan for them, and many do. Evil is baffling!

The earthly kingdom is transformed into an everlasting kingdom. The Millennium is 1000 years on earth, which opens up into eternity. The kingdom is "without end".

The government of Christ will be one of absolute authority with the Lord ruling with a rod of iron. Criminals will be dealt with and the concepts of the Sermon on the Mount will be applied.

### **A SPECIAL PLACE FOR ISRAEL IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

Israel is re-gathered and restored to extended borders. Lebanon will become part of the Promised Land. There will be a revived Davidic Kingdom. Here you have prophecies which talk about the reuniting of Judah and Israel which cannot deal with the church.

It talks about the boundaries of the land and the re-gathering of the Jews from the four corners of the earth. You cannot apply this to the church. There is no way around these Old Testament prophecies. Paul understood that even though in his day Israel had turned away from the Lord there would be a time when they would return and repent as indicated in many Old Testament passages.

The spiritual blessings of the Millennium are also given with **Isaiah 11** **Jeremiah 33**. There are blessings on the earth and in the souls of mankind. There will be a period of righteousness, there will be tremendous joy, and excellent living and social conditions. **Isaiah 61:1-7**.

This is an interesting passage because it brings together the First and Second Advent and the Millennium and rolls them all together. **Isaiah 61:1[a]** was fulfilled First Advent, **61:1[b]** will be fulfilled at the Second Advent. **Isaiah 61:2-7** refers to the Millennium.

### **OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH**

In Joel we have the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh. This was quoted by Peter at Pentecost, but it was clearly only partially fulfilled. When will that prophecy be fulfilled 100%?

1. **(Joel 2:28-29)** states, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."

2. From this it is clear that:-

- (a) This will occur afterwards (gk - eschatos) meaning in the last days.
- (b) The spirit would be poured out on all flesh.
- (c) Sons and daughters to prophecy.
- (d) Old men dream dreams.
- (e) Young men see visions.
- (f) Universal pouring out of the spirit.

3. In order for the Holy Spirit to be poured out on all flesh it would be necessary for all the inhabitants of the world to be believers. This only occurs twice after the Fall, at the Flood and at the start of the Millennial reign of Christ. As Joel lived long after the Flood the Second Advent is in view here.

4. In **(Acts 2:15-21)** Peter quoted directly from **(Joel 2:28-32)**. What Pentecost and the Second Advent have in common is that the Holy Spirit is given abundantly on both occasions.

5. At Pentecost what accompanied the giving of the Holy Spirit? The ability to evangelize in a language you have not previously learnt; the gift of tongues.

- (a) The spirit was only given to 120 people rather than universally. (Acts 1:15)
- (b) They spoke in foreign languages the good news of salvation. (Acts 2:1-15)
- (c) There were three more "Pentecost" like experiences in the book of Acts:-
  - (i) For the Samaritans. (Acts 8:15-17)
  - (ii) For the Gentiles. (Acts 10:44-46)
  - (iii) For the followers of John the Baptist who had not heard of Jesus. (Acts 19:2-7)

(d) In (Acts 8:15) it said that the Holy Spirit had fallen on a few only. At the giving of the Spirit to the Samaritans no mention of miraculous speaking in other languages is given. It is also the only one of the four occasions when Jews were not stated to be present.

6. Tongues is only mentioned once in the Old Testament, and it is a warning sign for Israel, telling them that they are to be severely disciplined and go into dispersion if they do not hear and respond to the message that will be given in the "tongues" they hear. **(Isaiah 28:8-11)**. From 32 AD, (Cross and Resurrection) to 70 AD (Destruction of Temple/city) is exactly the same time frame for the Exodus Wandering – the biblical period of grace and mercy before judgment.

7. The Holy Spirit was therefore given at Pentecost as the Spirit will be at the start of the Millennium, but not as it was given at Pentecost, with the sign of cursing and coming judgment – tongues. All the blessings delineated in Joel 2 will be poured out in the Millennial blessings that the Holy Spirit will pour.

**JUSTICE IN THE MILLENNIUM**

Criminals only commit one serious crime when the Lord is ruling. They are then executed and the innocent do not suffer. There is a crime free society, or at least a crime intolerant society. The innocent are protected in the Millennium. We do not deal with criminals today as we should, and as a result the innocent suffer disgracefully. There is no more war as the Lord deals with the causes of war in the hearts of anyone going after evil immediately. He knows what is in the heart of man and acts instantly to protect the weak and helpless for those who give way to evil; for even though Satan is locked away man can still rebel, and some do all through the period, even without satanic help. Baffling always!

There is a Millennial Temple, which is described in Ezekiel 40-46. If the Lord described a temple in seven chapters, and it has as yet not been built, then we must conclude that it must be important. It is going to be the centre of worship for the whole world then. In the resurrection body you will have the ability to move as the Lord could so we will be able to travel around easily. There is a sacrificial system at that time, which is to remind people of the Lamb of God who took away the sins of the world. The Feast of Tabernacles is important at that time, not Passover! Zechariah 14:16ff.

Geographic changes occur on the earth with the curse lifted from it; there is uniform climate, rainfall occurs equally everywhere, the ecological damage is reversed, and so it will be a golden age. We have a glimpse of this in the rock records of the earth when the entire earth, covered by the vapour canopy of Genesis 2:5-6, 6:11-12. There will be tropical forests everywhere again, including Antarctica, as once there were.

**PSALM 2:6-12**

Psalm 2 is one of the great passages on the Millennium. Here we see that the Lord will have all the kingdoms of the earth for His possession. This was one of the temptations of the Lord by Satan in the wilderness. The Lord said that God is going to give the kingdoms of the world to Christ and rejected the temptation. Satan is bound. Jesus will rule the nations with the rod of iron. The criminals who wish to work evil in that day will be destroyed.

The rulership of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is coming. What are we going to do about it right here and now? In the ancient world the servants would kiss the ring of the lord, not unlike the Pope today. The only way to escape the judgment of the Lord is to accept the Lord as Saviour and Lord, to "kiss the Son" [ v 12] – acknowledging Him as Saviour and Lord of your life. Here we have the gospel and judgment. When we give the gospel we need to tell the people about the judgment that is the alternative. Is the Rapture/Second Coming going to be the best day in your life or the worst?

## **DOCTRINES**

### **KINGDOM**

1. The Kingdom of Heaven is distinguished from the Kingdom of God.
  - a) Kingdom of Heaven
    - i) The Kingdom of Heaven will be the visible future Kingdom of the Lord on the earth. (Luke 1:31-33)
    - ii) Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, includes those physically alive going into the Millennium. (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50)
  - b) Kingdom of God
    - i) The Kingdom of God is spiritual (John 3:3, Romans 14:17, Luke 17:20)
    - ii) Entrance into the Kingdom of God is through regeneration. (John 3:3-7)
    - iii) The Kingdom of God covers the divine authority over all creation for all time. (Luke 13:28, 29, Hebrews 12:22, 23)
2. The King was born as prophesied of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14 cf Matthew 1:18-25) and in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2 cf Matthew 2:1)
3. The Kingdom was announced as at hand (Matthew 4:17) but was rejected by the Jews both from a moral (Matthew 11:20) and official viewpoint (Matthew 21:42-43). As a result the King was crowned with thorns.
4. Afterwards He announced His purpose to build His church. (Matthew 16:18)
5. The mysteries of the Church and the Kingdom of Heaven were seen as concurrent - they both refer to the spiritual kingdom. (Ephesians 3:9-11)
6. When He returns at the Second Advent, the Lord Jesus Christ will establish the Kingdom for 1000 years before eternity resumes. (Matthew 24:27-30, Luke 1:31-33, Acts 15:14-17, Revelation 20:1-10)
7. At the end of the Millennium, Jesus Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28)
8. The eternal throne is of God and the Lamb. (Revelation 22:1)

### **MILLENNIAL KINGDOM**

1. "Thy will be done on earth, " will be fulfilled in the Millennium. (Matthew 6:10)
2. The Kingdom is the Millennium, the first 1,000 years of Jesus' eternal reign. It will be after the Second Advent, on the old earth. (Revelation 20:4-6)
  - a) Promised (2 Samuel 7:8-17, Psalm 89:20-33)
  - b) Prophesied (Isaiah 2:1-5, 2:11, 12, 35, 55, 56, 62:11)
  - c) Presented (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Israel, not the church)
  - d) Postponed Epistles of New Testament (for church age)
  - e) Proclaimed (Revelation 10) (Angelic herald) (Revelation 11:1-14) (Human heralds)
  - f) Plagiarized (Revelation 13)
  - g) Perfected (Revelation 11:15-19)
3. Issues relating to the Kingdom
  - a) The Character of God - will He keep His word to Israel? Yes. Jesus Christ will reign.
  - b) Unconditional Covenant - will He keep Covenant? Yes. Abrahamic, Palestinian, Davidic, New - all fulfilled in the Millennium.
  - c) Dispersion of Israel - will He recover them again? Yes. At the Second Advent.
  - d) Advent - will He return to earth at the worst period in history? Yes. At the end of the Tribulation.



e) Millennial - The Kingdom of Jesus Christ is eternal, why the emphasis on the first 1,000 years? Jesus will do what Satan has been trying to do for 6,000 years; He will create perfect environment in an instant, as a demonstration to prove that perfect environment is not the answer; regeneration is.

4. Principles from Micah 4:1-8

- a) The Kingdom will be supreme. (Micah 4:1)
- b) The Kingdom will be universal. (Micah 4:2)
- c) The Kingdom will be peaceful. (Micah 4:3)
- d) The Kingdom will secure universal prosperity. (Micah 4:4-5)
- e) The nation of Israel ruled by the Lord for the Kingdom. (Micah 4:6-8)

**LESSON 78 – SATAN'S JUDGEMENT**

<b>NO</b>	<b>STUDY</b>	<b>TEXTS</b>	<b>TOPIC BOOK</b>
78	Satan's Judgement	John 16:8-11 Ezekiel 28:12-19 Genesis 3:15 John 12:27-33 Revelation 12:7-12, Rev 20:1-3, 7-10	Great White Throne Satan

**INTRODUCTION**

The great enemy of mankind is judged; the one who is a source of so many problems is to be judged. The judgment is certain. It also shows God as the permanent victor. This is a vital topic for mankind to know which is not often taught from the Scriptures. We are used to the concept from eastern religions that evil and good are equal forces, but they have never been so – evil is always a perversion and inferior, and it will be put away from the creation one day.

**SATAN IS TO BE JUDGED**

In **John 16:8-11** we have the background to this topic. In verse 11 the Lord ends this advice regarding praying for the unbeliever, telling us to be praying for conviction of the sin of unbelief, of the fact that they do not have the righteousness of God, and the fact that Satan is going to be judged. This is a specific ministry of the Holy Spirit to point out this truth.

While the Lord walked on the earth he convicted by His very presence all those that he met of the need for accepting a Saviour. In this passage he is telling us that as his believers we are to pray that the Holy Spirit might show the unbelievers that they are traveling with Satan and will share his judgment. The Lord is saying that Satan is actually judged now, and therefore he is condemned already.

In **Revelation 20:1-10** we see Satan cast into the Lake of Fire but that is just the last of a series of restrictions placed on him. Progressively through history Satan is more and more restricted and dealt with more harshly by God. Well before the Cross, Satan is judged. God is totally confident that the sacrifice of the Cross would be/was successful, for He is in control throughout history.

In **Ezekiel 28:12-19** we find a passage on Satan, that while the immediate application is to the King of Tyre, he is as an earthly king a type of Satan, and so this passage deals with the judgment of God on Satan. In verses 13 and 15 we have the statement that he was created. Satan is not God, nor equal to him; he has a start and a finish. **Isaiah 14:9-20** describes the arrival of Satan in hell, as he enters hell to await his final judgment – and as Satan enters all these things are said to him by those he fooled and deceived to be with him in this place. His doom is this certain, so that God has even foreseen the words the lost will abuse Satan with.

**RELIGION**

In all major religions there is a force of good and evil, and often in their theology it is not very clear who is going to win. The sides are balanced as shown in the flag of South Korea with the two circles of Ying and Yang. This is however a travesty of the truth, it is not a true picture of reality. God is in control; the evil is that of a creature, the good is of God. Evil is a blot on creation; a blot that is to be removed at the end of time.

Satan however, being the father of liars says that you could opt for either side here and either side could win. He lies from the beginning to the end of his rebellious reign on the earth. It is Satan's lie from the beginning that God has been replaced, and that the concept of God is an "interesting" view from our cave man past, or a genetic relic of our ancestors. Satan wants man to mock the concept of one God, but it is he and those deceived by him who will be mocked.

An earlier judgment on Satan is recorded in **Genesis 3:15** where God says that He will put enmity between the woman and the seed of Satan. In this it says that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent whereas the heel of the seed of the woman would be bruised. There is a difference in power. The Lord was terribly hurt at the Cross. However the power of sin and death was defeated at the Cross and within that Empty Tomb.

**THE VICTORY AT THE CROSS**

**John 12:27-33** it shows that the Lord's death was going to mean the end of Satan. After the Cross however Peter warned believers about him being a roaring lion. Lions do not take on healthy strong and well supported animals. A believer who is walking in the power of God's Word is in no danger of harm from Satanic attack. If you are walking in the Spirit Satan cannot knock you over. - **Romans 8:28 - 39**. He hates us and will try to hurt you, but in the Filling of the Holy Spirit you are safe against him. **John 15:18ff, 1 John 4:4**.

We can trip over and be seriously hurt if we are controlled by our Old Sin Nature. We have tremendous strengths that can be applied however through the Holy Spirit and stabilize our lives through the victory of the Cross and the Empty Tomb. At the Cross Satan's power base was forever destroyed. Satan's great work today is deception. You can be safe in Christ in the light of His Word and you need fear nothing.

**SATAN'S ACCESS TO HEAVEN**

Currently Satan can go back into the throne room of heaven and accuse the brethren. We have an advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ the righteous. [**1 John 2:1-2**]. Satan still has access but his attack is only slander and criticism. Every time Satan accuses the brethren Jesus Christ is able to say that "that person is covered by my blood", showing the righteousness of God that has destroyed Satan's power. It is agony for Satan in heaven today for every moment he feels his inferior status to believers and their certain victory – and his certain judgment in the Lake of Fire – but he still thinks he can out play the Lord and destroy all Jews and Christians. He cannot!

In **Revelation 12:7-12** this access ceases mid way through the tribulation. The elect angels cast the fallen angels down and the last half of the tribulation is terrible on earth because Satan knows his end is shortly to occur.

**Revelation 20:1-3** at the end of the Tribulation the Lord comes and the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire and all unbelievers are slain by the sword. In these verses it is clear that for the period of the Millennial Kingdom Satan is removed from circulation. The Archangel from heaven binds Satan for a thousand years in the abyss where the unbelievers who he fooled can apparently see him and mock him. Isaiah 14 passage above. No fellowship in hell!

**Revelation 20:7** - God finally releases him at the end of the Millennial Kingdom, and uses Satan to sift the nations, by allowing him to be released from prison for a short while to test those who have not known his temptation.

If God did not do this then Satan could say he did not have a last chance to attack the last generation. Satan says that as God made everybody with a flaw it is His (God's) fault and that all will follow him (Satan) if given the chance, and if this is so, then God ought not to judge men, nor angels, for simply doing what God has made them to do! We prove by believing in Christ that Satan is wrong.

Creatures have a will and thus have a choice, and we demonstrate that we can accept our maker and serve him, even under temptation. A vast multitude, even though they have had the Lord ruling from the new Jerusalem for 1000 years, will tragically follow Satan and rebel, but a vaster multitude do not, and so prove God right in his grace creation and provision for man, and so in his justice also.

God's righteousness and justice is demonstrated again for all to see. God is using this to test for all eternity His character. He is in control. They sing "Holy, Holy, Holy", because of his perfect character.

**THE JUDGEMENT OF SATAN**

There are four stages in the execution of judgment upon Satan

1. At the Cross, at which time Christ accomplished a lasting victory over Satan
2. Satan is cast out of heaven half way through the Tribulation [**Revelation 12:7-9**], and he is no longer able to accuse the brethren
3. Satan is bound and cast into the abyss for 1000 years at the start of the Millennium, and is unable to deceive the nations anymore – until released to test the volition of the last generation.
4. At the final judgment he is cast into the Lake of Fire where he is judged forever.

It should be noted that the fire will come out from him. His very nature will be his own judgement; he will be burnt up in his own nature. He is the spark which appears to light the Lake of Fire. He is Lucifer the angel of light and the Lake of Fire is waiting for him to hit it to catch fire.

We should be confident and trust in the Lord absolutely knowing that while you are with the Lord your enemy is powerless. By exercising your will to be a believer it shows to Satan and his angels that they could have done that as well. You can be confident as well as being respectful of the fallen angels, but you need never be fearful of them. A fearful believer is an ignorant one!

## DOCTRINES

### GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT [See page 152 above]

### SATAN

1. SCRIPTURE Genesis 3; Isaiah 14; Ezekiel 28; Matthew 4; Revelation.

#### 2. BIOGRAPHY

Satan is the most beautiful creature ever to be created by God. He is an angel who rebelled against God before the creation of man (Isaiah 14:12-15). Originally he was the covering angel, the personal attendant of Jesus Christ in the very throne room of God. Unlike God, Satan is a created being and as such can only be in one place at any one time. He is attended by a vast number of angels (called demons) who have given him unswerving allegiance. After the creation of man, he tempted Adam and Eve to be as gods and to know good and evil by disobeying God. Satan then became the ruler of this world (Genesis 3:1-7). He attacked the human race in many ways prior to the birth of Jesus Christ. Throughout Jesus Christ's life, Satan attacked the Lord. Since Christ's victory at the cross he attacks believers. Satan still has access into heaven where he accuses the brethren. Halfway through the tribulation period Satan is thrown out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9). This causes him to intensify his attack on the human race. During the millennium he is confined to the bottomless pit, allowing a perfect environment on the earth (Revelation 20:1-3). After a brief rebellion at the end of the millennium (Revelation 20:7-10), Satan is condemned to the eternal lake of fire which was created for the devil and his angels.

#### 3. EVALUATION

Satan is called:

- a) The destroyer (Revelation 9:11).
- b) The accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10).
- c) The adversary (1 Peter 5:8).
- d) Beelzebub, prince of devils (Matthew 12:24).
- e) The deceiver of the whole world (Revelation 12:9).
- f) The great dragon (Revelation 12:9).
- g) An enemy (Matthew 13:28,29).
- h) The wicked one (Matthew 13:19,38).
- i) The father of lies (John 8:44).
- j) The god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4).
- k) A murderer (John 8:44).
- l) The prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2).
- m) The ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30).
- n) The ancient serpent (Revelation 12:9).
- o) The tempter (Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5).
- p) A blinder of minds (2 Corinthians 4:4).
- q) A roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8).

#### 4. PRINCIPLES

- a) Believers are in Christ and therefore in a position of supremacy over Satan (Romans 8:37).
- b) Satan was defeated at the cross once and for all (Colossians 2:14,15).
- c) He can therefore only use devices and schemes, trying to convince the believer that he can still win the battle against God.
- d) Satan, through religion, tries to get man to work independently from God.
- e) A Christian out of fellowship can promote principles proposed by Satan (Matthew 4:8-10; Mark 8:33).
- f) Satan will use Scripture slightly changed, or added to, to try and confuse believers and lead them astray (Matthew 4:3-10; cf. Psalm 91:11,12).
- g) If Satan the adversary is resisted he will flee from you (James 4:7).
- h) Knowledge and application of the Scriptures is essential in understanding the wiles of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).

**LESSON 79 – NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH**

NO	STUDY	TEXTS	TOPIC BOOK
79	New Heavens and New Earth	Revelation 21:1-4 2 Peter 3:10-14 Rev 21:5-10, 11-21 Rev 21:22-27, 22:1-5 John 14:1-7	Eternity Past Eternity Future

**THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH**

In many pagan myths the end of the story is the defeat of evil so that everything on earth then looks good. This is not the end in God’s Word. In the scriptures before us God is telling us what is going to happen until space-time ends, and then after the time-space universe is ended!!! The Bible goes beyond time and space and through the Apostle John gives us a glimpse of what is going to happen. I Love John, and especially for Revelation 21-22, for he sees things way beyond his frame of reference and faithfully records them – even though he must have been overwhelmed.

The Bible is unique in the fact that only in the Bible do we have statements from before time and after time has finished. All other books are pale imitations. In **Revelation 21:5-27, 22:1-5** we are on the threshold of timelessness. Space and time are the framework of this present creation and the framework of our present thinking, but in resurrection body, like the Lord’s, we are able to go beyond time and space.

The New Jerusalem described in **Revelation 21:5-21** is a space station which leaves all science fiction far behind. We have crossed over here, well beyond the “bounds of sense” (space-time thinking) as we know them. We cannot even think outside the categories of space and time now, yet when we enter these chapters we have stepped through the barrier that separates our space-time universe and entered into eternity/infinity.

**THE ETERNAL STATE**

In **Revelation 21:1-4**, John introduces us to the eternal state (beyond space and time – into eternity and infinity). He concentrates on the New Jerusalem for that is as close as our language can get to this reality. The silence probably means that the language of humans is not sufficient to cope with what he sees in the new heavens and new earth.

Paul said that he had been to the third heaven and was not allowed to say what he had seen. He had been given a glimpse of what it was to be beyond time and space, as Peter and John also glimpsed these realities. These men are grappling with the difficulty of describing these things, for our language/brain is inadequate. What Paul had seen nevertheless would have allowed him to boast if he was that way inclined – but he just got on his knees in silent worship. The limits we have this side of eternity do not allow us to fully comprehend what eternity is going to be like but the glimpses we see in scripture bring us to our knees.

**2 PETER: 3:10-14**

There are several elements and changes mentioned in this passage

[1] Verse 10. He comes as a thief in the night. The Lord is not breaking in to steal. The thief in the ancient world came on horseback with thirty or forty friends and smashed his way in. It was sudden noisy and totally transforming. These people were thugs who would break in to pillage, rape and destroy and were not like the sneak thief of today. Like all analogies this is only a partial picture, for the Lord is not evil like the thieves. The Lord Jesus Christ comes in power to destroy the reign of crime and evil by the Anti-Christ.

[2] The great noise in this verse ties in with this which is almost like a thermonuclear explosion being described. Everything will melt, the Creator will fold it all up like an old worn garment and put it away.

[3] The words to describe this are dramatic, ‘dissolve” (like nuclear implosion) the total destruction of the world. The total elimination of this world is so dramatic that we should be very sober people. We should have holy and pure lives, looking earnestly for the coming of the Lord. We should be looking forward to a new heaven and earth in which only righteousness dwells.

This shows the practical application of prophecy. Everything we are seeing here applies today. Everything in the future should make us aware of what is happening now.

**REVELATION 21**

**Revelation 21** is the impact of these things as far as John is concerned. In verses 5-9 we see the Lord Jesus Christ on the throne and the destiny of the Bride as well as the destiny of the unbeliever. There is burning all around here, the old universe collapses in a sea of fire and perhaps the destiny of the unbelievers is to be wrapped up in the old universe that they loved so much. We are here beyond spatial realities. We also do not have the location of the Lake of Fire described.

In verses 10 – 21, the New Jerusalem is partially described. This city is a huge space station. We do not know if it is a pyramid or a cube. It is either a 1500 mile cube or a very large pyramid, but remember we are trying to put it into present physics and this vision doesn't fit.... It is so wonderful, rich, pure and breath taking. The impression made on John must have been amazing for his words move into poetry rather than descriptive prose. From Revelation 22 it appears that it could be a pyramid with water flowing from the throne of God down all faces of the structure. We will only fully know when we see this. This is the size of a small moon! There is nothing in all the literature of man that is like this description!!!!

**THE STONE IN THE NEW JERUSALEM**

Each of these stones are found on the High Priests breastplate, and are part of the inheritance of Israel. This ties in all the way through a Scripture. This is clearly figurative language, because John cannot grasp the sights he sees in normal technical language available to him. This is a man describing a space station 1900 years before man enters space! You have a glimpse of the perfection of God; the wonderful reflection of God's presence shining in the provision of his people. You also have the concept of purity in all these images. Don't try to draw these things....this is beyond space-time!

In 1 Corinthians 3 we as believers are told to build gold silver and precious stones into our eternal rewards by walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. The city is a reflection of the production of God, based on the plan of God, through the production of the Holy Spirit through the lives of mankind down the ages – it shines with the glory of God.

In verses 22- 27 the only ones who enter this area are believers. Again we have the Lamb's Book of Life. The believer is in focus.

**REVELATION 22**

In **Revelation 22:1-7** we come to the end of things that we can grasp and yet it is only the beginning of something even greater. Those who move into this area will reign with Him forever and ever. We have a tremendous vision of God triumphant and a totally new creation/universe showing all that the Lord wants from His creatures. We can see where things are going and this is where we are going. We need to see, understand and be excited about the glimpse we have of eternity here – for this is also the gospel message to mankind. When God starts moving to judge this world things will go very fast. Time is running out for all of us and for this tired present creation.

In verses 8-9 we see that angels are not to be worshipped they serve God and they serve us.

Verses 10-15 says that man must decide where he wants to be and who he wants to follow. The angel is saying that if you scoff at this book you are going to end up in the Lake of Fire. Recognise that each person will decide how he will live and that how he decides to live will be an everlasting decision. You will be rewarded when He arrives. Will it be judgment as an unbeliever or riches as a mature believer?

God is the first and last. There are those who will not enter his blessing, for they have chosen not to. [Colossians 3:6, Philippians 3:2 make the same point]. God is not mocked. It may be tough to serve the Lord but there is reward in it. Decide where you stand. God will let the unbeliever make his/her chosen way to Hell.

In verses 16 - 21 we have free will very much in focus. We are warned not to play fast and loose with God's Word. You take all the Word of God and apply it all to your life. Our attitude should be that we are desiring the New Jerusalem. We have to get a vision as to where we are going and see the future as we see the present. As we are obedient and occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ we look toward the end that is not an end it is a beginning.

**DOCTRINES**

**ETERNITY FUTURE**

In eternity future:

1. God reveals to us exceeding riches of His grace (Ephesians 2:7).
2. God brings many sons into glory (Hebrews 2:10).
3. Believers enjoy an inheritance (1 Peter 1:4).

4. It is God's purpose for the church to know the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3:10).
5. All former things pass away. There will be no more death, sorrow, pain, crying, sea, night or sun (Revelation 21:1-5, 23).
6. The curse will be lifted (Revelation 22:3).
7. All things in heaven and earth will be gathered in Him (Ephesians 1:10).
8. The present creation will be forgotten (Isaiah 65:17).
9. A river of water of life will run (Revelation 22:1).
10. The tree of life will be seen again (Revelation 22:2).
11. The Son of God will rule eternally (Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14).
12. He will still be subject to the Father (John 10:29; 1 Corinthians 15:28).
13. The lake of fire will continue forever (Isaiah 66:24; Revelation 14:11).

**ETERNITY PAST**

1. Jesus Christ existed before the foundation of the world in glory with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-2; 17:5,24).
2. In eternity past the Godhead agreed to permit sin to become manifest in the world of men before being eliminated forever from the universe (Hebrews 9:26).
3. In eternity past the Son of God agreed to come to earth as a human being to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8).
4. In eternity past it was ordained that Christ would be slain for the ungodly (1 Peter 1:18-20; Hebrews 10:5-10).
5. In eternity past the world and stars were created by Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:10; Colossians 1:16).
6. Man was placed on the earth to be made "a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men (1 Corinthians 4:9).
7. In eternity past believers were chosen in Christ (Ephesians 1:4). Christ is chosen, we share as believers his election.
8. In eternity past a book was written containing the names of those who would believe and survive the destruction of the universe (Philippians 4:3; Revelation 17:8; 20:15).

However, whilst God knew who would believe, he did not coerce human free will.

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