BIBLE COURSE

Savior of The World



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Acknowledgments and Other Essentials

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The designer and editors of the course have chosen to remain anonymous. They have adapted four verses to express their conviction:

• Jesus must increase, but we must decrease (John 3:30);

• Jesus made Himself of no reputation (Philippians 2:7), and we seek to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6); and

• He who glories, let him glory in the Lord (2 Corinthians 10:17).

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Preface and Features

Just as the spokes of a wheel have one central gathering point, all true Bible doctrines have their center in Jesus Christ. From Old Testament to New, Jesus is the Bible's focus. He is our Creator, Redeemer, High Priest, and soon coming King!



Savior of the World

Bible Course



The Savior of the World Bible Course is dedicated to leading you to our loving God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Every study is focused on Him.

This course is designed for people who are serious about studying the gospel of Jesus Christ and other key Bible doctrines in that same light. If you "hunger and thirst for righteousness," it is our belief that you truly "shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

Features of this Unbound, Color Edition of the Savior of the World Bible Course

This edition of the Savior of the World Bible Course has several features that will enhance your studies:

• The comprehensive scripture index will help you find where a verse is referenced in the lessons. This is a tremendous aid in jogging your memory regarding the meaning of a particular verse(s). Since you will have covered all the verses in the scripture index by the end of the lessons, you will be able to quickly revisit material you have already studied and grasped. Or you will be able to look forward to future studies.

• Color. There's something about color that appeals to the eye…that transforms a presentation. Enjoy!

• A picture is worth a thousand words. Scores of colorful pictures have been added to reinforce key messages.

• Underlining draws attention to the key points of the lessons.

• A handy feature for some is that this edition of the course is unbound. Individual pages can go places where the spiralbound version can't, such as between the pages of a Bible.

• This version of the course is priced between the bound, deluxe version and the unbound, black & white version.

Introduction to the Course

The world today is troubled. Men and women everywhere are seeking solutions to insurmountable problems - personal, social, national, and international. Underneath it all is a longing to know what is the real meaning of life.

• Where did the world come from, and how did life begin?

• Why are nations continually at war, and why is there so much hatred between various races and ethnic groups?

• Is there no hope for lasting peace in this world?

• Why is our human nature torn between ideals and actions, between hope for something better and perverse inclination to do something worse?

Unaided by some power outside of oneself, humanity has failed to find a satisfactory answer to these questions. But there is hope; for implanted in every human heart is a desire to worship some higher power, a desire for God. And God has the answers.

This Bible course is intended to lead men and women to the God of love and His wonderful gift of salvation in Christ.

Discover for yourself how much He loves you and longs to bring peace, hope, and joy into your life. Listen as God speaks to you from His Word and tells you He “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Because sin is a deceiver, many have been misled into thinking they can save themselves by their own good works. But the Bible is clear, “by the works of the law no flesh (i.e., no one) shall be justified (declared righteous)” (Galatians 2:16). It is for this reason Jesus said: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Man's only hope of salvation is Jesus Christ.

But before we can rejoice in this good news of salvation, we must first come to grips with our sin problem. Once we lose all confidence in ourselves, we will find it a joy to accept with open arms God's incredible gift of salvation in Christ.

★ It is only when the sky is pitch dark that the stars shine their brightest. ★

So, also, to appreciate the light of the gospel, we must view it against our total depravity.

Notes

PART 1 / The Incredible Good News of the Gospel

Lesson 1 - Why You Need a Savior



1. Who created man and for what purpose? Genesis 1:26

2. What did God do after He formed man out of the dust of the ground? Genesis 2:7

Man became a living soul, or being, when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. He was called "Adam," which means mankind1.

3. Out of what did God create Adam's wife? Genesis 2:21-24

God created this world by "the word of His mouth," except for the first man and woman. Adam (mankind) was formed by the hands of God out of dust; and Eve (mother of all) was formed out of Adam's rib. Out of this one couple the entire human race came into existence. Therefore, the human race, to which we all belong, is the proliferation of Adam's life (see Acts 17:26). For further discussion about the creation of mankind and related issues, see Lesson 14 and its supplement.

4. What did God command Adam not to eat from in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 2:15-17

Because God created mankind in Adam with a free will, He had to give them an alternative choice. Loyalty to Him meant the life God gave them could continue forever. Turning their backs to Him meant turning their backs to life itself, because God is the source of life.

1Every time an individual is born, it is actually just a multiplication of Adam's one life. For this reason David said of himself, "My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret (i.e., at Creation), and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (i.e., from the dust of the ground, when he was made "in Adam" -

Psalm 139:15)."

5. How many were affected by Adam's one sin? Romans 5:12

Since the fall of Adam took place before he had any children, the entire human race was still in him when he sinned. As a result, all humanity suffers the consequences of that original sin, even though we are not guilty or held responsible for the Fall.

6. What reversed humanity's status from condemnation to justification? Romans 5:18

☹ ☺

Justification (to be declared righteous) comes as a gift from God because of the righteous act of one man - the perfect life and the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This is the good news of the gospel.

7. As a result of the Fall, how many are righteous or good in God's eyes? Romans 3:9-12

The word "under" means to be ruled or dominated by. It was a term used to refer to slaves in Bible days. Just as a slave had no freedom but was ruled by his master, so also all humanity is "under sin," slaves to it (see Romans 7:14). This is the universal sin problem and our only hope of deliverance is a Savior.

8. How many stand guilty or condemned under God's law? Romans 3:19

9. Through whom only do we have redemption from sin? Romans 3:23, 24

The Bible is clear; man's only hope of salvation is Jesus Christ.

10. What does David say about himself, which is also true of all of us? Psalm 51:5

Sin, the principle of self, is a condition or a state that we all inherit from birth. It is something we are born with because of Adam's Fall. There is nothing we can do to escape it. Our only hope is in the redemption offered to us in Jesus Christ.

11. What do the wicked do from birth? Psalm 58:3

Because of our sinful state we are wicked and go astray from birth. But since God offers us salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, we can all escape this sin problem. That is the whole purpose of the gospel.

12. Like sheep, what two things have we all done? Isaiah 53:6

Because of our sinful condition we are by nature self-centered. We go astray and follow our own way from the moment we are born. It is from this condition that Jesus came to save us.

13. Why can we not trust our own hearts? Jeremiah 17:9

Even our own hearts deceive us into believing we can save ourselves by our good works. This is where many go wrong. A good example is Peter, one of Christ's own disciples (see John 18:15-27).

14. What does Jesus say about our own self-evaluation? Revelation 3:17

Most of us do not know how sinful we actually are. This is why God has to first convict us of our total sinfulness before we can appreciate His gift of salvation.

15. Instead of the interests of Jesus, how many seek their own way? Philippians 2:21

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

16. What can truly set us free from our sin problem? John 8:32

17. When we commit sin even against our wishes, what does it prove? John 8:34

18. In whom only is found freedom from sin's slavery? John 8:36

PRAISE THE LORD!

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

19. Why did Jesus come into this world? 1 Timothy 1:15

Even the great apostle Paul admits he is the chief of sinners whom Jesus came to save. Do you believe that Jesus can save you, too?

20. What does the Bible have to say to those who claim they are without sin? 1 John 1:8

21. Of what do we accuse God when we say we have not sinned? 1 John 1:10

The only reason God's Word points us to our sin problem is not to condemn, but to show us our need of a Savior. Once we recognize this fact, the gospel of Jesus Christ becomes incredible good news!

22. What two things does God do if we confess our sins to Him? 1 John 1:9

Most people think they are sinners because they have committed sins; but the fact is we commit sins because we are born sinners. The only hope of escaping this universal sin problem is Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. These Bible studies become exciting as we discover God’s plan of salvation for the entire human race in Jesus Christ. In our next study, we shall learn about God's unconditional love, the basis for our salvation. Don’t miss it!

My Response to Lesson 1

• Do you accept the Biblical truth that you were born a sinner, incapable of saving yourself, and that your only hope of salvation is in Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world?

Response: _____

Notes

More Notes

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Lesson 2 - The Love of God



It is hard for many to understand how God can save them while they are sinners. As a result, most people are running away from God out of fear. This is one way the devil, the enemy of souls, veils the good news of the gospel from mankind. For this reason, it is important for all to realize that the reason God redeemed mankind in Christ is because of His unconditional love for us, not our goodness. This is salvation by grace alone. The apostle Paul, once a persecutor of the Christian church, made this profound statement to young Timothy, "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15).

The reason that we sinners do not need to be afraid of God and can come to Him with full confidence is because God is love. In this lesson, we are going to discover this love of God, which is the basis of our salvation. Once our eyes are opened to this fact, the gospel will become incredible good news!

1. Whom did God so love that He sent His Son to be their Savior? John 3:16

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

2. What reason did Paul give why God redeemed sinners in Christ? Ephesians 2:4, 5

Although the Bible declares we are all sinners by nature and performance (see Ephesians 2:1-3), it also tells us that God's love for us is unconditional. This is indeed good news.

3. According to this text, why did God save us? Titus 3:3-5

Scripture declares that "God is love" (1 John 4:8). This love is what He is by very nature, and therefore His mercy is based on this love.

4. In the time of Christ, what were the people being taught? Matthew 5:43

The word "neighbor" here refers to fellow Jews and the word "enemy" refers to the Gentiles. Human beings know how to love one of their own, but it is difficult for us to love our enemies.

5. In contrast to this human love, how did Jesus describe Christian love? Matthew 5:44

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

6. How far-reaching is God's love? Matthew 5:45

God's love extends beyond all barriers. It is the opposite of human love. God even loves and cares for those who hate Him. God's love is therefore unconditional; it does not depend on our goodness.

7. What four conditions were we still in when God redeemed us in Christ? Romans 5:6-10

This passage tells us that while we were incapable of saving ourselves, (i.e., ungodly, still sinners, and even enemies of God), we were reconciled1 to Him through the death2 of His Son. Such love is beyond our comprehension, but it is real because God says so and demonstrated it on the cross of Christ.

1 Notice that we were reconciled to God. This is not a future, but a past event. Tremendous news!

2 Notice when/where we were reconciled, (i.e., through the cross of Christ). This will be explored further in Lessons 4 and 5.

8. How many times does the word "love" appear in the following passage? (John 21:15-17)

1 5So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love (agapao) Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love (phileo) You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." 16He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love (agapao) Me?" He said to Him,

"Yes, Lord; You know that I love(phileo) You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." 17He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love (phileo) Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love (phileo) Me?" And he said

to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love(phileo) You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep."

Our English Bibles fail to bring out the real significance of this dialogue. The English language has only one word for "love." But in Greek, the language of the New Testament, the Bible made a distinction between God's love and human love by using different words. The word Christ used was agapao3 (from the noun agape3), referring to God's kind of love that never fails. Peter's response was phileo, human affection, which is unreliable, and which led him to deny Christ three times.

9. According to the prophet Jeremiah, what draws us to God? Jeremiah 31:3

Most people are running away from God because they think He is out to punish them. But the truth is God loves us unconditionally and gave us His only Son so that none should be lost. This is what draws us to God. It is "the goodness of God that leads us to repentance" (Romans 2:4).

10. What endearing term does God use for His people? 1 John 3:1, 2

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3 The Greek verb "agapao" used in this dialogue is taken from the noun "agape." This noun appears some 87 times in the Greek New Testament and always refers to God's unconditional, unfailing, and selfless love, whereas the word "phileo" refers to human love or affection that is unreliable. Peter was grieved, not because Jesus had repeated the same question three times (as the English Bible implies), but because Jesus had switched from "agapao" to "phileo" the third time.

Not only does God love mankind unconditionally, but in His Son believers become adopted sons and daughters of God and joint-heirs with Christ. (See Romans 8:16, 17).

11. On what should we humans rely for our salvation? 1 John 4:16

Once we know and believe that God's love for us is unconditional, we can rely on Him for the assurance of salvation. And His love for us never fails. (See 1 Corinthians 13:8).

12. What does the knowledge of God's perfect love cast out? 1 John 4:17, 18

Fear of the judgment is the result of our sin problem. Because all have sinned, we are all victims to the fear of death, the wages of sin. Only the knowledge of God's redeeming love can cast out this fear.

13. What are ten things Paul mentions that cannot separate us from God's love? Romans 8:38, 39

As Christians we may have to face many hardships in this world, but our joy, peace, and hope come from knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God. There will never come a time when God will stop loving us, because His love is unconditional and everlasting. This love, manifested in Christ and Him crucified, is our eternal hope.

How God’s Love Was Perverted, Resulting in a Perverted Gospel

In order to fully appreciate the good news of the gospel, it is important to be familiar with how Satan has perverted God’s love in order to pervert the gospel. Here is a brief history of what happened. The Greek language, in which the New Testament was originally written, had four words for love. They were (1) eros, (2) storge, (3) phileo, and (4) agape. Of these four words, eros was considered the

highest form of love. As Plato described it, eros was man seeking after God. It was the basis of all pagan religion.

The New Testament writers did not use this word eros even once. This was unacceptable to some of the Church Fathers, who became the leaders of the Christian Church after the apostles died. Some of these Church Fathers, who were of Greek origin, wanted to substitute the word eros for the word agape, the key word used in the New Testament to define God’s self-emptying, unconditional love. So began the great battle in Church history between eros and agape.

All religions based on eros love (this includes all non-Christian religions) demand that man must save himself by his own good works. This is salvation by works - legalism. In contrast, the message of the gospel tells us that God sent His Son into the world to save mankind while we were helpless, wicked, still sinners and even enemies of God (Romans 5:6-10).

It was Augustine, one of the church leaders of the fourth century, who united these two opposite kinds of love and produced a synthesis, calling it caritas. The result was a perversion of the gospel, namely, that man is saved partly by God’s grace, based on His agape love, and partly by human effort, based on human eros. This is the same heresy the false teachers tried to introduce in Galatia (see Galatians 1:6, 7; 3:1-3). This perverted gospel plunged the Christian church into what history calls the “Dark Ages.”

Thus, by modifying the true meaning of God's love, Satan managed to pervert the pure gospel from being good news to good advice -

“I must do my best and God will make up the difference.“ This is what robbed the gospel of its power. Justification or righteousness was no longer by faith alone but is obtained partly because of human effort and partly by God's grace. Following is a table showing the distinction between man's eros love and God's agape love. After that is a diagram showing how caritas perverted the gospel:

HUMAN EROS LOVE IS	GOD'S AGAPE LOVE IS
CONDITIONAL - Depends on beauty or goodness and therefore needs arousing.	**UNCONDITIONAL** - Is spontaneous, uncaused, and independent of our goodness (see Romans 5:6-10).
CHANGEABLE - Fluctuates and is unreliable (consider the divorce rate in the United States).	**CHANGELESS** - Is everlasting and never ceases (see Romans 8:35-39 and John 13:1).
SELF-SEEKING - Is egocentric, and therefore always wants to climb socially, politically, academically, economically, and even religiously.	**SELF-EMPTYING** - Is selfless, and therefore will step down for the benefit of others (1 Corinthians 13:5; 2 Corinthians 8:9; and Philippians 2:6-8).

How Caritas Perverted the Gospel

The battle between agape love and eros love in church history resulted in caritas love, a mixture of truth and error.

These 3 loves have produced 3 gospels comprising today's world religions.



Many well-intentioned Christians err by adopting a PERVERTED, CARITAS gospel, which is no gospel at all (Galatians 1:6, 7). Good works, or law-keeping, are kept in order to earn salvation, despite Scripture's clear teaching that "by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified" (Galatians 2:16).

Under the AGAPE gospel, we are saved by grace alone, and this grace is received by faith alone (Ephesians 2:8). Good works (Ephesians 2:10), motivated by God's (agape) love for us, are the fruit of the Spirit. While glorifying God, these works do not contribute one iota to our salvation; rather they evidence the salvation that is already ours in Christ (Lesson 3).

Lessons 6-12 discuss how, by faith, the gospel is made effective in the lives of believers. Later in the course (Lesson 21), good works resulting from a saving faith are once again discussed, this time in the context of the judgment of believers.

My Response to Lesson 2

• Do you believe that God's agape love for you is unconditional and that is why He saved you in Christ, even though you are a sinner who has failed to perfectly keep His law?

Response: _____

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Lesson 3 - The Truth as It Is In Christ



God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to this world to be the Savior of mankind. But it was the apostle Paul that God chose to explain this good news of salvation. Paul does this by using a key phrase that runs through all his epistles. If you were to take out this phrase there would be very little left of Paul's exposition of the gospel. That phrase is “in Christ” or “in Christ Jesus.” The truth expressed by this phrase is also expressed by other similar phrases such as “in Him,” “together with Him,” “in the Beloved,” “in whom,” etc. All these phrases express the same “in Christ” idea or motif.

The truth behind this phrase was first introduced by Christ Himself when He told His disciples to “abide in Me.” These are the undergirding words of the gospel. If we do not understand what the Bible means by the expression “in Christ,” we will never be able to fully understand the good news of the gospel. Everything that the Bible offers mankind, with regard to our salvation, it does so in Christ. Outside of Him, we have nothing but sin, condemnation, and death.

The “in Christ” concept is based on Biblical solidarity, the idea that all mankind constitute or share a common life. To illustrate Biblical solidarity, let’s look at the way the writer of Hebrews applies this concept masterfully in describing how the heavenly priesthood of Christ is superior to that of the Levitical priesthood. First he establishes that Melchizedek blessed Abraham (Hebrews 7:1), and that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:2, 4). He then shows how the one who blesses is greater than the one who is blessed (Hebrews 7:7).

This is where the writer uses Biblical solidarity to make his key point. He shows that Levi met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him through Abraham when he was still in the loins (or body) of Abraham (Hebrews 7:9, 10). What the writer is showing is that Melchizedek actually blessed Levi, and that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, the greater. Therefore, Melchizedek is greater than Levi. And since

Jesus is a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:11, 17, 21), His priesthood is superior to that of the Levitical priesthood!

Scripture reveals three fundamental facts that are based on Biblical solidarity. We have to accept them by faith, although we may find them hard to understand. These three facts are as follows:

1. God created all men in one man - in Adam,

2. Satan ruined all men in one man - in Adam, and

3. God redeemed all men in one man - in Christ.

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

1. In order to save mankind, in whom did God put us? 1 Corinthians 1:30

In order to qualify Christ to legally be our Savior, God had to first unite the divine life of His Son with our corporate, condemned life that needed redeeming. It is through this union that Christ qualified to be our substitute and representative. Then by His perfect life and sacrificial death, He satisfied all the demands of the law on our behalf and thus changed our legal status from condemnation to justification. In Christ, God has given humanity a new history that fully qualifies us for heaven. This is the incredible good news of the gospel!

2. Who are the two men responsible for our death and resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22

Because the human race is composed of the descendants of Adam, his sin brought death to all mankind. But thank God, in Christ we have been given the hope of the resurrection to life.

3. What were the first and the last Adam made to be? 1 Corinthians 15:45

(First Adam):

(Last Adam):

The word Adam, in Hebrew, means mankind. By his sin, the first Adam lost the Holy Spirit and introduced condemnation and death for the entire human race. God put us into Christ who became the last Adam, the second representative of the human race. This renewed the Holy Spirit, and by His obedience, Jesus reversed mankind's destiny by introducing justification and life for all mankind. As we shall see, this is the incredible good news of the gospel.



4. Because of one man's offense what passed on to all mankind? Romans 5:18a

Since the human race is the multiplication of Adam's life (see Acts 17:26), we all inherit a life that has sinned and therefore stands condemned to death. While God does not hold us responsible for Adam's sin, nevertheless, because we were in Adam when he sinned, we inherit his death sentence.

5. Because of one man's obedience what passed on to all mankind? Romans 5:18b



Just as all die because all have sinned in Adam, so also God made it possible for all to obey in Christ and stand justified to life in Him. However, what God has obtained for mankind in Christ is a "free gift." Like any gift we cannot enjoy it until we receive it by faith (see Romans 5:17). The good news of the gospel is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

6. When did God plan our redemption in Christ? Ephesians 1:4

Even before we were created in Adam, God had already planned our salvation in Christ. God predestined all men to be adopted as His children in Christ (Ephesians 1:5), not because we were good or deserved it, but because of His unconditional love for us. The moment you accept Christ as your Savior, God looks at you as "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).

7. While still dead in sins, what three things did God do for us in Christ? Ephesians 2:5, 6

These three actions are what God has accomplished in Christ for the entire human race. Together they constitute the good news of the

gospel. In Christ God has obtained salvation full and complete for all mankind. However, for these actions to become ours personally, there must be a human response. That response is our faith.

8. How do we experience this salvation obtained for all mankind in Christ? Ephesians 2:8, 9

Salvation is by grace alone in what Christ has done. This is God's supreme gift to mankind. But this grace has to be made effective through faith.

9. What is the wages of sin? Romans 6:23a

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

10. What is the gift of God in Christ? Romans 6:23b

While death is wages we earn, eternal life is entirely a "free gift" that comes from God through the life and death of Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be saved by grace alone.

11. What gift has God given mankind in His Son? 1 John 5:11

None of us can escape death, the "grim reaper." But by faith in Christ we are able to pass from death to eternal life (see John 5:24).

12. What are the two options we have regarding this gift of life in Christ? 1 John 5:12

Because God is love, He does not force the gift of life on anyone. The choice is ours. Only those who receive Christ by faith will experience

eternal life. This includes those who through no fault of their own never heard the gospel but were faithful to the light they had. (See Romans 2:14-16).

13. What assurance does John give to those who believe in Christ? 1 John 5:13

14. By believing in Jesus Christ, what do we become? John 1:12

What a privilege, that by receiving Christ by faith we can all become sons and daughters of God (see 1 John 3:1, 2).

15. If we hear and believe God's Word, what will be the result? John 5:24

We pass from death to life by accepting Christ as our personal Savior. However, the hope of the Christian is in the resurrection, when Christ comes the second time to take believers to heaven (see 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23).

16. What does Christ become to those who believe in Him? Romans 10:4

The word "end" means something completed or fulfilled. Christ perfectly obeyed the law on our behalf when He was on this earth (see Matthew 5:17). This obedience becomes ours by faith in Him and we stand justified before God.

17. What happens when you accept the gift of Christ's righteousness? 2 Corinthians 5:17

On the cross, Christ's death brought our condemned human life to an end. Thus by His death, humanity has been redeemed from sin. In exchange, God gave humanity the life of His Son in the resurrection. When you accept Jesus by faith you become a new creation in Christ. Before you were a sinner, now you are righteous. Before you stood

condemned, now you are justified. We are told in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19 that in Christ, not only believers, but the whole world was reconciled to God. The person in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is the one who (1) by faith enters into Christ (see Lesson 6, especially Questions 3, 4, and 9-12), and (2) is baptized into Christ (see Lesson 7, especially Questions 1, 5, 6, and 8).

18. What two things did Christ accomplish by His death and resurrection? 2 Timothy 1:8-10

(verse 10):

(verse 10):

19. What two things must we do to be saved? Mark 16:15, 16

Your only hope of salvation is to believe in Christ and to be baptized into Him. (We will study what it means to be baptized into Christ in Lesson 7).

My Response to Lesson 3

• Do you believe that some 2000 years ago, God placed the entire human race into Jesus Christ, the second Adam? Do you also accept that by His perfect life and sacrificial death, He rewrote your history, changing your status from condemnation unto death to justification unto life?

Response: _____

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Lesson 3 Supplement - The Two Adams

1 The Hebrew word “Adam,” used 510 times in the Bible, is used in the majority of cases in a collective sense. Adam simply means mankind. “In the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and blessed them and called them Mankind (Hebrew - Adam) in the day they were created” (Genesis 5:1, 2).

When Adam sinned that humanity which resided in him was

imbued with the “law of sin,” the principle of self-love. “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned” (Romans 5:12). Accordingly, “through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation”. (Romans 5:18a). Refer to Lesson 1 (especially questions 2, 5, and 7-15), and to Question 2 of this lesson for further details.

2 Every human being who has ever lived came from one source - Adam: “He (God) made from one (Adam) every nation” (Acts 17:26). When Adam eventually produced offspring the only thing he could pass on to us was a life that had already sinned. We are nothing more than Adam's fallen life reproduced over and over. Hence, we are “by nature children of wrath” (Ephesians 2:3). It is for this reason that we need to be born again (see Lessons 6-8 for details), for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1_Corinthians 15:50).

3 As the Son of God, Christ was self-existing (John 1:1-3), sinless (2 Corinthians 5:21), and immortal (1 Timothy 1:17). Yet by an act of the Father (1 Corinthians 1:30), Christ was made “of a woman” (Galatians 4:4), made sin (2 Corinthians 5:21), and thus made mortal (Hebrews 2:14, 17). Although He was made all these things, He never ceased to be the eternal Son of God. Therefore, He was both the “Son of God” and the “Son of man” in one person. As a man He is said to have been made in the “likeness of sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3).

Just as all mankind was collectively resident in the first Adam, so

also all mankind was collectively gathered together in the body of Jesus, who is referred to as the last Adam (mankind - 1 Corinthians 15:45). Simply put, Jesus was not one man among many men, but “in Him” all men were gathered up (Ephesians 1:10). This qualified Him to be our substitute and Savior. He was God, yet He became humanity (Hebrews 10:5). By uniting Himself to

our corporate, fallen flesh, Christ became the Son of man, thus immediately placing Himself under the curse of the law (Galatians 4:4, Romans 3:19). See 5.

4 As man and our representative, Christ says of Himself, “I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love” (John 15:10). He was “obedient to the point of death” (Philippians 2:8). By this

obedience “we have been sanctified (past tense) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10), perfected (past tense) forever (Hebrews 10:14).

By uniting Himself with mankind (see 3), Jesus suffered in the

flesh (1 Peter 4:1). While this consisted of being acquainted with our sorrows and grief (Isaiah 53:3), He primarily suffered being tempted, through enticements of the flesh (James 1:14) that He assumed. Despite a lifetime of all sorts of temptations, He lived a life without sin (Hebrews 4:15). In this way, Jesus became the antitypical “lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:19). See Lesson 20, especially Question 9, for further discussion.

Paul tells of our history in Christ. “When the kindness and the

love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us (past tense), through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out (past tense) on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior” (Titus 3:4-6). “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me (us) free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2). In the holy history of Christ, mankind experienced a “regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit…through (the body of) Jesus Christ.” That is, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ” actually set us free from the “law of sin.”

All glory regarding our redemption must go to God (1

Corinthians 1:31), for “God…has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ…that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them…” (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19). And the amazing fact is that He did this while we were without strength, ungodly, sinners, and even His enemies (Romans 5:6-10).

5 Spirituality of the law - The law of God is holy, just, and good (Romans 7:12). It is the foundation of God’s government, as it represents the selfless (agape) love that proceeds from the throne of God (Matthew 22:35-40). Jesus described the spirituality of the Ten Commandments as being much more than a set of rules (Matthew 5:21-47). Jesus tried to show his disciples that a man is not justified by

the law, but by faith. On one occasion a rich, young ruler asked Jesus what he could do to inherit eternal life (Luke 18:18). Jesus showed the man that in reality he was not keeping the law, despite his outward law keeping. When the disciples asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus shifted their focus from man to God (Luke 18:26, 27).

In a similar way, Jesus showed that if someone wanted to enter

the kingdom of heaven by keeping the law, that person’s righteousness would have to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). Their righteousness would have to be even as perfect as that of God (Matthew 5:48).

Purpose of the law - "What purpose then does the law serve? It

was added because of transgressions, till the Seed (Jesus) should come…" (Galatians 3:19). It was to be a witness against all who have sinned (Romans 5:12, 13), which includes everyone. It was to stop every boastful claim of self-righteousness, give a knowledge of sin, and declare the entire world guilty before God (Romans 3:19, 20). James showed that if someone should stumble in one point of the law, he is guilty of the whole law (James 2:10). Paul settled the matter by declaring that there is none righteous, and that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:10, 23). He included himself in these universal statements, despite his previous self-assessment (while being a Pharisee) as to being blameless concerning the law (Philippians 3:5, 6).

That the law was not given that we might attain eternal life is also

clarified by Paul, "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law." Instead, "the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." And now that "faith (Jesus) has come, we are no longer under a tutor (i.e., the law)" (Galatians 3:21-25).

What does the law have to do with how God saved us in

Christ? The law has positive demands, "The man who does them shall live by them" Galatians 3:12. It also has negative consequences, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them" (Galatians 3:10). By assuming us, and thus becoming our substitute (see 3), Christ was in a position to rewrite our history. He met the positive demands of the law (see 4), and He faced the full negative consequences of the law (see 6). In so doing, He reversed the judgment of condemnation for all men and declared all men righteous in Him (Romans 5:16, 18).

6 "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the

wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself" (Ezekiel 18:20). Similarly, "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to death for his own sin" (Deuteronomy 24:16).

As this principle also applies to Christ, if He were to have died a

vicarious death (one man dying instead of all men) that would contradict His own law. Why? Because the law of God demands your death and my death. Christ is not the sinner; we are the sinners. And "without shedding of (our) blood there is no remission (forgiveness)" (Hebrews 9:22). On the contrary, God handled this situation ethically, in that Christ "Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

In order for Christ to bear our "sins in His own body," He had to

bear us. The great news of the gospel is that He did just that. God reconciled the entire human race in the holy history of Jesus Christ, the last Adam. He is the propitiation (atoning sacrifice) for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2), and is thus referred to as the Savior of all men (1 Timothy 4:10), or the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14). In His humanity, Christ did not become our substitute vicariously, but rather in actuality. Thus, when He tasted death, He did so for all men (Hebrews 2:9). And when He died, all died (2 Corinthians 5:14).

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having

become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree'), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:13, 14). For further study on how Christ became a curse for us, see Lesson 4, especially Questions 9, 12, 17, and the conclusion to that lesson. See also Lesson 21 for how Jesus, our Advocate, defends us in the judgment.

When we thus died to the law in the body of Christ, we were

delivered from the law's dominion (or lordship), including its curse, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:1-6). We are no longer under law but under grace (Romans 6:14), and for this reason there is no condemnation to the believer (Romans 8:1). See Lessons 6-8 regarding our response to this great news.

7 Near the end of Good Friday (the 6th day), right before He gave up His spirit, Jesus said, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). This was a significant proclamation, because it indicated that His work of redeeming mankind was complete. He would rest in the grave on the 7th day because of this fact, just like He did when He was finished with His perfect work of creation (Genesis 1:31-2:2). See Lesson 15 to see what the Bible teaches regarding entering God's rest as part of

the New Covenant of salvation by grace alone in the redemption that is ours in Christ.

8 When Jesus was resurrected He continued to be the last Adam or mankind. However, having cleansed us, upon his ascension into

heaven, He brought a newly created mankind with Him. Paul stated that those whom God justified, He also glorified (past tense - Romans 8:30). That is, God "raised (past tense) us up together, and made (past tense) us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). He has "blessed us (past tense) with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3). Consequently, "we know that if our earthly house (our earthly bodies), this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house (glorified body) not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body" (Philippians 3:20, 21).

We can thus "have boldness to enter the Holiest (the very

presence of God) by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and…let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:19-22). For additional fulfillment of Old Testament sanctuary symbols in Christ, see Lesson 20.

Summary

Items 3-8 depict the gospel, the gift of justification of life for all men in Christ. It is universal good news for all men and can be referred to as the objective facts of the gospel. However, just like any gift, it must be received to be enjoyed.

We receive the life of Adam automatically when we are conceived. All that Adam's life has to offer is what became of it after the Fall - the promise of toil, hardship, slavery to sin, and death.

What God accomplishes in the believers through the Holy Spirit does not add to the gospel, but makes real in experience what God has already obtained for mankind in Christ. This living experience is the fruits of the gospel, or Christ in you (And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness - Romans 8:10).

Our status as children of God is not automatic, because God will not force salvation upon us against our will. Christ received humanity unto Himself at the incarnation, and we must likewise receive Christ by faith. Faith identifies the believer with Christ and Him crucified, which involves saying goodbye forever to our old life of sin that we

inherited from Adam. We become one with Christ so that His righteousness is counted as our righteousness and His power is made available to us. We then experience what is already true of us in Christ.

Experiencing the Gospel is Conditional

• Faith is the condition for accepting justification, the fruit of which is peace with God, because there is no condemnation. "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Romans 5:1), and "There is...no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). Justification by faith is God declaring us positively righteous by what Christ did in our humanity approximately 2,000 years ago. See Lesson 6 for a more in-depth study of Justification by Faith, and Lesson 8 regarding the new birth in which the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the believer;

• Sanctification is the result of accepting a full and complete salvation in Christ and learning to walk in the Spirit. Having no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3), Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20). We

experience holiness of living in proportion to our faith, and fruit is born "some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matthew 13:23). See Lesson 9 for additional insight on walking in the Spirit; and

• The believer's faith must endure to the end to receive a glorified body, which is his in Christ now. "He who endures to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). See Lesson 12 for more information regarding this final stage of salvation.

Experiencing the gospel in this way is referred to as obeying the gospel. It is what constitutes righteousness by faith. For more on obeying the gospel, see the subjective application (i.e., in green) of the courtyard experience in the Lesson 20 supplement (page 4).

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Lesson 4 - The Supreme Sacrifice of Christ



At the very heart of the gospel message is the supreme sacrifice of Christ. However, it is Satan's determined purpose to engulf this truth of the cross in darkness. In this, he has had some measure of success. By convincing the Christian church to believe the lie that humans possess immortal souls, he has robbed the cross of its glory. The idea that humans possess immortal souls is not Biblical but a Greek concept introduced into the Christian church by the Church Fathers.

If man possesses an immortal soul then death is no longer goodbye to life but simply the separation of the soul from the body. In that case, that which constitutes Christ's supreme sacrifice has to be limited to the shame and torture of the cross, which was no different than that of the two thieves who were crucified with Him as well as countless others who met the same end.

Another factor that has robbed the cross of its glory is the fact that Christ was crucified on a Roman cross. While this is true, it was not the Romans who demanded His crucifixion but the Jews. Crucifixion was not a Jewish method of execution; on the contrary, the Jews detested the cross because it had a very special meaning for them.

It is only as we perceive the cross of Christ from the Jewish

perspective, as did the New Testament writers, that we can

begin to grasp the meaning of His supreme sacrifice that demonstrated God's infinite and unconditional love for mankind. In this study, as we look at the cross of Christ with Jewish spectacles, we will be amazed to discover the selfemptying agape love of Jesus and what He was willing to give up in order to save the world.

1. In what condition were we when Jesus died for us? Romans 5:8

God commended or demonstrated His unconditional love towards us in that while we were still sinners Jesus died for us. This unconditional love, as we saw earlier, is the basis of our salvation.

2. How did the death of Christ change man's relationship to God? Romans 5:10

The good news of the gospel is that God no longer looks upon the human race as His enemy. Instead, He has reconciled the entire world to Himself through the death of His Son.

3. What does the law require for our sins to be forgiven? Hebrews 9:22

The word "purified" (NKJV) or "purged" (KJV) means cleansed and "shed blood" means life laid down in death. The law demands death in order for sins to be forgiven. When Christ died on the cross, He paid the price for the sins of the world.

4. Through what means does God justify sinners? Romans 3:24

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

5. What did the death of Christ accomplish? Romans 3:25, 26

Legally, sins cannot be forgiven without the shedding of blood (see Hebrews 9:22). Therefore, God forgave the sins of the Old Testament believers out of kindness, or forbearance. But since Christ met the just demands of the law on the cross, God is just in forgiving all who believe in Christ. This is what Christ meant at the Lord's Supper when He said: "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission (forgiveness) of sins" (Matthew 26:28).

6. Since the cross, what can God lawfully do to believers? Romans 3:26

This is how the Amplified Bible translates Romans 3:26, "It was to demonstrate and prove at the present time in the now season that He Himself is righteous and that He justifies and accepts as righteous him who has true faith in Jesus."

7. In contrast to the wages of sin, what is the gift of God? Romans 6:23

8. What is Christ engaged in since His ascension into heaven? Romans 8:34

At the cross God's mercy and justice met. Because Christ legally paid the price for the sins of the world on the cross, He is now able to defend believers from Satan's accusations. For additional material on Christ's activities as our High Priest in heaven, see Lessons 20-22. That is why "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

9. What did Christ taste for every man on the cross? Hebrews 2:9

The death humans die today is a sleep death (see John 11:11-14). But the death Christ tasted for every man was what the Bible calls the second death (see Revelation 20:14) - the wages of sin or good-bye to life. We will study about this second death in Lesson 17: Questions 4, 9-12, and 23; and in Lesson 24: Question 22.

10. Why did the Jews demand that Christ should be crucified? John 19:5-7

Pilate, who represented Rome, found no fault in Jesus. So, the Jews had to give a reason why they were demanding Jesus' crucifixion. They accused Jesus of blasphemy, and by their law, this was punishable by death.

11. What method of death was stipulated by the law of blasphemy? Leviticus 24:16

The law against the sin of blasphemy demanded death by stoning. In John 10:30, 31 we read that the Jews took up stones "again" to stone Jesus when He said, "The Father and I are one." This proved they were aware that stoning was the method of death for blasphemy.

12. Why then did the Jews demand that Christ be crucified? Deuteronomy 21:22, 23

Hanging on a tree signified the curse of God - death without the hope of a resurrection. Crucifixion in the days of Christ was synonymous to hanging on a tree (see Acts 5:30, 10:39, 13:29; 1 Peter 2:24). Since Jesus predicted His resurrection (see John 2:19-22), the Jews wanted to make sure God would curse Jesus so that He would not rise again. That is why they demanded His crucifixion.

13. What does the law do to all those who disobey it? Galatians 3:10

The curse of the law is good-bye to life forever. This is the wages of sin which each of us deserves as sinners.

14. How did Christ redeem us from this curse of the law? Galatians 3:13

On the cross, Christ was treated as we deserved. God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). On the cross Jesus tasted the wages of sin, the curse of the law, for all humanity on the cross. That is why He cried out "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). Yet, He was willing to die forever so that we might live in His place. That is the supreme sacrifice that demonstrated God's self-emptying love for us.

15. What satisfied the Father that Christ had paid the price for our sins? Isaiah 53:6, 10, 11

We can only faintly understand the agony that our Heavenly Father must have suffered as He Himself allowed the curse of our sins to fall on Jesus, His beloved Son. Through this supreme sacrifice on the cross, the Father was satisfied that the just demands of the law were met in Christ. It is on this basis He can legally justify sinners who believe in His Son (see Romans 4:5).

16. How should this supreme sacrifice affect us? 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15

Not the fear of punishment nor the desire for reward but the love of God demonstrated on the cross of Christ must motivate Christians to live for Him. The hymn writer was correct when he penned these words: "Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all." This is what the cross of Christ did to His disciples, and this is what it must do to all who believe in Him.

17. What did Christ do to demonstrate God's selfless love for us? 1 John 3:16

Jesus laid down His life for us so that we might live in His place. That is why He said, "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself" (John 12:31-33). This is how the cross demonstrated God's selfless love for us sinners. By this supreme sacrifice, Jesus was telling us sinners that He loves us more than Himself. As you contemplate the supreme sacrifice of Christ may you not only be drawn to God, but willingly accept His indescribable gift.

Conclusion

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

“Upon Christ as our substitute and surety was laid the iniquity of us all. He was counted a transgressor, that He might redeem us from the condemnation of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon His heart. The wrath of God against sin, the terrible manifestation of His displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of His Son with consternation. All His life Christ had been publishing to a fallen world the good news of the Father's mercy and pardoning love. Salvation for the chief of

sinners was His theme. But now with the terrible weight of guilt He bears, He cannot see the Father's reconciling face. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Savior in this hour of supreme anguish pierced His heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. So great was this agony that His physical pain was hardly felt.

Satan with his fierce temptations wrung the heart of Jesus. The Savior could not see through the portals of the tomb. Hope did not present to Him His coming forth from the grave a conqueror, or tell Him of the Father's acceptance of the sacrifice. He feared that sin was so offensive to God that Their separation was eternal. Christ felt the anguish which the sinner will feel when mercy shall no longer plead for the guilty race. It was the sense of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon Him as man's substitute, that made the cup He drank so bitter, and broke the heart of the Son of God.” (Desire of Ages, p. 753)

Notes

My Response to Lesson 4

• On the cross Jesus demonstrated that His love for sinners is greater than that for Himself (Romans 5:8). Do you believe this supreme sacrifice, that on the cross Jesus was willing to say good-bye to life forever in order that you may live in His place?

Response: _____

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Lesson 5 - The Cross of Christ



As sinners, every one of us is under the condemnation and curse of the law (Romans 3:19 and Galatians 3:10). According to God's Word the wages of sin is death, good-bye to life forever (Romans 6:23). In our last study, we saw how Jesus bore this curse of the law for the entire human race on the cross. This is what constitutes the supreme sacrifice. In this study, we are going to consider the cross of Christ as the power of God that saves us from sin.

Legally, no law - God's or man's - will allow an innocent person to die in the place of the guilty one. According to the Bible, the father is not to be punished for the sins of his son, neither is the son to be punished for the sins of his father (see Deuteronomy 24:16 and Ezekiel 18:20). How then could Christ, who committed no sin, legally die for the sins of the guilty world?

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

1. How many have to die because of Adam's one sin? 1 Corinthians 15:22a

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As we saw in Lesson 3, the reason all die because of Adam's one sin is that the human race is the multiplication of Adam's life (Acts 17:26). Therefore, all inherit from him a life that has already sinned and therefore stands condemned to death.

2. When was this condemned life of the world executed and in whom? John 12:31-33

On the cross, the world (human race) was executed in Christ. God could do this because Christ was the second, or last, Adam (mankind). Because all humanity was in the first Adam, by his representative sin he ruined his posterity. Likewise, God united all humanity in Christ so that by His life and death He saved the world. This is the good news of the gospel that we accept by faith.

3. How many were implicated in the death of Christ? 2 Corinthians 5:14b

4. What did God make Christ to be in order to make us righteous? 2 Corinthians 5:21

When Christ was made flesh (John 1:14) and assumed our humanity that needed redeeming, He became the second Adam (mankind). This gave Him the legal right to live and die on man's behalf. It is in this sense Christ was made to be sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God in Him. This constitutes the “in Christ” truth that we studied in Lesson 3.

5. Who died when Jesus bore our sins in His body on the tree (cross)? 1 Peter 2:24

Since our sins are the fruits of our sinful nature, Jesus could not bear our sins on the cross without bearing us. As a result of our dying in Christ, God dealt with the very root of our sin problem, our sinful nature. This is the saving power of the cross, which makes holy living possible in the life of the believer.

6. What confession does Paul make about himself regarding the law? Galatians 2:19

Because all have sinned, die we must. Jesus did not come to do away with the death sentence that hangs over our heads but to fulfill it (see Matthew 5:17). That is why the apostle Paul acknowledges that he died to the law in Christ so that he may now live for God.

7. When did the apostle Paul die to the law and why? Galatians 2:20

It is through the cross of Christ that the human race was executed and set free from the sin problem. The cross of Christ is what sets us free from both the guilt and punishment of sin as well as from the power and slavery of sin. Like Paul, we too can by faith experience the power of the cross.

8. How long does the law of God have dominion over us? Romans 7:1

All humanity is born under the law, and because all have sinned, all stand guilty and condemned by the law (see Romans 3:19). Since the wages of sin is death (see Romans 6:23), this condemnation hangs over us as long as we are living. It is only when we die that we are set free from this curse of the law.

9. How did God set us free from under the law? Romans 7:4

God set us free from under the law by our death in the body of Christ. On the cross all humanity died in Christ. When we by faith accept Christ's death as our death, we experience justification unto life and are set free to live holy lives.

10. Having been delivered from under the law how should one live? Romans 7:6

The unbeliever who is still under the law serves God out of fear. This is what it means to serve in the letter. But the believer who has accepted Christ and has been delivered from the law serves God out of love. This is serving in the spirit, since the spirit of the law is love (see Matthew 22:35-40).

11. What truth does Paul declare regarding those who believe in Christ? Colossians 3:3

A Christian is one who has by faith died to the old life of sin and has risen in Christ to serve Him in newness of life. This is the true meaning of baptism, which we will study in Lesson 7.

12. In order for us to live with Christ what must first take place? 2 Timothy 2:11

In this sinful world we begin with life and end with death. In God's kingdom it is the very opposite. We begin by dying to the old condemned life and end with the eternal life of Christ (see Romans 6:8-11). This is what regeneration or conversion is all about.

13. What must take place before we can experience freedom from sin? Romans 6:7

A condemned criminal can only be legally justified or set free for his crime after he has paid the penalty. In the same way, we cannot experience justification unto life in Christ unless we first identify ourselves with His death. The word translated "freed" in your Bible is actually "justified" or "acquitted." Hence, the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation (see 1 Corinthians 1:17, 18).

14. From what else does the cross of Christ free us? Romans 8:2

Sin is a dual problem. Besides being the transgression of the law, it is also a principle or a force that resides in our sinful natures. This is what makes us sinners incapable of doing what is right (see Romans 7:14-25). Through the cross of Christ, we are delivered from both these problems. Our death in Christ does not only justify us but it also strikes at the very root of our sin problem.

15. Being made free from sin, what kind of life should a believer live? Romans 6:22

The fact that the cross of Christ has liberated us from the condemnation of the law does not give us the liberty to live as we please. When we accept Christ and Him crucified as our Savior, we are accepting salvation, both from the guilt and punishment of sin, as well as from the power and slavery of sin.

16. What did Jesus say to those who refuse to take up His cross? Matthew 10:38

Since Christ's death on the cross was a corporate death in which all humanity died in Him, to believe or follow Christ is to accept His cross as our cross. This is what makes the cross of Christ the power of God unto salvation.

17. How often must the believer take up his cross to follow Christ? Luke 9:23

Many Christians make the mistake of separating the cross they have to bear from the cross of Christ. This mistake leads to another error - equating the cross with the hardships of life. In Scripture there is only one cross that saves, it is the cross of Christ. When we are baptized into Christ (Lesson 7), the cross of Christ becomes the believer's cross. It symbolizes surrendering the life of the flesh to the cross and walking in the Spirit (see Galatians 5:16, 24).

18. What example did Jesus give from nature to illustrate the cross? John 12:24

19. How did Jesus apply this truth to the believer? John 12:25

The principle of the seed is the principle of the cross. Just like the seed must die in order for it to spring up to life and bear fruit, so also we must die to the old life of sin in order for us to rise in newness of life and bear fruit unto God.

20. What did Paul say about the same principle of the seed? 1 Corinthians 15:36

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

21. What attitude must a Christian have towards the flesh (sinful nature)? Galatians 5:24

As Christians we must consider ourselves dead and that our life is hid in Christ (see Colossians 3:3). The German martyr, Dietric Bonhoffer, concluded that this status is the cost of discipleship for "when Christ calls you to follow Him, He calls you to die." Herein lies the significance of baptism, which will be our subject in Lesson 7.

Notes

My Response to Lesson 5

• Do you understand that when Christ died on the cross, the Adamic life you were born with also came to an end in Him? Do you believe that in exchange, God gave you the eternal life of His Son so that you may live forever?

Response: _____

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PART 2 / Experiencing the Power of the Gospel

Lesson 6 - Justification by Faith



In Part 1 of this course, we discovered three important facts: (1) our universal sin problem; (2) God's unconditional love for mankind; and (3) the incredible good news of salvation in Christ, the gospel. On the cross, God obtained for the entire human race a salvation that is full and complete. However, the big question is, How can this wonderful salvation be mine? In other words, "What must I do to be saved?" This and the next few studies will answer that question.

Because God created mankind with a free will, He does not force His gift of salvation in Christ on anyone. While it is true that "God so loved the world (human race), that He gave His only begotten Son," the offer is "that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The good news of the gospel demands a human response if the salvation Christ accomplished for all mankind is to be made effective in us as individuals.

According to the Bible, that human response is described by the word faith. When the good news of salvation is received by our individual faith response, the gospel is made effective and the believer will experience the wonderful truth of justification by faith. In this lesson, we will consider this important truth.

1. After His resurrection, what commission did Jesus give His disciples? Mark 16:15

2. What did Christ say would be the result of our human response? Mark 16:16

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

3. What change takes place in those who believe in God's gift of salvation? John 5:24

4. According to the apostle Paul, how is justification experienced? Romans 3:28

Justification means God declares you righteous. In the Bible, justification by faith is God's way of saving sinners in contrast to salvation by works of the law or good works, which is man's way of saving himself.

5. Will anyone be saved or justified by the works of the law? Galatians 2:16

6. What part does the law play in the experience of justification by faith? Galatians 3:24

The Greek word Paul used for "tutor" (NKJV), "schoolmaster" (KJV), or "put in charge" (NIV), etc., was pedagogos. This was an entrusted slave who was responsible to take his master's children to their private tutor. So also, Paul says, while the law itself does not save us, one of its main functions is to bring us sinners to Christ so that we may be justified by faith.

7. What two terms may a judge use when stating the verdict in a courtroom? Deuteronomy 25:1

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

8. On what basis does God justify the ungodly (wicked)? Romans 4:5

Since "all have sinned and come short of God's glory" (Romans 3:23), our only hope of being declared righteous before God is through justification by faith.

9. How does one experience faith that justifies a sinner? Romans 10:17

Knowledge of the gospel is the first prerequisite to saving faith. Jesus said: “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). By “truth” Jesus was referring to Himself (John 8:36, 17:3).

10. What does it mean to have faith in Christ? John 6:40

A mere knowledge of the gospel is not enough. One has to believe in Jesus. The Jewish nation of Paul's day heard the gospel but not all believed (see Romans 10:16, 18). Jesus made it clear that only those who believe in Him will be saved (see John 3:18, 5:24, and 11:25).

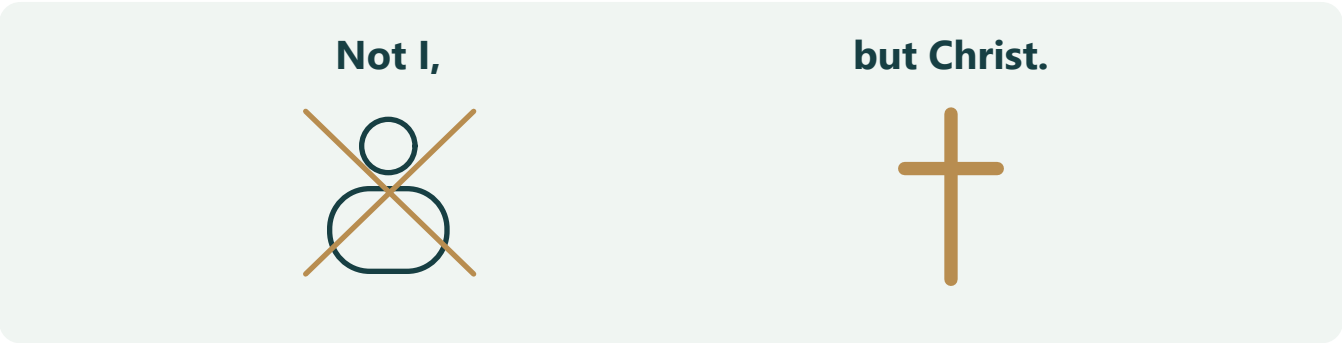
11. What is involved in believing in Christ? Romans 6:17

To believe is more than a mental assent to the truth as it is in Christ. It involves a heart-obedience to the facts of the gospel. Faith is saying “Yes” to God. It is the surrender of the will to our new history God obtained for mankind in Christ (see Galatians 5:7; Hebrews 5:9; 1 Peter 4:17). This is New Testament faith.

12. What does it mean to obey the gospel? Colossians 3:3

The gospel is what God did to mankind in Christ (Lesson 3). By joining our humanity that needed redeeming to Christ in the incarnation, God qualified Christ to be our substitute. This made it possible for Christ to rewrite our history. By His perfect life and sacrificial death we stand complete in Him (Colossians 2:10).

To know, believe, and obey the gospel therefore means we acknowledge this truth from the heart and accept Christ's life as our life and His death as our death. We are in effect uniting with Christ, by faith, just as He united with us, so that we become one. Such faith-obedience means we confess with Paul: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20). This is what it means to abide in Christ (John 15:4-8).



13. According to the Old Testament how is one to be justified? Habakkuk 2:4

14. How did the Gentiles obtain the righteousness that saves? Romans 9:30

15. Why did Israel fail to attain to this righteousness? Romans 9:31, 32

16. What did Paul have to give up to experience righteousness by faith? Philippians 3:7-9

It is impossible to be saved by faith in Christ and still hold on to our own self-righteousness. Justification that saves is by faith alone and nothing else. However, while we are not saved by faith plus works, we are saved unto good works (see Ephesians 2:8-10).

17. What happens when one adds law-keeping to justification by faith? Galatians 5:4

Any believer who adds his or her good works as a contribution to salvation will forfeit Christ's righteousness altogether. As sinners we cannot accept Christ's perfect righteousness by faith and then try to add our own good works to it. The gospel will not allow salvation partly of Christ and partly of us. It is either all of Christ's righteousness or none of it.

18. Does justification by faith alone mean we can now live as we please? Galatians 5:13

19. Why does the grace of God not allow believers to condone sinning? Romans 6:1, 2

As Christians, we must consider ourselves dead to sin and alive unto God in Christ (see Romans 6:10, 11). Justification by faith is saying Not I, but Christ.

20. What other reason does a Christian have for not condoning sin? Romans 6:15-18

Sin and righteousness belong to opposite camps. When we obey the gospel, we are not only saying good-bye to death, the wages of sin, but also to sin itself. In exchange, we have chosen to live a life of righteousness.

21. What happens when a Christian falls and commits a sin? 1 John 2:1

While believers do not condone sin they still possess sinful natures and in a weak moment may fall. This, however, does not deprive them of justification. We do have an advocate at the right hand of God to intercede for us against the accusations of Satan. Christ is not only our Savior but also our great High Priest.

22. What is the immediate blessing to those who are justified by faith? Romans 5:1

As long as we are believers in Christ and stand justified by faith, we have and will continue to have peace with God. We may not have peace in this world but our hearts rejoice because we have been reconciled to God and have the peace which surpasses all under-standing (see John 14:27, Philippians 4:7).

23. What ultimate hope does access to God’s grace give us? Romans 5:2

Access to God's grace here means the power or strength of God which makes it possible for believers to live the Christian life and fulfill God's purpose for them (see 1 Corinthians 15:9, 10 and 2 Corinthians 12:7-9). With such grace, we are able to reflect the unconditional agape love of God. It is this love that demonstrates to the world that the gospel is indeed the power of God to salvation (see John 13:34, 35).

My Response to Lesson 6

• Recognizing that you are a sinner, incapable of saving yourself, do you accept by faith the justification (righteousness) that Christ obtained for you in His holy history?

Response: _____

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Lesson 7 - Baptism Into Christ



The word “baptism” was first coined by those whose profession was to dye cloth. In Bible days, garments were made mainly of two kinds of materials - cotton and wool, both of which were white in color. The ones who dyed these materials (the common color was purple) used the word “baptize” (baptizo in Greek) to describe the dyeing process. They totally submerged the white material in the purple dye so that the cloth, which went in white, came out purple.

Jesus used this word “baptism” to describe the conversion or new birth experience.

By being immersed in the waters of baptism, the believer is saying good-bye to the old life of sin, which by faith is surrendered to the cross of Christ. When the believer is raised out of the waters of baptism, this act signifies the resurrection of the believer to a new life in Christ. That is why baptism in the New Testament is always by immersion. This will be our study.

1. What human response, besides believing, is essential to salvation? Mark 16:15, 16

Baptism is the believer’s confession of his or her faith-obedience to Christ and Him crucified. True Christianity is participating in the truth as it is in Christ. This means we identify ourselves with the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

2. In what three names should a believer be baptized? Matthew 28:18-20

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

3. Who is the one who really baptizes us into Christ? 1 Corinthians 12:13

Believers are baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. The expression "made to drink into one Spirit" means we have experienced the new birth and are now born from above. Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we receive the life of Christ and have become one with Him (see 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27).

4. What does Paul say to us if we have not experienced the new birth? Romans 8:9

Only when we have experienced the new birth and have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us are we truly Christians and stand justified by faith.

5. What does it mean to be baptized into Christ? Galatians 3:27

To "put on Christ" means identifying yourself with Christ, as if He is you and you are Christ. This is what Christ meant when He told His disciples that they are to abide in Him and He in them (see John 15:4).

6. What should every baptized Christian confess? Galatians 2:20

True baptism says, "Not I, but Christ." Every Christian must confess with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me." This is what it means to walk in the Spirit (see Galatians 2:20, 5:16).

7. As Christians, who should be controlling our lives? Romans 8:10

Before conversion, we had only one life, the life of the sinful nature. But now that we have surrendered that life to the cross of Christ, we should allow the new life of the Spirit to control us. This process we must repeat daily.

8. In what sense are believers baptized into Christ? Romans 6:3

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

9. How should believers who are baptized into Christ walk? Romans 6:4

In this world we begin with life and end with death. Through the gospel we experience the very opposite. We begin with death to our old life of sin and in exchange receive the eternal life of Christ.

10. What will be our experience if we identify with Christ's death? Romans 6:5

Our union with Christ by baptism is as two branches being grafted together so that they become one. His death and resurrection become the heritage of all believers.

11. What is destroyed or done away with when one is baptized into Christ? Romans 6:6

The original text actually says: "... that the body of sin might be 'deprived of its power' or 'rendered inoperative'." Through the new birth experience, we receive a life that is able to subdue the old life of sin. This is what makes holy living possible.

12. What are we freed from when we die with Christ in baptism? Romans 6:7

The actual word Paul used is "justified" which also means freed or acquitted. The law of God condemns sinners to death (see Romans 6:23). The moment we identify ourselves with the death of Christ by faith and baptism, the law no longer condemns us. Now we are free from the condemnation of the law (see Romans 8:1). This is what gives us peace with God (see Romans 5:1).

13. What is the ultimate hope of those who have been baptized into Christ? Romans 6:8

If we choose to die with Christ by faith and baptism, we have the hope of the resurrection. Christ has conquered the grave and His resurrection now becomes the blessed hope of the believer (see Philippians 3:20, 21).

14. Who is the source of our resurrection to the new life in Christ? Colossians 2:12

Our part in salvation is faith, from beginning to end (see Romans 1:17). God does the operation. The moment we believe in Christ, God sends the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and we live in His power.

15. What is one of the blessings we receive when we die with Christ? Colossians 2:13

God is just in forgiving all our sins because we died in Christ. That death paid the wages of our sin (see Romans 3:24-26). To be forgiven of all our sins is one of the great privileges we receive when we are baptized into Christ.

16. What experience of the Jews does Paul use as a model of salvation? 1 Corinthians 10:1-4

Paul is using the exodus of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan as a type of salvation. The crossing of the Red Sea is a type of baptism. Moses symbolized Christ; therefore, Egypt symbolized the world. Pharaoh symbolized Satan, and Canaan symbolized the kingdom of heaven.

17. Why did many of the Jews of the Exodus die in the wilderness? 1 Corinthians 10:5

Although the Jews had physically crossed the Red Sea, having been delivered from their slavery in Egypt, and were now heading for the Promised Land, the hearts of many of them were still in Egypt. Their act of baptism in crossing the Red Sea was therefore not genuine. In the same way, Paul is saying that the act of baptism does not save unless it is a heart response to the gospel.

Another example of Scripture's use of the Exodus as a type of baptism is found in the story of Joshua (Joshua 4:1-9). "And…the sons of Israel…took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, just as the LORD spoke to Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Israel; and they carried them over with them to the lodging place, and put them down there. Then Joshua set up twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan at the place where the feet of the priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant were standing, and they are there to this day" (Joshua 4:8-9). Those twelve stones represented the church. The sinful life of Egypt, which the Jews had brought with them, could not be taken into Canaan; it had to be buried in the Jordan. Only the new resurrected life, which God offers us in Christ, can enter heaven. Crossing the Jordan River represents true baptism.

18. What event does Peter use to describe our salvation by baptism? 1 Peter 3:18-21

The ark Noah built represented Christ. Only the eight people who entered it (Noah and his family) were saved when the flood came. In the same way, only those who enter into Christ by faith and

baptism will be saved when this wicked world is destroyed by fire (see 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). Baptism does not change our sinful natures but changes our (individual) status from condemnation unto death to justification unto life.

19. Why does Paul glory in the cross of Christ? Galatians 6:14

The three basic drives that control worldly people are "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16). Through the cross of Christ, a believer has said good-bye to all three (see Galatians 5:24). It is not the act of baptism, but our union with Christ crucified, buried, and resurrected, symbolized by baptism, that saves us. In this, we glory!

20. On hearing the gospel, what request did the Ethiopian eunuch make? Acts 8:36-38

This Ethiopian, a Jew by religion, had come to celebrate the Passover feast in Jerusalem. On his way back, he was reading the book of Isaiah when Philip approached him. The Ethiopian requested Philip to join him and explain whom the prophet Isaiah was talking about. Philip took this opportunity to preach Christ and Him crucified. The Ethiopian's heart was convicted and as a result, the first Gentile was baptized into the Christian church.

21. Would you like to make a similar request and have a pastor or church member visit you?

My Response to Lesson 7

• To obey the gospel from the heart means you are changing your spiritual citizenship from the world under Satan to God's kingdom under Christ. Is it your desire to publicly confess this by being baptized?

Response: _____

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Lesson 8 - The New Birth



On one occasion, Nicodemus, one of the chief officers of the Jewish religion, came to visit Jesus at night. He greeted Jesus with these words, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him” (John 3:2).

In response to this confession Jesus replied, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). This statement surprised Nicodemus since he had never heard of the new birth. He responded, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born” (John 3:4)?

But Jesus was not referring to the physical birth. “Most assuredly, I say to you,” He responded, “unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:5, 6). In order to be a true Christian, every believer must experience the new birth. We touched on this in Lesson 7, but in this lesson, we will consider the full significance of the new birth, something that is essential to salvation.

1. What must take place before one can see the kingdom of God? John 3:3

2. Of what two things must one be born to experience salvation? John 3:5

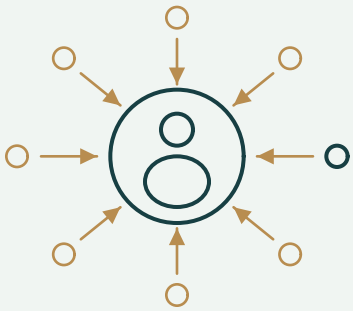
Being born of water is the experience of baptism, which we considered in Lesson 7. Being born of the Spirit is referring to our spiritual birth. In baptism, we participate by faith in the death, burial, and

resurrection of Jesus Christ. In this experience, the life of sin we were born with is surrendered to the cross of Christ and in exchange, we receive the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit. This is the new birth experience.

3. Is being born of the flesh the same thing as being born of the Spirit? John 3:6

The new birth is not a transformation of the old life of sin but an exchange of the old life for the new. God told Adam and Eve that in the very day they sinned they would surely die (see Genesis 2:17). We know that this did not take place physically the day they sinned. It was their spiritual life that came to an end. The Holy Spirit who was dwelling in them left them and they were plunged into spiritual darkness or death. Because Adam could not pass on to us what he did not have, all his children were also born spiritually dead. This is our natural inheritance.

4. How did God restore this spiritual life back to sinful humanity? Ephesians 2:4, 5



In the incarnation, God united our spiritually dead humanity to the divine life of Christ. This was accomplished by the Holy Spirit (see Luke 1:26-35). This is also part of the good news of the gospel since it makes it possible for us to experience the new birth (see Titus 3:3-6).

5. What two things must we do to be made the children of God? John 1:12

The words “received” and “believed” used in this text are synonymous. Believing in Jesus Christ is more than a mental assent to the truth as it is in Him; it involves receiving Him - making Him part of your life.

6. By whose will and act does one experience the new birth? John 1:13

7. Can one belong to Christ and yet not experience the new birth? Romans 8:9

8. Why is the body dead, but the Spirit is alive in the "born again" Christian? Romans 8:10

(Body):

(Spirit):

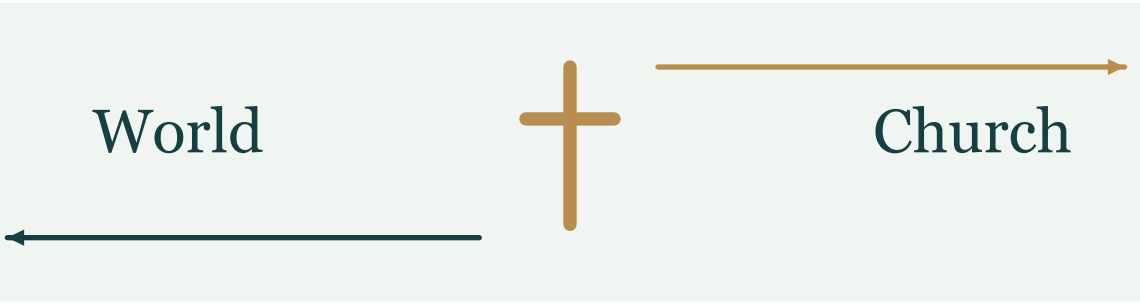
The new birth is not an option but essential to salvation. In the above two texts, Paul uses the terms "Holy Spirit" and "Christ dwelling in you" interchangeably. This is because the Holy Spirit represents Christ in the experience of salvation. This fact is the foundation of true Christian experience.

9. What change does the new birth bring to our lives? Romans 8:15

Without Christ and the experience of the new birth, we stand condemned to eternal death and therefore live in fear of the judgment. But the moment we experience the new birth we not only pass from death to life but we also become the adopted children of God and can call Him "Dear Father." In the Bible an adopted child has all the legal rights of a natural child (see Romans 8:16, 17).

10. What trustworthy or faithful saying must all Christians know? 2 Timothy 2:11

We cannot experience the new birth and still cling to our old life of sin. Between the world under sin and the church (the body of Christ) stands the cross of Christ. This cross will allow nothing of the world to creep into the church.



As Christians, we must consider ourselves as being delivered from this wicked world into the church, the kingdom of God on earth.

11. What did God restore in saving us in Christ? Titus 3:5

Through the truth as it is in Christ (the gospel), God has restored the Holy Spirit to mankind. The new birth is receiving the life of Christ, the Holy Spirit, in exchange for our life of sin. This is what regeneration is all about. Receiving the life of Christ is experienced by the renewing of the Spirit.

12. In obeying the truth of the gospel, of what do we purify ourselves? 1 Peter 1:22

The word "soul" means the life principle. When we obey the truth of the gospel, we surrender the life of sin to the cross of Christ. On the cross Jesus not only (1) delivered us from the guilt and punishment of sin, but also (2) cleansed us from the very principle or life of sin, which is the love of self. When we obey the gospel and experience the new birth, both these truths become ours by faith.

13. How does Peter describe the new birth experience? 1 Peter 1:23

By experiencing the new birth we receive a life that has not only conquered and condemned sin in the flesh (see Romans 8:3), but we also receive a life that will last forever, because it is the eternal life of Christ.

14. What heart exchange takes place in the life of the bornagain Christian? Ezekiel 36:26

In the new birth experience, God takes away our stony hearts of self and replaces them with Christ's heart of love. This love becomes the driving force in Christian living and is what makes it possible to keep the commandments of God.

15. What happens when God puts His Spirit in us? Ezekiel 36:27

16. When the Spirit of God dwells in us, what do we become? 1 Corinthians 3:16

When the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us through the new birth experience we become temples of God. It is for this reason we must not abuse or mistreat our bodies by indulging in alcohol, drugs or the wrong kinds of foods.

17. When the Holy Spirit dwells and lives in us, to whom do we belong? 1 Corinthians 6:19

18. According to Paul, what two things does God want to do in us? 2 Corinthians 6:16

God wants to dwell in us so that He may give us the hope of salvation. He also wants to walk in us so that He can demonstrate to the world what He is like, a God of love (see John 13:35). That is the privilege of being a Christian.

19. According to Isaiah, what two things does God want to do in us? Isaiah 57:15

20. What blessed hope does the new birth bring to the Christian? 1 Peter 1:3, 4

21. When will this blessed hope be realized? 1 Peter 1:5

By "the last time" Peter is referring to the Second Coming of Christ. The ultimate hope of the Christian is not in this world but in the world to come (see 1 Corinthians 15:19-23 and Lesson 12). Until then, we are saved by faith.

22. Why does God allow Christians to go through many trials? 1 Peter 1:6, 7

The purpose of these trials is to strengthen our faith so that it may endure unto the end, (i.e., until Christ comes to take us home). May this be true of you.

Notes

My Response to Lesson 8

• Unless you are born from above (of the Spirit), you cannot experience the salvation Christ obtained for you. Is it your heartfelt desire to experience the new birth?

Response: _____

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Lesson 9 - Walking in the Spirit



Christianity is not a modification or an improvement of the sinful life with which we were born. It is receiving by faith and the experience of baptism, the righteous life of Christ, in exchange for our sinful life that was executed on the cross of Christ. This is the experience of the new birth, which was discussed in Lesson 8.

The moment you experience this new birth, you have passed from death to life, from condemnation of the law to justification unto life. This is the beginning of the Christian life. The work of now subduing the sinful desires of the flesh and reproducing the holy and righteous life of Christ in believers is the work of the Holy Spirit. This work is the process of sanctification.

While this experience of sanctification does not contribute one iota towards your title to heaven, it does witness to the salvation you already have in Christ through justification by faith. Hence, sanctification, the fruit of the Spirit, is witnessing the power of the gospel (see Colossians 1:27).

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

1. How can believers overcome the desires of their sinful natures? Galatians 5:16

It is impossible for a believer to fully overcome the sinful desires of the flesh in his own strength (see Romans 7:1-19). This is only possible when we walk in the Spirit.

2. What kind of fruit do we bear when we walk in the Spirit? Galatians 5:22-25

Notice that when Paul talks about the flesh in Galatians 5:19 he uses the word "works." This is because works is what we produce. In Galatians 5:22 he uses the word "fruit," because it is not we, but the Holy Spirit, who produces the fruit.

3. What claim did Paul make in Christ? Philippians 4:13

The strength we receive to live the Christian life comes from Christ. Through the indwelling of His Spirit, the victorious life of Christ is communicated to us who walk in the Spirit.

4. What is fulfilled in us when we walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh? Romans 8:4

God's law is love, and when we walk in the Spirit the unconditional and self-emptying love of Christ will be manifested in us (see Romans 13:8-10).

5. Where is the battle between the flesh and the Spirit fought? Romans 8:5

The mind is the battleground in the Christian warfare. Those who are walking in the flesh are preoccupied with pleasing the desires of their sinful natures. Those who walk in the Spirit want to please their Lord Jesus Christ.

6. What is the result of being carnally or spiritually minded? Romans 8:6

(Carnally):

(Spiritually):

The word "carnal" means controlled by the sinful desires of the flesh, your sinful nature. Because the flesh is sinful it can only produce death, "the wages of sin" (Romans 6:23). Only through Christ's Spirit do we have life and peace.

7. Why is the mind controlled by the flesh (sinful nature) hostile to God? Romans 8:7

8. Is it possible to please God while walking in the flesh? Romans 8:8

9. Who should the Christian allow to control his or her mind? Romans 8:9

By obeying the gospel you have said in your heart, "Not I, but Christ." Christian living is putting this decision into practice.

10. What attitude must the Christian have towards one's sinful nature? Romans 8:10

Since no change takes place in our sinful natures before Christ comes (see Romans 8:22-25), we must put no confidence in the flesh (our sinful natures) to fulfill the will of God. Only through the Spirit of Christ can we please God.

11. If a believer is Spirit-controlled, what spiritual power is manifested? Romans 8:11

The ultimate power of sin is death. The sins of the whole world put Christ into the grave, but none of our sins could keep Him there. His resurrection therefore proved that the Spirit's power over sin is greater than all the power Satan can master through our sinful flesh. Hence, the gospel is the power of God to save you from every aspect of sin - its guilt and punishment as well as its power and dominion.

12. If you have been born of the Spirit what is your obligation? Romans 8:12-14

As Christians, we have an obligation. It is to live according to the Spirit. All that the flesh (sinful nature) can produce is sin which leads to death. Only the Spirit can subdue the flesh and produce genuine righteousness.

13. What other expression does the Bible use for "walking in the Spirit"? Romans 13:14

To "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" simply means you allow the Spirit of Christ to control your life. The Holy Spirit is Christ's representative on earth.

14. Who is the one that gives you real spiritual life? John 6:63

The source of real spiritual life is the Holy Spirit. When He comes and dwells in you He brings with Him the life of Christ, which has conquered both sin and death, replacing them with righteousness and life.

15. Besides enabling victory over sin, into what does the Spirit guide you? John 16:13

Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). The freedom that Jesus was talking about was the freedom from our slavery to sin (see John 8:32-36).

16. What transformation takes place when you walk in the Spirit? 2 Corinthians 3:17, 18

17. Who actually does the work of sanctification in your life? 1 Peter 1:2

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

18. How should we, who have been baptized into Christ's death, walk? Romans 6:4

Walking in newness of life means that now we let the Holy Spirit control our lives. It is in this way that the life of Christ is reproduced in us.

19. What kind of life will you live when you are walking in the Spirit? Ephesians 5:1, 2

20. What will you experience when you walk in the light of the gospel? 1 John 1:7

Walking in the light is the same as walking in the power of the gospel since Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world" (John 8:12).

21. How much fruit (holy living) are you able to produce without Christ? John 15:4-8

None!

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

22. In whose strength was Christ able to overcome temptation? Luke 4:13, 14

The same power by which Christ conquered temptation is available to every believer. When we walk in the Spirit as Christ did, we will be able to experience victory over the flesh as He did.

23. Why is Christian living so important in witnessing the gospel? Matthew 5:14-16

The world judges Christians by their works. By our unconditional love for one another, all men will know that we are Christ's disciples (see John 13:34, 35).

Notes

My Response to Lesson 9

• Motivated by Christ's unconditional and self-emptying love for you, is it your sincere desire to walk in the Spirit, that all may see the matchless charm of your Savior?

Response: _____

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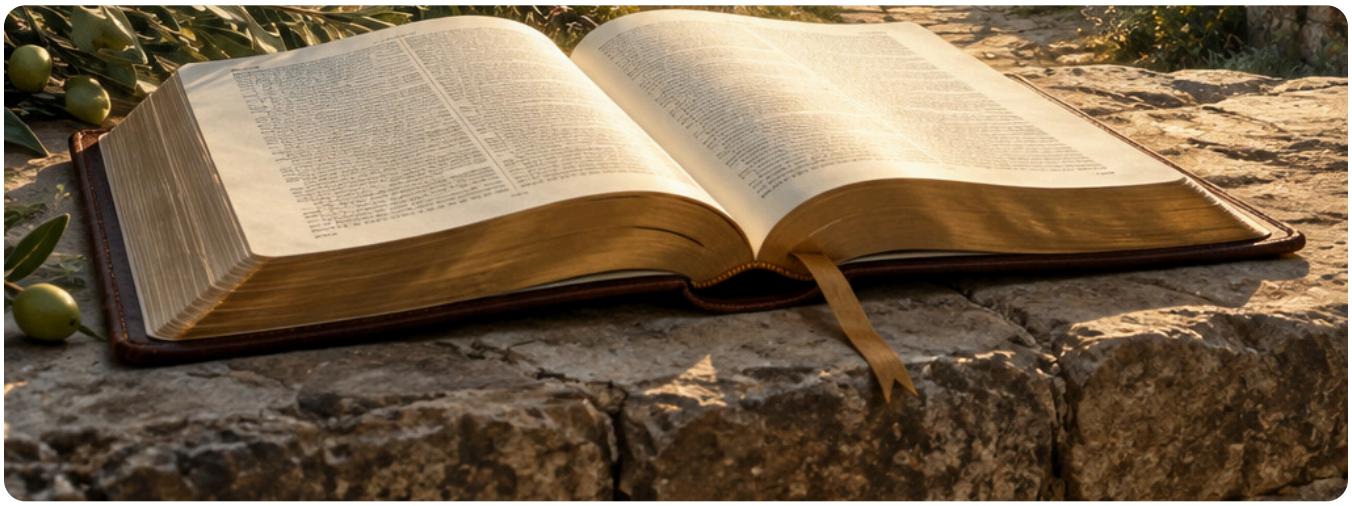
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Lesson 10 - The Two Covenants



The word “covenant” can either mean a contract, an agreement between two parties, or a will, a promise made by one person but benefiting others. The Bible describes two opposite methods of salvation labeling them as the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant was a contract made between God and the Jews, while the New Covenant is a will, a promise made by God that He would redeem mankind through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Old Covenant was first introduced to the Jews of the Exodus. This covenant was a contract, an agreement between them and God. In this contract, God spelled out His laws, especially the Ten Commandments, and in return, the Jews promised to keep all of them. The agreement was that if they obeyed, they could live; and if they disobeyed, they would have to die.

However, when God gave His laws to the Jews and entered into the Old Covenant, He knew they could not keep them. The whole purpose of the Old Covenant, based on man’s promise and performance, was to make them aware that they were sinners in need of a Savior, thus preparing their hearts to accept the New Covenant, God’s promise of salvation in Christ.

Since sin is a deceiver, many make the same mistake as the Jews and enter into an Old Covenant relationship with God, thinking they can be saved by promising Him to be good. In this study we will examine the two Covenants and see why the Old Covenant can never save us. Our only hope of making it to heaven is the New Covenant: salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in what God obtained for us in Jesus Christ.

1. How did the Jews respond when they heard the Book of the Covenant? Exodus 24:7

The Book of the Covenant read to the Jews of the Exodus was the "Torah," the first five books of the Old Testament given to them through Moses. When they agreed to keep these laws, they entered into what is known as the First or Old Covenant.

2. Why was it necessary for God to introduce the New Covenant? Jeremiah 31:31, 32

The reason God entered into the Old Covenant of salvation by works of the law was to convince man of his need for a Savior. Once this purpose is fulfilled, the New Covenant of grace becomes meaningful.

3. What did God promise to do under the New Covenant? Jeremiah 31:33

Putting His laws in our hearts simply means He will create in us new desires that are in harmony with His laws (see Ezekiel 36:26, 27). Such desires are created in our minds because of a heartfelt appreciation for the forgiveness of sins and the hope of salvation obtained for us in Christ.

4. What phrase does Paul use to describe being under the Old Covenant? Romans 3:19

According to Paul, all humanity has failed to obey God's law and therefore stands guilty before God. To be "under the law," however, is not limited to being under the condemnation of the law. For example, the Galatian Christians desired to be "under the law" (Galatians 4:21). Of course, they did not desire to be under its condemnation; rather, they desired to be ruled or dominated by the law's demand to "obey and you will live, disobey and you will die" (Deuteronomy 11:26-28).

5. What do we become conscious of through the law? Romans 3:20

The law has no power to save. All it can do is make us conscious of our sin problem (see Romans 3:23). This is an important step as a means of accepting God's promise of salvation in Christ, the New Covenant - salvation by grace alone, through faith alone (see Romans 3:24).



Read carefully for the message that is repeated 3 times in this one verse!

6. Why is justification by faith in Christ our only hope of salvation? Galatians 2:16

7. What do Abraham's two sons and their mothers represent? Galatians 4:22-26

The two sons of Abraham and their mothers are excellent examples of the two covenants. Ishmael, Abraham's son through the slave woman Hagar, represents the Old Covenant because he was born as a result of human effort. Isaac, Abraham's son through his wife Sarah, was born as a result of God's promise (see Romans 4:16-22). Ishmael, therefore, represents salvation by works - the Old Covenant, while Isaac represents the New Covenant - salvation by grace alone, which is experienced by faith alone.

8. To which of the two sons of Abraham does Paul link Christians? Galatians 4:28

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

9. What must we give up if we are to experience salvation by grace alone? Galatians 4:29-31

Salvation by works and salvation by grace are two opposite methods of salvation that cannot be reconciled. It has to be one or the other. When we by faith accept God's gift of salvation through

His Son, Jesus Christ, we cannot hold on to any of our own selfrighteousness. The gospel is not "I plus Christ" but "Not I, but Christ" (see Philippians 3:3-9).

10. What happens when law-keeping is added to justification by faith as a means of salvation? Galatians 5:4

You cannot have it both ways: (1) admitting on the one hand that you are 100 percent sinful and therefore cannot make any contribution towards your salvation; and then (2) on the other hand, adding your own good works or law-keeping towards your salvation. Our only hope of salvation is through the righteousness of Christ and nothing else (read Galatians 5:5, 6).

11. Why is the New Covenant called a better covenant? Hebrews 8:6

The Old Covenant is based on our human promises, which are like ropes of sand. On the other hand, the New Covenant is based on God's promises, which never fail. That is why the New Covenant is a better covenant.

12. What reason does the Bible give for the need of the New Covenant? Hebrews 8:7

13. Where in the Old Covenant did the fault lie? Hebrews 8:8, 9

The fault with the Old Covenant was not in God's law, but in the inability of the Jews to keep it. This is the very purpose of the Old Covenant, that is, to convince us that we are sinners in need of a Savior (see John 8:32-34).

14. Does the New Covenant do away with the law? Hebrews 8:10

Nowhere in Scripture do we find that the cross of Christ did away with the law (see Matthew 5:17-19). On the contrary, the law is impressed on our hearts in the New Covenant. While the law cannot save sinners it is still the standard for Christian living (see Romans 13:8-10, Galatians 5:13, 14).

15. How does Paul contrast the law with his own sinful nature? Romans 7:14

God's holy law and sinful human nature are incompatible. Only after we discover this fact, through much failure on our part, are we able to appreciate Christ and His saving grace (read Romans 7:15-25).

16. According to Jesus, what sets us free from our slavery to sin? John 8:32

No human method is able to set us free from our slavery to sin, the principle of self. The only power that can do that is the gospel, the truth as it is in Christ.

17. How did the Jews respond to Christ's statement in John 8:32? John 8:33

18. What was Jesus' reply to their remarks? John 8:34

The word that Jesus used was not "servant" (KJV), but "slave." That is what we are from birth in regards to sin. Only Christ can deliver from that slavery (see John 8:36).

19. Why did Israel of Paul's day fail to attain righteousness? Romans 9:30-32

We're righteous,

aren't we?

The phrase "works of the law" (Romans 9:32) represents the Old Covenant - using the law as a means or method of

salvation. The word for this in English is "legalism.1" Only by faith in Christ, the New Covenant, can we attain to a righteousness that saves.

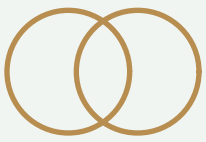
20. In the Lord's Supper, with what did Jesus link His shed blood? Matthew 26:28

Since the New Covenant, or Testament (KJV), is a will (promise) made by God to mankind, like any will it does not come into effect until death takes place. When Jesus died on the cross, God's promise became a reality.

21. Because of the cross, what does the New Covenant take away? Romans 11:27

22. What is another name for the New Covenant? Hebrews 13:20, 21

Just as the Old Covenant condemns to everlasting death those who disobey it, in the same way the New Covenant brings everlasting life to those who accept its offer of salvation in Christ. That is why Scripture sometimes refers to the New Covenant as the Everlasting or Eternal Covenant.



THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

My Response to Lesson 10

• Scripture describes two opposing means of salvation-the Old Covenant, salvation by human works, and the New Covenant, salvation by faith in the finished work of Christ. To which Covenant do you want to belong?

Response: _____

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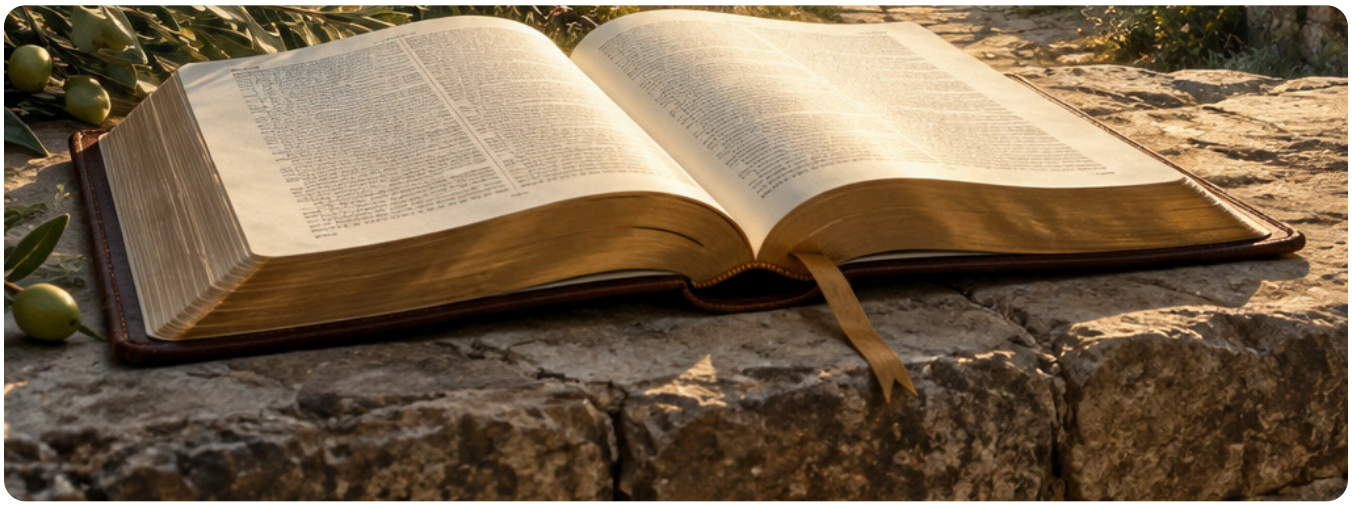
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Lesson 11 - Law and Grace



Closely related to our last study on the two Covenants is the issue between Law and Grace. These two are opposites when it comes to salvation. The law says, “Obey and you will live” (Galatians 3:12, Leviticus 18:5). On the other hand, grace says, “Believe in Christ and you will live” (John 5:24, paraphrased). Consequently, many Christians have great difficulty reconciling the two. Yet both have their source in God and therefore do not contradict each other when seen in their respective functions.

There are three main reasons why God gave the law to the fallen human race. The primary reason was to convict us of sin. This in turn makes us realize the need for a Savior. Here is the tutorial function of the law. Second, the law points to Christ as the perfect fulfillment of righteousness for our salvation. In Christ, all the demands of the law were fully met on man's behalf. This is the ceremonial or gospel function of the law. Finally, the law is codified love. This is the spirit of the law and is the standard for Christian living.

Seen in this light, there is no contradiction between God's law and His grace. Our problem as sinners is that God's holy law and our sinful natures are incompatible. This makes salvation through lawkeeping impossible. Grace comes along and saves mankind by meeting all the demands of the law in Christ and then gives the believer power to live a life that is in harmony with the law.

1. What command did God give to Adam in the Garden of Eden? Genesis 2:15-17

Since God created man with the freedom of choice, the tree of knowledge of good and evil became the test of Adam’s loyalty to God. It was placed in the Garden of Eden as an alternate choice to obeying God. By eating the forbidden fruit, our first parents sinned against God and became self-dependent.

2. Through whom did sin and death enter the world (mankind)? Romans 5:12

That “one man” was Adam (see 1 Corinthians 15:22a). The word “Adam,” in the original, means mankind. In creating Adam, God created the whole human race in him; therefore, the entire human race was implicated when Adam sinned. Although we are not guilty of Adam’s sin, the consequence of his wrong act is that sin and death spread to or affected all mankind.

3. What sentence was passed on mankind because of Adam’s sin? Romans 5:18a

4. In contrast, what did Christ’s obedience bring to mankind? Romans 5:18b

The “one” who sinned was Adam and the “one” who obeyed was Christ. By his perfect life and sacrificial death on the cross, Christ - the last Adam (mankind) - reversed the consequences of Adam’s sin on mankind. This is the good news of the gospel and what salvation by grace is all about.

5. Besides condemnation, how did Adam's sin affect humanity? Romans 5:19a

The word “many” is referring to mankind. Because of the fall of Adam, all of mankind is born with a nature that is dominated by sin. His one offense not only condemns us to death but it is also what makes us sinners from birth.

6. Whose obedience will one day make us righteous? Romans 5:19b

As Christians we are justified or declared righteous only by faith. It is not until Christ comes the second time that we will be changed and made righteous. This is the blessed hope of all believers (see Philippians 3:20, 21).

7. What is the wages of sin, and in contrast, the gift of God? Romans 6:23

(Sin):

(God’s gift):

8. What does the law demand of us in order for a person to be justified? Romans 2:13

Unlike the gospel, which justifies us by faith, believing in the law of God cannot save anyone. Being under the law means that we are required to obey all its demands perfectly and continually if we are to qualify for life. One single failure results in death (see Galatians 3:10).

9. How then can anyone experience justification? Romans 3:28

Justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ is the very opposite of salvation by works of the law. The two are diametrically opposed to each other. That is why the two methods of salvation cannot be mixed or reconciled.

10. What is the legal status of the whole human race under the law? Romans 3:19

God placed sinful mankind under the law in order to open our eyes to see that we are sinners in need of a Savior. The law makes us conscious of our sins so that we might be saved by grace.

11. How many can save themselves by keeping the law? Romans 3:20

12. In contrast, who is the end of the law for righteousness to the believer? Romans 10:4

13. Why is sin not able to have dominion to destroy the believer? Romans 6:14

Under grace, sin can no longer condemn us to death. This is because we are no longer under the authority of the law. However, this must not lead us to condone sin, since grace does not give us license to sin (see Romans 6:15-18).

14. What logical conclusion does Paul draw in this verse? Romans 11:6

When it comes to salvation, law and grace are opposites. These two methods of salvation cannot be reconciled. Therefore, we cannot subscribe to both methods of salvation; it has to be one or the other. To be saved by grace is saying, Not I, but Christ (see Philippians 3:9).

15. According to Scripture, what is the only way a person can be saved? Ephesians 2:8, 9

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

16. Does justification by faith make the law null and void? Romans 3:31

In the original text, the word “faith” is preceded by the definite article. By “the faith” Paul is referring to the doctrine of justification by faith and not the believer's faith. By His perfect obedience and His sacrificial death, Christ met the full demands of the law on man's behalf. This is how the law is established in the doctrine of justification by faith (see Romans 10:4).

17. With what must the Galatian Christians not be entangled again? Galatians 5:1

False teachers had convinced the Galatian Christians that they still had to keep the law as a requirement for salvation (Galatians 1:6, 7; 3:1-3). This is the yoke of bondage. Such a religion gives one no peace, nor assurance of salvation.

18. Does freedom in Christ (salvation by grace) give us license to sin? Galatians 5:13

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

19. When we love others as we love ourselves what are we fulfilling? Galatians 5:14

20. Therefore, does salvation by grace do away with the law? Matthew 5:17-19

Christ did not come to do away with the law, as some teach, but to fulfill its demands on man’s behalf. He then upholds it as a standard of Christian living.

21. According to the New Covenant where does God write His law? Hebrews 8:10

Besides giving us peace and assurance of salvation, God also gives believers a new heart of unselfish love. This love is what fulfills the law of God. See Galatians 5:14.

22. When was God's grace or strength made perfect in Paul? 2 Corinthians 12:9

God's strength does not depend on human abilities. Our weakness permits God to manifest His strength. That is why Paul could say to the Christians in Philippi, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

23. Besides redeeming us, what were we created in Christ Jesus to do? Ephesians 2:10

Besides saving us from the condemnation of the law, God also saved us in Christ from a life of sin to a life of good works. These good works do not save us but witness the salvation we already have in Christ.

24. What behavior proves to others that we are truly Christ's disciples? John 13:35

When we love one another, as Christ loved us (John 13:34), this is true commandment keeping (See 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, Galatians 5:13, 14).

My Response to Lesson 11

• Although we are saved by grace alone and not by works of the law, do you believe that the law is still God's standard for Christian living? Is it your desire to keep the law through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit?

Response: _____

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Lesson 12 - The Blessed Hope



In our earlier studies, we discovered that God has already obtained salvation, full and complete, for the entire human race in Jesus Christ. However, this salvation that has been received by every believer through faith in Christ is not experienced by Christians all at once but in three stages. That is why when asked, “Are you saved?” Christians should respond, “I am saved, I am being saved, and I will be saved.”

I am Saved from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin!

The first stage is referred to as justification by faith. This is made effective the moment one believes the gospel and receives Jesus as one's personal Savior (see John 5:24). The immediate blessing of justification by faith is peace with God (Lesson 6, especially Question 22). This experience also results in the new birth in which the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the believer (Lesson 8, especially Questions 16 and 17).

I am Being Saved from the Power and Slavery to Sin!

While justification by faith changes our status or standing before God from condemnation to death to justification unto eternal life, it does not change the believer's sinful nature. That is why we need the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to make the second stage of salvation possible. This second phase is holy living, commonly

referred to in Scripture as the experience of sanctification. It

is an ongoing process and is realized only as the believer learns to walk in the Spirit (Lesson 9).

I will be Saved from the Nature and Presence of Sin!

But even the experience of sanctification does not bring about any change to the sinful nature itself, which remains innately sinful all the believer's life. This sinful nature is the greatest hindrance to holy living and that is why Christians long to experience the third phase of salvation. This final stage of salvation is glorification. It will take place at the Second Coming of Christ. The Bible refers to this ultimate experience of salvation as "the blessed hope." Let us examine what the Scriptures have to say about this glorious truth.

1. What blessed hope does Jesus give to His disciples? John 14:1, 2

The phrase "You believe in God" or "Trust in God" is in the imperative. This means that Christians are never to doubt God's promise of salvation even as we struggle to live the Christian life in this world.

2. When will this ultimate hope of salvation take place? John 14:3

The Second Coming of Christ is the blessed hope of every Christian. Until then we are sinners saved by grace patiently waiting for Christ's soon return. We are citizens of heaven but still have sinful natures and live in a sinful world.

3. What gives us this blessed hope of salvation? Titus 2:11

Salvation has already been obtained for the entire human race in Christ. The believer's blessed hope of going to heaven is not based on his or her performance but in the truth that Christ is our righteousness.

4. What does this accomplished salvation in Christ teach us to do? Titus 2:12

While our salvation is guaranteed in Christ, this does not give the believer license to sin. The good news of the gospel does not save us only from the guilt and punishment of sin, but also from its power and slavery. Genuine justification by faith creates in believers a hatred for sin and a desire to live holy, upright lives.

5. What must our eyes be focused on while living the Christian life? Titus 2:13

6. What do Christians eagerly wait for while living in this world? Romans 8:22, 23

By “redemption of our body” Paul is referring to our sinful natures, which will be changed from corruption to incorruption only at the Second Coming of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

7. What will Christ do to our bodies when He comes the second time? Philippians 3:20, 21

The blessed hope of our bodies being redeemed from the corruption of sin is part of the blessed hope. Only then will we Christians be made righteous (see Romans 5:19b). Until then we are righteous only by faith in Christ and Him crucified.

8. In view of the above, how is faith described in the book of Hebrews? Hebrews 11:1

In justification by faith we are declared righteous. In sanctification we experience holy living and victory over the sinful desires of the flesh. We thus witness to the righteousness we already have in Christ. It is only at the Second Coming of Christ that we will be made righteous, when “this corruptible has put on incorruption” (1 Corinthians 15:54).

9. In order for us to experience this ultimate salvation what must we do? 2 Timothy 4:7, 8

While Christians may have full assurance of salvation, this does not mean, “Once saved, Always saved.” As long as you have faith in Christ, your salvation is guaranteed; but the moment you turn your back on Christ through unbelief, you are also turning your back to your salvation in Christ.

10. What admonition is given to believers who are weak in faith? Hebrews 10:35

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11. What warning is given to those who draw back from Christ? Hebrews 10:38

God cannot take to heaven those who have deliberately turned their backs on Christ. Hence, His desire is that “none draw back unto perdition” (Hebrews 10:39).

12. Who did Jesus say will be ultimately saved? Matthew 10:22

Because Christians live in a sinful world, the devil will try his level best to make our lives difficult in order to destroy our faith in Christ. But these difficulties are only temporary. That is why we must not focus on the hardships of our present life but on Christ, who will deliver us from all these at His Second Coming.

13. What counsel does Jesus give believers regarding His soon coming? Revelation 3:11

The righteousness that saves us and qualifies us for heaven is always in Christ. That, the devil cannot touch. But the faith that makes that righteousness ours is in us. That, the devil can destroy. We must hold on to that faith at all cost.

14. How is the Second Coming of Christ described by the lost? Revelation 6:17

While the Second Coming1 of Christ is the blessed hope for the Christian1, it is the very opposite to the unbelievers who have rejected the gift of salvation in Christ. To them the Second Coming of Christ is "the great day of His wrath."

15. What will all the nations do when they see Jesus coming in the clouds? Matthew 24:30

Those who will be mourning when they see Jesus coming in glory are the unbelievers. In contrast, the believers1 will rejoice and shout for joy - this is the day we have been waiting for.

16. What will happen to unbelievers who cry "peace and safety"? 1 Thessalonians 5:3

17. In contrast, why will the believers1 not be taken by surprise? 1 Thessalonians 5:4

Today, there is much talk in the political world about "peace and safety" but we Christians must not be deceived by such talk. The Bible is clear that at such a time sudden destruction will take place.

18. In view of the above, what admonition does Jesus give to believers1? Luke 12:40

19. How is Christ's Second Coming described in this text? Revelation 16:15

To come as a thief means that the coming of Christ will be at an unexpected time, even for Christians1. Therefore, we must constantly keep our eyes focused on Jesus Christ.

20. What will Christ's response be to those who claim salvation by works? Matthew 7:22, 23

Unfortunately, many today think they will be saved because they are involved in some kind of Christian ministry. Salvation is by grace alone, received by faith alone. Good works are the inevitable fruits of salvation, but they do not contribute to it (see Ephesians 2:8-10).

1 Many divergent beliefs have been espoused related to the rapture of the saints.

Many believe that Christians will be raptured to heaven prior to a time of trouble. There is evidence from the Scriptures, however, that Christians will have to endure severe hardships prior to Jesus' return (see Daniel 12:1). This evidence must be seriously considered. This subject will be addressed further in Lesson 23.

21. What must Christians endure prior to Christ's Second Advent? Jeremiah 30:7

Jacob represents those whose faith endures to the end. The time of Jacob's trouble is the great tribulation that the last generation of Christians will have to endure before Christ comes. This is the final showdown between the world under Satan and the church under Christ.

22. What did Jesus imply will be tested during the great tribulation? Luke 18:8

During the great tribulation, the supreme test will be the faith of God's people. Can God produce a people whose faith in Christ is unshakable even though they feel forsaken of God? This is what the issue in the great tribulation will be all about (see Isaiah 54:5- 8). An enduring faith will demonstrate, once and for all, that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (see Romans 1:16). Those who endure such a trial and come out victorious are referred to as the 144,000, God's remnant (a subject we will study in Lesson 23).

Dear Believer,

We are living close to that testing time and my prayer is that you may be among the faithful ones. In whatever trials you are facing now or will have to face in the future, always remember that the blessed hope for us Christians is the Second Coming of Christ. Don't ever give up your faith; hold on to the end no matter what circumstances come your way. And remember: "The one who calls you is faithful and will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

Yours truly,

Someone who cares and wants to meet you in heaven!

My Response to Lesson 12

• Recognizing that the blessed hope of the Christian is the Second Coming of Christ, when believers will experience full salvation, is it your desire to hold on to your faith at all cost?

Response: _____

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PART 3 / Biblical Doctrines in the Light of the Gospel

Lesson 13 - The Godhead



Before returning to heaven Jesus commissioned His disciples to go into all the world and make disciples (followers of Christ) of all nations, “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” He then added, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Now that we have covered the essential teachings of the Bible concerning the good news of the gospel, and you have by faith and baptism accepted Christ as your personal Savior, we will turn our attention to the key teachings or doctrines of Scripture.

We will begin with the Godhead, commonly referred to as The

Trinity. This doctrine is based on the Biblical truth that

there is only one God but consisting of a unity of three co-eternal, divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This truth, however, is beyond our human comprehension; for God is immortal, all-powerful, all knowing, above all, and omnipresent. Therefore, what may be known of Him through His self-revelation, we believers accept by faith.

According to Scripture, all three members of the Godhead are intimately involved in the redemption of mankind. The Father oversees the plan of salvation, the Son is the Savior of mankind, and the Holy Spirit communicates that salvation to the human race. In this study, we will discover what the Bible teaches about the persons of the Godhead and their united effort in saving fallen humanity.

1. What two pronouns indicate that the Godhead is more than one person? Genesis 1:26

The pronouns “us” and “our” clearly indicate that the Godhead consists of more than one person (see also Genesis 3:22, 11:7). In the Old Testament, the name for God is “Elohim.” In the Hebrew language, the singular for God is “El,” while the plural is “Elohim.” Thus, the very name for God points to the fact that the Godhead consists of more than one person. This is conveyed in Deuteronomy 6:4: “The Lord our God (Elohim) is one Lord.” The New Testament confirms this truth and reveals that the Godhead consists of three divine persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

2. In what three names did Jesus say believers are to be baptized? Matthew 28:19

The reason that a believer is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit is because all three members of the Godhead are actively involved in our salvation. It is important from the very start of our Christian experience that we realize this glorious truth (read Romans 8:31-39).

3. What led the Father to give His only beloved Son to the world? John 3:16

As the chairperson of the plan of salvation, God the Father so loved the world that He sent His Son not to condemn the world, even though that is what we deserve, but to save the fallen race (see John 3:17).

4. For what two reasons did the Father send His Son into this world? Galatians 4:4, 5

By His perfect life and sacrificial death Christ made it possible to change our status from under law to under grace (see Romans 6:14). Further, by sharing His eternal life with the human race He came to redeem, we may also become the adopted sons and daughters of God. This is the good news of the gospel.

Under the law the whole world stands condemned (see Romans 3:19).

5. In order for Christ to redeem mankind, what did He have to be made? John 1:14

"The Word made flesh" means that Christ, the divine Son of God, was united to the human race and became a man. In the Incarnation, the Father, through the Holy Spirit, united the divine life of His Son to the corporate life of the human race that needed redeeming. This made Christ the second Adam (mankind) and qualified Him to be the Savior of the world, mankind's substitute.

6. What two things did Christ accomplish for His Father? John 17:4

The work the Father had given His Son to accomplish was the redemption of mankind. On the cross this work was finished (see John 19:30).

7. Because of this finished work, of what is Christ the end? Romans 10:4

The Greek word "end" can either mean "terminated" or "completed." By His perfect life and sacrificial death, Christ terminated legalism (keeping the law as a means of salvation) and became man's complete righteousness.

8. What do sinners pass from when they accept God's gift, Jesus Christ? John 5:24

9. What promise did Christ make to His disciples before leaving them? John 14:16

The word translated "comforter" or "counselor" is paracletos

(someone who is there to guide, comfort, encourage, and meet all your needs).

10. Who is this Comforter or Counselor Jesus promised? John 14:26

11. What do believers receive after the Holy Spirit has come upon them? Acts 1:8

Jesus promised His weak disciples the power of the Holy Spirit to carry out His great commission of witnessing the gospel to the world. That same power is available to us to witness Christ to our modern world. See Lesson 18 for more on spiritual gifts.

12. Of what three things does the Holy Spirit reprove or convict the world? John 16:8

Jesus takes up each of these three convictions of the Holy Spirit and defines them. Note what He says in the next three verses.

13. How did Jesus define sin in the above text? John 16:9

Why did Jesus define sin as unbelief (deliberately rejecting the convictions of the Holy Spirit that Jesus is the only means of salvation)? Because it is the only sin that will keep out anyone from heaven. Every sin against the law can be forgiven because of the cross (see Galatians 3:13). But the sin of unbelief (rejecting Christ) is the unpardonable sin (see Matthew 12:31).

14. How did Jesus explain the righteousness that saves sinners? John 16:10

Since the Father sent His Son to save the world, Jesus could not return to the Father until His earthly mission was finished. The “going to the Father” means Christ obtained righteousness for mankind that fully qualifies sinners for heaven. This is the good news of the gospel.

15. Why must the world be convicted of judgment? John 16:11

When Adam sinned, the whole human race was taken captive by Satan. On the cross Jesus redeemed us from Satan’s hands (see John 12:31). Those who refuse God's gift of redemption in Christ must be warned that by this act they are deliberately choosing their destruction with Satan (see Matthew 25:41).

16. What great gospel truth does Paul reveal about God the Father? Romans 8:31

The wonderful truth about God is that He is on the side of the believers. While it is true that Satan accuses us sinners day and night (see Revelation 12:10), the good news of the gospel is that he is a defeated foe and God’s unconditional, redeeming love will never forsake us (read Romans 8:35-39).

17. What ultimate proof does Paul give that God is on the believers' side? Romans 8:32

18. What reason does Paul give that God will never accuse His people? Romans 8:33

19. Why will Jesus not condemn believers in the judgment? Romans 8:34

All three members of the Godhead are on the believer's side. The Holy Spirit convinces us that we are God's children and joint-heirs with Christ (see Romans 8:16, 17). The Father justifies us in His Son, Jesus Christ. And Jesus Himself is our Savior and Intercessor. What more can we ask for?

20. What does the knowledge of God's love for us cast out? 1 John 4:16-18

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

21. What are the three-fold blessings Paul mentions in this benediction? 2 Corinthians 13:14

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is what saves us; the love of God the Father is the reason for our salvation; and the communion of the Holy Spirit is what makes salvation a reality in our lives. What a wonderful God we have!

My Response to Lesson 13

• Do you accept the Biblical truth that there is one God constituting a unity of three co-eternal, divine persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), all of whom are actively involved in your salvation?

Response: _____

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Lesson 14 - The Doctrine of Creation



One of the great issues facing the Christian Church today has to do with the Biblical account of creation as recorded in Genesis. Ever since Charles Darwin published his book, The Origin of Species, in 1859, the idea that this world was created by God in six literal days has been challenged by the Theory of Evolution. This controversy is more than a scientific problem, for it also denies a vital truth of the gospel. According to the good news of salvation, when Christ comes the second time to take believers to heaven the dead in Christ will be raised instantly with perfect, glorified bodies (see 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52). This truth flies in the face of what evolution teaches. If it took millions of years for man to develop to his present stage, then obviously it is impossible for man to be raised from the dust with a perfect body in an instant. Yet, this is the clear teaching of the Bible and the blessed hope of every believer. While creation cannot be proven scientifically, neither has evolution been demonstrated by the scientific method. It is still a theory or idea awaiting confirmation. Therefore, both creation and evolution are accepted today by faith - the former by faith in God's Word and the latter by faith in the opinions of scientific man. Every heresy that Satan has introduced into the Christian church is ultimately an attack on the gospel. This includes the Theory of Evolution, which denies the creative power of God. Therefore, in this study we will examine what the Bible has to say about the creation of this world, especially of mankind, in the light of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

2. How long did it take God to create the heavens and the earth? Exodus 20:11

Scripture clearly teaches that God created this world in six literal days. He spoke and it happened. It is hard for our finite minds to understand how God could speak and things came into existence, but the Bible declares it so, and we accept it by faith (read Genesis 1).

3. How did Paul distinguish the true, living God from false ones? Acts 14:15

When the inhabitants of Lystra began to worship Paul and Barnabas because they miraculously healed a cripple (see Acts 14:8-14), Paul pointed out to them that there is only one true God - the God of creation. The Theory of Evolution denies this God, for it teaches that life came into existence by chance and gradually developed into the various species of today.

4. According to David, what do the heavens declare? Psalm 19:1

5. What evidence does Paul give that the invisible God does exist? Romans 1:20

While God may not be seen, one of the greatest proofs of His existence is creation. To believe that this highly complex world of ours came about by chance, as do the evolutionists, requires more faith than belief in an all-powerful God who created our universe.

6. How does Paul describe those who deny the God of creation? Romans 1:22

While those who turn their backs on God today no longer worship graven images (see Romans 1:23), evolutionists have created their own gods, according to their own ideas (self-worship), contrary to what the Bible advocates.

7. According to the apostle John, who actually created our world? John 1:1-3

The “Word” is none other than Jesus Christ (see John 1:14). While all three members of the Godhead were involved in creation, it was Christ who spoke and brought our world into existence.

8. For how much of creation is Christ responsible? Colossians 1:16

Not only is Christ the one by whom God created our universe but He is also our Redeemer through whom we have the forgiveness of sins (see Colossians 1:14). If we deny His creative power, how can we believe in His saving power?

9. As Christians, what do we accept by faith? Hebrews 11:3

Faith is taking God at His word, even though what He says in Scripture may disagree with the scientific method. In the Bible, Abraham is called the father of all true believers. His faith in a God who can do the impossible is set as an example of what our faith must be (read Romans 4:16-22).

10. What must we have in order to please God? Hebrews 11:6

11. What did Christ have to say about the creation of mankind? Mark 10:6

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

12. Through whom did sin and death enter the world? Romans 5:12

The one man who brought sin and death into this world was Adam. Sin is not the remnants of our animal nature, as many evolutionists claim, but the result of the Fall. According to Scripture, man is not getting better and better but going from bad to worse. History clearly demonstrates this Biblical fact.

13. Who are the two men responsible for death and life respectively? 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22

In spite of all its scientific claims, evolution has no solution to the problem of death, the grim reaper. Those who put their faith in evolution have no hope of the resurrection. In contrast, those who put their faith in Christ look forward to the blessed hope of the resurrection.

14. Of whom does Paul use Adam as a figure, pattern, or type? Romans 5:14

The one to come is none other than Jesus Christ. The reason

Paul uses Adam as a type of Christ is because what each of these men did affected the entire human race (see Romans 5:18). Mankind is the multiplication of Adam's life (see Acts 17:26). Therefore,

Adam's one sin brought condemnation and death to all. Likewise, Christ is called the second or last Adam because He also represents all humanity and His act of obedience brought justification of life for all. To believe in evolution is to deny this glorious truth of the gospel.

15. How many were affected by what Adam and Christ did? Romans 5:15

The reason that what Adam and Christ did affected "the many" (i.e., the human race) is that all humanity was in these two men - in Adam by creation and in Christ by the Incarnation.

16. What was the result on mankind of Adam's sin and Christ's obedience? Romans 5:18

(Adam's sin):

(Christ's obedience):

It would be impossible for these two facts to have taken place if the Theory of Evolution is correct. That is why anyone who denies the truth about creation as revealed in Scripture, must deny the truth about the two Adams. This is how Satan has attempted to destroy the very foundation of the gospel message.

17. What blessed hope did Job express when faced with death? Job 19:25, 26

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

18. What change to our bodies will take place at the Second Advent? Philippians 3:20, 21

19. How long will Christ take to bring about the above transformation? 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." That is how long it will take Christ to transform our bodies from corruption to incorruption. This hope of the gospel becomes impossible if we deny God's creative power and accept the lies evolution is proclaiming.

20. What hope does Paul give to believers who have lost a loved one? 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

21. What admonition, given by Paul to Timothy, must we heed? 1 Timothy 6:20

The Theory of Evolution may be correctly called “science falsely so called” (KJV). This theory is one of Satan’s most sophisticated means of sidetracking Christians from the path of the gospel truth. Beware of such teachings!

Lesson 14, Supplement - In the Beginning...

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In the Beginning...

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In Lesson 14 we saw that the Bible clearly teaches that God made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them in six literal days (Exodus 20:11). This explanation of the origin of the cosmos is referred to as Biblical creation or Creation Science. At the other end of the spectrum, the Big Bang Theory proposes that billions of years ago, the whole universe was contained within a volume the size of an atomic nucleus. Upon expanding, particles formed, dispersed, and have continuously evolved into the present state of the universe that we now know. Evolutionists believe this happened by chance, whereas theistic evolutionists believe God "created" the universe (including living beings) through this process.

Adherents of each camp generally agree on the facts related to scientific discoveries. Where disagreements arise is in the interpretation of the facts. Let's take a look now at a discussion between Ken (a Biblical creationist) and Charles (an evolutionist). Listen carefully as they speak in somewhat technical, yet

understandable terms.

The Discussion

Charles Ken

Ken, I just can't fathom that you believe that some "God" created the earth in six literal days, only a few thousand years ago!

Charles, why do you insist on fighting God? The foolishness of God is wiser than men (1 Corinthians 1:25)! According to Exodus 20:11, God created the world in 6 days. And the genealogies of Genesis and 1 Chronicles reflect an earth that is only a few thousand years old.

I've heard it all now! And it is always tied to some Bible verse(s). I wish you would leave that world of Bible make-believe and join the real world.

Charles, was anyone there to witness the Big Bang or when some onecelled organism eventually emerged from some swampy muck as an amphibian? If not, then what we both believe becomes an issue of faith, either way.

Of course, nobody was there, but scientists have long since proven that the earth is several billion years old. I don't have to have faith in anything, unless you want

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to include science.

How do you suppose that the earth is several billion years old?

The earth was in a molten state and then cooled, crystallized, and hardened over millions of years. Later progressions of life could not begin until this process was complete.

How do you know that this process occurred over millions or billions of years?

Simple! Geologists study rocks that contain samples of radioactive elements all the time. All that scientists need to do is apply some radiometric dating method to measure the percentage of (1) end-state elements to (2) parent elements in the rock. Let me give you an analogy. Suppose a faucet is dripping into a bucket. Any chemist could determine the volume of each drop of water and the frequency of the dripping. With some simple mathematics, it is easy to calculate how long it took to accumulate any given amount of water in the bucket.

The same is true for radiometric dating of rocks. For example, volcanic rocks are commonly aged using the potassium-argon (K-Ar) method. Radioactive potassium, present in the volcanic rocks when they hardened, eventually decays into the gas argon. Over time, the argon accumulates in the rock, since it can't escape. The older the rock, the less potassium and the more argon. Since the decay rate of potassium is constant, the same simple mathematics can be used to calculate when the volcanic rock formed. Radiometric dating of certain rocks in the billions of years has been performed in reputable, certified labs. It is but a tribute to our collective, ever-evolving brain trust.

But even if we know present decay rates, which I agree are scientific fact, that doesn't tell us anything about how old the rocks are unless the rate of potassium decay has been perfectly constant throughout history. How do you know that the decay rates have been constant since time began?

Ken, your questions are quite rudimentary. This is grounded upon the wellestablished Uniformitarian Principle. It's the glue that binds all evolutionary truths together. We can look to natural laws to explain everything, without needing any "miracles of God" that your understanding requires. This is taught in university physics courses from New York to New Zealand.

What if, in your analogy, someone turned the faucet on for some period of time, and then returned the flow of water to the same, steady

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dripping you once had?

Theoretically, that would present a problem in establishing a dependable age for the rocks, but that would violate the Uniformitarian Principle.

If I showed you that things were not always the same in the distant past as we now know them, would you consider abandoning your allegiance to the Uniformitarian Principle?

I'm an open-minded guy. I would have to consider the evidence, but good luck trying to crack that impenetrable fortress.

(Praying: Thank you Lord, I have been waiting for this chance.)

Charles, are you familiar with the testing of recent lava flows from Mt. Ngauruhoe in New Zealand?

No.

Eleven samples were collected from 5 lava flows, which date as far back as 1949. The samples were sent to a respected commercial laboratory to date the rocks, but the dates were not given to the lab. Do you know how old the lab calculated the rocks to be?

How old?

Some of the samples were given an age of less than .27 million years old, but seven of the samples were deemed to be one million years old or more. One sample derived from a 1954 lava flow was shown to be 3.5 million years old. And all these rocks formed since 1949!

That is interesting. But I suppose that there might have been some level of argon already present in the rocks when the lava cooled. Thus, the lab technicians would be unable to differentiate between the "normal" argon and the argon derived from the potassium decay. This would skew the results and make them believe that the rocks were older than they really are. I suppose that could happen, but you'll have to do better than that. That just shows that they need to work out some bugs in the mechanics of potassium-argon dating.

Charles, it's not an issue of mechanics, but rather of assumptions used in the testing. Well, since that didn't convince you, let me give you another example. Since we're talking about rocks, let's turn our attention to the earth's foundation rocks. Have you ever heard of primordial granites?

Sure, they are the original or foundation rocks of the earth.

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Do you know how they were formed?

I thought I already told you a few minutes ago that the earth was in a molten state and then cooled, crystallized, and hardened over millions of years. Are you trying to persuade me by being repetitive?

No, but perhaps a discussion of polonium will shed some light. Are you familiar with polonium?

Wow! That came totally out of left field! But to answer your question, of course.

Polonium: the 84th element listed in the Periodic Table of the Elements, right after #83, Bismuth, and right before #85, Astatine.

Great! But you didn't mention where polonium comes from.

Well, of course, polonium exists in nature only as part of the uranium decay chain. I don't remember all the other elements that uranium decays into during its decay process, but I'm sure polonium is one of them. One polonium isotope lasts for only a few fleeting moments before it decays into another element, and I think the end product is lead.

Very good! According to the evolutionary framework, polonium is supposed to exist in nature only as part of the uranium-238 (and actually, also, the thorium-232) decay chains. Since you mentioned uranium, I'll focus on that decay chain.

Now here's my $64 question: What if I told you that evidence has been found of polonium independent of uranium decay?

I'd have to see it to believe it, but what does all this have to do with attempting to tear down the Uniformitarian Principle or the fact that the earth is billions of years old?

You'll see! What you have been referring to is secondary polonium, but you have not mentioned primordial polonium, which has no parent uranium.

Like I said, I'll have to see it to believe it.

That's fair. Let me talk about it first and then I'll refer you to the hard evidence.

Amazing research has been conducted on over 100,000 halos (microspheres of coloration produced by the radioactive decay of primordial polonium), which were taken from basement granites from different continents. Each time the halos were examined, the researchers found abundant evidence of the polonium decay, but no evidence of the decay of "earlier elements" in the uranium decay chain. No evidence of uranium-238, uranium-234, thorium-230 (not to be confused with thorium-232), radium-226, or radon-222! In other words, this was not secondary polonium that originated from radioactivity derived from uranium, but primordial polonium, now extinct, that came into existence some other way!

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I suppose it's possible that polonium could exist another way, but you're not shaking my evolutionary foundation with this tiny mystery.

I'm not done yet. You have stated twice that the earth was in a molten state and then cooled, crystallized, and hardened over millions of years, but you have also stated that a certain polonium isotope lasts for how long?

Only a few fleeting moments.

So then radioactivity produced by this polonium isotope would have decayed away long before the magma cooled and crystallized, but it's there in the granites!

Now it's my turn to use an analogy. A speck of primordial polonium in molten rock can be compared with an Alka-Seltzer dropped into a glass of water. The beginning of effervescence is equated to the moment that polonium atoms began to emit radioactive particles. In molten rock, the traces of those radioactive particles would disappear as quickly as the Alka-Seltzer bubbles in water. But if the water were instantly frozen, the bubbles would be preserved. Just as the frozen bubbles would be clear evidence of quick-freezing of water, so are polonium halos undeniable evidence that many rapidly "effervescing" specks of created polonium interacted with a sea of primordial matter which was directly "frozen" as solid granite. These polonium halos could have formed only if specks of primordial polonium had been instantly encased in solid rock. But instant formation, or crystallization, of the granites completely disproves the Uniformitarian Principle, which predicted that granites had to form by slow cooling over long ages. That's why these polonium halos simply should not be there according to evolutionary theory.

I have never heard about this in any science class. Is this something that was done in some makeshift, mom n' pop home laboratory?

On the contrary, this work required the use of expensive, highly specialized equipment. Much of the work was performed at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. And yes, abundant documentation has been present in leading scientific journals such as Science, Nature, Geophysical Research Letters, and Annual Reviews of Nuclear Science. And for about a third of a century, attempts to contradict this "tiny mystery" have been meager. If this monumental discovery could be refuted, however, there would be volumes of materials doing so, for it is a major threat to the evolutionary framework!

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You haven't heard about the polonium halos in granites, because it doesn't fit the evolutionary framework. So much for open scientific forums, where all evidence is given equal weight in arriving at a conclusion!

Charles, this is another example of how God's "David" is continuing to slay the proverbial "Goliath" throughout history. Simply put, polonium radiohalos and the Uniformitarian Principle cannot both exist in the same universe. It is rock-solid evidence that billions of years have collapsed to almost nothing.

Let's "evolve" your own words that "the Uniformitarian Principle is the glue that binds all evolutionary truths together," to their logical conclusion: The pieces of evolution have indeed become unglued, disintegrating evolution. The only plausible explanation remaining: God purposely left His fingerprints of creation in the rocks when He made them, in the form of polonium radiohalos.

Well what about all the other scientific evidence for evolution?

Charles, you have heard the "evidence" for evolution all your life, but you have not heard the arguments and evidences for the creation belief system. I think you will be amazed when you discover the superabundance of present-day, observable evidence that supports a recent creation, whether it deals with coal formation, dinosaurs, natural selection, mutations, different "races" of people, the origin of languages, cloning, and much, much more. Whether it's a 100 foot canyon that was formed in one day by one mud flow as the result of the Mount St. Helens eruption, or a fish fossilized so quickly that it didn't even finish eating its lunch, you will see a fresh new perspective, which is actually the most ancient perspective of all.

I think you will be amazed with the evidence, and that you will concur that the model for a recent creation far outweighs the belief system for evolution. At the end of the exercise, only you will decide which belief system has the weight of evidence on its side, and which makes the most sense.

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That's fair. Where do I go from here?

Since you're such a "tekkie", you would be fascinated with the article written by Robert V. Gentry in 1998 entitled, "Fingerprints of Creation", [Creation ex nihilo Technical Journal, Vol 12 (No 3), 287]. On the lighter side, you can start by checking out the following websites, book, video, and magazine:

(Bibliography) The polonium radiohalos discussion was derived from:

◊ (Book) Creation's Tiny Mystery: Dr. Robert V. Gentry, (Knoxville, TN: Earth Science Associates, 1992);

◊ (Website) www.halos.com; and

◊ (Video) Fingerprints of Creation, Mike Lee Beesley, Dr. Robert V. Gentry, Steven Mosley, (Alpha Productions, 1994).

Dating of volcanic rocks using the K-Ar method was derived from:

◊ (Magazine) Creation ex nihilo, 22(1):18-21, December 1999- February 2000, (Andrew Snelling).

These and many additional resources are available at:

◊ Address: Earth Science Associates; P.O. Box 12067; Knoxville, TN, 37912-0067, USA Website: www.halos.com Phone: 800-467-6380

◊ Address: Answers in Genesis; P.O. Box 6330; Florence, Kentucky 41022, USA Website: www.answersingenesis.org Phone: 800-350-3232 (information) or 800-778-3390 (orders).

My Response to Lesson 14

• The hope of the resurrection becomes a reality only as we believe that God created this world by the word of His mouth, without depending on pre-existing matter. Do you accept this Biblical truth by faith?

Response: _____

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Lesson 15 - Entering God's Rest



The universal sin problem has inflicted mankind with guilt and shame, causing much distress and restlessness. It is for this reason Christ gave this invitation to the discouraged Jews of His day: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). This invitation is offered today to everyone through the gospel message.

Since the Fall that divine rest which Christ offers to sinful humanity has been linked with the Sabbath rest (see Exodus 31:13-16; Deuteronomy 5:15). That is why every feast day of the Old Testament that pointed to the coming Messiah and His work of redemption was designated as a day of sabbath rest. The Sabbath was also included in the Ten Commandments as part of the covenant God made with Israel.

Unfortunately, many Christians limit this Sabbath commandment to only the Old Covenant. However, Scripture does not support such a view. Since the Sabbath has a redemptive significance it is vitally linked with the New Covenant. As we saw in our study of the two covenants, the difference between the Old and the New Covenants is that the former offered salvation on the basis of man's obedience to the law, while the latter offered it based on God's promise to redeem mankind through the obedience of Christ.

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

1. According to the moral law to whom does the Sabbath belong? Exodus 20:10

All through the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, we find the Sabbath belongs to God and not man, not even to the Jews. Yes, it was made for man but it does not belong to him. That is why Israel was instructed by God: “Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep…” (Exodus 31:13).

2. According to the prophet Isaiah, whose holy day is the Sabbath? Isaiah 58:13

3. In whom are we delighting when we keep the Sabbath holy? Isaiah 58:14

Keeping the Sabbath holy neither saves anyone nor contributes toward one’s salvation. This is the mistake Israel made. But it is a sign that we have entered God's rest and are delighting in the salvation He gives us in Christ.

4. Why did God rest on the seventh day of creation and sanctify it? Genesis 1:31; 2:1-3

There are two reasons why God rested on the seventh day of creation. The first was because “everything that He had made… was very good,” that is, perfect. (Genesis 1:31). The second was because “the heavens and the earth…were finished” (Genesis 2:1). The Sabbath was therefore initially set aside (sanctified) as a memorial of God’s perfect and finished work of creation.

5. For whom did Jesus say the Sabbath was made? Mark 2:27

Please note, Jesus did not say that the Sabbath was made for the Jews but rather “for man,” that is, mankind. It was at creation that the Sabbath was set aside (sanctified) for man. It was given a universal application from the day mankind was created in Adam.

6. On which day of the week were Adam and Eve created? Genesis 1:27, 31

Adam and Eve were created at the end of the sixth day. This means that God's Sabbath was really their first whole day. Therefore, while the Sabbath is God's seventh day it is mankind’s

first day. Consequently, when we look at the Sabbath from God's point of view, He worked for six days and rested on the seventh. But when we consider the Sabbath from man's point of view, we begin by resting on God's Sabbath and then work the other six days. This order becomes significant when we consider the Sabbath in the light of redemption.

7. What did God give mankind after He created us in Adam? Genesis 1:28

God created man to have dominion over all of creation even though our first parents did not contribute to it. The Sabbath was therefore to be a covenant sign that man was always to be Goddependent. When we live independently of God, we are breaking the Sabbath covenant.

Who needs God, anyway?

8. How was Adam to make a living after he sinned? Genesis 3:19

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

9. According to the apostle John, who actually created our world? John 1:3

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

10. What was the Word made in order to save fallen mankind? John 1:14

At the Incarnation Jesus, the one who created this world, became one of us in order to be the Savior of mankind. By His perfect life and sacrificial death He redeemed the human race and restored the Sabbath rest.

11. Why did God command the Jews of the Exodus to keep His Sabbath? Deuteronomy 5:15

According to 1 Corinthians 10:1-11, the Exodus is a type of salvation from our bondage to sin. By commanding the Jews of the Exodus to keep His Sabbath, God gave the Sabbath a redemptive significance. This is how we must consider the Sabbath under the New Covenant.

12. Why did many of the Jews delivered from Egypt not enter Canaan? Hebrews 3:19

Unbelief is deliberately turning one's back on God. Sad to say, in spite of all the miraculous evidence God gave the Jews of the Exodus, the majority of the Jews who left Egypt turned their backs on God in unbelief. Their history is recorded as a warning to us (see 1 Corinthians 10:11).

13. With what is God's rest linked in the book of Hebrews? Hebrews 4:1, 2

Entering God's rest is linked with believing the gospel. This is because Jesus, who is Lord of the Sabbath, is also the source of our redemption. As Adam and Eve entered God's rest at creation, so also we must by faith enter the gospel rest obtained for us in Christ's perfect redemption.

14. To what is this gospel rest compared? Hebrews 4:4

Just as Jesus created a perfect and finished world by the end of the sixth day and rested on the seventh, likewise, He finished our redemption on the sixth day (Friday) and rested in the tomb on the Sabbath (Saturday). Thus, the Sabbath rest was restored through the gospel and given a redemptive significance.

15. According to the Book of Hebrews, what still remains for God's people? Hebrews 4:9

The Greek word "rest" in this text is "Sabbatismos," a keeping of the Sabbath. The epistle to the Hebrews was written to first century Jews. Therefore, the phrase "the people of God" refers to the Jewish nation. Although these Jews were keeping the seventhday Sabbath, in God's eyes this was meaningless as long as they rejected Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath.

16. What should we cease from when we enter God's rest? Hebrews 4:10

When we by faith enter God's rest and depend entirely on Christ's perfect and finished redemption for our salvation, we will cease trying to add our own works of the law toward that salvation (see Galatians 5:4). The keeping of the Sabbath as a day of rest is to remind us that righteousness is by faith alone.

17. What did Jesus cry out on the cross just before He died? John 19:30

When the crucified Jesus cried out "It is finished", He was proclaiming to the world that His saving mission had at last been completed. This took place at the end of the sixth day (Friday). The next day, the Sabbath, He rested in the tomb from all His work, just as He did at the end of creation week.

18. What day of the week will be kept in the earth made new? Isaiah 66:22, 23

The Sabbath was given to man before the Fall. It was a sign that man would be God-dependent. The Sabbath still testifies to the fact that God is our Creator. However, since the Fall, the Sabbath has a redemptive significance (see Question 11).

In the new earth, man will always be God-dependent. Entering God's rest means entering into what God has done for us.

19. Why did God command the Jews of the Exodus to keep His Sabbath? Exodus 31:13

After the Fall, the Sabbath was given a redemptive significance. It was made a covenant sign that God would step into our shoes in the person of Christ and make us holy and blameless in Him (see Ephesians 1:4). Therefore, all who enter God's rest, of which the Sabbath is a sign (not as a means of salvation but as their confession of faith in Christ), are guaranteed the salvation which Christ has obtained for everyone at the cross (see Hebrews 10:14).

My Response to Lesson 15

• The seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) belongs to God. It represents His rest from a perfect and complete work of creation, redemption, and soon to be realized restoration. Is it your desire to keep God's Sabbath as a confession of faith that you have entered His rest?

Response: _____

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Lesson 16 - Christian Stewardship



Scripture tells us that all who do not belong to God through faith in Christ are “under the sway of the wicked one” (i.e., Satan - see 1 John 5:19). It is for this reason that Jesus referred to Satan as the “prince of this world” on more than one occasion (see John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11).

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

Therefore, as Christians we are God's stewards, entrusted by Him with time and opportunities, abilities and possessions, and the blessings of the earth and its resources. We acknowledge God's ownership of all that we are and have by faithful service to Him and our fellowmen, and by returning tithes and giving offerings for the proclamation of His gospel and the support and growth of His church, the body of Christ.

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

1. To whom does this earth and all that it contains belong? Psalm 24:1

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2. Who did God create to have dominion over this entire earth? Genesis 1:26

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3. But who claimed this dominion when Jesus was on this earth? Luke 4:5, 6

In the beginning God created mankind to have dominion of this world. But when Adam and Eve sinned, Satan usurped this dominion and became the prince of this world. Therefore, apart from the redeeming grace of Christ, humanity is a slave to Satan. This is mankind's predicament.

4. What did it cost Christ to redeem the human race from Satan's hands? 1 Peter 1:18, 19

The word "blood" in the Bible represents life, and shed blood is life laid down in death (see Leviticus 17:11). This is the infinite price Christ paid to redeem us.

5. What happened to Satan as a result of Christ's death on the cross? John 12:31

The word "Now" is referring to the cross (see John 12:32, 33). At the cross Christ laid down His life in death and paid the infinite price for our sins. Therefore, mankind legally belongs to Christ and when we by faith accept Him as our Savior we also recognize Him as our Lord and Master.

6. Why should Christians glorify God in body and spirit? 1 Corinthians 6:20

At the cross Christ reclaimed the human race as His own, that dominion which Adam had surrendered to Satan at the Fall. As Christians we acknowledge this fact and demonstrate it by our total service to God.

7. How are Christians to acknowledge God's ownership? 1 Corinthians 10:31

Human existence can be divided into four basic areas, each a gift from God. He gave us a body that is capable of doing things, plus abilities, time, and material possessions. As faithful stewards we should serve God in all four areas.

8. What does God require of believers as His stewards? 1 Corinthians 4:2

A steward is a person entrusted with managing the estate of another. Christian stewardship means being responsible for everything entrusted to the believer by God - life, physical being, time, talents, and possessions.

9. As Christ's ambassadors what is our main responsibility? 2 Corinthians 5:20

As God's stewards we are ambassadors for Christ, and our main responsibility is to witness His saving grace to our fellowman. This means sharing with others the good news of the gospel (see 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19).

10. To whom are we to minister the gifts God has given us? 1 Peter 4:10

11. What are we to avoid as God's faithful stewards? 1 Timothy 6:20

As God's faithful stewards we are to avoid any controversy that creates doubts about God or what He has revealed in His Word. By faith we believe the Bible even though it may disagree with our rationale or the opinions of science.

12. What is the "root of all kinds of evil," that we must avoid as faithful stewards? 1 Timothy 6:10

Money is the ingredient that runs this world. As citizens of heaven but still living in the world, it is not a sin to possess money or even be rich. However, we must avoid making money our god. Like the apostle Paul we must learn to be content in whatever condition we find ourselves (read Philippians 4:11-13).

13. What are we guilty of when we are not faithful in tithes and offerings? Malachi 3:8

The tithe is a tenth of all that we earn, and offerings are what we give voluntarily for the cause of God. Failure in these matters is evidence of weak faith. When the Jews failed to pay tithes and offerings, this omission was an indication that they had turned their backs on God (read Malachi 3:6, 7).

14. Who are the two masters we cannot serve at the same time? Matthew 6:24

Money (riches or wealth) is the god of this world. Therefore, one cannot make money one's god and at the same time be loyal to Christ. Being a Christian means we become totally Goddependent and make Him our first priority.

15. On whom must we Christians totally depend for our every need? Matthew 6:33

Please read Matthew 6:25-34. Here Jesus is teaching His followers that when we become Christians we must place ourselves entirely in the hands of God for our support. This does not mean we must not work for our living but that our ultimate confidence for survival is in God who is able to supply all our needs.

16. As stewards what should we be doing with our God-given talents? Luke 19:13

To “occupy” or “do business” means to put our talents to work for the Lord. This is what God expects from faithful stewards.

17. Since we Christians belong to God, how should we live? Romans 14:8

As Christians we must consider everything we are and have as God's - our bodies, our money, our time, and all our God-given abilities. As faithful stewards we join Paul in declaring, “For me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21).

18. What attitude did the first believers have regarding their possessions? Acts 4:32

The idea that all we possess belongs to God is not easy for our sinful natures to accept. It is only as we experience the full power of the gospel that we can manifest the self-emptying love of God as the early Christians did.

19. How much did Jesus say the poor widow gave to God’s cause? Mark 12:41-44

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

20. What six things did Paul advise Timothy to pursue to avoid greed? 1 Timothy 6:11

21. What is the greatest battle we Christians face in this world? 1 Timothy 6:12

Because the love of money is the great temptation we all face, Satan takes advantage of this to destroy our confidence in Christ.

Unquestioning faith in God is therefore the tough battle we must all fight. Faithfulness in stewardship helps us tremendously to fight this good fight of faith.

22. What warning does the writer of Hebrews give to his readers? Hebrews 3:12

To say good-bye to your faith in Christ is to say good-bye to your salvation in Christ (see Hebrews 10:35-39). Faithfulness in stewardship is outward evidence that we are walking by faith alone. Here is what Christ will say to all faithful stewards: “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord” (Matthew 25:21). May this be true of you in all things.

Notes

My Response to Lesson 16

• As Christians, all that we have and all that we are belong to God. He has made us His stewards on earth, entrusting us with time, abilities, and possessions. Is it your purpose to be a faithful steward?

Response: _____

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Lesson 17 - The State of the Dead



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

The common belief is that the soul of the righteous goes to enjoy the bliss of heaven while that of the wicked goes to hell to burn forever. But is this what the Bible teaches? According to the most favorite text of Scripture, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish (die) but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

This eternal or everlasting life is God's supreme gift to mankind. Many pagan religions and especially Greek mythology teach that the soul of man is immortal. Unfortunately, this idea of an immortal soul was borrowed from the Greeks by the early Church Fathers and made a part of Christianity. However, it may surprise you that nowhere in the Bible is this idea found.

What then does the Bible teach about the soul and the state of man in death? Further, if man does not have an immortal soul where does one go after death? This lesson will answer these important questions.

1. What did man become after God breathed into him the breath of life? Genesis 2:7

The Hebrew word for “soul” (KJV) or “being” (NKJV) in this verse is nephesh. The primary meaning of the word nephesh is “the life principle.” That is why this same word is used to define the life of man as

well as of animals. For example, in Genesis 1:24 nephesh is translated "creature" to refer to animals. And nephesh is translated as "life," "lives" ("lifeblood" - NKJV) and again "life" in Genesis 9:4, 5.

2. What warning did God give Adam about eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Genesis 2:17

The word "die" means to say good-bye to life. The life or soul that God created in Adam was not naturally, but conditionally, immortal. As long as our first parents obeyed God, they were given the privilege to live forever. But the moment they sinned, their life came under the sentence of death.

3. Where did the idea of an immortal life or soul first come from? Genesis 3:4

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

4. What is (1) the wages of sin, and (2) God's gift to mankind in Christ? Romans 6:23

Please notice that "the wages of sin" is the opposite of "the gift of God." The former is good-bye to life forever while the latter is eternal life.

5. Who only has natural immortality? 1 Timothy 6:12-16

The "Who" is referring to Christ, the Son of God. Only God has natural immortality. But because God "so loved the world," He offers mankind the gift of immortality through His Son Jesus Christ.

6. What two things did Christ accomplish in His death and resurrection? 2 Timothy 1:10

7. What happens when we believe in God's Son, Jesus Christ? John 5:24

8. In whom only does a believer have eternal life? 1 John 5:11, 12

When we by faith receive Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, the gift of eternal life becomes ours. Apart from Christ, the only life we have is the mortal life we inherited from Adam. Because of sin, this life is condemned to eternal death.

9. For whom did God prepare the everlasting fire? Matthew 25:41

According to the clear teachings of the Bible, the word "everlasting fire" does not mean that the fire itself is everlasting but rather its effect is eternal. This fire is prepared only for the devil and his angels. By rejecting the gift of life in Christ, the lost have chosen to be eternally destroyed with Satan and his angels.

10. What example does Scripture give of this eternal or everlasting fire? Jude 7

Today Sodom and Gomorrah lie in ashes. The destruction of these two wicked cites by eternal fire has been recorded as a warning to mankind that all who turn their backs on God's gift of life in Christ will experience the same fate.

11. What happens to the soul that sins? Ezekiel 18:20

Here is a clear statement of Scripture, that if a soul sins, it will die. By the word "soul," the Bible means the total person. Then, the wages of sin is death or good-bye to life of the total person.

12. When a person dies, is he or she conscious of anything? Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6

In death all our thoughts and feelings end. The Bible is absolutely clear that a dead person is totally unconscious and is incapable of communicating with the living. Any other manifestation is from the devil.

13. What is accomplished when a person's faith in Christ is restored? James 5:19, 20

The death James is talking about is the eternal death that is the wages of sin. Again, the only hope of eternal life for anyone to experience is through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from Him we must all face eternal death.

14. When will the believers experience immortality? 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

It is only at the Second Coming of Christ that believers will experience immortality as a tangible reality. This is the blessed hope of all believers.

15. How did Christ describe the death of Lazarus to His disciples? John 11:11-14

Jesus described the death of Lazarus as a sleep. The Bible describes this as the first death since everyone experiences this death. It is only at the Second Advent of Christ that believers will experience the joy of eternal life.

16. What claim did Jesus make to Martha, the sister of Lazarus? John 11:25

The blessed hope of a Christian is not realized at death but at the resurrection. Eternal life will only be experienced at the Second Coming of Christ.

17. What hope does the Bible give to those who have died in Christ? 1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14

Just as Jesus died, was buried, and rose again, so also will be the experience of all who have died in Christ. That is why as Christians we do not mourn over our dead, as unbelievers do who have no hope of the resurrection.

18. What is implied when a person denies the hope of the resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:16

19. How does Paul describe the resurrection of Christ? 1 Corinthians 15:20

20. When will the resurrection of believers take place? 1 Corinthians 15:23

There were some in Corinth who did not believe in the resurrection (see 1 Corinthians 15:12). But Paul makes it very clear, in 1 Corinthians 15:13-19, that if we deny the resurrection of believers, we have to deny the resurrection of Christ. According to this passage, the hope of believers is not going to heaven at death but going at the resurrection which will take place at the Second Coming of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 15:51-54).

21. When did Jesus promise His disciples He would take them to heaven? John 14:3

Jesus promised to take His followers to heaven at His Second Coming, not at the time of death. This is the blessed hope (see Titus 2:11-13).

22. On whom does the second death have no power? Revelation 20:6

The Bible speaks of two resurrections, just as it does of two deaths. The first death is referred to as a sleep because it will be followed by a resurrection. The second death is the wages of sin, good-bye to life forever. This death the believers, who will rise first, will not experience (see John 5:28, 29).

23. Who will experience the second death? Revelation 20:14, 15

Those who have rejected the gift of salvation in Christ have refused to have their names recorded in the Book of Life. Consequently, they will have to join Satan and his angels in the lake of fire that will completely destroy the wicked (see Matthew 25:41-46). May this never become true of you.

Notes

My Response to Lesson 17

• According to Scripture, only God has immortality. But through the cross, He offers immortality to mankind. Believers will experience this gift at the Second Coming of Christ. Do you believe this?

Response: _____

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Lesson 18 - Spiritual Gifts



In Lesson 8, we discovered that the immediate outcome of being justified by faith is the new birth experience. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in a believer, He also bestows upon that believer one or more spiritual gifts. These gifts correspond to the function the Holy Spirit has chosen for the believer in the body of Christ, the church. In this study, we will discover that the purpose of these gifts is not for the benefit of the individual believer but of the church as a whole.

The spiritual gift or gifts each of us receives play a very important part in the life and mission of the church. It is only as each believer makes use of these gifts that the church can fully function as the body of Christ, just as the various parts of our physical body are essential to our human existence. That is why we must take these gifts seriously if the church is not to be handicapped.

These spiritual gifts may be divided into two categories. The first category of gifts such as apostles, prophecy, pastors, and teachers are for the edification or building up of the church as a whole. The second category of gifts such as miracles, healing, and tongues are supernatural signs and wonders to witness the power of the gospel (see Acts 4:33; 5:12).

When it comes to spiritual gifts, no one is excluded. However, these gifts must not be equated with the natural talents, with which we are born, even though these natural gifts are used by the Holy Spirit. Rather, spiritual gifts derive from divine grace that is bestowed upon believers so that the church may grow up into Christ and witness the power of the gospel.

1. When Christ ascended to heaven, what did He bestow upon the church? Ephesians 4:7, 8

Since the church is to represent Christ on earth, one of the first things Jesus bestowed on the believers after He returned to heaven was gifts of grace known as spiritual gifts.

2. Who is the source of these spiritual gifts? 1 Corinthians 12:4

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

3. For whose benefit are these gifts bestowed on individual believers? 1 Corinthians 12:7

It is important that every believer understands the purpose of spiritual gifts. They are not for the believer's personal benefit but for the common good of the church. When used appropriately, these gifts produce a healthy church.

4. Who decides what gift or gifts an individual believer is to receive? 1 Corinthians 12:11

It is neither the believer nor the church that determines which gift or gifts each believer is to receive. That work is the prerogative of the Holy Spirit. These gifts are supernatural abilities and may have nothing to do with our natural talents.

5. In describing spiritual gifts, with what does Paul compare the church? 1 Corinthians 12:12

Like the human body, the church is also made up of many members but constitutes one body, the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27). That is why the greatest evidence the church can give to the world of the power of the gospel is the model of a church acting as a single body, perfectly united in love (see John 13:34, 35).

6. As Christians what is our relationship to each other? Romans 12:5

Only the gospel of Christ can unite believers of various cultures and backgrounds into one united body. Such a witness is the most powerful evidence to the world that the gospel is the power of God to save us from our self-centeredness and unite men and women in love.

7. As to the gift(s) of the Spirit, what is the believer's responsibility? Romans 12:6-8

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

8. According to Paul what are the three most important gifts of the Spirit? 1 Corinthians 12:28

Of the three most important gifts, the gift of being an apostle was originally bestowed upon the 11 disciples of Christ plus Paul. These men were chosen by God to lay the foundation of the church by establishing the truth as it is in Christ (see Ephesians 2:19, 20). However, since the word "apostle" means "sent one," it could be applied to missionaries - those who are gifted in mission service.

9. Apart from the above three, what other gifts does Paul mention? 1 Corinthians 12:28

While the first three gifts are important for the spiritual growth of the church, the other five gifts are important for the mission of the church.

10. What are the purposes of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit? Ephesians 4:11, 12

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

11. How long are the gifts of the Holy Spirit to continue in the church? Ephesians 4:13

All the gifts of the Holy Spirit are to continue as long as time lasts, until the church fully reflects Jesus Christ.

12. Why is the prophetic gift important to the church? 1 Corinthians 14:4

Today much emphasis is given to the gift of tongues with very little mention of the gift of prophecy. Yet Paul places great importance on the gift of prophecy because it is this gift that builds up the church of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 14:3).

13. To whose benefit are these two spiritual gifts directed? 1 Corinthians 14:22

(Tongues):

(Prophecy):

The purpose of the gift of tongues is not for the benefit of the believers themselves, as some use it today, but rather to give evidence to the unbelievers that the believer who manifests this gift is controlled by a supernatural power. The prophetic gift is for the benefit of the church, to edify and exhort believers in their Christian walk (see 1 Corinthians 14:3).

14. What counsel does Paul give the church regarding prophecy? 1 Thessalonians 5:20

The prophetic gift is important and must not be despised by the church. However, the Bible warns us of false prophets and therefore the apostle Paul cautions believers to test the gift before accepting it (see 1 Thessalonians 5:21). The measuring stick for all truth is the Bible alone. All other "truths" must be verified by the words of Scripture.

15. What warning does John give regarding the prophetic gift? 1 John 4:1

As aforementioned, the message given by those who claim to have the prophetic gift must be tested by the Word of God and the truth as it is in Christ. This is especially true for us who are living in these last days when Satan will use many deceptive ways to sidetrack God's people from the gospel truth.

16. What counsel does the apostle John give regarding false prophets? 1 John 4:2, 3

Since human nature is sinful, some early Greek Christians (the Gnostics) denied the real humanity of Christ (who was born of a woman, born under the law - Galatians 4:4). The apostle John identified such persons as being antichrist (see 1 John 4:3). In the same way, anyone whose message contradicts the clear teachings of Scripture must be rejected as a false prophet.

17. What did Jesus say that false christs and false prophets of the last days would do? Matthew 24:24

As we approach the end of the world, false christs and false prophets will appear and seek to deceive even the maturest believer. That is why we must be grounded in the Word of God and be on our guard.

18. With what must all messages we hear and read agree? Isaiah 8:20

19. How are we to know which prophetic predictions are from the Lord? Jeremiah 28:9

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

20. Who is behind the teachings of all true prophecy? 2 Peter 1:21

One way you can distinguish true prophets from false ones is to ask and answer the following four questions: 1) Do their teachings agree with Scripture? 2) Do all their predictions come true? 3) Do their messages point to Christ rather than to themselves? 4) Do their life-styles agree with their message?

My Response to Lesson 18

• The Holy Spirit has endowed every believer with one or more spiritual gifts. These gifts are for the benefit of the whole church. Is it your sincere desire to use your gift(s) for the glory of Christ?

Response: _____

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Lesson 19 - Christian Lifestyle



The original sin of Adam affected mankind in three ways - spiritually, morally, and physically. When Christ came to be the Savior of the world, He came to redeem humanity from these threefold effects of sin. Therefore, when we by faith receive Christ as our Redeemer we also receive Him as Lord and Master and are to surrender ourselves to His transforming grace in all these three areas.

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

The reason why Christians must take care of their bodies is twofold. In the first place, when believers experience the new birth and are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, they become the temple of God (see 1 Corinthians 3:16). Therefore, as Christians we are to treat our bodies as the house of God. As the apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Corinth, whatever we do must be done to the glory of God (see 1 Corinthians 10:31).

Secondly, as Christians we are ambassadors of Christ, called to witness Him to the world (see 2 Corinthians 5:20). In order that we may fully represent Him, we must not only take care of our bodies so that we may be fit vessels for God’s use, but also represent Him in the way we dress and in our lifestyle.

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

While believers are not under a theocracy in the New Testament, these health principles as well as the dress guidelines are just as valid today as they were in ancient times. In this study we will consider some of the basic health and dress principles recorded in His Word as the fruits of salvation in Christ.

1. How much of the believer does God want to sanctify? 1 Thessalonians 5:23

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

2. How does this total redemption affect our Christian living? 1 Corinthians 10:31

Before our conversion we ate, drank, and dressed as we pleased, often abusing our bodies. But now that we belong to Christ and have become the temple of the Holy Spirit, God wants us to do everything to His glory.

3. As Christians, whom do we belong to and live for? Romans 14:8

Since Jesus redeemed us by His precious blood (see 1 Peter 1:18, 19), we belong to Him - spirit, soul, and body. Out of a heartfelt appreciation for His redeeming grace, all our actions are motivated by this love relationship.

4. Besides our souls, in what does God want us to prosper? 3 John 2

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

5. What promise did God make to the Jews if they obeyed Him? Exodus 15:26

All the health instructions that God gave the Jews of the Exodus were for their own good and not a requirement for salvation. As His children, God wants us Christians to experience the same blessings.

6. What blessings would Israel experience by their obedience to God? Deuteronomy 7:14

Although the ancient Jews made the mistake of turning all the health rules and regulations God gave them into legalistic requirements for salvation, they still experienced physical and mental blessings from obeying them.

7. As Christians, what kind of sacrifice does God want from us? Romans 12:1

8. What must we do daily to experience the transforming power of the gospel? Romans 12:2

The battlefield in the Christian life is the mind. On the one hand, the converted mind - what Paul refers to as the new or inner man (see Ephesians 4:22-24) - wants to do the will of God. On the other hand, the mind of the flesh, our sinful nature, wants to do the very opposite (see Romans 7:25).

9. How are we to gain victory over the sinful desires of the flesh? Galatians 5:16

Only as we surrender our wills to the control of the Spirit can we gain victory over the flesh. This is what it means to "walk in the Spirit." To do this we must constantly keep our minds focused on spiritual things (see Romans 8:4-6).

10. What is another reason why we should eat and drink correctly? Romans 14:21

To be a true Christian means we are dead to self and alive unto the Lord (see Romans 6:10, 11). This affects every phase of our Christian living so that the two guiding principles that motivate all our actions are: (1) I do nothing that affects my relationship to God, and (2) I do nothing that offends or weakens the faith of a fellow believer (see 1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

11. As Christians, what are we to God? 1 Corinthians 3:16

The new birth experience makes believers into temples1 of God. We must ever keep this in mind during our Christian walk.

12. As God's temples, why are we not to defile ourselves? 1 Corinthians 3:17

As temples of God, we are to keep ourselves holy. The reason for this will be answered in the next question.

13. As God's temples, what does He want to do in and through us? 2 Corinthians 6:16

The whole purpose of the Christian life is to glorify our Savior. This is how Paul expressed it: "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). The only way this can be done is to let the life of Christ shine through us. This is what sanctification is all about. That which motivates such behavior is not the fear of punishment, nor the desire for reward, but the love of God that compels us.

1 The temple of God is simply the place where He dwells.

• In the Old Testament, God dwelt with His people in the Sanctuary (see Exodus 25:8);

• When Jesus was on the Earth, He became Immanuel, which means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). He referred to His body as a temple (see John 2:19-21); and

• When we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit, we become the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16). It is in this way that we partake of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). The dynamics of the temple of God in its various forms is discussed in the Lesson 20 Supplement.

14. How does God fulfill the above transformation? Hebrews 8:10

The New Covenant does not do away with the laws of God but puts them into our hearts. Under the Old Covenant the laws of God were a series of rules, do's and don'ts. Under the New Covenant, the same laws become the inner desires of the converted mind (Romans 7:22). This is how God writes His laws in our hearts and minds. This is the transforming grace of the gospel.

15. What was the original diet God gave mankind? Genesis 1:29

Just as the car manufacturers instruct us on the best oils and gas to be used in our cars, so God, our Creator, instructed our first parents as to the best foods to eat - nuts, fruits, grains and vegetables. Today, medical science has confirmed that this is the most healthful diet for human beings. It is in our best interest that we follow it.

16. What warning does the wise man give regarding appetite? Proverbs 23:1-3

Appetite is one of the great weapons Satan uses. He used food to bring about the fall of our first parents. Likewise, it was through tempting Christ to turn stones into bread that Satan tried to cause His downfall. In the same way, Satan uses our appetites to cause us as Christians to stumble. Smoking, drugs, alcohol, and overindulgence in eating are some of the methods he uses to destroy the faith of believers and thus pull us out of Christ.

17. When it comes to the way we dress, what counsel does Peter give? 1 Peter 3:3, 4

The way we dress must reveal the inner beauty of a Christian so that we attract people to Christ and not ourselves. In regard to the way we dress, our priority must be the inward beauty rather than outward adornment.

18. According to Paul's counsel, how should women dress? 1 Timothy 2:9



In this world, people often judge us by the way we live and dress. We must do nothing that will in any way be an offense to the cause of God. This principle applies to members of both genders.

19. Why does the Bible advise believers to avoid alcoholic drinks? Proverbs 23:31, 32

20. Of what must Christians constantly remind themselves? 1 Corinthians 6:19

When we are tempted to indulge in harmful kinds of food and drink and to wear the wrong kinds of clothes we need to remind ourselves that we are the temple of God and we are not our own. Therefore, "...glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:20). This is true Christian living.

21. Is it your desire to care for your body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and do you wish to represent the Savior in your appearance?

My Response to Lesson 19

• When we experience the new birth we become the temple of God, and we must treat our bodies as such. In view of this, is it your purpose that whatever you do or eat, you do it all to the glory of God?

Response: _____

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PART 4 / Eschatology ~ Last Day Events

Lesson 20 - The Sanctuary



During the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt to Canaan, God gave Israel instructions to build a visual aid of the plan of salvation called the sanctuary. This sanctuary model was God's master plan of redemption, demonstrating from beginning to end the total plan of salvation for the human race in Christ.

After the death of the apostles, the leadership of the church fell into the hands of Gentile believers, commonly referred to as the "Church Fathers." These men felt that the sanctuary truth belonged to the Jewish nation and had no relevance to New Testament Christianity. Therefore, the sanctuary doctrine became somewhat obsolete, that is, until the mid-nineteenth century when it was reintroduced to the Christian church.

When examining the New Testament we find that much of the truth it presents about Christ's redeeming work is expressed in sanctuary language. The reason for this is obvious, because the sanctuary is God's visual aid of the total plan of redemption. Through it, God reveals to mankind the various stages of our redemption in Christ - His earthly mission as well as His heavenly ministry. The sanctuary may therefore be described as God's Show and Tell.

God's primary purpose in giving the sanctuary model was to reveal Jesus Christ and His saving grace through symbols. Everything about the sanctuary - its buildings, its furniture, as well as its rituals - points to Christ's earthly mission as the Savior of mankind and His heavenly ministry as the great High Priest of all believers.

Since the sanctuary model reveals the full plan of salvation, from beginning to end, its study becomes meaningful especially to us Christians. Through the sanctuary doctrine, we get a clear picture of the

whole plan of salvation. Welcome, therefore, to an introduction to the sanctuary message. After the study, you are invited to "walk through the sanctuary" in this lesson's supplement.

1. Why did God instruct Moses to build a sanctuary? Exodus 25:8

Sin had separated a holy God from sinful man (Isaiah 59:2). What God was revealing through the sanctuary was the plan of redemption that would bridge that gulf, reconciling God and mankind once again.

2. Who fulfilled the plan of salvation revealed by the sanctuary model? John 1:14

Christ is the reality of the sanctuary message. Everything about the sanctuary pointed to Christ and salvation through Him. That is why David declared, "Your way (of salvation), O God, is in the sanctuary" (Psalm 77:13).

3. What statement did Jesus make to the Jews of His day? John 2:19

The temple of which Jesus spoke was the permanent structure that had replaced the wilderness sanctuary of the Exodus.

4. What did Jesus mean when He made the above statement? John 2:20, 21

5. When did Jesus' disciples discover the true meaning of the temple? John 2:22

Like the Jews, the disciples of Christ had also failed to see the true meaning of the temple, God's visual aid of the plan of salvation in Christ. It was only after His resurrection that they saw the light.

6. What replaced the sacrificial system of the sanctuary? Hebrews 10:5

The whole purpose of the sacrificial system of the sanctuary was to point to Christ crucified. The sacrifice of animals had no saving merit of itself. Thus, God had no pleasure in these rituals (Hebrews 10:6).

7. Why did God prepare a body for Christ? Hebrews 10:7

It was through the human body of Christ that the world was to be redeemed. This was the will of God (see John 3:17). Through His humanity, which represented mankind, Christ obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race. It is for this reason that the humanity of Christ is everything to us.

8. What did the coming of Christ and His earthly mission replace? Hebrews 10:9

The sanctuary and its services were never given by God to be the means of salvation but pointed to Christ as the One who would save mankind. Therefore, Christ replaced the first system with the second. While we no longer practice the rituals of the sanctuary today, the sanctuary model continues to point us to the consummation, the ultimate end of God's plan of salvation in Christ.

9. What sanctuary symbol did John use to point to Christ as the Messiah? John 1:29

10. What sanctuary symbolism did Christ use to describe His mission? John 8:12

11. How did Christ describe Himself in this text? John 6:51

In the holy place of the earthly sanctuary, the two main pieces of furniture were the seven-branch lampstand (candlestick - KJV) and the table of showbread. The lampstand pointed to Christ as the light of the world, while the table of showbread pointed to Christ as the living bread of life.

12. What has God “set forth” Christ to be through faith in His blood? Romans 3:25

The word “propitiation” (NKJV) or the phrase “sacrifice of atonement” (NIV) is translated from the same word used in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, or LXX) for the mercy seat that rested on the top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary. This mercy seat, which represents Christ and Him crucified, is the means by which God can legally forgive our sins.

13. Of what is Christ the end to all who believe in Him? Romans 10:4

The sanctuary pointed to Christ as fulfilling all the demands of the law on behalf of fallen humanity. Therefore, all who receive Him as their personal Savior are looked upon by God as meeting all the requirements of the law for righteousness. This is what bridges the gulf between a holy God and sinful man.

14. Since His resurrection, what is Christ doing in the heavenly sanctuary? Romans 8:34

Even though as Christians we stand justified by faith in Christ, we are still sinners in ourselves and Satan accuses us before God day and night (see Revelation 12:10). As our great High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, Christ is continually interceding for us.

15. To what extent can Christ save those who put their full trust in Him? Hebrews 7:25

In His earthly mission, represented by the eastern square of the sanctuary courtyard, Christ obtained salvation full and complete for the entire human race. The western square reveals Christ's priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Thus, through the sanctuary and its services God has revealed the whole plan of redemption. The supplement to this lesson discusses this in further detail.

Lesson 20, Supplement - Walking Through the Sanctuary

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Walking Through the Sanctuary

The Old Testament sanctuary was God's creative way of communicating the gospel to the Hebrews of the Exodus (Hebrews 4:2). God gave Moses a pattern (Exodus 25:9) for building the sanctuary, and He prescribed ceremonial services that Levitical priests would perform. Everything associated with the sanctuary, from its furniture to its ceremonial services, was given to illustrate God's plan of salvation from beginning to end.

Rightly understood, the ceremonial services of the sanctuary were to prepare God's children to receive their Deliverer, the Messiah. Unfortunately, the symbols and services, in and of themselves, became intrinsically significant to most of the Jews. The truth of the sanctuary was largely forgotten, and when Jesus came to earth as the reality of the sanctuary, His saving mission was either misunderstood or rejected.

Many believe that there is no longer any value in studying God's miniature model plan of salvation, the sanctuary. After all, Christ has come to fulfill the ceremonies associated with the sanctuary, so why should we study about shadows, or figures, when we can look at the "real thing"?

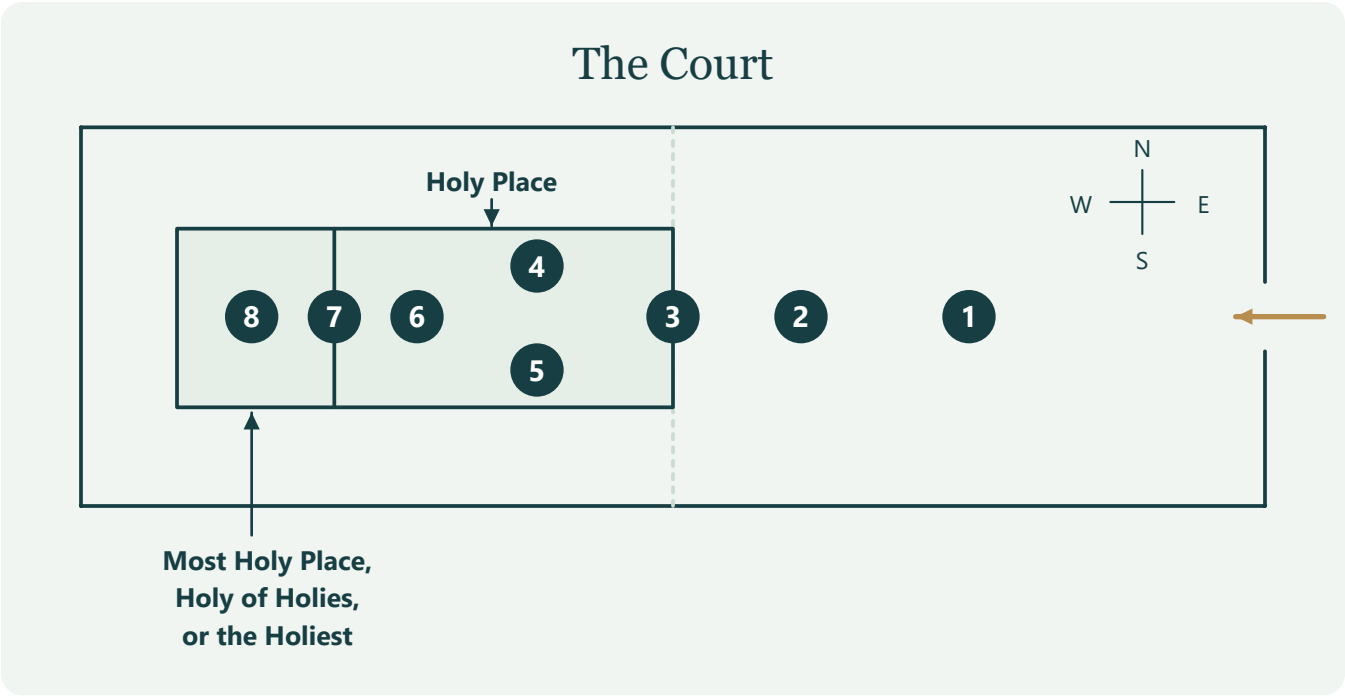
It is true that we ought not to get caught up with ancient articles of furniture, clothing, or ceremonial services. If this study is to be productive, it will only be as we gain insight as to how each important aspect of the earthly sanctuary is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. That said, let's proceed with open minds and a penchant for receiving Biblical gems that illuminate the plan of salvation through the sanctuary model.

Aerial Layout of the Sanctuary

To begin, an aerial diagram of the sanctuary is provided to illustrate the key elements of the sanctuary and its surrounding courtyard. It has been carefully drawn to scale, as the location of certain items is important in establishing the meaning of the symbols. The criss-crossing lines have been superimposed for illustrative purposes only. You'll see why briefly…

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Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary - Psalm 77:13



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Significance of Color Coding

The following color coding distinguishes between the gospel:

• in type (i.e., via the sanctuary model - Hebrews 4:2);

• realized in the humanity of Jesus Christ; and

• applied in the lives of believers.

New Testament quotes of Jesus are not shown in red, but in the color of their respective applications. General explanations are provided in black.

High Level Overview

The earthly temple was the most important place to the literal children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The temple was where God dwelt among sinners (Exodus 25:8); met them through a human priest (Exodus 25:22); revealed Himself to them (Exodus 29:46); and accepted them (Leviticus 1:4).

Jesus Christ, in His humanity, is the true temple of God (not discounting the fact that there is a heavenly sanctuary). In Christ, God dwelt among us (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1, 14); revealed Himself to us (John 14:9); meets us today (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 10:19, 20); and accepts us (Ephesians 1:6). Jesus affirmed this in referring to His body (or humanity) as the temple (John 2:19-21).

Finally, believers subjectively become temples of the Holy Spirit upon receiving Jesus as their Savior personally (1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19). As God's temple, it is our privilege to witness the gospel, or live the life of Christ, through the indwelling Holy Spirit (Galatians 2:20).

This represents a very high level explanation of the sanctuary in type, antitype, and subjective application. We now turn to significant aspects of the sanctuary, relating key articles of furniture and services to their fulfillment in Christ and in the

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lives of believers.

The Courtyard

All activities related to atonement for sin took place within the confines of the court, or courtyard, which was surrounded by a linen wall that was five cubits high (Exodus 27:18). Thus, the wall was about nine feet high, based upon the size of a sanctuary cubit (which was an ordinary cubit and a handbreadth - Ezekiel 43:13)1. The moment anyone entered that courtyard, he was hidden from view.

When Christ assumed humanity (Hebrews 10:5) at the incarnation, He became the reality of the sanctuary message (see Lesson 20, Questions 3-5). Everything that took place regarding mankind's reconcilement to God and His holy law took place within the humanity of Christ. We studied this in Lesson 3, where the in Christ motif was introduced. See especially Lesson 3, Questions 1 and 5-7.

When we enter into Christ by faith, we are clothed with His righteousness (see Lesson 3, Question 17, including related note).

In the Parable of the Wedding Feast, the king sent out his servants "into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests" . (Matthew 22:10). All who wore wedding garments2, which represented the righteousness of Christ, were accepted at the wedding feast. So it is with all who enter into Christ by faith, and who are found to be worthy by His merits in the Pre-Advent Judgment (see Lesson 21, especially Questions 20-22).

1 A cubit was the measure from a man's elbow to his fingertip, approximately 17.5 inches. However, during the time of the Exodus when the wilderness sanctuary was built, it is assumed that the Hebrews, due to their extended stay in Egypt, used the Egyptian cubit. This measured about 20.5 inches. The referenced text indicates that the sanctuary cubit was also larger than the ordinary cubit in Ezekiel's time.

2 Note that the wedding garment represents Christ's righteousness imputed and imparted to believers. The righteousness that qualifies the believer for heaven is the imputed righteousness of Christ, because in that righteousness we stand perfect (Colossians 1:28, 2:10; Hebrews 10:14). In Christ,

we stand perfect in nature, in character, and in relation to the law (see the Lesson 3 Supplement, Items 5 and 8, as well as Romans 10:4).

The evidence that we are actually wearing the garment is the imparted righteousness of Christ, or righteousness of Christ →

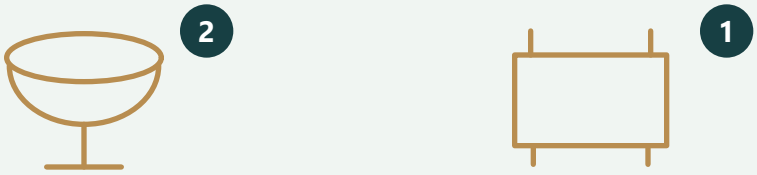
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The court itself was 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide (Exodus



27:9-13). The measurement of the court can be further broken down into two equally-sized parts, consisting of an eastern and a western square.

The most important structure in the eastern square (50 cubits x 50 cubits) was the altar of burnt offering, indicated by its prominent location in the exact center of the square (see 1 in the initial diagram and throughout this Supplement to Lesson 20). The second structure located in the eastern square was the laver (2), which stood between the altar and the western square. There was one entrance (←) into the courtyard, located at the eastern side of the court.



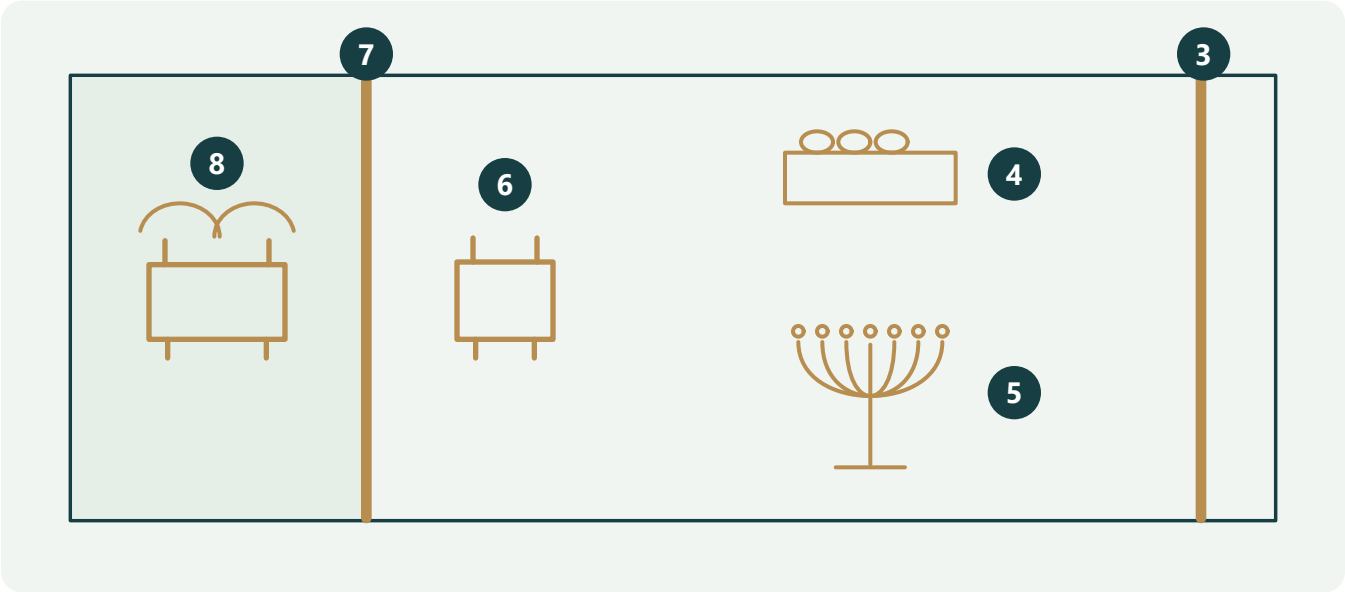
The eastern square represented the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), or Christ's earthly, Savior mission, consisting of His doing and dying (1). All eastern square services pointed to what are now completed, historical facts, accomplished in Christ some 2000 years ago for the entire human race. In this mission, the sentence of condemnation for the human race was changed to a verdict of justification (Romans 5:16, 18). What Christ did was not just a provision. He actually obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12). On Calvary's cross, the whole world was reconciled to God through the death of His son, that is, in Christ (Romans 5:10).

The term "obeying the gospel," or a related expression, is frequently used in the New Testament (e.g., Romans 2:8, 6:17, 10:16; Galatians 5:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 1:22, 4:17). This refers to a believer's acknowledgment and acceptance of his or her history in Christ. When we hear and understand the gospel, we believe the good news that Christ is our righteousness. We accept His righteous life as ours, and His death to sin as ours (Romans 6:4). See further details at 1 and 2.

The western square was also 50 cubits x 50 cubits, and contained the tabernacle with its two compartments, the Holy and Most Holy Places. While there was no physical barrier between the whole of the eastern and western squares of the courtyard, the outer veil of the tabernacle, which was the way into the Holy Place, was located exactly at this dividing longitude (3).

reproduced in us. While these works do not qualify us for heaven, they are visible evidence that we are wearing the imputed righteousness of Christ. This tangible evidence is what proves in the judgment that we have become one with Christ. See Lesson 21, Questions 9-19.

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Whereas common people could enter the eastern square of the court, only the Levitical priests, who were types or figures of Christ, could enter the tabernacle located in the western square. Everything the priests did in the tabernacle was based upon the ceremonial sacrifices and washings that had already occurred in the eastern square. Daily, priests ministered blood (from sacrifices on the Altar of Burnt Offering) before the inner veil, or curtain (7), in the Holy Place which contained the Table of Showbread (4), the Lampstand (5), and the Altar of Incense (6).

Yearly, on the Day of Atonement (Jewish feast day called "Yom Kippur"), an additional ceremony was performed by the High Priest of Israel to remove the final vestige of sin. On that day, only he could

pass through the veil (7), to minister in the Most Holy Place. The sanctuary was cleansed of sin on this day by the ceremony of the two goats - see 8 and Lesson 22.

The western square furnishings and services have their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, our heavenly, High Priest. Since His ascension to heaven, our High Priest is making real in our experience what God has already fulfilled in the earthly mission of His Son, Jesus Christ. See details at 3-8.

Walking Through the Eastern Courtyard

"←" The only entrance into the court was on the eastern side, which was of itself, significant. As people entered the court, they faced the opposite direction from the sun's rising in the east. Thus, worshiping the true God of Israel meant rejecting all pagan gods, including the popular sun god. In the light of the gospel, to which the eastern square of the courtyard pointed, this meant that the believer was rejecting righteousness by works (e.g., offering sacrifices to appease the sun god), and was accepting God's forgiveness through sacrifices that pointed to the then-future Messiah, or Savior.

Justification was obtained for all men in the humanity of Christ (See Lesson 3). Salvation is found in Him only (Acts 4:12). Jesus said, "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved

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(John 10:9)." Therefore, the gate into the eastern square represented entering into Christ, where there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1). For more on the "In Christ" motif, see Lesson 3.

We receive the life of Christ through the Holy Spirit, who convicts us by knocking on the doors of our hearts (Revelation 3:20). Our bodies then become the stage for witnessing what is in our hearts (Proverbs 4:23).

1 - The Altar of Burnt Offering

As previously mentioned, in the very center of the eastern half of the courtyard was its most important structure, the Altar of Burnt Offering. On this altar, sacrifices were made every morning and every evening on behalf of all Israel. In addition, there were individual offerings (e.g., burnt, grain, peace, sin, and trespass offerings - see Leviticus, chapters 1-5), as well as offerings for sabbaths, new moons, and special feasts. While sacrifices ranged from pigeons (Leviticus 5:7) to bulls (Leviticus 16:6), the most prevalent animal that was sacrificed was an unblemished, male lamb of a year old (Exodus 12:5). No matter what the sacrifice, it had to be without defect.

Christ's "Doing" - All of these sacrifices had their fulfillment in only one true and meritorious sacrifice, that of Jesus Christ crucified on the cross of Calvary. Using sanctuary language, John the Baptist referred to Christ as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). In like manner, Peter states that we "were… redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). Elsewhere we are told that despite being tempted in His

humanity, Christ never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). The meaning of the sacrifice without defect is that Jesus lived a perfectly righteous life in obedience to all of God's commandments continually.

In the earthly sanctuary, the sins of the people were symbolically transferred to the animal sacrifices, and then to the sanctuary via the sprinkling of blood by the priests. If it were possible, the people would have literally become one with the animal that was to be offered and they, too, would have died along with the sacrifice. Of course that was impossible. Therefore, the message of becoming one was conveyed through the confession of sin over the sacrifice, whereby sin was ceremonially transferred to the animal.

Christ's "Dying" - The reality of this union, or sin-bearing, took place at the Incarnation, where Jesus was made sin (2 Corinthians 5:21) by bearing the fallen humanity that He came to

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redeem. Thus, while Jesus did not deserve to die, His union with that humanity qualified Him to be our substitute and Savior. We saw in the preceding section entitled, "Christ's 'Doing'," that it was the continual, perfect righteousness wrought out in the body of Christ (our humanity) that constituted the unblemished aspect of the sacrifice. But why, if Jesus did not sin, did He have to die?

Since He had become united with our corporate, fallen life, He was put to death, the just for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18). And unlike the ceremonial service, where the sinner could not be joined, literally, to the sacrifice and thus die, corporate humanity did in fact die in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:14). This became possible only as a result of the miraculous union of divinity and humanity that began at the Incarnation and lasted until the cross, where the world was judged (John 12:31a).

It was not until after God rested on the seventh day (notice it was God's Sabbath, not the Jew's) from His perfect, completed work of redeeming the world in His Son on "Good Friday", that humanity was reunited with Christ and transported to heaven in Him. For this reason, we are told that eternal life is in God's Son (1 John 5:11). This is further discussed at 2. In addition, see explanations 3 and 6 in Lesson 3's Supplement for more on the ethical issues surrounding Christ's death.

New sins are not heaped upon Christ every time a person sins and confesses them. If that were the case, Christ would have had to "offer Himself often" (Hebrews 9:25) and "suffer often since the foundation of the world." Instead, "once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26). This sacrifice refers to the cross of Calvary, where by the one sacrifice of Christ, He has put away sin3. When Hebrews 9:28 states that Christ will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation, it means that when He returns, He will not deal with the sin problem. On the contrary, as verse 28 also states, He appears a second time to those who eagerly wait for him. See further details related to the Second Coming of Christ in Lesson 12.

If it were true that new sins are transferred to Christ every time someone confesses a sin, that would also contradict Hebrews 10:12, which clearly states that after Christ "had offered one

3 Note, however, that a record of sin exists because there is an accuser of the brethren, who accuses day and night (Revelation 12:10). The vindication of God's saints is discussed in Lesson 21. In addition, God's sanctuary must be cleansed to remove all remnants of sin that defile it (see Lesson 22).

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sacrifice for sins forever, (He) sat down at the right hand of God." If new sins had to be transferred to Christ every time someone confessed a sin, it would be too late for us in the 21st Century, because where there is already remission of sins (in that one sacrifice), there is "no longer an offering for sin" (Hebrews 10:17, 18). Since we were not yet born, our sins would not have met the deadline for sin-bearing. On the contrary, by assuming humanity (as the Second Adam - see Lesson 3 Supplement), Christ bore every sin of every individual, repentant or unrepentant, past, present, and future, on the cross.

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Why then are sins confessed? For two main reasons: First, in order for us to receive the imputed righteousness of Christ, we need to acknowledge our utter sinfulness. If we attempt to be justified by our good works and our lawkeeping (even though this is impossible - Romans 3:20), we essentially say that we have no sin, and we deceive ourselves (1 John 1:8). On the contrary, "If we confess our sins (that is our sinfulness as well as transgressions of the law), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). The second reason for confessing our sins is that since we were present in the humanity that Christ assumed (see explanations 3 and 6 in the supplemental material at Lesson 3), we recognize that our sins contributed to Christ's death on the cross. Thus, we confess our sins because of our relationship to Christ under grace.

Confession of our sins within a relationship is altogether different than confession under the law. Israel attempted this latter method and failed. See Question 19 of Lesson 10 and the other questions leading up to that one. If we attempt that method, we too will fail. And in the process, we will be robbed of the joy of our salvation.

Like a husband who confesses his shortcomings (sins) to his beloved wife (because he loves her), or as James instructs us to confess our trespasses (or sins) to one another (James 5:16), we are to confess our sins to Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us (Ephesians 5:2). We are to ask then for His abiding presence in our lives, that we may bear much fruit, and thereby glorify God (John 15:5, 8). These are words within a loving relationship, whereby we experience Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

We are therefore not lost every time we fall, and then rejustified every time we confess our sins. It has been stated that the only sin that is not forgiven is the sin that is not confessed. On the contrary, the Bible speaks of only one sin that is unpardonable, which is the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28, 29). It is the ultimate, deliberate, and willful rejection of salvation in

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Christ, of which the Holy Spirit convicts the world (John 16:8), which leaves no other way to be saved (Acts 4:12). "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life (pardon full and complete); and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him" (John 3:36). To reject Christ is therefore the only unpardonable sin.

As believers, we reckon ourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in active faith (Romans 6:11). This is what it means to repent. Our minds are renewed, however no change has taken place in our bodies, which puts the renewed mind and the flesh at odds with each other. Therefore, as we walk in the Spirit our bodies become the place of sacrifice (Romans 12:1, 2; Colossians 3:5).

2 - The Bronze Laver

Also located in the eastern square of the court is the bronze laver, which contained water for washing. This is where the priests washed their hands and feet whenever they ministered in the tabernacle or when they came near the altar of burnt offering (Exodus 30:19, 20). This was the last place the priests went before entering the tabernacle, which represents heaven. If they did not wash, they would die (Exodus 30:21). This signified the need to be cleansed prior to entering the western square of the court (heaven).

Soon after Jesus' baptism, He went to Jerusalem during the Passover. When He arrived, He found that the temple had been defiled, and with great authority, He cleansed the temple (John 2:13-16). He then related that cleansing to the cleansing of the human temple in Him (John 2:19, 21). What He was referring to was the washing of humanity in His resurrection (John 2:22).

In the humanity of Jesus Christ (Lesson 3), our corporate humanity that needed redeeming was cleansed. In Christ, man was saved according to God's mercy through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4, 5). In the context of believers being able to enter the holiest (i.e., the very presence of God), through the humanity of Christ (Hebrews 10:19, 20), we are told that we can draw near with full assurance of faith. Why? Because our hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies have been washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22). Where did this take place? In Christ, at the resurrection.

In the resurrection, we were deemed "fit in Him" to be transported into heaven. And in Him, we were made to (and now) sit. The old life of Adam died and remained in the grave. In exchange, we

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were given the life of Christ in the resurrection (Ephesians 2:4-6). The washing in the watery grave of baptism symbolizes what the Holy Spirit does in the lives of all believers: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13), which is the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). We enter the church by (a proclamation of) faith, i.e., we accept our death in Christ, which was a death to sin (Romans 6:10), as our death. This is symbolized by our submersion under the baptismal waters. In exchange, we accept the life of Christ, made available in the resurrection through the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-18). This is symbolized by our coming up out of the baptismal waters. The truth of baptism, therefore, represents our exodus from this world and our entrance into the kingdom of God. It is our laver experience.

Walking Through the Western Courtyard

To recap, the western square ministry of the Levitical priests prefigured the heavenly ministry of Jesus Christ upon His ascension to heaven after the resurrection. Unlike His earthly mission, which included the reconciliation of the entire human race to God, Christ's heavenly ministry is that of a priest, i.e., representing the people to God. Christ can present as "perfect in Him" (Colossians 1:28) only those who have received the gift of His righteousness, which qualifies them for heaven (Romans 5:17).

3 - The Outer Veil

The outer veil of the sanctuary was the dividing line between the eastern and western halves of the court. If extended north and south to the surrounding linen walls in a straight line, this bisection of the court would be completely visible. As previously discussed, only priests, who were types of Christ, could enter the western square of the court, which represented heaven. Upon entering within the outer veil, Levitical priests found themselves in the first compartment of the tabernacle, called the Holy Place. It was there that they performed their daily ministry. Upon His ascension, Christ began the first phase (daily intercession) of His two-phased, priestly ministry. Jesus Christ, the true High Priest, "ever lives to make intercession for us" (Hebrews 7:25). He mediates on behalf of repentant sinners by continually applying the merits of His sinless life and sacrificial death (i.e., what He accomplished in His earthly mission) on their behalf. As soon as a believer is justified by faith (See Lesson 6), all that is true of him in Christ is credited, or imputed, to him subjectively

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(personally). Because of Christ's continual intercession, he remains an adopted child (Galatians 4:5), without interruption, as long as his faith endures (Matthew 24:13).

4 - The Table of Showbread

On the Table of Showbread was, of course, the showbread or "bread of the presence." Because it was on the table before the Lord always (Exodus 25:30), it was considered to be part of the daily service.

Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven," and "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no (eternal) life in you" John 6:51, 53.

We are to thus partake of, or experience, the life (bread) and death (blood) of Christ, which is our obedience to the gospel, as previously mentioned in the eastern square overview. This is summarized nicely in 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread." Similarly, Galatians 2:20 states, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me…"

5 - The Lampstand

How is it that we can experience the life (bread) and death (blood) of Christ, as discussed in 4? First, it was imperative that Christ leave earth and return to His Father in heaven. Jesus said, "It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). He then defined the Helper as the Spirit of truth (or Holy Spirit) in John 16:13. The Holy Spirit was to be with us continually. Jesus appropriately said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Through the Holy Spirit, we are convicted that we are falling short of the glory of God, which is codified in His law (Romans 3:20, 23). In addition to convicting us of sin, the Holy Spirit convicts our hearts of what God did to us in Christ, how He rewrote our history unto righteousness (John 16:8-10). See explanations 3-6 in the supplemental material at Lesson 3.

With heartfelt appreciation for what Christ did in reconciling us

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to the Father, despite our ungodly, sinful condition (Romans 5:6, 8), we gladly choose to partake of the body and blood of Christ. The Holy Spirit then imparts to every humble believer the life of Christ. As we thus walk in the Spirit, we participate in Christ. In the context of the fruit of the Spirit, Paul says, "And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh (participating in His blood) with its passions and desires. If we live (participating in His body) in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:24, 25).

The article in the Holy Place that encapsulated all this was the golden, 7-branched lampstand (Exodus 25:31- 37). Each of its lamps was filled nightly by Aaron and his Levitical descendants with pure olive oil, to cause the lamp to burn continually (Exodus 27:20, 21).

The lampstand also emitted light from its burning oil. As long as Jesus was in the world, He was the light of the world (John 9:5). Jesus called His plurality of believers the light (singular) of the world, referring to when His life (singular) was to be multiplied throughout the body of Christ. When His life was first poured out upon the believers at the Day of Pentecost, tongues of fire, as though from the

Golden Lampstand, sat upon each of them as they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3, 4). Oil was also used to refer to the Holy Spirit in the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25:1-13).

6 - The Altar of Incense

While the golden altar was located within the Holy Place directly in front of the inner veil (7) (Exodus 30:1-6), it was considered as belonging to the Most Holy Place (Hebrews 9:3, 4). Sweet incense was burned upon this altar every morning and at twilight, and was thus referred to as a "perpetual incense before the Lord" (Exodus 30:7, 8). In addition to incense being burned on the altar, blood was applied to the horns of the altar by the priest after certain sacrifices (e.g., Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 4:18).

In the book of Revelation, an angel is seen at the Altar of Incense and given incense to offer with the prayers of the saints, that they may ascend before God together (Revelation 8:3, 4). Thus, it is shown that only as the prayers of the saints are mixed with the merits of Christ's righteousness may our worship be acceptable to God. This allows no room for self-righteousness, but for one who worships God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). For an explanation of the application of the blood to the horns of the altar, see the

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significance of the sprinkling of blood before the veil in 7...

7 - The Inner Veil

The Holy and Most Holy Places of the earthly sanctuary were separated by the inner veil. This was to keep a protective barrier between the priests who ministered daily in the sanctuary, and who were sinful men, from the direct presence of God, which appeared in a cloud above the mercy seat of the ark in the Most Holy Place (Leviticus 16:2). Had they been exposed to God directly, they would have been destroyed, for the glory of God is as a consuming fire (Exodus 24:17; Hebrews 12:29).

Therefore, whenever the priests performed the daily application of blood from the sacrifices of the eastern court, the closest they could get to the mercy seat, whereupon mercy was obtained, was before the veil in the Holy Place (Leviticus 4:17, 18). While they were only about 5 cubits (less than 10 feet) away from the mercy seat, the best they could do was to look in the direction of the mercy seat by faith, lest they die.

As soon as Jesus died on the cross, reconciliation to God (and also to His holy law, which is a transcript of His character) became an historical event (Romans 5:10). The stark evidence of this reconciliation was manifested within the sanctuary at the hour of the evening service. The inner veil that separated the Holy from the Most Holy Place was immediately torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50, 51). Thus, the barrier between sinful man and a holy God was removed in Christ.

We now have direct access to God through our heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ. There is now no need to go through another human priest, because we can have "boldness to enter the holiest (or Most Holy Place) by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh (Hebrews 10:19, 20). This does not preclude the need to cleanse God's sanctuary - see Lesson 22. There is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). We can now come directly to God as priests through Christ (Revelation 1:5, 6).

8 - The Ark of the Covenant

At the very center of the western square of the Courtyard was the Ark of the Covenant, which contained the Ten Commandments (Hebrews 9:4), or law of God, that condemns the world

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universally (Romans 3:19). Fortunately, above the ark was the mercy seat (Hebrews 9:5).

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Only once a year, on the annual Day of Atonement, could the high priest enter into the Most Holy Place. Before he did, however, he had to offer a bull as a sin offering for himself and make atonement for himself and his house (Leviticus 16:6). He also had to bring incense within the veil before the presence of the Lord, that it should provide some barrier between him and the direct presence of God. He did this before sprinkling blood on the mercy seat for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance (Leviticus 16:12-14; Hebrews 9:7).

While the priest's entering into God's presence was a very real event, the daily and yearly sacrifices with their application of blood before the veil (daily) and on the mercy seat (yearly) never actually took away sin (Hebrews 10:1, 4, 11). The Holy Spirit indicated that "the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing" (Heb 9:8).

"But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place (heaven) once for all, having obtained eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:11, 12).

However, after Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins forever, He sat down at the right hand of God…for by one offering He has perfected (past tense) forever those who are being sanctified (Hebrews 10:12, 14).

While the Ten Commandments (which were contained in the ark) condemn the whole world (Romans 3:19), all the positive and negative demands of the law were met in Christ. There is therefore no

condemnation to the person who has subjectively joined himself to the body of Christ (Romans 8:1). See Lesson 3 Supplement, Item 5, also Lesson 7.

See Lesson 21 to see how Jesus defends the saints as our Advocate in the Pre-Advent Judgment. See Lesson 22 to see what Jesus has yet to accomplish in order to bring sin to its ultimate end. The solemn service that symbolized this cleansing process took place on the Day of Atonement.

My Response to Lesson 20 & Supplement

• The sanctuary was given by God to the Jews as a visual aid of the whole plan of salvation in Christ. Since it reveals both Christ's earthly mission (the gospel) as well as His heavenly, priestly ministry, do you believe it is still relevant to us as Christians?

Response: _____

Lesson 21 - The Pre-Advent Judgment



In our last study, we discovered that the sanctuary was God's show and tell of the entire plan of redemption. In the next few studies, which will end these series of Bible lessons, we will consider what the sanctuary truth reveals about the closing events of this earth's history. The purpose of these studies is to strengthen your faith in Christ and prepare you for the final crisis that will transpire prior to the Second Advent and the end of the world.

One of the events that will take place before Christ comes to take believers to heaven is the vindication of the saints against the accusations of the devil. The Bible tells us that Satan is “the accuser of the brethren...which accused them before our God day and night” (Revelation 12:10). In the battle for souls, Satan is determined that none of the believers make it to heaven.

Therefore, before the Second Advent can take place, Christ, our great and faithful High Priest, has to vindicate the saints in the judgment. This is part of the good news of salvation. The Pre- Advent Judgment of the saints is often referred to as the Investigative Judgment, and is what we will examine in this study.

1. What change takes place in our status when we believe in Christ? John 5:24

As we discovered in Lesson 5 (especially Questions 2-9), at the cross the entire human race was executed in Christ, our Substitute. Because of this supreme sacrifice, every sinner who receives Christ by faith passes from death (condemnation) to life (justification). This is what righteousness by faith is all about.

2. Do believers have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ? Romans 14:10

Since believers have already passed from condemnation to justification, the question is often asked, Why do believers have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ? Is it because God needs to investigate our cases to see whether we qualify for heaven? Of course not! He who does not forget a sparrow and who has numbered the hairs of our heads (Luke 12:6, 7) also knows who are His (2 Timothy 2:19). Believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ because they are being accused (see the next question). Since God is just (Romans 3:26), He will not simply bring believers to heaven, while ignoring the accusations of Satan. If He did not clear Satan's accusations against the saints in a pre-advent judgment, God would appear to be arbitrary in justifying some while not justifying others. Because God is just, He reveals the secret thoughts and motives of even the ungodly who believe on Him (Romans 4:5) - not to condemn them, but to clear their names forevermore. This "evidence" will be made available for the saints to review during the millennium (See Lesson 24: Question 16). If God did not do so, Satan would have a legitimate claim against God for not bringing him to heaven, too.

3. Who accuses the believers and how often does he do this? Revelation 12:10

4. Who is on the believers' side in this controversy over the saints? Romans 8:31

What Paul is saying here is that since God is on the believers' side, it does not matter who is against us. As we shall see, all three members of the Godhead are on the side of believers. This is indeed good news!

5. How do we know that God the Father is on the believers' side? Romans 8:32

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus earnestly pleaded with His Father, "If it is Your will, take this cup away from Me…" (Luke 22:42). The cup He was referring to was the curse of the law against us (see Galatians 3:13). Although Jesus sweated blood when making this earnest request, the Father's reply was "No!" Because of His great love for mankind, God spared not His Son. Without the cross mankind could not be justified (Romans 8:33).

6. How do we know that Christ is on the side of the believers? Roman 8:34

In Christ, we not only have a perfect Savior but also a High Priest who intercedes for us. He will defend us against all the accusations of Satan, now and in the Pre-Advent Judgment (see 1 John 2:1).

7. What testimony does the Holy Spirit bear to every believer? Romans 8:16

This is clear evidence that even the Holy Spirit is on the side of the believers. Therefore, as Christians we have nothing to fear in the Pre-Advent Judgment because all three persons of the Godhead - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - are on the side of the believers. With such a defense on our side, we can be sure that Satan has no chance in the judgment to win his case against us.

8. According to Peter, with whom does the final judgment begin? 1 Peter 4:17

The term "house of God" refers to believers, all those who by faith have accepted Christ as their personal Savior and whose names are written in the Book of Life. In this judgment, Satan is the accuser and Christ is our advocate.

9. What will be exposed in the judgment of the believers? 1 Corinthians 4:5

We humans judge each other by our outward acts, but God judges us by the desires of the heart. Unfortunately, our acts often contradict the desires of the heart (see Romans 7:15-23). This is part of our Christian struggle.

10. Besides saving us, what were we created in Christ to do? Ephesians 2:10

Not only did Christ save us from death to life, i.e., from condemnation to justification, but also from a life of sin to a life of good works. These works of faith do not save us, but they are the evidence of our salvation. Christ will bring them up in the judgment as a witness of our faith (see Matthew 25:31-36).

11. What is dead if we do not produce good works? James 2:17

Genuine justification by faith always produces good works. However, the believer may not be aware of these good works since they are the fruits of the Holy Spirit (see Matthew 25:37-40).

12. Who profits from the good works of believers? Titus 3:8

Good works do not save us, but they do give evidence to others that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. People judge us by our behavior, and they must see the love of Christ manifested in every believer.

13. What did Christ say is the greatest proof of genuine Christianity? John 13:34, 35

The greatest proof we Christians can give to the world that we are Christ's disciples is our selfless love for one another. According to the Bible, such love is the true keeping of the law (see Galatians 5:13, 14).

14. How is a person justified before God? Romans 3:28

Justification is by faith alone in Jesus Christ. Our law-keeping does not save us, but is the evidence of our salvation. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15, 1 John 3:24, 5:1-3).

15. How will we be judged in the Pre-Advent Judgment? Ecclesiastes 12:14

The Bible clearly teaches that believers are justified by faith apart from any good works they do (see Romans 4:5; Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5). Yet they are judged and rewarded according to their works (see Matthew 16:27; John 5:28, 29; 2 Corinthians 5:10). How do we reconcile this apparent contradiction? This will be answered in the next few questions.

16. How is God glorified by Christians? Matthew 5:14-16

As Christians, we are to be the light of the world. It is not by our words that we give evidence of this but by our works (see 1 Corinthians 4:20). Jesus said that the world will know us by our fruits or works (see Matthew 7:16-20).

17. What should be peculiar about God's redeemed people? Titus 2:14

18. What did the works of Abraham prove? James 2:22

Abraham's works proved that his faith was genuine. In the same way, works of faith will be used as evidence by Christ to vindicate the believers in the Pre-Advent Judgment.

19. What kind of works will not justify a person before God? Galatians 2:16

We must not confuse works of faith, which are the fruits of the gospel, with works of the law. The phrase "works of the law" always refers to good works or law-keeping in order to earn salvation. In English, we call it legalism. In contrast, "works of faith" are the fruits of the Spirit. While these fruits do not contribute toward our salvation, they do give evidence of it. That is why they will be brought up in the judgment as evidence to prove a believer's justification by faith.

20. How many will stand before the judgment seat of God? Daniel 7:10

Daniel is here describing the Pre-Advent Judgment of the believers. While they themselves will not be physically present, they will be represented by their great High Priest and Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous One. This is illustrated beautifully in Zechariah 3:1-4. Joshua, who represents the people, was clothed in filthy rags, but Jesus vindicates God's people in Joshua. Jesus tells Joshua that He has removed the iniquity from him and will clothe him with rich robes, which represents His righteousness. That is the vindication of God's people in the Pre-Advent Judgment. Note that Joshua is the Hebrew name for Jesus. In Christ our sins have been removed. We must make this truth ours individually, by faith.

21. In this Pre-Advent Judgment of the saints, who will be vindicated? Daniel 7:22

Praise God, the verdict in the Pre-Advent Judgment will be in favor of the saints! That is why, when we truly understand the love of God and His saving grace, all fear of the judgment will be removed (see 1 John 4:16-18).

22. What will the saints receive once the Pre-Advent Judgment is over? Daniel 7:27

This is the consummation of the ages, the blessed hope of all believers. The Pre-Advent Judgment will be followed by the Second Advent when God will usher in His everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness. Praise God!

My Response to Lesson 21

• The whole purpose of the "Pre-Advent Judgment" is to vindicate believers against the accusations of Satan. This is necessary before Christ can come to take them to heaven. Do you accept this doctrine as part of the plan of salvation?

Response: _____

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Lesson 21, Supplement - Why a Pre-Advent Judgment?

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Why a Pre-Advent Judgment?

THANKS GUYS, I REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR COMING OUT TO REVIEW LESSON 21 OF THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD BIBLE COURSE WITH ME TODAY. IT SURE SOUNDED LIKE GOOD NEWS, BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT, I AM A LITTLE CONFUSED. I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY I HAVE TO BE JUDGED. I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN TAUGHT THAT "THE LORD KNOWS WHO ARE HIS" (2 TIMOTHY 2:19), SO HE WILL

SIMPLY REWARD THEM WHEN THEY DIE AND GO TO HEAVEN. WAIT A MINUTE... LET ME CORRECT MYSELF... I MEAN, "AT HIS SECOND COMING." I REMEMBER WE STUDIED THAT IN LESSONS 12 AND 17.

I'M GLAD WE'RE TALKING MORE ABOUT THIS, BECAUSE NOW I REMEMBER ANOTHER VERSE (JOHN 10:14) WHERE JESUS CALLED HIMSELF THE GOOD SHEPHERD. HE SAID THAT HE KNEW HIS SHEEP. ISN'T THAT SUFFICIENT? SO WHY DOES GOD HAVE TO BE SO FORMAL IN JUDGING US?

Lee, you are absolutely right! God knows who are His. But do I detect a little fear in that voice of yours, or are you really

wondering why God is particular about how He judges us? Donna

A LITTLE OF BOTH, I SUPPOSE. I MEAN, I ALWAYS FELT GOOD ABOUT NOT NEEDING TO FACE "THE JUDGE," BUT I'VE KIND OF LOST THE "WARM AND FUZZIES," NOW THAT I REALIZE THAT WE SHALL ALL STAND BEFORE THE

JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST (LESSON 21: QUESTION 2). OBVIOUSLY THAT MEANS ME, TOO! AND SINCE YOU ASKED, DONNA, I FIGURE THAT SINCE GOD IS ALL- KNOWING, WHY GO THROUGH ALL THE HASSLE OF JUDGING EVERYONE?

You and many other people share these same concerns. They feel uncomfortable about standing before the judgment seat of Christ. Why? Because they feel inadequate, naked so to speak. That's because so many people believe that the ultimate deciding factor in determining their eternal fate is their performance. Pardon my forthrightness, Lee, but that's legalism, and it's poison.

Tina

As Christians, we must realize what the apostle John tells us in 1 John 4:17-19, "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world." In other words, when the Father sees us, He sees Jesus because we two are one.

Remember what we studied way back in Lesson 6? In Question 12 of that lesson, we saw that by Christ's perfect life and sacrificial death we stand complete in Him. In Question 21 we saw that while we believers do not condone sin, we still possess

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sinful natures and in a weak moment may fall. Then what? Are we deprived of justification? No, we have an advocate. Then in Question 22 we saw that the first fruit of being justified by faith was peace with God. Peace means no fear, and that is what the very next two verses of 1 John 4 (that we didn't finish reading a second ago) say. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears (or I might say he who lacks faith) has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us."

Sounds great,

Because this is so important, is it OK if I rehash more material that we covered in our earlier studies?

Donna!

Great! We saw that by nature as well as by performance, we are sinners and deserve death (Lesson 3: Question 9). Even the apostle Paul admitted that he was a sinner in need of a Savior (Lesson 1: Question 19). Lee, salvation is by grace alone in what Christ has done (Lesson 3: Question 8). It's a free gift that comes through the life and death of Jesus Christ (Lesson 3: Question 10).

Without Christ, we stand condemned to eternal death and therefore live in fear of the judgment.

But the moment we are born again, we pass from death to life (Lesson 8: Question 9). We receive the free wedding garments that give us entrance into God's eternal kingdom. We studied this in "The Courtyard" section of the sanctuary walkthrough (Lesson 20: Supplement). But remember, even though as Christians we stand justified by faith in Christ, we are still sinners in ourselves and Satan accuses us before God day and night (Lesson 20: Question 14). Praise the Lord, we can boldly enter God's presence through our High Priest, Jesus Christ (Lesson 20: Supplement, "7 -The Inner Veil").

Let me close by asking you a question. Can you say for certain that you have eternal life and that you will stand in the judgment? Before you answer, let me ask you the question that was posed in Lesson 3: Question 13: "What assurance does John give to those who believe in Christ?" When we studied that a few months ago, you read 1 John 5:13 aloud. Will you read that verse again, please?

GLADLY! IN FACT, I THINK I REMEMBER THE VERSE, BUT LET ME LOOK IT UP AGAIN TO BE SURE. HERE IT IS. "THESE THINGS I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU WHO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD,

THAT YOU MAY KNOW THAT YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND THAT YOU MAY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD."

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WOW, THAT'S GREAT! I CAN SEE THAT I NEED TO BECOME MORE GROUNDED IN THE WORD OF GOD AND NOT RELY SO MUCH ON MY FEELINGS.

TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, "YES, I AM SURE THAT I WILL STAND IN THE JUDGMENT. BUT LET ME TELL YOU LADIES SOMETHING, IF I MAY. IT'S ONLY BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO STAND. SO IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING SO, PRAISE THE LORD!

Amen! I'll second that!

NOW HOLD ON A SECOND. I DON'T THINK YOU EVER ANSWERED MY FIRST QUESTION… YOU KNOW, THE ONE RELATED TO GOD BEING HASSLED WITH A JUDGMENT. ONLY THIS TIME I'M NOT ASKING BECAUSE I FEAR THE JUDGMENT, BUT BECAUSE I WANT TO HAVE AN ANSWER FOR MY FAITH.

YOU SEE, WITH ALL THIS TALK OF THE JUDGMENT, I REMEMBER WHAT I ONCE HEARD A PREACHER SAY A FEW YEARS AGO. HE SAID THAT THE PRE-ADVENT JUDGMENT (ACTUALLY HE CALLED IT THE "INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT") CONTRADICTED THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. BUT FROM WHAT I RECALL, HE LINKED THIS TEACHING WITH THE BELIEF THAT WHEN YOU FIRST COME TO CHRIST, GOD JUSTIFIES YOU. JUSTIFICATION IS SUPPOSEDLY THE FORGIVENESS OF PAST SINS ONLY. SOMETHING LIKE GOD WIPES THE SLATE CLEAN, AND THEN GOD HELPS US BE GOOD THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. IN THE JUDGMENT WE WILL BE SCRUTINIZED AND IF WE HAVE BEEN BAD, OR IF OUR UNCONFESSED SINS ARE GREATER THAN OUR GOOD ACTS, OR IF WE FORGOT TO CONFESS ONE SIN, WE WILL NOT PASS THE JUDGMENT.

I GUESS HIS MAIN POINT WAS THAT THE BELIEF IS THAT OUR CONDUCT WILL ULTIMATELY DECIDE IF WE ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO GO TO HEAVEN. HE CONDEMNED SUCH THINKING AS LEGALISM, WHICH I HAVE HEARD YOU SAY TODAY A COUPLE OF TIMES. YET I DON'T HEAR YOU SAYING THE THINGS HE SAID. HIS FINAL POINT WAS THAT BOTH BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS WILL BE JUDGED AT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. CAN YOU HELP ME SORT THIS ALL OUT IN MY MIND?

Wow! That's some pretty heavy stuff. You're right, or should I say he's right in having a problem with the idea that justification is the forgiveness of past sins only. We discussed how some try to use Romans 3:25 as support for this idea, but we saw the true meaning of that passage in Lesson 4: Question 5. Nowhere in the

Bible is that taught. Such teaching would imply that every

time you made a mistake you would become un-justified until you repented. In Christ one minute, out the next.

As for believers and unbelievers being judged at the Second Coming of Christ... Tell you what. Let us gather our thoughts, and when we come back next week, we'll address these questions instead of moving on to Lesson 22. Deal? Deal!

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One week later...

Donna, Tina, and Lee met at the university commons at 7:00 in the evening to grab a bite to eat. They often enjoyed the company of each other over a meal before studying the Bible together. This time Lee offered up prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide them in their study. As usual, Donna was excited about tackling the meaty issues without much delay, so she picked up where they left off in the library lobby a week ago...

Lee, Tina and I decided to split the two questions we ended

with last week. I'll address the Pre-Advent Judgment in the light of justification by faith.

OK, Ladies!

And I will address the issue of when the judgment of believers and unbelievers takes place.

You'll have to bear with me as I develop the framework for our study. I'm going to pour the cement first, and then I will do the framing. When I'm done with that, I'll finish the house. Bet you didn't think I could do that, did you?

Pouring the Cement

Let's look at the Biblical procedures for judging, which are quite similar to what we are accustomed to in even our secular society. According to Scripture, the judgment, be it of believers or unbelievers, involves three steps:

(1) The trial. For believers, this takes place before Jesus returns. As you know, before a person can be convicted there must be a trial where evidence is presented for and against the accused. Witnesses are brought forward and the jury (or judge) decides on the outcome of the case based upon the evidence, which includes the testimony of the witnesses.

We already looked up a couple of excellent verses that describe the trial in Questions 2 and 20 of Lesson 21. Let's take the latter one. I can see how people might shake in their boots if they stopped at verse 10 of Daniel 7: "...Ten thousand times ten thousand (that's 100,000,000!) stood before Him. The Court (or judgment) was seated, and the books were opened." That's phenomenal, and it's obviously a trial.

(2) The verdict. In the Bible there are two verdicts, or

outcomes. Let's look at them in Deuteronomy 25:1, "If there

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is a dispute between men, and they come to court, that the judges may judge them, and they justify the righteous and condemn the wicked,..." In other words "innocent" or "guilty". That's pretty straightforward.

(3) The execution of the verdict. What do you think these two

alternatives could be?

I WOULD SAY THAT SOMEONE WILL RECEIVE EITHER A REWARD OR A PUNISHMENT.

Precisely! Let me give you an example. In Revelation 14:14-

20, the apostle John has a vision wherein he sees the earth's harvest (people) being reaped. Jesus had previously explained that as taking place at the end of the world (Matthew 13:39). Some will receive rewards (Matthew 25:34); others will receive punishments (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Rewards for the saints (believers) will be given at the Second Coming of Christ. Punishments will be meted out to the wicked (unbelievers) at the end of the thousand years, after the saints have reviewed the evidence against the unbelievers (during millennial trials, so to speak), and have concurred with God's verdict. When this second verdict is executed, it will be a sad day for all. We'll study more about this in Lesson 24.

Doing the Framing

Now that we have poured the cement, let's do some framing. We've established the three steps that comprise a judgment. Now let's look at the objective facts of the judgment, which we must be clear on, in order to understand the Pre-Advent Judgment correctly. When I say "objective judgment" I mean something that took place regarding us, but outside our personal experience.

In Romans 5:12, Paul explains the universal sin problem: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned." Universal sin and death entered the human race through Adam.

Then in Romans 5:16, Paul applies this where the objective facts of the judgment are brought out. "And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment (verdict) which came from one offense resulted in condemnation…"

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Condemnation to how many? Romans 5:18a tells us. "Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation…" Before any human being was born, the human race was already condemned because of the sin of one man. We studied this in Lesson 1: Question 5. This is an objective truth that has nothing to do with our personal experience. It is something that we inherit.

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That was the bad news. Now for the good news. In John 12:31 we read, "Now is the judgment of this world (Jesus is talking about the execution of the verdict, in other words, it is time for the world to be executed); now the ruler of this world will be cast out." How is that good news, you may ask?

Just as one objective fact is that all sinned in Adam and therefore stand condemned, the other objective fact is that the whole world was already judged, executed, in Jesus Christ. We were executed not only for Adam's sin, but for our sins, too.

When God executed Christ on the cross (Remember, that was the meaning of the cross from a Jewish perspective. See Lesson 4: Questions 12-15), He executed Him for Adam's sin plus the sins of the whole world: past, present, and future. We discussed this as we stopped in the sanctuary walkthrough at the "1 - The Altar of Burnt Offering" in Lesson 20: Supplement (green portion). This is also found in Romans 5:16b (the second half of the verse, which we never finished a couple minutes ago): "but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification."

Let's read all of Romans 5:18 now. "Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life." Is this making sense?

IT IS VERY CLEAR TO ME THAT WHAT ADAM DID AND WHAT JESUS DID UNIVERSALLY AFFECTED ALL MANKIND. I WOULD, THEREFORE, SUMMARIZE THE OBJECTIVE FACTS OF THE JUDGMENT AS (1) IN ADAM, THE WHOLE WORLD STANDS JUDGED, CONDEMNED TO ETERNAL DEATH; AND (2) LIKEWISE, THE WHOLE WORLD HAS BEEN JUSTIFIED BY THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I WOULD ADD THAT WHAT I JUST MENTIONED IN (2) IS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL. I THINK I AM FINALLY BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE GOSPEL REALLY IS. SO SIMPLE, YET

SOMETIMES… WELL, I GUESS IT'S TRUE WHAT YOU HAVE SAID ABOUT NEEDING TO COME TO THE BIBLE AS A LITTLE CHILD, WITHOUT PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS ABOUT WHAT'S WHAT.

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Exactly. The only difference is that what is true of us in Adam is ours by nature (we inherit it). What is true of us in Christ is not ours naturally. It is a gift, and according to Romans 5:17, only those who receive the gift of righteousness will reign in life.

Donna, and don't forget John 3:18, where Jesus says that whoever believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already.

Oooh, good verse! Thanks for the queue. Lee, Tina's right.

Jesus is saying that the reason some will be condemned is not because we are sinners. It is not because we are breaking the law.

Does that mean I can live anyway I

please?

Lee Chen, what am I going to do with you? Of course not! I'm not even going to answer that. But I will tell you that the answer can be found in Lesson 6: Question 19. (Or at Romans 6:1, 2).

Juuust Kiiidding. I thought you were going to

send me to Romans 3:8. I

couldn't resist!!

I owe you one! Back to serious stuff… The reason some are condemned is not because they are breaking the law. This is a really important point, which God has made plain in His Word. Romans 3:20, 28 and Galatians 2:16 make it absolutely clear that no one can be justified before God by the works of the law. How can God judge us for not keeping His law when He told us repeatedly that it is impossible to be saved by keeping it? The reason some are condemned is because they have deliberately rejected the gift of God.

Now check out these gems. Jesus said that every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men (people), but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men (Matthew 12:31). How so? What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? In John 16:7, 8, Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit comes, He will convict the world of sin. Why? Because they do not believe in Him. The only sin that will deprive any person of being in heaven is a deliberate, willful rejection of the gospel.

Excuse me again, but I can't help but think of John 5:24, which says that he who believes Jesus' word and believes in the Father who sent the Son has everlasting life and shall not come into judgment (or really condemnation, according to the original Greek) but has passed from death into life.

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Another excellent verse, Tina! From all this, it becomes abundantly clear that the issue in the judgment will really not be the law of God, but the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Wherever the gospel is preached in its clarity, the hour of judgment has come because the moment you have clearly heard the gospel and the Holy Spirit has convicted you, you have to make a choice for or against Christ.

Finishing the House

Even though we just ate, I've practically worked up another

appetite from all this physical labor. Not easy pouring the cement and framing the house!

All right,

already!

We're almost ready to discuss why we need to go through a judgment even though we are saved by grace and we have already accepted salvation in Jesus Christ. First, we need to identify three groups of texts that are found in the Bible regarding our works relative to the judgment.

First Group of Texts

The first group of texts seems to indicate that we are saved by works. Last week, we saw that the Lord will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels (or motives) of the hearts (Lesson 21: Question 9). Oh, and there are a bunch more -

• "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10);

• "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works" (Matthew 16:27);

• "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation" (John 5:28, 29);

• And others such as 1 Peter 4:17, Revelation 20:12, and Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."

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Sounds like a

You're exactly right… if you stop there. And that's where some people stop. These poor people never have any peace or joy because they are constantly trying to prove to God that their works are good. They want to be sure they are "good enough" for heaven and (supposedly) have a little buffer zone between them and hell. Their motives are impure because first, their motivation is selflove, which we will see (in Lesson 22: Footnote 1) was at the heart of Lucifer's rebellion in heaven. Second, they are ultimately depending upon their goodness, or what Christ does through them, to earn their way into the kingdom of God.

works trip.

These people are "between a rock and a hard place," because on the one hand they are trying to get total victory over their flesh. They think this is going to give them the peace that they desperately seek. On the other hand, they don't realize that God will never give them victory if they are looking at that victory for assurance. Why? Because they are asking God to do something that contradicts His plan of salvation. Our assurance must never be in our feelings, but by faith (Romans 10:9-13; Hebrews 11:6), we must believe that what God promised, He will do.

Second Group of Texts

There is another group of texts that tell us that salvation is by grace alone without any works or any law-keeping. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:28). "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9). God saved us "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy…" (Titus 3:5).

Do you know what the first group of people do in an effort to maintain their own internal belief system and defend their doctrines against the people who cling to the second set of verses we just read? They attack Paul. They jump on the poor guy by using a couple of verses where Peter says that some of Paul's writings are hard to understand, and which people twist to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:15, 16). They conclude that if you are using Paul to establish your understanding, you have entered into dangerous territory.

I have totally heard people say

Yeah, sure, if people are using Paul's comments such as not being under law, but under grace

that!

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(Lesson 11: Question 13) or living under liberty as a license to

sin, which you, Lee Chen, joked about a few minutes

Oops

ago. But instead of fighting Paul, who wrote about

half the books in the New Testament, they need to realize that he was set apart to proclaim the gospel (Acts 9:15; Romans 1:1; Galatians 1:11, 12; 2:7, 8, etc.). If you can't beat Paul (and you can't), why not join him?

While the people we just spoke of memorize all the verses in the Bible that agree with the first group of texts to the exclusion of the second group of texts, guess what others do?

Ignore the first group of texts

I'm afraid so. But Lee, we need to be honest with the Word of God. If we build a belief system around one group of texts and ignore another, that's the "twisting of Scripture" that Peter was talking about (in 2 Peter 3:16).

and use only the

second?

Third Group of Texts

The next obvious question is how do we reconcile these seemingly contradictory sets of verses? We can do this with a third group of texts. For example -

• We previously read Ephesians 2:8, 9. I purposely left out verse 10 to make a point here. Now let's read the whole passage together. "8For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10For we are His workmanship,created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." No one can say they are going to heaven because they are good, however God prepared believers to do good works!

• We included Titus 3:5 in the second group of texts, but once again I purposely left out verse 8, which says, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men."

• In Titus 2:11, Paul said that "the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men." That sounds like a verse that belongs to the second group of texts, saying that grace is what saves us. But look what grace also does in verse 12: "teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we

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should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age." And then in verse 14, "that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works."

What is this all saying? Genuine justification by faith always produces works.

But we must never confuse works of faith with works of the law. Externally they look the same, but they are really worlds apart. For example, let's say that Fred and Jan both tithe. We studied that in Lesson 16: Questions 12-15. Fred pays a tithe because he wants to keep his slate clean before God. Jan on the other hand returns a tithe because she recognizes that all that she has and is are God's. Jesus has purchased her with His precious blood (1 Peter 1:18, 19), and she is returning her tithe to God as a sign of her total dependence upon Him. There is no difference in the act; the difference is in the motivation.

And Lee, so that you don't revert back to a subtle form of

legalism - I feel I can talk directly to you like this because we are friends - I need to mention that works of faith may not be the same for everybody. Jesus mentioned in the parable of the sower that all the seeds that fell on the good ground produced fruit, but some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred" (Mark 4:20).

Donna, You sure call a spade

a spade!

Oh yeah, and when a person does works of faith, he/she may not even be conscious of it. When Jesus says, "I was hungry and you gave Me food…" (Matthew 25:35-39), we will not say, "You're right, Lord, I have kept a detailed journal of all these things I did." But the legalist will say to Jesus, "Lord, have I not prophesied in Your name, and done many wonders (or wonderful works) in Your name (Matthew 7:22)? I was a deacon in the church, and I cast out devils… Notice that these are all good things, not bad things. But Jesus will say to him, "I never knew you…" (Matthew 7:23).

So Lee, don't look at your performance to see whether you are doing works of faith or works of the law. Keep your sights on Jesus and the works will take care of themselves. When we stand on the platform of "Not I, but Christ" (Lesson 7: Question 6), when we let Him take over in our lives, it is guaranteed that we will produce works because Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

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We're now ready to tackle a passage that is a stumbling block to so many people: James Chapter 2. If we read it carefully, we see that in verses 1-7, James is rebuking Christians who have failed to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ. They are still practicing discrimination.

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DONNA, THAT IS STILL TRUE TODAY OF MANY PEOPLE. THEY WEAR RELIGION ON THEIR ARM, YET THEY WON'T GO TO CHURCH WITH SOMEBODY OF ANOTHER COLOR.

IN FACT, SIMPLY BECAUSE WE LOOK "DIFFERENT", THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO

WOULD FROWN UPON THE FACT THAT YOU, TINA, AND I ARE GOOD FRIENDS.

Trust me, I know what you are talking about. But all we can do is pray for these people and pray for ourselves that we may represent Christ to them, despite how they may act toward us.

In verses 8-11, James discusses the royal law, which applies to the last six of the Ten Commandments. He is showing what it means to show the love of Jesus. He comes right out and says that if we show partiality (we might call that being racist), that's sinning (verse 9). John is also tough in this area. He says that "whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).

Now we come to a favorite verse of those who believe that they will be judged by the law. "So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:12). The Bible defines the law by itself as a yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1). The law of liberty is the gospel. The issue is, "What have we done with the gift of God, Jesus Christ?"

In John 8:32, Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (or shall set you at liberty)." He then defines truth: "If the Son (not the law) makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Now let's see what Paul says about this liberty. "Now the Lord is the Spirit (i.e., the Holy Spirit represents the Lord), and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

And he tells us what this liberty does for us: "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror (or reflecting) the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).

When Moses came down from Sinai after being given the Ten Commandments, the people could not look at his face because of

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the glory of the Ten Commandments (2 Corinthians 3:7). But Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 3:16 that when we come to Christ, the veil is removed. You are now free! You can come to God with a clear conscience, without guilt (Hebrews 10:22). Your sins are washed away through Jesus Christ.

James 2:17, 20 sum up all of James 2:14-26 by saying that faith without works is dead. James then gives an example of how Abraham was justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar (James 2:21). Wow! Does this contradict justification by faith? Let's see.

When was righteousness accounted to Abraham? When he believed God. James says that in verse 23. What was it that Abram (Abraham) believed? That God would give him an heir from his own body, and that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky (Genesis 15:4-6).

In other words, when was Abraham justified by faith? When, at approximately 120 years of age, he offered up Isaac, as some would suggest James 2:21 to say? Or at 75 years old, when he believed that God would give him a son (Genesis 12:4, 7)?

James is simply defending the true meaning of justification by faith, which Paul also defends, i.e., that genuine justification by faith produces works.

Abraham was justified by faith when he was 75 years old, when he believed God. But he was justified by works when he was 120. This simply means that his justification was revealed when he offered up Isaac. James is saying that Abraham's works did not save him, they did not make him righteous, but they proved that he was already righteous by faith. Perhaps this is best summarized in verse 22: "Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" Abraham's faith was proven in that act, not his righteousness.

Conclusion

Let me now conclude the question you had last week, when you mentioned hearing a pastor say that the Pre-Advent (or Investigative) Judgment contradicted Justification by Faith.

Does it? No way. In Lesson 13: Questions 16-19, we saw that all three members of the Godhead are on our side. But we have an accuser (Satan), who accuses us "before our God day and

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night" (Revelation 12:9, 10), even when we are sleeping.

Here's the crux of the matter. Our sins do not make us

sinners. That's the "cart before the horse." They only prove what we already are. An apple tree is an apple tree, whether it has apples on it or not. And we are still sinners to our dying day, whether we have experienced thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or a hundredfold victory.

When Satan comes to us to tell us we are not good enough for heaven, we agree. But then we defend ourselves by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony (Revelation 12:11). We tell him to get behind us, because Jesus died for our sins!

That's our defending ourselves here. But in heaven, there comes a time, praise the Lord, when my name, your name will come up in the Pre-Advent Judgment. Perhaps it already has come up. We won't know when it happens.

Remember, God is just. We discussed that in Lesson 21: Question 2 (Note). He doesn't just ignore Satan's accusations against us. So what God will do is use our works - not to prove our righteousness or salvation - but to prove our faith. Once He has proven our faith, our great High Priest will have defended us, because this will have proven our union with Christ. Since Satan cannot find a single flaw in Christ, he can no longer find fault with us. And so shall those words be echoed once and for all, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan!... Is this not a brand plucked from the fire" (Zechariah 3:2)? The Lord rebuke you, Satan!

And that, my friend, is the Pre-Advent Judgment in complete harmony with the precious doctrine of Justification by Faith.

AMEN! YOU KNOW, THIS IS REALLY AWESOME! THIS MESSAGE IS WORTH

UNDERSTANDING SO I CAN TELL SOMEBODY ELSE ABOUT THE WONDERFUL GOOD NEWS OF THE JUDGMENT MYSELF. I CAN'T BELIEVE I AM ACTUALLY SAYING THIS!

There's nothing better than serving the Lord, Lee! I'm really excited about hearing you say that you want to tell others what wonderful things the Lord has done for you.

And with that, guys, I've got to run. My night class starts in 7 minutes. Lee, since I didn't get a chance to answer your last

Great

question, why don't you join Donna and me at our picnic Saturday afternoon - 2:00 at Mirror Lake. Over lunch, I'll cover the material I was going to present today.

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Saturday Afternoon at Mirror Lake...

What an awesome day for a picnic and a Bible study! Like the last time the trio got together, they began with food, and after they had eaten their last raspberry for dessert, Tina asked Donna to pray to begin their study.

Lee, what Donna covered last meeting was excellent! It was really the "main course", which I just enjoyed listening to. That topic never gets old with me.

I would classify today's topic as a side dish - something that I hope will complement the main dish. It relates to the timing of the judgment in relation to other events.

You mentioned that you had heard both believers and unbelievers will be judged at the Second Coming of Christ. What we have to remember is that God does not work in the context of time, but in the context of eternity.

Often in the Bible He will weave two or more thoughts together. Let's take the disciples' question as to when Jerusalem would be destroyed and when Jesus' coming would be (Matthew 24:1-3). Here are two distinct events, separated by almost 2000 years at least, and Jesus lumped them together in His response which encompassed all of Chapter 24 and beyond.

The pastor you heard was right in that there are many texts in the New Testament which imply that the judgment of believers and unbelievers will take place at the same time, but we will dig a little deeper to discover that they are in fact separate events.

Let's start by looking at when the rewards for the believers are handed out. Revelation 22:12 says, "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me..." If the reward to the believers takes place at the

Second Coming of Christ, the trial and the verdict, which Donna spoke of last time, must take place prior to the Second Coming.

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Another thing is that the Bible never teaches that when Christ comes the second time, He will be our Advocate. It actually says the very opposite, that Christ will appear a second time apart from sin, for salvation (Hebrews 9:28). He will have already dealt with sin in terms of our justification in heaven. We have an advocate now, but when Christ comes the second time, He will come as King and Lord (Revelation 19:16). In addition, the Bible indicates that the judgment of believers will be pre-advent. Donna touched upon some of this last time when she referred to Daniel Chapter 7. If you look, you'll notice that all three steps of the judgment are addressed. The trial is mentioned in verses 9 and 10. The verdict is in verse 22. And the execution of the verdict (in this case the reward, because it applies to the believers) is found in verses 26 and 27. This is consistent with Peter's statement in the New Testament that judgment begins at the house of God. We already looked at that in Lesson 21: Question 8. I could stop right here, but are you interested in finding out more specifically when the Pre-Advent Judgment began? Excellent! But I have to confess that I'm not going to give you the answer on a platter. I will give you some clues, and you are going to have to do some digging to find the treasure.

Sure!

Aw, That's

no fun!

Believe it or not, it's very fun. It's kind of like doing

detective work in your Bible. Let me get on my soapbox for a minute. There is only one solid platform you can stand on for your spiritual authority. That's the Bible. It's not Donna's word, my word, some preacher's word or anybody's church's word. You, Lee Chen, are going to have to take the approach that the reformers took to lead us out of the oppressive Dark Ages, when the Word of God was kept out of the hands of laypeople like you and me. You're going to have to search the Bible for yourself and know that what you believe has its foundation there and nowhere else. You must never let any authority or ecclesiastical body sway you to follow them unless they can back up everything they do from the Bible. Back to the clues. They relate to the Book of Daniel. Here they are…

1. Daniel employs the principle of parallelism as he repeats historical events, through his various chapters, from different perspectives. You will find parallels in Chapters 2, 7, and 8.

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2. The stone that was cut out without human hands in Daniel Chapter 2 is the event that parallels the key events in Chapters 7 and 8. 3. The starting point for the judgment is found in Daniel, Chapter 8, by way of parallel application to Chapter 7.

4. You will have to read to the end of Daniel Chapter 9 to find the event that marks the starting point for what will be a time period that you will have to calculate (this is closely linked to clue 3). You see, there was some major "unfinished business" in Chapter 8 that Daniel was "dying" to understand. He was "left hanging" for several years, until he received his clues in Daniel 9.

5. You will need to become familiar with the Book of Ezra in order to discern which event Daniel 9 is discussing. 6. You are going to have to brush up on your history of Western Civilization to assign "real live" dates to the years of kings you will encounter in the Book of Ezra.

7. Oooh, last clue: You will have to apply the principle found in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 to calculate the year properly. I'll give you a week to figure out the starting point for the judgment, that's if you are up to the challenge, of course.

LET ME GIVE IT A SHOT! TINA, DONNA, I AM SERIOUS ABOUT LEARNING THIS MATERIAL. THE ETERNAL VALUE OF WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY COVERED HAS IMPACTED ME MORE THAN YOU KNOW. I ACTUALLY FIND MYSELF PONDERING MANY OF THE TOPICS WE HAVE STUDIED EVERY DAY, AND I ACTUALLY CAN'T WAIT FOR EACH NEXT MEETING. THANK YOU BOTH SO MUCH, AND THANK YOU, JESUS! ONCE AGAIN, I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HEAR MYSELF SAYING THAT! Great! Hey, what do you say we go over to the agricultural center

to look at the animals? I hear they have a new bull that's absolutely gorgeous!

I'm game!

Sounds like

a plan!

Notes

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Lesson 22 - The Day of Atonement



According to the Sanctuary model, God's show and tell, the daily services concluded every year on the Day of Atonement. This was, and still is, the most solemn feast day in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur. It represented the culmination of the plan of redemption, pointing to the time when sin would be totally eradicated and everlasting righteousness would be ushered in.

The Day of Atonement therefore pointed to the consummation of the ages. It was the only time of the year God required His people to keep a solemn day of fasting and prayer. No strong drink was allowed to be consumed and the women were required to remove all their jewelry. This feast day pointed to the moment in time when the great controversy between Christ and Satan would finally be brought to an end.

Besides the vindication of the saints in the Pre-Advent Judgment (Lesson 21), the purpose of the Day of Atonement is to vindicate God's holy and righteous name and eradicate the sin problem. When the Day of Atonement is accomplished in reality, Satan and his angels, along with all who have refused the gift of salvation in Christ, will be destroyed forever. God will then create a new heaven and a new earth for the saints.

In this study, we will examine the significance of the two goats in the main ceremony that took place on the Day of Atonement. These two goats - one representing Christ and the other Lucifer - pointed to the end of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. This controversy began in heaven when Lucifer rebelled against God and became Satan (see Revelation 12:7-9).

1. When did the Day of Atonement take place in the Jewish calendar? Leviticus 23:27

The word “atonement” is a combination of three separate words joined together: At-One-Ment. Its meaning is synonymous with the word “reconcile.” This solemn feast day pointed to the endtime event when the whole universe will again be At-One-Ment with God.

2. What did the high priest cleanse on the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:30

This cleansing of God's people prefigured the Pre-Advent

Judgment when Christ, our great and faithful High Priest, will vindicate the saints from all the accusations Satan has been making against them. We studied this in Lesson 21.

3. What else did the high priest cleanse on the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:33

Besides the saints, God’s sanctuary will also be cleansed or vindicated on the Day of Atonement. How can heaven need cleansing? Has the blood of Christ defiled heaven? No, on the contrary God’s sanctuary will be cleansed of all the blame1 that has been heaped against God for the sin problem. When this is accomplished one pulse of harmony will exist and the whole universe will again be At-One-Ment.

4. What will the saints sing at this time? Revelation 15:3

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1 There are three aspects of sin, which need to be resolved before God can bring an end to the sin problem: (1) Guilt, (2) Punishment, and (3) Responsibility. Romans 5:10, 11 (KJV) clearly indicates that on the cross, “we were reconciled to God,… through out Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” This completed, historical fact reconciled sinful men to a holy God, thus resolving items (1) and (2) above. However the cross did not settle item (3). The Day of Atonement, which represents the culmination of the plan of salvation, addresses item (3) regarding who is responsible for the sin problem.

Since God is sovereign (nothing happens in the universe without His permission), and since He has allowed sin to continue on earth to this present day, He must assume the blame for what happens in His kingdom. This has been true ever since Adam ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. Adam did not deny what he had done, nor did he take the blame. Rather, he passed the blame to Eve and ultimately to God (“the woman whom You gave to be with me…”). Eve in turn blamed the serpent, implying “the serpent that You created…” (Genesis 3:12, 13). God did not then ask the serpent, because He knew that Satan blamed Him, too. See Question 16 of this lesson (including the related note and footnote) for other examples of the blame for sin that God has assumed since the Fall.

In fact, God continues to assume the blame for sin even today. People contend that if God is a God of love, why does He allow all the pain and suffering that we see in the world, especially of innocent victims? Sometimes this leads to people questioning whether God even exists!

Why then, has God permitted sin to fester all these years? It was the only way to show the universe the reality of sin. When iniquity was found in Lucifer (see Questions 14 and 15), the principle of self-love was introduced as a viable alternative to God's government, which is based upon agape love. (We studied the love of God in Lesson 2). So convincing was Lucifer's argument that he actually convinced one-third of heaven's angels

When all that the Day of Atonement pointed to is fulfilled, all doubt about God and the way He has dealt with the sin problem will be removed. Then, and then only, will we see things clearly. As the apostle Paul stated to the Corinthian believers, "Now we see in part" (1 Corinthians 13:12), but in heaven we shall see God as He truly is, a God of love, mercy and justice.

5. What were the believers required to do on the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:29; 23:27-32

These two requirements represent the negative and positive demands of the gospel - Not I, but Christ. To afflict the soul (Leviticus 23:27) means to deny self ("Not I"). It is saying with Christ, "I can of Myself do nothing" (John 5:30), that the works we do may be God's (John 14:10). It is admitting that in us nothing good dwells (Romans 7:18). It is acknowledging that despite our faith, we are sinners in need of a Savior (1 John 1:8). This is the negative requirement of the gospel (Luke 9:23). Doing no work (Leviticus 23:28) was referred to as a sabbath of rest (Leviticus 23:32). The sabbath of rest signifies that the believers are resting entirely in the Lord of the Sabbath ("But Christ"), Jesus Christ, for salvation (see Hebrews 4:3, 4). In the Pre-Advent Judgment, Christ can only vindicate those who meet these two requirements.

6. What were presented before the Lord on the Day of Atonement? Leviticus 16:7

(Revelation 12:4a, 9b) to pledge their allegiance to him in lieu of God.

Not even angels had the foreknowledge of God to imagine the insidious effects that sin would have when put into practice. Had God destroyed Lucifer in heaven without allowing his theory to produce its malignant fruit, all creation would have thereafter served God out of fear instead of love. Perhaps they would be the next ones to be blotted out if they made one (supposedly) minor mistake?

As you can see, if God did not vindicate His name on this issue, sin could never be eradicated. There would always be doubts in the minds of created beings in the universe. Therefore, on the Day of Atonement, the

Lord's goat (pointing to the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross) bore the guilt and punishment for sin. The scapegoat (representing Lucifer-turned- Satan), bore the responsibility for sin. Technically speaking, Satan takes the (blame for) sins of repentant sinners, who are part of the first resurrection. See Lesson 24: Question 20 for additional comments. We will see in Lesson 24 (especially Questions 13-21) how the events during and after the millennium further fulfill these sanctuary rituals.

As we shall see, "goats" in the Bible represent sin. According to the directions given by God, both goats had to be spotless or without blemish.

7. By casting lots, whom did these two goats represent? Leviticus 16:8

The goat selected for the Lord represented Jesus Christ. He was sinless, but on the cross, He bore the guilt and punishment of the sins of the world. The second goat (scapegoat) represented Lucifer. He was created sinless until he chose to sin (see Ezekiel 28:15). Ultimately Satan is to blame for the sin problem.

8. Whom do you think the sheep and the goats represent in this passage? Matthew 25:31-34, 41

(Sheep):

(Goats):

The sheep represent believers and the goats, unbelievers. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus said that the fire, which will consume and destroy unbelievers, was not prepared for them, but "for the devil and his angels."

9. What did God do to the entire human race in Jesus Christ? 2 Corinthians 5:19

At the cross the whole human race was reconciled to God (see Romans 5:10). Therefore, there is no excuse for anyone to be lost. Those who will be lost are those who have deliberately, persistently and ultimately rejected the gift of salvation in Christ.

10. In order to save mankind from sin, what did God make Christ to be? 2 Corinthians 5:21a

11. In exchange, what did God make mankind to be in Christ? 2 Corinthians 5:21b

Since all mankind is born in a state of sin, the only way we can stand righteous before God is by faith in Christ. In Him all

humanity was made righteous, and this is the good news of the gospel, made effective by faith alone.

12. How many have gone astray and on whom did God lay our iniquity? Isaiah 53:6

Christ our Substitute is who the Lord's goat represented on the Day of Atonement. Therefore, all who are resting in Christ for their salvation (symbolized by their Sabbath-keeping) and are denying themselves of their own self-righteousness (signified by afflicting the soul, see Philippians 3:7-9) will be vindicated on the solemn Day of Atonement. This is the good news of the Pre-Advent Judgment, which we studied in Lesson 21.

13. How complete was Christ's sacrifice on the cross for our sins? Hebrews 10:14



THE HUMAN RACE

It is finished.

When Jesus cried out on the cross, “It is finished” (John 19:30), He was declaring to the world that the entire human race was fully redeemed. This is God’s supreme gift to mankind. All who have accepted this salvation by faith and are sanctified by that sacrifice stand perfect forever in Christ.

14. According to this text, who is the originator of the sin problem? Ezekiel 28:14, 15

How could a perfect being commit sin? This is a mystery that our finite minds cannot comprehend and is why the Bible alludes to Satan’s fall as “the mystery of iniquity” (2 Thessalonians 2:7). Only when we go to heaven will our eyes be opened and will we fully understand how sin could enter a perfect world.

15. According to this passage what was Lucifer’s heart problem? Isaiah 14:12-14

Lucifer's heart problem was self. When He decided to exalt himself and take the place of God, he brought about his own downfall. At the core of every sin is the principle of self which completely contradicts God's agape love that "does not seek its own" (1 Corinthians 13:5). It is this principle of self with which Satan infected the human race at the Fall and which makes us sinners.

16. For what bad thing does God assume the blame in this text? Isaiah 45:7

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We discussed in Footnote 1 of this lesson how nothing happens in the universe without God's permission. This also explains verses such as "the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart" (Exodus 10:20, 27, 11:10)2 and "the evil spirit from God came upon Saul" (1 Samuel 16:23, 18:10, 19:9). God is not causing these events to occur, but He has permitted them. This is why God assumes the blame for all the bad things that have happened (and are happening) in this world. But on the Day of Atonement, the blame will be put on Satan, the one who is really responsible for the sin problem. Thus, the scapegoat represents Satan, the one who truly deserves the blame.

17. When did David say he will praise God with uprightness of heart? Psalms 119:7

On the great Day of Atonement, God will be vindicated. All the blame He has assumed since the Fall will now be placed on the real culprit, Satan. Only then will God be able to eradicate sin and usher in everlasting righteousness. May you be present on that final Day of Atonement!

18. How will sin and sinners be eradicated on the Day of Atonement? Revelation 20:9

When the lake of fire has consumed all that belongs to the sin problem, only then will this universe be At-One-Ment with God. May you be a part of that vast multitude that will share the privileges of the saved.

My Response to Lesson 22

• The sanctuary services ended with the Day of Atonement. It represented the consummation, the closing events of the plan of salvation. This will bring to an end the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Do you see the significance of this doctrine?

Response: _____

2In other verses, Pharaoh is said to have hardened his own heart: "Why then do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He did mighty things among them, did they not let the people go, that they might depart" (1 Samuel 6:6)?

Lesson 23 - The Remnant and the 144,000



Jesus prophesied that before God will bring this wicked world to an end, “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness” (Matthew 24:14). When this prophecy is fulfilled, every person on this earth who has reached the age of accountability will have made his or her ultimate choice, either for or against Christ.

At that time, the whole human race will be polarized into only two distinct camps. The Bible describes these two groups in many different ways:

• Believers and unbelievers (John 3:18);

• Sheep and goats (Matthew 25:31-46);

• Those who have built their houses on the rock Jesus Christ and those who have built their houses on the sand of their own selfrighteousness (Matthew 7:24-27); and

• Those who are sealed with the seal of God and those who have received the mark of the beast (Revelation 7:1-3; 13:16, 17; 14:9, 10).

In other words, the two groups will be (1) those who belong to God and (2) those who are still ruled by Satan (see 1 John 5:19).

Because of this polarization, the closing events of this world’s history will culminate with the final showdown in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. As pointed out in Lesson 22, this controversy began in heaven when Lucifer, the highest angelic being, rebelled against Christ, the second Person of the Godhead (see Revelation 12:7-9).

In this final showdown, which the book of Revelation describes as the war of Armageddon or “the battle of that great day of God Almighty” (Revelation 16:12-16), the conflict will actually be between God's people - the last generation of Christians, and Satan's people - those who have deliberately and ultimately rejected Christ and have chosen to be under the banner of Satan.

At that time, the faith of this final generation of Christians will be tried and tested to the utmost in a way that no other generation of believers has ever been tested.

666

False christs and prophets will incite the masses against

This final test is described in the Bible as the great tribulation or the time of trouble. It will take place just before the Second Coming of Christ and the end of the world.

God’s people

once again.

Those believers who will endure this great time of trouble and will triumph over the full force of Satan's attacks are described in the Bible as the Remnant. They are the ones who “overcame him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Revelation 12:11).

God’s people will have

an unshakable faith.

According to Bible prophecy, we are presently living in the antitypical Day of Atonement, the closing events of this earth's history. This was the subject of our last study. Therefore, it is God's purpose that every believer living in these last days be part of that last generation of Christians who will vindicate Him in this final showdown between Christ and Satan. In this study we will examine what the Bible has to say about the Remnant, whom we will discover are “the 144,000,” the ones who will vindicate the full power of the gospel by their unshakable faith.

1. What did Jesus say will take place before the end of the world? Matthew 24:14

According to Scripture, God does not want anyone to be lost (see 2 Peter 3:9). That is why He will not bring this sin-cursed world to an end until He gives everyone a chance to accept His gift of salvation in Christ.

2. How is this gospel of the kingdom described in the book of Revelation? Revelation 14:6

The reason why this final message to the world is called “the everlasting gospel” is because it was planned from eternity (see Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9; and Revelation 13:8) and is the only message that offers everlasting hope to mankind. This is the message that will carry the last generation of Christians through the great time of trouble!

3. Who gets angry when the everlasting gospel is proclaimed and why? Revelation 12:12

The devil hates the everlasting gospel because it is the only power that he cannot defeat. He will therefore do his utmost to destroy anyone who proclaims this message as well as anyone who receives it.

4. How does the Bible describe the last generation of Christians? Revelation 12:17b

The last generation of Christians are described as “the remnant of her seed” (KJV). The word “remnant” in the Bible refers to God's people who remain faithful to Him no matter what happens; those whose faith endures to the end in spite of apostasy or persecution (see Romans 11:2-5).

5. According to the prophet Isaiah, who only will be saved? Romans 9:27

Finish Line

To experience ultimate salvation, it is not enough to believe in Christ; faith must endure unto the end (see Matthew 10:22). In the last days, the Christians who endure the time of trouble and remain faithful to Christ unto the end are called the Remnant.

6. What question does Jesus raise regarding His Second Coming? Luke 18:8

7. What similar question does John the Revelator ask? Revelation 6:15-17

Judging from the description given in Revelation 6:15, 16, it seems no one will be able to withstand the Second Coming of Christ. But in Revelation 7, John answers the question by describing the Remnant who will be able to stand. The word “Remnant” means the faithful ones.

8. What must happen before the great tribulation takes place? Revelation 7:2, 3

Before God allows Satan to test the Remnant, their faith has to be sealed. This seal in their foreheads means that their minds are fully settled into the truth of the gospel. Their faith in God's love, and the truth as it is in Christ, has become unshakable, no matter what Satan and the wicked do to them.

9. How many of the last generation of believers will be sealed? Revelation 7:4

The 144,000 who are sealed is not a literal number1. In Revelation 7:4, John does not see them but only hears their number. The reason for this is because they are scattered throughout the whole world. However, in Revelation 7:9, he sees them and they are "a great multitude, which no one could number." We know this vast multitude is referring to the 144,000 because in Revelation 7:13, 14 they are described as being victorious in the great tribulation.

10. What will the 144,000 sing in heaven, which no other saint can sing? Revelation 14:3

11. What makes these 144,000 so special in God's eyes? Revelation 14:4

The reason that the 144,000 will sing a new song is because it is the song of total victory over Satan. That is why they will be given special privileges in heaven. Their faith will have endured the great tribulation and in doing so, they will have vindicated God in the final showdown between Christ and Satan.

1 The symbolic nature of the 144,000 is conveyed in the rendering of the tribes of Revelation 7:4-8. Not all the tribes are listed (there is replacement with near kin), and their order is different than in the Old Testament. A secondary reason for ordering the tribes, as such, was to convey a special message, using the literal meaning of the Hebrew names.

In Revelation 7:9, 10 John sees the great multitude praising (Judah - Gen 29:35) God (the Father) and the Lamb (the Son: Reuben - Gen 29:32). This troop (Gad - Gen 30:11) is immensely happy (Asher - Gen 30:13) because they wrestled (Naphtali - Gen 30:8) with Satan, overcoming him by the blood of the Lamb (Rev 12:11). They forgot (Manasseh - Gen 41:51) the trials of the great tribulation as they heard (Simeon - (Gen 29:33) their reward: Forever, they will be "attached" (Levi - Gen 29:34) to the Lamb, following Him wherever He goes (Rev 14:1-4). There is hire (Issachar - Gen 30:18) for them, serving God day and night in His temple (Rev 7:15). He who sits on the throne will dwell (Zebulun - Gen 30:20; Rev 7:15) among them, for He will add (Joseph - Gen 30:24) them to be sons of the right hand (Benjamin - Gen 35:18) with the Lamb.

12. How does the prophet Daniel describe the great tribulation? Daniel 12:1

The great tribulation will be a time of trouble such as has not been experienced by any previous generation. The prophet Jeremiah gives a similar description (see Jeremiah 30:7). But both prophets indicate that God's sealed people, the Remnant, will be victorious and ultimately will be delivered.

13. What will make the time of trouble so terrible for the Remnant? Isaiah 54:7a

The issue in the great tribulation will be much more than physical torture. Rather, it will be similar to what Christ faced on the cross when He felt forsaken of God (see Matthew 27:46). In this great tribulation, God will produce a people who will manifest the faith of Jesus even though they feel God has abandoned them (see Revelation 14:12). This is the faith Christ manifested on the cross and which will be reproduced in the Remnant.

14. In order for our faith to be unshakable, in what must it be grounded? Ephesians 3:17

The word “dwell” in the original actually means “to permanently dwell.” This is possible only when our faith in Christ is rooted and grounded in God’s agape love, which we studied in Lesson 2. It is faith in this unconditional love that is able to keep us from falling in the great tribulation (read 1 John 4:16-19).

15. What should all Christians be convinced of regarding God's love? Romans 8:38, 39

When we are rooted and grounded in God's agape love, we will know that nothing on earth or in heaven can ever separate us from God's love, which was manifested to mankind in Christ (see Romans 5:5-10).

16. How does the prophet Jeremiah describe God's love? Jeremiah 31:3

There will never come a time when God will stop loving us. We may fail Him but He will never fail or forsake us. Although we will feel forsaken of God in the time of trouble, our faith in His love will be unshakable.

17. According to Paul, who is the source of our power in Christian living? 2 Corinthians 4:7

18. How does Paul describe the Christian battle between faith and feeling? 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9

We must never confuse faith with feelings. Under distress or persecution, the two will part company so that our feelings will contradict our faith. But we must not allow our negative feelings to get the better of us. Instead, our faith in God's love must be what directs our actions. May this be your experience.



Be prepared! During the Great Tribulation, our faith and feelings will part company. But never, ever give up your faith. You may feel that you have let God down. Do not be dismayed, for all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Don't ever forget that it is only because of Jesus' righteousness - 2,000 years ago - that believers stand completely righteous in Him today (see Colossians 2:10). It is only as we are united to Christ by faith, that He may present us "holy, and blameless, and irreproachable in His sight" (Colossians 1:22). What is the condition? "If indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard…" (Colossians 1:23).

My Response to Lesson 23

The word "remnant" means "faithful ones." In Revelation they are represented as the 144,000 who will vindicate Christ and the power of the gospel during great tribulation. Do you want to be one of them?

Response:

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Lesson 24 - The Millennium



The closing chapters of the book of Revelation describe the final events of this world's history and the plan of redemption. One of these events is the 1000 years, commonly referred to as the millennium. The word "millennium" comes from two Latin words joined together - mil, meaning a thousand and annum, meaning a year.

Unfortunately, like many last day events, there is much confusion within the Christian church regarding this doctrine of the millennium. The only way we can clearly understand the true meaning and purpose of this doctrine is to examine it in the context of the Day of Atonement (Lesson 22). This is how we will approach the study of this important doctrine.

The millennium is part of the final judgment scene revealed by the Day of Atonement, when sin will be eradicated and everlasting righteousness ushered in. God cannot eradicate sin nor usher in everlasting righteousness until all doubt about Him and His dealings with the sin problem is removed.

At the end of the Pre-Advent Judgment of the saints (Lesson 21), the vast multitude of God's angels, along with the unfallen worlds, will confess to God, "just and true are your ways." At the end of the thousand years (the millennium) the saints will confess to God, "just and true are your ways." Finally, after Satan, his angels, and the lost are personally judged, they too will confess to God, "just and true are your ways" (Romans 14:10-12).

Then, and only then, will God execute Satan, the originator of sin; the wicked angels who have joined him in the rebellion; and the lost - those who have deliberately, persistently and ultimately rejected the gift of salvation in Christ.

In this study, we will turn our attention to the thousand years, the doctrine of the millennium, when God will remove all doubt from the minds of the saints about Himself and His dealings with the sin

problem. For Christians, many questions about God's dealing with sin still remain unanswered. All this will be settled during the millennium, and our hearts will be full of praise to God.

1. What are the two kinds of resurrections that Jesus taught? John 5:28, 29

The Bible speaks of two resurrections. The first is the resurrection of the believers, the saved, and the second resurrection is that of the unbelievers, the lost. Between these two resurrections is the millennium, the 1000 years.

2. When will the resurrection of the believers take place? 1 Thessalonians 4:16

3. What will happen to the believers still living at the Second Advent? 1 Thessalonians 4:17

The resurrection of the believers sleeping in Christ will take place at the Second Coming of Christ. This is the first resurrection, the blessed hope of all believers. This is when the thousand years or millennium begins.

4. What change will take place in the believers at the resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:51-53

According to the clear teachings of the New Testament, the last generation of Christians, those who go through the time of trouble, will not experience death but will experience a change.

5. Where will Jesus take the believers after they are resurrected? John 14:1-3

Until the Second Advent, Christians will still have sinful natures and mortal bodies. All this will change at the Second Advent. This is the blessed hope.

6. What were the disciples told who witnessed Christ's ascension? Acts 1:10, 11

Just as Christ's ascension into heaven was literal and physical, so also will be His Second Coming. It will be literal and physical.

7. How many who are alive will witness Christ's Second Coming? Revelation 1:7

Besides the living, God will also raise those who crucified Christ in a special resurrection, just before the Second Advent. This is to fulfill what Christ promised them at His trial (see Matthew 26:64).

8. What will happen to the wicked at the Second Coming of Christ? 2 Thessalonians 2:8

God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29); therefore, when Christ comes in His divine glory all those who have accepted the deceptions of Satan and rejected the gift of salvation in Christ will be destroyed by His brightness.

9. What serious question did Jesus ask of those who rejected Him? Matthew 16:26

When the wicked face death at the Second Coming of Christ, they will realize what they have given up for the pleasures of sin. But it will be too late!

10. To what condition will this earth be reduced after the Second Advent? Jeremiah 4:23

This was the condition of the earth before creation (see Genesis 1:2). This will be the ultimate result of the sin problem. It will reduce the perfect world God created to the condition it was before creation.

11. What will happen to the vegetation and the cities when Jesus returns? Jeremiah 4:26

12. To what are the lost compared after the saints are taken to heaven? Jeremiah 25:33

13. What will God do to Satan during the millennium? Revelation 20:1-3

The “bottomless pit” describes the earth as it was before God created this perfect world: “without form and void.” Satan will have a thousand years to contemplate the disaster he has brought upon the earth, by introducing sin.

14. What will happen to Satan after the thousand years are over? Revelation 20:3b

At the end of the millennium, the wicked will be raised. This is the second resurrection. At this time the wicked, referred to as the dead, stand before God at the Great White Throne Judgment. The books are opened and they are judged out of the things written in the books according to their works (Revelation 20:11, 12). The books reveal every sin they ever committed. As their lives flash before their eyes, they realize they have trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29). At that time Satan, who has shown no signs of repentance, will take the initiative to deceive them again (see Revelation 20:7, 8).

15. What will Satan and the wicked do and with what consequences? Revelation 20:9

When Satan uses the wicked to attack God and the saints, it clearly proves that the thousand years did not change his attitude toward

God. He and those who have joined him deserve to be destroyed. This is the end of Satan, the wicked angels, and the lost (see Revelation 20:14).

16. What will the saints be doing in heaven during the thousand years? Revelation 20:6

Reigning with Christ involves investigating and judging the lives of the lost. There will also be opportunity to see why God vindicated certain individuals whose lives did not appear to evidence a true conversion experience while on earth. This is what it means to be “priests of God and of Christ.” During this time, every doubt about God’s dealings with the sin problem will be removed.

17. How does Paul describe reigning with Christ during the millennium? 1 Corinthians 6:2

During the thousand years all the questions concerning God’s dealings with the sin problem will be answered, and the saints will be satisfied that God was just and true in all His ways.

18. What will the saints confess after they have judged the world? Psalm 119:7

During the thousand years, every opportunity will be given to remove any doubt concerning God. This has to happen if God is to be vindicated and sin is not to rise again the second time.

19. Before the final judgment takes place, what blame does God assume? Isaiah 45:7

Because God is sovereign, nothing can happen without His permission. For this reason He assumes all the blame for the havoc and atrocities that sin has produced in this world. It is only after the thousand years, when all will have had the opportunity to examine God's dealings with the sin problem, that all will confess "just and true are Your ways… for Your judgments have been manifested" (Revelation 15:3, 4).

20. On whom will God ultimately place the blame for the sin problem? Leviticus 16:20-22

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The live goat in this verse represents Satan, the originator of the sin problem. After God has vindicated Himself on the Day of Atonement, He will put the blame for the havoc that sin has produced where it really belongs, on Satan. Lesson 22: Footnote 1 addresses this further. Technically speaking, Satan takes only the (blame for) sins of repentant sinners, who were part of the first resurrection. Those who were part of the second resurrection had willfully, persistently, and ultimately rejected the gospel. Therefore, they themselves are to blame.

21. How will the righteous finally respond to God's judgments? Revelation 16:7

The whole purpose of the millennium is to clear all doubt from the minds of the righteous regarding God and His dealings with the sin problem. Only when this is done can He put the real blame for the sin problem where it belongs: on Satan. Only then can Christ usher in everlasting righteousness.

22. Will heaven be the permanent home of the saved? Revelation 21:2, 3

At the end of the millennium, Christ and all the saints dwelling in the New Jerusalem will return to earth. It is at this time that Satan and the wicked will be destroyed. Then Christ will create a new heaven and a new earth for the saints (see Revelation 21:1). This will be the topic of our next and final study.

My Response to Lesson 24

• The millennium is the 1,000 years between the 2nd and 3rd Comings of Christ. During this time the earth will be desolate, believers will be in heaven, and God will clear any doubts about His dealings with sin. Do you believe this is necessary to usher in everlasting righteousness?

Response: _____

Lesson 25 - The New Earth



Before creation, this world was “without form,

and void; and darkness was upon the face of

the deep” (Genesis 1:2). Then in six days

God created a perfect world and placed

Adam and Eve to rule over it (see Genesis 1:26-28). Unfortunately, the bliss of this perfect and finished creation was marred by the entrance of sin. At the Fall, this world was handed over to Satan and he became its ruler (see Luke 4:5, 6). Thus began the downward trend.

Unlike the theory of evolution, the Bible teaches devolution; that is, in the beginning God created a perfect and finished world to which nothing could be added for improvement. But when sin entered this world, things began to go from bad to worse. Ultimately, sin will destroy our world until one day this earth will be reduced to what it was before creation, “without form and void.”

The book of Revelation describes this destroyed world as the “bottomless pit”. This is where Satan, the originator of sin, and his angels will be bound during the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-3). They will have one thousand years to contemplate what sin has done to God's perfect creation.

After the thousand years are ended and God has judged and executed Satan and all who have joined him, thus eradicating sin from the universe, He will create a new heaven and a new earth wherein will dwell righteousness. At that time, God will move His throne from heaven to this earth made new and the saints will rule with Him forever and ever. This wonderful truth, which culminates the plan of redemption, will be the concluding lesson of these Bible studies.

1. What was the condition of the earth before creation? Genesis 1:2

Before creation, the earth was shapeless and lifeless, unorganized and inanimate, and covered by water. As for the earth's genesis, see the Lesson 14 Supplement.

2. How long did it take God to create this world we live in? Exodus 20:11

Please read Genesis 1:3-31 to get a complete description of creation week. Note that all that God created was "very good." At the end of the sixth day, this world was perfect and finished so that God rested on the seventh day from all His work and sanctified the seventh day (see Genesis 2:1-3).

3. Out of what did God create this universe of ours? Hebrews 11:3

Man depends on preexisting matter to create things. But God created this universe just by speaking the word. His breath is energy so that when He spoke things came into existence. Likewise, when Christ comes the second time He will speak, and the dead in Christ will rise instantly with perfect bodies.

4. Who of the three persons of the Godhead actually created this world? John 1:1-3

According to John 1:14, the "Word" is Jesus Christ who "was made flesh and dwelt among us." Jesus who created us is also the One who redeemed us.

5. What promise did Jesus make before returning to heaven? John 14:2

What Christ was implying is that in heaven there is room for everybody. No one will be lost who accepts by faith the gift of salvation offered in Christ. This is the incredible good news of the gospel.

6. Where will Christ take the believers at His Second Coming? John 14:3

Heaven is God's dwelling place and that is where Christ will take the saints when He comes the second time.

7. What will happen to this earth at the Second Coming of Christ? 2 Peter 3:10

Because “God is a consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:29), nothing that has been tainted by sin will be able to withstand Christ’s full glory at His coming.

8. To what do believers look forward because of the plan of redemption? 2 Peter 3:13

Heaven will not be the permanent home of the saints. The earth made new will be the final home of the saved, a world in which dwells righteousness.

9. What will this world be like when Christ takes the saints to heaven? Jeremiah 4:23

10. What will happen to life and vegetation at Christ's Second Advent? Jeremiah 4:25, 26

Sin will ultimately destroy this earth and all life in it. This world of ours will be reduced to what it was before creation, “without form and void.” It is to this destroyed earth that Satan will be bound for a thousand years.

11. Will this earth remain desolate forever? Jeremiah 4:27

God’s plan is to eventually restore this earth to its original perfection.

12. What promise did Christ make to His disciples in this beatitude? Matthew 5:5

The meek1 are those who have lost all confidence in self and are depending entirely on the righteousness of Christ for their salvation.

13. How long will the saints reign with Christ in heaven? Revelation 20:6

14. What New Covenant promise will be fulfilled in the earth made new? Revelation 21:3

After the thousand years the saints, along with the Holy City in which they have been dwelling, the New Jerusalem, will descend to this earth and become the capital of the earth made new (see Revelation 21:2).

15. What special tree will be found growing in the New Jerusalem? Revelation 22:1, 2

16. Describe briefly what life will be like in New Jerusalem? Revelation 22:3

1 (Luke 18:9-14): 9Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men - extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' 13And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' 14I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted".

How wonderful it will be to live in such a city! But the greatest joy the saints will experience is to serve their God and their Savior, Jesus Christ.

17. What will God wipe out in the earth made new? Revelation 21:4

Just think of it, no more death, pain, or heartaches in the earth made new! According to Revelation 21:5, God is going to make "everything new."

18. Who will be allowed to inherit the earth made new? Revelation 21:7

All who have overcome unbelief and received by faith God's gift of salvation will inherit the earth made new. Only those who have deliberately and ultimately refused Christ as their Savior will be destroyed forever (Revelation 21:8).

19. Briefly, describe what life will be like in the earth made new? Isaiah 65:21, 22

20. What other description of the new earth does Isaiah give us? Isaiah 65:25

21. Will illness ever threaten the lives of God's people in the new earth? Isaiah 33:24

What a future! Surely, the new earth will be paradise restored. Therefore, anyone who refuses such an offer, which God gives us through the gospel of Jesus Christ, needs to think twice about what he or she is rejecting.

22. Will sin ever rise again in the new earth? Nahum 1:9

Sin will not rise a second time to plague the new earth. That is not because God will take away our freedom of choice but because the saints will know first-hand what sin is. They will hate sin for what it did to Christ on the cross, and the thought of rebellion against God will never enter their minds.

23. What two things are required of all believers to inherit the new earth? Hebrews 10:35, 36

Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that "once saved" means "always saved." As Jesus stated in Matthew 10:22, only those whose faith "endures to the end will be saved." Hebrews 10:38 says the same thing. This is what it means to have the perseverance of the saints. Even if it costs us our lives, if we are to make it to heaven and the earth made new, our faith in Christ must be unshakable. Jesus does not want believers to lose their confidence in Him, and therefore He wants our faith to endure unto the end. His final words in the Bible are "Surely I come quickly." May your response to this promise be "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20). The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and forever more. Amen.

My Response to Lesson 25

• The ultimate goal in the plan of salvation is to eradicate sin and restore this earth to its original perfection. In doing so, this earth made new will become the center of God's government. Is it your heartfelt desire to be part of this kingdom through faith in Christ?

Response: _____

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Where Do We Go from Here?

Where Do We Go from Here? and Scripture Index

Wow! It has been quite a journey, but we have actually come to the end of our studies. Time to rest? You will decide that, of course. But here's something to think about. If you think you might know someone who hasn't heard the fantastic, good news of the gospel, you may be their only opportunity to hear it. Perhaps a family member, friend, neighbor, or co-worker. But there's no highpressured sales pitch here, because that's between you and the Holy Spirit.

You can know God's specific will for your life. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness… (Matthew

6:33)

Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Study the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:15, 16).

Tell it to someone special (Mark 5:19).



Write about it (Luke 1:3).

Sing about God's grace in Spirit and truth

(John 4:23).

Remember what we covered in Lesson 9 on "Walking in the Spirit?" Take a few moments and revisit some of the key points in Lesson 9. Now, wherever the Holy Spirit leads you, proceed with full assurance of faith. In heaven, you will see why God led you the way He did, and you will agree 100% that His leading was perfect!

Scripture Index

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Have you ever come across a Bible verse that you didn't completely understand? Or perhaps you once knew the meaning of a verse, but it has been a while since you had to share its meaning with someone, and you would like to "brush up" on your understanding?

Well, that is why we have assembled a scripture index. It is intended to be a useful companion for jogging your memory regarding the meaning of a particular scripture passage.

How so? Let's say you are reading the Bible and you come across a verse you would like to know more about. Go to the Scripture Index to see if the verse is covered in the course. If so, go to the precise location(s) in the course where the verse is referenced.

Since you will have covered all the verses in the index by the time you complete the course, you will be able to quickly revisit material you have already studied and grasped. If you have not completed the course, you can see where a verse will be covered in a future lesson.

Of course, you can jump ahead to any lesson you have not already studied. But keep in mind that the course content is largely cumulative in nature. Material covered in later lessons is based upon material covered in earlier lessons. You are therefore encouraged to cover all lessons in their order for maximum benefit.

You'll need to know that L=Lesson, and Q=Question. Otherwise, navigating through the Scripture Index should be a snap. Have fun!

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