

PEACE WITH GOD- BY BILLY GRAHAM

INTRODUCTION

In the Part One of PEACE WITH GOD, Billy Graham gives a vivid description of the human predicament of sin and how man has made several unsuccessful attempts to free himself from this predicament. In Part Two, Billy offers a clear solution to the human predicament of Sin. According to him, the freedom from sin and its devastating effect comes when one clings to the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Part Three also offers to the believer the necessary antidote for living a victorious Christian life.

PART ONE

CHAPTER 1

THE GREAT QUEST

All mankind is on a quest and Billy calls it the 'Great Quest'. All mankind is seeking the answer to the confusion, the moral sickness, the spiritual emptiness that oppresses the world. Humanity's attempts to find an answer to this quest have led them to many paths.

- First, the path we labeled 'political freedom'. Let us select our own government leaders and we shall have the kind of government that will make life worth living. Yet, we achieved political freedom, but we did not achieve our better world.
- Second, the path of Education or the Educational path. Again, this path could not answer the 'Great Quest' because we are the most informed people in the history of civilization- and yet the most confused.
- Third, the most inviting path was the one marked 'higher standards of living'. Yet this path also could not bring us the joy and satisfaction we are seeking.
- Fourth, the seduction of science was another path. The gift of science could not present to us the reason for living that we were seeking.
- Also, the paths of fame, fortune, pleasure and power are other paths we are travelling. None of these paths leads anywhere.

At the heart of the 'Great Quest' is the inability of man to truly diagnose his situation and get to know his real problem. The problem of man dates back to the Garden of Eden when man gave up God's will for his own will. Since then, the human predicament of sin depraved man and gave man a nature that fills him with hate, envy, greed and jealousy. Hence, the true story of man constitutes three facts: "His past is filled with sin; his present is overflowing with sorrow; and the certainty of death faces him in the future". Now it is Jesus Christ alone who can give us the answers to the three enduring problems of sin, sorrow and death. Henry F. Lyte captures

this in his hymn when he wrote “Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me”.

CHAPTER 2

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE BIBLE

In this chapter, Billy tries to draw our attention to the authoritative source material that could give us the key to our dilemmas. This code book is the BIBLE. The Bible is more than just Great literature or history of Israel or that which sets forth the soundest ethics, it is the story of God’s redemption as it exists in Jesus Christ. God caused the Bible to be written for the express purpose of revealing to man God’s plan for His redemption. God caused the Bible to be written that He might make His everlasting laws clear to His children and that they might have this great wisdom to guide them and His great love to comfort them as they make their way through life. The Bible easily qualifies as the only Book in which is God’s revelation. However, the critics of the Bible claim that it is filled with forgery, fiction and unfilled promises but careful scholarship has shown that apparent contradictions in the Bible were caused by incorrect translations rather than divine inconsistencies. Again, Billy compares the Bible to the constitution and so He says the Bible is the Supreme Constitution for all mankind that helps to bring equality to all. Just as the constitution is the highest law of the land, so the Bible is the law of God. While the constitution of any nation may be amended from time to time, no amendment is every necessary for the Bible. This makes the truth of the Bible timeless. And the message of the Bible is the message of Jesus Christ our Savior, a message of salvation. The Bible as an indestructible book has survived attacks of every kind (i.e. from barbaric vandalism, civilized scholarship, burning of fire to laughter of skepticism).

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

It is the absence of the knowledge of God and man’s refusal to obey Him that lie at the root of every problem which besets us. If that is the case, then we need to learn all that we can about Him. But, where do we go for this knowledge? As we have already seen in our previous chapter, God has revealed Himself in the Book called the Bible. In the Bible we have a revelation of God. Let us look at four aspects of God’s revelation of Himself in the Bible.

GOD AS SPIRIT

The Bible declares God to be Spirit as Jesus said in John 4:24. When Jesus said, "God is Spirit". He meant that God is not limited to body [Luke 24:34- Spirit is without body; yet it has being and power]; He is not limited to shape; He is not limited to boundaries or bonds; He is absolutely immeasurable and indiscernible by eyes that can see only physical things. The Bible tells us that because He has no such limitations He can be everywhere at once- that He can hear all, see all and know all. The idea that God is an infinite, eternal and unchangeable Spirit helps us to overcome the temptation to limit God.

GOD IS A PERSON

The Bible reveals God as a Person. Everything that we attribute to a person is attributed to God. A person is one who feels, thinks, wishes, desires, and has all the expressions of personality. Most often, we have confined personality to the body but God is not bound by a body, yet He is a Person. He feels, He thinks, He loves, He forgives, and He sympathizes with the problems and sorrows that we face.

GOD IS HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS

The Bible reveals that God is Holy and Righteous. He is utterly perfect and absolute in every detail. He is too Holy to tolerate sinful man, too Holy to endure sinful living. It is in God's holiness that we find the reason for the death of Christ. God's holiness demanded the most exact penalty for sin and His love provided Jesus Christ to pay this penalty and provide man with salvation.

GOD IS LOVE

The human mind may contemplate that since God is love everything is going to be secret, beautiful and happy and that no one will be punished for his sins. God's love provides the plan and way of redemption for sinful man. God's love provided the cross of Jesus, by which man can have forgiveness and cleansing. It was the love of God that sent Jesus Christ to the cross! God's love is unchangeable in that whiles we were terrible sinners; God still loved us (Romans 5:8).

CHAPTER 4

THE TERRIBLE FACT OF SIN

God created the world as a perfect whole. In this perfect world God placed a perfect man. Upon this perfect man God bestowed not only the most precious gift of all- the gift of life eternal. He also gave him the gift of freedom. God gave Adam the freedom to choose. His terrible freedom!

His terrible freedom because Adam's exercise of this free-will brought with it certain consequences and sets the pattern that all humanity was to follow. For Adam was the fountain head of the human race. The history of the human race from the day of Adam's fall has been the story of man's futile effort to gain back the position that was lost by Adam's fall and to reverse the Adamic curse. Sin entered the human race through Adam and the human race has been trying without success to get rid of it ever since. And, short of that, mankind has been seeking in vain to reverse the curse. As true sons of Adam we have followed faithfully in his steps and given- in to several tempting sins. Sin- plain, old-fashioned sin, the self same sin which caused Adam's downfall- is what we are suffering from today. Dr. Richard Beal gives us five words for sin.

FIRST: SIN IS LAWLESSNESS. It means that sin is the transgression of the law of God.

SECOND: SIN IS INIQUITY. Iniquity is the deviation from right, whether or not the particular act has been expressly forbidden. Iniquity has to do with our inner motivations, the very things that we so often try to keep hidden from the eyes of men and God. They are the wrongs which spring from our own corrupt nature rather than the evil acts which force of circumstances sometimes cause us to commit. (Mark 7:21- 23).

THIRD: SIN IS MISSING THE MARK. That means falling short of the goal that has been set. God's goal is Christ. The object and end purpose of all of life is to live up to the life of Christ.

FOURTH: SIN IS A FORM OF TRESPASS. It is the intrusion of self-will into the sphere of divine authority. It is the centering of affection in one's own being instead of reaching out with all one's heart to embrace God. Egoism and selfishness are the marks of this form of sin. It is the most subtle and destructive form of sin.

FIFTH: SIN IS UNBELIEF. Unbelief is a sin because it is an insult to the truthfulness of God. It is unbelief that shuts the door to heaven and opens it to hell. It is unbelief that rejects the Word of God and refuses Christ as Savior. It is unbelief that causes men to turn a deaf ear to the gospel and to deny the miracles of Christ.

Sin incurs the penalty of death and no man has the ability in himself to save himself from sin's penalty or to cleanse his own heart of its corruption. The only remedy to sin and man's salvation from his corrupt nature is Christ's death on the cross. Through the death of Christ upon the cross, sin itself was crucified for those who believe in Him.

CHAPTER 5

DEALING WITH THE DEVIL

There is a satanic principle involved in all that is happening today. For Satan is determined that the dark and joyless river of humanity shall continue on its tormented way until the end of time. The question we need to ask is, how and why did the devil come to be? We know from the story of Adam and Eve that the devil was already present on earth before God made the first man. The question is how God who is all-powerful, all holy and all loving- could have created evil or permitted the devil to create it? Before the fall of Adam, long before Adam even existed, it would appear that God's universe was divided into spheres in influence, each of which was under the supervision and control of an angel or heavenly prince, all of whom were responsible directly to God. The devil must have been just such a powerful, heavenly prince, having the earth assigned to him, perhaps, as his special province. Known as Lucifer, the "Light bearer", he must have stood very close to God- so close, in fact, that ambition entered his heart and he determined not to be God's beloved prince, but to place himself on an equal footing with God Himself! Lucifer was not the counterpart of God, but the counterpart of Michael or Gabriel; he was not a fallen god, but a fallen angel. It was at this moment that the universe- which had been all good and all harmonious to God's will- split and a portion of it set itself in opposition to God. Even at this moment in history, two mighty trinities stand face to face: the Trinity of God (the Father, Son and Holy Ghost) and the trinity of evil (the devil, anti-Christ and false prophet). The struggle between the forces of good and evil will continue until the end of time when one triumphs over the other and places the True King or the false king on the throne. The human phase of this battle started in the Garden of Eden when the devil seduced mankind from God, making it possible for there to be billions of warring wills, every man turning to his own way.

CHAPTER 6

THE DESPAIR OF LONELINESS

Billy talks about six types of loneliness namely;

- I. The Loneliness of Solitude
- II. The Loneliness of Society
- III. The Loneliness of Suffering
- IV. The Loneliness of Sorrow
- V. The Loneliness of Sin
- VI. The Loneliness of the Savior

THE LONELINESS OF SOLITUDE

Loneliness of solitude occurs when one is always alone. It brings certain images and feeling in mind that may have never existed. Now Billy says that sentry standing alone at an outpost,

those in mental institutions and those in solitary confinement in prisons and concentration camps know the meaning of the loneliness of solitude.

THE LONELINESS OF SOCIETY

Loneliness of society is far worse than the loneliness of solitude in that with this form of loneliness one is within the society yet he/she is neglected and forgotten by the people in the society. Example can be old people who are neglected and forgotten in dilapidated institutions of state or the street people living in doorways, and scavenging food in garbage cans.

THE LONELINESS OF SUFFERING

This type of loneliness deals with a situation where one's unfortunate conditions put him away from all others. An example can be one who is suffering on a hospital bed.

THE LONELINESS OF SORROW

This type of loneliness can be seen when one goes through a troubling situation [E.g.: Mary and Martha weeping at the death of Lazarus] that makes the fellow sorrowful yet there is none to comfort him or her.

THE LONELINESS OF SIN

This type describes the loneliness sin brings to the sinner. Every sin one deliberately clings to has the tendency of making him/her lonely. There are thousands of lonely people in the city and in the country, who carry heavy and difficult burdens of grief, anxiety, pain and disappointment; but the loneliest soul of all is the man whose life is steeped in sin.

THE LONELINESS OF THE SAVIOR

The savior, our Lord Jesus Christ experienced loneliness at His crucifixion. Not only was He forsaken by His human companions, but in the desperate and lonely hour He- because He was bearing our sins in His own body on the Cross- was forsaken by God as well. Jesus suffered this.

CHAPTER 7

AFTER DEATH- WHAT?

The Bible indicates that there are actually **two deaths**: One physical death and the other is eternal death. Jesus warned that we are to fear the second death more than the first death. He described the second death as hell, which is eternal separation from God. He indicated that the death of your body is nothing compared to the conscious everlasting banishment of a soul from

God. There are those who teach that everybody eventually will be saved, that God is a God of love and He will never send anyone to hell. They even believe that the words “eternal” or “everlasting” do not actually mean forever. There are others who teach that after death those who have refused to receive God’s plan of redemption are annihilated; they cease to exist. This is not so.

The Bible teaches that whether we are saved or lost, there is conscious and everlasting existence of the soul and personality. There are others who teach that after death there is still a possibility of salvation, that God will offer a second chance. If this is true, the Bible gives no hint of it because the Bible is continually warning that “now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). Another pertinent question one may ask “will a loving God send a man to hell?” the answer is yes, because He is just. But He does not send him willingly. Man condemns himself by his refusal of God’s way of salvation. There are others who ask, “What is the nature of hell?” **There are four words that have been translated in the Bible as “hell”.** One word is “**Sheol**”, which means ‘an unseen state’ and the words of ‘sorrow, pain and destruction’ are used in connection with it. The second word is “**Hades**” which means the same as “Sheol” and the words ‘judgment’ and ‘suffering’ are connected with it. The third word is “**Tartarus**” which is used only once in 2 Peter 2:4, where it says that disobedient angels are cast in Tartarus. It indicates a place of judgment such as a prison, dungeon, where there is darkness. The fourth word is “**Gehenna**” which is the illustration that Jesus used the valley of Hinnon, a place outside Jerusalem where rubbish and debris were burned continually. Others ask, “Does the Bible teach literal fire in hell?” If it is not literal fire, Jesus would not have exaggerated.

As the Bible pronounces hell for the sinner, it also promises heaven for the saint. The Bible teaches that heaven will be a place of beauty. It is described in the Bible as “a building of God”- “a city”- “a better country”- “an inheritance”- “a glory”. One may ask, “Will we know each other in heaven?” The Bible indicates in a number of places that it will be a time of grand reunion with those who have gone before. Others say, “Do you believe that children will be saved?” Yes. The Bible indicates that God does not hold a child accountable for his or her sins until he reaches the age of accountability. Many people ask, “Well, what will we do in heaven? Just sit down and enjoy the luxuries of life?” No. The Bible indicates that we will serve God. There will be work to do for God. Our very beings will praise God. It will be a time of total joy, service, laughter, singing and praise to God. Now the Bible teaches to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. The moment a Christian dies, he goes immediately into the presence of Christ. Many people ask, “How can the bodies that have decayed or been cremated be raised?” God knows. But the new body that we will have will be a glorious body like the body of Christ. It will be an eternal body. It will never know tears, heartache, tragedy, disease, suffering, death or fatigue.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 8

WHY JESUS CAME

It is noticed that the most terrible, the most devastating fact in the universe is **SIN**. The cause of all troubles, the root of all sorrows, and the dread of every man lies in this one small word- **SIN**. The Bible describes sin as a fatal disease that demands a radical cure. All through the Old Testament, God gave man the promise of salvation if by faith he would believe in the coming Redeemer. The burning question became, "How can God be just and still justify the sinner?" It must be remembered that the word justify means "the clearance of the soul from guilt". Justification is far more than just forgiveness. Sin must be put away and made as though it had never been. Man must be restored so that there shall be no spot or blemish or stain. In other words, man must be taken back to the position he had before he fell from grace. Because each man had to bear his own sins, all mankind was excluded from helping, since each was contaminated with the same disease. The only solution was for an innocent party to volunteer to die physically and spiritually as a substitution before God.

GOD IN THREE PERSONS

The Bible teaches that God is actually three Persons. The Bible does not teach that there are three Gods- but that there is One God. This one God, however, is expressed in three Persons. There is God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Second Person of this trinity is God's son, Jesus Christ. He is co-equal with God the Father. He was not a Son of God but the Son of God. He is the Eternal Son of God- the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, God manifested in the flesh, the living Savior. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ had no beginning. He was never created. All things were created by Him, and for Him (Colossians 1:15-17). Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and sinless Son of God, He alone had the power and capacity to bring man back to God. In effect, Christ came to redeem man from sin and the defeat of the devil. He suffered as a substitute for the sinner on the cross. Billy asserts that Christ expressed the terrible physical pain He suffered on the cross when he said "I thirst". Again, Billy asserts that Christ reached the final of sin, fathomed the deepest sorrow, when He cried, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" This cry was proof that Christ, becoming sin for us, had died physically and with it He lost all sense of the Father's presence at that moment in time. As such the awful suffering of Jesus Christ was His Spiritual death. Now Billy points out three assertions in the Cross of Christ.

First is a description of the depth of man's sin. It was not the people or the Roman soldiers who put Christ to the cross- it was your sins and my sins that made it necessary for Him to volunteer this death.

Second, the cross also depicts the overwhelming love of God. The cross is the expression of God's love.

Third, in the cross is the only way of salvation. There is no possibility of being saved from sin and hell except by identifying yourself with the Christ of the cross (John 14:6).

The distinctive feature of Christianity is blood atonement. Without it we cannot be saved. Billy identifies five things blood brings.

First, blood redeems. Redemption means "bring back". We had been sold for nothing to the devil, but Christ redeemed us and brought us back.

Second, blood brings us nigh. When we were aliens and strangers from the covenant of promise, Christ's blood brought us nigh.

Third, blood makes peace. The world will never know peace until it finds it in the cross of Jesus Christ.

Fourth, blood justifies. The repentant sinner pardoned through the blood of Jesus Christ, regains his full citizenship.

Fifth, blood cleanses. All our sins are cleansed by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7)

THE FACT OF THE RESURRECTION

The resurrection meant, first, that Christ was undeniably God. Without the resurrection there could be no salvation. The resurrection of Christ although disputed by some historians, it is still certain and without any doubt that Christ rose from the dead. Second, it meant that God had accepted His atoning work on the cross which was necessary to our salvation (Romans 4:25). Third, it assures mankind of a righteous judgment (Romans 5:19). Fourth, it guarantees that our bodies also would be raised in the end (1 Corinthians 15: 20). Fifth, it means that death will untimely be abolished (Psalm 23: 4).

CHAPTER 9

HOW AND WHEN TO BEGIN

God is a righteous God. He cannot tolerate sin. Sin separates us from God. Man will not find God until he finds the way back to God. There is only one way back to God. Jesus said unless ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18: 3). By childlike faith, everyone has the chance from feeble minded to intellectuals.

This is where it starts, you must be converted. There are many people who confuse conversion with the keeping of the law. The law was given as diagnose of the worlds ills: it outlines the reason for our trouble, not the cure. Actually the word “conversion” means “to turn around, to change one’s mind, to turn back or to return, to repent, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain assurance”. Conversion can take different forms- the way it is accomplished depends largely upon the individual, his temperament, his emotional balance, his environment and his previous conditioning and way of life. Conversion may follow great crisis in a person’s life. Or again conversion may take place at the very height of personal power or prosperity. Conversion can be an instantaneous event, a crisis in which the person receives a clear revelation of the love of God, or it can be a gradual unfolding accompanied by a climactic moment at the time the line is crossed between darkness and light, between death and life everlasting.

PSYCHOLOGY LOOK AT CONVERSION

Psychologist pointed out that conversion is not only a Christian experience but is also found in other religions and that it is not necessarily a religious phenomenon but also occurs in non-religious spheres. Students of psychology have agreed that there are three steps in conversion.

First is a sense of perplexity and uneasiness. Second, a climax and turning point. Third, a relaxation marked by rest and joy. Psychologists say that there are two kinds of conversion. One is accompanied by a violent sense of sin and the other by a feeling of incompleteness, a struggle after a larger life and a desire for spiritual illumination.

Biblical conversion unlike the psychological perspective, involves three steps- two of them active and one passive. In the active conversion, repentance and faith are involved. Repentance is conversion viewed from its starting points that the turning from the formal life and faith indicates the objective point of conversion, the turning of God. The passive one may be called the new birth or regeneration, commonly called born again, - which literally means being born into God’s family. True conversion will involve the mind, the affection and the will.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTELLECTUAL BELIEF AND CONVERSION

There have been thousands of people who have been intellectually converted to Christ. They believe the entire Bible. They believe all about Jesus, but they have never been really converted to Him. These people have had an emotional experience that they refer to as conversion but true conversion must result in changed lives.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

The three element of conversion are repentance, faith and regeneration. These three probably happen at the same time. Repentance means “to turn around from sin”.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

One cannot have genuine repentance without saving faith and one cannot also have saving faith without genuine repentance.

REPENTANCE AND THE GRACE OF GOD

We know that salvation is based entirely upon the Grace of God. Salvation, forgiveness and justification are based entirely upon the atoning work of Christ. However, if the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is to be made effectual for any individual of any age, the individual must repent of sin and accept Christ by faith.

JESUS’ DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

Jesus’ definition of repentance goes beyond the dictionary meaning which entails regretting and feeling sorry about sin. According to Jesus, repentance means “to change or turn”. It is a word of power and action. It is a word that signifies a complete turn about in the individual.

REPENTANCE IS NOT MERE EMOTION

Many people have taught that to repent you must mourn for a stated time in order to be ready for salvation. This falsely produced emotionalism has been a stumbling blocks to many a sincere searching soul. But the true Biblical repentance involves three things: it involves the intellect, the emotion and the will.

THREE ASPECTS OF REPENTANCE

First, there must be knowledge of sin. It is the Holy Spirit who brings about this conviction.

Second, the emotions are involved in repentance just as they are all in genuine experiences. Paul says there is a godly sorrow that worketh towards repentance.

Third, repentance involves the will. There must be that determination to forsake sin- to change ones attitude towards self, towards sin and towards God, to change ones feeling, to change ones will, disposition and purpose.

REPENTANCE DEMANDS SURRENDER

True repentance demands total surrender. When Christ enters into the human heart, He expects to be Lord and Master. He commands complete surrender. He demands control of your intellectual processes. He requires that your body be subject to Him. He expects you to surrender your talents and abilities to Him. He expects nothing less than that all your work and labor will be performed in His name.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT IS FAITH?

Billy used Hebrews 11: 24- 27, which talks about the sacrifices Moses made in rejecting the pleasures of Egypt and rather choosing to suffer with the people of God. According to Billy, Moses' choice was not informed by over emotionalism, frustration, hopeless misfit or an unfulfilled man. Moses made that choice by faith in God. Faith is simply the channel through which God's grace to us is received. It is the hand that reaches out to receive the gift of His love. Faith literally means "to give up, surrender or commit". Faith is complete confidence.

THE ASPECTS OF FAITH

There are three things involved in faith. First, there must be knowledge of what God has said. Second, the emotions are also involved. When you fall in love with Jesus Christ, your emotions are bound to be stirred. Third, the most important of all is the will. It is the will that makes the final and lasting decision.

Chapter 12

THE OLD AND THE NEW

The bible teaches that you were born the first time into the physical world but your spiritual nature was born in sin. The bible declares that you are dead in trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1). The bible teaches that there is nothing in your dead and sinful nature that can originate life. Being dead in sin, you cannot produce life of righteousness unless you are born again. The old nature cannot serve God. In our natural state we are actually at enmity with God. They also teach that our old nature is totally corrupt from its head to its feet. The Bible also teaches that our old nature is a self-nature. The old self is therefore is to be crucified not cultivated. Salvation is not just preparing the original self, it is a new self created of God in righteousness and true holiness. The life that comes from the new birth cannot be obtained by natural development or self effort. Being born again is all together the work of the Holy Spirit. The new birth is a divine work. The new birth entails the infusion of divine life into the human soul.

THE RESULT OF THE NEW BIRTH

First, the new Birth will increase your vision and understanding. Second, your heart undergoes revolution. Third, your will undergo a tremendous change.

THE MEANING OF JUSTIFICATION

By being justified it meant just-as-if-I'd never sinned. Justification is the act of God whereby He declares an ungodly man to be perfect whiles He is still ungodly.

THE OLD AND NEW

Certain changes takes place once an individual is born again. First, there will be a different attitude towards sin. You will learn to hate sin as God hates it. Second, you would want to obey God. Third, you will be separated from the world. Fourth, there will be a new love in your heart for people.

CHAPTER 13

HOW TO BE SURE

How can I be certain that am born again? Many do not seem to understand the nature of Christian experience as a result, they are uncertain about being born again. It is because we have confused faith with feeling, that many experience the difficulty and uncertainty that is so common among professing Christian today. The object of Christian is faith in Christ. Faith actually means surrender and commitment to the claims of Christ. The fact always precedes the faith. The bible says we are saved when our faith is in this objective fact. The work of Christ is a fact, His cross is a fact, his tomb is a fact and his resurrection is a fact. Hence, trusting in Christ for your salvation is Trusting in the fact. Feeling comes after faith.

PART THREE

CHAPTER 14

ENEMIES OF THE CHRISTIAN

The Bible teaches that the Christian have three enemies which will be warning against him/ her as long he/she lives.

First is the devil. The moment you made your decision for Christ, Satan suffered a tremendous defeat. He is angry now. From now on he is going to tempt you and try to lead you into sin.

Second is the world. The world means cosmos, this world system. The world has a tendency to lead us into sin- evil companions, pleasures, fashions, opinions and aims.

Third is the lust of the flesh. The flesh is that evil tendency of your inward self. Even after you are converted, sometimes your old, sinful cravings will return.

FIGHTING OUR FOES

These three foes are: the devil, the world and the flesh can only be fought when we RENOUNCE them. There can be no bargaining, compromise or hesitation. We should also remember that we can only renounce them by the help of the Spirit.

FAITH IS A FACT

Disregard feelings. You are not saved by feeling and you may or may not feel the Spirit. Accept Him by faith as a fact. He lives within you right now to help you live the Christian life.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

One does not produce the fruit of the Spirit himself. They are supernatural in origin. Whereas the gifts of the Spirit are given, the fruits are grown. To grow something there must be a close, intimate, personal relationship between the vine and the branch. A person must be rooted and grounded in Christ.

CHAPTER 15

GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

The Bible teaches that the Christian life is one of constant growth. This implies steady development, constant enlargement, increasing wisdom. This growth can be achieved when we:

1. Read the Bible daily
2. Learn to pray
3. Rely constantly on the Holy Spirit
4. Attend church regularly
5. Become a witnessing Christian
6. Allow love to be the ruling principle of our lives
7. Become obedient Christians
8. Learn how to meet temptation
9. Become wholesome Christians (neat in appearance etc.)
10. Live above our circumstances

CHAPTER 16

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE CHURCH

Man is a social animal, gregarious by nature, and finds greatest sense of security and satisfaction in the company of others who share his interests and attitudes. Nowhere, however, has man found this sense of security and comfort except in the church, for all other groups are man-inspired.

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH

The word “church” is an English translation of the Greek word “ecclesia”, which means “the called out ones” or an assembly of people. In the first century, the word “church” would suggest to the Greek a self-governing, democratic society; to the Jew, a theocratic society whose members were the subjects of God. The word “church” as applied to the Christian society was first used by Jesus Himself in Matthew 16: 18. Thus Jesus Christ Himself founded the Church. He is the great cornerstone upon which the Church is built.

The NT teaches that while there is actually only one universal church, there can be many number of local churches formed into various denominations. The NT teaches that even though there may be divisions within the structure of the Church, yet we have only “ONE LORD”. We must also bear in mind that every local church has its own shortcomings. There is no perfect church.

A CHURCH FOR EVERYONE

A stable church is built up when the members of the congregation recognize that it is their mutual love of Christ and the sincere desire to follow His steps that hold them together. Do not make the mistake of attaching yourself to a particular minister rather than to the body of the Church itself. The ministry may change but the tenets of the Church remains the same. The true Christian goes to church not for what he gets out of it but what he can put into it.

THE CHURCH IS A CHANNEL

The Church should be the means for channeling your funds for Christian work and the needs for fellow Christians. Giving is a Christian grace that should be woven into the fabric of our daily lives until it becomes a part no longer distinguishable from the rest. Our giving is the expression of our love for God. We give back to Him in return for the grace that He has bestowed on us and in that way we spread His love abroad.

THE CHURCH SPREAD THE GOSPEL

The Church is for the spreading of the Gospel. Sixty five percent of the world has yet to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and it is the mission of the Church to reach the unsaved world. According to Wycliffe Bible translators, there are still more than three thousand languages and dialects into which the Bible has not yet been translated.

Chapter 17

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER

Many people have refused the Christian life because it has been presented to them in its negative rather than its positive aspect. They say Christian conduct is against every pleasant and profitable thing. Contrary to this world view, being a Christian does not mean the forfeiting of all real pleasure. Only sinful pleasure has been forbidden by God. The Christian ideal certainly does not demand that the person renounce all interest in the affairs of this life; but rather that we seek God's guidance in performing our daily work to the best of our abilities and that we keep both our work and ambitions in subordination to the Lord at all times. First, the Christian should be a citizen. Second, Christians should be given hospitality. Third, we should have the Christian attitude towards sex. Fourth, it follows naturally that those who take a Christian view of sex will take a Christian view of marriage. Fifth, we are to take the Christian attitude in labor-management relationship. Sixth, the Christian should not encourage racism. Seven, the Christian attitude should prevail in the matter of economics. Jesus said a man's life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesses. Eighth, a Christian would be concerned about the suffering humanity around him. Ninth, the Christian has special obligations to fellow Christians. And lastly, Christians ought to be gracious and this is one of the most important Christians virtues. We must try as much as possible to show love to all others just as Christ demonstrated to us in the scriptures. Jesus hates sin but loves the sinner.

Chapter 18

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Some people ask "when is Christ coming back?". The coming again of Jesus Christ is mentioned more than 300 times in the New Testament alone. C.S. Lewis once said there are three things which keep people from believing in the coming of Christ. First, he said Jesus didn't come when they expected him to come in the first century. The second reason was the theory of evolution- the idea that we are making progress on our own and we really don't need Christ. We are doing it ourselves! And the third reason is that, the coming of Christ cuts across our materialism and our good times- all the things we like the most in this world. The hope for the future for the Christian stands from 1 Thessalonians 4:17 which states "we who are alive on that day will be caught up together with those who have gone before to meet the Lord in the air". It is the hope of the Christian that a day is coming when Jesus Christ will come back to "snatch away" his

followers from all the graveyards of the world, and those of us who are alive and remain, will join them in the great escape.

WHY IS CHRIST GOING TO COME?

There are five reasons why Christ has to come back to this earth.

1. He must come back because of the promises of the Old Testament that have yet to be fulfilled.
2. Christ has to return because of His own statement(Matt. 24:25)
3. Jesus must return because of the present position of Satan (2 Cor. 4:4)
4. Jesus must return because of the present chaos in the world
5. Christ must come so that those people who died believing in God and trusting him may rise again.

SIGNS PRECEDING JESUS' COMING

Jesus gave certain signs that will precede His coming.

1. There will be collapse of morals just before he comes back.
2. There will be a falling away of some believers individually or collectively.
3. There will be increase in lawlessness.
4. There will be worldwide emphases on evangelism and the proclamation of the gospel before He comes.

Chapter 19

PEACE AT LAST

The world is searching for peace, yet peace can be experience only when we have received divine pardon- when we have been reconciled to God and when we have harmony within, with our fellow man and especially with God. Through the blood of the cross, Christ has made peace with God for us and He himself is our peace. If by faith we accept him, we are justified by God and can realize the inner serenity that can calm man through no other means. There are three kinds of peace describe in the bible. First, peace with God. One makes peace with God if he surrenders his life to Christ and accepts Jesus as his lord. Then the war between mankind and God is taken away. For one to have peace with God it cost the blood of Christ. Second, is the peace of God everyone who knows the lord Jesus Christ can go through any problem and face death and still have the peace of God in his heart? Third, future peace. The bible promises that there will be a time when the whole world is going to have peace. We are not going to get permanent peace until the Prince of Peace comes.