

THE ABC's of, CHRISTIAN MATURITY

***A-Z Bible Studies
in the Meat of the Word***

By: Robert J. Sargent

READ THIS FIRST

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A Apostasy

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Like a number of key doctrinal terms (e.g. Trinity, rapture), the word “**apostasy**” is not found in the text of our English Bible — but it is found in its teaching!

The word comes from the Greek ‘*apostasia*,’ which means “a falling away” in the sense of defection or rebellion. *Matthew 19:7* has the word “divorcement”—*apostasion*. This word is translated as “forsake” in *Acts 21:21*. Thus it may be defined as a deliberate act of repudiation.

In this lesson, we shall use the terms “apostasy” and “apostate” in the negative sense as they refer to the act of departing from the faith. We are living in days of great spiritual apostasy and moral decline, and it is absolutely vital that the child of God be fully aware of its danger.

THE SPECTRUM OF UNBELIEF AND ERROR

It is important that we first consider the various forms of unbelief and departure from the faith spoken of in the New Testament — some of which can apply to saved people, and some which refer to lost people. For example, there is:

A. UNBELIEF — no faith.

1. Read: *Romans 4:18-21*. According to *verse 20*, unbelief is the opposite of _____.
2. Read: *Matthew 13:54-58*. According to *verse 58*, unbelief limits the mighty _____ of God.
3. According to *Acts 16:31*, a lost man must _____ in order to be saved.
4. According to *John 8:24*, a lost man’s unbelief means he will _____ in his _____.
5. According to *Revelation 21:8*, the _____ ING shall have their part in the _____ of _____.

6. According to *Mark 16:14*, is it possible for a Christian to have unbelief in his heart? _____
7. Read: *Hebrews 3:12,13.*
- This passage is addressed to “ _____.”
 - Unbelief causes us to _____ from the living God.
(Compare this with *Hebrews 11:6*, which shows that with faith we come to God.)
 - A heart is hardened through the _____NESS of _____.
 - One way we can avoid unbelief is to _____ each other daily.
 - According to *Psalm 119:11*, another way we can avoid unbelief is to hide God’s _____ in our heart.
8. Look up *Mark 9:24*. What should our cry be to the Lord when we find unbelief in our heart?

B. DOUBT — *little faith.*

1. Read: *Matthew 14:25-31.*
- Did Peter obey the Lord (*verse 29*)? _____
 - What kind of faith did Jesus say Peter had (*verse 31*)?
_____ faith.
 - What was it that caused Peter to take his eyes off the Lord (*verse 30*)? _____
2. Read: *Luke 12:22-31.*
- According to *verse 30*, it was the disciples’ concern over “all these _____” that caused them to doubt the Lord.
 - According to *verse 31a*, what should be the focus of the Christian’s life?

-

3. Read: *Romans 14.*

This chapter deals with the question of Jewish dietary laws and customs (*verses 2,3*) and holy days (*verses 5,6a*), and whether Christians are obligated to observe them. The answer is “No!”— but that does not give a Christian the right to disregard those who struggle in these areas (*verses 14,15,21*).

- a. According to *verse 5c*, it is important that every Christian be fully _____ on such matters.
- b. According to *verse 14*, Paul was persuaded by the _____ .
- c. By what means should we be persuaded? (See: *Luke 16:31*.)

- d. According to *verse 23c* when we doubt God and His Word, we
_____ .

C. **IGNORANCE** — *growing faith*

The word “ignorant” means to be ‘uninformed,’ or ‘unlearned’ — ‘lacking in knowledge.’

1. Study: *Acts 3:17; 17:23; Romans 10:3; Ephesians 4:18; I Peter 1:14*. Of what kind of people is the word “ignorant” used in these passages?

2. Study: *Romans 11:25; I Corinthians 10:1; 12:1; I Thessalonians 4:13*. Of whom is the word “ignorant” used in these passages?

3. Read: *I Corinthians 14:23-25*. Notice that in this passage both of the above-mentioned groups are distinguished.
4. *I Peter 2:2* describes young Christians as “new born _____.”
5. *II Peter 3:18* instructs young Christians to _____ in _____ and in _____ .

Mature believers need to exercise discernment and care in this area when working with new Christians or those with whom the Spirit of God is dealing.

D. **ERROR** — *false faith*.

1. According to *Matthew 22:29*, error comes because we do not know the _____ .
2. According to *I Timothy 6:10*, the sin of C _____NESS will cause doctrinal error.
3. According to *I Timothy 6:20,21*, false _____ (that which is in opposition to the Word of God) will lead to error.

4. According to *II Peter* 3:17, Christians can be led astray by following after the error of those who wrest the Scriptures.

E. HERESY — *subverted faith*.

The word heresy (Gk. *hairesis*) literally means “a choice.” When used in connection with faith and the Word of God, it means a deliberate alignment with the side of error.

It is much more than ignorance. It is more than simply holding to an error. It is taking sides with error against truth. In *Acts* 5:17; 15:5; 24:5; 26:5; and 28:22, the word is translated “sect,” which shows that the concept of heresy involves forming a “party” within the main body.

1. According to *Galatians* 5:20, heresy is a work of the _____.
2. According to *Titus* 3:10, a church member who is a heretic is to be given _____ chances to conform to the Word of God or be rejected.
3. Note: *Titus* 3:11. A heretic is one who has been “subverted.” Subversion is the method often employed by reprobates — *Titus* 1:11.

F. APOSTASY — *repudiated faith*.

As stated above, we have defined “apostasy” as the deliberate repudiation of the faith. “The Faith” refers to the whole body of truth “once delivered unto the saints” — *Jude* 3.

Read: *I Timothy* 4:1-3.

1. According to *verse 1*, to apostatize means to _____ from the faith.
2. This passage gives **five** marks of an apostate. He is one who:
 - a. Has listened to _____ spirits. In *I John* 4:6d, this spirit is called the “spirit of _____.”
 - b. Has accepted devilish _____. According to *Hebrews* 13:9a, these are “divers and _____ doctrines,” contrary to what *Titus* 2:1 calls “_____ doctrine.”
 - c. Is a lying _____ (*verse 2*). Apostates always pretend to be what they are not! — orthodox Christians.
 - d. Has a _____ conscience. According to *Romans* 2:15, the conscience bears _____ to God’s moral law. (When flesh is cauterized it loses its response to the natural senses.)

- e. F _____ s and C _____ s contrary to God's Word (*verse 3*). **Note:** Both marriage (*Hebrews 13:4a*) and meats (*Colossians 2:16*) are sanctioned by God's Word.

G. **REPROBATION** — *counterfeit faith*

Read: *II Timothy 3:6-8* and *Titus 1:13-16*.

These passages describe another class of religious 'ministers' — referred to in *II Peter 2:1* and *Jude 4* as false teachers. They are reprobate concerning the faith.

1. What They Are:

- a. They are unable to come to the _____ of the truth — *II Timothy 3:7*.
- b. They _____ the truth — *II Timothy 3:8*.
- c. They are _____ ignorant of God's promises — *II Peter 3:5*.
- d. They _____ to be Christians — *Titus 1:16*.
- e. They are not _____ — *I John 2:19*.
- f. They are W _____ in sheep's clothing — *Matthew 7:15*.
See also: *Acts 20:29*.
- g. They are _____ men — *Jude 4*.
- h. They are twice _____ — *Jude 12*.
- i. They have not the _____ — *Jude 19*.
- j. They are Satan's _____ — *II Corinthians 11:15*.
- k. They are _____ of the cross — *Philippians 3:18,19*.

2. What They Do:

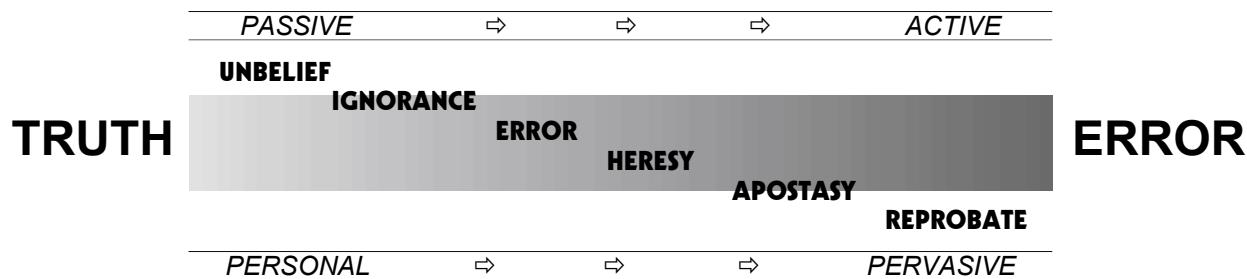
- a. According to *Jude 4*, they have _____ in unawares. They get into our churches (*Acts 20:29*) and among our people (*II Timothy 3:6*) — either by direct contact (*Titus 1:10*), or through books, magazines, tapes, radio, television, etc.
- b. According to *Jude 12* and *II Peter 2:13*, they F _____ (i.e. fellowship) with God's people.
- c. They S _____ and D _____ — *II Timothy 3:13*.
- d. They _____ men from the truth — *Titus 1:14*.
- e. They cause men to S _____ from the truth — *I Timothy 1:6*.
- f. They make _____ of God's people — *II Peter 2:3*.

3. What They Teach:

- a. Damnable _____ — *II Peter 2:1*. These are false **doctrines** which, if believed, will keep a person from being saved.
- b. Counterfeit L _____ — *II Peter 2:19*. This is false **morality**, antinomianism — the belief that Christians may conduct themselves as they please.

Reprobates are unsaved professors of true (Bible) Christianity who are in reality Satan's agents engaged in fomenting error, heresy, and apostasy within God's true churches.

The following diagram will help summarize the 'spectrum' of unbelief and error.



Note: This chart is for illustration purposes only, and is not intended to be Biblically definitive.

FOUR INROADS TO APOSTASY

Satan's efforts to destroy the Lord's churches come on **four** fronts. His attacks can be seen in Scripture as well as throughout Christian history, and it is absolutely vital that Bible-believing Baptists clearly understand exactly where the battles are to be fought, how the Devil will maneuver, and when to take a stand.

This section will consider these four key battlegrounds for the faith. They are:

A. The Gainsaying Of KORAH — *Jude 11*.

The word "gainsaying" means to 'contradict,' 'dispute,' or 'resist,' with reference to God's appointed authority.

The story of Korah is found in Numbers 16.

- In *verse 1*, Korah and his associates "took _____. " i.e. They incited others (in leadership positions!! — *verse 2*) to apostatize.

- In *verse 3*, we are told “they gathered themselves _____ Moses” and Aaron.
- In *verse 28*, Moses claimed his authority came from the _____.

Now study the following Scriptures to note these same characteristics in godless reprobates:

1. According to *II Timothy 3:8*, Jannes and Jambres (the magicians of Pharaoh’s court) _____ Moses (God’s man).
2. False teachers despise _____ — *II Peter 2:10*.
3. Reprobates despise _____ — *Jude 8*.
4. These deceivers are U _____ (will not be ruled) — *Titus 1:10*.

This all adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies the rejection of God’s AUTHORITY — chiefly the authority of the Word of God (*II Timothy 3:16; Psalm 119:160; Matthew 4:4*), but also Church authority (*Matthew 18:17b; I Timothy 3:15*) and pastoral authority (*Titus 2:15; Hebrews 13:7,17*).

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they turn aside from the pure Word of God (the Authorized, King James Version), when they begin to question the verbal, plenary, inerrant, infallible inspiration of the Word of God, or when they refuse to submit — either in their personal lives or in their Churches — to the absolute authority of the Bible in matters of faith and order.

B. The Way Of CAIN — *Jude 11*.

The story of Cain and Abel is found in *Genesis 4:1-12*.

- Cain was a _____ of the _____ (*verse 2*).
- His offering consisted of the fruit of the _____ (*verse 3*).
- The ground had been _____ through sin (*Genesis 3:17*).
- Cain’s offering consisted of his own _____ (*I John 3:12*).

Now study the following Scriptures to note these same characteristics in godless reprobates:

1. False teachers deny the Lord that _____ them — *II Peter 2:1*.
 - a. According to *I Corinthians 6:20a*, believers are _____ with a _____.
 - b. According to *IPeter 1:18,19*, the price of redemption is the precious _____ of Christ.

- c. Atonement for sin requires the _____ of innocent _____ (*Hebrews 9:22b*).
2. False teachers turn the _____ of God into lasciviousness (lustful desire) — *Jude 4*.
- According to *Titus 2:11*, it is the grace of God that bringeth _____.
 - According to *Romans 6:1,15*, the grace of God does **not** give us license to continue in _____.
3. False teachers deny “the only Lord _____, and our _____ Jesus _____” — *Jude 4*.

According to *Romans 3:24,25*, we have been:

- J _____ freely by His _____
- Through R _____ in C _____
- Through F _____ in His _____.

The “way of Cain” adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies the rejection of God’s *GRACE* — particularly the grace of God in salvation (*Ephesians 1:7; 2:7-9*), but also of God’s grace in holy living (*Titus 2:12*).

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they turn aside from the pure Gospel of Christ to ANOTHER GOSPEL — *Galatians 1:6-9; II Corinthians 11:4*. These ‘gospels’ abound today — e.g. the social ‘gospel,’ the bloodless ‘gospel,’ the no-repentance ‘gospel,’ the ‘gospels’ of works, legalism, emotionalism, etc.

The first Biblical example of this kind of error is found in Acts 15, where false teachers taught a *ceremonial gospel* (*verse 1*) in opposition to the one true Gospel (*verse 11*). This error quickly became a heresy, which developed into the first great historical apostasy — **baptismal remission**.

C. **The Way (Error) And Doctrine Of BALAAM** — *Jude 11*.

The story of Balaam is found in Numbers 22–25.

- Balaam was hired by Balak, king of the Moabites, to _____ the children of Israel — *Numbers 22:6*.
- Balaam was offered great _____ to do Balak’s bidding — *Numbers 22:17*.
- Balaam was rebuked by his _____ as he attempted to do what God had forbidden him — *Numbers 22:21-34*.
- Balaam eventually brought God’s severe judgment upon Israel through his _____ — *Numbers 31:16*.

The New Testament speaks of the way (error) of Balaam, and the doctrine of Balaam. Study the following Scriptures to see these same characteristics in godless reprobates:

1. The WAY (Error) Of Balaam — *II Peter 2:15; Jude 11.*

- a. This way is _____ — *Numbers 22:32e.*
- b. This way loves the _____ of unrighteousness — *II Peter 2:15.*
- c. This way runs greedily after _____ — *Jude 11.*

Balaam is a hireling (*John 10:13*) — in the ministry for the money.

This also highlights an area of great temptation for faithful preachers — *modify the message for the sake of a salary* — *I Timothy 6:10.*

2. The DOCTRINE Of Balaam — *Revelation 2:14.*

- a. Balaam could not directly curse God's people. Instead he devised a *roundabout* plan to bring divine judgment upon them.

He instructed Balak how to cast a _____
_____ before the children of Israel (*Revelation 2:14*).

- b. Compare *Revelation 2:14d* with *Numbers 25:1; 31:15,16.* Exactly what was Balaam's counsel to Balak?

- c. Read: *Numbers 25:1-3.* Notice three things the children of Israel lost when they joined themselves to Baal-peor:

- They _____ at Shittim (*verse 1*) — i.e. they lost their pilgrimage.
- They committed _____ (*verse 1*) — i.e. they lost their purity.
- They sacrificed to and worshipped Moab's _____ (*verse 2*) — i.e. they lost their peculiarity (*Deuteronomy 7:6*).

- d. Read: *Joshua 22:16-18.* Did the wickedness at Baal-peor have any affect on next generation?

- e. According to *Numbers 25:18a*, the enemy vexed the Israelites with their _____, wherewith they _____ them.

- f. According to *II Peter 2:14*, reprobates are able to beguile those who are _____.

This all adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies the rejection of God's STANDARDS — principally those holy standards of morality and personal conduct to which believers are enjoined (*I Peter 1:15,16; II Corinthians 6:14–7:1; I John 2:15-17*).

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they turn aside from godly living and godly standards in their homes and churches. In these matters the LORD wants us to be "peculiar" (*I Peter 2:9; Titus 2:14*), "simple" (*Romans 16:19d*), exemplary (*John 17:16; Ephesians 4:17-24*), and separated (*Ephesians 5:6-8; I Thessalonians 4:1-7; II Timothy 2:19-22*). As the children of Israel were *subtly* drawn into great wickedness when the Moabite women allured them through the lusts of the flesh (*II Peter 2:18*), so today the "counsel of Balaam" craftily seeks to displace spirituality with sensuality, and consecration with carnality.

D. **The Seduction Of JEZEBEL** — *Revelation 2:20*.

The account of the historical Jezebel is found from *I Kings 16* to *II Kings 9*. In these passages we see that Jezebel:

- Was the pagan wife of king _____ (*I Kings 16:31*).
- Introduced _____ worship into Israel (*I Kings 16:31,32*).
- _____ the LORD'S prophets (*I Kings 18:4*).
- Was benefactress to 850 false _____ (*I Kings 18:19*).
- Stirred up Ahab to work _____ (*I Kings 21:25*).
- _____ her face in an attempt to seduce Jehu (*II Kings 9:30*).

The 'Jezebel' of Thyatira was a false teacher (perhaps a woman — *I Timothy 2:12*) in the mold and spirit of the ancient queen. Study the following Scriptures to see the grave danger posed by this kind of reprobate:

1. According to *Revelation 2:20*, Jezebel's teaching and seduction was targeted on the Lord's _____ .
2. According to *Acts 20:17,28-31*, the first "line of defense" in any Bible-believing Baptist church is: _____
3. Jezebel's doctrine is equated with the _____ of Satan (*Revelation 2:24*).
4. This fornicating woman is identified as the great _____ in *Revelation 17:1-9*. Here she is not simply a false teacher, but a false system!

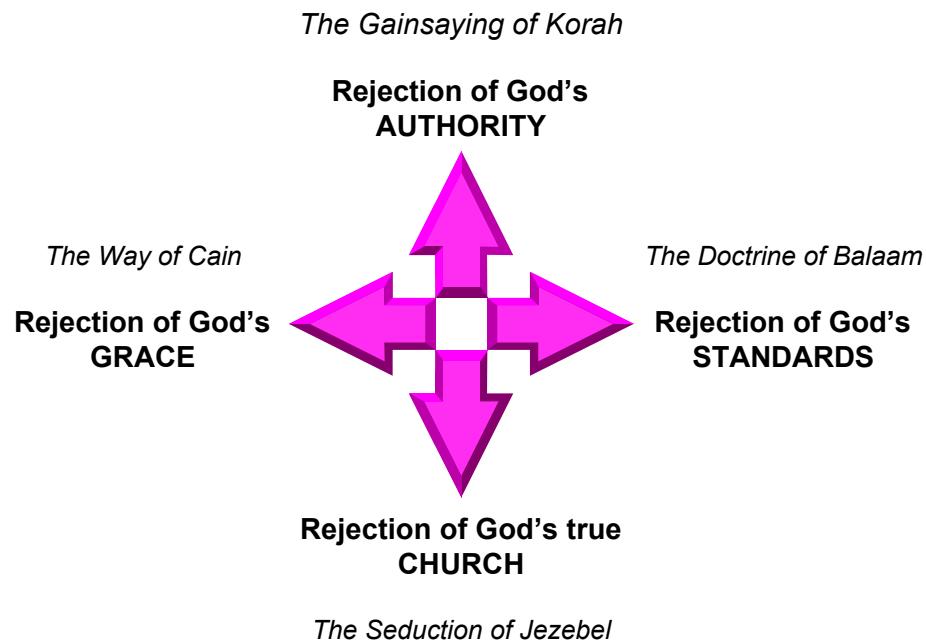
This is the coming ecumenical 'Church' of the Antichrist, sitting in the city of seven hills — Rome! Right now the 'Church' of Rome and her Protestant daughters are moving ever closer to bringing about this new "Tower of Babel."

5. Read: *Proverbs 7:6-21*. This Scripture shows the manner in which a harlot goes about seducing her unwary victim — she paints her face just like the Old Testament Jezebel in order to look attractive.
6. *Revelation 18:4* commands God's people to _____ of this religious organization.
7. According to *Revelation 2:22,23*, those who are ensnared by this Jezebel will end up with her in great _____.

This all adds up to one thing: apostasy embodies the rejection of God's true CHURCH — the pure, chaste, virgin churches of the Lord Jesus Christ (*II Corinthians 11:2-4*).

Baptists are on the road to apostasy when they begin to involve themselves in the present-day ecumenical movement, interdenominationalism, parachurch organizations, etc. All such roads eventually lead to the harlot ROME — a religious system which has always hated Baptists (*Revelation 17:6*). Today, however, Rome has "painted her face" and is alluring many unsuspecting men into a spiritual — *and eternal* — death trap!

The following diagram will help summarize the four major inroads to apostasy within Bible-believing Baptist churches today:



THE GREAT APOSTASY

In *II Thessalonians 2:3* we are told of a “falling away” (apostasy) associated with the end of this present age. To understand what this means we must carefully consider the context of the passage, some doctrinal explanation, and the sequence of events:

A. The Context — *II Thessalonians 2:1,2.*

1. A first century A.D. doctrinal error put forward by reprobates was that the resurrection is _____ already (*II Timothy 2:18*).
2. Another term we use for the resurrection is “The R _____ of the saints”— see: *I Corinthians 15:51,52*.
3. This false teaching was cunningly devised to _____ the _____ of the believers (*II Timothy 2:18*).
4. The members of the church at Thessalonica were _____ in mind, and _____ by false epistles saying that the “Day of Christ **is** at hand.” — *verse 2*.
5. The apostle Paul comforted them by speaking of the _____ of the Lord and the _____ ING of the saints unto Him as a ‘yet-to-happen’ event — *verse 1*.

B. Some Doctrinal Explanation.

The “Day of Christ” (*verse 2*) is the period of time which begins with the coming of Christ **for** His saints, and encompasses the heavenly events associated with the Judgment Seat of Christ (*I Corinthians 1:7,8; 5:5; Philippians 1:6,10; 2:16*) — ending in “that day” (*II Thessalonians 1:10*) when Christ returns in glory to the earth **with** His saints.

The “Day of the LORD” also begins at the same time, but relates to the earthly events associated with Daniel’s 70TH Week and the establishment of the millennial kingdom of Christ.

C. The Sequence Of Events — *II Thessalonians 2:1-8.*

1. The _____ of _____ is already at work — *verse 7a; I John 2:18*.
2. The One Who presently “letteth” (hinders) will be taken _____ of the _____ — *verse 7b.*

Note: The “*he who now letteth*” refers to the present work of the Holy Spirit in restraining wickedness and the coming of the Antichrist. Why? Because of the personal pronoun “he” (*John 14:17*), because He was known by these Christians (“*ye know*”—verse 6), and because *I John 4:3,4* teaches that the indwelling Holy Spirit enables believers to be overcomers in the face of the present-day ‘spirit’ of antichrist. (When the Antichrist does come on the scene, he will be the overcomer—*Revelation 11:7; 13:7*.)

3. The Lord Jesus Christ will return as a thief in the night for His saints — *verse 1, I Thessalonians 4:15-17*.
4. The Day of the Lord *and* the Day of Christ will begin concurrently.
5. The Great Apostasy will take place. This is described in *Psalm 2:1-3* as the day the whole world will throw off the LORD’S B _____ (control) and C _____ (restraint).

Note: One can only imagine the rampant lawlessness that will come upon the world when the “salt of the earth” is suddenly removed.

Note: This coming great apostasy is being prepared in our day, as more and more we see people refusing to endure sound doctrine (*II Timothy 4:3,4*).

6. The _____ of _____ will be revealed — *verse 3*. He will present himself as the Messiah and Saviour of the world.
7. The Antichrist will then sit in the _____ of God and claim to BE ____! — *verse 4*.
8. The second coming of Christ will bring God’s _____ upon a wicked world (*II Thessalonians 1:8*), and the destruction of that _____ one (*II Thessalonians 2:8*).

HOW TO DEAL WITH APOSTASY

We have seen that apostasy is the deliberate departing from the faith — brought about (usually incrementally) through the introduction of error and heresy, often at the hand of deceitful reprobates.

There are two questions we must now ask: How do we prevent apostasy? *and*, How do we deal with apostasy? To these the Word of God gives clear answers.

A. God's Provision For SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.

Read: *I John 2:18-27*.

This passage is written “concerning them that _____ you” (*verse 26*), and gives us God’s **double defense** against apostasy.

1. God has given us an _____ (*verse 20*).
 - a. In *verse 27* this is called the _____.
 - b. Both these expressions refer to the _____ of truth — *John 14:17*.
2. We are also instructed to let that which we have _____ from the beginning abide in us (*verse 24*).
 - a. This refers to His His _____ which we are to _____ in — *II John 6*.
 - b. According to *II Peter 3:2* we are to be _____ of the _____ which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the _____ of the apostles.
 - c. *Jude 17* instructs us to remember the _____ which were spoken before of the _____.
 - d. In *Jude 20-23*, God gives **seven** practical steps to avoid falling into error. These are:
 - B _____ yourself up on the most holy faith — *verse 20a*
 - P _____ in the power of the Holy Ghost — *verse 20b*
 - K _____ yourself in the center of God’s love — *verse 21a*
 - L _____ expectantly for the return of Jesus — *verse 21b*
 - M _____ a difference in others through love — *verse 22*
 - S _____ the lost through the Gospel — *verse 23a*
 - H _____ sin, worldliness, and the flesh — *verse 23b*

In *II Timothy 3:13,14* we are admonished to _____ in the things we have both learned (from the Word of God) and been assured of (by the Spirit of God).

The promise of *I John 2:24* is that we shall _____ in the faith IF we know the truth and obey the truth.

B. God's Prescript To SOLEMN DUTY.

Here's a five-fold plan Baptists must adhere to for dealing with the error, heresy, apostasy, and reprobates which abound on every side:

1. NO RESPITE:

- a. In *Acts 20:31a*, pastors are instructed to W _____ . (Note the context.)
- b. In *II Timothy 4:5*, Timothy was exhorted to _____ in all things. (Note the context.)
- c. According to *Hebrews 13:17*, pastors are charged to watch for our _____ .

There must be unceasing surveillance!

2. NO FELLOWSHIP:

- a. We must have _____ fellowship with the _____ of darkness — *Ephesians 5:11*.
- b. According to *I Timothy 6:5*, we must _____ from those of corrupt minds who are destitute of the truth.
- c. *II Timothy 3:5c* instructs us to _____ from all false teachers and teaching.

There must be unwavering separation!

3. NO TOLERANCE:

- a. Churches are to _____ (brand) and _____ deceivers who cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine — *Romans 16:17*.
- b. According to *II John 10* we are not to _____ false teachers into our homes — or the house of God!

There must be unending steadfastness!

4. NO COMPROMISE:

- a. According to *Jude 3b*, we must C _____ , not accommodate!
- b. A little _____ leaveneth the whole lump — *Galatians 5:9*. (Note the context.)
- c. Leaven is a symbol of false _____ , according to *Matthew 16:12*.

There must be unbroken soundness!

5. NO QUARTER:

- a. In *Revelation 2:2b*, the Lord Jesus Christ commanded the church of Ephesus because they _____ those false teachers who claimed to be apostles.
- b. According to *I Timothy 1:20*, those who had “put away concerning faith” were delivered unto _____ (i.e. removed from the church by church action, *I Corinthians 5:5a*).
- c. Because of false prophets, we must _____ the spirits, *I John 4:1*. (Note: This word does not mean to “sample” — it means to “put on trial.”)

There must be unrelenting safeguards!

REPROVE ► REBUKE ► REJECT ► REFUSE

Ephesians 5:11

II Timothy 4:2

Titus 1:13; 2:15

II Timothy 4:2

Titus 3:10

I Timothy 4:7

“Many Baptists are being affected by the apostasy of these last days. It is true they are not apostates but they are being neutralized by apostate tendencies. They are being swept along in the flood tide of the denials of the age. They are no longer the salt of the earth. They have lost their savor. Many have developed a system of compromise which sounds very convincing. But apostasy is apostasy. Our forefathers stood by the Truth and so should we. We must not abandon it for convenience or for temporary peace with the world. It is time for those who hold to the faith of the Book to stand up, speak up, and proclaim it.”

— Brother Gordon Silcox

“Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”

Luke 18:8

MEMORY VERSE: Try and commit to memory *I Timothy 4:1*.

B The Bride Of Christ

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This subject is one of the more unfamiliar and misunderstood doctrines of the Word of God. One reason for this has undoubtedly been due to some of the bizarre claims made over the years as to who or what constitutes the Bride of Christ. The title itself is not used consistently in the New Testament — it is “bride” in John 3 & Revelation 22, “espoused” in II Corinthians 11, and “wife” in Revelation 19 & 21.

In Baptist circles the doctrine has become somewhat divisive. The reasons for this are basically:

- Pride of position — where some brethren have taken a bombastic attitude of superiority over those they consider are not “in the Bride,” etc.
- Misunderstanding — where some think that for a Bible-believing Baptist to believe in the Bride of Christ means he believes only Baptists are saved, or that only Baptists will be raptured!!

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the doctrine of the Bride of Christ is found in the Bible — e.g. *John 3:29; Revelation 19:7-9; 22:17*. Therefore the purpose of this lesson is to study what the Word of God teaches on the matter. Therein we find a beautiful, thrilling, and challenging doctrine.

DEFINING SOME IMPORTANT TERMS

References to the Bride of Christ are couched in the customs of oriental and Biblical marriage — which differ from those of the western world. Engagement, then marriage is the usual practice in this country. However, the Bible uses three terms:

- BETROTHAL — engagement, often arranged by others — *Exodus 21:8-11*.
- ESPOUSAL — engagement, demonstrated by expensive gifts and a dowry — *II Samuel 3:14; Genesis 34:12*. The period of espousal was typically one year, during which time neither party saw each other.

See: Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:27; 2:5. Though not consummated this was as binding as marriage. Mary is called Joseph’s wife!

- MARRIAGE — the consummation, accompanied by long feasting (usually one week) — *Matthew 22:1-10.*
-
-

THE IDENTITY OF THE BRIDE

The first question to consider is: “Who, or what, is the Bride of Christ?” There have been a number of suggestions put forward which we will now consider.

A. Is ISRAEL The Bride?

Some believe the nation of Israel is the Bride of Christ, based on passages such as *Isaiah 54:5,6*. However:

1. The LORD refers to Himself as Israel’s _____ in *verse 5.*
2. Israel is called a _____ of youth in *verse 6.*
3. According to *Jeremiah 3:8*, Israel committed _____ and Judah played the _____.
4. According to *Jeremiah 3:8*, God has “put _____” Israel and given her a “bill of _____.”
5. The LORD declares He is _____ to Israel in *Jeremiah 3:14.*
6. Read: *Ezekiel 16:30-33.*
7. According to *Isaiah 54:7*, God has forsaken Israel for a _____, but will one day _____ them with great mercies.
8. The LORD will once more _____ His chosen people in righteousness, judgment, lovingkindness, mercy, and faithfulness — *Hosea 2:19,20.*

Israel *will* be reunited with her estranged Husband — at the second coming of Christ. See: *Zechariah 12:10; 13:9.*

However, Israel is **NOT** the Bride of Christ for two reasons:

- She is a wife, not a bride! (Israel is sometimes referred to as “the wife of Jehovah.”)
- Her future reconciliation occurs on earth, not in Heaven (*Zechariah 14:4*), whereas the marriage of the Lamb is in Heaven (*Revelation 19:1*) and before Christ returns to the earth (*Revelation 19:11&c.*)

B. **Do The SAINTS Of All Ages Make Up The Bride?**

This is a plausible suggestion, because saved people are most certainly the objects of the great love of the Lord Jesus Christ — e.g. *Romans 5:8; 8:38,39; I John 4:10; Revelation 1:5b*; etc. However:

1. Read: *John 3:29.*

a. What does John the Baptist call himself in this passage? _____

b. Was John the Baptist a saved man? _____ (See: *Luke 1:15,16; 7:24-28.*)

c. Did John consider himself to be in or of the Bride? _____

2. Read: *Luke 5:33-35.*

a. What three groups of disciples are mentioned here?

b. Which of these three groups was associated with the Bridegroom?

c. According to *John 1:35-42*, two of John's disciples (saved and baptized) who became disciples of Jesus were _____ and _____ Peter.

The saints of all the ages *will* enjoy the blessings of eternity with Christ — *Revelation 21:24*. However, the saved of all the ages do **NOT** constitute the Bride of Christ because the Bible distinguishes the bride from other saved people.

C. **Is The CHURCH The Bride?**

1. Look up *II Corinthians 1:1*. According to this verse, the Book of II Corinthians was initially addressed to the “ _____ of God which is at _____, with all the _____ which are in all Achaia.”
2. Some might argue that the words “*with all the saints*” in this verse widens the salutation to include every believer — regardless of church membership. However, a careful study of *I Corinthians 1:2; 14:33; Ephesians 1:1* (with *Revelation 2:1; 4:12; Philippians 1:1*; and *Colossians 1:2*) shows that saints were always connected with churches.

3. This church at Corinth had been _____ by the apostle Paul to one _____ (Christ) — *II Corinthians 11:2*.
4. According to *Ephesians 5:25b*, Christ loved the _____.
5. According to *Ephesians 5:32*, the preceding verses are dealing with Christ and the _____.

The conclusion we draw from these Scriptures is that the Bride of Christ **IS** none other than the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What Is The Church?

Remember, the Bible speaks only of “the Church” in a generic or institutional sense — in the same way *Ephesians 5:23* speaks of “the husband” and “the wife.”

There is no such thing as a universal (invisible, mystical, Body of Christ) ‘Church’ taught in the Word of God — there are only churches. A simple Biblical definition of a New Testament Church is:

“An assembly of baptized believers, organized to carry out the Lord’s work.”

Therefore...

The Bride of Christ is a faithful CHURCH bride.

THE PREPARATION OF THE BRIDE

Ephesians 5:25-33 is a wonderful passage in which the Lord’s relationship with His churches is held up for an example of true love between a husband and wife.

Read the passage, then answer the following:

A. Christ’s Love For His Churches.

His love is demonstrated by the fact that:

1. He _____ Himself for it (*verse 25c*) — a selfless love
2. He N _____ it (*verse 29b*) — a nurturing love.
3. He C _____ it (*verse 29b*) — a possessive love.

B. Christ’s Plan For His Churches.

The love of Christ for His churches is a visionary love.

1. One day Christ will _____ His bride to Himself (*verse 27*).

2. On His wedding day, the Lord desires His bride be presented as:
 - a. A G _____ church (i.e. resplendent) — *verse 27a.*
 - b. A S _____ LESS church (i.e. without defect or disgrace) — *verse 27b.*
 - c. A W _____ -free church — *verse 27c.*
 - d. A H _____ church — *verse 27e.*
 - e. A B _____ -free church (i.e. blameless) — *verse 27e.*
3. The Lord expects His bride to be presented as a pure, _____ — *II Corinthians 11:2.*
4. On the wedding day, the bride will have made herself _____ — *Revelation 19:7d.*

C. Christ's Preparing Of His Churches.

1. *Ephesians 5:26* says the Lord washes His bride with the _____ of God.
2. The *applied Word of Truth* will _____ (separate) His bride from the world — *John 17:17.*

According to the oriental customs of marriage, a bride would spend a lot of time and money preparing for her wedding day.

- Esther was _____ and _____ (*Esther 2:7f*), yet she took _____ months of preparation for marriage (*verse 12*).
- According to *Isaiah 61:10*, a bride would _____ herself with her _____. See also: *Jeremiah 2:32.*
- Read *Ezekiel 16:10-14* and observe how the LORD describes His preparation of Israel as His wife.
- According to *II Peter 2:13*, what are the spots and blemishes which afflict the Lord's churches? _____

THE PURITY OF THE BRIDE

The New Testament uses three important metaphors to describe a true Church:

- Each true New Testament church is likened to a B _____, with Christ as its _____ (*Colossians 1:18a*). This speaks of service.
- Each true New Testament church is likened to a B _____, with Christ as the CHIEF _____ — _____ (*Ephesians 2:20-22*). This speaks of sanctuary — the special presence of God.
- Each true New Testament church is likened to a BRIDE, with Christ as the BRIDEGROOM. This speaks of spotlessness.

A. Can A Church Can Lose Her Purity?

1. The apostle's greatest fear for the church at Corinth was that she might be C _____ from the S _____ that is in Christ — *II Corinthians 11:3d*.
2. Satan employs the same methods by which he _____ Eve — *II Corinthians 11:3c*.
 - a. According to *Genesis 3:1*, the first recorded words of Satan on planet Earth were, “Yea, _____ God _____?”
 - b. Satan's foremost attack is to create doubt in God's Word.
 - c. Satan uses his _____ to sow seeds of corruption in a church — *II Corinthians 11:15*.
3. According to *Revelation 2:4*, the church at Ephesus eventually left its _____. Contrast this with *Song of Solomon 2:2-5*.
4. The church of the Laodiceans had effectively left the Bridegroom standing at the _____, knocking — *Revelation 3:20*. Compare this state of affairs with *Song of Solomon 5:2-6,9-16*.

B. When Does A Church Lose Her Purity?

1. A true New Testament church loses her purity when she receives a ‘Bible’ that is _____ — *II Corinthians 2:17*.

2. Read: *Revelation 2:20-24*. A true New Testament church loses her purity when she receives a D _____ that is corrupt — *verse 24c*.
 - a. The church at Pergamos was tolerating (“hast”) those within her membership who held false _____ — *Revelation 2:14,15*.
 - b. From *Revelation 2:20*, we see the church at Thyatira was permitting (“sufferest”) a false prophet to teach its members, causing them to commit spiritual _____.
3. A true New Testament church loses her purity when she becomes a friend of the _____ — *James 4:4*.

The Lord’s bride must keep herself doctrinally and morally pure!

C. What Happens When A Church Loses Her Purity?

1. The Bible says marriage and the bed _____ are honourable — *Hebrews 13:4a*. During the time of espousal Christ expects His bride to keep herself pure and spotless, committed exclusively to Him.
2. According to *I Corinthians 6:15-18*, the sin of fornication (whether personal or corporate) J _____ S one to an harlot.
3. The Lord calls upon the churches to _____ or _____ in *Revelation 2:5,16*.
4. In *Revelation 2:21*, the Lord gives _____ to repent.
5. In *Revelation 3:4*, the Lord appeals to a _____ in the church at Sardis which had remained undefiled.
6. According to *Hebrews 13:4b*, God will _____ adulterers.
7. According to *I Corinthians 3:17*, God will _____ those who defile His temple (each New Testament church).
8. According to *Revelation 2:22,23a*, churches (and their children) which have joined themselves to the harlot will suffer the harlot’s fate (*Revelation 17:16*) and be cast into great _____.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BRIDE

Read: *Revelation 19:1-9.* In this prophetic scene we are given a glimpse of the great wedding day and the marriage of the Lamb.

A. The Time Of The Marriage.

1. *Revelation 19:1* says, “... _____ these things...”
 2. “These things” refers back to *Revelation 18* which details the destruction of _____ — *verse 2.*
 3. This calamitous event will occur with the _____ vial judgment — *Revelation 16:17-19.*
 4. According to *Revelation 19:11-15*, what event follows the marriage?
-

B. The Place Of The Marriage.

Revelation 19:1a indicates the marriage will take place in _____.

C. The Participants At The Marriage.

1. The Father — “_____ that sat on the throne” — *verse 4.*
2. The massed choir — a great _____, singing the four-fold _____ chorus — *verse 6.*
3. The center of attraction — the L _____ — *verse 7.*

“*The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom’s face;
I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace.
Not at the crown He giveth, but on His pierced hand:
The Lamb is all the glory, of Immanuel’s land.*”

[Anne Ross Cousin, 1824-1906]

4. The W _____ — *verses 7d,8.*
5. Read: *Hebrews 12:22-24.* In this passage we have a list of 8 ‘things’ we shall see in glory (mount Sion). These are:
 - a. The heavenly _____ — *verse 22.*
 - b. An innumerable company of _____ — *verse 22.*
 - c. The G_____ A_____ — *verse 23.*
This is the Greek “*panegyros*,” the festive gathering of the whole kingdom.

- d. The _____ of the firstborn — *verse 23*. This is the Greek “*ecclesia*,” a local assembly within the kingdom.
Note the use of the plural “are” in *verse 23*, indicating the “general assembly” and the “church of the firstborn” have distinct identities.
- e. _____ the Judge — *verse 23*.
- f. The spirits of _____ men made _____ — *verse 23*. Looking back to *Hebrews 11:40*, we see that these are the Old Testament saints made perfect through the resurrection.
- g. _____ — *verse 24*.
- h. The _____ — *verse 24*.

D. The Celebration Of The Marriage.

- 1. From Christ’s parable of a marriage in *Matthew 22*, we see that the marriage also involves a prepared D _____ — *verse 4*.
- 2. From the marriage at Cana we see that wedding celebrations involved a F _____ — *John 2:8,9*.
- 3. The marriage of the Lamb is followed by the marriage _____ — *Revelation 19:9*.
- 4. This will fulfill the Lord’s promise to His church, made when He instituted the memorial Lord’s Supper — *Matthew 26:29*. Churches are to observe the Lord’s Supper “_____ he _____” — *I Corinthians 11:26*.

THE PICTURE OF THE BRIDE

The Old Testament account of Isaac and Rebekah (*Genesis 24*) is the first love story in the Bible, and presents an interesting picture of what we have studied above.

In this account the father (Abraham) sought a wife for his son (Isaac), *Genesis 24:1-3*. He sent his trusted servant (Eliezer — *Genesis 15:2*) into a far country to search on his behalf — *Genesis 24:4-6,10*.

A. The Bride Is Found — *verses 15,16*.

Rebekah is a beautiful, chaste V _____.

B. The Tokens Of Betrothal Are Received — *verse 53*.

Note: these are given to the bride-to-be and her family.

C. The Bride Decides — verse 58.

Note: this is a willing relationship. Rebekah belonged to the wider household of Abraham, but is set apart from the family through her new relationship with Isaac.

D. The Bride Comes To The Son — verses 61-66.

Isaac went out to the _____ (*Matthew 13:38a*) at _____ TIDE — verse 63. See: *Matthew 25:6*.

E. The Marriage Takes Place — verse 67.

In this verse we see the first mention of love in the Bible.

Note: The servant is an illustration of the Holy Spirit — sent by the Father on behalf of the Son (*verse 4; John 14:16*), revealing the Father and the Son (*verses 34-36; John 16:13,14*), proclaiming the riches of the Son (*verse 53; I Corinthians 2:9,10*), and guiding the bride on her journey (*verse 61; John 16:13a*).

THE PRIVILEGE OF THE BRIDE

What a love story! Let's construct a *possible* chain of events from beginning to end, based on the Word of God and some common marriage customs of the Biblical world:

A. A Future Wife Is Chosen.

Just as parents often played a prominent rôle in selecting their child's life's partner, so God the Heavenly Father has chosen a wife for His Son.

B. The Couple Are Introduced.

The friend of the groom often played an important part in the back-and-forward transactions of courting. John the Baptist prepared the materials (baptized believers) Jesus would use to build His church.

C. The Dowry Is Paid.

Jesus purchased His churches with His blood — *Acts 20:28e*.

D. The Token Is Given.

Not an engagement ring, but the earnest of the indwelling Spirit — *Ephesians 1:13,14*.

E. The Period Of Espousal.

While the Bridegroom tarries (*Matthew 25:5*) the bride is sending out invitations to the wedding — *Revelation 22:17*.

Notice there are three essential parties involved in this:

1. The Spirit — *John 16:8-11; Ephesians 6:17b*.
2. The Bride — the Great Commission was given to the Lord's churches.
3. Him That Heareth — the saved individual (*Romans 10:17*) is to witness.

F. The Wedding Procession.

This usually took place during the evening. The wedding party would meet at the bride's house, then the bridegroom would come and escort his bride to his house. She was accompanied by virgins — *Psalm 45:14*, and such a procession was accompanied with great joy and merriment — *Jeremiah 7:34*.

One day the “midnight cry” will herald the Bridegroom’s coming for His bride. All the saints will be raptured and taken to Heaven. See: *I Thessalonians 4:14-17; I Corinthians 15:51,52; Matthew 25:6,13; Philippians 3:20,21*.

G. The Marriage Feast.

This was usually held at the groom’s house (*Matthew 22:1-10*). Guests were required to wear a wedding garment (*Matthew 22:12*). There was no religious ceremony conducted at the feast — instead, witnesses would be called upon to attest to the marriage — see: *Ruth 4:9-13*.

The feast and festivities could last as long as a week — *Judges 14:16,17*.

H. The Honeymoon.

Following the marriage supper of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to earth and establish His glorious kingdom of 1,000 years (*Revelation 20:3-6*). The Lord’s promise to His faithful servants is that they shall rule and reign with Him — *Matthew 25:21,23; Revelation 2:26,27; 5:10*. What a honeymoon!

I. The New Home.

Right now, Jesus is preparing our Heavenly home — *John 14:2*. Since it has been almost 2,000 years in the making it must be an indescribably splendiferous place (*I Corinthians 2:9*).

The Word of God describes this home in *Revelation 21:2*. In John’s prophetic vision, the bride and Groom are already there — *verses 9-21*.

Note: The holy Jerusalem itself is not the bride, as *verses 9 & 10* might suggest. To illustrate: a man may say to a friend as he pulls up to his home, “I’d like you to meet my wife.” Obviously, the house is not his wife — but she is there inside.

THE PARODY OF THE BRIDE

There is one final aspect to this study. Satan, the great imitator, has successfully produced a counterfeit ‘bride.’ Her description is given in Revelation 17. She is the consummation of religious Babylon, the sinkhole of all false religion. This is the ‘Church’ of the Antichrist — already in existence, yet still awaiting her supreme moment of glory.

A. The Name Of The False Bride.

1. The “great _____” — *verse 1*. The exact opposite to *II Corinthians 11:2*.
2. “Mystery, _____ the _____” — *verse 5*. This identifies her true, pagan origins.
3. The “M _____ of H _____ and abominations of the earth” — *verse 5*.

B. The Nature Of The False Bride.

1. She “sitteth upon many _____ — *verse 1*. *Revelation 17:15* defines these as _____
i.e. She is a universal (catholic) ‘Church.’
2. She has committed fornication with the _____ of the earth — *verse 2*. i.e. She is a State ‘Church.’
3. She is full of names of _____ — *verse 3*.
4. She is arrayed in _____ and _____ — *verse 4a*.
i.e. She is a pompous ‘Church.’
5. She is decked with _____ and precious gems — *verse 4b*. i.e. She is a wealthy ‘Church.’
6. She is drunk with the _____ of the saints and martyrs — *verse 6*. i.e. She is a persecuting ‘Church.’

C. The Identity Of The False Bride.

According to *verse 9*, the woman sits on _____ mountains.

The only city in the Biblical world built upon this number of hills is ROME. (The ancient city sits on the Aventine, the Cælian, the Capitoline, the Esquiline, the Palatine, the Quirinal, and the Viminal hills.)

Today, the ‘Church’ of Rome and her offspring are coming together in a concerted effort to bring in a One World, end-time, religious body. The multi-faceted ecumenical movement is their present-day mechanism.

Thought: Many are quick to *specifically* identify the Harlot — but uncomfortably reticent when it comes to specifically identifying the Bride!

MEMORY VERSE: Try and commit to memory *Revelation 19:7*.

NOTES & QUESTIONS TO ASK

C The Crucified Life

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This lesson deals with the KEY to **living** the Christian life. Paradoxically, it is all about dying. In *Galatians 2:20*, the apostle Paul wrote: “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God...*”

Jesus said in *John 10:10* — “*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*” Sad to say, many Christians have never really experienced this abundant life. For them the Christian life consists of a list of “do’s,” “don’ts,” and conditions by which they hope to live acceptably for God. While they have received the truth of justification through Christ (salvation), they have missed the truth of identification with Christ. Instead of enjoying their Christianity, they are enduring it!

Like most important doctrines of the Bible, that of the Crucified Life has been tarnished by extremes. There are those who believe one must undergo an actual ‘crucifixion’ experience, while others have become overly introspective (and thus self-centered) through their pursuit of a “deeper life.”

Nevertheless it **is** a Bible doctrine and is presented for careful study. Our concern is with the “*life which I NOW live in the flesh.*”

THE BELIEVER’S CONFLICT

The first thing to understand is the doctrine of the believer’s “two natures.” Consider:

A. The UNSAVED Man — natural.

1. According to *I Corinthians 2:14*, he _____ not the things of the _____ of God. i.e. he is spiritually blind.
2. According to *Ephesians 2:1b,5a*, he is spiritually _____.
3. The natural man has his understanding _____, he is _____ from the _____ of God through his I _____ and B _____ NESS — *Ephesians 4:18*.

4. The natural man's only hope is to be _____ ED (made alive) through a supernatural work of God —*Ephesians 2:1a; John 6:63*.

B. The SAVED Man.

When we are saved, we do not lose our old nature. The Bible teaches that the spiritual man has **two** natures: the old, sinful, Adamic nature (received through his natural birth and connection to Adam —*Romans 5:12*), and the new, spiritual nature (received through his new birth and connection to Christ).

Complete the following comparison setting forth the two natures of the believer:

OLD NATURE



NEW NATURE



- Called the _____ man
(*Ephesians 4:22*)
- Is _____
(*Ephesians 4:22*)

- Has no _____ thing
(*Romans 7:18a*)
- Profiteth _____
(*John 6:63*)

- Called the F _____
(*John 3:6a*)
- It is W _____
(*Matthew 26:41*)

- Called the _____ man
(*Ephesians 4:24*)
- After God is created in _____ NESS
(*Ephesians 4:24*)

- The _____ nature
(*II Peter 1:4b*)
- It is born of _____
(*I John 3:9*)

- It _____ sin
(*I John 3:9*)
- It is _____
(*Colossians 3:10*)

- A new _____
(*II Corinthians 5:17*)
- Called the S _____
(*John 3:6b*)
- It is W _____
(*Matthew 26:41*)

C. The Great Struggle.

Because of this dual nature, every Christian will experience an inner conflict.

1. According to *Galatians 5:17*, the flesh and the Spirit _____ against one another.
2. Because of this, the believer often finds that he _____ do the things that he _____ (*Galatians 5:17*).
3. According to *James 4:5*, the Spirit lusts to the point of _____. (This shows just how much God wants to control our lives.)
4. Paul's experience in *Romans 7:18* was that he had the desire ("will") to do right, but struggled in its P _____ ANCE.

D. Four Spiritual Laws.

Romans 7 presents four laws which operate in the arena of the believer's inner conflict. They are:

1. The Law Of God — verses 1,12.
 - a. This law is H _____, J _____, G _____ (verse 12), and S _____ (verse 14).
 - b. This law enables us to K _____ sin — verse 7. See: *Romans 3:20b*.
 - c. This law makes sin exceeding _____ — verse 13.
 - d. This law declares man _____ before God — *Romans 3:19*.
 - e. The believer's new nature (inward man) D _____ S in this law — verse 22.
2. The Law Of Sin — verse 21.

This law is soon discovered to be a reality by every Christian.
It states that _____ is still present within us even though we have been saved!
3. The Law Of The Mind — verse 23b.

The mind is the decision-making faculty in man. In *verse 18* it is called the W _____.
4. The Law Of Conflict — verse 23a.
 - a. This law operates in our _____ (i.e. the flesh).
 - b. This law is constantly _____ against the law of the mind.

There is one other law to be considered later.

THE BELIEVER'S CONDITION

It is now necessary to distinguish between a believer's standing and state.

- Our STANDING refers to ***what we are*** in Christ
- Our STATE refers to ***where we are*** with Christ.

Christians often struggle with assurance of salvation (or fail to experience victory on a daily basis) because they don't understand the difference between their standing and state.

A. **Two Fundamental Realities.**

Before any real forward progress can be made in the Christian life, two essential facts must be grasped by the believer:

1. I am A _____ in Christ — *Ephesians 1:6b.*

There is *nothing* I have to do to merit God's love — ***or*** to keep myself in His love!

Problem: Many Christians in actuality base their feelings of acceptance on *performance* or *circumstances*. When they are doing right or when things are going along well and God seems to be blessing, they feel accepted — but, when sin comes into their life and they stumble or things seem dry and difficult and trials come, they doubt their acceptance with God or feel they must somehow renew it.

The fact is, our acceptance in the first place was *never* performance-based (*Ephesians 2:9*) nor circumstance-based (*Romans 5:8c*). We are accepted IN (on the merits of) Christ, then and now!

2. I am C _____ in Christ — *Colossians 2:10a.*

There is *nothing* more God has to do to add to the finished work of salvation — I have it all ... now! I do not have to "help God out"— I simply need to let Christ work out His life in me — *Philippians 2:13.*

B. **The Believer's Standing — position.**

In addition to the above, there are many things we ARE and HAVE in the Lord Jesus Christ. For example:

1. I HAVE _____ with _____ — *Romans 5:1.*
2. I HAVE obtained an _____ — *Ephesians 1:11a*
3. I HAVE boldness and _____ with God — *Ephesians 3:12.*
4. We ARE more than _____ — *Romans 8:37.*

5. We ARE the _____ of _____ — *I John 3:2a*.
6. We ARE _____ — *Ephesians 4:30b; 1:13*.
7. We ARE blessed with _____ spiritual _____ in heavenly places, where we NOW _____ — *Ephesians 1:3b; 2:6*.
8. I AM _____ with Christ — *Galatians 2:20a*.
9. We ARE _____ — *Colossians 3:3a*.

What a wonderful standing we have in Christ! Notice in these Scriptures that everything we are or have is “through” or “in” Jesus Christ.

C. The Believer's State — condition.

What’s the difference between standing and state? There shouldn’t be any difference, but most often there is.

We have peace *with* God, but don’t enjoy the peace *of* God. We have an inheritance, but live like spiritual paupers. We have free access to God’s throne, but haven’t had a prayer answered in a long time. We are conquerors, but live in constant defeat. We are showered with all blessings, and yet are so miserable. We are sealed, but go through life as doubters.

Condition is based upon CONTROL. The question is, “Who controls my life?” For the believer there are only two choices. I am either:

1. CHRIST-Controlled.

Christ is on the throne and in control of my life.

Read: *Romans 8:1-8*.

- a. This is called “walking after the _____” — *verses 1,4,5*.
- b. To be spiritually minded is _____ and _____ — *verse 6b*.

OR

2. SELF-Controlled.

My old nature is in control of my life.

Read: *II Corinthians 1:9b; Romans 12:3c*.

- a. I may be C _____ — *Romans 8:5,6; I Corinthians 3:1,3*.
This means I am being driven by the flesh and its appetites, resulting in the works of the flesh (*Galatians 5:19-21a*).
- b. I may be W _____ LY — *Romans 12:2a; I John 2:15-17*.
This means my old nature is being influenced and controlled by the things of the world.

Note: We readily understand the following “self” problems as being sin: self-centeredness, self-admiration, self-gratification, selfishness, self-pity, self-seeking, self-will, etc. But what about things such as self-assertiveness, self-esteem, self-respect, self-control, self-vindication, or being self-motivated, self-dependent, self-made, self-sufficient, etc.? (In addition to these, we should also consider ‘negative’ traits such as being self-conscious, self-effacing, self-critical, etc. in the same light.)

THE BELIEVER’S CROSS

In Matthew 16:24, Jesus said: “*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*” There has been considerable misunderstanding about what this cross is or means. We hear people speak of their “cross in life” — meaning a physical handicap, a personal health burden, or a wayward child, etc. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A. The Physical Significance Of “The Cross.”

Death by crucifixion was introduced by the Romans, and was reserved for the peoples they conquered, not Roman citizens.

1. It Is An Instrument Of Shame.

There was nothing private or pretty about a crucifixion. The condemned was stripped naked and left hanging for all to see. All vestiges of honor or class were gone. Read *Psalm 22:6-13* to see something of this.

2. It Is An Instrument Of Death.

A Roman cross meant a death most cruel. The victim would suffer a slow, agonizing death — often taking days to succumb. Read *Psalm 22:14-17* to understand something of this.

B. The Spiritual Significance Of The Cross For The Believer.

Obviously, the Lord does not intend for us to be literally impaled on a wooden cross. He applies the cross to the Christian life in a spiritual sense. Nevertheless:

1. It Is An Instrument Of Shame.

By it we associate with Christ.

- a. We bear His _____ — *Hebrews 13:13.*
- b. We suffer its O _____ — *Galatians 5:11.*

2. It Is An Instrument Of Death.

- a. Death to S _____ — *Mark 8:34.*
- b. Death to W _____ (possessions) — *Mark 10:21,22.*

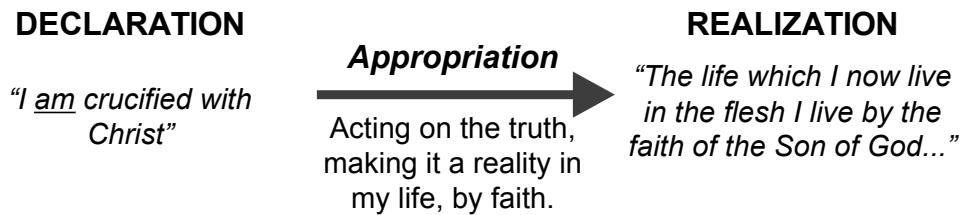
- c. Death to F _____ (parents, brothers, sisters, etc.) — *Matthew 10:37.*
- d. Death to the W _____ — *Galatians 6:14.*
- e. Death to A _____ that we have — *Luke 14:33.*

This is the cost of discipleship (not salvation). This is what it means to “take up our cross.” Every Christian has to make a choice:

- We can _____ our life, but lose it — *Mark 8:35a.*
OR
- We can _____ our life, but find it — *Mark 8:35b.*

THE BELIEVER'S CRUCIFIXION

The Bible declares that we **are** dead, that we **are** crucified with Christ — yet it also admonishes us to deny self and take up our cross! The explanation for this lies in the difference between truth stated and truth substantiated.



The question then is, “how do I make what Christ has done for me a working reality in my life?” — “how do I live the ‘crucified life’?” The answer is found in Romans 6. In this chapter, there are **three** key steps given. These are:

A. **KNOW** — “**Assimilation**” (the *recognition* of our position in Christ).

If we don’t know what God says we cannot do what God commands, and neither can we hope to enjoy the abundant life He has given us. Therefore, the first step of the “crucified life” is to recognize the fact of our position in Christ.

In Romans 6 the Bible makes **three** statements of fact, each of which is essential in this matter:

1. The Picture Of Baptism — *verse 3* (our *allegiance*).
 - a. “_____ ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his _____?”

- b. The word “*into*,” used twice in this verse, has been misunderstood by those who teach a so-called ‘Spirit-baptism.’ However, *verse 3* is explained by *verses 4 & 5*.
 - The act of Scriptural baptism is a B ___ IAL (*verse 4a*) and a P ___ ING (*verse 5a*) — hence immersion.
 - The words “L ___” (*verse 4*) and “L ___ NESS” (*verse 5*) show Scriptural baptism is symbolic.
 - The historical facts behind *I Corinthians 10:2* also explain this expression. When Israel followed Moses through the Red Sea, they were identifying with him: Scriptural baptism is our visible (public) identification with Christ.
- c. Witnessing a baptism (and remembering our own baptism) ought to be a constant reminder of the fact that our allegiance is no longer to the flesh, the world, or the Devil — but to Jesus Christ!

Note: Baptism is like a military uniform. The wearing of a uniform is a public declaration of one’s allegiance — it tells others what country you are from, what branch of the armed forces you belong to, etc. (Remember: a uniform doesn’t make one a soldier, just as baptism doesn’t make one a Christian. The corollary: a soldier without his uniform is still a soldier, and an unbaptized believer is still a believer.)

2. The Position Of Crucifixion — *verse 6* (our association).
 - a. “___ ING this, that our old ___ crucified with ___ ...”
 - b. According to *Ecclesiastes 9:5b*, “the ___ know ___ anything...” i.e. a dead man is not conscious of his surroundings, etc.
 - c. “For he that is ___ is ___ from ___” — *Romans 6:7*.
 - d. “And they that are Christ’s ___ crucified the flesh...” — *Galatians 5:24*.
 - e. Through justification we understand that Christ has dealt with our sin (as to its penalty) — through our union with Christ we understand He has dealt with the old man (the vehicle of sin).
3. The Power Of Resurrection — *verse 9* (our authority).
 - a. “___ ING that Christ being ___ from the dead dieth no more...”

- b. *Ephesians 2:4,5* — “But God ... hath _____ us _____ with Christ...”
- c. *Colossians 3:3b* — “...your _____ is hid _____ Christ in God.”
- d. *II Corinthians 13:4d* — “... we shall _____ with him by the _____ of God toward you.”
- e. Resurrection power is the greatest power there is. It is the power that raised Christ from the dead (*Romans 1:4*). This same power is available to every believer — see: *Ephesians 1:19,20*.

Here then are the facts to “know” — our old nature is crucified with Christ and we *have* new life in Christ, and these are pictured and declared in baptism.

B. RECKON — “Appropriation**” (turning these facts into *reasons*).**

It is not sufficient to give mental assent to these facts — we must also be fully *persuaded* that they are so for us personally. This, regardless of how we feel.

- *Romans 6:11* — “Likewise _____ ye also yourselves to be dead _____ unto sin, but _____ unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The word “reckon” means “to count it so.” It is here the matter extends to the MIND, the decision-making faculty of the soul — *Romans 7:25b; I Peter 4:1,2*.

C. YIELD — “Affirmation**” (turning reasons into *reality* in our daily experience).**

Here is the crux of the matter. It is not enough to know; it is not enough to believe — there must also be an ACT.

- *Romans 6:13* — “... but _____ yourselves unto God, as those that are _____ from the _____ ...”

The “crucified life” is making real in our life what is true by virtue of our standing in Christ — we make actual in experience what the Word of God says is so.

1. HOW Do I Yield Myself To God?

The word “yield” means to “present” oneself (unreservedly). It means to “give right of way.” When we yield to God we replace SELF’s control with CHRIST’s control, allowing Him to live HIS life through us. Yielding determines our victory or defeat — *Romans 6:16a*.

Yielding is not a passive act by the believer, it is a call to determined action:

- a. *Romans 6:12* — “Let not sin therefore _____ ...”

- b. *Ephesians 4:22* — “... put ____ ... the ____ man ...” (*Colossians 3:9*).
- c. *Ephesians 4:24* — “... put ____ the ____ man ...” (*Colossians 3:10*).
- d. *Romans 13:14* — “But ____ ye ____ the Lord Jesus Christ, and make ____ provision for the ____ ...”
- e. *Colossians 3:5* — “_____ therefore your members” (*Romans 8:13*).

2. WHAT Do I Yield To God?

- a. We are to present our _____ to God — *Romans 12:1*.
- b. According to *Romans 6:13*, we can yield our members (bodies) either as instruments of:
 - _____ NESS, or
 - _____ NESS
- c. We are to yield ourselves as those that are _____ from the ____ (*Romans 6:13*) — not as those that are dead!
- d. We cannot yield the *old life* to God, for that is crucified! Besides, there is nothing God can do with the flesh (*Romans 7:18a*). No, we must yield our new life to God, thereby allowing Christ to live His life through us.
- e. Study carefully: *II Corinthians 4:10*. The apostle Paul says there were two things he carried about in his earthly tabernacle:
 - The _____ of the Lord Jesus — i.e. our death in Him.
 - The _____ of Jesus — i.e. His life in us.

? Why are so many believers frustrated in the Christian life — continually dedicating and rededicating their lives to the Lord?
 Could it be because they have yielded their old self to Christ, and are trying to live for Him in the self-life (which is impossible!)?
 We cannot consecrate the Old Man.

☞ According to *Philippians 2:13*, God's work in us involves both:

- to W ____, **and**
- to D ___.

The Holy Spirit and the Word of God produce the “want to” (will), but many times we think it is up to us to perform the doing of it. No! That is God's work too.

3. WHEN Should I Yield Myself To God?

- a. *Luke 9:23* — "...take up his cross _____ ..."

Crucifixion is a slow and agonizing death, and the Old Man will not go without a lot of commotion. Every day we need to see that he is pinned to the cross, and that for all his screaming, reviling, and writhing he is powerless!

- b. *I Corinthians 15:31* — "I die _____."

No doubt Paul is referring to his constant state of physical jeopardy, but he would not have served the Lord as he did by means of an 'un-crucified self.'

- c. *Hebrews 3:13a* — "But exhort one another _____ ..."

4. A New Law To Live By.

- a. According to *Romans 6:14b*, we are not _____ the law (of God) but under _____.

- b. According to *Romans 7:4*, we have become _____ to the law (of God) because we are dead with Christ.

- c. According to *Romans 7:6*, we are _____ from the law and now serve God in _____ of spirit.

- d. According to *Romans 8:2*, a new law has superseded the old law. It is called the "Law of the _____."

- e. *Galatians 5:16* — "... _____ in the _____, and ye shall not _____ the _____ of the flesh..."

- f. *Galatians 5:25* — "If we _____ in the Spirit, let us also _____ in the Spirit.

The law of **gravity** is fixed and immutable. However, the law of **aeronautics** is a higher law in that it enables man to overcome the law of gravity. In the same way, the law of God is fixed and unchanging, but the law of the Spirit makes us free from that law. What does it take for the law of aeronautics to prevail over the law of gravity? **Power!** — and lots of it. What does it take for the law of the Spirit to free us from the law of God? Power — resurrection power! See: *Philippians 3:10*.

KNOW — RECKON — YIELD

These three steps amount to faith. Faith is never "wishful thinking" — it is always action based upon facts, i.e. believing God's Word (facts) and acting upon it (action). We are saved this way (by faith) and we are to live this way. Note the following Scriptures:

- *Romans 1:17c* — "The _____ [saved] shall _____ by faith."

- *Galatians 2:20e* — “...the life which I now _____ in the flesh I live by the _____ of the Son of God...”
- *Colossians 2:6* — “____ ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord [how? through _____, *Ephesians 2:8a*], so _____ ye in Him.”
- *II Corinthians 5:7* — “For we _____ by _____ ...”
- “But without _____ it is impossible to _____ him...” — *Hebrews 11:6*.
- “So then they that are in the _____ cannot _____ God” — *Romans 8:8*.

THE BELIEVER'S CULTIVATION

The reality of the “crucified life” produces three things in the believer:

A. Life.

Philippians 1:21a — “For to me to _____ is _____.”

The believer is under new management. The old Self was crucified with Christ and can no longer dominate our life (unless we allow it to), despite the struggle it puts up.

In Christ we have received a new life, have entered a new kingdom, and are under a new law. By yielding ourselves to God every day, the life that we live in the flesh is that of Christ living in and through us.

B. Likeness.

As we yield to Christ we become more like Christ. In *Philippians 3:10-16* we have an outline of the apostle Paul’s Christian experience:

1. His Goal — “That I may...”
 - a. “_____” — *verse 10a*.
 - b. [Know] “the _____ of his resurrection” — *verse 10b*.
 - c. [Know] “the _____ of his sufferings” — *verse 10c*.
 - d. Be “made _____ to his death” — *verse 10d*.

- e. Attain “unto the _____ of the dead” — verse 11.

Note: Paul refers to this as being “perfect” (mature) — verse 12. His longing was to have ‘self’ completely out of the way so that Christ would be everything to him, in him, and through him.

2. The Distance He Had To Go — verses 12,13a.

Paul wasn’t there yet! (Consider the conflict he experienced in *Romans 7:14-25*.)

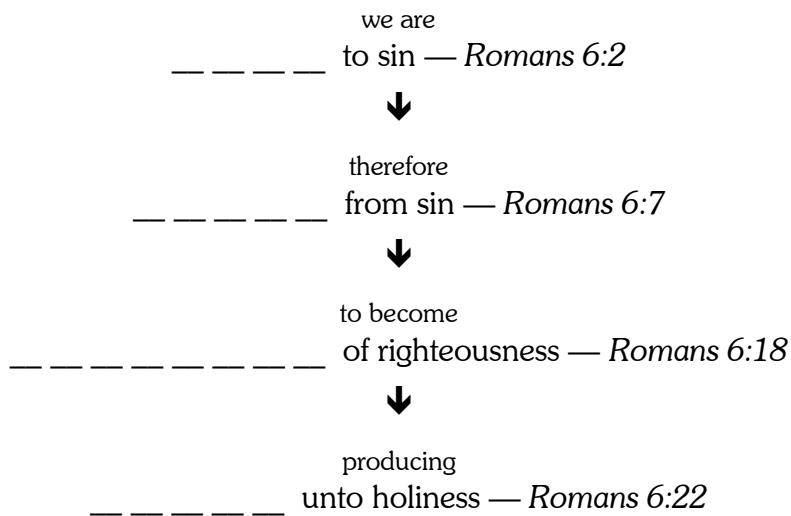
3. The Way Ahead — verses 13,14.

- a. “This _____ thing I do” (verse 13c) — he was focused.
- b. “_____ TING those things which are behind” (verse 13d).
- c. “_____ ING forth unto those things which are before” (verse 13e).
- d. “I press toward the _____ for the prize...” (verse 14).

4. The Distance He Has Already Gone — verse 16a.

C. Liberty.

Romans 6 concludes with the blessing of true liberty. Note the following order:



Most Christians can achieve “results,” but what is needed is FRUIT (*John 15:5,16*).

Remember...

There is a past, present, and future aspect to the work of Christ for us:

PAST	Justification	Are saved from the PENALTY of sin
PRESENT	Sanctification	<i>Being</i> saved from the POWER of sin
FUTURE	Glorification	<i>Will be</i> saved from the PRESENCE of sin

Living the “crucified life” ensures we will have victory over the flesh, even though it will always be there vying for control.

MEMORY VERSE: Try and commit to memory *Galatians 2:20*.

D Divorce

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This lesson deals with an extremely *painful and emotional* subject. In today's society almost everyone has been touched in some way by marital divorce — either having been divorced themselves, seeing close friends or relatives go through a divorce, or having experienced a home broken by divorce. There is never anything clean and sweet about a divorce — there is nothing quite like the pain of divorce.

It is also a very *controversial* matter. There are some differing opinions about divorce and (especially) remarriage among Bible-believing Baptists. Applying sound Biblical teaching with godly compassion to some of life's most tangled, sordid, and heart-wrenching situations will test anyone's resolve and is never easy. There is little else that will cause one to hate sin more than divorce!

It is a very *timely* subject. The breakdown of marriage is of epidemic proportions as the follow statistics relate:

The United States of America leads the world in divorce. In 1994 nearly 1.2 million American marriages were legally dissolved — a divorce rate of 4.6 per 1,000 population. These divorces involved about 1 million children under the age of 18. Today, about 47% of all marriages will end in divorce — statistically after an average of 7 years. The divorce rate has tripled since 1960. A University of Oklahoma study found that "no-fault" divorce laws raised the divorce rate in 44 states. Nevada has the highest divorce rate (9.0%) and Massachusetts the lowest (2.4%). A 1988 study by the National Center for Health Statistics found that children in single-parent families (including those whose parents never married) are more likely to drop out of high school, become pregnant as teenagers, abuse drugs and get into trouble with the law than those living with both parents. [Sources: Los Angeles Times, 5/27/96; Family Research Council; US Department of Health & Human Services.]

In 1986, Canada had a divorce rate of about 3.0 per thousand population.

In Australia the Family Law Act 1975 introduced the "no-fault" divorce. By 1991 there were 114,000 marriages and 45,630 divorces — a divorce rate of 2.6% (a 40% marital failure rate). 62% of men and 79% of women who divorced were married before age 24 (35% of divorced women were married before age 20). The 'average' divorce occurred after 10.1 years of marriage, usually between a couple who married young and had two children.

Statistics like these do not include unhappy marriages which stay together!!

The saddest thing about all these statistics is that they include real Christians! Thus it becomes a very *practical* topic to study. How can divorce be prevented? How should a church deal with divorce? How should we treat divorced people? Is there any ministry for a divorced Christian in a Baptist church? etc., etc.

As always the Word of God is our infallible guide. This lesson plan will be centered around our Lord's teaching on the subject of divorce found in *Matthew 19:3-12*.

HAVE YE NOT READ?

The Pharisees of Jesus' day were split over the issue of divorce. Those belonging to the conservative rabbinical school of Shammai taught that divorce could only be granted on the grounds of adultery; those from the very liberal school of Rabbi Hillel believed a man could divorce his wife for "every cause" — i.e. anything that was displeasing to him. (The Jewish Mishna speaks of divorce being permitted on grounds such as a wife appearing in public with disheveled hair, speaking so loud that the neighbors can hear, or even spoiling a dish!)

In *Matthew 19:3*, these Pharisees attempted to draw the Lord Jesus Christ into their arguments. Our Lord, as He always did, pointed them to the Scriptures — "*Have ye not read?*" (verse 4). He took them back to the very beginning and the institution of marriage. This is where we begin. Before we consider divorce, let's study God's Plan For Marriage!

A. The Creation Of Man.

Read: *Genesis 1:26-28.*

1. Man was _____ by God — *verse 27.*
2. Man was made in the _____ and _____ of God — *verses 26,27.*
3. Man was created _____ and _____ — *verse 27c.*
4. Man was formed of the _____ of the _____ — *Genesis 2:7a.*
5. The woman was made from a _____ taken from the man's side — *Genesis 2:22.*

B. The Creation Of Marriage.

Read: *Genesis 2:18-25.*

1. God said: "It is not _____ that the man should be _____ — *verse 18b.*

2. Can animals meet man's need for companionship? _____
3. God made for the man an “_____ MEET” for him — *verse 18c.*
The word “meet” means ‘suited,’ ‘appropriate,’ or ‘corresponding to.’ An “help meet” carries no implication of inferiority, but means the wife is the *completer* of the man. Eve was Adam’s other half!
4. God _____ the woman _____ the man — *verse 22d.*

Thought: How much marital misery might be avoided if young people quit looking for a wife (or husband) and instead trusted the Lord to bring her (or him) into their life?

5. God’s institution of marriage is given in *Genesis 2:24*. This verse is repeated four more times in the Bible (*Matthew 19:5,6; Mark 10:8; I Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31*).

There are four principles of divine intent given in *verses 24,25*. They are:

- a. L _____ — *verse 24a.*
This requires a clear separation from the old family relationship. (Failure to properly do this is one of the top ten causes of divorce.)
- b. C _____ — *verse 24b.*
II Kings 5:27 helps define this word. It is the literal cementing of two people into one relationship — to become one person with one mind, going in one direction.
- c. One _____ — *verse 24c.*
I Corinthians 6:16 defines this expression to mean the physical union or J _____ ING of a man and woman.
- d. Not _____ — *verse 25c.*
Among other things, this speaks of God’s intent that marriage is to be an open, transparent, vulnerable relationship.

C. The Creation Of Management.

The entrance of sin into the world threw every part of God’s creation into chaos and disorder — including marriage! (Note: In *Genesis 3:12* the man was already blaming God and accusing his wife!)

To bring about order in the home, God established new rôles within the marriage partnership. According to *Genesis 3:16*:

1. The wife’s _____ shall be [subject] to her husband.
2. The husband shall _____ over his wife.

This did not mean the husband was made to be more important than his wife or that he was given dictatorial powers over her. It was the establishment of order for the preservation of the home.

- According to *I Corinthians 7:4* there is an equality of person.
- According to *I Corinthians 11:3* there is a difference of function.

GOD'S HOLY PLAN: "ONE MAN, ONE WOMAN, ONE LIFETIME!"

WHAT THEREFORE GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER

In *Matthew 19:6c*, the Lord Jesus Christ affirms that marriage is something GOD did (and does)! It is not a man-made thing but a ***spiritual*** matter of great consequence.

Since marriage was instituted by God, it follows that all marriage choices, decisions, planning, counseling, guidance, and ceremonies should seek His approval and be according to His Word!

This brings us to another question: “Exactly what constitutes marriage?” Is it a ceremony? Is it signing a document? Is it the marriage bed? Is it living together?

The Bible teaches there are two elements which TOGETHER constitute marriage:

A. Marriage Is A Covenant.

1. According to *Malachi 2:14*, a wife is a man's _____ and the wife of his _____ .
2. According to *Proverbs 2:17*, the strange woman is one who has forgotten the _____ of her God. (i.e. forsook her marriage.)
3. A “covenant” is a bond which unites people in mutual obligations.
4. According to Biblical custom, a marriage BEGAN with the engagement and was CONSUMMATED when the couple came together. Because western marriage customs are somewhat different, three Biblical terms need to be considered:
 - Betrothal — engagement, often arranged by others, *Exodus 21:8-11*.
 - Espousal — engagement, demonstrated by expensive gifts and a dowry, *II Samuel 3:14; Genesis 34:12*. The period of espousal was typically one year, during which time neither party saw each other.

See: *Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:27; 2:5*. Though not consummated this was as binding as marriage. Mary is called Joseph's wife!

- Marriage — the consummation, accompanied by long feasting (usually one week), *Matthew 22:1-10*.

B. Marriage Is A Conjugation.

Marriage requires there be a physical union between husband and wife. Why?

1. Marriage is designed to meet the physical needs of the couple — *I Corinthians 7:9*.
2. *Matthew 19:5,6* speaks of husband and wife being one _____.
3. *I Corinthians 6:16* defines this term as a physical conjugation.

Note: A formal (legal) covenanted agreement *by itself* does not constitute a marriage. (This is the Roman Catholic [sacramental] position, that a man and a woman are joined together by God at the altar with the priest.)

A physical relationship *alone* does not constitute a marriage. If this were the case there would be no such thing as adultery or fornication! Note what Jesus said to the woman in *John 4:18* — the man she was ‘living with’ was not her husband. See also: *I Corinthians 7:2*.

MARRIAGE: “THE PHYSICAL UNION OF A MAN AND A WOMAN WITHIN THE BONDS OF A COVENANT OF COMPANIONSHIP.”

LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER

Here in *Matthew 19:6d* we see that marriage is intended to be a permanent relationship.

A. What God Thinks About Marriage.

1. Marriage is _____ — *Hebrews 13:4a*
2. Whoso findeth a _____ findeth a _____ thing — *Proverbs 18:22a*.
3. A prudent _____ is from the _____ — *Proverbs 19:14*.
4. To avoid _____, let every _____ have his own _____, and let every _____ have her own husband — *I Corinthians 7:2*.

5. If thou marry, thou hast not _____ — *I Corinthians 7:28a.*

Note: It is not necessarily *always* God's will for a person to marry. The apostle Paul indicated in *I Corinthians 7* that in the context of Christian service (*verses 7,8,32,33,35*) or in times of severe persecution (*verses 26,29*), marriage may not be the best option. The Master spoke of those who would intentionally choose celibacy for the "kingdom of heaven's sake" (*Matthew 19:12e*).

A. What God Thinks About Divorce.

1. Let ___ man put _____ — *Matthew 19:6d.*
2. *Malachi 2:16* says God _____ putting away.

WHY DID MOSES THEN COMMAND?

In *Matthew 19:7*, the Pharisees drew Christ's attention to the Old Testament teaching on divorce — in particular *Deuteronomy 24:1-4*.

To understand this passage it is essential to see (based on Christ's reply in *Matthew 19:8*) that there is a difference between a **command** of God and a **concession** by God! Here, the Lord is not instituting divorce; rather, He is *regulating* it! Divorce is never a prescribed 'solution' for marital problems.

A. The Old Testament Premise For Divorce.

1. The Act Of The Wife.

Some _____ — *Deuteronomy 24:1.*

This word means "shame," or "disgrace."

2. The Attitude Of The Husband.

H ___ RED toward one's wife — *Deuteronomy 24:2.*

Presumably this would result from an inability to forgive or reconcile.

The question then becomes: "Exactly what is this 'uncleanness?'" Is it:

- Unchastity? — *Deuteronomy 22:13-21.*
- Adultery? — *Deuteronomy 22:22-24; Leviticus 20:10.*
- Rape? — *Deuteronomy 22:25-27.*
- Incest? — *Leviticus 20:11,12.*
- Sodomy? — *Leviticus 20:13.*
- Bestiality? — *Leviticus 20:15,16.*

No! These sins were grounds for death, not divorce! Furthermore, the penalty for fornication was marriage without the possibility of divorce — *Deuteronomy 22:28,29*.

It was this question as to what constitutes uncleanness that resulted in a long-standing debate between the rabbinical schools, prompting the Pharisees to ask our Lord, “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” (*Matthew 19:3*).

It seems this type of uncleanness is related somewhat to perception (“*she find no favor in his eyes*”), because in such cases the divorcee was permitted to remarry.

B. The Old Testament Procedure For Divorce.

There were three steps to implementing a divorce given in *Deuteronomy 24:1,3*.

1. A written _____ of _____ MENT was to be prepared.
(Perhaps this feature was designed to eliminate any hasty action, giving the husband time to think or “cool off.”)
2. The document was to be placed in the wife’s _____.
3. The wife was to be _____ from the man’s _____.

Note: Although this passage speaks only of a husband putting away his wife, by New Testament times at least (according to *Mark 10:11,12*) divorce could originate with either party.

C. The Old Testament Prohibitions In Divorce.

1. According to *Deuteronomy 24:2*, remarriage was permitted.
2. According to *Deuteronomy 24:4*, the _____ husband could not remarry his ex-wife once she had remarried — even if she was now ‘free.’ (No doubt this prohibition was given to prevent marriage further degenerating into legal “wife-swapping.”)
3. According to *Leviticus 21:1,7* a _____ could not marry a divorced woman.

The reason for this was that he was a _____ man among his people — *Leviticus 21:4*. i.e. those in positions of leadership were to exemplify integrity in marriage. See also: *Leviticus 21:14*, which covers the requirements of the high priest.

D. Two Unusual Old Testament Cases Of Divorce.

1. Jeremiah 3.

Here the LORD uses marriage and divorce to illustrate His relationship with His people, Israel.

- a. The LORD is _____ to Israel — *verse 14a*.
Note: Israel is the “wife of the LORD.” This is not an espousal!
 - b. Israel was guilty of spiritual _____ — *verse 8a*.
 - c. The LORD _____ Israel away and gave her a _____ of _____ — *verse 8a*.
 - d. The LORD begs His estranged wife to _____ again to Him — *verse 1h*.
 - e. When “all Israel shall be saved” (*Romans 11:26*) at the time of Christ’s return to earth (*Zechariah 12:7-10; 13:1,6,8,9; 14:1-4,9,16*; etc.), the LORD’s wife will have been restored to Him — *verses 16-18*.
2. Ezra 10.
This incident took place in Jerusalem among the post-exilic Jews during a time of national repentance.
 - a. Many Jews confessed they had taken _____ (heathen) wives — *verse 2*.
 - b. Ezra commanded the people to _____ from these wives — *verse 11*.
 - c. As difficult as this was, the people did it. Their collocation was “be of good courage, and do it!” (*verse 4*).

Note: These divorces were accomplished according to the law and took considerable time — see: *verse 13b* and compare *verse 9* with *verse 17*. This indicates that the wives and children involved were provided for.

Note: The Bible does not say whether any of the offending Jews later remarried.

Note: This passage offers some guidance for those who labor in the Gospel among Mormons or in nations where polygamy is practiced (e.g. among Moslems).

BECAUSE OF THE HARDNESS OF YOUR HEARTS

In *Matthew 19:8* the Lord Jesus Christ explained the concession of God through Moses permitting divorce. Here, and in *Mark 10:5*, the Bible teaches that the root cause of all divorce is sin. Divorce was only sanctioned because of the hardness of man's heart.

The corollary of this statement follows that when the heart of both husband and wife is tender toward God there should be no need for divorce.

A. Read: *Hebrews 3:8-19.*

The Lord uses Israel's wilderness wanderings as an example of hardness of heart. From this passage we see that hearts become hard:

1. When we do not know God's _____ — *verse 10.* i.e. Bible ignorance.
2. When we _____ from the living God — *verse 12.*
3. Through the _____ NESS of _____ — *verse 13.*
4. Through failure to heed God's _____ — *verses 15,16a.*
5. Because of _____ — *verse 19.*

B. Read: *Mark 6:52.*

The illustration of a ship in the midst of a storm is a fitting description of marriage (*verse 48a*), for no marriage is 'smooth sailing' and every marriage needs the peace of God upon it (*verse 50*). A hardened heart fails to consider what God can do! This is why most people think divorce is the only answer to serious marital problems. See also: *Mark 8:14-21.*

C. Read: *Proverbs 28:14.*

1. Fearing God brings _____ NESS.
2. A hardened heart brings _____ .

D. Read: *II Chronicles 36:13.*

1. King Zedekiah hardened his heart by not H _____ ING himself before the Word of God when it was preached to him (*verse 12*).
2. Persistent hardness of heart ultimately brings about a situation where there is no _____ (*verse 16e*).

HARDNESS OF HEART: MARRIAGE KILLER & DIVORCE KEY!

EXCEPT IT BE FOR FORNICATION

In *Matthew 19:9* (also *Matthew 5:32*), the Lord gives the famous “exception clause,” whereby He narrowed the grounds for divorce to one issue — fornication!

Since this is a very controversial point, there are four important questions which need to be answered:

A. Does This “Exception Clause” Apply Today?

The corresponding passages in the Gospels of Mark (10:11) and Luke (16:18) do not mention any exception. For this reason some believe divorce is not permitted at all today under *any* circumstances.

Two arguments are commonly put forward to support this contention:

1. The Textual Argument.

This view contends that the clause shouldn't be in the text at all because it is not found in some ancient manuscripts of the New Testament (*Sinaiticus*, *Ephræmi*, *Bezæ*, and most Syrian versions).

We reject this argument because the clause *is* in the text of the pure Word of God (the Authorized, King James Version) as well as the underlying *Textus Receptus* — *and Codex Vaticanus*!

2. The Ultra-Dispensational Argument.

This view contends that since Moses' concession was given to Israel and Matthew's Gospel was written to Israel, the exception clause does not apply to Christians today.

It is this line of reasoning that pushes John the Baptist back into the Old Testament (cf. *Luke 16:16*), has ‘The Church’ beginning in Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost, and removes the four Gospels as authoritative Scripture in Church matters. Yet, in Matthew's Gospel we have the first mention of the Lord's Church (16:18), instruction on Church discipline (18:15-17), and the Lord's commission to His Church (28:18-20).

Yes, the exception clause does apply today.

B. Exactly What Is Fornication?

1. Compare: *Matthew 15:19* with *Galatians 5:19*. Would you conclude that fornication is the same as, or distinct from, adultery? _____
2. Look up: *I Corinthians 5:1*. What kind of wickedness is called fornication in this passage? _____

3. Study: *I Corinthians 6:13b-18.* What behavior is called fornication here?

4. Read: *I Corinthians 7:1,2,9.* How is the term fornication applied here?

5. In *John 8:41*, the vicious taunt of the Jews to the Lord Jesus was, “*We be not _____ of fornication.*” What was their filthy implication?

C. **Under What Conditions Is Divorce Permissible?**

Bible-believing Baptists generally hold one of two views on this matter:

1. NO Divorce After Marriage.

The example of Joseph and Mary in *Matthew 1:18,19* is the basis of this position.

- a. Mary was _____ to Joseph — *verse 18b..*
- b. This was the time before they came _____ as “one flesh” — *verse 18c.*
- c. Joseph was called Mary’s _____ at this time — *verse 19a.*
- d. When he discovered Mary was with child, Joseph planned to privately _____ her _____ i.e. divorce her — *verse 19d.*
- e. Shortly after he understood what God was doing, Joseph took Mary unto him as his _____ — *verse 24.*

On this basis, it is contended that ‘divorce’ is only allowable if one party is unfaithful during the engagement period, before the wedding. After that, there can be no fornication — the only thing to break a marriage is death (*Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:39*).

Some of the difficulties facing this position are:

- The context of *Matthew 19* is marriage, not betrothal or espousal. What Moses wrote, and the Pharisees were questioning Jesus about, clearly applies to marriage — *Deuteronomy 24:1&c.*
- If pre-marital fornication were the only grounds for divorce, then *Deuteronomy 22:19,28,29* would be meaningless.
- This standard is difficult to apply in our western culture since Bible-style betrothal and espousal are not commonly practiced.

2. Divorce Permissible On The Limited Grounds Of Immorality.

This view holds that the only Scriptural ground for divorce today is sexual immorality of any kind — adultery, sodomy, incest, whoremongering, etc.

Note: Those who believe this do not *advocate* divorce in such cases. It is considered only as a last resort option — initiated when all other means of restoring the broken *one-flesh* relationship are exhausted. (Love, forgiveness, and the all-sufficient grace of God are able to restore any marriage marred by sexual sin.)

No allowance for divorce is conceded in cases of “mental cruelty,” “incompatibility,” “inattention,” “I don’t love him/her any more,” etc. Separation is the option when the life of a spouse is threatened by an abusive partner.

A real concern with this position is the “thin end of the wedge” effect. It is apparent that in recent years divorce has become quite commonplace among professing Christians. In many cases a very restrictive “exception clause” has been widened well beyond the allowance of Scripture. The Lord Jesus Christ was extremely narrow in His teaching on this subject, as evidenced by His disciple’s remarks — *Matthew 19:10*.

D. Does I Corinthians 7 Give Another Exception?

This chapter covers the subject of marriage and is written directly to believers. Like Matthew 19, its interpretation has also proven to be controversial.

It addresses single Christians (*verses 1,2,6-9,25,26,32*), married Christians (*verses 3-5,10,11,27*), and Christians in ‘mixed’ marriage situations (*verses 12-17*), where their partner is not saved.

1. Paul’s Opinion, Or God’s Truth?

The apostle’s words in *verses 6, 10, and 12* have been taken by some to infer this chapter is not entirely inspired Scripture but contains a man’s (non-binding) opinions as well. This is not the case:

- a. “*I command, yet not I but the Lord*” (*verse 10*) — this refers to previously given revelation. Paul is re-stating what other Scriptures already teach.
- b. “*Speak I, not the Lord*” (*verse 12*) — this is new inspired revelation, given through Paul (*verse 6*) by the Spirit of God (*verse 40c*).

2. Instruction For Married Believers — *verses 10,11*.

This instruction is not ‘new’ — it has been [previously] commanded by the Lord.

- a. Let not the wife _____ from her husband — *verse 10d.*

- b. Let not the husband _____ his wife — *verse 11d.*
- c. The word “depart” here cannot mean “separation,” because in such a case the wife is said to be UN _____ — *verse 11b.* (Note also the uses of the word “departed” in *Deuteronomy 24:2*, and “put away” in *Matthew 19:3*.

Conclusion: Christians should *not* divorce. If they do, their only option is to remain unmarried or be _____ (*verse 11*).

3. Instruction For Those In Mixed Marriages — *verses 12-17.*

Ancient Corinth was a cosmopolitan city given over to much lewdness, idolatry, and perversion. It was center of the Greek mystery religion, the worship of Aphrodite (goddess of beauty and sex). One feature of this religion was its 1,200 ‘priestesses’ — temple prostitutes. Many believers in the church there had once been caught up in the city’s sensualities, as evidenced by passages such as *I Corinthians 5:1,2,10,11; 6:9-11,15-18; 10:14,21.*

In these verses, Paul gives new (“*speak I, not the Lord*”) inspired revelation concerning those in a mixed marriage situation.

- a. A saved man with an unsaved wife should _____ put her away — *verse 12.*
- b. A saved woman should not _____ her unbelieving husband — *verse 13.*
- c. An unbelieving spouse is _____ by the believing partner — *verse 14.*

The word means “set apart.” This Scripture does not teach “proxy salvation” — where an unsaved husband is somehow made saved in God’s sight because his wife is a believer. It means that God recognizes this marriage arrangement as legitimate — “*else were your children unclean (illegitimate).*”

- d. Christians finding themselves in this kind of situation should do all they can to _____ their partner — *verse 16.* See: *I Peter 3:1.*
- e. Christians finding themselves in these circumstances should not seek to change them. e.g. A divorced and now remarried wife should not go back to her previous husband. A believer should not divorce his unbelieving spouse simply because she is unbelieving. This is the teaching of *verses 17,20.*
- f. If the unsaved spouse departs, let him _____ — *verse 15.*

4. Two Opinions Regarding *I Corinthians* 7:15.

Bible-believing Baptists generally hold one of two views about this Scripture:

a. This Verse Does Not Refer To Divorce.

Those taking this position believe the words:

- “depart” — means desertion, i.e. a separation.
- “not under bondage” — means to be under no further conjugal obligation.

The question which must be considered here is whether the ‘depart’ of *verse 15* is the same kind of ‘depart’ in *verses 10,11*.

b. This Verse Permits Divorce.

Those taking this position believe the Bible grants another limited permission for divorce:

- only as a last resort.
- only when initiated by an unbelieving partner on the basis of his or her spouse’s faith in Christ.

Those who hold to this interpretation only advocate divorce as a last resort option, stressing the importance of the believing partner not to make life miserable or unbearable for the unbelieving spouse.

SHALL MARRY ANOTHER

In Matthew 19, the Lord Jesus Christ not only dealt with the subject of divorce, but also with that of remarriage. His words in *Matthew 19:9* are repeated in *Matthew 5:32; Mark 10:11,12; and Luke 16:18*.

This raises the thorny question of remarriage. Is remarriage after divorce forbidden or permitted? If it is permitted, on what grounds?

Remarriage is taught in the Bible.

- The law permitted it after a divorce — *Deuteronomy 24:2*.
- It is better for W _____ to marry than to burn — *I Corinthians 7:8,9*.
- According to *I Timothy 5:11-14*, younger _____ should not be cared for by their church (why? *verse 13*), but should marry.

But what about remarriage for Christians who have been divorced?

Among Bible-believing Baptists, there are three basic convictions on this issue:

A. One: No Divorce, Therefore No Remarriage.

Those who see no New Testament grounds for divorce obviously see no grounds for remarriage. The disciple's response (*Matthew 19:10*) and the Lord's answer (*Matthew 19:11,12f,g*) would seem to bolster this viewpoint.

B. Two: Limited Divorce, No Remarriage.

There are those who would concede divorce permissible on the narrow grounds of fornication or in the case where it is initiated by an unbelieving spouse, but would deny any possibility of remarriage while the divorced partner is still living.

C. Three: Limited Divorce, Limited Remarriage.

There are those who would concede divorce permissible on these same narrow grounds, and also hold that in such cases the New Testament permits remarriage.

D. Remarriage And The Teaching Of Christ.

The issue boils down to the question as to whether the so-called exception clause refers ONLY to divorce — or, to both divorce and remarriage. (If it refers to both and limited divorce is permitted, then limited remarriage is also permitted).

Those who believe the exception clause covers divorce *and* remarriage point out the following:

1. The context of *Mark 10:11,12* and *Luke 16:18* is divorce and remarriage.
2. The Pharisees were well aware of the Law (which permitted remarriage after divorce).
3. If the Lord Jesus Christ intended to absolutely forbid remarriage, would He not have said so?
4. Write out *Matthew 19:9* to the colon (:), omitting the reference to marriage ("*and shall marry another*").

"Whosoever _____
_____ :"

Does this make sense? _____

5. Now, write out the same portion of *Matthew 19:9*, this time omitting the exception clause ("*except it be for fornication*").

"Whosoever _____
_____ :"

What two references does this now echo? _____

It is obvious that the exception clause applies to the question of remarriage as well as divorce. Therefore, **if** it permits divorce then it must also permit remarriage.

E. Remarriage And I Corinthians 7.

1. We have already seen that Christians who divorce should remain unmarried or seek to be reconciled — *verse 11*.
2. The issue of remarriage once again revolves around the question as to whether divorce is permitted under special circumstances by *verse 15*.

IF the meaning of the word “bondage” in *verse 15* refers to the bonds of marriage, do the words “bound” and “loosed” in *verse 27* likewise refer to marriage and divorce, respectively? Those who believe they do, argue as follows:

- a. “Art thou _____ (married) unto a wife? seek not to be _____ (divorced).” This is what *verse 10* teaches.
- b. “Art thou _____ (divorced) from a wife? _____ not a wife.” This is what *verse 11a* teaches.

Note: The word “loosed” here cannot refer to death, because the verse would become ludicrous.

3. *I Corinthians 7:28a* says: “But and ____ thou _____, thou hast _____ ...”

Those who believe there can be limited remarriage in the case of permissible divorce see this verse as following on from *verse 27* — “Art thou loosed (divorced) from a wife [on the grounds of *verse 15*]? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned...”

4. Marriage in *I Corinthians 7:28a* cannot refer to marriage between two single people because the verse goes on to say, “AND if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned.”

F. What About Romans 7:2?

“For the woman which hath an husband is _____ by the _____ to her husband so long as he _____; but if the husband be dead, she is _____ from the law of her husband.”

This Scripture is quoted by Bible-believing Baptists on both sides of the issue of possible remarriage after divorce.

Those who do not believe the New Testament makes any allowance for remarriage ask, “Does not this verse speak of the permanency of marriage?” Yes, indeed — just as our Lord spoke of it in the Gospels.

Those who believe the New Testament allows for limited divorce point to the expression “bound by the law” and ask the question, “What law?”

1. In *verse 1* the Bible says, “I speak to them that _____ the law...”

2. Compare this verse with *Romans 2:14* and look at *Romans 7:12*. Does *Romans 7:2* refer to the law of Moses? _____
3. Does the Law of Moses permit divorce? _____

Their argument is that a wife **is** bound by the Law [of Moses] to her husband, but that same law permits divorce (and subsequent remarriage).

G. Real Problems With Remarriage.

These are indeed thorny issues — matters over which many Bible-believing Baptist churches and pastors literally agonize. Sometimes it results in strife between brethren, but righteous anger should surely be focused upon the hardness of the hearts of men and women. Anytime we move away from God's perfect will (in this case: "one man, one woman, one lifetime) we create seemingly unsolvable situations.

Often, when remarriage *appears* to be the best solution it only brings a new set of problems — especially when children are involved. When the sin that was the root cause of a previous marriage's failure is not Scripturally dealt with, it will usually resurface in the second marriage. Expectations of a new start in life can be unrealistic, thus leading to a new round of disappointments. When someone has been hurt in their first marriage (e.g. by an unfaithful partner), they find it difficult to enter into an unreserved relationship.

On the other hand, when remarriage is *forbidden* to those who have been divorced within the allowances of either the exception clause (immorality) or I Corinthians 7 (having been divorced by an unbelieving partner), a new set of questions is raised. For example, consider this very typical scenario: a 28 year-old Christian woman and mother of two young children who, despite her best efforts, willingness to forgive, and refusal to initiate divorce proceedings, was divorced by her unfaithful (and since remarried) husband. Her pastor lovingly counsels her that she cannot remarry until her former husband is dead. This raises a very tough question: "Does one command of God ever cause us to disobey another command of God?" Without a husband, this poor woman:

- Cannot work and let others raise her small children — *Titus 2:4c,5c*.
- Cannot be sustained by her church — *I Timothy 5:9,10*.
- Cannot live off government welfare.
- Cannot be reconciled to her ex-husband.

Beside all this, her children have no father-figure to lead them in the ways of the Lord.

Of course there are other *possible* options (her family, *James 1:27*, work from home, alimony and child support, etc.). The point is that while an absolutely

“no remarriage” position may be ‘cut-and-dried’ for the pastor, it is never so simple for those actually involved!

Oh! the hardness of the heart of man! What a tangled imbroglio divorce creates!!

DOTH COMMIT ADULTERY

According to *Mark 10:11,12; Luke 16:18;* and *Romans 7:3*, when someone who has divorced their partner remarries, or when someone marries their divorced partner — they commit adultery. (According to *Matthew 5:32* and *Matthew 19:9* this is also the case apart from the exception clause.)

This raises more difficult questions. For example:

A. Is This Adultery “One Time” Or “Perpetual?”

- Those who believe it is a ‘one time’ act often counsel the innocent party to remain unmarried until such time as their ex-partner commits adultery by remarrying, thereby providing Scriptural ‘grounds’ to remarry.
- Those who believe it is a perpetual sin usually recommend the adulterous (remarried) couple separate (not divorce) at least until any and all previous [first] marriages are Scripturally dissolved by death. This counsel is offered regardless of how long a second marriage may have existed, and regardless of any children born from the second marriage.

B. Can This Kind Of Adultery Be Forgiven?

- According to *John 8:2-11* and *I Corinthians 6:9-11*, is adultery a ‘forgivable’ sin? _____
- According to *I Corinthians 6:9,10* and *Galatians 5:19,21*, adulterers cannot _____ the _____ of God.
- Consider the scenario of a seemingly Christ-loving middle-aged couple — strong members of a church, doing the Lord’s work, etc. Before both were saved, their first marriages ended in divorce. As single divorcees they were saved, later met and were married, and have since been happily married for 20 years. Those who hold to the idea of perpetual adultery would logically have to say either that they were never truly saved (because they evidence no fruit of repentance, living in continual disobedience to God’s clear teaching against remarriage) — or, that they were saved, but lost their salvation once they remarried! (cf. *Romans 8:17*)

- If a Christian committed adultery through remarriage before they were saved, then according to *I Corinthians 6:11*, they ARE _____ ED, they ARE _____ IED, they ARE _____ IED.

C. The Old Testament Solution.

1. The Law's penalty for adultery was _____ — *Leviticus 20:10*.
2. This would certainly solve a multitude of practical problems!

D. The New Testament Way.

1. According to *Leviticus 20:11*, a man who lay with his father's wife was to be "put _____."
2. According to *I Corinthians 5:1,13*, a church member who lay with his father's wife was to be "put _____" — i.e. church discipline was to be effected.
3. This demonstrates a basic shift in penalty between the Old Testament (nation) and the New Testament (church). Baptist churches do not execute those of their number who violate God's holy precepts — but they still have an obligation to deal with such sins.

If a *believer* is guilty of adultery through remarriage, he or she should confess it as sin and receive God's and the church's forgiveness.

Church members who have experienced divorce and remarriage in their past should be careful not to give others an impression that theirs was a desirable course of action. (There are enough people about who will give the advice that divorce is a viable solution to marital problems.)

THE CAUSES OF DIVORCE

A recent survey of several experienced Bible-believing Baptist pastors who have dealt with the tragedy of marital breakdown and divorce throughout their ministries found the following to be major causes of divorce in our society:

A. Lack Of Godly Leadership.

1. According to *Ephesians 5:23*, the _____ is the head (leader, authority) in the home.

2. *Isaiah 3:12a* aptly describes our present society:

a. _____ are their _____.

b. _____ rule _____ them.

This is not to say all such women are rebellious — many times they are forced to take the leadership of the home because of a weak, spineless, self-centered husband!

B. Lack Of Motherly Presence.

1. According to *I Timothy 6:10a*, the _____ of _____ is the _____ of all evil — including the evils associated with marital breakdown.
2. According to *I Timothy 6:10b*, this sin is really C _____ OUSNESS.
3. A couple's desire to possess material 'things' above and beyond their needs (*I Timothy 6:8*) often results in a mother placing her young children in the care of someone else in order to work out of the home.
 - a. The mother is to be the _____ at home — *Titus 2:5c*.
 - b. A _____ left to _____ bringeth his mother to shame — *Proverbs 29:15*.

In the United States of America, in November 1995, there were 32,562,000 married women in the workplace.

C. Lack Of The Word: Love Of The World.

Many Baptist homes pay lip service to the Word of God. They may be the first to rise in DEFENSE of the Authorized, King James Version as the inspired, infallible, inerrant, preserved Word of God — but far too often lag in their DEFERENCE to it.

The average North American child watches around 25 to 27 hours of television a week! (There are not that many hours of wholesome TV programmed in a week!!)

About 60% of American homes have access to pornography through a variety of movie channels now available. Soap Operas and many talk shows focus on divorce. Sitcoms belittle the Biblical home and substitute alternative families (and worse!).

If the Bible was read for just half the hours given over to worldly pursuits, there would be revival in the home!

D. Other Causes.

1. Liquor — *Proverbs 20:1; Isaiah 5:11&c.*
2. In-Law Interference — *Genesis 2:24.*
3. Immaturity — not physical, so much as spiritual and emotional.
4. Slothfulness — *I Timothy 5:8* (husbands); *Proverbs 31:27* (wives).
5. Self-centeredness — *Ephesians 5:21; I Corinthians 7:4; I Peter 3:7,8.*
6. Unresolved Conflict — *Ephesians 4:26* which leads to *Ephesians 4:31.*
7. Unforgiving Spirit — *Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13.*

THE CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE

There is always a high price to be paid when we step outside of God's perfect will — e.g. *Genesis 12:10* leading to *13:7*; *Genesis 16:2* leading to *21:9-11*; etc. *Numbers 32:23d* and *Galatians 6:7* are timeless principles. No divorce comes without serious side effects.

A. Divorce Violates.

1. Read: *Ecclesiastes 5:4-6.* Divorce violates holy _____ .
2. Read: *I Corinthians 6:1-8.* Divorces are usually settled by the L _____. For Christians, this is a violation of God's Word.

B. Divorce Has Emotional Consequences.

- Loneliness and feelings of rejection.
- Bitterness and guilt.
- Intense pain. All divorces are painful — they involve the tearing apart of one flesh!!
- Strife, as friends and relatives “take sides.” Custody and visitation battles.
- Confused children — they must go through the conflict, the divorce, and the aftermath!

C. Divorce Has Financial Consequences.

- Wives forced to work.
- Alimony and child support. Extra expenses in maintaining two dwellings.

D. Divorce Has Social Consequences.

- No wife to come home to; no husband to talk to.
- Children are greatly affected — divorce and promiscuity are often a result (*Exodus 20:5*).
- Adultery brings an indelible R _____ — *Proverbs 6:33b* (read: *verses 32,33*).

E. Divorce Has Spiritual Consequences.

Divorce brings confusion.

1. It confuses God's ORDER:

The Home is God's first institution. It is the bedrock of society. When homes are destroyed or dismantled, society soon follows.

2. It confuses God's PICTURE:

According to *Ephesians 5:32* marriage is a picture of the relationship of _____ and the _____. (verse 32). Divorce destroys this analogy.

3. It Confuses God's WITNESS:

Divorce is an unwitting testimony to our children, neighbors, friends, and churches that marriage is NOT a lifelong commitment, and/or, God cannot do everything!

THE CHURCH AND DIVORCE

Our final consideration in this study is to ask the question: "What should be the attitude and rôle of Bible-believing Baptist churches regarding divorce?"

A. Three Basic Church ATTITUDES Toward Divorce And Divorced Persons:

1. Counsel.

More than ever before, God's people need to be encouraged in their marriages and taught what God says about divorce. Godly counsel must come from pastors via the pulpit and their counseling. Church members should be forward in motivating others in marriage, being careful never to disparage it.

Malachi 2:15b says: "Take heed to your _____ ..." Divorce is a spiritual problem — it begins in the heart of man. The Word of God must reach man's heart, not just his head, in these serious matters.

2. Correction.

- a. When sin threatens a marriage, it should be quickly dealt with (according to *Matthew 18:17-17* and *Galatians 6:1,2*).
- b. A church has the God-given right to J _____ in matters so serious as divorce — *I Corinthians 6:1,3,4*.

3. Compassion.

- Many divorced people feel more loved, accepted, and appreciated at a single's bar than at a Baptist church!
- Divorce often makes its victims feel like “second-class citizens” and their children as unclean!
- Church members must resist judging and discarding those who have suffered the tragedy of divorce — even if the church has had to administer discipline (*II Corinthians 2:6-8*).
- If God can forgive divorce and remarriage then God’s people must also forgive, love, and accept those who have been forgiven.

B. Three Basic Church ACTIONS Relating To Divorce And Divorced Persons:

1. A Ministry Of PROCLAMATION.

- Affirming God’s holy standards for marriage — through preaching, teaching, and example.
- Condemning the world’s plan for marriage — e.g. living together, trial marriages, divorce, etc.

2. A Ministry Of RECONCILIATION.

- Praying for couples, homes, children.
- Preventing divorce by applying God’s Word to problems as they arise.

3. A Ministry Of RESTORATION.

- Reclaiming those who have gone through divorce.
- Restoring divorced Christians to a place of meaningful service.

Note: Those in positions of leadership are required to have a “good report” (*I Timothy 3:7*). A divorced and remarried pastor is certainly going to experience reproach in his ministry because of his past.

Furthermore, God’s leaders should set a personal example of God’s ideal before the flock.

“Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife; to live together in the holy estate of matrimony, to love her, cherish her, comfort her, honour and keep her, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as you both shall live?”

“Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband; to live together in the holy estate of matrimony, to reverence him, obey him, comfort him, and honour and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as you both shall live?”

I Do!

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Matthew 19:6.*

E Education

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Education is without doubt a subject of vital and practical importance — not only because it permeates so much of everyday life in one form or another, but also because it impacts the quality and length of that life.

This lesson looks at the principles of education set forth by the Word of God. It is not intended to be a treatise for or against various methods and forms of modern education, except in a peripheral way as they relate to these principles.

There is no mandate given in either Testament for the establishment of the kinds of educational institutions we have today. The word “school” is found only one time in the Bible (*Acts 19:9*) — although the existence of some kind of formal education is certainly implied elsewhere (*Psalm 119:99; Proverbs 5:13; John 7:15; Galatians 3:24,25; 4:1,2*).

What the Bible does teach by way of principle is generally contrary to much of what is commonly practiced by most people today — including many Bible-believing Baptists! The *blessing* is that its principles of education are still very much relevant, and will continue to work effectively whenever and wherever they are implemented.

This study deals with three important areas of education which apply directly to Baptists: the education of **children**, the education of **Christians**, and the education of **preachers**.

BIBLE PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION

Since the rise of “progressive education” in the 19th century, numerous and voluminous books have been written on matters such as curriculum, childhood development, teaching techniques, psychology, and teacher training.

Teaching (doctrine) and learning is central to the Word of God, so it obviously has much to say about this subject. Unlike most modern theories, the Bible is both simple and consistent when it comes to education. There are two key principles to note:

A. Principle #1 — All Education Is Spiritual.

It is a mistake to speak of secular *and* spiritual education as being distinct and separate. Secular humanism uses this ploy to ‘cut and corral’ religious content

from public school curriculum, thereby removing God and the Bible from the disciplines of history (*Job 12:23; Psalm 33:12a; 75:6,7; Proverbs 14:34; 21:1; Daniel 4:25b*), mathematics (e.g. *Leviticus 25:27a; 27:30-32*), language (*Genesis 11:9*), physics (*Romans 1:20; Colossians 1:17*), science (*Genesis 1:11,12,21,24,25; Leviticus 17:11a; Job 12:7-9; 26:7b; 37:5-14; Psalm 19:1,3; 139:13-16; Isaiah 40:22; etc.*), social studies (*Genesis 10; Acts 17:26*), music (*II Chronicles 7:6; Psalm 47:7*), economics (*Luke 6:38; Proverbs 3:9,10*), etc.

Many well-meaning Baptist parents have mistakenly believed that godless ‘education’ can simply be countered and even overcome with an hour or two of Bible teaching and preaching each week! In reality, they have fallen for the same error —that of divorcing God from the wonder and order of HIS creation (see: *Romans 1:21-25&c*).

All true education is spiritual. This principle is demonstrated by:

1. *Proverbs 9:10.*

“*The _____ of the LORD is the _____ of _____ : and the knowledge of the _____ is understanding.*”

Here we observe what is foundational to any and all real education.

a. According to *Proverbs 8:13*, the fear of the LORD is to HATE:

E _____

A _____

P _____

The evil _____

The _____

b. According to *Job 28:28*, understanding is to _____ from evil.

c. According to *Psalm 111:10*, all those who _____ God’s commandments have a _____ understanding.

2. *Proverbs 22:4.*

“*By humility and the fear of the LORD are _____, and _____, and _____.*”

One of the stated goals of modern secular ‘education’ is to produce “productive members of society” having a good “quality of life.” Well, here’s the real way to achieve it!

See also *Joshua 1:8*. According to this Scripture, the way to prosperity and personal success is to constantly attend to *The Book*.

3. *Proverbs 23:7a.*

“For as he _____ in his _____, so is he.”

A heart ‘educated’ with a godless curriculum can only produce a godlessness in the life.

B. Principle #2 — Education Is More Than Acquiring Knowledge.

The Bible uses four words which outline the steps to, and the outcome of, a sound education. They are:

1. I _____ — *Proverbs 1:8.*

This refers to the communication of facts and information from the teacher to the student.

2. K _____ — *Proverbs 1:7a; 23:12.*

This is the assimilation and retaining of communicated facts; the development of skills.

3. U _____ — *Proverbs 2:3b; Psalm 119:130.*

This is the adaptation and application of acquired knowledge and skills in the light of God’s Word; discretion.

4. W _____ — *Proverbs 2:6; 16:16a; &c.*

This refers to a life which is in harmony with the mind of Christ (the Word of God) — the ability to think and do as God would think and do.

Proverbs 4:4,5a refers to these same steps with the words — “taught” (instruction); “retain” (knowledge); “keep” (understanding); and “wisdom.”

Note God’s order in *II Peter 1:5* — faith (first), then virtue ... before knowledge!

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

Q. What is the most common practice of educating children today?

A. At the ‘appropriate’ time, parents will send their children off to preschool — then on to kindergarten, elementary school, secondary school, and finally college or university. In the majority of cases these schools will be secular government-run institutions with a generally increasing reputation of diminishing academics, social engineering, frivolous pursuits, and increasing wickedness. Parents may or may not try to offset these ‘shortcomings’ with some extra-curricular activity and possibly once-a-week Sunday School and church attendance.

Surely the answer to this situation is the Christian School or the Home School! Or is it?

Consider the Biblical principles of educating children:

There are five Biblical principles involved in the education of children:

A. The Principle Of PATERNAL Responsibility.

Read: *Deuteronomy 6:1-9.*

According to the customs of the Israelites in the Old Testament period, children were taught at home by their parents — there were no schools established for the educating of children. From the earliest age children were taught the Law by recitation, repetition, games, and songs, etc. In addition to this elementary education, the father would teach his sons his trade or occupation, while the mother would prepare her daughters to be good homemakers and wives.

Most likely, toward the end of the Old Testament era and in New Testament times, the local synagogue had become a schoolhouse. Even so, the prime responsibility for education belonged to the parents and in particular the father.

1. The RESPONSIBILITY Of The Father.

- a. According to *Psalm 78:1-8*, fathers are responsible to train the next G _____ .
- b. According to *Proverbs 13:1*, a wise son is to listen to the instruction of his _____ .
- c. According to *Ephesians 6:4*, the father is responsible to bring his children up in the _____ and admonition of the _____ .
- d. According to *Galatians 4:2*, the extent and nature of the education of a child is to be determined by the _____ .
- e. The father is to make known God's _____ to his children — *Isaiah 38:19b*.

Every father will be required to give account to God for the raising and educating of his children.

2. The RÔLE Of The Father.

The father serves his home in a three-fold capacity:

- Provider — *I Timothy 5:8* (Physical needs).
- Protector — *Matthew 24:43* (Physical, emotional, spiritual).
- Priest — *Genesis 18:19; Joshua 24:15e* (Spiritual leadership).

3. The ROUTINE Of The Father.

How is the father to carry out his God-given responsibilities?

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 outlines three ways:

- a. By Vital Conversation — *verse 5a.*

“*thou shalt teach them* _____”

This means there is to be deliberate, prayerful, and thoughtful effort on the part of the father. It cannot be done haphazardly in an “off-and-on,” “hit-and-miss,” way.

- b. By Victorious Demonstration — *verse 5b.*

“*when* _____ *sittest* ... *when* _____ *walkest*... *when* _____ *liest down* ... *when* _____ *risest up.*”

Dad, you must “walk the walk” as well as “talk the talk.” Children cannot be told to “do as I say, not as I do.” A father must be consistent and real before his wife and children.

- c. By Visual Manifestation — *verses 8,9.*

A Baptist home ought to radiate godliness through its décor and decorum. It is not enough to simply cover the walls with Scripture verses and otherwise “shove God’s Word down the throats” of children — there must be an accompanying atmosphere of the Christian graces. Much of a child’s education is “caught” rather than “taught!”

4. The REPLACEMENT For The Failed Father.

The sad reality today is that many homes have no father — whether by divorce, death, or dereliction. Statistically, children in such homes are more likely to be “at risk” when it comes to academics and getting an adequate education.

What is to be done in such situations? Consider the example of Timothy:

- a. Timothy’s mother was a Jewess who _____ — *Acts 16:1.*
- b. The word “but” in this verse indicates that Timothy’s Greek father had little use for ‘religion.’
- c. Timothy received his early education from his grandmother and his _____ — *II Timothy 1:5.*
- d. According to *Acts 16:3a*, _____ took Timothy with him on his second evangelistic journey.
- e. *Philippians 2:22; I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; 2:1;* etc., describe the relationship between Paul and Timothy as that of father and _____.

- ☞ When no father is present, the responsibility for educating children falls upon the mother. However, she should seek help in doing this — preferably from other relatives, and especially from a “father-figure” mentor where sons are involved.

5. The RIVALS Of The Father.

There is tremendous opposition to God’s plan for educating children. Two foes set in array against fathers are:

a. Television.

In many Baptist homes today, children watch between 30 to 40 hours of television per week — very little (if any) of which is positively godly and Biblical, let alone ‘neutral.’ Most children’s and adolescent television programming in fact engineers young people away from the Word of God.

Television has taken over as the prime teacher of this nation’s children. It has been allowed to do so because it is the ‘ideal’ baby-sitter — relieving (self-centered) parents of their God-given duty to raise their children.

Using the following chart, calculate where your child is *really* getting his or her education from:

**OVER THE PERIOD OF A NORMAL WEEK
MY CHILD AVERAGES THE FOLLOWING
AMOUNTS OF EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES....**

Formal Instruction (at school, etc.)	_____ hours
Undistracted Study (homework)	_____ hours
Sunday School (actual class time)	_____ hours
Preaching (church meetings, fellowships, etc.)	_____ hours
Home Bible Instruction (Deuteronomy 6 in action)	_____ hours
Parental Guidance (father/son & mother/daughter life instruction)	_____ hours
Watching Television	_____ hours

- According to *Psalm 1:1*, a believer should not W _____ in the counsel of the ungodly.

- According to *Psalm 1:2*, a believer's D _____ should be in the Word of God.
- Compare *Galatians 5:19-21a* with *Galatians 5:22,23*. Which of these passages best describes the content of most television programming? _____
- Look up *Psalm 101:3,4*. What principle does this Scripture give concerning watching television?

b. Government.

This nation has seen a definite historical progression away from God's plan for educating children.

FAMILY EDUCATION

(prime responsibility for education)



PUBLIC EDUCATION

(local communities took over responsibility)



GOVERNMENT EDUCATION

(education financed through taxation)



SOCIAL EDUCATION

(education in hands of bureaucrats, social engineers; parents shut out)

According to *Luke 20:25*, we are to _____ unto Cæsar (government) the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's. From the list below, indicate which things belong to the government, and which things belong to God:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| My taxes (<i>Romans 13:6</i>) | _____ |
| My tithes (<i>Leviticus 27:30</i>) | _____ |
| My prayers (<i>I Timothy 2:1,2</i>) | _____ |
| My church (<i>Acts 20:28b</i>) | _____ |
| My obedience (<i>Romans 13:1,5</i>) | _____ |
| Myself (<i>I Corinthians 6:19,20</i>) | _____ |
| My children (<i>Psalm 127:3</i>) | _____ |

According to *I Peter 2:14*, the two-fold responsibility of GOVERNMENT is to:

- P _____ the evildoers
- P _____ the well-doers.

There is NO Biblical mandate for Government to take and educate our children.

God's Word clearly teaches the principle of PATERNAL responsibility. Fathers are responsible and accountable to God for the education of their children!

B. The Principle Of IMMEDIATE Responsibility.

When does the education of children begin?

1. Look up: *Psalm 58:3*. When do children begin to display wicked tendencies?

2. Look up: *Isaiah 28:9*. At what age are children able to be taught knowledge and understand doctrine?

3. Look up: *II Timothy 3:15*. At what age did Timothy begin to be taught the Scriptures?

4. Look up: *Deuteronomy 31:12,13*. According to verse 13, at what point in their life should children begin hearing and learning?

5. Look up: *Judges 13:8*. When should parents begin making plans to educate their children?

6. According to *Proverbs 22:6*, parents are to train up a _____ in the way he should go.

Childhood is the time for:

- Communication — *Proverbs 1:8*.
- Correction — *Proverbs 23:13a; 22:15*.
- Conversion — *Luke 18:16a; II Timothy 3:15*.

There are four reasons why childhood is the best time for education:

- * The curiosity factor — children have a natural (God-given) desire to know about things. "Why?"

- * The memory factor — a child's mind has a remarkable capacity to retain things.
- * The humility factor — children are not cynical or skeptical. They have no pride of intellect (*Matthew 18:4*).
- * The trust factor — children have a God-given capacity to believe what they are told.

The education of children should begin with their arrival into the world and continue until they leave home (and beyond!). It is an on-going process as set forth by *Isaiah 28:10*.

C. The Principle Of DELEGATED Responsibility.

If the responsibility for educating children rests with the parents and in particular the father, does this mean parents have to become full-time school teachers?

Read: *Galatians 4:1,2*. In this passage, the Bible uses the process of educating a child to illustrate the difference between Law and Grace in the matter of salvation. It also sets forth an important principle for the educating of children.

1. According to *verse 2a*, a child may be placed under _____ and _____ to receive its education.
2. According to *verse 2b*, this educational process is entirely in the hands of the child's _____.
3. According to *verse 1*, the principle applies for “as _____ as he is a _____.”

Fathers can Scripturally delegate ('give authority to another') the education of their children to others. In doing so, there are three (often forgotten) facts to keep in mind:

- Fathers may DELEGATE but not ABDICATE! While many parents seem quite happy to literally turn their children over to the State for an 'education,' the sad fact is that many Baptist Dads turn their children over to the Christian School (or their wives at home), then absent themselves from any further tangible part of the education process. Believing they have "done the right thing for their children," they have actually missed the point: it is still a father's responsibility to educate his children. (This misguided thinking often results in Christian Schools and their staff being unjustly 'blamed' for the learning problems and failures of children.)
- Delegation requires that tutors and governors act in the father's stead. Therefore, it is a SIN for any Bible-believing Baptist father to commit the education of his children into the hands of another who will not teach in harmony with his wishes, goals, standards, etc.

- Parents have a *duty* to PREPARE their children for tutors and governors. Children should never be sent to school to learn good manners, proper hygiene, self control, obedience — or even basic Bible truths! These things are to be taught at home long before a child attends school.

D. The Principle Of DIRECTED Responsibility.

Everyone agrees children need to learn the “three ‘R’s”— reading, writing, and arithmetic! — but how should Baptist parents consider the curriculum their children need to be taught?

According to the Bible there are some things which are essential to a sound education and some things to be avoided:

1. What Our Children NEED To Be Taught.

- a. Our children must be taught the T _____ — *III John 4*.
- b. According to *Philippians 4:8*, our children must be focused on things that are:

T _____

H _____

J _____

P _____

L _____

G _____ R _____

V _____ OUS

P _____ WORTHY

- c. Children need every _____ made captive to the _____ of _____ — *II Corinthians 10:5*.
- d. According to *Colossians 3:16*, our children will attain real wisdom when the _____ of _____ dwells within.
- e. Children should learn to _____ all things (by the Word of God), and to _____ that which is good — *I Thessalonians 5:21*.

2. What Our Children DON'T Need To Be Taught.

- a. According to *Jeremiah 10:2*, children must not learn the _____ of the _____.”

Note: This is contrary to the humanistic idea of giving children a ‘rounded’ education by exposing them to all kinds of points of view — good and bad!

- b. According to *Romans 16:19b*, the curriculum we allow to be taught to our children should make them _____ concerning good, and _____ concerning _____.

Note: This answers a common argument leveled against Christian Schools and home schooling: “You are sheltering your children. How will they ever survive in the real world if they are not exposed to it now?!?”

A tiny sapling planted in a busy parking lot must be staked and protected if it is to survive the onslaught of careless traffic. But let it grow up into a mighty oak and it will more than survive any collision with a wayward auto. Children don’t need a Ph.D. in sin!

- c. According to *Psalm 118:8,9*, children must not be taught to put their confidence in _____ (humanism) nor P_____ (government).
- d. According to *Proverbs 19:27*, children don’t need instruction which causes them to _____.
- e. According to *Colossians 2:8*, parents must beware of an ‘education’ based on ungodly P_____ and not after _____.
- f. *1 Timothy 6:20* forbids exposure to any curriculum which promotes a F_____ science (e.g. the theory of evolution).

It is a SIN for any Baptist to allow his children to be educated contrary to the Word of God. Fathers must take the responsibility to direct the education of their children according to Biblical precepts and principles.

E. **The Principle Of TERTIARY Responsibility.**

Most Baptist parents will have a struggle with the issue of post-secondary (tertiary) education. It is a fact of life that in today’s world most young men are going to need something more than a high school diploma to secure employment sufficient to provide for their future needs. What are the general options?

- An interdenominational ‘religious’ college or university?
- A ‘secular’ college or university?
- A branch of the armed forces?

Each one of these usual choices has its “pros and cons,” and there is probably not a totally satisfactory answer available.

Secular institutes of higher learning often have the very latest and best in equipment and research facilities — but they are also hotbeds of radicalism, political correctness, socialism, feminism, evolution, etc. They are morally and intellectually dangerous to Baptists. What price must one pay to get an advanced education from this kind of college or university?

Military-based education offers good discipline and practical training — but they can also be morally rough and hard places for Christians to maintain a vibrant testimony for Christ.

Religious colleges usually offer a sound tertiary education in a strictly controlled atmosphere — however, their interdenominationalism, pseudo-churchism, and often-weak stands on the Word of God, etc. are spiritually dangerous for Baptist young people.

Added to these choices is the question of whether it is best to send young people far away from their homes and churches — or send them to a nearby college and remain under the influence of their home and church.

These are not easy decisions! Does the Bible give any guidance? Yes, it does.

There are two Bible examples of men who attended worldly, secular universities — and survived!

A. MOSES — *Exodus 2:5-10; Acts 7:22; Hebrews 11:24-26.*

1. Moses received his early-childhood education from whom?
-

2. Moses received his advanced education at which university?
-

3. Do you think it was Moses' (or his parent's) choice that he receive this education? _____

4. Did Moses excel in his advanced schooling? _____

5. Moses 'survived' his education because he made two key decisions:

- a. He _____ to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter — *Hebrews 11:24.*

- b. He C _____ to stand on the side of God's people — *Hebrews 11:25.*

B. DANIEL — *Daniel 1:3-21.*

1. Daniel belonged to the _____ 'S seed — verse 3.

i.e. He was of the royal Judæan family.

2. According to *Daniel 1:4*, when he came to Babylon as a teenager Daniel was already “ _____ in all _____, cunning in _____, and understanding _____.”
3. Daniel and his three companions received their advanced education from which university?

4. Was it Daniel’s (or his parent’s) choice that he receive this education?
_____ (*Isaiah 39:7*)

5. Daniel’s tertiary education was both grueling and ungodly. He was subjected to:

- Physical tampering — *verse 3, II Kings 20:18.*
- Intellectual tampering — *verse 4g.*
- Spiritual tampering — *verse 7* (named after pagan gods).

6. Did Daniel and his three friends excel in their advanced education?
_____ (*verse 17*)

7. Daniel ‘survived’ his education because he made a key decision:

He “ _____ in his _____ that he would not _____ himself” — *verse 8a.*

Principle: Baptist parents should not send their children off to a place of higher learning just because they have completed High School. The child may not be ready — in fact, he may never be ready!! Baptist young adults are only ready to attend a tertiary educational institute when they have the spiritual ability and courage to make (and hold to) the same KEY decisions made by Moses and Daniel. Then they can survive the moral and spiritual dangers abounding in such places — *and* go on in life to be used mightily by the LORD, just as those men were.

This concludes the section dealing with the education of children. Baptists need to pray much for wisdom *and* for their precious children in this matter. It is THE most important aspect of raising a generation of children who will shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.

Are Christian Schools the answer? Is home schooling the answer? No! **Parents are the answer** — parents who will heed and follow the clear commands and principles of the Word of God and educate their children by them!

THE EDUCATION OF BELIEVERS

Believers are expected to _____ in grace, and in the _____ of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ — *II Peter 3:18*.

According to *I Peter 2:2*, the means of this growth is the _____ of God.

This section of the study considers the Biblical principles for the education of believers.

A. **WHERE Are Believers To Be Educated?**

While the Christian home can, and ought to, have a significant part in instructing believers in the Christian walk (*Proverbs 4:1-4; II Timothy 3:14,15*), the Lord has established another institution specifically for the education of believers — the New Testament CHURCH.

1. The so-called “Great Commission” was given by our Lord to His churches (“organized assemblies of baptized believers”) in *Matthew 28:18-20*.
This commission outlines the three-fold mission of every Bible-believing Baptist church:
 - a. To T _____ (disciple) all nations — *verse 19b*.
 - b. To B _____ all who believe — *verse 19c*.
 - c. To T _____ them (baptized believers) to observe all things — *verse 20a*.
2. This command was obeyed by the Church at Jerusalem in *Acts 2:22-42*.
 - Peter preached the Gospel to the lost — *verses 22-40*.
 - Those who gladly received his word were _____ and _____ to the Church — *verses 41,47b*.
 - The believers continued in the apostle’s _____ — *verse 42a*.
3. Look up *Acts 11:26*. For one year, Barnabas and Saul assembled with the _____ at Antioch and _____ much people.
4. According to *I Corinthians 14:12*, the greatest use of spiritual gifts is for the _____ (building up) of the _____.
5. According to *I Timothy 3:15*, the pillar and ground of the _____ is the _____ of the living God.

There are many man-made substitutes for the New Testament church today — man-founded ‘Church’ societies, religious radio and television programs, para-Church organizations, etc. None of these have the Biblical authority to

teach the saints of God, and can be downright dangerous — see: *II Timothy 3:6; 4:3,4; II John 10*; etc.

Divine authority for all evangelism, baptism, and the instruction of disciples has been vested in the Lord's churches.

B. **By WHOM Are believers To Be Educated?**

Christians will receive their instruction in a number of ways:

1. Some Things Are Communicated Directly From God.

This instruction is received by virtue of the new birth and the new nature.

- a. *I Thessalonians 4:9* says we are taught of God to _____ one _____. i.e. it is a spiritually natural thing to do. cf. *I John 3:14,15*.
- b. According to *Titus 2:11,12*, the “_____ of God that bringeth salvation” teaches us to _____ soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

2. Some Things Are Taught By Nature.

According to *I Corinthians 11:14*, what does nature teach about a man's appearance?

3. Some Things Are To Be Learned Through Self-Study.

Write out: *II Timothy 2:15*.

4. Some Things Will Be Taught In The Home.

- a. Parents must instruct their children — *Proverbs 6:20*.
- b. Husbands must be able to instruct their wives — *I Corinthians 14:35*.

5. Many Things Will Be Taught By Other Believers.

- a. Christians are to teach and admonish one _____ — *Colossians 3:16*.
- b. Christians are to _____ one another — *Hebrews 10:25c*.

Note: These Scriptures highlight the importance of faithful church attendance. They also give insight into what Christian interaction needs to be during times of assembly!

- c. Older Christian women are to teach the _____ women how to order their home life — *Titus 2:3-5*.
6. In The Church, The Principle Instructor Is The Pastor Teacher.
- Pastors Are Placed In The Churches By God.
 - “God hath _____ some in the _____ ... thirdly _____ ...” — *I Corinthians 12:28*.
 - “And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, _____ and teachers” — *Ephesians 4:11*.
 - Pastors Are To Be Qualified Men.
 - A bishop (pastor, elder) must be _____ to _____ — *I Timothy 3:2g; II Timothy 2:24c*.
 - A bishop must be _____ by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince others — *Titus 1:9*.
 - Pastors Are To Specialize In Teaching The Word Of God.
 - They are to _____ the flock of God — *I Peter 5:2*.
 - They are to _____ themselves continually to prayer and the _____ of the _____ — *Acts 6:4*.
 - They are to _____ the church of God — *Acts 20:28*.
 - They are to put the _____ in remembrance — *I Timothy 4:6a*.
 - They are to give _____ to reading, exhortation, and doctrine — *I Timothy 4:13*.
 - They are to _____ in the word and doctrine — *I Timothy 5:17b*.
 - They are to _____ and teach — *I Timothy 4:11*.
 - They are to teach and _____ — *I Timothy 6:2g*.
 - They are to R _____, R _____, and exhort with all _____ and doctrine — *II Timothy 4:2b*.
 - They are to be remembered and F _____ ED by every church member — *Hebrews 13:7*.

Note: The Bible does not advocate blindly following any man. The key here is the word “faith” —

“whose faith follow.” We are to loyally follow the pastor as God’s man so long as he remains Biblically sound!

- They are to be O ____ ED and S _____ TED to in the exercise of their office — *Hebrews 13:17*.

d. Pastors Serve A Three-Fold Purpose In Baptist Churches.

This is outlined in *Ephesians 4:11-16*. In *verse 11*, we see that God gave pastors to His churches for:

- The _____ of the saints. This is defined in *verses 13-15* as bringing them to full maturity.
- The _____ of the _____. This is the fulfilling of the Great Commission.
- The _____ of the body of Christ (the church, *Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18*). This is explained in *verse 16*. The pastor’s responsibility is to develop his church into a ‘fine-tuned’ body, ready to accomplish the work of the Lord.

Pastors are God’s teachers of God’s people. While they may not personally do all the teaching in a church, they are nevertheless responsible for all the teaching that goes forth.

Note: Someone will say, “But what about *I John 2:27*? I don’t need any man over me to teach me anything! It is absolutely true that every believer has the Holy Spirit of God abiding within him (*I Corinthians 2:12; Romans 8:11*), and that He is the true Teacher of the Word of God (*John 14:26; I John 2:20*). However, this does not obviate the need for pastors and teachers. The context of *I John 2:27* is seductive teaching by false teachers, *verse 26*. According to *verse 24*, if we keep that which we have heard (how? from sound teachers imparting the Word of God!) we will recognize error without having to be told. (This is the principle of *Proverbs 22:6*.)

7. There Are Some Restrictions As To Who May Teach In A Baptist Church.

- a. According to *Hebrews 5:12-14*, those who teach should be of full _____, i.e. spiritually mature.
- b. According to *I Timothy 2:12*, a _____ is not to teach, nor _____ authority over the _____.

This does not preclude women from all teaching — they have an important rôle to play in teaching other women (as well as children) of the church. The key is that women are not to be in positions of authority over men — such as they would be if they were pastors!

C. **WHY Are believers To Be Educated?**

There are three major reasons why every Baptist needs to be taught and grounded in the Word of God:

1. For Stability.

- a. According to *Ephesians 4:14*, God's desire is for every believer to grow from childhood to spiritual maturity so as not to be:
 - Tossed ____ and _____. .
 - Carried about by every _____ of _____.
- b. According to *Romans 16:17*, doctrine which has been learned will enable Baptists to _____ those causing divisions and offences injurious to their church.
- c. According to *Colossians 2:7*, we need to be _____ (grounded), _____ up, and _____ ED as we have been _____.
- d. According to *II Thessalonians 2:15* we must stand _____ in that which we have been _____.
- e. According to *Hebrews 13:9a*, it is essential that we be not carried _____ with divers and _____ doctrines.

2. For Service.

- a. According to *Ephesians 4:15*, we must be able to _____ the truth in _____.
- b. According to *I Peter 3:15b*, we must be _____ always to give an _____ to every man that asks a reason of the _____ within us.
- c. We ought to be _____ — *Hebrews 5:12a*.
- d. According to *II Timothy 3:17*, we will be thoroughly furnished unto all _____ through the Scriptures.

3. For Sanctification.

Read: *Ephesians 4:20-24*. Christians need to be taught how to:

- a. Put ____ the old ____ (Adamic nature) — *verse 22*.
- b. Put ____ the ____ man — *verse 24*.

D. WHEN And HOW Are believers To Be Educated?

1. According to *Acts 2:42*, the believers _____ steadfastly in:
 D ____.
 F ____.
 Breaking of ____ (see: *verse 46*).
 P ____.
2. According to *Acts 5:42*, the work of the ministry through the church at Jerusalem took place on a _____ basis.
3. According to *Acts 20:20*, Paul instructed those of the church at Ephesus both _____ and from _____ to house.
4. According to *Acts 20:31*, this was done _____ and _____.
5. Paul was careful to teach churches the whole _____ of God — *Acts 20:27*.

The teaching ministry of a church is to be extensive *and* expansive. How sad that today in many Baptist churches there is precious little real teaching of the Word of God. Much of what is passed off as teaching is both superficial and shallow.

True Bible teaching is instructional (preparing Baptists to be “mighty in the Scriptures”), defensive (protecting Baptists from apostasy), and motivational (producing Baptists who are fervently evangelistic)!

THE EDUCATION OF PREACHERS

- Q.** What is the most common practice of educating pastors and evangelists today?
- A.** When a man surrenders to God's call to preach, he enrolls in a Bible institute, Bible college, or theological seminary, where he receives three to four (or more) years of specialized Bible training.

While this practice is a well-established Baptist *tradition*, it has some serious shortcomings. For example:

- ★ Sending men who have been called to preach away to a distant Bible college depletes the churches of some of their most dedicated workers.
- ★ Sending *families* away to live in a "college town" disrupts family life — jobs are often scarce (and low paying), and family members are put into situations which can make them bitter or resentful toward the ministry.
- ★ The "success syndrome" promoted in most Bible colleges creates unrealistic expectations in young preachers. (Struggling, 'non-successful' preachers usually don't get asked to speak in chapel!!)
- ★ Bible college students are generally confined to a campus 'church(?)' or one or two area churches, where the only practical experience they receive is in childrens', bus, music ministries, etc. While these are valuable, most men never get to preach in main church meetings, serve as deacons, etc.
- ★ Many Bible colleges employ professional educators. Too often, men graduate from these institutions no longer believing the things they were taught back in their old church by their old pastor. Historically, theological colleges and seminaries have been a major reason for Baptist apostasy.
- ★ When Bible colleges draw students and seek financial support from many different churches, they are forced to play 'doctrinal politics' (i.e. certain subjects and issues become taboo) to keep their constituency happy.
- ★ Bible colleges are at the forefront of producing Baptist factions. The "old school tie" syndrome runs deep. Major 'independent' Baptist groups are usually centered around personalities, papers, programs ... and schools!

Are these traditional Baptist Bible colleges and training institutions of no value? Obviously they *have* had a significant impact in the preparation of many good men. The point is, they are not found anywhere in the New Testament — they are not God's appointed method for training and preparing His servants.

Consider the Biblical principles of educating preachers:

A. **The Principle Of “Passing The Torch:”**

Look up: *II Timothy 2:2*. In this verse we see a four-fold “chain” in training men for the ministry:

“...the things that thou hast heard of ____” (PAUL)

“...the same commit _____” (TIMOTHY)

“...to _____”

“...who shall be able to teach _____ also.”

1. The Example Of Paul With Timothy.

- a. According to *Acts 16:1-5*, Timothy became a traveling companion of Paul and Silas near the beginning of the apostle’s second evangelistic journey.
- b. According to *I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; 2:1*, Timothy was like a ____ to Paul.
- c. According to *I Timothy 6:20a*, Timothy was charged to keep the things which the apostle Paul _____ to his _____.
- d. According to *I Timothy 1:13*, Timothy was to hold _____ the sound words he heard from Paul.

2. The Example Of Christ With The Apostles.

According to *Acts 1:21,22*, the apostles C _____ with the Lord from the baptism of John to His resurrection. During these approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, the Lord was engaged in training the twelve in preparation of their future ministries.

3. The Example Of Barnabas.

Barnabas was Saul’s mentor.

- a. In *Acts 9:26,27*, it was Barnabas who spoke up on Saul’s behalf.
- b. In *Acts 11:25*, it was Barnabas who went to _____ to find Saul.
- c. According to *Acts 11:26; 12:25*, Barnabas and Saul had an important 1 year ministry in the church at _____.
- d. According to *Acts 13:1,2*, Barnabas and Saul made up the first evangelistic team sent forth from the church at Antioch.
- e. In the above-mentioned chapters the order has been Barnabas (first) and Saul. After *Acts 13:43*, it becomes Paul (first) and Barnabas — indicating Barnabas’ training of Paul had ended.

- f. Barnabas later invested his life in John Mark (*Acts 15:39*) who had failed in his first attempt to serve the Lord. Because of this, John Mark went on to become a profitable servant (*II Timothy 4:11*).
4. Examples From The Old Testament.
 - a. Read: *Numbers 27:15-20.*
Moses passed the torch to _____.
 - b. Read: *I Samuel 3:1a,15-21.*
Eli passed the torch to _____.
 - c. Read: *I Kings 19:19.*
Elijah passed the torch to _____.

B. The Principle Of “On-The-Job Training:”

1. Paul Gave Timothy (And Others) On-The-Job Training.

- a. *II Timothy 3:10* — “But thou hast _____ known my:

_____ .
_____ of _____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____.
_____ .

The apostle Paul was completely transparent with Timothy.

- b. *Philippians 2:22* — “He hath served _____ me in the gospel.” (Paul never had Timothy do things he wouldn’t do.)
- c. *Acts 20:20* — [Addressed to the pastors of the church at Ephesus]
“I kept back _____ that was _____ —
_____ unto you, but have _____ you, and have
_____ you...”
- d. *Acts 20:27* — “I have not shunned to declare unto you _____
the counsel of _____.”
- e. *Acts 20:35a* — “I have _____ you _____ things...”

2. Christ Gave The Apostles On-The-Job Training.

- a. "He ordained twelve, that they should be _____"
— *Mark 3:14*.
- b. According to *Matthew 5:1,2*, Jesus _____ His disciples.
- c. According to *Luke 9:1,2*, Jesus S _____ His disciples out preaching.
- d. According to *Matthew 17:19-21*, Jesus spent time working with His apostles when they felt they had failed.

C. The Principle Of The “Great Commission:”

According to *Matthew 28:20*, the commission given to the Lord’s churches includes the teaching of _____ things.

If a Baptist church is commanded to do this, then it must be *capable* of doing it — which begs the question: “What place is there for a man-made institution in the training of preacher?”

D. The Principle Of Pastoral Responsibility:

Look again at *Ephesians 4:11-16*.

Part of the pastor-teacher’s duty is to prepare the saints for the _____ of the _____ (verse 12).

There are three important things a pastor must train young preachers in:

- * Sound _____ (*II Timothy 1:13*)
A preacher must know he HAS the Word of God.
- * Sound _____ (*Titus 1:9*)
A preacher must know what is IN the Word of God.
- * Sound _____ (*Titus 2:8*)
A preacher must know how to USE the Word of God.

GOD’S LAW OF SPIRITUAL REPRODUCTION

CHRISTIANS *PRODUCE* CHRISTIANS
CHURCHES *PRODUCE* CHURCHES
PREACHERS *PRODUCE* PREACHERS

NOTES & QUESTIONS TO ASK

F Financial Freedom

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

There is a plague afflicting this nation which threatens to enslave it. It is an epidemic of *out-of-control debt!* — ranging from the staggering national debt to overwhelming personal debt. Hundreds of thousands of people are in literal financial bondage — much of which has resulted from an addiction to consumer credit.

In the United States of America (population 260 million), there are over 400 million credit-cards (plus countless store, gas, and phone cards) being used to obtain just about everything — including the necessities of life (food and clothing, *I Timothy 6:8*). Non-promotional interest rates on these cards generally range from 14% to 24%, and are accompanied by substantial penalties for charging ‘over the limit’ or making late payments. About 17% of all the disposable household income in the country goes to make payments on consumer credit debt. The credit-card delinquency rate ranges from 3–4% — at a time of declared economic prosperity! The average American family carries over \$6,000 in credit-card debt — in addition to mortgages, auto loans, student loans, department store debt, etc. In 1996, nonprofit debt counseling agencies met with almost a million people with an average debt of around \$18,500. Yet, for all of this, most American mailboxes continually receive regular offers for pre-approved credit cards!!

According to the Bible, insolvency resulted in drastic action — *Matthew 18:25; II Kings 4:1*. Today, the usual (and now virtually acceptable) way to ‘solve’ a debt problem is to declare bankruptcy — by means of either a “Chapter 7” petition which discharges personal debt through the liquidation (selling off) of one’s assets, or a “Chapter 13” petition which allows for the reorganizing of personal finances in order to establish a payment plan. During the Great Depression, 1 in 215 Americans declared bankruptcy. In 1995 the rate was 1 in 225!! In 1997 there were 1,404,145 bankruptcy petitions filed in United States’ federal courts — all but 54,027 of which were non-business (i.e. personal).

Although bankruptcy protection offers a “fresh start” for the one in debt, it remains on one’s record forever (although credit reporting agencies are generally prohibited from reporting it after 10 years), and it doesn’t deal with the real problem. Furthermore, bankruptcy and bad debt also seriously affect the livelihood of many ‘innocent’ people and businesses.

Here's the really disturbing fact: many Bible-believing Baptists are also in financial bondage. This state of affairs not only has its attendant material, emotional, and social consequences, but it also has an impact spiritually. Debt impairs our walk with the Lord, our ability to serve Him, and our testimony.

- Read: *Luke 16:10-13*. According to verse 11, we cannot expect the Lord to commit to our trust the _____ if we have not been _____ in the area of finances.

This lesson concerns itself with achieving real financial freedom through the application of Biblical principles.

THE AIMS OF FINANCIAL FREEDOM

What is real financial freedom? First, consider what it is not: It's not necessarily a matter of having more money! It's not having everything you could ever want! It's not being insulated from having needs and experiencing financial pressures and problems. It is certainly not to be independent from God!! Then what is it?

Here are three Biblical goals which, when achieved, define financial freedom:

A. GOAL #1: TO BE RICH TOWARD GOD — *our Motive*.

Read: *Luke 12:15-21*.

Why does God bless us with material wealth and possessions? Obviously, to keep body and soul together with the necessities of life (*Matthew 6:31,32*) and to provide for others in our family (*1 Timothy 5:8*) — but ultimately, to be a blessing in the work of the Lord.

1. The parable of the certain rich man was given as a warning against the sin of _____ (verse 15).
2. Jesus contrasted the pursuit of earthly wealth with being _____ toward God (verse 21).
3. In *Matthew 6:19,20*, we are instructed to more concerned about laying up treasures in _____ than accumulating earthly wealth.
4. According to *Proverbs 11:24a*, God blesses the S _____ ING of wealth.
5. According to *Proverbs 11:25*, God blesses the _____ soul.

Note: The difference between a true liberal and a political 'liberal' is that the true liberal is generous with his *own* money!!

6. Read: *Acts 4:34-37*. In this example, _____ used his possessions to be a blessing to the church at Jerusalem.
7. Read: *II Corinthians 8:1,2*. Is it possible to show liberality without having great wealth? _____
8. Look up: *II Corinthians 10:15,16*. The giving of God's people "enlarges" (enhances, enables) the _____ to be preached in the regions _____.
9. According to *I Timothy 6:17-19*, the Lord blesses us with "uncertain riches" so that we may be rich in _____.

What a blessing it is to have the ability to generously (and joyfully — *Hebrews 10:34*) respond to the financial needs of the Lord's work. On the other hand, financial bondage ruins our ability to effectively serve the Lord with our time and treasure — *Matthew 6:24*.

B. GOAL #2: TO BE CONTENT — *the measure of our Faith*.

One of the most difficult things for any Christian to be is content — especially under the pressures of a materialistic society and a constant barrage of advertising which is deliberately designed to foment discontentment and promote the "enjoy now, pay later" mentality.

Contentment means the desire and ability to live at the level God provides.

According to *Philippians 4:12* contentment is a condition independent of life's circumstances, yet many people think they can *only* be content when they have what *they* want — i.e. more money, a better job, bigger house, etc.

1. According to *I Timothy 6:6*, _____ with contentment is great _____."

See also: *Proverbs 15:17; Ecclesiastes 5:12*.

2. According to *Philippians 4:11b*, contentment is something which must be L _____.

Note: In verse 12 the apostle says he was "instructed." This instruction comes initially from the Word of God, but also from personal experience as we trust the Lord to provide all our needs (verse 19) and see Him do it! Many Christians deny the Lord any opportunity to provide for them because they do not follow Biblical principles in their financial affairs.

3. Look up: Hebrews 13:5,6.

- a. The opposite to contentment is C _____ NESS .
 - b. We are to be content with _____ as we _____ .
 - c. True contentment rests upon the sure promise of God that He will _____ us nor _____ us.
- Thus, contentment is the by-product of faith.

4. Look up: Proverbs 30:7-9.

- a. With having “too much” comes the danger of D _____ ING the Lord. See: *Deuteronomy 32:13-15*.
- b. The problem with having “too little” is the danger of taking the Name of the Lord in _____ (i.e. dishonoring God).

C. **GOAL #3: TO BE DEBT FREE — our Responsibility.**

The Word of God does not teach that borrowing money is a sin. However it certainly discourages going into debt for the following reasons:

1. According to *Psalm 37:21a*, “the _____ borroweth, and payeth _____ again.” Therefore the righteous (saved) have an implicit obligation to repay all debts. See also: *Exodus 22:14*.
2. According to *Proverbs 22:7b*, the “borrower is _____ to the _____ .” The truth of this scripture is best seen in the “page or two of ‘fine print’” incorporated in loan agreements.

Note: There is an argument to be made that so long as loan repayments are made on time and in the manner agreed upon no debt exists. While this is technically true, these Biblical discouragements nonetheless still apply.

3. According to *Romans 13:8a*, we should “_____ no man _____ thing...” While this verse introduces the believer’s obligation to love his neighbor, it nevertheless springs from a financial context — “dues” and “tribute” (taxes) in *verse 7*.

To be completely debt free (including the mortgage) is the number one financial objective every believer must earnestly strive for.

The easiest way to be debt free is to never go into debt
in the first place!

THE ANTAGONISTS OF FINANCIAL FREEDOM

What is it that causes financial bondage? Except in extreme circumstances (e.g. *Hebrews 11:36-38*), most financial problems come about as a result of **sin**.

Below are the **TEN** most common reasons for financial woes.

A. COVETOUSNESS — the desire for “things”

Covetousness is the sin of desiring that which does not belong to us (*Exodus 20:17*), or desiring things God does not intend for us to have (*Joshua 7:21*).

1. According to *II Timothy 3:1,2*, covetousness is a mark of the _____ . It is the appeal of modern-day advertising and a major impetus of consumerism!
2. According to *Mark 7:21,22*, covetousness is a _____ problem.
3. The Lord instructs us to _____ of covetousness — *Luke 12:15*. This means it is a very real danger to the believer.
4. According to *Ephesians 5:5* and *Colossians 3:5*, covetousness is a form of _____ .
5. What do *Ephesians 5:3* and *Hebrews 13:5* say about covetousness and the Christian life?

6. What instruction does *I Corinthians 5:11-13* give concerning the sin of covetousness in the life of a church member?

7. According to *Exodus 18:21*, one of the qualifications for leadership is the _____ R E D of covetousness.
8. What do the qualifications of a pastor (*I Timothy 3:3*) have to say about covetousness?

9. According to *II Peter 2:3,14*, covetous is a ‘tell-tale’ characteristic of _____

The ‘Christian’ who covets has his or her affections set on the wrong “things” (*Colossians 3:2b*). According to *Matthew 6:32*, God takes care of the “things” we really need. Failure to differentiate between NEEDS and WANTS will always result in money problems!

B. **THE LOVE OF MONEY — the desire to be materially “rich.”**

Read: *I Timothy 6:6-10.*

1. This key passage does not condemn money, but “the _____ of money” (*verse 10a*).
2. This Scripture distinguishes between those that “_____ rich” (*verse 17a*) and those that “_____ be rich” (*verse 9a*).
3. The love of money is the _____ of _____ evil (*verse 10a*). This passage is an accurate commentary on the social, business, legal, and political ills of the nation.
4. For the unsaved, the love of money will eventually _____ them in _____ and _____. (*verse 9*).
5. In *Matthew 19:16-26*, the rich young ruler went away from the Lord Jesus Christ _____ F U L and unsaved because he loved his great _____ more than his own soul (*verse 22*).
6. The love of money will cause the saved to _____ from the faith and to experience many piercing _____. (*verse 10b*).
7. Those whom the Lord has blessed with great wealth must be careful not to _____ in their _____. riches (*verse 17*).
8. According to *Proverbs 11:24b*, stinginess leads to _____.

Money is a necessary part of life (and the Lord’s work!), but the believer must view it as a means to an end, and not an end in itself. See: *Psalm 62:10b*.

C. **GREED — the inordinate desire for “more” than we need.**

1. Look up *Proverbs 25:16*. Is it possible to have “too much of a good thing?” _____
2. Greed results when we are not _____ (content) with what we have (*Ecclesiastes 5:10*).
3. Read: *I Kings 21:1-16*. The greed of king _____ caused the murder of _____.
4. Read: *II Kings 5:15,16,20-27*. The greed of _____ caused him to be cursed.
5. Greed brings trouble H _____ — *Proverbs 15:27a*.

D. ENVY — resentment over what others have.

This can be a real problem for Bible-believing Baptists because the Lord's work often requires much personal sacrifice. The Devil is quick to point out what they don't have and what they could have — if only they 'eased up' on their giving.

1. David was envious at the _____ of the wicked (*Psalm 73:3-9*) — until he got his eyes back on God (*verse 17*).
2. According to *Proverbs 14:30b*, envy is the _____ of the _____ — i.e. it produces physical side-effects.
3. Envy over Isaac's material possessions resulted in malicious acts by the _____ — *Genesis 26:14,15*.
4. According to *I Corinthians 13:4c*, _____ enviieth not. The right response to God's material blessings upon others should be one of gladness and joy.

"Keeping up with the 'Jones's'" is a sure path to financial bondage.

E. OVERINDULGENCE — wasteful use of money and material resources.

We live in a hedonistic society which, like Sodom of old (*Ezekiel 16:49*), has an abundance of just about everything. What is thrown out in our garbage cans and city dumps would be a 'treasure' in many parts of the world!

The attitude of "if it's broken, throw it away and buy another" — instead of, "if it's broken let's try and fix it" — permeates the way we live. (Indeed, a good deal of consumer manufacturing operates on a "throw-away" mentality!)

1. According to *Proverbs 27:7*, overindulgence erodes an appreciation for the good things and blessings of life.
2. According to *Proverbs 21:17a*, the love of _____ leads to poverty.
3. The prodigal _____ his substance with _____ living — *Luke 15:13*.
4. *Proverbs 21:17b* states that a love for the finer, costlier things (exemplified by wine and oil) leads away from financial freedom.
5. Another cause of poverty is G _____ (overindulging the flesh) — *Proverbs 23:21a*.
6. The Bible calls a "spendthrift" a _____ man — *Proverbs 21:20b*.

Christians will have to give account of their use of money. The practice of **thriftiness** (living below your means) is to be chosen: extravagance (living beyond your means) is to be shunned!

F. IMPULSIVENESS — *lack of control in spending.*

“Impulse buying” is a trap for many people — including Christians! The usual results from impulse buying are wasted money, collected junk, and garage sales. (The adage, “Don’t go grocery shopping when you are hungry” is very true.)

1. According to *Proverbs 21:5*, haste produces _____.
2. The woman of virtue _____ a field before she _____ it — *Proverbs 31:16a*.

G. ROBBERY — *failure to honor the Lord.*

1. According to *Matthew 6:33*, seeking _____ the kingdom of God, and His righteousness will take care of the T _____ (food, clothing) we have need of.
2. According to *Proverbs 3:9,10*, when we honor the LORD with our substance and the _____, we shall be blessed with P _____ (enough).
3. When we do not tithe, we _____ God — *Malachi 3:8*.
4. With the command to tithe comes a two-fold promise of God:
 - a. “I will ... open you the _____ of heaven, and pour you out a _____ ...” — *verse 10*.
 - b. “I will _____ the _____” — *verse 11a*. (This can refer to those ‘unexpected’ bills, etc.)

It is impossible to achieve real financial freedom when the Lord is not first in our finances. Storehouse tithing is elementary to the Christian life!

H. DISHONESTY — *using wicked and shady means to make money.*

1. According to *Ephesians 4:22,28a*, we are not to live as we did before we were saved.
2. There is no _____ in the _____ of wickedness — *Proverbs 10:2a*.
3. God’s people are not to seek financial gain through:
 - a. Cheating — the _____ — *Proverbs 11:1a*. See also: *Proverbs 20:10,23*.

- b. L _____ — *Proverbs 21:6.*
- c. Misrepresentation — *Proverbs 20:14.*
- d. Get-rich-quick schemes — *Proverbs 13:11a; 28:22.*

I. **SLOTHFULNESS — unwillingness to labor.**

“Life with hard labor” has been man’s God-given sentence since his fall into sin — *Genesis 3:19a*. Yet according to *Proverbs 14:23a*, hard work is an essential part of enjoying the blessings of financial freedom.

Conversely, slothfulness (laziness) is a sure path to poverty — *Proverbs 13:4a*.

The Bible has much to say about slothfulness and lazy people:

1. A lazy man is one who _____ a lot (*Proverbs 6:9,10; 20:13a; 24:33,34; 26:14*) and who _____ a lot (*Proverbs 14:23b*).
2. According to *Proverbs 20:4; 22:13*, a lazy man is one who finds _____ for not working.
3. A lazy man is one who does not take care of his tools and resources — *Proverbs 24:30-32*.
4. A lazy man is one who keeps company with _____ persons — *Proverbs 28:19b*.
5. A lazy man is one with a _____ hand — *Proverbs 10:4*. i.e. he doesn’t do a job properly.
6. According to *Proverbs 12:27a*, a slothful man is one who doesn’t finish the job.
7. Look up: *Proverbs 14:4*. A lazy man is one who doesn’t like inconvenience. Oxen produce income, but require upkeep!
8. According to *Proverbs 18:9*, a slothful man is _____ to a great _____.
9. God’s sentence upon slothfulness is given in *II Thessalonians 3:10* — “If any _____ not _____, neither should he _____.”

Note: This Scripture does not say “could not!” Those who are physically unable to work need the help of others — *Galatians 6:10; I Timothy 6:18*.

Socialism (and its attendant high taxation) ultimately destroys the Biblical “work ethic,” instead creating an unhealthy dependence upon man (government, welfare).

J. UNPREPAREDNESS — *failure to plan financially for the future.*

1. Look up: *Proverbs 6:6-8* and *Proverbs 30:5*.
 - a. God's object lesson is the _____.
 - b. This creature provides for winter needs in the _____ and in the _____.
 - c. According to *Proverbs 10:5*, a _____ son gathereth in summer.
2. Look up: *Genesis 41:34-36*. Joseph's wise plan was to gather and store F _____ against the seven years of F _____.
3. Planning well for one's financial future takes:
 - a. I _____ — *Proverbs 13:18*. A sound (godly) education is needed.
 - b. P _____ C E — *Proverbs 22:3; 27:12*. (This means to exercise due caution with an eye to the future.)
 - c. Preparation — *Proverbs 24:27*. See: *Luke 14:28-30*.
 - d. D _____ C E — *Proverbs 22:29; 27:23,24*.

Financial planning requires a **balance** — we must not fail to plan for the future, but we must not leave the Lord out of our plans either. The key is found in *Proverbs 16:3,9*.

AXIOMS OF FINANCIAL FREEDOM

There are two basic things which need to be understood in order to enjoy the blessings of financial freedom:

A. THE WAY TO OBTAIN WEALTH.

The Bible legitimizes three means by which we obtain and retain wealth:

1. WORK.

- a. According to Ecclesiastes 5, the blessing and ability to work is man's P _____ (*verse 18*) and the _____ of God (*verse 19*).
 - b. According to *Ephesians 4:28*, a saved man should engage himself in honorable employment.

- c. Look up: *Ephesians 6:5-8* and *Colossians 3:22,23*. What kind of “work ethic” does the Lord expect of His children?
-
-

2. SAVINGS & INVESTMENT:

- a. According to *Proverbs 21:20*. A _____ man will set aside funds as a reserve against unexpected expenses.
- b. *Ecclesiastes 11:2* teaches the principle of diversification. From this verse comes the saying, “Don’t put all your eggs into one basket.”
- c. In the parable of the talents (*Matthew 25:14-30*), the Lord endorses T _____ I N G to get G _____ (*verses 16,17*) and investing to receive U _____. See: *Luke 19:23*.
- d. Remember, there is a Biblical balance to be maintained here. We must avoid covetousness, the love of money, greed, etc.

3. GIFTS:

- a. A good man will leave an _____ to his grandchildren — *Proverbs 13:22a*.
- b. According to *Proverbs 19:14a*, a house and riches are the inheritance of _____.
- c. The principle of *II Corinthians 12:14* is that _____ lay up for their _____.

B. THE WAY TO DRAIN WEALTH.

The greatest menace to financial freedom is debt INTEREST! Interest greatly multiplies the debt, often making it virtually impossible to be debt free ... ever!!

For example:

- Borrowing \$100,000 on a 30 year conventional (fixed rate) loan in order to purchase a modest (\$125,000) home (assuming a 20% down-payment) means you will actually pay the following for the house:

@ 7% interest — \$240,000

@ 8% interest — \$264,000

@10% interest — \$316,000

- To purchase a new \$25,000 automobile with a 25% down payment and an unsecured bank loan of \$18,750 at 10% interest means you will repay:

\$21,800 on a 3 year loan
\$22,825 on a 4 year loan
\$23,900 on a 5 year loan

This is the equivalent of paying just over \$1,000 per year (\$20 per week) in interest!! This is on top of normal running costs, maintenance, repairs, and depreciation!

- Credit card debt is the biggest killer of financial freedom. It is “quicksand debt!” Most credit card agreements use the “daily balance” method of computing interest — i.e. interest is calculated (and added in) on the beginning account balance of every day!! Take the case of a credit card account with an APR of 18.9% carrying a balance of \$1,000 with the minimum monthly payment of 2½% (\$25) being made in the middle of the monthly billing cycle:

The balance is reduced \$15 per month — for an outlay of \$25

It will take almost 5½ years to pay off this debt at this rate

It will cost over \$1,625 to pay off this debt at this rate

Adding any purchase immediately accrues more interest

What does the Bible say about interest?

1. Under the Law (*Deuteronomy 23:19,20*), Israelites were forbidden to charge _____ to their _____ S, but could lend with interest to _____ S.
2. According to *Leviticus 25:35-38*, God’s people were not to take advantage of people in need, but to _____ them (*verse 35*).
3. This Old Testament principle of lending was continued and magnified by the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples in *Luke 6:35*.
 - a. Christians should be willing to _____ to those in need, hoping (expecting) for _____ to be repaid.
 - b. This attitude reflects the kindness of the H _____ toward sinful men.
4. Look up: James 2:15,16 and I John 3:17,18. How would you summarize the principle of love taught in these verses?

DANGER

Personal financial dealings between members of a Baptist church is an area where offenses easily occur. Well-intentioned loans, sales, and partnerships between brothers and sisters have been used by Satan to literally destroy friendships — and churches. Here are three “rules” to follow:

- Never charge interest to a brother in Christ.
- Never loan anything with the expectation of being repaid.
- Never co-sign a loan for a brother — *Proverbs 22:26*.

ACTIONS FOR FINANCIAL FREEDOM

We will now study some principles and methods of actually achieving and maintaining financial freedom.

A. FINANCIAL FREEDOM FROM THE PAST:

If a believer is in debt, how can he get out of debt?

Getting out of financial bondage is never easy, and it takes time. Like most serious problems of our own making, “it took time to dig the hole — it’s going to take time to fill it in!”

There are TWO basic requirements to becoming free from debt bondage:

1. **Sanctions** — “coercive measures intended to ensure compliance.”

Most people get into debt because of undisciplined spending or financial management. Getting out of debt requires real DISCIPLINE. It is going to hurt — but the results are wonderful!

Strong discipline is needed to:

a. Reverse the root causes of the debt.

If covetousness, impulsiveness, wastefulness, etc. has been the root cause of your debt, these things must be dealt with — or nothing is going to change. Follow these steps:

- Honestly identify the cause(s) — *Psalm 139:23,24*.
- Confess these causes as sin (i.e. agree with God that it is in fact sin — *I John 1:9*).
- Forsake it daily — *Galatians 5:24; I Corinthians 15:31c*.

Note: It is vital that you and your spouse are in full agreement before the Lord and each other on these matters.

b. Refuse to continue borrowing.

The addition of further debt has to **stop**. So-called “easy credit” was more-than-likely the culprit in the first place — therefore it cannot help with the solution.

Note: Debt that is caused by overspending or unwise spending is usually an addiction. Like any addiction, breaking the habit is very unpleasant — even painful. There is no painless way to get out of debt. Thus the need for discipline, bathed in constant prayer and vigilance.

2. **Surplus** — “securing funds for debt elimination.

Having identified the root cause and arrested the ‘bleeding,’ the next step is to create a surplus.

This means living below your means, but it is absolutely essential to begin “filling in the debt-hole.”

a. Obtaining a surplus.

There are many ways to get surplus funds, depending on the situation:

- trim the budget — remove all ‘wants,’ buy less expensive ‘needs,’ buy in bulk, quit eating out, learn to do your own repairs, plant a vegetable garden, etc. — in other words: “*Cut back, cut out!*”
- sell some non-essential items — the second car, the TV, the fishing boat, club dues, etc. “*Cut loose!*”
- get a second job — but *NEVER* at the expense of family and church!! See: *Titus 2:4,5; Hebrews 10:25*.

Drastic situations call for drastic measures.

b. Using a surplus.

Even if it is only possible to gather a small surplus every month, you have entered the path toward debt elimination.

- list all your debts in descending order (largest to smallest).
- apply the surplus to the smallest debt until it is paid off.
- add the monthly payment of the paid-off debt to the surplus and begin applying this to the next smallest debt.
- continue this process until all debts have been eliminated — including the mortgage.

- most people can become completely debt-free in 7 to 10 years using this method.
- remember, the discipline applied to begin this process must continue throughout the process.
- if you receive a raise, apply it to the debt! Don't go out and spend it!
- the **#1** goal is to eliminate debt.

Note: When it comes time to tackle the home mortgage, even a little extra added to the regular monthly payments can save. For example: Monthly payments on a 30 year fixed rate mortgage for \$100,000 at 8% are \$733.76. Adding just \$10 to each payment would save over \$10,000 in interest and pay for the home in 28½ years. An extra \$25 each month saves over \$23,000 in interest and pays for the home in 26½ years. Making one extra payment a year (i.e. adding \$61.15 to each monthly payment) saves over \$45,000 and takes 7 years off the length of the loan.

Just think what could be done to the mortgage with surplus funds once all other debts were eliminated!!

B. FINANCIAL FREEDOM FOR THE PRESENT:

The best way to enjoy financial freedom is to use a BUDGET. A budget is a simple, yet sound method of financial management which requires planning, communication, and discipline.

Read: Proverbs 27:23-27.

- The instruction of *verse 23* is to _____ the _____ of, and to look _____ to, the management of our income.
- The promise of *verse 27* is that there will be E _____ for our own needs, those of our household, and those who depend upon us.

1. Planning A Budget:

There are three questions to answer in order to properly plan a budget:

a. Where am I right now?

- What is my income?
- What are my basic needs?
- What are my current commitments?

b. Where do I need to go?

- Am I working toward becoming debt-free?
- Are there any unusual needs coming up?

- What special savings goals am I trying to reach?
- c. How do I get there?
- In *Proverbs 16:3*, we are admonished to _____ our works (planning) unto the LORD so that our thoughts shall be established. Planning a budget should be seen as a matter of wise stewardship — therefore a *spiritual exercise* as much as an arithmetical one.

2. Prioritizing A Budget:

- a. The LORD must be FIRST — *Proverbs 3:9,10*.
- b. Taxes must be paid — *Romans 13:6,7*.
- c. Debts must be paid — *Psalm 37:21*.
- d. The family must be provided for — *I Timothy 5:8*.
- e. The future must be saved for — *Proverbs 6:6-8*.

3. Producing A Budget:

- Step ONE — determine your gross monthly **income**. Even if you are paid weekly it is more practical to budget on a monthly basis, then calculate back to your actual pay schedule.
- Step TWO — subtract from your gross monthly income the **tithe** (10%) and your monthly **taxes**. The remaining amount is your “net spendable income” — the object of your budget.
- Step THREE — list every **expenditure** you know or can possibly anticipate. If possible, study your previous spending habits and use them as a starting guide.

BUDGET CATEGORY GUIDELINES

Every individual and family will have differing needs, so the following list and suggested percentages is a general guide only.

HOUSING: 32–37% of net

Rent/mortgage, taxes, utilities, insurance, furnishings, maintenance, telephone, gardening, etc.

FOOD & HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES: 12–17% of net

Groceries, personal items, etc.

AUTO: 13–15% of net

Gas, repairs & maintenance, tires, insurance, licensing, etc.

INSURANCE & MEDICAL: 10–15% of net

Premiums for health, life, disability. Allow for medical deductibles & co-payments and special family needs — eye-glasses, orthodontics, prescriptions, etc.

PERSONAL: 7-10% of net

Clothing, hairdressing, pets, subscriptions, etc.

DEBT ELIMINATION: 5-7% of net

This is your “surplus.” If you are not in debt, this is extra!

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION: 5-7% of net

Eating out, family days, sport, vacations, gifts, etc.

GIVING: 5% of net

Faith Promise missions, love offerings, offerings for special needs (building funds, etc.).

SAVINGS: 5% of net

Emergency savings, long term, short term, investments, etc.

MISCELLANEOUS: 4-5% of net

However these figures are arranged, they must total **100%**!

Another item common to Bible-believing Baptists which requires great sacrifice (i.e. adjustment of these figures) is the cost of providing a Bible-based Christian education for their children.

4. Persevering With A Budget:

- a. Determine to stay within your budget guidelines. Be disciplined, be prayerful! (This determination, discipline, and dependence upon God *must* be shared by husband and wife equally and fairly, and explained to older children if necessary.)
- b. Balance your check account every month (to the penny!), and compare your actual expenditure with your budget.
- c. Never supplement your income with debt.
- d. Dispose of your credit cards. (For someone who is financially responsible, a credit card is a handy convenience. However, unless one has the ability and discipline to *always* pay for credit card purchases in full every month it will invariably become a catastrophe!!)
- e. Be accountable to a trusted friend — someone who is not under financial bondage.
- f. Seek advice when a financial decision or problem arises.
- g. If you receive a raise, consider saving it instead of spending it. (If you are in the process of eliminating debt, your raise should go towards that end.)

**TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR MONEY
before it
TAKES CONTROL OF YOU!**

C. FINANCIAL FREEDOM FOR THE FUTURE:

This final section looks down the road of life at some of the real benefits and blessings of becoming debt free and living debt free. It involves the setting aside of money for future needs (and wants) — an exercise which requires both a Biblical balance and godly wisdom.

In this case, compound interest becomes a true “friend.”

The “rule of 72” — divide the number 72 by the rate of interest to determine the approximate number of years it will take to double your initial investment.

1. Saving For The Short Term.

Common sense dictates that funds should be saved for emergencies, unexpected needs, and (if income allows it) specific “wants” (such as another automobile, a special vacation, an anniversary gift, etc.).

The usual vehicles for this kind of savings are:

- Insured — bank accounts, certificates of deposit — no risk, low interest.
- Uninsured — money-market accounts — variable risk, higher interest.

2. Saving For The Long Term.

Most retired people will automatically receive a limited income from some Government-sponsored social program — social security, pension, etc. — and most people will find it very difficult to live solely on that income.

Planning to have additional income for the retirement years has become a matter of necessity. The attitude of “I’ll work till Jesus comes,” is noble, but presumptuous — on God’s timetable and on one’s health.

Proverbs 12:24 compares the situation of the _____ with the _____ — a principle which can be applied to the days when we no longer can be as productive as we once were.

The first (and best) long term investment is to become debt free and to stay debt free.

Other methods of savings to supplement income during years of limited employment (or disablement) are individual retirement accounts, company retirement plans, superannuation insurance, mutual funds, stock market investments, etc. These come with a range and variety of risks, some of which can be minimized with the help of professional “money managers.”

TWO KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL LONG-TERM SAVING

- Start Early — consider the following example:
A 20 year-old deposits \$1,000 a year at 8% interest (compounded daily) for 10 years, then leaves the \$15,939 he has accumulated alone to continue growing. At age 70 the \$10,000 investment has grown to almost \$391,000. Ten years later, a 30 year-old begins depositing the same amount at the same rate of interest, and continues doing so faithfully for 40 years. At age 70 the \$40,000 investment has grown to \$306,000!!

Only \$26 a month invested at 8% from birth to age 70 will accumulate to one million dollars. [This assumes no inflation.]

- Don't Touch It.

The rewards of *compound* interest are dependent on time and a growing principal.

IS INVESTING THE SAME AS GAMBLING?

In a sense “yes,” and in a sense “no!” All investment plans (even a bank savings account) have some risk involved. The question is really an issue of informed risk *versus* chance. A roulette wheel or poker machine in a casino involves 100% chance — it is pure gambling and therefore evil.

Investing with a “*will be rich*” (*I Timothy 6:9a*) motive will invariably involve high risk ventures, which is a gamble — see: *Proverbs 23:4,5*.

Investing can be conducted in an informed and reasonably safe manner, but it is a personal matter for each believer based on the understanding that the Lord expects us all to be good stewards over all He has blessed us with.

3. Saving For The Next Generation.

The Bible instructs us to pass on an inheritance to those who follow us in life — *Proverbs 13:22b; 19:14a; II Corinthians 12:14*.

In *Genesis 48:21,22* we see the example of Jacob passing on a special legacy to Joseph. This was “one portion above” that which was given to the other sons, based upon Jacob’s prerogative and insight.

The best thing one can do for the next generation is to live debt-free. However, there are two other important considerations to saving and preparing financially for the future — after one has gone home to be with the Lord in glory:

- a. Life Insurance — this is a method of ‘forced savings’ designed to ensure a wife and children are not left destitute in the case of the unexpected death of the husband. It is more important when the

family is young. If this method is chosen, the proceeds of a life insurance policy should be sufficient to pay funeral costs, provide income for at least five years, and (depending on circumstances) assist with the education of children, etc. *Ecclesiastes* 6:3 speaks of a life lived without any preparation for death (including a burial).

- b. A Last Will & Testament — a written document detailing how assets and personal possessions are to be distributed. A will is presupposed in *Hebrews* 9:16,17. This important document not only assures the passing down of an inheritance according to one's wishes but is also a means of bequeathing one final blessing to the Lord's church and work.

Financial freedom is a strength and blessing throughout life — *and after this life has ended.*

MEMORY VERSE: Try and commit to memory *I Timothy* 6:10.

G The Gifts of the Spirit

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

One of the unique characteristics of true (Bible) Christianity is the dispensing of *spiritual gifts* from the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit to the members of a New Testament church for the functioning of that particular body of Christ.

These gifts are key to the life and ministry of every Baptist church. Therefore the study of them is essential — even though it may require having to “wade through” some of the muck and mire of doctrinal error built up over the past 50 or so years largely by the controversial and flamboyant modern-day Charismatic Movement. This movement, with its hallmark emphases on “speaking in tongues” and the so-called “gift of healing,” has successfully infiltrated (and influenced) practically every denomination within Christendom — as well as Baptists!!!

Sound doctrine is never established by majority belief. Neither is it to be based on appearances, experiences, or emotions. It must always be grounded in and on the Word of God. (To know things as they *are* is better than believing things as they *seem*!!)

The major Bible passage dealing with the gifts of the Spirit is I Corinthians 12–14. In studying these chapters it is important to keep in mind the following:

- I Corinthians was primarily addressed to the _____ of God which is at ____ — *I Corinthians 1:2*.
- This church was filled with _____ I N G, _____, and _____ — *I Corinthians 3:3*.
- There were serious _____ within the church membership — *I Corinthians 1:11*.
- There were also _____ present within the Church, *I Corinthians 11:19a*.

It is *not* a complimentary epistle, and much of what is written concerning spiritual gifts is done so to correct misconceptions and abuses.

This study is concerned with the Biblical doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit and the application of these gifts in the apostolic times as well as today.

GENERAL FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The word “gift” is translated from the Greek word ‘charisma’ which comes from ‘charis,’ meaning “grace,” which comes from the root word ‘char,’ “joy.” Spiritual gifts are spiritual endowments — freely (and undeservedly) bestowed upon us by God!

A. Spiritual Gifts Are God-Given Abilities For Service.

1. They were given by _____ after He _____ up on ____ — *Ephesians 4:7,8.*
2. There are _____ (numbers) of spiritual gifts, according to *I Corinthians 12:4.*
3. They are called the _____ (i.e. visible evidences) of the _____ in *I Corinthians 12:7a.*
4. They are given for _____ — *I Corinthians 12:7b.* (i.e. that of others, *I Corinthians 14:6.*)
5. They are to be used to _____ to others — *I Peter 4:10.*
6. They are to be used for the _____ (“building up”) of the Lord’s _____ — *I Corinthians 14:12.*

Note: Spiritual gifts differ from talents. Talents are certain *natural* abilities which need to be enhanced by training and education, and may be used in many ways — for good or bad.

B. Spiritual Gifts Are Sovereignly Bestowed.

1. According to *I Corinthians 12:11*, they are given by the Holy Spirit “severally [uniquely] as _____.”

Note: This means it is futile for a Christian to seek or pray for a particular gift. (*I Corinthians 12:31* is set in a church/body context. Besides, the “best gift” is the one God gives!!)

2. The church at Corinth “came _____ in ____ gift,” according to *I Corinthians 1:7* — meaning that every spiritual gift was represented within its membership.

Note: This shows that possessing a spiritual gift does not equate to spirituality. The church at Corinth had all the gifts, but was at the same time carnal, schismatic, and filled with serious problems.

C. Every Church Member Has A Spiritual Gift.

1. They are given to _____ man — *I Corinthians 12:7,11*.
2. They are given to “every _____ of ____” — *Ephesians 4:7*.
3. Every man “_____ received the _____” — *I Peter 4:10*.
4. God has “_____ [gifts] to _____ man” — *Romans 12:3f*.
5. Members will all have _____ gifts — *Romans 12:6a*.

Note: The rhetorical questions asked in *I Corinthians 12:29,30* show that no one person has all of the gifts.

Note: Church members have differing ministries and functions within the body of Christ (*Romans 12:4*). Each ministry, function, and office requires certain spiritual abilities. According to *I Corinthians 12:14-24*, GOD has “tempered the body together” (verse 24) by setting the members in the body (verse 18) in such a way that the body functions as He desires. Each member is necessary, and each spiritual gift bestowed is necessary!

D. Spiritual Gifts Are To Be Discerned.

We should be fully aware and knowledgeable of the gift God has given us to use for His glory in the Church. Gifts are discerned through:

1. By _____ (preaching) — *I Timothy 4:14; Romans 1:11*.
Hearing the Word of God preached directs a believer to his spiritual motivation (gift).
2. By the _____ (pastors) — *I Timothy 4:14*.
The “laying on of hands” on Timothy by the pastors of the church at Derbe/Lystra indicates their recognition of (and identification with) his spiritual gift.

E. Spiritual Gifts Are To Be Used.

1. A spiritual gift can be _____ E D — *I Timothy 4:14a*.
2. Our gift needs to be _____ up, *II Timothy 1:6*.
According to this verse and *II Peter 1:13; 3:1,2*, this will happen as we are put in _____ of the Word of God.
3. According to *I Timothy 4:15* there are two things we must do if our profiting (gift) is to appear to (i.e. benefit) all:

- a. _____ upon these things (i.e. the things mentioned in *verse 13*), and
 - b. Give thyself _____ to them (i.e. use them, exercise them!!).
4. The words “_____ us” and “_____ him” in *Romans 12:6-8* show the Lord expects us to concentrate on exercising our gift in the church.
 5. The motive for using our spiritual gift is that God in all _____ may be _____ — *I Peter 4:11*.

F. Spiritual Gifts Are To Be Controlled.

Sandwiched between I Corinthians 12 and I Corinthians 14 is the “Love Chapter.” The exercise of all spiritual gifts is to be controlled by the Fruit of the Spirit—exemplified by the first mentioned fruit, charity (self-giving LOVE). See: *Galatians 5:22,23*.

1. The gift of T _____ without charity is just empty noise, *I Corinthians 13:1*.
2. The gifts of P _____, U _____ I N G all mysteries, K _____, and all F _____ —without charity are nothing, *I Corinthians 13:2*.
3. The gift of G ____ I N G without charity is of no profit, *I Corinthians 13:3*.

THE NUMBER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

It is not clear whether the New Testament lists all of the spiritual gifts there are to be had. The following is a list of all those mentioned:

A. The Gifts Of The Spirit FOR The Churches:

This list is derived from I Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and I Peter 4.

1. The word of _____ — *I Corinthians 12:8*.
2. The word of _____ — *I Corinthians 12:8*.
3. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:9*. (*Acts 6:8* couples this gift to that of miracles.)
4. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:9,28,30*.

5. The working of _____ — *I Corinthians 12:10,28,29.*
6. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:10; Romans 12:6; I Peter 4:11.*
7. _____ of spirits — *I Corinthians 12:10.*
8. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:10,28,30.*
9. The _____ of tongues — *I Corinthians 12:10,30.*
10. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:28.*
11. _____ — *I Corinthians 12:28.* In *Romans 12:8* this is called R ____ I N G.
12. _____ — *Romans 12:7; I Peter 4:11.*
13. _____ — *Romans 12:7.*
14. E _____ I O N — *Romans 12:8.*
15. G ____ I N G — *Romans 12:8.*
16. M _____ — *Romans 12:8.*

More will be said below about the relevance of these gifts of the Spirit to the Lord's churches today.

B. The Gifts Of The Son TO The Churches:

In addition to giving gifts to men (*Ephesians 4:8*), the Lord Jesus Christ also gives gifted men to His churches (*Ephesians 4:11*). These are:

1. A _____ .
2. P _____ .
3. E _____ .
4. P _____ and T _____ .

Three of these offices are also mentioned in *I Corinthians 12:28.*

More will be said below about the relevance of these offices to the Lord's churches today.

THE PERMANENCY AND PASSING OF THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

At the heart of the “Charismatic debate” is the question of whether ALL of the spiritual gifts (and gifted offices) mentioned in the New Testament are available and operational today.

According to *I Corinthians 13:8*,....

- Prophecies shall _____.
- Tongues shall _____.
- Knowledge shall _____ away.

According to *I Corinthians 13:9,10*, this will happen when...

- That which is _____ is _____

Some would say this points to the return of Christ. However, according to *Joel 2:28-31*, there will be an outbreak of prophesying associated with the second coming of Christ, NOT the ending of it.

On this key question, scripture interprets scripture!

A. We HAVE That Which Is Perfect:

1. According to *II Peter 1:19*, we have a _____ word of _____.
 - a. This refers to the written S _____ S, according to *II Peter 1:20,21*.
 - b. These are superior to even an E Y E _____ experience of the transfiguration of Christ (*II Peter 1:16-18*)!!
 - c. Until the day _____, (*Malachi 4:2*) and the day _____ arises (*Revelation 22:16*), they are sufficient.
2. *James 1:23-25* likens the Word of God to a G _____ (i.e. a mirror).
 - a. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians he said: “For _____ we see through a glass _____” — *I Corinthians 13:12*.
 - b. James speaks of the Word of God as the _____ law of liberty — *James 1:25*.

"That which is perfect" refers to the completed (written) Word of God (i.e. the New Testament). The final Book was not penned until c.95–100 A.D.

BEFORE

- "We know in _____, and we prophesy in _____. —*I Corinthians 13:9,12.*
- The gifts of prophecy, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and discerning of spirits were necessary during the 'days of infancy.'

AFTER

- "We _____ the _____ of _____" —*I Corinthians 2:16c.*
- "We know ____ things" —*I John 2:20.* (Note the word "written" in verse 21!)
- The Bible gives us all the wisdom, knowledge, and discernment necessary to live for and serve the Lord.

B. There Was A Specific & Limited Purpose For Some Gifts:

1. According to *Mark 16:17,18*, some of the gifts were "_____ which followed those who believed."
2. *Mark 16:20* shows that the purpose of these particular sign gifts was to C _____ the _____ that was preached by the apostles.
3. According to *Hebrews 2:3,4*, how did God bear witness to the word of salvation preached by those who "heard him" (i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ)?
 - With _____ and _____, and
 - With diverse _____ and _____.
4. According to *Acts 4:29,30*, the church at Jerusalem prayed that the Lord would grant _____ in speaking the Word by:
 - Stretching forth His hand to _____.
 - Doing _____ and _____ in Jesus' Name.
5. Today, faith comes from hearing the _____ of God (*Romans 10:17*), which is the _____ of the Spirit (*Ephesians 6:17b*).

C. Some Gifted Offices Were Also Temporary:

The offices of apostles and predictive prophets are no longer in existence.

1. Apostles.

The office of “apostle” has ceased. This is because an apostle:

- a. Was required to be a W _____ of the resurrected Christ — see: *Acts 1:22; I Corinthians 9:1; 15:8*.
- b. Was to be audibly C _____ by Christ — *Matthew 10:1,2,5; Romans 1:1*.
- c. Was to be accredited by the _____ of an apostle — *II Corinthians 12:12*.

2. Prophets.

The office of predictive prophet (fore-telling) has ceased because the gift of prophecy “failed” with the coming of the completed Word of God (*I Corinthians 13:8*). *Revelation 22:18* forbids any additional prophecy (revelation).

The offices of apostle and prophet are vitally linked to the written Word of God.

- The Gospel is made manifest by the _____ of the prophets — *Romans 16:25,26*. See also: *Ephesians 3:5*.
- In *II Peter 3:2*, we are instructed to be mindful of the _____ spoken before by the holy prophets and of the commandment of the apostles. See also: *Jude 17*.
- The Lord’s churches are built upon the _____ of the apostles and prophets (i.e. the Word of God, and the New Testament in particular) — *Ephesians 2:20&c.*

THE SIGN GIFTS

According to *Mark 16:17,18*, the gifts of the Spirit which are denoted as “sign gifts” are:

- _____ IN G out _____ .
- _____ IN G with new _____ .
- _____ IN G up _____ (and other poisons).
- Healing the _____ .

These “sign gifts” are passing and passé!

A. The Purpose Of Sign Gifts.

As noted previously, they were given for accreditation.

They either accredited God's man (*Exodus 4:1-9; Acts 2:22*) or God's message.

Note: Each of the signs listed in the prophecy of *Mark 16:17,18* were evidenced in the Book of Acts — casting out devils (*Acts 16:18*), tongues (*Acts 2:4*), poisonous things (*Acts 28:3-6*), and healing (*Acts 3:6-8*). “*These things shall follow...*” — and they did!

B. The Place Of Sign Gifts.

Sign gifts were manifested not only for a particular purpose (accreditation) and at a particular time (apostolic age), but also to a particular group of people.

1. The _____ require a _____ — *I Corinthians 1:22*.
2. Certain of the _____ and _____ (Jews) came seeking a sign from Jesus in *Matthew 12:38-40*.

See also: *Exodus 4:30,31; 31:13; Numbers 14:11; Judges 6:17; I Samuel 10:7-9; Isaiah 7:11,14; Ezekiel 4:3; Matthew 24:3,30; Mark 8:11,12; Luke 12,34.*

It is interesting to observe that whenever the New Testament records the manifestation of any sign gift, Jews and at least one apostle were present. Furthermore, *Micah 7:15* suggests that signs will be operative only when Israel is in the land. (There is no recorded instance of any sign gift after A.D.70.)

C. The Peril With Sign Gifts.

There is an extreme danger in seeking after the sign gifts today. This is because Satan is well able to produce (imitate) ‘signs and wonders’ — *Exodus 7:10-12,22; 8:7,18; II Corinthians 11:13-15; Mark 13:21-23; II Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 13:13,14*.

Satan is well able to provide any experience outside of the Word of God an unbeliever (or a believer) may seek!

THE SERVING GIFTS

In Romans 12 we find a list of seven spiritual gifts which are available today for service within each church. These are the “serving gifts” — permanent and profitable!

The gifts are listed in *verses 6-8*, and in *verses 9-15* the corresponding dispositions needed for using the gifts are given.

A. The Gift Of PROPHECY — Romans 12:6.

Biblical prophets are either fore-tellers or forth-tellers.

The gift of *predictive* prophecy has “failed” (ended) (*I Corinthians 13:8*) — it is the gift of *proclamative* prophecy which remains.

1. According to *Romans 12:6*, prophesying must be done according to the proportion (analogy) of _____ which, according to *Romans 10:17*, comes through hearing the _____ of _____.
_____ and
_____.
2. In *Acts 13:1*, Barnabas and Saul are called _____ and _____.
3. In *Acts 15:35*, these men are involved in _____ and _____ the _____ of the Lord.
These two references define the gift of prophecy for today. It is limited to the preaching of the (completed) Word of God.

4. According to *I Corinthians 14:3*, the purpose of prophesying is:

- _____ I O N.
 - _____ I O N (see also: *Acts 15:32*).
 - _____ (see also: *verse 31*).
5. Prophesying is to be directed to the _____ (see: *I Corinthians 14:4b,5,22b*).
 6. According to *Romans 12:9*, the disposition required in a prophet (preacher) is:
 - Sincere _____ (see: *Ephesians 4:15*).
 - Hatred of _____.
 - An exemplified holy life (“cleave” means to ‘hold to,’ ‘to stick with’).

B. The Gift Of MINISTRY — Romans 12:7a.

The word “ministry” (‘diakonia’) means ‘to serve.’

The position of servant is the _____ position, according to *Matthew 20:27; Luke 22:26*.

1. The gift of ministry requires us to _____ (as in “waiter”) on our ministering (*Romans 12:7a*). In other words, the gift must be used!

2. According to *Romans 12:10*, the disposition in exercising this gift is that the servant be:

- Kindly _____ toward others.
- To H _____ and P _____ others.

This is the “servant’s heart!”

Those who hold the office of “deacon” are to be the servants of the church, but all believers need to be servants (*Galatians 5:13e; Colossians 3:23,24*).

C. The Gift Of TEACHING — *Romans 12:7b.*

This is the God-given ability to present the truths of God’s Word clearly and precisely.

According to *Romans 12:11*, the disposition in exercising this gift is that the teacher is to be:

- Not _____ in his preparation.
- _____ in spirit.
- Serving as unto the _____, not to impress men.

Apollos shows the qualities of a teacher — *Acts 18:24-28*.

Those who hold the office of _____ are to be teachers (*I Timothy 3:2g; II Timothy 2:24,25; Titus 1:9*), but all church members are to teach one another (*Colossians 3:16b*).

D. The Gift Of EXHORTING — *Romans 12:8a.*

The exhorter is motivated to get alongside other church members and, with the Word of God encourage, stimulate, and motivate them to pursue spiritual growth, spiritual labor, and a spiritual course of conduct.

1. According to *Romans 12:12*, one exercising this gift must:

- Rejoice in the blessed _____ — see: *Titus 2:11-13*.
- Be _____ in tribulation.
- Be persistent in _____ for others.

2. Perhaps the greatest example of an exhorter in the New Testament was _____ — *Acts 4:36,37; 9:27; 11:23*.

Nevertheless, believers are to exhort _____ — *(Hebrews 3:13; 10:25)*.

E. The Gift Of GIVING — Romans 12:8b.

This is the motivation to both gain and give bounty in order to meet the needs of others in the church.

1. Giving is to be done with _____ (without ulterior motive) — *Romans 12:8b; Matthew 6:3,4.*
2. Exercising the gift of giving will meet the _____ I E S of other believers — *Romans 12:13.*
3. All believers ought to have a giving attitude — *Matthew 10:8e; Luke 6:38.*

F. The Gift Of RULING — Romans 12:8c.

This is the God-given ability to oversee and direct the activities of others in the church in order to accomplish a work for God.

Those exercising this gift must be D _____ — *Romans 12:8c.*

According to *Romans 12:14*, they must also _____ those who would resist their rule.

G. The Gift Of MERCY — Romans 12:8d.

Those with this spiritual gift are motivated to identify with and share in the sufferings and joys of others, using the Word of God to bring comfort.

According to *Romans 12:8d*, the merciful must be _____ F U L and uplifting.

According to *Romans 12:15*, those exercising the gift of mercy will empathize with the sorrows and joys of those in the church. Nevertheless, all believers are to:

- _____ one another's _____ — *Galatians 6:2.*
- Put on _____ of mercies — *Colossians 3:12.*

What a blessing it is when the members of a Bible-believing Baptist church are exercising their spiritual gifts just as the Lord intended! What great things can be accomplished for the glory of God (*Ephesians 3:21*)!!

- This is why God hath _____ the members in the body as it has pleased Him (*I Corinthians 12:18*).
- This is why God has _____ the body together (*I Corinthians 12:24b*).
- This is why God has fitly [properly] _____ the whole body together (*Ephesians 4:16*).

THE GIFT OF TONGUES

The best-known feature of the Charismatic Movement is its emphasis upon “speaking in tongues.” From the middle of the 20th century this phenomenon has crossed practically every denominational boundary, and has infected (and destroyed) many Baptist churches along the way.

The gift of tongues is one of the “sign gifts,” and therefore has ceased — *Mark 16:17; I Corinthians 13:8*. Nevertheless a large segment of present-day Christendom not only holds that speaking in tongues is for today, but that it is an experience to be earnestly sought by all Christians. Some teach it is optional, while others contend it to be essential for salvation (as the evidence of the so-called ‘baptism of the Spirit’).

To determine the Biblical truth about the gift of tongues, we ask THREE questions of every tongue-speaker:

A. “In What Language Did You Speak?”

1. Look up: *Acts 2:8-11*. How many different known languages and dialects are listed as having been heard on the Day of Pentecost?
-

2. Look up: *Genesis 10:5,20; Deuteronomy 28:49; Ezra 4:7; Acts 21:40; 22:2; and Revelation 5:9; 7:9; 13:7*. How do these scriptures define the word “tongue?”
-

3. Read: *I Corinthians 14:9-11*. Some claim the expression “unknown tongue” (mentioned in *I Corinthians 14:2,4,13,14,19,27*), proves the existence of non-human (heavenly, ecstatic) languages. However this passage defines an unknown tongue as one:

- a. Which is not _____ to be _____ (verse 9).
- b. Which has no _____ I N G to the hearer (verse 11a).
- c. Which makes the speaker sound like a _____ I A N (verse 11b).

According to *I Corinthians 14:2,4*, when someone speaks in a foreign language (unknown to the hearers) only God and the speaker can understand what is being said.

Note: The hyperbolic expression “tongues of angels” (*I Corinthians 13:1*) means the ability to speak perfectly (vs. *II Corinthians 10:10*). Angels are spirit beings (*Hebrews 1:14*) and as such do

not have tongues. However, whenever they have appeared in human form they have always spoken in the language of the hearer and have been perfectly understood — e.g. *Daniel 9:21,22; Luke 2:10,15; Acts 12:7.*

If the gift of speaking with tongues were operational today, those who exercised the gift would have the miraculous ability to speak in a foreign language without any formal language training.

B. **"To Which Group Of Unbelieving Jews Did You Speak?"**

1. According to *I Corinthians 14:22*, the purpose of the gift of tongues was for a _____ to them that _____ not.
2. According to *I Corinthians 1:22*, the _____ require a sign.

Note: *I Corinthians 14:21* refers to the prophecies of *Deuteronomy 28:49; Isaiah 28:11; 33:19; and Jeremiah 5:15*, in which tongues are declared to be a sign of impending judgment upon Israel. Interestingly, there is no instance of the gift of tongues being exercised after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Note: A study of the (only) three recorded instances of tongues being manifested shows that Jews and an apostle were always present: in *Acts 2:1-13* (to unbelieving, unregenerate Jews), in *Acts 10:44-48* (to unbelieving, saved Jews), and in *Acts 19:6* (to unbelieving Jewish Church members).

C. **"Did You Follow The Biblical Rules When You Spoke In Tongues?"**

If the gift of tongues were for today (which it is not), then the following rules would have to be applied:

1. Only _____ men at the most are to speak — *I Corinthians 14:27.*
2. Those who speak are to do so “by _____” (i.e. not all at once, but in turn) — *I Corinthians 14:27.*
3. One person must _____ — *I Corinthians 14:27.*
4. If no interpreter is available, those who can only speak in a foreign language are to keep _____ — *I Corinthians 14:28.*
5. _____ are to keep silence also — *I Corinthians 14:34.*

Note: *I Corinthians 14:32* teaches that those who speak in our churches are to be in control of themselves. The Holy Spirit never takes anybody out of control into some state of ecstasy.

In reality, the Bible places little emphasis on tongues.

- There are only three recorded instances of the gift being scripturally used. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians indicates and corrects the abuse of the gift.
- Tongues and the interpretation of tongues are listed last in *I Corinthians 12:28,29*.
- Peter, James, John, and Jude all spoke with tongues, yet say nothing about it in their epistles.
- The apostle Paul was skilled in foreign languages (*I Corinthians 14:18*) but only spoke them on special occasions — *Acts 21:37; 22:2*.

THE GIFTS OF HEALING

The so-called “gift of healing” is another hallmark of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.

The Word of God teaches divine healing but opposes the practices of modern-day divine healers. God is omnipotent, and His power extends to His ability to heal the physical body. He can heal anyone at any time in any way He wills. The issue is not, “Can God heal?” but rather, **“Is the gift of healing operational today?”**

(The matter of divine healing will be studied fully under lesson “S.”)

The gift of healing is one of the sign gifts (*Mark 16:18*) and therefore is obsolete today. Modern-day “faith healing” is best shown for what it is by simply comparing it with the healing ministries of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles. Scripture then confounds these ‘charlatans of Christendom’ with their contrivances of:

- selective sicknesses — psychosomatic illness (no broken bones, please!!)
- sideshow stooges — people who are miraculously ‘healed’ at every town!
- surging sensationalism — emotional pulsating music, rhythmic repetition, climatic clowning!

A. **The Healing Ministry Of Jesus Christ** — e.g. *Matthew 4:23,24*.

The Bible records 18 specific miracles of healing by the Lord Jesus Christ. Consider the following facts:

1. Jesus healed people where He found them — no special healing meetings.
2. Jesus healed ALL manner of sickness — no screening process was employed to eliminate hard cases or real sicknesses.
3. Christ’s healings were complete — no failures, no relapses, no convalescence.

4. Christ's healings were free of charge — no offerings, no books, no handkerchiefs, no gimmicks.
5. Jesus generally healed without touching — no theatrics.
6. Jesus never prayed before He healed someone.
7. Jesus discouraged testimonies — *Mark 7:36*.
8. Christ's healing ministry was directed to Israel.
9. Those Jesus healed were generally unsaved, or were saved at the same time as they were healed.

B. The Healing Ministry Of The Apostles.

The Book of Acts records four specific miracles of healing plus three general statements. Read: *Acts 3:1-12,16* and note the following:

1. The afflicted man did not seek to be healed. He wanted money!
2. The two apostles healed the man where he was. They did not conduct a healing meeting nor draw attention to themselves to attract a crowd.
3. The healing was complete. There were no relapses with any of the apostolic healings.
4. Peter and John did not claim any special power or ability. They gave all the glory to God — *Acts 3:12*.
5. The miracle was a minor matter. Gospel preaching was the major focus of apostolic endeavor. More verses tell of Peter's subsequent preaching (and the conversion of about 5,000 men) than of the healing.

Once, it was the blessing — Now, it is the Lord,
 Once, it was the feeling — Now, it is His Word;
 Once, His gifts I wanted — Now, Himself alone,
 Once I sought for healing — Now the Healer own!

Once, 'twas painful trying — Now, 'tis perfect trust,
 Once, a half-salvation — Now, the uttermost;
 Once, 'twas what I wanted — Now, what Jesus says,
 Once, 'twas constant asking — Now, 'tis ceaseless praise!

Once, it was my working — His it hence shall be,
 Once, I tried to use Him — Now He uses me;
 Once, the power I wanted — Now, the Mighty One,
 Once, I worked for glory — Now, His will alone!!

Hell

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

One of the “missiles” conspicuously absent from the arsenals of a lot of today’s evangelistic preaching is the subject of Hell. Within the soothing halls and auditoriums of many (*Laodicæan-style*) Baptist churches, Hell is considered a distasteful doctrine, one which will only scare people away. It is a subject looked upon condescendingly as a relic of some long-gone, unsophisticated ‘hellfire and damnation’ era. Surely the ‘modern way’ is to focus on the love of God in order to bring sinners to Christ!

Yet it was the love of God which sent the Son of God to this sin-cursed planet to save men from Hell. In *Proverbs 15:11* we read, “*Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?*”

- The Word of God declares there is a Hell — *Matthew 5:29,30; 10:28.*
- The Holiness of God demands there be a Hell — *Psalm 7:11b; 9:17a.*
- The Love of God delivers sinners from Hell — *John 3:16.*

The most detailed passage in the Bible on the subject of Hell is found in *Luke 16:19-31*. That this is NOT a parable (as some claim) is seen from the fact that it does not have the customary preamble of a parable (cf. *Luke 12:16; 13:6; 14:7; 15:3*; etc.), that it is not said to be a parable, and that it mentions names of people (which no other parable of Christ does).

When Jesus said, “And in _____ he lifted up his eyes...,” (verse 23) He was speaking of a literal place of literal flame and literal torment — the region of the damned! A place just as real as Heaven (*John 14:2*)!

Because Hell IS real we must preach it — not with glee, but with tears; not sanctimoniously, but with trembling; not with callousness, but with compassion! It is our solemn duty — *Ezekiel 33:8; Matthew 3:7c.*

“Warn the boatman before he enters the current — then if he’s swept down the rapids he destroys himself. Warn the man before he drinks the cup of poison; tell him it’s deadly — then if he drinks it, his death lies at his door” — Spurgeon.

THE DESIGNATIONS OF HELL

The Bible uses a number of terms to refer to the place that is generally called “Hell.” These are:

- A. _____ — *Psalm 9:17; Matthew 10:28; Luke 16:23.*
- B. The _____ of _____ — *Revelation 19:20; 20:10,14,15.*
- C. The _____ — *Numbers 16:30,33.*
- D. The _____ — *Revelation 9:1,2,11; 17:9.*
- E. _____ of _____ — *II Peter 2:4; Jude 6.*

It is helpful to understand some Hebrew and Greek words pertaining to this subject.

- The Hebrew word ‘**sheol**’ is found 65 times in 63 verses of the Old Testament. It is translated 31 times as “hell;” 31 times as “grave,” and 3 times as “pit.” The word literally means ‘*the region of the departed.*’ (More will be said later about the grave and Hell.)
- The Greek word ‘**hades**’ is found 11 times in 11 verses of the New Testament. It is translated 10 times as “hell” and once as “grave.” It is the Greek equivalent of sheol — Acts 2:27 (hades) quotes *Psalm 16:10* (sheol).
- The Greek word ‘**gehenna**’ is found 12 times in 12 verses of the New Testament, and is translated as “hell.” The word is derived from the name given to the ‘Valley of Hinnom’ — the garbage dump of Jerusalem.

THE DIVISIONS OF HELL

While we usually speak of Hell in general terms (referring to a place of torment), the subject is actually somewhat more complex. To understand the Bible doctrine, we must consider the following:

A. The Meaning Of ‘Sheol’ And ‘Hades’:

1. As mentioned above, the fundamental meaning of these words is “*the region of the departed*” — both saved and lost! They do not necessarily refer exclusively to a place of fire and brimstone.
2. This explains why:

- a. David (a saved man, *Acts 13:22; Romans 4:6,7*) could write, “If I make my _____ in hell, behold, _____ art there” (*Psalm 139:8*).
- b. Christ (the Son of God) went to Hell but was not _____ there — *Acts 2:31*.

Note: The teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ went to Hell to suffer our punishment for our sins is blatantly unscriptural. His death on the cross was totally sufficient — *John 19:30c*. Neither did He go to Hell and preach to lost people as some would have *I Peter 3:19* teach. (The “By which” in this verse refers back to its antecedent [“the Spirit,” *verse 18*], and the passage is stating that Christ preached [the Gospel] by the Spirit of God through the preaching of Noah (*II Peter 2:5*) to those who are now in prison because of their disobedience and rejection of his message.

B. **Death And Hell BEFORE The Ascension Of Christ:**

The following study of Abraham will explain what happened to the Old Testament saints upon their death:

1. *Genesis 25:8a* — Abraham gave up the _____ (his spirit). Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body (*Ecclesiastes 12:7; Genesis 35:18*).
2. *Genesis 25:8e* — Abraham was _____ to his people. This expression is explained by *Genesis 49:33; 50:2*. It cannot mean being buried in a grave because that act is noted separately. He (his soul and spirit) went to the “region of the departed.”
3. *Mark 12:27* — The God of Abraham is the God of the _____. Taken in its context (*Mark 12:26; Exodus 3:6*), this scripture proves that Abraham was still alive — about 500 years after his physical death!
4. *Luke 16:22-31* — the rich man saw Abraham with Lazarus resting in his _____.
 - That Abraham could converse shows he was still alive some 2,000 years after his physical death!
 - Abraham, a saved man (*Romans 4:3*), was in proximity of the rich man who was lost.
5. *Luke 23:43* — Jesus said to the repentant thief, “_____ shalt thou be with me in _____.”
6. *Acts 2:31* — Jesus Christ went to _____ in the time between His death and His resurrection.

Because He had announced He would be going to paradise just minutes before His death, this must be the section of Hell set aside for the saved.

7. Putting it all together, we conclude that the “region of the departed,” most commonly referred to as HELL, has three major compartments:
 - a. Place of Torment — the region of the damned. Specifically ‘gehenna.’
 - b. Paradise — the region of the saved.
 - c. The Great Gulf — *Luke 16:26*.
8. The Bottomless Pit is another section of Hell, because *Proverbs 15:11* and *27:20* link “hell ['sheol'] **and** destruction ['abaddon']” — a name associated with the Bottomless Pit, *Revelation 9:11*.
9. *II Peter 2:4* — associated with Hell is a place where certain angels are held in _____ of _____.
The Greek word translated “hell” here is ‘tartarus.’

Since chains are associated with the Tartarus section of Hell **and** the Bottomless Pit section of Hell (*Revelation 20:1*), they are either one-and-the-same place or are located in the same proximity.

C. Death And Hell SINCE The Ascension Of Jesus Christ:

1. *Matthew 16:18* — Hell has _____. See: *Isaiah 38:10*.
2. *Revelation 1:18* — The risen Christ now has the _____ of Hell (presumably to its gates).
3. *Ephesians 4:8,9* — When Jesus Christ ascended back to His Father, He led _____.

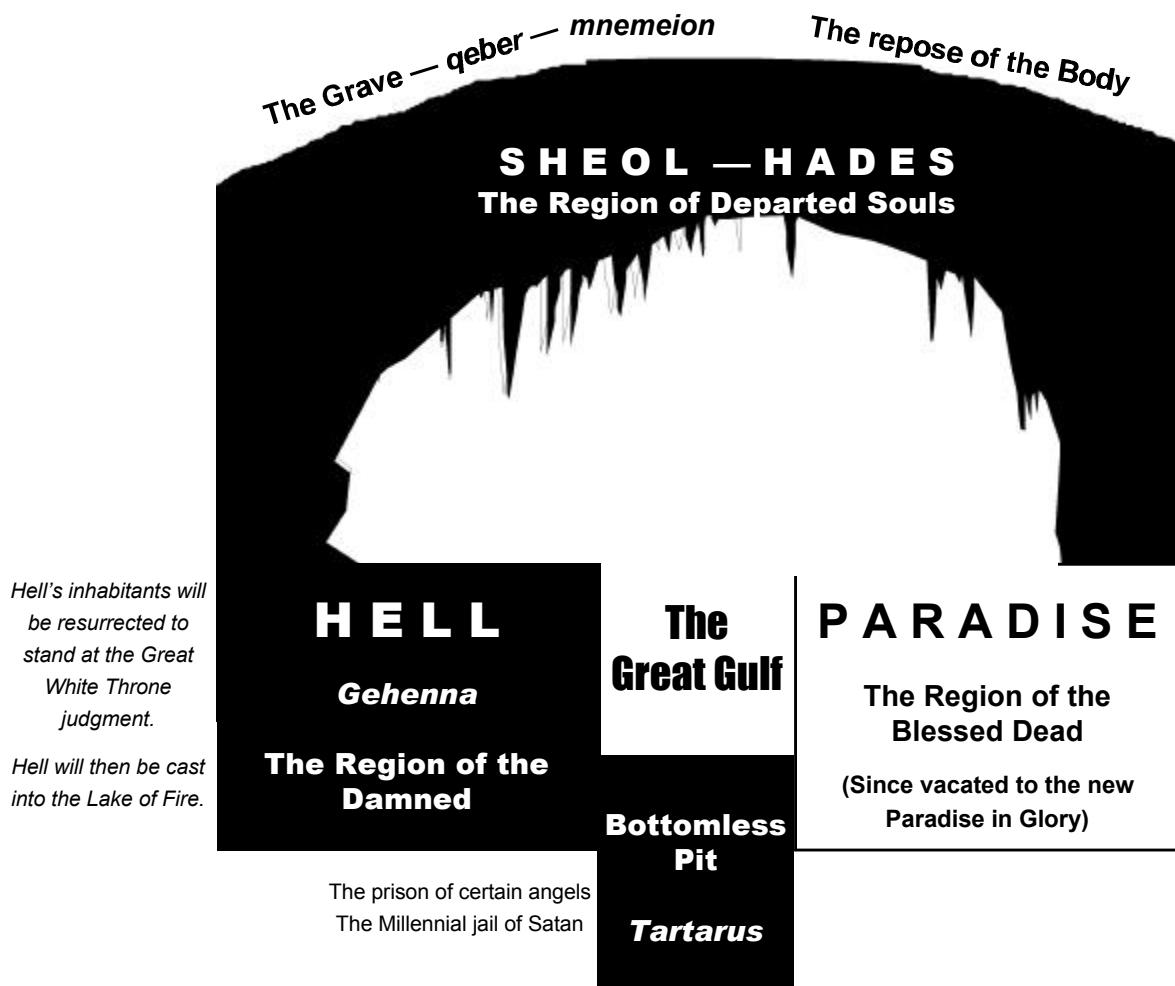
Note: Christ first **descended** (to Hell) before He **ascended** (to Heaven).

4. *II Corinthians 12:2-4* — About 10 years after the resurrection of Christ, the apostle Paul is caught ____ into _____.
This means something happened to the Paradise section of Hell. It was emptied out by Jesus Christ, its captives (the spirits of the saved) taken with Him to glory!!

5. *II Corinthians 5:8* — now, to be _____ from the body is to be _____ with the Lord. (See also: *Philippians 1:23*.)

D. Death And Hell AFTER The Millennial Kingdom Of Christ:

1. *Revelation 20:13* — at the Great White Throne judgment, death and Hell will D_____ up their inhabitants to be judged.
This cannot include saved people because they are with the Lord.
 2. *Revelation 20:14* — death and Hell are _____ into the _____ of _____.
- Note:** The “place of torment” section of Hell (‘gehenna’) may be likened to a LOCK UP where the guilty are remanded. God is a God of justice, and every lost sinner will have his day in court. The Great White Throne judgment is the TRIAL. The eternal Lake of Fire, then, is the PENITENTIARY.
3. *II Peter 2:4; Jude 6* — the chained angels are _____ for this great day of _____. See: *I Corinthians 6:3*.



THE DESCRIPTION OF HELL

Just as a description of the glories and bliss of our future Heavenly abode is beyond the reach of mortal understanding and expression (*I Corinthians 2:9; I Peter 1:3-5*), so any attempt by human means to describe or depict Hell with all its horrors will fail miserably.

Yet the Bible does give us a number of facts about the place, such as:

A. THE LOCATION OF HELL:

1. Read: *Psalm 55:15; Proverbs 7:27; Isaiah 14:15; Ezekiel 31:17; Matthew 11:23; Luke 10:15; II Peter 2:4.*

In what direction is Hell? _____

2. Read: *Ephesians 4:9.* Christ descended where?

Into the _____ of the _____.

3. Read: *Ezekiel 31:14,16,18; 32:18,24.* Where is Hell located?

In the _____ parts of the _____.

Note: This word is defined as “lower.” See: *Deuteronomy 24:6.*

4. Read: *Numbers 16:28-35.* In what direction did God’s judgment take Korah and his rebellious cohorts? _____

5. According to *Job 11:8*, as Heaven is high, Hell is _____.

6. According to *Proverbs 15:24* and *Isaiah 14:9* Hell is _____.

7. According to *Amos 9:2*, if one were to search for Hell’s location one would have to _____ for it.

B. THE DIMENSIONS OF HELL:

While no actual physical dimensions of Hell are given (cf. *Revelation 21:16*), the Word of God has three interesting things to say about the size of the place:

1. According to *Isaiah 5:14*, “Hell hath _____ herself, and opened her mouth _____.”

This means there will be no “SORRY, WE’RE FULL” sign hung on its infernal gates.

Habakkuk 2:5 indicates the place is continually enlarging!

2. It is evident Hell has depth.
 - a. *Proverbs 9:18* speaks of the _____ of Hell.
 - b. *Deuteronomy 32:22* speaks of the _____ Hell. (See also: *Psalm 86:13*.)
 - c. The pit of Hell is _____ — *Revelation 9:1,2 &c.*
3. The gates of Hell are _____ — *Matthew 7:13*.

C. THE FIRE OF HELL:

Hell is a place of literal fire. (Scientifically, this would certainly be consistent with the location of Hell!)

1. It was called “Hell _____” by Jesus Christ in *Matthew 5:22; 18:9* and *Mark 9:47*.
2. In *Mark 9:43,45* Jesus said it is a “_____ that shall _____ be _____.” (See also: *verses 44,46,48*.)
3. In *Matthew 18:8; 25:41* it is called _____ fire.
4. In *Matthew 13:42,50* it is called a _____ of _____.
5. The rich man was tormented in Hell’s _____ — *Luke 16:24*.
6. The Lake of Fire consists of _____ and _____ (sulfurous lava) — *Revelation 19:20; 20:10; 21:8*.

Note: It was with these same substances that God poured out His judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 19:24*) — which Jude calls _____ (*Jude 7*).

7. According to *Revelation 14:11*, the fire of Hell produces _____ .

D. THE DARKNESS OF HELL:

Hell is an infinitely dark place. There is absolutely no light there!

1. The angels that sinned and were cast down into Hell are bound in chains of _____ — *II Peter 2:4*.
2. People will be cast into “_____” where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth — *Matthew 8:12; 22:13*.

3. False prophets and false teachers have as their destiny the “ _____ of _____” for ever — *II Peter 2:1,17*.
4. According to *Jude 13*, God has reserved the “ _____ of _____ for _____” for all reprobates.

The obvious question arises: “If Hell is so dark, how can there be flames?”

We observe fire in a variety of spectral colors, depending on the intensity of its heat. The ‘coolest’ flame is yellow. Then as a fire grows hotter its color changes from yellow to orange to red to blue and to white. White heat is the hottest fire man can produce, but scientists know that the very hottest fire is BLACK!

THE DURATION OF HELL

Here is perhaps the saddest fact about Hell — it is forever! The following scriptures make this clear:

A. HELL IS AN EVERLASTING PLACE:

1. An everlasting _____ — *Matthew 18:8; 25:41*.
2. An everlasting _____ — *Matthew 25:46*.
3. An everlasting _____ — *II Thessalonians 1:8,9*.
4. An everlasting _____ — *Daniel 12:2*.
5. An eternal _____ — *Mark 3:29*.

Note: These same words are used for the saved — *everlasting life, eternal life!*

B. HELL IS FOR EVER:

1. For ever R _____ D — *II Peter 2:17; Jude 13*.
2. For ever T _____ D — *Revelation 14:11; 20:10*.
3. There is NO way out (*Luke 16:26*) — there is NO hope (*Proverbs 11:7*).

The Devil’s choir will one day have only one song to sing: one word, one tune, one note, one key — “*F O R E V E R!*”

THE DESIGN OF HELL

- A. According to *Matthew 25:41*, Hell was originally prepared for the _____ and his _____. This awful place was **never** intended for a single human soul — *II Peter 3:7,9*.
- B. Read: *Isaiah 14:12-15*. This prophetic passage (cf. *Revelation 12:7-9*) sees the ultimate end of the Devil (cf. *Revelation 20:1-3,10*).
- C. The Devil's angels are those spirit beings which evidently followed him in his rebellion. These would comprise:
1. Devils (Greek, ‘*daimon*;’ demons).
Note what these devils said to Jesus in *Matthew 8:28-32* — “Art thou come hither to _____ us before the _____” (*verse 29*).
 2. Angels That Sinned — *II Peter 2:4*.
According to *Jude 6*, these were they who “kept not their _____” (principality).
Scripture does not inform us as to the details of their sin.

THE DAMNATION OF HELL

Jesus spoke of the damnation of Hell in *Matthew 23:33b*. The word ‘damnation’ means “condemnation” or “judgment.” In most cases it refers to *eternal judgment* in Hell (*Mark 3:29*); in some instances it applies to God’s chastisement in the life of an erring saint (e.g. *I Corinthians 11:29-32*; *I Timothy 5:11-13*).

What is the damnation of Hell??

A. PHYSICAL TORMENT:

1. The rich man in Hell was tormented in the _____ — *Luke 16:24*.
2. The rich man in Hell begged for a drop of _____ — *Luke 16:24*.

Note: The rich man in Hell possessed the physical senses — sight (*verse 23*), taste (*verse 24*), hearing (*verses 29,30*).

Note: A glimpse of the physical agonies of Hell are seen in the effects of God’s judgments to be poured out upon the earth during Daniel’s 70TH Week — *Revelation 16:8-11*.

3. The “Worm That Dieth Not” — *Mark 9:44,46,48.*

Worms (maggots) are associated with physical decay after death (e.g. *Job 19:26; 21:26*), but evidently there is also an *eternal* worm that exists in Hell which brings continued physical torment.

There is a second resurrection “of damnation” (*Daniel 12:2; John 5:28,29*; cf. *Revelation 20:6*), where Death and Hell deliver up their dead (*Revelation 20:13*) to be judged. Resurrection presupposes a body, however there is no evidence the unsaved dead will receive a glorified body like that of the saved (for then the second death would not hurt them). Obviously they will receive corruptible bodies, subject to every ailment, aggravation, and agony we all experience in this life — and then some!!

It is prophesied of the Antichrist in *Isaiah 14:11*, “*Thy pomp is brought down to the grave [sheol] ... the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.*”

4. Endless _____ and _____ of teeth,
Matthew 13:42 (also: *Matthew 8:12*).

What indescribable physical torments there are in hell! Scorching fire, black darkness, gnawing worms, unquenchable thirst, endless pain, screaming and crying — forever!

B. MENTAL TORMENT:

1. According to *Daniel 12:2*, there will be _____ and everlasting
_____ (see: *Proverbs 1:24-30*).

2. Son, _____ — *Luke 16:25.*

What indescribable mental torments there are in Hell! Endless shame, endless guilt, endless memory!!

C. SPIRITUAL TORMENT:

1. *Matthew 7:23* — “_____ from Me.”

In the Bible, death means separation. The second death (*Revelation 20:14*) is to be everlastingly separated from God.

2. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust _____” — *Revelation 22:11a.*

3. “He which is filthy, let him be filthy _____” — *Revelation 22:11b.*

No change, no rehabilitation, no repentance, no hope — forever!

THE DEGREES OF HELL

All sin must and will be punished by a thrice-Holy God, but just as there are degrees of sin (e.g. *John 19:11d; I John 5:16,17*) so there will be degrees of damnation. Why?

- God is a _____ God — *Isaiah 45:21i.*
- The Judge of all the earth will do _____ — *Genesis 18:25.*
- The judgment of God through His Son will be _____ — *John 5:22,30.*

A sinner will be turned into Hell for not believing on the Son of God (*John 3:18,36*). However, just as our criminal justice system metes out different sentences for different crimes, so the divine justice system (which is absolutely just) will have varying degrees of punishment in Hell. The degree of eternal punishment is based upon:

A. THE AMOUNT OF LIGHT RECEIVED:

1. According to *John 1:9*, _____ man has received light.
2. According to *Romans 1:19,20*, all men are without _____.
3. Nevertheless, it will be more _____ for some sinners in Hell than others according to *Matthew 11:22,24*. Why? Because they had more light! See also: *Matthew 12:41*.
4. According to *Matthew 23:14*, the religious Pharisees of Jesus' day will receive the _____.
5. Read: *Hebrews 10:26-29,38,39*. There is a much _____ punishment for those who willfully reject the light of the Gospel.

See also: *Luke 12:47,48.*

B. THE NATURE & NUMBER OF SINS COMMITTED:

1. God Hates Some Sins More Than Others.
 - a. Any sin is a sin in God's eyes, but according to *Proverbs 6:16-19*, there are seven sins He _____ more than others.
 - b. Some sins are an **abomination** to the LORD, i.e. they are particularly damnable in God's sight — e.g. *Deuteronomy 7:25,26; 17:1; 18:10-12; 22:5; 23:17,18; 24:4; 25:15,16; Proverbs 11:1; 12:22; 16:5; 17:15; 20:10,23.*

2. With God, _____ transgression and disobedience will receive a _____ recompense of reward — *Hebrews 2:2*.
3. At the Great White Throne judgment, condemned sinners will be judged according to their _____ — *Revelation 20:12*.
4. Certain works will receive _____ damnation — *Revelation 18:5,6*. (See also: *Isaiah 40:2; Jeremiah 16:18; 17:18*.)
5. According to *Isaiah 30:1*, it is possible to compound sin.

THE DENIZENS OF HELL

Many lost sinners flippantly say things like, “I don’t care if I go to Hell! I’ll have lots of company with all my friends; we’ll have one big party down there!” Sadly, the Bible offers no such hope. It gives no intimation that the unsaved will recognize or know one another in that awful place.

Who will be in Hell? The Bible lists the company of the damned:

A. THE INTENDED INHABITANTS:

1. The _____ — *Revelation 20:10*.
2. The _____ — *Revelation 19:20a*.
3. The _____ — *Revelation 19:20b*.
4. The _____ that _____ — *II Peter 2:4*.
5. The _____ — *Matthew 8:28,29*. (*Luke 8:31*.)

B. THE UNINTENDED INHABITANTS:

1. The _____ — *Psalm 9:17*.
2. The _____ — *Revelation 21:8a*.
3. The _____ — *Revelation 21:8b*
4. The _____ — *Revelation 21:8c,27b*.
5. _____ — *Revelation 21:8d; 22:15d*.
6. _____ — *Revelation 21:8e; 22:15c*.
(The Greek word thus translated is “pornois” [pornography].)
7. _____ — *Revelation 21:8f; 22:15b*.
(The Greek word thus translated is “pharmakeia” [drugs].)

8. _____ — *Revelation 21:8g.*
9. All _____ — *Revelation 21:8h,27c; 22:15f.*
10. Anything (and everything) that _____ E T H (*Revelation 21:27a*)
11. _____ — *Revelation 22:15a.*
See: *Philippians 3:2; II Peter 2:22* (context); *Isaiah 56:10,11.*
12. The strange _____ — *Proverbs 5:3-5.*
13. _____ — *John 17:12* with *John 6:70; 13:26,27. Acts 1:25.*

THE DENIALS OF HELL

There are many who deny the existence of a literal, burning, everlasting Hell — either directly by their outright rejection of the Word of God or their substitute unscriptural theories, or indirectly by their careless living (both lost and saved!!).

Five common Hell-denying theories are:

A. UNIVERSALISM:

“All men will be saved.”

This modernistic theory absolutely denies the plain teachings of the Bible — e.g. *Matthew 7:13,14,21-23; II Thessalonians 2:10-12; etc., etc.*

Associated with this lie is the “God is Love” theory — that a loving God would never send a soul to such an awful place.

B. ANNIHILATIONISM:

“The wicked dead are or will be annihilated, and are or will be no more.”

Many cults (Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, Christadelphians, etc.) teach this theory, which is a denial of an everlasting Hell (*Mark 9:43-48; Matthew 25:41,46*).

In *Revelation 19:20*, the Beast and the False Prophet are cast alive into the Lake of Fire. After the 1,000 year reign of Christ, the Devil is cast into the Lake of Fire, where the Beast and the False Prophet _____ — *Revelation 20:10* (not, “were!”)

The rich man continued his existence in Hell — *Luke 16.*

C. PURGATORY:

“The dead all go to Purgatory to be purified and made fit for Heaven.”

This is one of the most important and lucrative doctrines of Roman Catholicism.

“When coins in the chest doth ring,
Souls from Purgatory spring.”

1. There is no Biblical teaching of a Purgatory, or any kind of second chance of salvation after death. According to *Hebrews 9:27*, “...it is appointed unto men _____ to _____, but _____ this the judgment.” See also: *Hebrews 10:26,27*.
2. Our eternal destiny and condition are determined (and set) in this life by what we do with Jesus Christ — *Revelation 22:11*.
3. This blasphemous and damnable teaching denies the complete work of Christ — *John 19:30c; Hebrews 10:10,12,14,17,18*.

D. HELL IS ON EARTH:

Perhaps the most common view among so-called ‘evangelicals’ and popular religion today.

- “A person is in hell when he has lost his self esteem” — Robert Schuller.
- “Hell...[is]...not fire but something worse, a thirst for God that cannot be quenched” — Billy Graham.
- “The essence of hell is surely an inner misery of helpless remorse...an eternity of self-absorbed unwillingness to receive and respond to divine goodness...” — J. I. Packer.
- “The Bible does not teach that we experience hell after we die, we experience it before we die” — Ruth Carter Stapleton.
- Hell is... “the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God...the pain, frustration and emptiness of life without God” — Pope John Paul II.

These lies deny the literal and plain teaching of the Word of God. In many cases they are attempts to make the doctrine of Hell palatable and ‘respectable.’

E. HELL IS THE GRAVE:

This is the favored ‘explanation’ of the Hell-denying Russellites (so-called Jehovah’s Witnesses). Pointing to the 31 times the Hebrew word “sheol” is translated ‘grave’ in the Authorized, King James Bible, they assert that that is all Hell really is — the grave, a hole in the ground.

This is a figure of speech where the part stands for the whole. However:

1. No one ever purchases a Sheol — *Genesis 23:4,6,9,20; 49:30*.
2. No one ever digs a Sheol — *Genesis 50:5*.
3. No living person ever touches a Sheol — *Numbers 19:16*.

4. No one will find bones in a Sheol — *I Kings 13:31; II Kings 13:21.*

The word “grave” in these passages is ‘qeber’ (or ‘qebuwrah’), elsewhere translated as sepulchre or buryingplace. (The word qeber is found 68 times, qebuwrah 13 times in the Old Testament. It always refers to a physical grave, never Hell!)

THE DEMAND OF HELL

There is a cry from Hell that cannot be ignored — an urgent cry that demands the Gospel be preached to sinners while there is yet time.

A. THE LOVE OF GOD DEMANDS IT:

1. God is not willing that ____ should _____ — *II Peter 3:9.*
2. God sent His Son into the world so that all who would believe on Him should not _____ — *John 3:16.*
3. Hell and destruction are _____ the LORD: how much more then the _____ of the children of men? — *Proverbs 15:11.*

B. DUTY DEMANDS IT:

1. “If thou _____ to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;
If thou sayest, Behold, we _____ it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart _____ it? and he that keepeth _____ soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his _____?” — *Proverbs 24:11,12.*
2. “Knowing therefore the _____ of the Lord, we _____ — _____ men” — *II Corinthians 5:11a.*

C. THE LOST IN HELL CRY FOR IT:

1. The rich man in Hell begged for Lazarus be sent back to his father’s house to witness to his five _____ — *Luke 16:27,28.*
2. He feared they would also _____ into this _____ of _____ — *Luke 16:28.*

3. Abraham's solemn reply:

- a. They have _____ and the _____ (i.e. the Word of God) — *Luke 16:29.*
- b. Men will not be _____ to believe except they hear the Word of God — *Luke 16:31.*

Israel

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Historically, the Jews are a people without parallel in the annals of human history. No other nation on earth has experienced the presence and mighty hand of God as has Israel; no other nation on earth has survived oppression, captivity, and dispersion like that of Israel. From its origin, the Hebrew race has been at the center of God's dealing with mankind. See: *Deuteronomy 32:8*.

Israel is special to God.

- The LORD calls Israel the _____ of His _____ — *Deuteronomy 32:10; Lamentations 2:18; Zechariah 2:8*.
- The LORD calls her His _____ in *Psalm 135:4b*.
- The LORD calls Israel “_____” — *Isaiah 46:13*.

The Bible promises a special blessing to those who love His chosen people — *Psalm 122:6*.

Prophetically, one cannot properly understand God's plan for the ages to come without first understanding the Jew. The nation of Israel figures at the very heart of coming world events. Current world events should be considered in the light of Israel and Jerusalem

This Bible lesson studies Israel's past history, then looks ahead to see God's future plans for His people.

ISRAEL: A CHOSEN NATION

Up until *Genesis 11:9* God dealt with the human race in general. After man's wicked rebellion at Babel however, God "gave them [the nations] up" (*Romans 1:18-32*) — turning aside from the great river of humanity (*Genesis 10*) to draw off one small 'tributary' through which He would later bless the whole (*Genesis 12:3*). Thus God entered into a special relationship with Israel (*Amos 3:2a*).

The Bible refers to Israel as God's "chosen people" — *Deuteronomy 10:15*.

A. The Ancestry Of Israel.

1. From Adam To The Flood — Genesis 5.

- a. ADAM — verse 3.
- b. _____ — verse 3.
- c. _____ — verse 6.
- d. _____ — verse 9.
- e. _____ — verse 12.
- f. _____ — verse 15.
- g. _____ — verse 18.
- h. _____ — verse 21.
- i. _____ — verse 25.
- j. _____ — verses 28,29.

2. From The Flood To Ur — Genesis 10,11.

- a. NOAH — 10:1.
- b. _____ — 10:1.
- c. _____ — 11:10.
- d. _____ — 11:12.
- e. _____ — 11:14
- f. _____ — 11:16.
- g. _____ — 11:18.
- h. _____ — 11:20.
- i. _____ — 11:22.
- j. _____ — 11:24.
- k. _____, _____, _____ — 11:26.

3. From Ur to Peniel.

- a. ABRAM (Abraham) — Genesis 17:5.
- b. _____ — Genesis 21:3.
- c. _____ — Genesis 25:26.

(His name was changed by God to _____ — Genesis 32:28.)

4. The Children Of Israel — I Chronicles 2:1,2.

- a. _____ .
- b. _____ .
- c. _____ .
- d. _____ .
- e. _____ .
- f. _____ .
- g. _____ .
- h. _____ .
- i. _____ .
- j. _____ .
- k. _____ .
- l. _____ .

Special Notes Concerning The Twelve Tribes

- The descendants of Joseph are represented by his two _____ ,
_____ and _____ — *Genesis 48:5*.
- The tribe of _____ received no inheritance of land, but was
the priestly tribe — *Deuteronomy 10:8,9; 18:1,2*.
- Reuben forfeited his _____ to the sons of
_____ — *I Chronicles 5:1; Genesis 49:3,4*.
- The first tribe to go into idolatry was _____ — *Judges 18:30*. (It
is interesting to note that this tribe is omitted from the list in *Revelation*
7:4-8. See: *Deuteronomy 29:18,21*.)
- The royal tribe is _____ — *Genesis 49:10*.

B. The Names Of Israel.

The Bible uses several names for God's chosen people. See: Hosea 4:15-17.
These names, and their significance are:

1. Judah.

- a. One of the _____ of Israel — *Joshua 7:16*.
- b. The tribe independently loyal to the house of _____
during the united monarchy — *II Samuel 2:4,10,11; 19:41-43*.

- c. The name applied to the southern kingdom during the period of the divided monarchy, comprising the tribes of _____ and ____ — *I Kings 12:16,17,20,21.*
2. Israel.
- The collective name for the _____ tribes — *Genesis 49:28; Exodus 24:4; 28:21.*
 - The name specifically applied to the northern kingdom during the period of the divided monarchy, consisting of _____ tribes — *I Kings 11:31,35.*
3. Ephraim.
- The _____-born son of _____ — *Genesis 41:50-52.*
 - One of the tribes, taking the place of Joseph and _____ for the division of the promised land — *Joshua 14:4; Numbers 1:33.*
 - A name also applied to _____ [above] — *II Chronicles 25:7; Isaiah 7:17; 11:12,13.*
- This is because Ephraim's location was _____ (*Isaiah 7:9a*), which was the seat of government for the northern kingdom (*II Kings 17:1,5,6*).
4. Jew.
- A word derived from "Judah" and first used in *II Kings 16:6*. The name is used frequently in the Old Testament from the time of the Babylonian captivity (e.g. *Daniel 3:12; Esther 3:13; Ezra 4:12; Nehemiah 1:2*; etc.).
5. Hebrew.
- A name first applied to _____ — *Genesis 14:13.*
 - The race of all _____ I T E S — *I Samuel 13:19.*
- The word is thought to mean a 'descendant of Eber' (*Genesis 11:14*).
6. In The New Testament:
- The apostle Paul called himself a _____ (*Acts 22:3*), of the stock of _____, of the tribe of _____, and an _____ (*Philippians 3:5*). See also: *Romans 11:11.*
 - The name _____ is used in a general way in the New Testament to refer to any descendant of Jacob — e.g. *John 1:47; Acts 3:12; Romans 9:3-5; 10:1; I Corinthians 10:18*; etc.

- c. The words “Jew” and “Israel” also have a spiritual connotation and apply to those who are saved — *Romans 2:28,29; Romans 9:6; Galatians 6:16*.

C. **The Choosing Of Israel.**

Read: *Deuteronomy 7:6-8.*

1. The LORD chose Israel to be a _____ people unto Himself, _____ all other people on the earth — *verse 6.*
2. The LORD chose Israel because He _____ them, *verse 8a.* See: *Deuteronomy 10:15; Jeremiah 31:3.*
3. The LORD chose Israel because of the _____ He made with the patriarchs (fathers), *verse 8b.*
4. The LORD chose Israel to be a testimony before the _____ to Him and His Word — *Deuteronomy 4:6-8.* See also: *Exodus 34:10; Isaiah 43:9-12; 44:6-8; 52:10; Micah 7:15-17; Psalm 67:1-4.*
5. The LORD chose Israel to be the channel wherein all families of the earth would be _____ — *Genesis 12:3.*
6. The LORD chose Israel as the channel for the “_____ (Word) of God” — *Romans 3:2.* [i.e. the Old Testament]

The choosing of the nation of Israel is a remarkable testimony to the sovereignty of God (see: *Romans 9:6-16*). God chose Seth over Cain, Shem over Ham and Japheth, Abram over Haran, Isaac over Ishmael, and Jacob over Esau.

Note: Romans 9 is not teaching that God chooses between individuals in the matter of *salvation*. God has chosen to save any and all who put their faith in His Son. This passage is using the fact of God’s sovereign choice as to who made up Israel’s lineage as an illustration to show the Jews that they have no inherent right to salvation! This is what John the Baptist preached — *Matthew 3:9.*

Note: Considerable confusion has arisen by failing to distinguish how the word “elect” is used in the New Testament. Sometimes the word is used of Israel (e.g. *Matthew 24:22,24,31; II Timothy 2:10*), other times of the believer (e.g. *Colossians 3:12; I Peter 1:2*) — but also of angels (*I Timothy 5:21*) and of Jesus Christ Himself (*I Peter 1:6*)! Confusing Israel with Christians or the Lord’s churches — especially in the Gospels — has led to incorrect interpretations of prophetic passages.

D. A Brief Biblical History Of Israel — *Old Testament*.

I.	<u>PATRIARCHAL</u>	[2000–1500 B.C.]	
1.	Abraham		
2.	Isaac		<i>Genesis</i>
3.	Jacob (Israel)		
4.	Joseph		
II.	<u>TRANSITIONAL</u>	[From a Family to a Nation]	
1.	Bondage		<i>Exodus</i>
2.	Exodus		<i>Leviticus</i>
3.	Mt. Sinai / Wilderness		<i>Numbers</i>
			<i>Deuteronomy</i>
III.	<u>THEOCRACY</u>	[1500–1200 B.C.]	
1.	Conquest — Joshua		<i>Joshua</i>
2.	Conquest — Judges		<i>Judges</i>
			<i>Ruth</i>
IV.	<u>UNITED MONARCHY</u>	[1200–1000 B.C.]	
1.	Samuel		<i>I Samuel</i>
2.	Saul		
3.	David		<i>II Samuel</i>
4.	Solomon		
V.	<u>DIVIDED MONARCHY</u>	[1000–600 B.C.]	
1.	Northern Kingdom (10 tribes) — “Israel”		<i>I & II Kings</i>
2.	Southern Kingdom (2 tribes) — “Judah”		<i>Chronicles</i>
			<i>Isaiah</i>
			<i>Jeremiah</i>
VI.	<u>CAPTIVITY</u>	[600–400 B.C.]	
1.	Daniel		<i>Daniel</i>
2.	Esther		<i>Ezekiel</i>
			<i>Esther</i>
VI.	<u>RESTORATION</u>	[400 B.C.]	
1.	Zerubbabel		<i>Ezra</i>
2.	Ezra		<i>Nehemiah</i>
3.	Nehemiah		<i>Haggai</i>
			<i>Zechariah</i>
			<i>Malachi</i>

The period between the two testaments (400–5 B.C.) is known as the “Silent 400 Years” during which no new revelation came from God to man. In this time, Israel passed from Persian captivity through Greek, then Roman conquests.

In 70 A.D., the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. The Jews were dispersed throughout the world until the birth of the modern Jewish state — May 14, 1948.

ISRAEL: A COVENANT NATION

In dealing with His chosen people, God established a number of covenants with them. A covenant is simply an agreement between two or more parties, and may be conditional or unconditional.

- Conditional covenant — “IF you do this, I’ll do that.”
- Unconditional covenant — “I WILL do that, regardless.”

The Hebrew word translated “covenant” (beriyth) literally means ‘to cut.’ This is because the ancient method of making a covenant involved both parties killing an animal, dividing the parts, then walking through the midst of the parts. The symbolic implication of this was: “Let be done to me what has been done to this animal if I do not perform what I have agreed to.” See: *Jeremiah 34:18*.

A. THE NUMBER OF THE COVENANTS.

There are **six** covenants between God and man mentioned in the Old Testament. They are:

1. The Noahic Covenant — *Genesis 6:18; 9:9-17.*
2. The Abrahamic Covenant — *Genesis 12:1-7; 13:14-17; 15:1-21; 17:1-14.*
3. The Mosaic Covenant — *Exodus 19:3-8.*
4. The Palestinian Covenant — *Deuteronomy 30:1-10.*
5. The Davidic Covenant — *II Samuel 7:8-17.*
6. The New Covenant — *Jeremiah 31:31-34.*

The last five of these covenants apply specifically to the nation of Israel — four of which have prophetic importance. The last of these covenants (the New Covenant) encompasses the salvation of both Jew and Gentile.

B. THE MOSAIC COVENANT.

Read: *Exodus 19:2-9&c.*

1. God spoke to M_____ from mount S_____ (*verses 2,3*).
2. This covenant was made by the LORD with the house of _____ (*verse 3*).
3. This covenant was conditional: the LORD used the word “____” in *verse 5a.*
4. This covenant was bilateral: it was made between the L_____ and all the P_____ — *verse 8.*

5. This covenant was dedicated with _____, according to *Hebrews 9:18-20*. See: Jeremiah 34:12-20.
6. Jacob's household had gone down to Egypt as a family: they came out of Egypt as a nation. The Mosaic covenant gave God's laws to govern the new nation:
 - Moral laws — encapsulated in the _____ commandments. See: *Deuteronomy 4:13; Exodus 20:1-17*.
 - Ceremonial laws — offerings, the priesthood, feasts, sabbaths, etc.
 - Civil laws — hygiene, human relationships, crimes and punishments, etc.
7. The Law was never intended to save people — it was a way **of** life, not a way **to** life!
 - a. According to *Romans 7:12*, the Law is _____, and the Commandment _____, and _____, and _____.
 - b. According to *Romans 8:3a* however, the Law is _____ through the _____.
The problem is not with the Law, but with man who is unable ("weak") to keep it.

"The Law commands,
But gives me neither feet nor hands!"
 - c. According to *Romans 3:20b*, the Law is intended to give man the _____ of _____.
d. The Law is to be our _____ to bring us to _____ — *Galatians 3:24*.
- Note:** Old Testament saints were not saved by keeping the commandments (an impossibility!). They were saved by faith in the promises of God — which the ceremonial Law foreshadowed. See: Hebrews 11:13,39.
8. According to *John 1:17*, the _____ was given by _____, but _____ and _____ came by Jesus Christ.
9. According to *Hebrews 10:9*, Christ took away the _____ (the Law) that He might establish the _____.
10. In *Matthew 5:17*, Jesus said He came to _____ the Law.

He did this by:

- a. KEEPING it perfectly, "without _____" — *Hebrews 4:15b.*
See: I John 3:4b.
- b. REMOVING its _____ — *Galatians 3:13.*
- c. ACTUALIZING it. The Law was a _____; Christ is the _____, the 'real thing' — *Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1.*
- d. ENDING it — *Romans 10:4.*

C. **THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.**

Read: *Genesis 12:1-3.*

This is the most significant covenant God made with Israel, because it embraces all the subsequent covenants. In fact, all the blessings known to man arise out of the Abrahamic Covenant.

This covenant was given through Abram (Abraham) progressively, as follows:

- Made — *Genesis 12:2,3,7.*
- Enlarged — *Genesis 13:14-17.*
- Signed — *Genesis 15:5-21.*
- Confirmed — *Genesis 17:2-8.*
- Reiterated — *Genesis 22:15-18.*

1. **The Promises Of The Abrahamic Covenant.**

- a. The covenant contained some *personal* promises to Abraham:
 - I will make of thee a great _____ — *Genesis 12:2a.*
 - I will _____ thee — *Genesis 12:2b.*
 - I will ... make thy _____ great — *Genesis 12:2c.*
 - Thou shalt be a _____ — *Genesis 12:2d.*
- b. The covenant contained promises to Abraham and his *posterity*:
 - I will _____ them that bless thee — *Genesis 13:3a.*
 - I will ... _____ them that curse thee — *Genesis 12:3b.*
- c. The covenant contained a *planetary* promise to all:
 - In thee shall all _____ of the earth (Genesis 10) be _____ — *Genesis 12:3c. (Matthew 1:1,21.)*

2. The Prophecies Of The Abrahamic Covenant.

There are three promises made in the Abrahamic Covenant which are of prophetic significance:

- a. The Promise of a S_____ — *Genesis 13:16a; 15:5.*

Notice the two kinds of seeds involved here (*Genesis 22:17*):

- As the _____ of the earth — *Genesis 13:16.* This is the earthly seed, the physical descendants of Abraham. See: *Matthew 3:9; Romans 9:4-7a.*
- As the _____ in the heaven — *Genesis 15:5,6.* This is the heavenly (spiritual) seed, the faith descendants of Abraham. See: *John 8:39; Romans 4:16,17; Galatians 3:6,7,29.*

- b. The Promise of a L_____ — *Genesis 12:7; 13:15.*

- The dimensions of the land — *Genesis 15:18-21.*

From the _____ of Egypt in the south

to the

River _____ in the north

- The tenure of the land — *Genesis 17:8.*

An _____ possession

- c. The Promise of a THRONE — *Genesis 17:6c.*

3. The Permanency Of The Abrahamic Covenant.

- a. It is an _____ covenant — *Genesis 17:7,13,19; I Chronicles 16:16,17; Psalm 105:8-10.*
- b. Read: *Genesis 15:8-18.* A _____ fell upon Abram. Only the LORD passed between the pieces of the carcasses.
- c. Though this covenant was *based* on Abraham's obedience (*Genesis 22:18*), it was never conditioned upon his (or any of his descendant's) obedience.
- d. The covenant was confirmed to _____ in *Genesis 26:3-5.*

e. It was confirmed to _____ in *Genesis 28:13,14*.

There is *nothing* the nation of Israel must DO to keep this covenant in force! Therefore, if some of the provisions of this covenant have not been fulfilled, then it follows they are yet to be fulfilled.

Note: Some contend that the “land” aspect of the covenant was fulfilled during the reign of king Solomon, based on *I Kings 4:21*. While Solomon expanded Israel’s hegemony to its greatest extent, Israel never possessed this land — Solomon merely collected tribute from its inhabitants (*verse 24*). Israel’s boundaries were basically unchanged (*verse 25*).

Bible prophecies subsequent to Solomon’s reign (e.g. *Ezekiel 11:17*) still looked for the realization of the promise.

D. **THE PALESTINIAN COVENANT.**

Read: *Deuteronomy 28:1,2,15*.

This covenant enlarges upon the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the LAND. The full text of the covenant is found in *Deuteronomy 28:1–30:10*. It was given just before the nation of Israel was about to enter the promised land, which at the time was inhabited by others. This covenant deals with the conditions upon which Israel would enjoy the blessing of the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant.

1. The Provisions Of The Palestinian Covenant.

- a. According to *Deuteronomy 11:26-28*, God set before His people a _____ and a _____.
- b. Both were conditioned upon whether Israel would _____ the _____ of the LORD.
- c. The covenant anticipated Israel’s disobedience, which eventually would result in them:
 - Being _____ among all people — *Deuteronomy 28:64*.
 - Finding no _____ among the nations — *Deuteronomy 28:65*.
 - Becoming an _____, a proverb, and a _____ among the nations — *Deuteronomy 28:37*.

2. The Prophecies Of The Palestinian Covenant.

Read: *Deuteronomy 30:1-9.*

Seven major prophecies are contained in this covenant:

- a. Israel will be _____ among all the nations — *verse 1.*
- b. Israel shall _____ unto the LORD — *verse 2.*
- c. The LORD will _____ His people from all the nations — *verse 3.*
- d. The LORD will _____ Israel back into the _____ — *verse 5.*
- e. The LORD will circumcise (change) the _____ of His people to _____ Him — *verse 6.*
- f. The LORD will make Israel _____ in every work — *verse 9.*

3. The Permanency Of The Palestinian Covenant.

Although some of the provisions of this covenant have been fulfilled (the Babylonian captivity and the present diaspora), it is still in force.

- a. The covenant God made in the “days of thy _____” is called an _____ covenant in *Ezekiel 16:60.*
- b. The Old Testament prophets still looked for Israel’s future regathering “out of the _____ wherein ye are _____” — e.g. *Ezekiel 20:34.*

Israel’s disobedience to God did not forfeit their *title* to the land — just the blessings of the land. (The Lord must allow for this because He is HOLY, and His holiness cannot be set aside by any covenant, conditional or unconditional!)

E. THE DAVIDIC COVENANT.

Read: *II Samuel 7:12-16.*

This covenant enlarges upon the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the THRONE.

1. The Provisions Of The Davidic Covenant — *verse 16.*

In this verse, the Lord made three promises to king David:

- a. "Thine _____ ... shall be established for ever."
- b. "Thy _____ shall be established for ever."
- c. "Thy _____ shall be established for ever."

2. The Permanency Of The Davidic Covenant.

- a. *II Samuel 7:16* says the covenant is _____.
- b. Read: *Psalm 89:3,4,28-37*. Here, God says:
 - Thy seed will I establish _____ — *verse 4a.*
 - Thy throne to all _____ — *verse 4b.*
 - My faithfulness will not _____ — *verse 33b.*
 - My covenant will I not _____ — *verse 34.*
 - Once have I sworn by my _____ — *verse 35.*
- c. According to this Psalm, will Israel's disobedience annul the Davidic Covenant?

YES

NO

- d. Read: *Jeremiah 33:19-26*. If God should break His covenant with David, there would no longer be _____ and _____ .

Note: When God gave a similar covenant to Solomon (*I Kings 9:1-9*), it was conditional. The Lord did *not* promise that Solomon's seed would sit upon David's throne for ever. This is because His lineage would eventually be cut off (*Jeremiah 22:30; 36:30*).

In studying the lineage of Christ we see that Joseph's line comes through Solomon and the kings of Judah (*Matthew 1*), but Mary's lineage comes from David (*Luke 3*).

3. The Prosecution Of The Davidic Covenant.

- a. According to *Romans 1:3*, _____ is of the SEED of David.
Thus David's seed extends eternally.
- b. David's KINGDOM has been interrupted, as follows:
 - From David to the Captivity, a total of 20 kings reigned in unbroken succession from the throne of David in Jerusalem.

- Zedekiah was removed from the throne of David by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. (see: *Jeremiah 52:10,11*).
 - The Babylonian Captivity ushered in what *Luke 21:24b* calls the “ _____ of the _____ ” — a period when no son of David sits on the throne of David ruling Israel.
 - Following the Maccabean revolt, Jews did rule themselves for a brief period (165-63 B.C.). However the Maccabees were Levites, not of the royal tribe of Judah.
 - Since 1948, Israel has been an independent sovereign nation. However, none of its leaders — Ben Gurion, Meir, Begin, Rabin, Shamir, Netanyahu, etc. — are of David’s lineage, nor have they been divinely appointed.
- c. According to *Isaiah 9:6,7*, David’s **THRONE** will **not** be occupied again until the Prince of _____ returns. See: *Jeremiah 23:5,6; 33:14-17; Hosea 3:4,5.*
- d. According to *Luke 1:31-33*, the next ruler to sit on David’s throne will be _____ .
- e. According to *Revelation 3:21* and *Hebrews 10:12*, Jesus Christ is presently seated in His _____ ’S throne.

F. **THE NEW COVENANT.**

Read: *Jeremiah 31:31-34.*

This covenant enlarges upon the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the HEART.

1. The Promises Of The New Covenant.

- a. God’s law will be written on Israel’s _____ — *verse 33.*
- b. All Israel shall _____ God — *verse 34e.*
- c. God will _____ Israel’s iniquity and remember their _____ no _____ — *verse 34h.*
- d. God will give Israel one _____ and one _____ — *Jeremiah 32:38,39.*
- e. God will put a new _____ within His people — *Ezekiel 11:19.*

2. The Permanency Of The New Covenant.

This is an _____ covenant according to Ezekiel 37:26,27.

It is based upon the “I will” of the LORD alone. Note the five “I wills” in *Jeremiah 31:31-34*.

3. The Payment For The New Covenant.

Since the New Covenant involves the spiritual regeneration of Israel it must provide for the miracle of the individual new birth by grace through faith *in Christ*. This can only be accomplished through the blood of Christ, which has been shed — Matthew 26:27,28.

ISRAEL: A BLINDED NATION

What is the present spiritual status of Israel and Jews today?

A. NATIONAL ISRAEL REJECTED CHRIST.

1. According to *John 1:11*, “He (Christ) came unto His _____, and His own _____ Him _____.”
 2. The rejection of Christ expressed by the parable in *Luke 19:14* is:
“
— — — — — — — — — — — —
— — — — — — — — — — — — !”
 3. The chief priests answered Pilate’s question, “Shall I crucify your King?” with: “We have _____ but _____” (*John 19:15*).

Note: While Israel rejected Jesus Christ as their Saviour *nationally*, there were multitudes which believed on Him during His earthly ministry. Salvation is always an individual matter.

B. GOD HAS BLINDED ISRAEL:

1. The nation brought God's judgment upon itself when the people cried: "His _____ be upon us, and on our _____" (*Matthew 27:25*).
 2. God has given Israel the "spirit of _____," according to *Romans 11:8-10*.

3. This judgment is called “blindness in _____” — *Romans 11:25e*.
4. At this present time there is a saved Jewish _____ — *Romans 11:5*.
5. Because of Israel’s fall, _____ has come unto the _____ — *Romans 11:11b*.
6. Most Jews today are _____ of God’s righteousness, yet are trying to establish their _____ righteousness — *Romans 10:2,3*.
7. This spiritual darkness will continue until the _____ of the Gentiles be _____ in — *Romans 11:25f*.
According to *Acts 15:14-16a*, this will be until the _____ of Christ.

ISRAEL: A REGATHERED NATION

The regathering of the nation of Israel is one of the major prophetic themes of the Old Testament.

A. A DIVINE REGATHERING.

1. God will once again set His hand the _____ time to recover the _____ of His people — *Isaiah 11:11*.
2. The LORD will gather the _____ of _____ from the four _____ of the earth — *Isaiah 11:12*.
3. The LORD will cause Israel to _____ to the _____ He gave them — *Jeremiah 30:3*.

B. A DIVINE REVIVAL.

Read: *Ezekiel 37:1-14*.

1. Ezekiel’s vision was of a _____ full of _____ bones.
2. The bones represented the whole _____ of _____ (*verse 11*).

This vision is one of national resurrection!

ISRAEL: A DECEIVED NATION

Read: Daniel 9:24-27. This is one of the key prophetic passages in the Word of God. It deals with God's overall plan for Daniel's people (the Jews) from:

- the going forth of the commandment to _____ and to build _____ (Nehemiah 2, 445 B.C.) — *verse 25b.*



- Christ brings in everlasting _____ — *verse 24e.*

A. THE COMING PRINCE.

Daniel 11:26 speaks of the people of the “*prince that shall come.*” These ‘people’ (who would destroy the holy city of Jerusalem) are identified as **Rome** (which did just that in 70 A.D.). Therefore, this prince *cannot* be the Lord Jesus Christ. Elsewhere, Daniel spoke of a coming king who will one day arise out of a revived **Roman** empire (*Daniel 7:7,8,19-25; 8:23-25*). See also: *Revelation 13:1-7; 17:11-14.*

1. In *John 5:43*, Jesus spoke of one who would come in his _____ name.
2. In *I John 2:18* this person is called the _____.
3. The coming prince will be a *counterfeit* Messiah. Note the similarities:
 - a. Both come riding on a _____ — compare *Revelation 6:2* with *Revelation 19:11-16*.
 - b. The ‘Beast’ suffers a _____, yet lives again, *Revelation 13:3*.
 - c. Both are _____ P E D by men — *Revelation 13:8*. cf. *Matthew 14:33*.
 - d. Like Christ, the ‘Beast’ will do great _____ (through the False Prophet) — *Revelation 13:12-15*.
4. According to *Matthew 24:24*, the coming ‘Abomination of Desolation’ shall _____ the very _____ (the Jews).

Today, Jews are still looking for their Messiah. The prophets declare that one day, a false messiah will come — and Israel will turn to him.

B. THE COVENANT CONFIRMED.

Daniel 9:27 says this false messiah shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (seven years). The covenant in question will most likely be the Abrahamic Covenant, and especially its promise of LAND.

How the whole world will hail this “savior!” He will ride onto the world’s stage and usher in a false millennium — “— — — — , — — — — ,” when there is none, *Jeremiah 8:11*.

ISRAEL: A TROUBLED NATION

The name “Jerusalem” means “city of PEACE.” Ironically, it is a city which has known little peace during its turbulent history. And yet, what this city and the Jewish people as a whole have endured to this point is virtually *nothing* compared to what is coming!

A. THE BROKEN COVENANT.

1. According to *Daniel 9:27b*, in the _____ of the week (i.e. after 3½ years) the Antichrist will abruptly end the temple sacrifices.
2. What follows is referred to as the _____ of abominations.
3. According to *II Thessalonians 2:3,4*, at this time the man of sin will sit in the _____ of God, shewing himself that he ____ God!
4. Energized by Satan himself, the Antichrist will P_____ E the woman (Israel) — *Revelation 12:7-9,12,13; 13:8*.

B. THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

1. According to *Matthew 24:21*, the last half of Daniel’s 70TH Week will be 3½ years of _____ .
2. This will be an unprecedented _____ of _____ , according to *Daniel 12:2*.
3. Although the general population of the world will experience devastating calamities and divine judgments (as outlined in Revelation 6 through 19), according to *Jeremiah 30:7*, this horrendous period is specifically called:

“the _____ of _____ , _____ ”

4. According to *Ezekiel 22:17-22*, God will bring His people into a furnace of affliction to remove the “D _____.”
5. According to *Ezekiel 20:34-38*, the LORD will:
 - a. _____ with His people (*verses 35,36*).
 - b. Cause His people to _____ under the _____ (*verse 37*).
 - c. _____ out the rebels (*verse 38*).
6. Daniel prophesied that the Antichrist would make _____ with (*Daniel 7:21*), and _____ (Daniel 7:25) the saints — Israel.
7. Jesus spoke of the Great Tribulation being _____ for the elect’s (Israel’s) sake — *Matthew 24:22*.
8. According to *Revelation 13:6,13-16*, the Woman (Israel) will receive divine protection in the W_____.
9. By the time this ‘mega-holocaust’ ends, only one _____ of the people of Israel will have survived — *Zechariah 13:8,9*.
10. This terrible time will culminate with _____ gathered against _____ — *Zechariah 14:2*.

C. THE FAITHFUL WITNESSES.

1. The Sealed Servants Of God — *Revelation 7:3-8*.
 - a. They number _____, _____.
 - b. They are from all the _____ of Israel (*verse 4*).
 - c. They are the “_____” of redeemed Israel (*Revelation 14:4e*).
 - d. They will turn many to _____ (*Daniel 12:3*).
2. The Two Witnesses — *Revelation 11:3-12*.
 - a. They will prophesy (preach) for __, __ days (42 months or 3½ years) — the first half of Daniel’s 70TH Week.
 - b. They shall eventually be killed by the _____ (Antichrist).
 - c. After 3½ _____ they shall rise, then ascend to heaven.

Note: The identity of these two witnesses is not given. Most speculate them to be either Moses and Elijah (based on verse 6; *Matthew 16:28-17:3*; and *Malachi 4:5,6*), OR Enoch and Elijah (the only two men in the Bible who by-passed death — *Hebrews 9:27*).

ISRAEL: A SAVED NATION

Israel's salvation is anticipated by the Abrahamic Covenant and assured through the New Covenant. See: *Deuteronomy 4:30,31*.

A. The Promise Of Salvation — Romans 11.

1. “Hath God cast away His people? _____ !” (1)
2. “How much more their _____ ?” (12)
3. “What shall the _____ of them be, but life from the _____?” (15)
4. “God is _____ to _____ them in again.” (23)
5. “Blindness in part is happened to Israel, _____ the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” (25)
6. “And so all Israel shall be _____ :” (26)

B. The Plan Of Salvation.

1. God will gather all _____ against Israel — *Joel 3:2,9-13; Zechariah 14:2*. This is the culmination of the Great Tribulation, *Revelation 14:14-20*.
2. The _____ will be darkened and the _____ shall be turned to _____ — *Matthew 24:29; Joel 2:10,31; 3:15*.
3. The LORD shall return in power and great glory — *Joel 3:16a; Zechariah 14:3; Matthew 24:30; Romans 11:26; Revelation 19:11-16*.
4. God will pour out His _____ upon His people — *Joel 2:28; Zechariah 12:10a*.
5. Finally, all Israel will _____ upon Jesus, and be saved — *Zechariah 12:10b-11; 13:1,6; Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7*.

Note: Although Israel will be “born at once” (*Isaiah 66:8*), its salvation will nonetheless be on an individual basis.

ISRAEL: A GLORIOUS NATION

To this day, none of the four prophetic covenants have been completely fulfilled.

- While Israel is in Palestine today, it by no means possesses all the land promised to Abraham.
- The modern nation of Israel is a parliamentary democracy, not a kingdom.
- While some Jews have been saved down through the centuries, the nation is still in abject unbelief.

All the covenantal promises will finally be fulfilled in the Millennial kingdom of Christ — *Isaiah 11:1-10*.

A. A GLORIOUS LAND.

See: *Obadiah 17-20.*

1. Its NORTHERN border is _____ — *Ezekiel 48:1* (a place about 100 miles north of Damascus).
2. Its SOUTHERN border is to the _____ [of Egypt] — *Ezekiel 48:28*.
3. It will be “_____ for _____” — *Psalm 48:2*.
4. Living _____ shall flow out from Jerusalem — *Zechariah 14:8*. (See: *Ezekiel 47:1,2,7-12.*)

B. A GLORIOUS KINGDOM.

1. Its CAPITAL will be _____ — *Isaiah 2:2,3; Micah 4:1,2; Zechariah 8:3.*
2. Its KING will be the _____ — *Zechariah 14:9; Isaiah 9:6,7; 33:22; Jeremiah 33:15,16.*
3. The Lord’s apostles will serve as _____ — *Matthew 19:28; Isaiah 1:26.*

Note: Jerusalem will be called:

- The city of _____ — *Isaiah 1:26d.*
- The _____ city — *Isaiah 1:26e.*
- The _____ is _____ — *Ezekiel 48:35.*
- The city of the _____ — *Isaiah 60:14e.*
- The _____ of the Holy _____ of Israel — *Isaiah 60:14.*
- _____ — *Isaiah 62:4.*
- _____ — *Isaiah 62:12.*

C. A GLORIOUS PEOPLE.

1. The _____ [Israel] shall _____ the kingdom — *Daniel 7:18,22,27.*
2. The _____ of Israel shall _____ upon the LORD — *Isaiah 10:20.*
3. They shall be _____ nation — *Ezekiel 37:22.*

D. A GLORIOUS WORSHIP.

1. Christ shall build a _____ — *Zechariah 6:12,13.* The details and dimensions of this magnificent structure are given in *Ezekiel 40–44.*
2. A great _____ will be erected — *Ezekiel 43:13-17.* The continual blood sacrifices will be memorial rather than anticipatory, serving to remind men of the CAUSE of the millennial peace and righteousness — that the cause will be praised more than the effect!
3. The _____ will go up annually to _____ the _____ — *Zechariah 14:16.*
4. Truly, this is the _____ which the LORD hath _____ — *Psalm 118:24.*

J Judging and Discerning

Lesson Commenced: _____ Lesson Checked: _____

Probably no other single statement in Scripture has been cast in the teeth of Bible-believers more than: “Judge Not!” Whenever an open Biblical stand against wrong-doing is taken, someone will probably berate us by saying it is not our place to judge, or that we have no right to judge — particularly when it comes to matters of morality and immorality (in which case a second out-of-context, and usually misquoted, statement often follows: “He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone!”). We are accused of being ‘unloving.’ We are told to keep ‘our’ opinions to ourselves.

Yet the questions, “Is it right to judge?” and, if so, “When is it right to judge?” have perplexed numerous believers — many of whom have been browbeaten into silence when they have a duty to speak out.

The subject of judging and discerning is one of **balance**. As with most teachings in the Word of God there are extremes on both sides; truth is found at the center (in the pages of holy Scripture). As always, **context** is important. Those who [themselves judgmentally] quote just a part of *Matthew 7:1* and *John 8:7* against Bible-believing Christians effectively make the Bible to teach the exact opposite of what it does teach!

It is foolish to think that a Christian has no business exercising judgment over various matters or even other people — as the following examples demonstrate:

- In *Luke 7:43* we read of the Lord Jesus Christ commanding Simon the Pharisee for judging _____.
- In *I Corinthians 5:3*, we read of the apostle Paul passing judgment even though he was _____ in body.
- Paul challenged the members of the church at Corinth to judge him in “what I _____” — *I Corinthians 10:15*.
- According to *I Corinthians 2:15*, he that is _____ judgeth _____ things.

It is not so much a question of whether it is right to judge, but “What are we to judge?” and “How are we to judge?” These are the concerns of this study.

PRINCIPLED JUDGMENT

The verb “to judge” is translated from the Greek word ‘krino’ (from whence we get our words ‘critic,’ ‘criticize,’ ‘crisis,’ etc.). Its meaning ranges in intensity and Biblical usage from “to discern” all the way to “to condemn” — in other words, there are different forms of judging, and there is both a good and a bad kind of judgment.

This fact is seen in *John 7:24*, where the Lord speaks of right and wrong judging:

“JUDGE ____ according to the appearance,
____ JUDGE righteous judgment.”

The question is: How then can we judge rightly?

Answer: By observing the following principles:

A. **The Principle Of RIGHT MOTIVE:**

Read: *Matthew 7:1-5*.

Although the so-called Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 5-7*) was given specifically to Christ’s disciples (see: *Matthew 5:1,2*):

1. The **context** of this particular passage shows that Jesus was referring to the kind of judging which is ____ I C A L in attitude (*verse 5a*).
 - This word was originally used in the ancient Greek theater of an actor who displayed another identity (*rôle*) by covering his face with a mask (hence the term “two-faced!”).
 - Judging others in this manner only serves to C____ oneself (see: *Romans 2:1,3*).
2. The **contrast** given is between the ____ (a tiny speck of sawdust) and the ____ (plank) — *verse 3*.
 - The judging our Lord referred to here is the nit-picking, negative, hypercritical, fault-seeking kind. It is the criticism of others without consideration of their feelings; it is pointing out all that is wrong while ignoring what may be right; it is characterized by an attitude of superiority.
 - In *II Samuel 12:1-7*, king David displayed great ____ (*verse 5*) and indignation over a wealthy thief at the time he was covering up his own sins of adultery and murder!!
3. The **conclusion** (and command) is that we “judge ____” with this wrong kind of attitude or motive — *verse 1a*.

- Read: *Acts 18:24-26&c.* What might have happened to Apollos had Aquila and Priscilla been critical and judgmental of his Bible ignorance?
- Don't be a _____ : be a steppingstone! (*Romans 14:10,13*).

B. The Principle Of METE & MEASURE:

See: *Matthew 7:2*. This is the principle of sowing and reaping in action.

Some Rabbis taught that God had two measures with which He judged men: the measure of Justice and the measure of Mercy. Perhaps the Lord was alluding to this commonly held belief here. Regardless:

1. We shall receive the same _____ in **quality** (*verse 2a*).
 - From those superior to us (employers, magistrates, etc.).
 - From those we have influenced (our children, young converts, etc.).
 - Ultimately from God the Judge.
2. We shall receive the same _____ in **quantity** (*verse 2b*).
 - If you can “mete it out” you’d better be able to take it!

C. The Principle Of SELF SEARCHING:

See: *Matthew 7:5*. We should major on “fault fixing” rather than “fault finding!”

1. Take care of your own ‘beam’ _____ — *verse 5a*.
2. Make sure you are able to see things _____ — *verse 5b*.
3. When seeking to help a brother overtaken in a _____, one should first C_____ oneself — *Galatians 6:1*.

D. The Principle Of LIMITED INSIGHT:

1. Judgment based solely on the outward _____ of people doesn’t produce _____ judgment (*John 7:24*).
2. Read: *I Samuel 16:1-12*. According to *verse 7b*, a man cannot see into the _____ of another person.
 - Samuel based his judgment of _____ as God’s choice on his C_____ and H_____ (*verses 6,7a*).

- The absence of young David from such an auspicious occasion as a visit from the man of God (cf. *verse 4*) shows his father Jesse apparently judged David to be of lesser importance than his brothers.
 - The attitude of David's eldest brother toward him is seen from *I Samuel 17:28*.
 - While David indeed possessed a striking countenance (*I Samuel 16:12*), God was impressed with his _____ — *Acts 13:22*.
3. Read: *I Corinthians 4:1-5*. According to *verse 5b*, only the Lord can see the _____ (motives) of the _____.

We can judge a man's words and deeds...

BUT

...we cannot — **MUST NOT** — judge his heart or motives!

4. According to *II Timothy 2:19b*, [only] the _____ knoweth them that are _____. We really cannot judge with absolute certainty whether a man is truly saved or not. For example:
- No one suspected _____ of being lost (*John 13:21-29*).
 - No one would have thought _____ was saved (*Matthew 26:69-74*).
 - We can only make an assessment of a man's spiritual condition by looking at his _____ — *Matthew 7:18,20*. (However, *verses 21-23!!*)

E. **The Principle Of WISE DISCERNMENT:**

While the Lord Jesus Christ warned His disciples about being judgmental and hypocritical, He also taught them to exercise some common sense discernment in *Matthew 7:6*. This principle balances the first five verses of the chapter.

1. In Scripture the _____ is an unclean animal (*Deuteronomy 23:18*), a scavenger governed by its carnal appetite (*Exodus 22:31; I Kings 14:11; Psalm 59:6,14,15*), and symbolic of false teachers (see: *Isaiah 56:10,11; Philippians 3:2; Proverbs 26:11*) and the unregenerate (*Revelation 22:15*).
2. Likewise _____ are unclean (*Leviticus 7:11*) and love to wallow in the mire, also typifying the unregenerate professor (*II Peter 2:19-22*).

3. This scripture teaches that we ought to exercise discernment as to a man's true spiritual condition. (Don't try to make a deacon out of a dog, or a preacher out of a pig!!) See also: *Proverbs 11:22.*

F. The Principle Of ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY:

All human judgment must be based on the Word of God.

1. According to *Psalm 19:9*, the judgments of the LORD are _____ and _____ altogether.
2. According to *Psalm 119:160*, every one of God's true and righteous judgments _____ forever.
3. The consistent _____ of the Word of God will enable a believer to _____ both _____ and _____ (*Hebrews 5:14*).
4. According to *I Corinthians 2:14-16*, the things of the Spirit of God (God's Word) are discerned _____ (verse 14), so that the spiritual man is able to _____ all things (verse 15). In God's Holy Word we have the _____ of _____ (verse 16).

PATTERNEDE JUDGMENT

If and when we do exercise judgment, we ought to judge as God does.

A. GOD IS:

1. The Judge of all the _____ — *Genesis 18:25*.
2. The Judge of the _____ [living] and the _____ — *Acts 10:42; I Peter 4:5*.
3. The Judge of _____ — *Hebrews 12:23*.

B. GOD'S JUDGMENTS ARE:

1. _____ — *Genesis 18:25*.
2. _____ — *Psalm 9:8*.
3. _____ — *John 5:30*.

4. _____ —John 8:16; Romans 2:2.

PERMITTED JUDGMENT

There are some areas and matters in which we are allowed (yes, even required) to exercise judgment and discernment. (In doing so, we must follow the above-mentioned principles.)

A. Judgment Of SELF:

1. Read: *I Corinthians 11:20,28-32.*
 - a. We must judge ourselves before partaking of the _____ , _____ .
 - b. Failure to do this will bring the _____ I N G of the Lord upon us.
 - c. Our prayer should be “_____ me, O God, and know my _____ ...” —*Psalm 139:23,24*. See also: *Psalm 26:2*.
 - d. Our method should be to look into the _____ (*James 1:23-25*) which is likened to a _____ [mirror], *verse 23*.
2. Read: *II Corinthians 13:5.*
 - a. We are to _____ ourselves to be sure we are “in the _____” (i.e. holding fast sound doctrine —*Ephesians 4:5; Titus 2:7*).
 - b. We are to _____ our own selves, meaning we should continually be measuring our faith and practice against the Word of God. See also: *Galatians 6:4a*.
3. Read: *I Thessalonians 5:21.* We are instructed to _____ all things in order to _____ to that which is good.
 - This proving is done according to *Acts 17:11*.

B. Judgments By SELF:

1. According to *I Corinthians 14:29*, _____ who speak (preach) should be judged. Since the completion of the New Testament in apostolic days, this practice is now done by listening to a preacher with an open Bible on one's lap!!

- Some judgments are made on the basis of common sense and natural observation — e.g. *I Corinthians 11:13,14*.

C. Judgment By The CHURCH:

- According to *I Corinthians 1:10*, meaningful church unity is achieved when members are perfectly joined together in the same _____ and in the same _____. This means that church members all need to be on the “same page” (Biblically).
- Philippians 1:9,10* teaches that real Christian _____ will abound in _____ and in all _____.

The Lord has given His churches authority to make Biblical judgments in matters pertaining to:

1. DISCIPLINE — I Corinthians 5.

- The sin of a certain member of the Church at Corinth was of “common _____” (*verse 1*) — i.e. a public offense.
- Paul (who was not a member) had _____ already (*verse 3*) as far as what needed to be done.
- The church was instructed to gather _____ (*verse 4b*).
- The church had the _____ (authority) of the Lord Jesus Christ to act in this matter (*verse 4d*).
- The Lord’s churches have divine authority to judge “them that are _____” — *verse 12b* (i.e. members).
- Churches are to _____ from themselves sinning members (*verse 13b*), and not to _____ company with such people afterwards (*verse 11*).
- According to *Matthew 18:17*, the ultimate authority in Church disciplinary matters is the _____.

Note: Unlike the “excommunication” practiced by the Roman Catholic ‘Church’ and other cults, scriptural church discipline does not claim to invoke the loss of one’s salvation. *I Corinthians 5:5* makes it clear that the ‘worst case scenario’ for an unrepentant sinning church member is physical death (at Satan’s hand by

God's permission), "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

From the church's perspective, the act of exclusion removes a sinning member from the fellowship, privileges, and rights of church membership.

2. DISPUTES — *I Corinthians 6:1-8.*

This passage deals with interpersonal strife between members of a church over matters which are not related to personal offenses (*Matthew 18:15-17*), heresy (*Titus 3:10*), or morality (*I Corinthians 5*).

- a. The wrong course — church members going to _____ with church members (*verses 1,6*).
- b. The right course — set them to _____ who are the least _____ in the _____ (*verse 4*).
- c. The best course — it is better to take _____ than allow dishonor to come upon the Lord and His church (*verse 7*).

Think what it would mean to the testimony of the Lord if His churches followed this practice to settle disputes between husbands and wives!!

3. DEACONS — *I Timothy 3:10.*

A deacon should first be _____.

A study of the qualifications of both bishops (elders, pastors) and deacons in *I Timothy 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9* shows the need for examination and close scrutiny (judgment) of any man being considered for a church office. See: *I Timothy 5:22a*.

4. DECEIVERS.

- a. The church at Ephesus _____ false apostles (*Revelation 2:2e*).
- b. We are commanded to _____ (i.e. put on trial, not "sample") the spirits as to whether they are of _____ (*I John 4:1*).
- c. If a preacher or teacher speaks not according to God's Word it is because "there is _____ in them" (*Isaiah 8:20*).

See: *I Timothy 6:3-5.*

PROHIBITED JUDGMENT

There are some areas and matters in which we ought not exercise any judgment at all.

A. OVER PERSONS — *James 2:1-6.*

1. We should never judge between people based on _____

2. Partiality makes us _____ of [with] _____ thoughts
(verse 4).
3. God calls _____ of persons _____ (verse 9).

B. OVER PREFERENCES — *Romans 14.*

Preferences have to do with things neither proscribed nor prescribed in the Bible by precept or principle — areas of personal liberty and conscience. Romans 14 and I Corinthians 8 deal with this subject.

Note the following:

1. A Sound Rule For Church Membership — *Romans 14:1.*
 - a. Receive into membership those who are _____ in the faith.
 - b. Don't receive those seeking to stir up doubtful (i.e. not-of-faith — verse 23) _____.
2. A Right Attitude Toward Other Members Holding Different Preferences:
 - a. Do not D _____ them — *Romans 14:3a.*
 - b. Do not J _____ them — *Romans 14:3b,4.*
 - c. Do not _____ them at _____ — *Romans 14:10.*
 - d. Do not cause them to S _____ — *Romans 14:13b.*
 - e. Do not D _____ them — *Romans 14:15a.*
 - f. Do not O _____ them — *Romans 14:21.*
 - g. Do not W _____ them — *I Corinthians 8:12.*

3. Preferences Outside The Scope Of Personal Judgment.

- a. Diet — *Romans 14:2*.
- b. Days — *Romans 14:6; Colossians 2:16,17*.

Note: Liberty in these matters should never be used to justify ignoring the feelings of others (*I Corinthians 8:9*), or to sin (*I Peter 2:16*).

4. The Right Approach For Every Church Member.

- a. Live your life unto the _____ (*Romans 14:6-8*).
 - b. Follow those things which make for _____ in the church (*Romans 14:19*).
 - c. Bear the _____ of the weak (*Romans 15:1a*).
 - d. Don't seek to _____ yourself (*Romans 15:1b*).
 - e. Seek the W _____ (best) of others (*I Corinthians 10:24*).
- Remember, when we wrongly judge our brothers and sisters in Christ we are judging the royal ____ — *James 4:11,12; 2:8*.
 - Remember, one day every one of us must give an _____ of ourselves to God — *Romans 14:10c-12; II Corinthians 5:10; I Corinthians 3:13-15; 4:5*.

K The Kingdom of God

Lesson Commenced: _____ Lesson Checked: _____

The doctrine of the “kingdom of God” is a major theme of the New Testament. Unfortunately, an historical misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and/or misapplication of this doctrine has led to some of the gravest errors in Christendom — errors which pervade the thinking of many believers to this day.

A careful study of what the Bible teaches concerning the “kingdom of God” is necessary to a proper understanding of the doctrine of the Church and, to a great extent, the doctrine of Salvation.

WHAT IS THE “KINGDOM OF GOD?”

The word “kingdom” is defined as: “the power or authority of a king; a realm or a domain over which this extends.”

Therefore, the “kingdom of God” is both the “rule of God” and the “extent of His rule.”

A. Other Names For The Kingdom Of God.

1. The kingdom of _____ and of _____ — *Ephesians 5:5.*
Compare this scripture with *I Corinthians 6:9,10* and *Galatians 5:21.*
2. The kingdom of _____ — *Colossians 1:13.*
3. The _____ kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ — *II Peter 1:11.*

B. The Kingdom Of God & The Kingdom Of Heaven.

The term “kingdom of heaven” is peculiar to the Gospel according to Matthew. For this reason some distinguish it from the kingdom of God, teaching it to be the earthly rule of God — thereby encompassing both good and bad elements.

The question is: Is this justified?

The way to answer this is by comparing scriptures to see if there are any differences and, if so, what those differences might be.

Read and compare:

<i>Matthew 4:17</i>	<i>Mark 1:14,15</i>	<i>Luke 4:43,44</i>
<i>Matthew 5:3</i>		<i>Luke 6:20</i>
<i>Matthew 8:11</i>		<i>Luke 13:28,29</i>
<i>Matthew 10:7</i>		<i>Luke 9:2</i>
<i>Matthew 11:11</i>		<i>Luke 7:28</i>
<i>Matthew 11:12</i>		<i>Luke 16:16</i>
<i>Matthew 13:31</i>	<i>Mark 4:30,31</i>	<i>Luke 13:18,19</i>
<i>Matthew 13:33</i>		<i>Luke 13:20,21</i>
<i>Matthew 18:3,4</i>	<i>Mark 10:15</i>	<i>Luke 18:17</i>
<i>Matthew 19:14</i>	<i>Mark 10:14</i>	<i>Luke 18:16</i>
<i>Matthew 19:23</i>	<i>Mark 10:23,24</i>	<i>Luke 18:24</i>

Conclusion: The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are:

- Different
- The Same

WHO BELONGS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

If the Kingdom of God is the rule and realm of God, who or what are His subjects? The answer becomes apparent when we consider the following:

A. The Kingdom Of God Must Be ENTERED.

There are sixteen New Testament references to “entering” God’s kingdom.

1. Requirements For Entrance:

- a. A _____ which exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees — *Matthew 5:20*. How? See: *Romans 3:22; 10:4; I Corinthians 1:30; Philippians 3:9*.
- b. Doing the _____ of the _____ — *Matthew 7:21*. What? See: *John 6:40; II Peter 3:9*.
- c. Must be _____ — *Matthew 18:3*.
- d. Must be _____ — *John 3:5,7*.
- e. Must be _____ from the power of darkness — *Colossians 1:13*.

2. Hindrances To Entrance:

- a. Trusting in _____ — *Matthew 19:23,24; Mark 10:23-25; Luke 18:24,25.*
- b. Religion — *Matthew 23:13.* (Read the entire chapter.)
- c. Sin — *Mark 9:47.* cf. *Matthew 5:29,30.*
- d. Pride — *Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17.* cf. *Matthew 5:3.*

The Kingdom of God is a **spiritual** kingdom. Every believer enters the Kingdom at the instant of regeneration.

B. The Kingdom Of God Must Be RECEIVED.

1. As [like] a _____ — *Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17.*
2. A kingdom which cannot be _____ — *Hebrews 12:28.*

The Kingdom of God is a **voluntary** kingdom. No coercion is applied (as is often the case in the kingdoms of men).

C. The Kingdom Of God Is AT HAND.

1. Preached by _____ — *Matthew 3:2.*
2. Preached by _____ — *Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14,15.*
3. Preached by the twelve _____ — *Matthew 10:5,7.*
4. It is _____ unto men — *Luke 10:9,11.*

The Kingdom of God is a **convenient** kingdom. It requires no long journey to reach it, no life-long quest to find it. It has no ‘closed borders.’ It is near to all who seek it — *Mark 12:34; Luke 11:20.*

D. The Kingdom Of God Must Be INHERITED.

See: *I Corinthians 6:9,10; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5.*

This means the Kingdom of God is not anyone’s by right or natural birth.

1. The _____ shall NOT inherit the kingdom of God — *I Corinthians 6:9.*

2. Only those who are W_____ , S_____ I E D, and J_____ I E D will inherit the Kingdom — *I Corinthians 6:11*.

E. The Kingdom Of God Comprises People Of FAITH.

Read: *Matthew 8:10-12; Luke 13:23-30.*

1. There will be _____ who will come into the kingdom of God to join _____, _____, _____, and all the _____ — *Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:28.*
2. Jesus marvelled at the centurion's great _____ — *Matthew 8:10.*
3. The “_____ of the kingdom” shall be _____ out (*Matthew 8:12*) or _____ out (*Luke 13:28g*).
 - a. Jesus was referring to His own — *John 1:11,12.*
 - b. The nation of Israel had all the opportunities (*Luke 13:26*), but so many had missed the one necessary thing (*Luke 13:27*).

Note: The Kingdom of God is unassailable — it cannot be entered any other way than through the strait gate. In *Matthew 11:12* Jesus said, “*the violent take it by force,*” and in *Luke 16:16*, “*every man presseth into it.*” The words ‘violent’ and ‘press’ are translated from the same Greek word (‘*bazio*’) and refer to the vain attempts of the self-righteous to force their way into God’s kingdom — *Luke 16:14,15.*

F. The Kingdom Of God Embraces Christian Service.

1. Look up: *Matthew 10:7; Mark 1:14,15; Luke 9:2,60; Acts 8:12; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23,24,31.* It is to be the subject of our P_____ IN G.
2. We are to be “F E L L O W _____” unto the kingdom of God (*Colossians 4:11*).
3. According to *Luke 9:57-62*, we must be totally committed to Jesus Christ. We cannot look _____.

Note: A ploughman could only produce straight furrows my setting his sights on some far-distant landmark and heading for it. If he continually looked back (to see how he was doing), he would plow all over the place! See: *Philippians 3:13,14.*

WHERE IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

Earthly kingdoms have discernible locality, dimensions, borders, etc. (e.g. *I Kings 4:21,24,25*). But what of the Kingdom of God? Where is it? What are its borders?

A. The Kingdom Of God Is INTANGIBLE:

1. It is not come with _____ (*Luke 17:20*), meaning you cannot see it.
2. It is not “Lo _____! or Lo _____!” (*Luke 17:21*).
3. It is not in word, but in _____ — *I Corinthians 4:20*. This is explained by *I Thessalonians 1:5*.
4. It is not _____ (*John 18:36*) — i.e. it is not a political kingdom. The sword was never shaped for the hand of the Lord’s churches: God’s work is to be done only with the “sword of the Spirit” (*Ephesians 6:17b; Hebrews 4:12*).
5. It is nevertheless a kingdom which brings real, tangible suffering to its subjects (*II Thessalonians 1:5; Revelation 1:9*):
 - _____ ION for righteousness’ sake (*Matthew 5:10*).
 - Entered through much _____ ION (*Acts 14:22*).

B. The Kingdom Of God Is INVISIBLE:

1. It is _____ (*Luke 17:21g*). Like the wind (*John 3:8*), the Kingdom of God is manifested only in the fruit resulting from the miracle of regeneration.
2. Look up: Romans 14:17. The Kingdom of God is not _____ and _____ (visible, tangible things), but:
 - _____ .
 - _____ .
 - _____ .(All intangible, invisible realities)

WHEN WILL THE KINGDOM OF GOD “COME”?

In the model prayer (*Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4*), Jesus taught His disciples (and us) to pray: “**Thy kingdom come.**” What does this mean? How does it line up with scriptures such as:

- *Matthew 12:28* — “...the kingdom of God is come unto you.”
- *Mark 9:1* — “There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”
- *Luke 10:11* — “...be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.”

The answer is that the kingdom of God has “**phases**” or various manifestations. There are three distinct phases taught in the New Testament:

A. The Present Phase:

1. This is the spiritual, invisible, intangible, universal realm of the redeemed.
2. Thus in *Matthew 12:28*, this phase has indeed come — as attested by the power of God in Christ _____ I N G out _____ (*Luke 11:20*).
3. The preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom began with _____ the _____ (*Luke 16:16; Matthew 3:2; 11:12*).
4. Whenever and wherever the Gospel is preached, the kingdom of God is brought _____ to people — *Luke 10:8-11*.

B. The Prospective Phase:

1. This is the time when God’s _____ is done in _____ as it is in ____ — *Matthew 6:10*.
2. This is the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
 - a. When the King of Kings shall rule over the earth with a _____ of _____ — *Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15*.
 - b. The age of universal P _____, J _____, and J _____ — *Isaiah 9:7*.

- c. An age of universal W _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ (*Zechariah 14:16*).
 - d. An age of universal K _____ of the LORD (*Isaiah 11:9*).
 - e. An age when mankind shall not learn _____ any more (*Micah 4:3*).
 - f. An age which lasts for a _____ years, during which _____ shall be bound (*Revelation 20:1-7*).
3. This is the phase of God's kingdom _____, _____, and _____ were permitted to see in preview when Jesus Christ was gloriously _____ before them — *Mark 9:1-7*.
See also: *II Peter 1:16,17*.
4. It is the phase of the Kingdom of God when the Lord Jesus will once again sit down to _____ and _____ with His Church — *Luke 22:16-18; Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25*.
5. It is the visible kingdom that many of _____ thought would be ushered in at the first advent of Christ — *Luke 19:11*.
- Note:** The Lord Jesus Christ did not offer the [millennial] kingdom at His first coming (and then at some point in His earthly ministry change plans because of rejection by Israel). Like many dispensationalists today, these Jews missed the **two-fold** message of the prophets — that Christ should first suffer to bring salvation (*Acts 3:18,19a*), and then return the second time to bring in the “restitution of all things” (*Acts 3:19b-21*).
6. It is the restored “kingdom to _____” inquired about by the Lord’s church in *Acts 1:6*. See: *Isaiah 9:6,7; Jeremiah 23:5,6*.
- Note:** This question should be set against *Acts 1:3*. Jesus had been teaching His church about the kingdom of God for forty days. The fact of the question and the Lord’s answer demonstrate a distinction between the kingdom of God NOW and its coming phase (in the father’s own time).
7. It is the kingdom which will ‘come’ at Christ’s _____ (His second advent) — *II Timothy 4:1*. See also: *Revelation 12:10*.
- Note:** The expression, “Now is come salvation,...and the kingdom” found in *Revelation 12:10* illustrates the concept of phases.

Salvation is the present possession of each believer, but there is also a sense in which it is prospective — *Hebrews 9:28*. In the same way, every believer is [now] **in** the kingdom of God, yet the full manifestation of that kingdom is still future.

C. **The Perpetual Phase:**

1. This is the _____ Kingdom — *II Timothy 4:18*.
2. The Millennial [earthly] kingdom will end with _____ being loosed to lead mankind's final rebellion against God — *Revelation 20:7-9*.
3. After Jesus has put down all _____, _____, and _____, He will then deliver up the kingdom to _____ the _____ — *I Corinthians 15:24-28*.

Note: Regardless of which ‘phase’ of the Kingdom of God one may be considering, the entrance requirement is the same: salvation by grace through faith in Christ!

The Kingdom of God is the Rule of God

NOW: in the hearts of willing subjects (i.e. believers)
[universal, invisible]

SOON: over the nations of the whole earth
[universal, visible]

THE KINGDOM, THE FAMILY, AND THE CHURCH OF GOD

A careful study of *Ephesians 2:19-22* reveals three distinct spiritual entities involving saved people:

- *verse 19* — “ye are ... _____ with the saints”
AND
- *verse 19* — “ye are ... of the _____ of God”
AND
- *verses 20-22* — “are built ... unto an holy _____ in the Lord.”

Citizens belong to a kingdom; a household suggests a family; and the temple is a metaphor for a New Testament church — *I Corinthians 3:9,10,16; I Timothy 3:15*.

While these entities are closely related, they are distinguished in the Word of God.

A. **The Kingdom Of God:**

As seen above, this is the rule of God in the hearts of willing subjects [believers].

Jesus was rightfully called “King” by His disciples (*Luke 19:37-40*) because they were His subjects. Contrast this with *Luke 19:14*.

Note: The idea that the rejoicing multitudes of ‘Palm Saturday’ became the bloodthirsty crowd crying out to Pilate “crucify him! crucify him!” is not supported by Scripture.

The kingdom of God is apparently earthly in its sphere.

B. **The Family Of God:**

1. Look up: *Ephesians 3:15*. The family of God consists of all the saved in _____ and _____.
2. Believers are the _____ of God — *Ephesians 1:5; 5:1; John 1:12*.
3. God is our _____ — *Ephesians 1:2; 4:6*.

C. **The Church Of God:**

A New Testament Church is “an organized assembly of baptized believers.”

1. **The Church And The Kingdom CONTRASTED:**

Observe some of the differences:

<u>THE KINGDOM</u>	<u>THE CHURCH</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Universal	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
<input type="checkbox"/> Invisible	<input type="checkbox"/> Visible
<input type="checkbox"/> No organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Organized
<input type="checkbox"/> Entered through regeneration	<input type="checkbox"/> Entered through baptism
<input type="checkbox"/> One Kingdom	<input type="checkbox"/> Many churches
<input type="checkbox"/> Theocracy	<input type="checkbox"/> Qualified democracy
<input type="checkbox"/> No officers	<input type="checkbox"/> Pastors & deacons
<input type="checkbox"/> No ordinances	<input type="checkbox"/> Baptism & The Lord’s Supper
<input type="checkbox"/> No earthly discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> Church exercises discipline

Failure to distinguish between the “kingdom” and the “church” leads directly to the universal ‘Church’ heresy.

Cyprian (200-258 A.D.), the ‘bishop’ of Carthage, was first to promote the “ONE true universal ‘Church’” error. The so-called conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine I in 311 A.D., and his subsequent elevation of Christianity to the status of the official religion of the empire made it a reality. Augustine’s (354-430 A.D.) formulation of it into doctrine then produced the Roman Catholic (universal, visible) ‘Church.’

Medieval Catholic scholars taught there was no salvation, except IN the ‘Church.’ They said there could be no service to God, except TO the ‘Church.’ They declared there could be no subjection of peoples and nations, except BY the ‘Church.’

The Protestant reformers merely changed the Catholic concept of the ‘Church’ into a universal **invisible** one.

2. The Church And The Kingdom In COLLABORATION.

While a Church and the Kingdom are not the same, there is nevertheless a vital interrelation between the two. A New Testament Church is the visible, audible, tangible manifestation of the invisible, inaudible, intangible Kingdom.

According to *Matthew 16:19*, Christ gave the _____ of the kingdom of heaven to His Church (the antecedent of *verse 18*).

Keys symbolize two things: authority and assignment.

- a. The authority of a church to make binding decisions in matters concerning the lives of kingdom subjects is seen in *Matthew 18:17,18*.
- b. The assignment of a key is to lock or unlock. What is the key which unlocks the door to the kingdom?? Surely it is the Gospel! The commission of unlocking the door of salvation through the application of the Gospel is given in *John 20:23*.

Every Bible-believing Baptist Church is designed to be a “recruiting agency” for the kingdom!

THE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

The kingdom of God has _____ according to *Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11, and Luke 8:10.*

A ‘mystery’ is defined by *Romans 16:25,26* as a truth not revealed in the Old Testament but which has been revealed in the New Testament.

These mysteries are given in the parables of the kingdom, found chiefly in the Gospel according to Matthew, but also in Mark and Luke. See: *Matthew 13:10-17; Mark 4:10-13; Luke 8:10.* The truth not explicitly revealed in the Old Testament (*Matthew 13:17,34,35*) was the spiritual nature of God’s kingdom, the requirement that its subjects be born again (*Matthew 13:16*).

The Old Testament prophets foretold the glorious earthly Millennial kingdom of Christ; the present invisible, intangible form was the mystery. The true kingdom of God is not seen in an outward form but in the hearts of men, and only God knows His true subjects.

In these parables the key word is “*like*.” They describe the perceived appearance or manifestation of the kingdom of God during the course of the present age. One of the major themes in these parables of the kingdom is that there are within the kingdom of heaven **two spheres** — the sphere of (religious) **profession** and the sphere of (regenerate) **possession**.

A. The Necessity Of REGENERATION In The Kingdom:

1. The Parable of the Four Soils — *Matthew 13:3-9,18-23.*
 - a. The seed is the _____ of the kingdom.
 - b. The _____ pictures those who don’t understand.
 - c. The _____ represent a shallow, emotional hearing of the Word.
 - d. The thorny ground pictures the hearer who is C_____D out by cares and riches, becoming _____ F U L.
 - e. The _____ represents the hearer who brings forth much _____.
2. The Parable of the _____ and the hired _____ — *Matthew 20:1-16.*
3. The Parable of the M _____ — *Matthew 22:1-14.*
4. The Parable of the _____ — *Matthew 25:1-13.*

3. The Parable of the Cast _____ — *Mark 4:26-29.*

B. The TRUE And The FALSE Kingdoms:

1. The Parable of the Tares Among The Wheat — *Matthew 13:24-30,36-43.*

Tares were a noxious weed which looked like wheat. The thrust of this parable is that within the kingdom of God there is the *counterfeit* ‘look-alike’ kingdom.

In this case...

- a. The good seed are the _____ of the kingdom (i.e. the saved).
- b. The tares represent the children of the _____ one.
- c. Both wheat and tares will grow _____ until the harvest, which is at the _____ of the _____.

Note: God’s judgment upon professing Christendom cannot take place while ‘wheat’ is still present (*Matthew 13:29*). Christians will not pass through Daniel’s 70TH Week and the Great Tribulation! See: *I Thessalonians 5:9; Revelation 3:10.*

2. The Parable of the _____ — *Matthew 13:47-50.*
3. The Parable of the _____ — *Matthew 13:31,32; Mark 4:30-32; Luke 13:20,21.*
4. The Parable of the Hid _____ — *Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:18,19.*

Note: These last two parables speak of the abnormal growth of the *counterfeit* kingdom. Leaven symbolizes sin or false teaching. (See: *Matthew 16:6,11; I Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 5:9.*)

D. The BLESSINGS Of Kingdom Truth:

1. The Parable of the Hid _____ — *Matthew 13:44.*
2. The Parable of the _____ of great _____ — *Matthew 13:45,46.*

L Liberty, Legalism, & License

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Godless humanism and the philosophy of moral relativism have worked to produce a strange concept of freedom in the minds of many today. It is a freedom to do whatever one wishes to do (provided, of course, it doesn't infringe on any rights of others!). Indeed, the last one-third of the 20TH century has witnessed the "rights" movement: civil rights, worker's rights, women's rights, children's rights, 'gay' rights, patient's rights — you name it! It seems just about everyone is clamoring for *their* rights.

Regrettably, this kind of thinking has also permeated Christian proprieties. Real liberty is being supplanted by an increasing resistance to Biblical standards and a man-centered goal of unrestricted personal enjoyment and fulfillment. Preaching has become more and more non-directive. As a result, much Christian conduct has sunk to the level of the world.

Baptists who preach against sins and who dare declare (and practice) what the Bible says Christians ought and ought not to do are often labeled as "legalists." They are accused of robbing people of their joy by imposing on them their lists of "do's" and "don'ts."

Galatians 5:1 is undoubtedly the pivotal scripture here:

"Stand fast in the _____ wherewith Christ hath
made us _____, and be not _____
again with the yoke of _____."

Interpreting this verse (and its context) will go a long way toward understanding what Christian liberty really is — as well as legalism, the true and the false.

THE BLESSING OF LIBERTY

Does liberty or freedom mean we have the right to do *anything*? Are there restraints to freedom? The Bible teaches there are TWO SIDES OF LIBERTY:

- Freedom **FROM** — a release
and
- Freedom **TO** — a responsibility

A. WE ARE SET FREE FROM SIN BY CHRIST:

1. The Servitude Of The Sinner:

- a. Read: *John 8:32-34*. Whoever _____ S sin is the _____ of sin.
- b. According to *Hebrews 2:14,15*, mankind is subject to bondage through the _____ of _____. (See: *Romans 6:23a; Revelation 20:14,15*.)
- c. The Law puts man under the _____ — *Galatians 3:10*.
- d. Offending in just _____ point of God's holy Law makes a man _____ of all — *James 2:10*.

2. The Rescue By The Redeemer:

- a. The _____ shall make you free — *John 8:32*.
- b. Jesus said: “__ am the way, the _____, and the life...” (*John 14:6*).
- c. “If the _____ therefore shall make you _____, ye shall be free _____” — *John 8:36*. See: *Galatians 5:1*.
- d. The Son was sent by the Father “to proclaim _____ to the _____” — *Isaiah 61:1*.
- e. *II Corinthians 3:17* — “Where the _____ of the Lord is, there is _____.”
- f. According to *Romans 8:2*, the law of the _____ of life in Jesus Christ hath made me free from the law of _____ and _____.”
- g. Christ has _____ the _____ of commandments contained in _____ (*Ephesians 2:15*).
- h. Christ _____ the handwriting of ordinances that was _____ us (*Colossians 2:14*).
- i. We _____ the servants of sin until we _____ from the _____ the Gospel — *Romans 6:17*.

B. **WE ARE SET FREE TO LIVE FOR CHRIST:**

According to *Romans* 8:21, our liberty in Christ is _____.

But does this give us the ‘right’ to now live as we please or choose? No!

1. According to *Romans* 6:18b, the believer is now made free from sin to serve _____. (See also: *I Peter* 2:16.)
2. This freedom allows us to produce fruit unto _____, according to *Romans* 6:22. See also: *Romans* 7:4.
3. We are now free to _____ unto Christ — *II Corinthians* 5:15.
4. According to *Titus* 2:11,12, the grace of God (by which we are saved, *Ephesians* 2:8,9) teaches us to:
 - deny _____.
 - deny _____.
 - live _____.
 - live _____.
 - live _____.
5. According to *Titus* 2:14, the Lord Jesus Christ redeemed us ('set us free') from ALL iniquity that we might be:
 - a _____ people.
 - who are _____ of good _____.
6. Our liberty enables us to seek (and do) God's _____ (*Psalm* 119:45).
 - a. According to *Galatians* 4:24, the covenant received from mount _____ (i.e. the Law) gendereth to _____.
 - b. By contrast, believers are now under the _____ Law of _____ — *James* 1:25; 2:12.
 - This is called the “royal law of _____” — *James* 2:8. See also: *I John* 2:3-11; 3:22-24.
 - This law’s commandments are not _____ — *I John* 5:2,3. (Contrast: *Matthew* 23:4.)
 - This law is a D _____ to the believer — *Romans* 7:22.
7. We are to use our liberty to _____ one another by _____ (*Galatians* 5:13).

8. Our freedom enables us to be the _____ of God (*1 Peter 2:16*).
9. *Exodus 21:5,6* illustrates how service under the law of love is not bondage. We serve not because we have to, but because we want to!
10. We are now under the “new creature rule” — *Galatians 6:15c,16*.

True freedom (or liberty) then is not the right to do as we want or please, but the privilege to do what is right — something we could never do before we were saved (*Isaiah 64:6; Proverbs 15:8a; Romans 8:3,4*).

THE CURSE OF LEGALISM

The legalism spoken of in the New Testament is very different from what many label legalism today.

A. NEW TESTAMENT LEGALISM:

Legalism was the first doctrinal error to raise its head within Christendom.

1. This error is first expressed in Acts 15.
 - a. “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of _____ [i.e. the Law], ye _____ be _____” — *verse 1*.
 - b. The **truth** of the matter is stated in *verse 11* — “But...through the _____ of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.”
2. These Judaizers eventually formed into some of the early ‘Christian’ sects during the apostolic days.
 - Nazarenes — orthodox Jewish Christians who also maintained a strict observance of the Law and Jewish customs.
 - Ebionites — who reduced the plan of salvation to strict Law-keeping. They eventually came to teach that Jesus was only a man Who became the Messiah at His baptism and Who was important because of His legal piety (not His suffering and death). They rejected the writings of the apostle Paul.
 - Elkesaites — speculative (platonic) Judaizers, who taught that Jesus was the ideal man. They held that circumcision and repeated washings were required.
3. The Book of **Galatians** was written to counter the spread of this damnable heresy. It is an error which:
 - a. Is a P _____ S I O N of the true Gospel (*Galatians 1:7*).
Note: *Galatians 1:9*.

- b. Was imposed by F _____ B _____ (*Galatians 2:4*) who T _____ D the saints (*Galatians 5:12*).
- c. F _____ S the grace of God (*Galatians 2:21*).
- d. Is very B _____ I N G, i.e. appealing (*Galatians 3:1*). This appeal is to the flesh — *Galatians 6:12*. See: *Romans 7:18a*.
- e. Proposes that salvation is made _____ by the flesh i.e. works of the Law] (*Galatians 3:3*).
- f. Causes believers to T _____ again to the weak (incapable) and beggarly elements [of the Law] (*Galatians 4:9*).
- g. Which only serves to E _____ believers and put them under the _____ of bondage (*Galatians 5:1*).
- h. Which can only H _____ us in the Christian race (*Galatians 5:7*).
- i. Is a dangerous, insidious L _____ (*Galatians 5:9*) which causes God's children to _____ and _____ one another (*Galatians 5:15*).
4. Judaistic legalism was an “attempt to sew up the rent veil!” Today, it is any teaching holding that:
- Works are necessary for salvation.
 - Works are necessary to complete salvation.
 - Works are necessary to maintain salvation.
5. Galatianism has presented itself in many forms since the days of Acts 15. It wasn't long before the word “circumcised” was being replaced by “baptized” — giving rise to the false doctrine of baptismal regeneration (or baptismal remission). Any teaching that “*salvation = grace +*” is damnable — whether it be sabbath-keeping, tongue-speaking, door-knocking, mass-attending, etc. True salvation is BY **grace alone**, THROUGH **faith alone**, IN **Christ alone** — plus or minus nothing! See: *Romans 11:6*.

THE LAW AND ITS PURPOSE

1. The Law was given by _____ — *John 1:17a*. It contains 613 commandments.
2. The Law is _____, and _____, and _____ — *Romans 7:12*. It is not faulty because of its inability to save men. See: *I Timothy 1:8*.
3. By the Law comes the _____ of _____ — *Romans 3:20b*. This is why God gave the Law through Moses — *Galatians 3:19*. It defines sin.
4. The strength of _____ is the Law — *I Corinthians 15:56b*.
5. The Law is a _____. It is designed by God to _____ us to _____. [by causing us to see our true condition before Him, and our need of Him] — *Galatians 3:24*.
6. No one can or will ever be _____ by the works of the Law — *Galatians 2:16*. See also: *Galatians 2:21b*.
7. Trying to keep the Law only brings a _____ — *Galatians 3:10*.
8. We can only be saved through Jesus Christ, Who kept the Law, fulfilled the Law, finished the Law, and paid the penalty on our behalf for every broken law! — *Colossians 2:13-15*.
9. Christ is the _____ of the Law to every believer — *Romans 10:4*.
10. Believers are not _____ the Law, but under _____ — *Romans 6:14b*.

6. Legalism And Sanctification.

The law cannot justify; neither can it sanctify. The law shows us that we are unholy but it cannot make us holy. The KEY to living the Christian life is found at Mount Calvary, not at Mount Sinai — *Romans 6; Galatians 2:20*. [See: Lesson “C” — The Crucified Life]

Look up *Colossians 2:6*.

- a. Salvation — “As ye have therefore _____ Christ Jesus the Lord [How? By faith!] ...”
- b. Sanctification — “so [in the same way, by faith] _____ ye in Him.”

B. PRESENT-DAY LEGALISM:

The charge of “legalism” is commonly leveled against anyone today who might be zealous for doctrinal and personal purity. Churches requiring Biblical standards of conduct of their workers and for their activities are often labeled as ‘legalistic.’

The fact is this kind of charge is very *subjective*. Since most every Christian or church claiming to be Bible-believing has *some* standards, legalism becomes more of an issue of *degree* — i.e. when your standards and beliefs are stricter than mine, you’re a legalist!!

1. Areas Of Issue:

- Dress codes — *I Timothy 2:9* (what constitutes “modest?”).
- Hair — *I Corinthians 11:14,15* (how long is “long;” how short is “short?”).
- Music — *Ephesians 5:19*.
- Amusements — *I John 2:15-17*.
- Television — *Psalm 101:3*.
- Bible versions — *II Corinthians 2:17a*.

2. The Charge Of Pharisaism:

Another term for legalism is “Pharisaism.” Bible-believing Baptists are often accused of being modern-day Pharisees by those who resent their “lists” of ‘do’s and don’ts.’ This is patently unfair: there is a great difference between a real Bible-believer and a Pharisee of Jesus’ day:

- a. The Pharisees loved T _____ over Truth — *Matthew 15:1-9*. They were in fact Bible-rejecters — *John 8:47*.
- b. They were SELF-R _____ — *Luke 18:9-14*.
- c. They were H _____ — *Matthew 23:13,14*.
See: *Matthew 23:3d*.
- d. The Pharisees were zealous, but in their **man-made** religion — *Matthew 23:14,15,23; Philippians 3:6*.
- e. The Pharisees were hell-bound sinners — *Matthew 23:26-33*.

Read: *Philippians 3:4-7*.

3. What About Those “Lists?”

It seems the most offensive aspect of the whole legalism issue is over the “lists,” or standards a church may publish, preach, and require of its ministry workers. Seven things must be said about this:

- a. Biblical standards must be preached — *Titus 2:15*.
- b. Any and all so-called lists must be measured against the Word of God. The Bible is *the* authority, not man.
- c. While there will probably always be some differences over the content of any ‘list,’ the Biblical mandate is that we abstain from ALL _____ of evil — *I Thessalonians 5:22*.
- d. True legalism is related to WHY one should obey a list rather than to the rightness or wrongness of what is on the list. If a believer thinks he will gain merit with God by keeping and following a list, that is legalism. Legalism has been defined as “the flesh attempting to carry out the precepts of God.” The flesh will never/can never succeed!
- e. In some cases the rejection of standards using the charge of legalism is an excuse for self-willed and sinful living — *Galatians 5:13*.
- f. Even to the casual observer there has been a noticeable decline in general standards of Christian conduct over the past 50 or so years. (*II Timothy 3:1-5*) Practices which were once taboo to just about **all** Christians — dancing, social drinking, movies, dating, cards, etc. — are now common practice. It may well be that many of the old-fashion Christians abstained for the wrong reasons (i.e., to earn favor with God), but it cannot be argued that godliness has not declined. “Is the world churchy, or the Church worldly?”
- g. Great care must be exercised to speak the truth in _____ (*Ephesians 4:15*). Bible-believers must not become censorious in their attitude toward other believers who do not see (or agree with) their understanding of the Word of God. However, it is also unfair to expect churches to be accommodating in these matters by lowering their standards for those who would serve in ministry capacities.
- h. Remember: true freedom in Christ involves living obediently to the “perfect law of liberty,” encapsulated by LOVE — for Christ (*John 14:15*) and each other (*I John 4:7-21*).

4. What Legalism Is NOT:

- a. Being obedient to specific commandments of the Lord is NOT legalism — *I John 2:3,4*.
- b. Living a holy life is NOT legalism — *I Thessalonians 4:3,7*.
- c. Refusing conformity to world is NOT legalism — *Romans 12:2*.
- d. Conforming one’s life to certain standards when requested by godly pastors is NOT legalism — *Acts 15:20,21,38,29*.

- e. Forsaking personal rights out of deference to a weaker brother in Christ is NOT legalism — *Romans 14:21*.

A common excuse given for not preaching or expecting godly standards of Christian conduct is: “Well, I believe that is something God must do in each individual’s heart!” True enough, but how will God work in an individual’s heart?? “Through His Spirit,” comes the reply. Well then, how does the Spirit work in our lives? “Through the Word.” Well, how shall they hear without a PREACHER? See: *II Timothy 4:2-4; Titus 2:15*.

THE FOLLY OF LICENSE

License is the attitude that I have the freedom to do as I please. It is the mentality that since I am saved, safe, and secure in Christ, I can live my life any way I want to.

In earlier times this error was known as “antinomianism” — ‘anti’ (against), ‘nomos’ (law) — “against the law.” It is the other extreme to Judaistic legalism.

A. NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT NOT LAWLESS:

1. We are not under the Law but under _____ — *Romans 6:14b*.
2. Many throw out this statement as an ‘answer’ to what they see as legalism. But what does grace teach?? *Titus 2:11,12*.
3. Shall we continue in sin? _____ — *Romans 6:1*.
4. According to *I Corinthians 9:21*, a Christian is “not without law to God, but _____ the law to _____. (This is the royal law!)

B. LIBERTY IS NOT LICENSE:

1. *I Peter 2:16* — Our liberty is not to be a _____ (covering) of _____ N E S S.
2. *Galatians 5:13* — It is not to be an _____ (excuse) to the _____.

MEMORY VERSE: Try and commit to memory: *Titus 2:11,12*.

NOTES & QUESTIONS TO ASK

M The Mysteries of God

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” — I Corinthians 4:1.

This study inquires into these mysteries.

WHAT IS A “MYSTERY?”

The word “mystery” or “mysteries” is found 27 times in the New Testament, translated from the Greek ‘*mysterion*’ meaning “something deliberately hidden.”

The Bible defines a mystery in two ways:

A. NEW TESTAMENT TRUTH NOT FOUND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

Read: *Romans 16:25,26.*

This passage defines a mystery as something which:

1. Is given according to _____ — *verse 25c.*
2. Was kept _____ in times past — *verse 25d.*
3. Is _____ made _____ (known) by the scriptures to all _____ — *verse 26.*

The references to the “gospel” and “Jesus Christ” in *verse 25* identify “the prophets” of *verse 26* as the writers of the New Testament. (The writers of the New Testament are called “apostles and prophets” — *Ephesians 2:20; 3:5; 4:11; II Peter 3:2; Revelation 18:20.*)

Old Testament prophets foresaw the mountain peaks of Christ’s FIRST advent (the **cradle**, e.g. *Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:12* — and the **cross**, e.g. *Isaiah 53:1-12*) and Christ’s SECOND advent (the **crown**, e.g. *Isaiah 2:1-3; 61:2*). However, they could not see the great “valley” that was between these peaks — the “Valley of the Present Age!” See: *I Peter 1:10-12; Acts 3:18-21.*

Many of the mysteries of God are found in this ‘valley,’ now revealed to us through the New Testament.

A mystery is now an “open secret!”

B. TRUTH NOT UNDERSTOOD BY THE ‘UNINITIATED:’

Read: *I Corinthians 2:6-14.*

In this context, the word “mystery” (*verse 7*) is set against the so-called mystery religion which was centered at Corinth — the worship of Aphrodite, goddess of beauty and sex.

Greek mystery religions abounded in the ancient world. They were characterized by elaborate initiation rituals and secret rites, in many cases centered around a mother-child deity. Initiates into these cults were privy to the mysteries of sacred rites, secret words, and symbols.

1. The wisdom of God is understood by them that are _____ (*verse 6a*) — i.e. the spiritual man (*verse 15*).
2. This wisdom is hidden from the _____ man (*verse 14*) which included the _____ of this world (*verse 8*).
3. Read: *Matthew 13:10-16.* Also: *Matthew 11:25.*

Reference to the mystery of God in *Colossians 2:2,3* is probably set against the heresy of Gnosticism — a late-1ST and 2ND century perversion of the Gospel by Greek philosophy in which the initiates claimed special ‘knowledge’ (*gnosis*).

In these cases, a mystery is defined as divine Truth hidden from the lost.

WHAT ARE THE MYSTERIES OF GOD?

There are TEN mysteries of the faith (*I Timothy 3:9*) mentioned in the New Testament, although some of them appear to overlap.

They are as follows:

A. THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS — *I Timothy 3:16.*

This is the central truth (*I Timothy 3:15d*) of Bible Christianity — the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!!

1. _____ was _____ in the _____.

This refers to the incarnation of Jesus Christ — a truth revealed in the Old Testament (*Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2*) but not understood by the Jewish leaders (*I Corinthians 2:8*). See: *Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-3,14; 14:9.*

2. [Christ was] _____ in the _____.

This refers to the Father’s authentication of His Son at His baptism (*Matthew 3:16; John 1:32,33*), and the declaration of the resurrection (*Romans 1:3,4*).

3. [Christ] was _____ of _____.
This refers to special angelic ministry during times of our Lord's greatest trials — *Matthew 4:11; Luke 22:43*.

4. [Christ] was _____ unto the _____, and _____ on in the world.
This refers to the mystery of the Gospel, that salvation would extend beyond Israel's boundaries — *Ephesians 6:19; Colossians 4:3*.

5. [Christ] was _____ up into _____.
This refers to His glorious ascension — *Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 12:2; I Peter 3:22*.

B. THE MYSTERY OF “CHRIST IN YOU” — *Colossians 1:26,27*.

1. This mystery was _____ from _____ and generations, i.e. it was not revealed through the Old Testament.

2. This mystery is _____ made _____ to the saints, i.e. it is New Testament truth.

3. Read: *John 14:15-26*. In this passage the Lord Jesus Christ gives us the great promise of the Comforter.
 - a. From Old Testament times up to this point in Christ's ministry, the Spirit dwelt _____ men (*verse 17f*).
He could come and go — e.g. compare *Judges 14:6* and *I Samuel 10:10* with *Judges 16:20* and *I Samuel 16:14*. This explains David's prayer in *Psalm 51:11*.

 - b. The promise was that the Spirit would soon be _____ men (*verse 17g*). This began after Christ sent the Comforter (*Acts 2*).

 - c. This passage actually teaches that believers are indwelt by the Godhead:
 - The Holy Spirit, *verse 17* — *Romans 8:9,11; I Corinthians 6:19; II Timothy 1:14*.
 - The Son, *verse 20* — *II Corinthians 13:5; Ephesians 3:17*.
 - The Father, *verse 23* — *I John 4:12-16*.

Note: This is a reciprocal indwelling. Christ in you and you in Christ! See: *Ephesians 2:10,13; Colossians 1:2,28*.

C. THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH — *Ephesians 3:1-10.*

The New Testament Church is not mentioned anywhere in the Old Testament. See: *Ephesians 3:5.*

The reference to Israel as the “church in the wilderness” (*Acts 7:38*) is accurate because at this point in its history Israel was a ‘church’ — an assembly. It met the four requirements of an assembly:

- Local — e.g. *Exodus 12:37; 13:20; 14:2; 15:23,27; 17:1; 19:2*; etc.
- Visible — e.g. *Numbers 23:28; 24:2 (22:5)*
- Organized — e.g. *Numbers 2; 3:23-38*
- Constituted — *Numbers 1:2,18.*

However, while Israel in the wilderness was a Church (congregation) it was not a **New Testament** Church (“MY Church” — *Matthew 16:18*).

The Book of Ephesians speaks of two aspects of the mystery of the New Testament Church:

1. That _____ should be members of the body (3:6). Christ has broken down the “middle wall of partition” (2:11-16).
2. That Christ’s relationship to His churches would be like the love between a _____ and his ____ (5:23-33, esp: verse 32).

There is a mystery revealed in the Book of The Revelation which shows more of the Lord’s relationship to His churches — *Revelation 1:12,13,16a,20.*

- The Lord stands in the _____ of His churches.
- The Lord holds His preachers (*Galatians 4:14*) in His _____ hand.

D. THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD — *Mark 4:11.*

[See also: Lesson “K”]

This has reference primarily to the parables of the kingdom spoken by the Lord.

That there will be a glorious Messianic kingdom on the earth is one of the great verities of the Old Testament — e.g. *Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-12; Daniel 2:44,45; 7:9-14; Micah 4:1-5; Zechariah 14:9,16*; etc. So what is the mystery??

1. The Jews were looking for Messiah to set up this earthly kingdom (*Acts 3:19b-21a*) — but they had missed the **first** part of the prophets’ message (*Acts 3:18,19a*).
2. The kingdom is present now in its “mystery form” — intangible (*Romans 14:17*), invisible (*Luke 17:21*), spiritual (*John 18:36*), entered through the door of faith (*John 3:3*). It is the reign of God in the hearts of willing subjects!

3. We pray for the earthly manifestation of this kingdom to _____ —
Matthew 6:10.

E. THE MYSTERY OF ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS — *Romans 11:25.*

[See also: Lesson "I"]

The entire 11th chapter of Romans deals with the temporary (present-day) setting aside of national Israel — a fact not revealed by any Old Testament prophecy.

1. Blindness In Part.

- a. God has not _____ away His people forever — *verses 1,2.*
- b. There is at this present time a _____ who are saved by grace — *verse 5.*
- c. The rest of the nation has:
 - Been B _____ — *verses 7,8,10.*
 - S _____ — *verse 11.*
 - F ____ E N — *verse 12.*
 - Been B _____ O ____ — *verses 17,19,20.*

2. The Fulness Of The Gentiles.

The setting aside of Israel has meant the following for the Gentiles:

- a. S _____ — *verse 11.*
- b. R _____ — *verse 12.*
- c. R _____ I A T I O N — *verse 15.*

3. Until.

There is a 'time limit' to Israel's blindness. See: *Acts 15:14-16.*

This time limit corresponds to the present age — the indeterminable time between Daniel's 69TH and 70TH Week (*Daniel 9:25-27*).

4. All Israel Shall Be Saved — *Romans 11:26,27.*

That which is spoken of by the Old Testament prophets shall surely come to pass. See: *Joel 3:16; Zechariah 14:3,4.*

In the meantime, God's gracious dealings with Gentiles are designed to:

- P _____ Israel to _____ (*verse 11*).
- P _____ Jews to _____ (*verse 14*).

Note: God is _____ to graft them in again — *Romans 11:23d*.
The prerequisite will be their [national] belief. *Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1,6; Revelation 1:7*.

F. **THE MYSTERY OF THE RAPTURE — I Corinthians 15:51.**

The Old Testament prophets foresaw the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth but they did not see the Rapture — the translation of the saints (living and dead) in the glorious Resurrection Day.

1. The Old Testament spoke of the two resurrections in a concurrent way, *Daniel 12:2*.
2. The New Testament actually separates the two resurrections in time by at least _____ — *Revelation 20:4-6*.
3. The New Testament also teaches that the FIRST resurrection is a three-part event. It follows the idea of the Jewish harvest (see: *Leviticus 23:20-22*):
 - a. Christ's resurrection was the _____ stage of the harvest — *I Corinthians 15:23b*.
 - b. They that are Christ's at His _____ make up the main part of the harvest — *I Corinthians 15:23c*. This is the Rapture (*I Thessalonians 4:13-17*).
 - c. Those who are saved (and almost certainly will perish) during Daniel's 70TH Week make up the “gleanings” part of the harvest. See: *Revelation 6:9-11; 7:9-15*.

Note: *Revelation 20:4* sees two classes of resurrected saints: those who received their resurrection bodies at the Rapture (and who now sit in judgment, *I Corinthians 6:1-3*), AND those who were executed during the Antichrist's reign of terror (and presumably who received their resurrection bodies at the return of Christ to the earth).

4. The great mystery is that we shall not all _____ (*I Corinthians 15:51*). *Daniel 12:2* sees only a resurrection of the dead.

G. **THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY — II Thessalonians 2:7.**

This mystery has to do with the coming Antichrist.

Many details of the Antichrist and his reign are given in the Book of Daniel (e.g. *Daniel 7:8,20-26; 8:23-25; 9:26,27; 11:36-45*). The fact of the coming Antichrist was well-known by the believers at Thessalonica — *II Thessalonians 2:5*.

The mystery is that the spirit of the Antichrist is NOW at work in the world.

1. There is one _____ but _____ antichrists (see: *I John 2:18*).
2. The _____ of antichrist is already in the _____ (see: *I John 4:3*).
3. There is a W _____ E R Who is presently keeping the Antichrist from being revealed (*II Thessalonians 2:6*).
4. The Antichrist is currently being _____ [an old English word (still used in the game of tennis) meaning “hindered”] — *II Thessalonians 2:7b*.
5. Who Or What Is The Hinderer??
 - a. It is a _____, not an “it” — *II Thessalonians 2:7c*.
 - b. He is someone the believers K _____ — *II Thessalonians 2:6*.
 - c. Consider these facts in the light of *John 14:17* and *I John 4:4-6*.

H. THE MYSTERY OF BABYLON THE GREAT — *Revelation 17:5*.

[See also: Lesson “B”]

1. The Origin Of Babylon — *Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9*.
 - a. A city founded by _____ (“rebel”) — *10:8*.
 - b. According to *Genesis 11:4*, Babel was an attempt to make:
 - A _____ — political unity.
 - A _____ — religious unity
 - A _____ — racial unity
 - c. This was in direct disobedience to God’s command to man after the Flood, *Genesis 9:1*.
2. The History Of The System Of Babylon.

Many historians believe paganism (in all its forms) has its roots in Babylon, where the worship of Nimrod and his wife Semiramis began. Following the violent death of Nimrod, Semiramis claimed the child she brought forth was Nimrod risen from death. Thus developed a system of “Mother-Child” worship — a feature common to practically all of the pagan religions of the ancient (and not-so-ancient) world. It is seen, for example, in:

Isis & Osiris (Egypt)	Ishtar & Bel (Assyria)
Venus & Cupid	Beltis & Baal

The Mother goddess is also known as Cybele, Ashtaroth (*Judges* 2:13; 10:6; *I Samuel* 7:3,4; 12:10), Aphrodite, Artemas (Diana, *Acts* 19:27,28), and the Queen of Heaven (*Jeremiah* 7:18; 44:17-19,25).

The Child god is also known as Bacchus, Baal, and Tammuz (*Ezekiel* 8:14).

3. Mystery Babylon — Revelation 17.

This chapter describes the final form of ‘one-world’ religion which will be in place during the rise of the Antichrist.

- a. Mystery Babylon is a W _____ — *verses 3-6.*
- b. She represents a great C _____ — *verse 18.*
- c. It is built on seven _____ [hills] — *verse 9.*
This is a clear reference to Rome.
- d. She is called a “Great _____” — *verse 1,* cf. *II Corinthians* 11:2.
- e. She sits on many _____ (*verse 1*), which symbolizes “peoples, and multitudes, and _____, and tongues” (*verse 15*). A worldwide (universal) religion.
- f. She has committed fornication with the _____ of the earth — *verse 2.* A politico-religious (State-Church) religion.
- g. She is drunk with the _____ of the saints and martyrs of Jesus — *verse 6.* A persecuting religion.

The “Church of the Antichrist” is a seducing, blasphemous, pompous, wealthy, immoral, and pagan imitation of the real thing. It is the culmination of the system of Babylon, the one-world religious order which will sweep to power on the back of the Antichrist — **until** he demands all worship for himself, *verse 16,17; II Thessalonians* 2:3.

I. THE MYSTERY OF GOD — *Revelation 10:7.*

Nothing else is said about this mystery. Tying it in with the sounding of the trumpet by the seventh angel (see: *Revelation* 11:15), it would seem this mystery is the [seemingly] long delay of Almighty God in [finally] taking the kingdoms of the world and establishing His glorious kingdom.

J. THE MYSTERY OF GOD’S WILL — *Ephesians 1:9,10.*

This is the mystery of eternity; the mystery of consummation.

1. Set for the _____ [end, completion] of times.
2. All things will be gathered together in _____.

N Numerology

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Bible numerology is the study of the *significance* of numbers in the Bible. Two things can be said about this subject: first, it is one of the more obscure areas of Bible study; second, it is a very fascinating exercise for any who pursue it.

Numbers are an integral part of the Word of God. One out of every five verses contains a number. One of its Books is called “Numbers.” Its Author is the Creator of a mathematically exact universe in which numbers are meaningful, e.g. *Psalm 147:4,5; Isaiah 40:25,26; Matthew 10:30*. He is a God of order, not randomness (*Psalm 18:30a; 40:5; I Corinthians 14:33,40*). Furthermore, certain numbers are clearly said to have more than just a numeric significance — e.g. *Revelation 13:18*.

As with all areas of Bible study, numerics is open to extremes — perhaps more-so than most. On the one hand there is the extreme of ignoring any significance of numbers in the Bible; the other extreme is to assign unwarranted significance to numbers in a cabalistic fashion (i.e. finding hidden meanings in words and the order of words in Scripture). The Bible must be its own interpreter — *II Peter 1:20*.

The following points should be kept in mind when studying the significance of numbers in the Bible:

- Significance must be determined by usage — i.e. from the fruit of Bible study. It is a dangerous error to assign numbers a meaning in order to make them ‘unlock’ the Bible.
- A number does not necessarily have a symbolic or spiritual significance every time it is used in the Bible.
- Often, the first mention of a number can give insight to any significant meaning it may have.
- Once we have, from a sound (scriptural) basis, determined the significance of any given number, we may cautiously proceed to consider some of the mathematical properties associated with the number — if just out of fascination.

And now, to the study.....

ONE — UNITY, PRIMACY

The number “one” is indivisible, standing alone and in need of no other number. It is exclusive, and the source and beginning of all other numbers. So too with God.

A. UNITY: (“One”)

1. Look up: *Deuteronomy 6:4; John 10:30; Galatians 3:20; I Timothy 2:5; I John 5:7.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

Note: The “oneness of God” is not a denial of the Trinity — it is the exclusion of any other God or Lord. Hence the first commandment: *Exodus 20:3.*

2. Look up: *Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:10,15; Matthew 19:5,6; Ephesians 5:31.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

3. Look up: *Ephesians 2:13-15; Galatians 3:28; John 10:16.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

4. Look up: *Ephesians 4:3-6; John 17:21,22; Acts 4:32.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

5. Look up: *Genesis 11:1,6; Joshua 9:2; Judges 20:1,8,11; I Chronicles 12:28; Ezra 3:1; Nehemiah 8:1.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

6. Look up: *Zechariah 14:9; Isaiah 66:8; Jeremiah 32:39; Ezekiel 11:19; 34:23; 37:16,17,19,22,24.*

These verses speak of the unity of _____.

B. PRIMACY: (“First”)

1. The LORD is the _____ and the _____ — *Isaiah 43:10,11; 44:6; 48:12; Revelation 1:11,17; 2:8.*

There cannot be two *firs*ts.

2. Man is to _____ God first — *Matthew 6:33.*

3. The first and great _____ — *Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:29,30.*

C. SOME INTERESTING “FIRSTS:”

1. The First Book In The Bible:

- Genesis — ‘Bereshith’ — “beginnings.”
- The first verse — *Genesis 1:1*.
- The “seed plot of the Word of God” (most major doctrines of the Bible have their roots in Genesis).
- The first day (1:5), the first man (2:7), the first woman (2:22), the first marriage (2:23-25), the first sin (3:6), the first promise of a Saviour (3:15), the first sacrifice (3:21), the first birth (4:1), the first murder (4:8), the first city (4:17), the first bigamy (4:19), the first musician (4:21), the first manufactured tools (4:22), the first manslaughter (4:23), the first worship (4:26), the first flood (7:11), the first drunkard (9:21), the first rebellion (11:1-4), the first pilgrim (12:4-10), the first war (14:1), the first incest (19:33), the first mention of love (24:67), etc.

2. The First Question:

- In the Old Testament: God is seeking _____ (*Genesis 3:9*).
- In the New Testament: Man is seeking _____ (*Matthew 2:2*).

3. The First Hallelujahs: (“praise the Lords”)

- In the Old Testament — *Psalm 104:35*.
- In the New Testament — *Revelation 19:1-3*.

Both references are speaking of _____.

4. The First Recorded Words Of Christ — Luke 2:49.

Compare these words with:

- His last recorded words on the cross — *John 19:30*.
- His last recorded words on earth — *Acts 1:8* (cf. *John 20:21*).

5. The First Act Of Christ’s Public Ministry — Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-23; John 1:29-34.

Compare this with the last command of the Lord Jesus Christ to His churches — *Matthew 28:19*.

TWO — DIVISION, SEPARATION

In contrast with the number “one” (exclusive, indivisible, independent), the number “two” signifies difference and divisibility. It can also stand for strength.

A. DIVISION:

1. First Mention Of “Two” — *Genesis 1:14-18.*
 - a. God made TWO _____ (verse 16).
 - b. To _____ the light from the darkness (verse 18).
2. Look up: *Genesis 1:6,8.* On the SECOND day of creation, God made the _____ to _____ the waters.
3. Look up: *Genesis 10:25.* In the days of _____ ('division'), one of Eber's TWO sons was the earth _____ .
4. Look up: *Ezekiel 37:21-24.* This prophetic passage looks forward to the restoration of the TWO divided _____ (in the Millennium).
5. The Word of God is divided into TWO Testaments — *Hebrews 9:15; II Corinthians 3:6,14* — embracing TWO covenants, the first (Law) being “faulty” and the second (Grace) being “better” — *Hebrews 8:6-13.*
6. There are TWO classes of people in God's sight — the saved and the lost (*Luke 19:10*); the just and the wicked (*Matthew 13:49*); the sheep and the goats (*Matthew 25:32*); the children of God and the children of the Devil (*I John 3:10*).

B. SEPARATION & STRIFE:

1. “Can TWO _____ together, except they be _____ ?” (*Amos 3:3*).
 - a. Cain & Abel.
 - b. Abraham & Lot.
 - c. Ishmael & Isaac.
 - d. Esau & Jacob.

} Consider the strife and separation between these men.
2. “No man can _____ TWO _____ ” (*Matthew 6:24*).

- a. The friend of the _____ is the _____ of God” (*James 4:4*). See: *I John 2:15*.
- b. The F _____ and the S _____ are contrary to each other (*Galatians 5:17*). See also: *I Corinthians 3:1,3*.
3. “The first man is of the _____, earthy; the SECOND _____ is the Lord from heaven” — *I Corinthians 15:47*. (Note the important differences, *I Corinthians 15:22,45-49*.)
4. There are TWO opposing S _____ S in the world — *I John 4:6*.

C. **STRENGTH:**

1. TWO are _____ than one — *Ecclesiastes 4:9,10*.
2. In evangelistic ministry — *Luke 10:1*.
3. In resolving problems — *Matthew 18:16*.

THREE — DIVINITY

The number “three” is one whose significance may be adduced from both Biblical and natural considerations. It is the divine number.

A. **BIBLICAL:**

1. There are THREE Persons in the Godhead — *I John 5:7; Matthew 28:19*.
2. God dwells in the THIRD _____ — *II Corinthians 12:2*.
3. Heaven resounds with “_____ , _____ , _____ ” — *Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8*.
4. Jesus Christ is called the “Which ____ (present), Which ____ (past), and Which is to ____ ” (future) — *Revelation 1:4b*.
5. The Lord Jesus Christ was _____ E D THREE times — *Matthew 4:1-11*.
6. Christ raised THREE from the dead — the son of a _____ (*Luke 7:12-15*); the daughter of _____ (*Mark 5:22,23,35-42*); and _____ (*John 11:43*).

Note: There are THREE instances of people being raised from the dead in the Old Testament: *I Kings 17:17-22* (note: verse 21, “THREE

times"); *II Kings 4:18-20,32-35* (note: verse 34, THREE body parts); and *II Kings 13:21*.

7. Jesus prayed THREE times in the garden — *Matthew 26:44,45*.
8. Christ was denied _____ by Peter — *Matthew 26:34*. (He also restored Peter with THREE questions, *John 21:15-17*.)
9. The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified at the THIRD _____ (*Mark 15:25*); there were THREE hours of _____ (*Mark 15:33*).
10. Christ rose from the dead on the THIRD _____ (*Luke 24:7; Matthew 12:40*).
11. Christ has THREE offices — Prophet (*Acts 3:22*), Priest (*Hebrews 4:14*), and Potentate (*Revelation 19:16*) — past, present, future (*Hebrews 9:24,28*).
12. The Lord Jesus Christ is called THREE kinds of Shepherd:
 - a. The _____ Shepherd — *John 10:14* (death).
 - b. The _____ Shepherd — *Hebrews 13:20* (resurrection).
 - c. The _____ Shepherd — *I Peter 5:4* (glory).
13. Salvation through Christ has THREE tenses:
 - a. Past — I AM saved from sin's PENALTY (justification).
 - b. Present — I am BEING saved from sin's POWER (sanctification).
 - c. Prospective — I WILL BE saved from sin's PRESENCE (glorification).
14. There are THREE abiding graces: _____, _____, and _____ — *I Corinthians 13:13*.
15. The THIRD day of creation saw the emergence of land from the waters (a picture of resurrection) and the beginning of life (living things), *Genesis 1:9-13*.
16. Man was created in the image of God with THREE parts: B _____, S _____, and S _____ — *I Thessalonians 5:23*.
See: *Genesis 1:27; Hebrews 4:12b*.

B. NATURAL: (*Divine Order in Creation*)

1. THREE primary colors — yellow, magenta, cyan.
2. THREE kingdoms — animal, vegetable, mineral.
3. THREE forms of matter — solid, liquid, gas.
4. THREE periods of time — past, present, future.
5. THREE dimensions — length, width, height.
6. THREE areas of human capacity — thought, word, and deed.

FOUR — CREATION, EARTH

The significance of this number is less certain, but it is used in connection with the earth and God's creative acts. Four is the first non-prime number.

A. BIBLE INSTANCES:

1. First Mention — *Genesis 2:10*. The _____ of Eden divided into FOUR _____.
2. *Genesis 10:5,20,31* gives a FOUR-fold division of mankind:
L _____ S (countries), T _____ S, F _____ S, and N _____ S.
3. In *Proverbs 30:24*, there are FOUR things which are _____ upon the EARTH, but exceeding _____.
4. In *Daniel 7:2,3*, we see the FOUR _____ of the heaven and the FOUR great _____ coming up out of the sea. These represent the FOUR great world empires of the “Times of the Gentiles.”
5. There are FOUR kinds of ground in our Lord's parable of the sower — *Matthew 13:3-9,18-23*.
6. The FOURTH commandment (*Exodus 20:8-10*) provides rest for man from his labors.

B. NATURAL INSTANCES:

1. FOUR directions — N-E-S-W — *Isaiah 11:12; Jeremiah 49:36*.
2. FOUR seasons — Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter.

FIVE — DEATH & GRACE

This number is often associated with death, but also with the grace of God (as it is revealed through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ).

A. DEATH:

1. First mention of [natural] death — *Genesis 5:5.* (cf. *Acts 5:5.*)
2. The dimensions of the brazen altar (upon which sacrifices were made) were FIVE _____ by FIVE _____ — *Exodus 27:1.*
3. In *Joshua 10:5,16-26*, the FIVE _____ of the Amorites were _____ E D from FIVE trees.
4. In *I Samuel 6:4,5,16-18*, the Philistines made FIVE golden _____ and FIVE golden _____ to stay a deadly plague.
5. David chose FIVE _____ S with which to face (and kill) Goliath — *I Samuel 17:40.*
6. A means of assassination: to smite another under the FIFTH _____, *II Samuel 2:23; 3:27; 4:6; 20:10.*
7. Note: the FIFTH seal (*Revelation 6:9*); the FIFTH trumpet (*Revelation 9:1-6*); and the FIFTH vial (*Revelation 16:10*).

B. GRACE:

The grace of God is revealed in Jesus Christ, notably in His substitutionary death for sinners. The number five sometimes relates to this grace.

1. FIVE offerings in Leviticus, each picturing some aspect of Christ's atonement: the burnt offering (chapter 1), the meal offering (2), the peace offering (3), the sin offering (4), and the trespass offering (5) — all burnt on the 5 x 5 altar!
2. FIVE women in Matthew's genealogy of Christ — Tamar (1:3), Rahab (1:5), Ruth (1:5), Bathsheba (1:6), and Mary — each of whom experienced something of the GRACE of God!
3. Jesus fed FIVE thousand men with FIVE _____ and two fishes — *Matthew 14:17-21.*
4. There were FIVE porches on the _____ of _____ (“house of kindness”) — *John 5:2.*
5. FIVE wounds on our Lord's body.

SIX — MAN: *SINFUL MAN, SATAN'S MAN*

Six is the one number in the Word of God which is directly associated with man (*Revelation 13:18*).

A. SINFUL MAN IN GENERAL:

1. Man was _____ E D on the SIXTH _____ — *Genesis 1:27,31*.
2. SIX is associated with MANUAL labor (*Genesis 3:17,18*) on earth:
 - a. Man is to do his W_____ in SIX _____ — *Exodus 20:9*.
 - b. Hebrew _____ had to be released after working for SIX _____ — *Exodus 21:2; Deuteronomy 15:12*.
 - c. The _____ could only be worked for SIX _____ — *Exodus 23:10,11; Leviticus 25:3,4*.
 - d. The time of MAN'S sojourn on earth will be SIX thousand years:
 - Man was created approximately 4,000 B.C.
 - The days since Christ are approximately 2,000 years.
 - The seventh millennium is the earth's Sabbath rest — *Isaiah 14:7*.
3. Consider: *Romans 3:23*. Arithmetically, $6 = 7 - 1$. If seven is the number of spiritual perfection, then man's number has come short!
4. First Mention: *Genesis 7:6*. Noah is SIX _____ years old when the _____ wipes [wicked] MAN off the earth.
5. A total of _____ souls went down to Egypt — *Genesis 46:26*. (Egypt is a picture of the world, *Isaiah 31:1; Genesis 13:10; Deuteronomy 5:6*; etc.)
6. There were SIX _____ for _____ for the MANslayer, *Numbers 35:6*.

B. SATAN'S MAN:

1. The number of the _____ (Antichrist) is _____ — *Revelation 13:18*.
 - a. The Book of The Revelation reveals a Satanic Triad:
 - The D _____ (12:3,7-17; 13:2-4) [Satan].
 - The B _____ (13:1-8) [Antichrist].

- The F _____ P _____ (13:11-16; 19:20).
- b. Note: According to *Revelation* 13:17, there are three things associated with the Antichrist:
- The M _____ of the Beast — *an indelible, visible etching.*
 - The N _____ of the Beast — *as in ‘authority.’*
 - The N _____ of his _____ — *can be counted.*
- c. There have been numerous attempts to identify the Antichrist by assigning numerical values to letters — A=1, B=2, ... J=10, K=20, ... T=100, U=200, ... etc.
- For example, if one made A=100, B=101, C=102 ... Z=126, the numerical value of the name “Hitler” comes to 666. (This may be correct, since the name “Sargent” totals 777!!! ☺)
- A similar system using the Latin alphabet totals the sum of the letters of the inscription on the papal crown (“Vicarius Filii Dei”) at 666.
- Trying to understand the number of the Antichrist has produced endless speculation (certain people, bar codes, etc.). One thing is certain: it will be obvious when he appears.
2. According to *I Samuel* 17:4-7, _____ (who defied the God of Israel, *verse 45*):
 - a. Stood SIX _____ and a span tall.
 - b. Had a spear with a SIX hundred _____ head.
 - c. Had a son with SIX _____ on each hand and SIX _____ on each foot — *II Samuel* 21:20.
 3. The number SIX is associated with the reign of Solomon (*II Chronicles* 9:13,15,18,19) — which was short of being perfect!
 4. The wicked _____, who attempted to destroy the royal _____ (lineage of Messiah), reigned for SIX years — *II Kings* 11:1-3.
 5. Nebuchadnezzar (a forerunner of the Antichrist) made a great image of himself (cf. *Revelation* 13:14,15) with the dimensions of ____ X __ cubits, *Daniel* 3:1.
 6. The number 666 occurs three times in the Word of God — *Revelation* **13**; *II Chronicles* 9:**13** (as well as *I Kings* 10:14), and *Ezra* 2:**13**.

SEVEN — DIVINE & SPIRITUAL PERFECTION

Without doubt, seven is the most sacred number in the Word of God. It is the most obvious number when it comes to Biblical numerology. It is the number of perfection.

A. PERFECTION SEEN IN THE GODHEAD:

1. Luke's genealogy of Christ gives a total of ____ names between (and including) JESUS (*Luke 3:23*) and GOD (*Luke 3:38*).

Note: Matthew's genealogy gives $14 + 14 + 14 = 42 = 6 \times 7$ generations between Abraham and Christ (*Matthew 1:17*).

2. Our Lord uttered SEVEN statements from His _____.
Luke 23:34,43; Matthew 27:46; John 19:26,28; Luke 23:46; John 19:30.

3. The SEVEN _____ of God — *Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6*. This seven-fold perfection is explained in *Isaiah 11:2* where He is called the “Spirit of....”

- a. The _____.
- b. _____.
- c. _____.
- d. _____.
- e. _____.
- f. _____.
- g. _____.

B. PERFECTION SEEN IN GOD'S CREATION:

1. God _____ His work of creation on the SEVENTH day, *Genesis 2:2*.
2. Light is visibly refracted into SEVEN colors (the rainbow).
3. There are SEVEN notes in music.
4. The human body goes through a cell-cycle of SEVEN years.

C. THE SEVENS OF THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION:

The number occurs 54 (symbolic) times in the Book of consummation. There are:

1. SEVEN _____ — 1:4,11,20.
2. SEVEN _____ of God — 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.
3. SEVEN golden _____ — 1:12,13,20; 2:1,5.
4. SEVEN _____ — 1:16,20; 2:1; 3:1.
5. SEVEN _____ of fire — 4:5.
6. SEVEN _____ — 5:1,5.
7. SEVEN _____ on the Lamb — 5:6.
8. SEVEN _____ — 8:2,6.
9. SEVEN _____ — 10:3,4.
10. SEVEN _____ on the “great red _____” — 12:3; 13:1; 17:3,7,9.
11. SEVEN _____ on the seven heads — 12:3.
12. Another SEVEN _____ — 15:1,6-8; 16:1; 17:1; 21:9.
13. SEVEN last _____ in SEVEN golden _____ — 15:1,6-8; 21:9.
14. SEVEN _____ — 17:10,11.

There are SEVEN “_____ s” in the Book — *Revelation* 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7,14. These are called the ‘Beatitudes of The Revelation.’

D. NOTABLE SEVENS FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THE BIBLE:

1. Clean _____ were taken into the _____ by SEVENS (*Genesis* 7:2).
2. In *Leviticus* 8, _____ and his sons were consecrated SEVEN days, *verse* 33.
3. In *Leviticus* 16:14, the _____ was commanded to be sprinkled on the _____ SEVEN times. cf. *Hebrews* 9:12.

4. There are SEVEN _____ of the LORD — *Leviticus 23*.
- P _____ — verse 5.
 - U _____ B _____ — verse 6.
 - F _____ — verse 10.
 - F _____ D _____ (Pentecost) — verse 16.
 - T _____ — verse 24.
 - A _____ — verse 27.
 - T _____ — verse 34.
5. Elisha commanded _____ to _____ SEVEN times in the _____ (*II Kings 5:9,10*).
6. Divine (perfect) forgiveness is expressed as _____ times SEVEN in *Matthew 18:21,22*.
7. There are SEVEN _____'s in the Gospel according to John (the "Gospel of Deity," *John 20:31*) — 6:35,41,51; 8:12; 9:5; 10:7,9; 10:11,14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1,5. This is the Name of deity (*Exodus 3:14; John 8:58*).
8. *Ephesians 4:3-6* gives the SEVEN-fold _____ of the Spirit.
9. *Ephesians 6:14-18* gives the SEVEN-piece _____ of God.
10. There are SEVEN "_____ Things" mentioned in the Book of Hebrews — 7:19; 7:22 (8:6); 9:23; 10:34; 11:16; and 11:35.
11. *James 3:17* gives a SEVEN-fold description of divine _____.

EIGHT — NEWNESS

If the number seven signifies divine perfection and completeness, then EIGHT (being $7 + 1$) stands for a new beginning.

A. NEW BEGINNINGS:

According to *I Peter 3:20*, there were EIGHT souls on the _____ who subsequently constituted the “new world [post-diluvian] order.”

B. NEW LIFE:

God commanded the rite of _____ be performed on the EIGHTH day — *Leviticus 12:3*.

This physical act is a spiritual “shadow” of the NEW birth — *Colossians 2:11*.

NINE — FRUITFULNESS

If there is any significance in the number nine, it would be seen in the totals of “nine things.”

A. NINE-FOLD FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT — *Galatians 5:22,23.*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

B. THE NINTH YEAR OF FRUITFULNESS — *Leviticus 25:2-4,18-22.*

“...until the _____ year; until her _____ come...” (verse 22).

C. THE NINE BEATITUDES — *Matthew 5:3-11.*

Blessed are:

- the _____ in _____.
- they that _____.
- the _____.
- they which do _____ and _____ after righteousness.
- the _____.
- the _____ in heart.
- the _____.
- they which are _____.
- ye, when men shall _____ you.

TEN — COMPLETION

Ten is the number of digits upon a man's hands (or feet) — the basis of the decimal system. It is associated with man, particularly the Gentile. It is a perfect number, signifying completion.

A. TEN AS IT RELATES TO THE THINGS OF GOD:

1. There are TEN _____ — Exodus 20:3-17.
The complete statement of God's holy Law.
2. The _____ (one-tenth) is the _____'S — Leviticus 27:30.
3. The Tabernacle in the Wilderness had:
 - a. TEN _____ — Exodus 26:1.
 - b. Boards that were TEN _____ — Exodus 26:15,16.
 - c. TEN _____ on TEN _____ — Exodus 27:12.

B. TEN AS IT RELATES TO THE AFFAIRS OF MANKIND:

1. The generations from _____ to _____ total TEN — Genesis 5. This represents the completion of the antediluvian world.
2. Genesis 10:10 records the first Gentile K _____.
3. The _____ S against _____ were TEN — Exodus 7:20; 8:6,17,24; 9:3,10,23; 10:13,22; 12:29. This represents the complete circle of divine judgment.

4. The image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream had TEN _____, representing the final (completed) form of Gentile power — *Daniel 2:42,44*.
5. This prophecy is reinforced by Daniel's vision of a dreadful and terrible _____ which had TEN _____ — *Daniel 7:7,24*.
6. The completion (consummation) of Gentile dominion will be in the form of a TEN _____ [dom] confederation — *Revelation 17:12*.

TWELVE — ISRAEL, GOVERNMENTAL PERFECTION

The number twelve figures much in relationship to the nation of Israel and matters of government.

A. THE NATION OF ISRAEL:

1. There are TWELVE _____ — *Genesis 49:28; Exodus 24:4*.
Note: This number is found many times in the Bible relative to Israel — e.g. *Exodus 24:4; 28:21; Numbers 17:2; Joshua 4:8,9; Revelation 12:1*.
2. Moses appointed TWELVE _____ — *Numbers 1:44*.
3. There were TWELVE _____ over Israel from Othniel to Samson, *Judges 2:16*.
4. TWELVE is associated with the dedication of the altar — *Numbers 7:84-87*.
5. Solomon had TWELVE _____ set in his kingdom — *I Kings 4:7*.
6. The Millennial altar will be TWELVE _____ square — *Ezekiel 43:16*.
7. In Genesis 12, we read of the first Hebrew.
8. In Exodus 12, the Israelites leave Egypt.

Multiples of twelve are also significant — *I Chronicles 24:4; Revelation 4:4; 7:4*.

B. GOVERNMENT:

1. Ishmael begat TWELVE _____ — *Genesis 17:20; 25:16*.

2. Christ chose TWELVE _____ as the foundation of His first Church — *Matthew 10:2*.
3. The Lord's apostles shall _____ upon TWELVE _____ where they will be _____ the TWELVE _____ of Israel — *Matthew 19:28*.
4. TWELVE _____ of _____ evidently make up a celestial “task force” — *Matthew 26:53*.
5. According to *Revelation 21:12-16,21*, the New Jerusalem will have:
 - a. TWELVE _____ made of TWELVE _____.
 - b. In a wall having TWELVE _____.
 - c. Which measures TWELVE- _____ furlongs.
6. According to *Revelation 22:2*, the _____ of _____ will bear TWELVE manner of _____.
7. There are TWELVE months in a year.
8. There are TWELVE hours in a day — *John 11:9*.

THIRTEEN — REBELLION

This number is known as the “number of rebellion, based upon *Genesis 14:4*:

- TWELVE years they served... [the number of government]
- In the THIRTEENTH year they REBELLED.

The number 13 is most often associated with bad things. In superstition, it is the “unlucky number!” For example:

- ★ There are thirteen vices coming from the heart of man listed in *Mark 7:21,22*.
- ★ The word “Dragon” occurs THIRTEEN times in the Book of The Revelation.
- ★ The curse of the Law is given in *Galatians 3:13*.
- ★ Haman worked his wicked scheme on the THIRTEENTH day — *Esther 3:12,13*.
- ★ Of the kings of Judah, 7 were good, 13 were wicked.

FORTY — PROBATION, TESTING

This number is associated with trials and periods of waiting.

- ★ The _____ was FORTY days upon the _____ — *Genesis 7:12,17.*
- ★ The life of _____ is divided into sets of FORTY — *Acts 7:22,23,30.*
- ★ Moses was in the _____ FORTY days and FORTY nights — *Exodus 24:18.*
- ★ Israel would _____ in the _____ for FORTY years — *Numbers 14:33,34.*
- ★ _____ challenged Israel for FORTY days — *I Samuel 17:16.*
- ★ Elijah went FORTY days and FORTY nights in the _____ of the angelic provision — *I Kings 19:7,8.*
- ★ The city of _____ was given FORTY days to change — *Jonah 3:4.*
- ★ The Lord Jesus Christ _____ FORTY days and FORTY nights — *Matthew 4:2.*

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Psalm 90:12.*

O Offenses

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This study considers the matter of offenses that can occur between brothers and sisters in Christ and within our Baptist churches. While any casual observer would undoubtedly conclude that “offenses are just a part of life,” the fact is that the Lord intends otherwise. For example:

- “Behold, how _____ and how _____ it is for brethren to dwell together in _____!” — Psalm 133:1.
- “Endeavouring to keep the _____ of the _____ in the bond of _____” — Ephesians 4:3.
- “That there be no _____ among you” — I Corinthians 1:10e.
- “Be at _____ among _____” — I Thessalonians 5:13b.

Many Christians either do not know how to handle grievances and offenses, or just do not follow the plain teaching of the Bible on the subject. As a result, much harm has come to the cause of Christ — churches have split (or gone out of existence), fruitful lives have been made ‘castaway’ (*I Corinthians 9:27; I Timothy 1:19*), sweet fellowship has been destroyed, and ultimately the preaching of the Gospel has suffered.

Therefore, this is a most necessary study for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, the brethren, the Church, and the souls of men.

RECOGNIZING OFFENSES

A. THEIR POSSIBILITY:

1. Jesus said to His disciples, “It is _____ but that offences _____ come:” — Luke 17:1a.
2. James calls one who does not offend a _____ man — James 3:2.

B. THEIR SOURCE:

Read: *James 3:14-18*. This passage identifies a three-fold source of the sort of “wisdom” that gives rise to offenses and the resultant envying, strife, and confusion:

1. _____ — *verse 15b.* (i.e. the World)
2. _____ — *verse 15c.* (i.e. the Flesh, *Galatians 5:19a,20*)
3. _____ — *verse 15d.*

Note: An offense may be given or taken (or both). In other words, the workings of these three things may be found in either party.

C. THEIR CAUSE:

Some of the reasons given in scripture as to *why* people are offended are:

1. The T _____ — *James 3:2-10.*
 - a. Gossip and talebearing will _____ the best of friends — *Proverbs 16:28; 17:9.*
 - b. An _____ man stirreth up _____ — *Proverbs 29:22.*
2. M _____ — *James 3:1,2a.* This word is referring to pastors (rulers, *Hebrews 13:7,17,24; I Timothy 5:17*). Preaching can offend people, especially sound preaching, *II Timothy 4:3; Isaiah 30:9,10.*
3. The W _____ — *Matthew 13:21.* See: *John 6:60,61; Matthew 15:12.*
4. The C _____ — *Galatians 5:11e.*
5. The L _____ — *Matthew 11:6; 13:57; 26:31,33; I Peter 2:8.*
6. Contrary D _____ — *Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 11:18,19.*
7. M _____ — *I Corinthians 8:13a.* i.e. the liberty of other believers, *Romans 14:20.*
8. N _____ T — *Acts 6:1d.*

D. THEIR DANGER:

1. The danger of a _____ of _____ — *Hebrews 12:15.* This has a two-fold effect:
 - a. It will T _____ “you,” and
 - b. It will D _____ “many.” It is like a spreading cancer.

2. The danger of a “Church T _____” — *II Corinthians 12:20*.
Note the downward spiral into chaos from what began between two Church members:

- D _____ — it takes two, and involves a difference.
↓
- E _____ I N G S — feelings become involved.
↓
- W _____ — tempers begin to flare.
↓
- S _____ — the difference has now become an issue.
↓
- B _____ — unkindness enters the fray.
↓
- W _____ I N G S — the matter is spread to others.
↓
- S _____ I N G S — the whole church body becomes involved.
↓
- T _____ — a “knock-down, drag-out” battle ensues.

Note: there are *three* steps between debates and strife — i.e., differences do not automatically mean strife. People have to ‘get there’ to that point!

E. THEIR NATURE:

Offenses may generally be classified as either:

1. Private Offenses — between individuals.
These are matters which arise on a one-to-one, couple-to-couple, or family-to-family basis. They are private, and should remain so.

- a. The instruction of *Matthew 18:15* is to “go and tell him his fault between thee and him _____.”
- b. “Debate thy cause with thy neighbour _____; and discover [uncover, disclose] _____ a secret to another.” (*Proverbs 25:9*).

2. Public Offenses — those which affect the church.

These are open matters which, for the sake of the Church and the offender, must be publicly dealt with. Such offenses include:

- a. Immoral Conduct — *I Corinthians 5:11*.
- b. Disorderly Conduct — *II Thessalonians 3:6,11*.

- c. Unruly Conduct — *I Thessalonians 5:14a; Matthew 18:17c; Hebrews 13:7.*
- d. Heretical Conduct — *Titus 1:13,14; 3:10; Romans 16:17.*
- e. Arrogant Conduct — *III John 9,10.*
- f. Unfaithful Conduct — *Hebrews 10:25.*

REACTING TO OFFENSES

Offenses are often compounded when they are not dealt with scripturally, when people *react* rather than *respond*. Some of the ways this can occur are:

A. VIOLATING THE “PRIVACY” COMMAND:

See: Matthew 18:15; Proverbs 25:9.

Human (Adamic) nature will seek its own cause by enlisting the sympathy and support of others. This often occurs in the form of gossip, but also under the guise of “sharing a matter for prayer,” etc.

B. FAILING OF THE GRACE OF GOD:

1. A _____ of _____ results when we “fail of the grace of God” — *Hebrews 12:15.*
2. Why? Because it is by the grace of God that we experience and enjoy the _____ N E S S of _____ — *Ephesians 1:7b.*
3. Therefore (because “God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”), we are able to _____ one another — *Ephesians 4:32.*

Note: For a believer to say he cannot (or will not) forgive one who has offended him is to deny the work of God in his life — and to fail of the grace of God.

4. It is important not to let the _____ go _____ upon our anger and wrath — *Ephesians 4:26.*

Bitterness only hurts the container it is in.

C. RETALIATING:

Human (Adamic) nature will seek to “pay back” the offending brother in order to satisfy SELF.

1. According to *Proverbs 24:29*, there are two things we should not do:

- a. Say, "I will ____ so to him as he hath _____ to me."
- b. R_____ to the man according to his _____.

2. According to *I Peter 3:9*, we should:

- a. Not _____ evil for evil, or railing for railing;
- b. Instead (to the contrary), we should _____ the offender.

3. Read: *I Corinthians 6:1-7*. Rather than take another Church member to court, for the sake of Christ it would be better to take _____.

D. **WITHDRAWING:**

Read: *Luke 15:28*. When the elder brother had his feelings hurt, he "would not ____ in" to the feast. Offended believers often likewise withdraw. They will:

- resign their ministries.
- quit the Church.
- back off their support (and tithe).

While claiming to do so in order to avoid further problems, in reality they are seeking to punish others. Ultimately, it is the Lord (and His work) who suffers!

E. **TAKING UP AN OFFENSE:**

1. According to *I Corinthians 3:3*, carnality (being controlled by the flesh, the old Adamic nature) produces:

- E ____ I N G.
- S _____.
- D _____ S.

2. According to *Proverbs 26:17*, when we _____ in strife between other people, it is like taking a ____ by the _____. See: *Psalm 15:3*.

What a child of God does when he or she is offended should be totally different from what a lost person might do. Why? *I Peter 2:23*.

RESPONDING TO OFFENSES

The New Testament outlines four “laws” for dealing with offenses between church members and believers in general:

A. FOR THE OFFENDER — THE LAW OF CONFESSION:

1. Confess your _____ [not sins] _____ to another — *James 5:16*.
2. One who has committed an offense has but one valid decision to make, namely, to confess his error. All other decisions are worthless until this is done.
3. A sound rule to follow when we offend is:
 - Confess personal sins personally to God.
 - Confess private offenses privately to the offended party.
 - Confess public offenses publicly before the Church.

B. FOR THE ACCUSED — THE LAW OF INITIATIVE:

1. According to *Matthew 5:23,24*, it is imperative that we _____ be reconciled to our _____.
2. Our ‘horizontal’ relationships affect our ‘vertical’ relationship with God!
3. We should follow this command *anytime* we become aware that a brother has been offended by us. Failure to do so on the grounds that “I haven’t done anything wrong” usually only exacerbates the problem. It is our duty to go, even if we doubt it is our responsibility!

C. FOR THE OFFENDED — THE LAW OF FORGIVENESS:

The word “forgive” comes from the Old English ‘forgiefan’ — *for*, “away;” *giefan*, “give.” It literally means to ‘give away,’ or to ‘put away’ an offense.

1. According to *Matthew 18:21,22*, we are to forgive an offending brother _____ times _____.

Note: This does not mean exactly (and no more than) 490 times. The expression is an oriental idiom meaning “endlessly!”

2. Our Lord’s parable in *Matthew 18:23-35* teaches that the basis of our forgiving others is God’s gracious forgiveness of our great _____.

3. An unforgiving spirit withholds our _____ 'S forgiveness of our own trespasses — *Mark 11:25,26*. See: Matthew 6:15.
4. We are to forgive one another “ ____ God ... hath forgiven ____ !” (*Ephesians 4:32b.*)

Was this:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conditional? | <input type="checkbox"/> Unconditional? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partial? | <input type="checkbox"/> Complete? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deserved? | <input type="checkbox"/> Undeserved? |

See: *Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 38:17; 44:22; Jeremiah 50:20; Micah 7:18,19; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17.*

Note: Often Christians will say, “I can forgive, but I cannot forget!” True, we do find it hard to forget. However, if we remember a past offense we can also remember a past forgiveness. That’s the key!

The forgiven life is the forgiving life!

D. FOR EVERY CHURCH MEMBER — THE LAW OF LOVE:

1. The “ _____ Commandment” is that we _____ one another (*John 13:34,35*).
2. This is defined by, “as I [Christ] _____ you” (*John 15:12*).
3. We have the full capacity for demonstrating this kind of love because of our salvation, *I John 3:14*.
4. According to *I Peter 4:8a*, this kind of love is to be _____.
5. According to *I Peter 4:8b*, this kind of love will _____ a multitude of _____.
6. According to *I Corinthians 13:5b*, charity (Christlike love) “seeketh not her ____ .” It always seeks the welfare of others.
7. According to *Colossians 3:14*, charity is the _____ [super-glue] of _____.

RESISTING OFFENSES

People react to offenses differently. In any given (large enough) group there is bound to be someone who is “thin-skinned,” who takes offense very easily — just as there will be someone else who never seems to get offended no matter what, who takes everything in stride. The majority fall somewhere in between.

The question is: “How can we *offense-proof* our life?” Considering the fact that offenses will come, that they have the potential of causing much harm, and should be scripturally dealt with when necessary — how can we minimize their impact? Here are some Biblical suggestions:

A. ADJUST YOUR FOCUS:

We are always more easily offended by others when our focus is SELF-centered.

1. Develop A Biblical Perspective.

Great _____ have they which _____ thy ____: and
_____ shall _____ them — *Psalm 119:165.*

2. Develop A Ministry Perspective.

- a. Be of the _____ in the Lord — *Philippians 4:2b.*
- b. With one _____ striving _____ for the faith of the _____; — *Philippians 1:27.*

3. Develop A Bond-Servant Perspective.

Know ye not ... ye are _____ your ____? For ye are bought with a ____: — *I Corinthians 6:19d,20a.*

B. REACT IN LOVE:

1. Let Love Rule In Your Life.

- a. Charity [self-giving love] ... seeketh _____ her _____, is not easily ____ ... — *I Corinthians 13:5.*
- b. Have _____ charity among yourselves: for charity shall _____ the multitude of ____ — *I Peter 4:8.*
- c. Hatred stirreth up strifes: but _____ covereth ____ sins — *Proverbs 10:12.*

2. Seek The Welfare Of The Offender.

- a. _____ your _____, bless them that curse you, do _____ to them that hate you, and _____ for them which spitefully use you ... — *Matthew 5:44*.
- b. Overcome _____ with _____ — *Romans 12:20,21*.

Note: It is well to “consider the source” when we are offended. It may be that the offender is a babe in Christ. It may be necessary to make allowances when offenses come about as a result of physical, emotional, or spiritual stress.

Note: Confronting the offender in the scriptural manner is often most beneficial to him, inasmuch as God will use the incident to produce spiritual growth. (For this reason, overlooking a matter is not always the right thing.)

C. GIVE IT OVER TO THE LORD:

Sometimes the best course of action is to “take it on the chin.” This is usually a measure of our maturity — the more Christlike we become, the less we will allow offenses to affect us.

1. Make Every Attempt To Avoid Taking Offense.

- a. If it be _____, as much as _____ in you, live _____ with all men — *Romans 12:18*.
- b. The discretion of a man _____ his anger; and it is his _____ to _____ a transgression — *Proverbs 19:11*.
- c. We are to exercise F _____ A N C E (putting up with other people) — *Colossians 3:13*. See: *I Corinthians 6:7*.
- d. See: *Matthew 5:38-44; Hebrews 12:3; I Peter 2:19-23*.

2. Let The Lord Settle Scores.

- a. _____ not yourselves — *Romans 12:19*.
- b. In _____ thing give _____ — *I Thessalonians 5:18*.
- c. Read: *II Samuel 16:5-12*. This was David’s greatest victory! Note that the Lord used this unsavory and offensive incident to work on David’s character.

RESTORING THE OFFENDER

Scripture gives clear instruction on how to deal with offenses which cannot be overlooked or forgiven without speaking with the offender — see: *Matthew 18:15-17*.

A. WHEN? — “*If thy brother shall trespass against thee*”

We cannot set everyone straight on everything. We should only act when we personally are the one offended.

B. WHO? — “*thee and him alone*”

It is important that we examine our own life first:

1. Is the offense justified? — *Matthew 7:3*.
2. Am I right with God? — *Galatians 6:1* (“*Ye which are spiritual*”).

C. WHY? — “*thou hast gained thy brother*”

Our goal should not be to win the battle, but to win our brother. Restoration is the reason for action!

D. HOW?

According to *Galatians 6:1*, we should go:

1. In a spirit of _____ N E S S.
2. C _____ I N G thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

E. WHAT?

We are to go:

1. Privately — *verse 15*.

Most offenses will be successfully dealt with at this level.

2. Plurally — *verse 16*.

This is a limited escalation — “*one or two more*.” Those that are taken should not be sympathizers, but spiritual (*Galatians 6:1*). Normally, this would be a pastor.

3. Publicly — *verse 17*.

Only after all avenues have been exhausted should the matter become public. The church meets according to the manner of *I Corinthians 5:4,5; II Corinthians 3:6*. Church action is the final arbiter. See: *Proverbs 18:18*.

CONTENDING, CONTENTION, & CONTENTIOUSNESS

What happens when two brothers simply cannot agree?

In Acts 15:36-41, we read of a S _____ C _____ (verse 39) between Paul and Barnabas over the issue of John Mark. These men had been a great ministry team from the time of Acts 11:25 — Barnabas had been Paul's mentor in the ministry; they had traveled along many roads together; they had been effective in establishing churches throughout southern Asia Minor — and now this! (Obviously Satan hates evangelism, and would have gleefully used this incident to derail the proposed trip if he could.)

A. THE CAUSE OF THIS CONTENTION:

The issue was whether to take John Mark with them on their proposed journey.

1. This Dispute Differed From Most Conflicts Between Believers:

- a. Both men were actively serving the Lord — neither was half-hearted or cold-hearted (spiritual conditions which do lead to conflict).
- b. Both men shared an agreed-upon, common goal — *verse 36*. This was not an issue over *what* to do.
- c. Both men were “determined” — *verse 37*.

These men had _____ their lives for the cause of Christ (Acts 15:25,26) — they had counted the cost, they knew what was in store for them if they went.

2. We See Two Different “Temperaments” At Work In This Situation.

- a. Barnabas — the encourager (Acts 4:36), who saw the POTENTIAL in others. Remember: Barnabas stood for Saul when no one wanted him (Acts 9:26,27)!
- b. Paul — the driven one (Acts 20:24), who looked at the PERFORMANCE (Acts 15:38) and PROFITABILITY (*II Timothy 4:11*) of others.

3. It Is Interesting To Observe What Was Missing In This Dispute.

- a. There was no doctrinal difference — they believed the same way.
- b. There was no clash in purpose — they desired the same thing.
- c. No harsh, unkind words were exchanged — *II Timothy 2:24*.
- d. There was no attempt by one to “dig up dirt” on the other.
- e. There was no attempt to garner supporters among the brethren.
- f. In fact, NO offense ever actually occurred!

B. THE CURE FOR THIS CONTENTION:

1. The Importance Of A Christ-Like Attitude.

This was the **key** in this particular incident.

- Let this _____ be in you, which was _____ in Christ Jesus — *Philippians 2:5*.
- Yea, _____ of you be _____ one to another, and be _____ with _____ — *I Peter 5:5*.
- Let no man _____ in _____ — *I Corinthians 3:21*.
- Be kindly _____ one to another with brotherly _____; in honour _____ one another — *Romans 12:10*.
- Honour _____ men. Love the _____ — *I Peter 2:17*.
- God _____ the proud, but giveth grace to the _____ — *James 4:6*.

2. Sometimes, Separation Is Inevitable.

Sometimes, Christians just cannot work together — especially when both parties are God-called leaders.

However, note:

- a. The issue was kept between Paul and Barnabas — it obviously didn't "spill over" into a church issue.
We are to "leave _____ contention _____ it be meddled with" — *Proverbs 17:14*.
- b. Neither man "dropped out" of the ministry. Both continued serving the Lord very effectively.
- c. God's work did not suffer — in fact, it multiplied! Two evangelistic teams instead of one. Furthermore, the original goal (*verse 36*) was met.
- d. God sometimes uses difficulties and problems to rearrange and realign. cf. *Acts 1:8* with *Acts 8:1,4*. Also: *Genesis 13:7-9*.
- e. Broken relationships do not have to mean broken friendships. See: *I Corinthians 9:6*, where Paul later refers to his old friend in a ministry capacity.
- f. It is possible to have contention without being contentious! Sometimes men must agree to disagree, and that's all right (unless the issue is over doctrine or morals, etc.).

C. WHO WAS “RIGHT?”

Answer: Both were “right!”

1. Barnabas had his confidence in John Mark proven — *II Timothy 4:11.*
The young man had become _____ for the ministry.

Note: Paul was happy to acknowledge this fact. There is no hint of him harboring a grudge — or having any lingering doubts about John Mark.

2. Paul’s expectation of performance and profit was achieved. His second evangelistic journey was world-changing!

D. WHO “WON?”

1. The Lord “Won” — His work not only continued on, it doubled!
2. John Mark “Won” — he was given a second chance, and went on to become a great servant of the Lord AND the writer of the second Gospel.
3. The Lost “Won” — this contention had fallen out to the furtherance of the _____ (cf. *Philippians 1:12,15-18*).

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Matthew 5:23,24.*

NOTES & QUESTIONS

P Precepts, Principles, & Preferences

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This study follows an excellent outline first developed by Pastor Gary S. Prisk.

It examines a key consideration for applying the Word of God in a practical way, particularly in church-related matters. Confusion (and extremes) will result from a failure to distinguish precepts, principles, and preferences. Too often, someone's preferences have risen to the stature of a precept — or a Bible principle has been relegated to the level of a preference.

Some things in the Bible are clearly "black and white" issues, while others seem less clear. This lesson seeks to make the distinction and the appropriate application.

PRECEPTS:

The word "precept" is found predominately in Psalm 119 (the "Word of God chapter"), where it occurs 21 times.

A. THE DEFINITION OF A BIBLICAL PRECEPT:

1. The word is translated from a Hebrew word meaning "appointed," a "mandate."
2. Another Hebrew word "mitzvah" is translated as 'precept' and 'commandment.'
3. The dictionary defines it as "an **authoritative rule** prescribing a particular kind of conduct or action; a standard or guide to morals; a maxim (that having greatest authority)."
4. "Thou hast _____ us to _____ thy precepts
_____ — *Psalm 119:4.*"

B. EXAMPLES OF BIBLICAL PRECEPTS:

1. The _____ — *Deuteronomy 4:13.*

2. That which was given through _____ — *Hebrews 9:19a; Nehemiah 9:14.*
3. They are clearly defined directives (“thou shalt”) or prohibitions (“thou shalt not”).
4. They carry a penalty for disobedience. e.g. *Exodus 21:12,16,17; 22:19; Leviticus 20:10,13,15.*

C. **THE APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL PRECEPTS:**

1. They are a basis of C _____ S H I P (fellowship) — *Psalm 119:63.*
2. They are the means of getting true U _____ I N G and of discerning every _____ way — *Psalm 119:100,104.*
3. In the Church:
 - a. They are to be PROCLAIMED — *Isaiah 58:1.*
 - b. DISOBEDIENCE requires DISCIPLINE — e.g. *I Corinthians 5:1-13.*

Note: Failure to take action will destroy a church.

PRINCIPLES:

A. **THE DEFINITION OF A BIBLE PRINCIPLE:**

1. The dictionary defines a principle as “a **general rule** or truth basic to other truths; a rule of personal conduct; a primary source or fundamental cause.”
2. According to *Hebrews 5:12-14*, a principle is a means whereby we can “_____ both _____ and _____.”
3. Whereas a precept decrees a definite action or prohibition, a principle delivers a guiding policy which can then be applied to non-specified situations.

B. **EXAMPLES OF BIBLE PRINCIPLES:**

There are numerous principles given throughout the Word of God. The Lord has not given us specific instructions for every single circumstance and possible situation man may encounter in life. We deal with most of these things through the application of principles. For example:

1. The believer's _____ is the _____ of the Holy Ghost (*I Corinthians 6:19,20*).
 - This principle guides in areas of physical health (e.g. smoking, drugs, etc.) and temperance (e.g. *Proverbs 23:2; I Timothy 4:8*; etc.).
2. A believer is not to be _____ yoked together with _____ — *II Corinthians 6:14-17*.
 - This principle speaks to matters of marriage, business partnerships, church associations, etc.
3. We are to receive those who are _____ in the faith, but not when it would cause doubtful _____ I O N S (*Romans 14:1*).
 - This principle applies to the requirements a church may place on a prospective member.
4. Christian women are to wear _____ (*I Timothy 2:9,10*).
 - This scripture does not list specific items of clothing which are acceptable or unacceptable. There is no “Baptist uniform!” It is left to other scriptures to help one discern what is acceptable (e.g. *I Peter 3:3-5*) and unacceptable (e.g. *Proverbs 7:10; Isaiah 47:2,3; Deuteronomy 22:5*).
5. We are to _____ from all _____ of evil (*I Thessalonians 5:22*).
 - Not just what IS wrong, but what LOOKS wrong — or may give a wrong message.
6. We are to do _____ to the _____ of God (*I Corinthians 10:31*).
 - This principle, when turned into a question, will guide the child of God as to where he should go and what he should do.
7. *Romans 15:20* gives a sound evangelism (church-planting) principle.

C. THE APPLICATION OF BIBLE PRINCIPLES:

1. They Are To Be TAUGHT:

A believer must understand the general rule in order to identify the specific applications.

2. They Are To Be APPLIED:

The thrust of *Hebrews 5:11–6:3* is that Christians are to **grow** toward “perfection” (maturity). This comes about through assimilation and application of the principles of God’s Word.

3. With Maturity Comes MINISTRY — *Hebrews 6:9,10.*
4. With Ministry Comes RESPONSIBILITY.
 - *Luke 12:48* — “For unto whomsoever much is _____, of him shall be much _____:”
 - The greater the responsibility, the greater the qualifications required. e.g. *I Timothy 3:1-12; II Timothy 2:20,21.*
 - Disobedience results in DISQUALIFICATION.

Note: A church member who may happen to smoke cigarettes, frequent movie-theaters, or wear inappropriate clothing, etc. is not a candidate for church discipline. Neither is he or she ready to serve in a ministry, but should be afforded every opportunity to grow in grace toward that end.

PREFERENCES:

A. THE DEFINITION OF A PREFERENCE:

1. This term is not found in the Word of God per se.
2. A preference is defined as “the choosing of one person or thing over another or others; also, the privilege of so choosing.”

B. EXAMPLES OF PREFERENCES:

In *I Corinthians 7:6-9*, the apostle Paul expresses his personal preference concerning marriage. His reasoning was:

1. Because of the “present _____” — *verse 26.*
2. From his desire (*verses 32-35*) to “A _____ upon the Lord without _____ I O N.”
3. The fact that this was not obligatory is seen by the words “but” (*verse 36*) and ”nevertheless” (*verse 37*).

C. THE APPLICATION OF PREFERENCES:

1. We may share them, or suggest them. That is all.
2. They are not precepts or principles — they are not to be set forth authoritatively.

3. In the church, if someone disagrees with our preference they are not disciplined nor disqualified — and ought never to be disliked!!
4. When one preference clashes with another preference (in the Church, in the home, in the school, etc.), for the sake of good order the one in a position of authority (i.e. pastor, husband, parent, teacher, etc.) must prevail.

SUMMARY:

PRECEPTS A matter of Obedience
PRINCIPLES A matter of Maturity
PREFERENCES A matter of Taste

Perhaps the greatest difficulty lies at the '**borders**' — where principles end and precepts begin, etc. For example:

- *I Corinthians 8:7* speaks of a _____.
- *I Corinthians 8:8* is a _____.
- *I Corinthians 8:9* is a _____.

Sometimes precepts, principles, and preferences are separated only by degree. For example when it comes to the issue of clothing:

- *Deuteronomy 22:5* is a PRECEPT.
- *Genesis 1:27b* is a PRINCIPLE (unambiguous distinction of the sexes).
- Red dress/blue dress; striped shirt/white shirt — all PREFERENCES!

Perhaps the greatest danger comes when our preferences border on violating a principle, and when failure to follow principles leads directly into violating a precept! For example:

- *II Samuel 11:1* — David remained in Jerusalem — a PREFERENCE.
while not wrong, opened the way for....
- *Psalm 101:1-4; Romans 13:14* — a PRINCIPLE not being followed.
which led to....
- *Exodus 20:14* — a PRECEPT being violated.

— HERE IS DISCERNMENT —

Sin is progressive — *James 1:14,15; Psalm 1:1* (“walk,” “stand,” “sit!”).

— HERE IS WISDOM —

Err on the side of caution, stay away from the ‘borders!’ — *Proverbs 4:14,15*.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Ephesians 5:15*.

Q Qualifications of Officers

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This study considers the qualifications set forth in scripture and required of a man who serves as an officer in a church. By “officer,” we mean one who serves in a scripturally designated church office — as opposed to all areas of general ministry to which every member is enjoined.

There is a great need today for men to be ministers; yet they must be qualified men. The consequences of appointing unqualified men as church officers are just as dire as not having sufficient men to appoint. It is more important to “fill the shoes” than to fill a position!

THE SCRIPTURAL CHURCH OFFICES

According to *Philippians 1:1*, there are two offices established by the Lord for His churches:

_____ and _____

The Bible knows nothing of the hierarchical systems of the man-made ‘churches’ and denominations. These developed during the late-apostolic and post-apostolic years, and were refined during the Middle Ages. Although the development was gradual and not always uniform, there were some clearly defined steps away from the New Testament pattern:

- The domineering pastor _____ is an early example of this change (*II John 9,10*. cf. *I Peter 5:3*).
- The second century A.D. saw the rise of a definite clergy class. Judaism, with its reversion to the Old Testament model of a priesthood (where priests were mediators between God and the people), was the driving force behind this change. Another related factor was the growing error of baptismal regeneration and its inevitable requirement of consecrated water (thus a consecrator — a priest!).
- By the middle of the third century A.D., there was a division of the establishment clergy into ranks — at first, bishops and elders; then archbishops, metropolitans, primates, patriarchs. Much of this evolved based on the size, prestige, and history of a church. Constantine’s

imposition of Christianity as the official state religion of the Empire added another dimension by imposing a Roman model of government.

- By the fifth century A.D., the Roman papacy was well underway in its development. It was quantified and qualified during the middle ages, and today operates on four basic levels — the universal level (pope and cardinals), the provincial level (archbishops), the diocesan level (bishops), and the parish level (priests, deacons, subdeacons, etc.). Most Protestant groups also have a hierarchy — some complex, others more simple.

The two scriptural offices of a Baptist church are those of:

A. **PASTOR.**

There are actually three words used for this one office:

PASTOR	— <i>poimen</i>	— shepherd	— duty of the office	— FEED
BISHOP	— <i>episkopos</i>	— overseer	— design of the office	— HEED
ELDER	— <i>presbuteros</i>	— ruler	— dignity of the office	— LEAD

The fact that they are used interchangeably shows that there are not three separate offices.

1. *Titus 1:5,7* uses the words “_____” and “_____” in the same context.
2. *I Peter 5:1-4* is addressed to the _____, whose duties are directed toward the F_____, and who are responsible to the Chief _____.
3. *Acts 20:28* charges the _____ of the _____ (*Acts 20:17*) to take _____ to themselves and the flock over which they were made _____ (*episkopos*), and to _____ (*poimaino*) the church of God.

B. **DEACON.**

The word “deacon” comes from the Greek ‘diakonos,’ which means “servant.” The root meaning of diakonos is “to raise dust by hastening,” i.e., to be busy in service. Another word, ‘diakoneo’ is translated “minister.”

A deacon is therefore a “servant of the church.”

The Lord Jesus Christ sets forth the example of both pastor and deacon:

- In *John 10:11*, He is the good _____ (*poimen*) — see: *Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 2:25; 5:4*.
- In *Matthew 20:28*, He came to _____ (*diakoneo*).

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A PASTOR

Read: *I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9.*

These passages list a combined total of 22 qualifications for a pastor.

A. HE MUST BE: _____ — *I Timothy 3:2a; Titus 1:6a,7a.*

This word means he is without censure or rebuke in his conduct; that he stands unaccused; that there are no questions concerning his deportment. No man can expect to have the confidence of his people when even a hint of scandal touches him.

1. *Titus 1:7* connects this qualification with S _____ S H I P.
2. Read: *I Corinthians 4:1,2.* According to *verse 2*, a pastor should be a man who is found F _____ .

Note: When considering a man for the pastorate, a church should carefully examine his faithfulness to his previous ministries. See: *Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:10-12.*

3. A pastor's conduct should give "no _____ in any thing, that the _____ be not blamed" (*II Corinthians 6:3,4*).

Note: This does not mean he will never offend someone. The message he is to preach is offensive, but he is not to be offensive. An example of blamable behavior is given in *Galatians 2:11-14.*

B. HE MUST BE: the _____ of one _____ — *I Timothy 3:2b; Titus 1:6b.*

The interpretation and explanation of this qualification has proven to be somewhat difficult. It could mean one of three things:

1. A Pastor Must Be A Married Man.

While a pastor is usually well advised to be married and will certainly have his ministry strengthened by a godly wife, Paul's instructions and admonitions in *I Corinthians 7* would rule out this interpretation:

- a. I would that all men were even as I _____ (*verse 7a*).
- b. I say therefore to the _____ ... it is good even if they _____ even as I (*verse 8*).
- c. An unmarried man can devote all of his time to the _____ (*verse 32*).

d. A married man must seek to please his _____ (verse 33).

Even though this passage is not directed specifically to pastors, it would seem unlikely that Paul would encourage men to remain celibate (in times of distress, *I Corinthians 7:26*) while at the same time insisting that a pastor *must* be married.

2. A Pastor Cannot Have Concubines Or Practice Polygamy.

While concubinage and polygamy was practiced by numerous men in the Old Testament (outside of the will of God), there is NOT ONE mention of these sins in the New Testament. Why then would Paul bring it up if it was a non-issue?

3. A Pastor Cannot Be Divorced And Remarried.

This is undoubtedly the correct interpretation. Why?

- a. Because other qualifications assume pastors would be men, not boys — e.g., *I Timothy 3:4,5,6*. (The term “elder” is indicative of maturity, *I Timothy 5:1; I Peter 5:5a*.)
- b. Because the majority of men (as is any era and in any society) would be married. Why then make a special qualification out of the normal? (That would be like saying a bishop must have two legs. Most do!)

The fact that this is a *special* qualification moves it from the ordinary to apply to specific circumstances.

Note: According to *Leviticus 21:1,7* a _____ could not marry a divorced woman.

The reason for this was that he was a _____ man among his people, *Leviticus 21:4*. i.e., those in positions of leadership were to exemplify integrity in marriage. See also: Leviticus 21:14, which covers the requirements of the high priest.

Other men could — priests could not!

Note: Other qualifications may well come into play on this issue. A divorced pastor will likely have difficulty qualifying as blameless or of good report. He may also have to deal (fairly or unfairly) with the stigma of divorce — especially in counseling with those who are contemplating it themselves.

Note: This is a special prohibition affecting the office of pastor and deacon only. Divorce and remarriage does **not** disqualify a believer from meaningful and fruitful service. [See: Lesson “D,” Volume I, pages 45-68.]

C. HE MUST BE: _____ — *I Timothy 3:2c.*

This words means to “be on alert, on guard.”

1. Pastors must be alert for any attacks of the _____, the _____ (*I Peter 5:8*).
2. According to *Acts 20:29,30*, these attacks will come in the form of:
 - a. Grievous _____ entering in from outside the church membership, seeking to destroy. See: *Matthew 7:15; II Peter 2:1*.
 - b. Perverse-speaking _____ arising from within the church membership, seeking to take people out of the church. See: *I John 2:19*.

Note: There are shepherds and there are _____ S (*John 10:12*). The difference will be seen when danger approaches.

3. Pastors also _____ for the _____ of those in their flock (*Hebrews 13:17c*).

The word translated “vigilant” in *I Timothy 3:2* (‘*nephaleos*’) is associated with the command to “watch” in *II Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 13:17; & I Peter 4:7*. The word translated “vigilant” in *I Peter 5:8* (‘*gregoreuo*’) is also translated elsewhere as “watch,” notably in *Matthew 24:42; 25:13; 26:41; Acts 20:31; I Corinthians 16:13; Colossians 4:2; & I Thessalonians 5:6*.

This is what true shepherds do — *Luke 2:8*.

D. HE MUST BE: _____ — *I Timothy 3:2d; Titus 1:8c.*

This means “not allowing external or irrational things to control us.”

We usually associate this word with drunkenness (*I Thessalonians 5:6-8*), but it does have a wider application. It means to be in control of one’s faculties — see: Acts 26:24,25. It also means to have a good grasp of reality (*Romans 12:3*), something which is learned with age (*Titus 2:4,6*).

The Book of I Peter gives three reasons why pastors (and all believers) need this temperament:

1. Because of manifold T _____ (testings of faith) (1:6. This is the context of 1:13 — “wherefore”).
2. Because the _____ of all things is near (4:7 — “therefore”).
3. Because of the _____, the _____ (5:8).

A pastor must be balanced and controlled in his emotional makeup. This doesn’t mean he should be void of emotion, but that his actions and decisions are not

driven, controlled, or directed by emotion, feelings, passion, etc. He is to be serious minded because he is involved in serious work.

E. HE MUST BE OF: _____ — *1 Timothy 3:2e.*

This has to do with conduct, which for a pastor has a two-fold application:

1. His Personal Conduct as a Man of God.

A pastor should be a gentleman in the finest sense of the word — in his appearance, his manners, and his speech.

- a. He should have this testimony among B _____ R S (*I Thessalonians 2:10*).
- b. He should cause others to want to F _____ his example (*II Thessalonians 3:7*).

2. His Ecclesiastical Conduct in the Church — *1 Timothy 3:14,15.*

- a. These verses give the reasons for the writing of the epistle. I Timothy is called a “pastoral epistle” because it deals with pastoring and church order.
- b. The Lord’s desire for His churches is that everything should be done _____ and in _____ (*I Corinthians 14:40*).
- c. A pastor must know how to lead his flock in a well-behaved, well ordered way. See: *Ephesians 4:16.*

F. HE MUST BE: _____ to _____ — *1 Timothy 3:2f; Titus 1:8a.*

According to *1 Peter 4:9*, this ought to be an attribute of all Christians. It is a natural outflow of brotherly love — *Hebrews 13:1,2*. It means practical open-heartedness.

1. A pastor must be _____ to this habit (*1 Timothy 3:2*). This means he is actively seeking opportunities to be hospitable — rather than passively waiting for people to come to him.
2. A pastor must be a _____ of this practice (*Titus 1:8*). It should bring him particular joy to help take care of people.
3. Pastors should see to it that the brethren and strangers who preach are “brought _____ on their journeys after a _____ sort (manner)” — *II John 5:8.*

One of the blessings of the pastorate (which in many ways is a lonely office) is to be able to take care of and enjoy the company of visiting preachers and other servants of the Lord.

G. HE MUST BE: _____ to _____ — *I Timothy 3:2g; II Timothy 2:24.*

This refers to the ability to communicate the truth of God's Word in a way that feeds the flock and perfects (makes mature) the saints.

1. *Ephesians 4:11* refers to the office as "pastors _____ teachers" — the punctuation of the verse does not separate the two.
2. The primary 'job description' of a pastor is "_____ and the _____ of the _____" — *Acts 6:4.*
3. A pastor must first have been _____ — *Titus 1:9a.*
4. A pastor's teaching should be:
 - a. Authoritative — *I Timothy 4:11; Titus 2:15.*
 - b. Affirmative — *I Timothy 6:2g.*
 - c. Appreciative (of the hearer's needs) — *II Timothy 2:25.*

H. HE MUST NOT BE: _____ to _____ — *I Timothy 3:3a; Titus 1:7e.*

In the Bible, the word "wine" is a generic term that refers to grape juice in either its alcoholic or non-alcoholic form. The context usually makes clear the intended meaning.

1. In *I Timothy 5:23*, Paul advised Timothy to use a _____ wine instead of _____ because of a _____ condition and other persistent illnesses.
This therefore precludes unfermented grape juice as the meaning of the word under the qualifications for pastors. (Why would he forbid it in chapter 3 and recommend it in chapter 5?)
2. According to *Proverbs 20:1*, alcoholic wine is a _____. See also: *Proverbs 23:29-35; Isaiah 5:11.*
3. Drunkenness is listed among the _____ of the _____ (*Galatians 5:19-21*).
4. In the Old Testament, intoxicating drink was forbidden to those in leadership or authority:
 - a. To _____ and his sons — *Leviticus 10:8-10.*
 - b. To _____ — *Proverbs 31:4,5.*
5. A pastor must be a total abstainer from alcoholic beverages — both to set a godly example, and that his judgment and discernment are not impaired.

I. HE MUST NOT BE: a _____ — *I Timothy 3:3b; Titus 1:7f.*

This word refers to a physical attack. It means “to smite.”

A pastor must never resort to violence (physical or verbal), but always conduct himself with mildness and restraint — *II Timothy 2:24,25.*

1. When Jesus was reviled, He reviled _____, when he suffered, he _____ not (*I Peter 2:23*).
2. Notice the apostle Paul’s response in *Acts 23:2-5.*

J. HE MUST NOT BE: _____ of filthy _____ — *I Timothy 3:3c; Titus 1:7g.*

This has to do with ill-gotten gain. Pastors must not use the ministry as a means of personal enrichment. They should be absolutely trustworthy in the area of finances — both in fact *and* in appearance.

1. A pastor does not serve for _____, but of a _____ mind — *I Peter 5:2e.*
2. Pastors are the ones ultimately responsible for the oversight of the church’s finances — as evidenced by the church at Jerusalem, *Acts 4:35,37; 5:2.* (The act of placing something at the feet of another signifies the recognition of their authority and/or responsibility — see, for example *Acts 7:58; 10:25; 22:3; and I Corinthians 15:25,27.*)
3. The handling of the Lord’s money by men was taken very seriously by the early churches — *II Corinthians 8:18-22.*
 - a. The special offerings were administered by “ ____ ” (*verses 19,20*) i.e., by Paul and his fellow preachers.
 - b. These preachers were careful that no _____ could ever be attached to their administration of the offerings (*verse 20*).
 - c. They were careful to be _____ before the Lord *and* before men (*verse 21*).
4. Isaiah called false shepherds in his day “ _____ which can never have enough” — *Isaiah 56:10,11.*
5. A characteristic of false teachers is that they run _____ after the error of _____ for _____ — *Jude 11.*
 - a. They make _____ of God’s people (*II Peter 2:3*).
 - b. Their hearts are exercised with _____ practices (*II Peter 2:14*).

6. The man of God is to _____ (*I Timothy 6:11*) the _____ of _____ (*I Timothy 6:10*).
7. This does not mean a pastor is to be a pauper. The old saying, “Lord, you keep him humble, we’ll keep him poor” is terribly unscriptural.
 - a. God has ordained that they which _____ the gospel should _____ of the gospel (*I Corinthians 9:14*).
 - b. Those _____ in the Word of God have a responsibility to _____ to the teacher (*Galatians 6:6*).
 - c. Those who _____ in the Word and doctrine are to be counted worthy of _____ honour (*I Timothy 5:17*).

Nevertheless: The two things that will destroy a preacher quicker than anything else are women and money!

K. **HE MUST BE:** _____ — *I Timothy 3:3d.*

This is the quality of allowing God to do His work in His time.

1. Pastors and teachers are given for the _____ (maturing) of the saints (*Ephesians 4:11,12*).
 2. Just as a _____ waits for his _____ to mature, pastoral ministry is a long-term proposition — *James 5:7,10*. See also: *II Timothy 2:24-26*.
 3. A pastor is to be _____ toward _____ men, saved and lost — *I Thessalonians 5:14*.
 4. The quality of “much _____” is one way a man is approved as a _____ of God — *II Corinthians 6:4*.
 5. According to *Romans 5:3,4; 12:12* and *James 1:3,4*, patience springs from
-

6. This qualification is expressed “_____ soon _____” in *Titus 1:7d*.

The Greek word translated “patient” in *I Timothy 3* (‘*epieikes*’) is elsewhere translated as “gentleness” or “gentle” (e.g. *II Corinthians 10:1; Titus 3:2*).

A pastor must be a true gentleman. A harsh and arrogant man is most unsuited to lead God’s flock.

L. HE MUST NOT BE: a _____ — *I Timothy 3:3e.*

This word means “quarrelsome.” A pastor who is always looking for a fight will most certainly get one.

1. As a M _____, he must let God control his T _____.
Read: *James 3:1,2* with *verses 8-10.*

2. Even when he does battle for truth, a pastor must convince the gainsayers by _____ (Titus 1:9b), rather than personal attacks and verbal abuse.
3. According to *Colossians 3:13*, instead of becoming quarrelsome, a pastor (as with every believer) must learn to:

F _____ and/or F _____.

4. The battle is not with _____ and _____ (*Ephesians 6:12a*).
5. Our Lord’s admonition would be: “Put up again thy _____ into his place” (*Matthew 26:52*).

M. HE MUST NOT BE: _____ — *I Timothy 3:3f.*

1. “Thou shalt not covet” is the _____ Commandment — *Exodus 20:17.*
2. According to *Colossians 3:5fg*, covetousness is _____.
3. In forbidding covetousness, *Deuteronomy 5:41* specifically mentions the following things:
 - a. Thy [member’s] _____.
 - b. Thy [member’s] _____.
 - c. Thy [member’s] _____.
 - d. Thy [member’s] man- and maid- _____ S.
 - e. Thy [member’s] _____ or _____.

These are quite applicable to pastors who, in the course of their normal duties, will find themselves visiting the homes of church members — especially when they must be prepared to forsake things for the sake of the ministry (*Matthew 19:29*).

4. Paul said: “I have coveted no man’s _____, or _____, or _____ — *Acts 20:33.* See: *I Timothy 6:10; II Peter 2:3.*
5. C _____ M E N T rather than covetousness — according to *Philippians 4:11; I Timothy 6:8* and *Hebrews 13:5.*

N. HE MUST BE: _____ that _____ well his own _____ — *I Timothy 3:4,5; Titus 1:6c.*

This qualification focuses in on **two** aspects of the pastor's home:

1. The Way he _____ S his House — *order and arrangement.*

A pastor is to “ruleth _____” in this area. This means he is to have a *successful* home — i.e., one which is ordered according to God’s pattern.

- a. His family must be “with him” as he _____ S the LORD — *Joshua 24:15f.*
- b. His _____ must be in _____ S S I O N to his leadership — *Ephesians 5:22-24.*
- c. He must _____ his wife — *Ephesians 5:25.33.*
- d. He must be raising his children “____” to be godly children — *Ephesians 6:4d; Proverbs 22:6a.*

A pastor’s home should be a living example to the church of what a Christian marriage and a Christian family is all about. There is no requirement here that his home be perfect or ‘problem-free.’ In the normal course of life it will undergo the trials, stresses, hard times and good times of any marriage and home — what is important is how the pastor (and his family) responds to or deals with such things. If he preaches “God’s Word works,” he needs to show that it does indeed!

Notice the connection between home and church — *I Timothy 3:5.*

2. The Way his _____ Behave — *product and testimony.*

A pastor’s children can “make or break” his ministry. This is because they are usually the true indicator of the home. If the home is spiritual, they will be spiritual; if the home is disciplined, they will be disciplined; if it is committed to the Lord’s church, they will be committed.

- a. They must be in _____ to their parents with all _____ (i.e. seriousness) — *I Timothy 3:4b.*
- b. They must be _____ — *Titus 1:6c.* i.e. to God, to their parents, and to the church.
- c. They must not be _____ of _____ or be _____ — *Titus 1:6c.*
- d. Read: I Samuel 2:11-17,27-30; 3:11-13. God held _____ the priest accountable for the actions of his sons.
 - He _____ E D them above the LORD — *2:29.*
 - He _____ them _____ — *3:13.*

- e. Until they “L _____ and C _____” (*Genesis 2:24*), a pastor is responsible for the character and conduct of his children.

Thus we see the qualifications of a pastor “spill over” into his immediate family. His wife and children are to be included when considering his qualification for the office.

Note: The pastor who fears God will put his duties to wife and home before his responsibilities to the church. A wise church will do all it can to help its pastors maintain a ‘normal’ home life — by praying for their families, by being considerate of their time and their needs, and by being supportive rather than critical. (Many cowardly attacks against a pastor have been directed [unjustly] toward his wife and/or children.)

Note: While she must *always* be supportive of her husband, and may *often* be involved with him in his ministry, the pastor’s wife is first and foremost the wife of the pastor and the mother of his children.

Note: A pastor’s children must be taught how to deal with the added pressure of being a “PK.” On the one hand they are children who must pass through the normal ages and stages of growing up (*I Corinthians 13:11*). On the other hand, their testimony reflects greatly upon their father. How sad it is that many times the “church brats” are the preacher’s children. Hence the words, “*not accused*,” (*Titus 1:6*) and “*all gravity*” (*I Timothy 3:3*). They have a wonderful privilege, but a huge responsibility.

This qualification is one of the most overlooked requirements of a pastor. A pastor leads by example as well as by precept. If his wife continually opposes or undermines his ministry, or if his children “run riot” during church meetings, he ought to resign — at least until he can rule his home as God would have him.

O. HE MUST NOT BE: a _____ — *I Timothy 3:6*.

This word means a “new convert.” A baby believer (*I Peter 2:2*) is not qualified to be a pastor.

1. According to *I Timothy 4:12*, this requirement is not directly a function of a man’s physical age. Rather, it demands a pastor be an “example of the believer:”
 - a. In _____ — see: *I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 5:13,14; I John 2:14; James 3:2*.
 - b. In _____ — i.e. in lifestyle. See: *Colossians 3:17; James 3:13; I Peter 2:12; II Peter 3:11*.

- c. In _____ — self-giving love. See: *I Timothy 1:5; I Peter 4:8.*
- d. In _____ — see: *Romans 12:11; Galatians 6:1.*
- e. In _____ — see: *I Corinthians 16:13; Hebrews 13:17.*
- f. In _____ — holy, separated living. See: *I Peter 1:15; II Timothy 2:22.*

When a God-called man shows maturity and consistency in these areas, he satisfies this qualification.

2. The word “elder” presupposes age and maturity. See: *I Timothy 5:1,2* and *I Peter 5:5.*
3. The greatest danger with an immature pastor is _____. See: *Proverbs 16:18.* When one experiences ‘success’ in his ministry, he will be tempted to become *puffed up* by ‘his’ accomplishments. Maturity knows only too well the truth of *John 15:5f.*
4. The _____ is ever waiting (and wanting) to discredit and condemn a pastor.

Note: God-called men must never be hasty in seeking the pastorate, and churches should exercise much reservation before ever ordaining a man (*I Timothy 5:22*). It takes time to fully mature a man in his personal walk with God, his family life, and his service for the Lord. Bible knowledge isn’t the only skill required of a shepherd — wisdom in applying that knowledge is critical.

P. **HE MUST BE:** of _____ — *I Timothy 3:7.*

This has to do with a pastor’s reputation among those _____ (i.e. outside of) the church.

1. The lost think the Christian lifestyle is _____ (*I Peter 4:4*). Why? Because godly living brings conviction of sin to their hearts. Therefore, if the lost can ever use a believer’s life or conduct to justify their sin and rejection of the Word of God — they will!
There is nothing more abhorrent in the eyes of the world than a believer’s hypocrisy.
2. A pastor may be hated for his doctrine, but he must be respected for his integrity, honesty, and testimony toward:
 - Businesses — does he pay his bills? honor his commitments? etc.
 - Employers and co-workers — *Colossians 3:22-25.*
 - Neighbors — *Matthew 22:39; Romans 15:2.*

3. A bad report will bring a pastor into _____ and the snare of the _____.
4. According to *Proverbs 29:25a*, the _____ of man (e.g., of creditors, etc.) is a snare.
5. According to *I Timothy 6:9*, wrong motives in financial dealings can also bring a snare.

Q. HE MUST NOT BE: _____ — *Titus 1:7c.*

This word means “self-pleasing,” or “self-seeking.” A pastor (as with every believer) must be in subjection to the will of God. A man who is self-opinionated, self-serving, and self-loving cannot be a good pastor.

1. He must _____ what the will of God is — *Ephesians 5:17*. This is prerequisite to leading the flock.
2. He must _____ what the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God is — *Romans 12:2*. He must lead his people by experience.
3. He must _____ God’s will — *Hebrews 13:20,21*.
4. His attitude must always be: “If the _____ will” — *James 4:17; I Corinthians 4:19a*.

R. HE MUST BE: a _____ of _____ men — *Titus 1:8b.*

This qualification has to do with the company a pastor keeps. Aside from his pastoral duties, a pastor should associate with other godly men (*Proverbs 2:20*).

1. Such men are described as those:
 - a. Whose _____ are _____ by the LORD, and who _____ in God’s ways — *Psalm 37:23*.
 - b. Whose hearts bring forth _____ things — *Matthew 12:35*.
2. Examples of such men are:
 - a. _____ (*Acts 11:24*).
 - b. _____ (*III John 11,12*).

S. HE MUST BE: _____ — *Titus 1:8d.*

This means “equitable.” A pastor will be called upon to exercise his judgment in many matters involving his ministry and his people. Making sound judgments when people are involved is often like walking a tight-rope — heavenly wisdom is definitely needed.

1. A pastor must avoid any _____ of _____. See: *Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; 16:19; Proverbs 24:23; 28:21; James 2:1-9.*
2. A pastor must exercise judgment based on _____, *Proverbs 10:31,32.*
3. A pastor must _____ God for wisdom, *James 1:5.* See also: *James 3:17,18.*
4. A pastor must also be discreet in his judgments — *Leviticus 19:16.*

T. HE MUST BE: _____ — *Titus 1:8e.*

Some pastors evidently believe they must “fit in” with everyone in order to win some. However, this qualification demands that a pastor be a holy man. He is to be a man of God. His mere presence ought to quell bad language, corrupt speech, and bad habits!

This qualification addresses the way a pastor _____ S himself among believers, *I Thessalonians 2:10.*

Like all believers, pastors must:

1. ____ holy — *I Peter 1:16.*
2. _____ holiness — *Hebrews 12:14.*
3. Seek to _____ holiness — *II Corinthians 7:1.*

U. HE MUST BE: _____ — *Titus 1:8f.*

This comes from a word that signifies ‘strength,’ and denotes one who has power or control over his appetites and affections. This qualification has to do with the pastor’s personal life and relationship to things.

1. According to *Galatians 5:23-25*, this control is to be achieved through:
 - a. C _____ Y I N G the _____ (*verse 24*), and by
 - b. Walking in the _____ (*verse 25*).
2. According to *I Corinthians 9:25-27*, a preacher who strives for mastery must:
 - a. Be _____ in _____ things (*verse 25*).
 - b. “Keep under” the _____ (the old nature), and bring it into _____ (*verse 27*).

Many pastors do great harm to their ministry effectiveness by their intemperate behavior. See: *Proverbs 22:2; 23:19-21.*

V. **HE MUST BE SOUND IN DOCTRINE** — *Titus 1:9.*

This final qualification of a pastor deals with his knowledge of and training in the Word of God. Obviously, a pastor must be well studied. He cannot give to others what he doesn't have.

This verse has several key words pertinent to this qualification:

1. Holding — a pastor must do *more* than just know, or believe. He must have a strong heart-held conviction of the truth.

- a. He must _____ all things, and _____ fast that which is good (*I Thessalonians 5:21*).
- b. He must hold the _____ he has been taught (*II Thessalonians 2:15*).

Note: This is in the good sense of the word. It does not refer to man-made traditions (*Matthew 15:3,6,9*; etc.) but to those based on the written Word of God, as the text itself makes clear.

2. Fast — meaning “tight.” A pastor must be willing to defend truth with his life, if need be (*Revelation 2:13*). See also: *II Timothy 1:13*.
3. Taught — there is no escaping the need for a sound Bible education. Biblically, this is to be received from:

- a. One's own _____, which is the pillar and ground of the truth — *I Timothy 3:15c; Matthew 28:20a*.
 - b. Other _____ men — *II Timothy 2:2*. This is the mentoring process. Preachers beget preachers!
 - c. Personal _____ — *II Timothy 2:15*.
4. Able — a pastor must be skillful in using the Word of God to good effect in the lives of people.

A pastor must be able to:

- Put the brethren in _____ (*I Timothy 4:6*).
- _____ and _____ (*I Timothy 4:11*).
- _____ to faithful men (*II Timothy 2:2*).
- _____ the _____ (*II Timothy 4:2a*).
- _____, _____, and _____ with ALL AUTHORITY (*Titus 2:15*).
- _____ constantly (*Titus 3:8*).

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON

Read: *I Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:3.*

These passages list a combined total of 12 qualifications for a deacon, with an additional four for the wife of a deacon.

A. QUALIFICATIONS IN COMMON WITH A BISHOP:

Five qualifications demanded of a pastor are also required of a deacon (in I Timothy 3). Since these have already been studied, they are listed only.

A deacon also must be:

- Not given to _____ (verse 8c).
- Not _____ of _____ (verse 8d).
- B _____ (verse 10c).
- The _____ of one _____ (verse 12a).
- A ruler of his _____ and his _____ (verse 12b).

Note: A difference has been imagined between *verse 3a* and *verse 8c* over the word “much” — as if a pastor may have NO wine, whereas the deacon may imbibe a little. Such an interpretation violates the Word of God. This is best understood when the two words “much wine” are taken as one, meaning ‘drunkenness.’ A pastor is not to drink alcoholic beverages, a deacon is not to get drunk! Same thing!

B. OTHER QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON:

Notice that *I Timothy 3:7-13* begins with the word “likewise” — indicating there is a general application of all the qualifications to those who hold church office.

The seven additional qualifications are:

1. A Deacon Must Be: _____ (verse 8a).

This comes from the word “gravity” and means ‘weighty,’ or serious. A deacon must be very serious about his ministry.

2. A Deacon Must Not Be: _____ (verse 8b).

The first deacons were called upon to serve two factions within their church (*Acts 6:1*). They cannot say one thing to one person or group and something else to another person or group. A doubleminded man is unstable (*James 1:8*) — a double-tongued man will produce instability!

3. A Deacon Must Have: a _____ ——————
(verse 9).

This means he is:

- a. According to Acts 24:16, V _____ of offense toward _____ (Hebrews 9:14) and _____ (Hebrews 13:18; I Peter 3:16).
- b. Sound in the _____ — I Timothy 1:5,19.
- c. Performing his ministry in _____ and godly _____ — II Corinthians 1:12.
- d. Settled on the issues of Christian liberty — I Corinthians 10:25-27.

4. A Deacon Must Be: _____ (verse 10a).

This means “tried and tested.” It could be taken two ways:

- a. That a deacon first serve a probationary period to see how he fits the office.
- b. That a deacon be chosen from among those who have already proved themselves to be faithful.

The example of Acts 6:3 and the principles of stewardship (Matthew 25:21,23) would suggest this to be the meaning. It hardly makes sense that a man who otherwise fulfills all the spiritual qualifications for office be then put on probation.

See: II Corinthians 8:22 for an example of what this qualification means.

5. A Deacon Must Be: of _____ (Acts 6:3c).

This qualification relates to “them that are _____” i.e. ‘on the outside’ of the church) — I Thessalonians 4:12.

The nature of a deacon’s service to others requires he be absolutely trustworthy.

6. A Deacon Must Be: _____ of the _____ (Acts 6:3d).

- a. Every believer is commanded to be _____ with the Spirit — Ephesians 5:18c.
- b. Obedience in this area produces _____ in preaching — Acts 4:31d.

Deacons should not only be sound in the faith, but BOLD in the faith also (I Timothy 3:13). They should be active soul winners. At least two of the first seven deacons were able to preach — one of whom went on to become a church-planter (evangelist).

7. A Deacon Must Be: full of _____ (Acts 6:3).

Since deacons minister in temporal things, many believe they need to have a good business sense, or a good worldly sense. However, according to Acts 6:10 and Colossians 3:16, this is a spiritual requirement relating to the _____ of God.

C. **THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE WIFE OF A DEACON:**

The wife of a deacon must also meet certain qualifications if her husband is to serve in that office. This indicates that a deacon's wife has a vital part in her husband's ministry. *I Timothy 3:11* give four important qualifications:

1. The Wife of a Deacon Must Be: _____. [see: above]

2. The Wife of a Deacon Must Not Be: a _____.

This has to do with the things she says about other people. The Greek word is 'diabolos' — "the accuser." It is elsewhere translated "the devil." Because she will be privy to personal information about those to whom her husband is ministering, she must exercise great care with her tongue.

3. The Wife of a Deacon Must Be: _____. [see: above]

4. The Wife of a Deacon Must Be: _____ in _____.
things.

She ought to be:

- a. Faithful in her daily walk with the Lord.
- b. Faithful to her husband and children.
- c. Faithful to her church — in attendance, ministry, obligations, etc.
- d. Faithful to her husband's ministry.

The privilege of serving as a deacon comes with its own special rewards. Two of these are specifically mentioned in *I Timothy 3:13*. Those who use the office well purchase [acquire] to themselves:

- A good _____ ("step"). Serving as a faithful deacon can be a step up to another ministry — e.g., Philip went from deacon to evangelist.
- Great _____ in the faith — e.g., Stephen preached a sermon which had far reaching repercussions (in Saul/Paul).

DISQUALIFICATION FROM OFFICE

It stands to reason that the qualifications of a bishop must also extend to the evangelist. Both are gifted to a church by the Lord for the same general purpose.

The final question concerns the matter of disqualification — when is a pastor or a deacon disqualified from his office, and what should be done about it?

A. HIGH STANDARDS MUST BE SET:

1. By Churches, When Considering A Man For Ordination.

Most churches would be well served by erring on the side of caution when it comes to ordaining a man to an office. Inquiries into a man's doctrine and convictions, his marriage, his family, his experiences, his personal habits, his desires, and so forth should be carefully made.

- Lay hands _____ [hastily] on no man — *I Timothy 5:22.*

2. By Men Who Serve In The Ministry.

Pastors and deacons should set reasonable, yet exemplary, standards for themselves, and ought to have the integrity to step aside or step down from their office if they are no longer faithfully fulfilling the qualifications.

B. GREAT CARE MUST BE EXERCISED:

Those who serve in a church office (particularly the pastors) are often the target of false accusations. This is one of the side-effects of leadership.

The Bible says: “Against an elder receive _____ an accusation, but before _____ or _____ witnesses — *I Timothy 5:19.*

This guards against frivolous accusations or gossip.

C. WITH RESPONSIBILITY COMES ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Personal Accountability — *I Timothy 4:16; Acts 20:28a; I Corinthians 11:31.*

A wise pastor or deacon will continually review his life and ministry.

2. Church Accountability — *I Timothy 5:20.*

When necessary, a church must take public action to deal with an erring pastor. This means exercising church discipline when it is properly called for, and not making an exception because “he is the preacher,” or allowing him to quietly resign and move on to another church.

3. Ultimate Accountability — *Hebrews 13:17.*

Every pastor and servant will answer to God for his stewardship!

R Repentance

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This lesson looks at one of the most *misunderstood* (or *missing!*) aspects of Biblical evangelism — the doctrine of repentance! Perhaps as a spin-off from the mega-church movement of the 1960s and '70s or the rise of 'celebrity-salvation' and attempts to make the Gospel more palatable, repentance has certainly become the "missing ingredient" in much Gospel preaching and teaching.

There has been considerable controversy among Baptists over the subject of repentance, and (as always) with controversy comes extremes. Today, there are those who would teach that repentance is simply going from unbelief to belief, from Christ-rejection to Christ-acceptance — while others insist true repentance means that a man must yield his life completely to the Lordship of Christ if he is to be saved.

The word "repent" (or "repentance") occurs 112 times in the word of God. A careful study of these and other scriptures will not only correctly define repentance, but will demonstrate its necessity with regard to salvation and fellowship.

THE DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

Any true definition of "repentance" must come from its Biblical *usage*. Since the word is not always used in connection with sin and salvation, its basic definition cannot embrace only those terms — and yet it must accurately apply to them.

A. THE BASIC MEANING OF "REPENTANCE:"

1. The two most common Hebrew words translated "repent" or "repentance" are:
 - 'nacham' (naw-kham) — to regret, to be sorry.
 - 'shuwb' (shoob) — to turn, to return.
2. The main Greek (New Testament) word translated "repent" or "repentance" is:
 - 'metanoeo,' 'metanoia' — to change one's mind.

REPENTANCE is “*a CHANGE OF MIND resulting in a CHANGE OF ACTION.*”

3. Look up: *Exodus 13:17.*
 - ☞ Change of mind — “Lest [they] repent when they _____ war.”
 - ☞ Change of action — “and they _____ to Egypt.”
4. This definition is consistent with God’s repenting — e.g. *Jonah 3:10.*
 - ☞ Change of mind — “God repented of the _____, that he had _____ he would do...”
 - ☞ Change of action — “and he _____ it _____.”

B. THE APPLIED MEANING OF “REPENTANCE.”

In the Bible, repentance most often applies to sin and salvation. While the above definition still holds true, it can be elaborated on in its application to these areas.

1. A Change Of Mind:

- a. *Job 42:6* — “I _____ myself.”
- b. *I Kings 8:47* — “We have _____, and have done _____, ...”
- c. *Jeremiah 8:6* — “What have I _____?”
- d. *Jeremiah 31:18,19* — “I was _____...” [verse 19]
- e. *Revelation 2:5* — “_____ ... from whence thou art fallen.”

Repentance means the sinner sees himself and his sin exactly as God does. It involves agreeing with God about my sin.

2. A Change Of Action:

Repentance involves a “turning” — *FROM* something and *TO* something else.

- a. *I Kings 8:48* — “And so _____ un**TO** thee with all their _____ ...”
- b. *Ezekiel 14:6* — “**FROM** your _____ ... and ... from all your _____.”

- c. *Ezekiel 18:30* — “**FROM** _____ your transgressions.”
- d. *Matthew 3:8* — “Bring forth _____ meet for repentance.”
- e. *Matthew 21:29* — “He repented, and _____.”
- f. *Acts 8:22* — “Of this thy _____.”
- g. *Acts 26:20* — “Do _____ meet for repentance.”
- h. *II Corinthians 12:21* — “Of the _____ N E S S and _____ and lasciviousness which they have _____.”
- i. *II Timothy 2:25* — “**TO** the _____ I N G of the _____;”
- j. *Hebrews 6:1* — “**FROM** _____.”
- k. *Revelation 2:5* — “Do the _____.”
- l. See also: *Revelation 9:20,21* and *Revelation 16:9,11* which list a number of D _____ S [16:11] men will not repent of.

Repentance is more than an attitude, it is also an act.

THE DEMONSTRATION OF REPENTANCE

The Bible not only teaches repentance as a change of mind resulting in a change of action, but gives several great examples of it. For example:

A. THE REPENTANCE OF NINEVEH:

- 1. According to *Matthew 12:41*, the inhabitants of Nineveh repented at the _____ of Jonah.
- 2. According to *Jonah 3:5-8*, this involved:
 - a. B _____ I N G God (*verse 5*) — Faith.
 - b. Proclaiming a _____ (*verses 5,7*) — Seriousness with God.
 - c. Putting on _____ (*verses 5,6,8*) — Grief over their sin.

- d. A mighty _____ unto God (*verse 8*) — Prayer.
- e. A _____ ING **FROM** their _____ (*verse 8*) — a change of action. From wickedness (*Jonah 1:2*) to God!

B. THE REPENTANCE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR:

Daniel 4 records the amazing conversion of a heathen monarch — the great Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. The chapter is actually his personal testimony (*verses 1-3*). Follow the steps:

1. Nebuchadnezzar's Troubling Dream & Daniel's Interpretation (*verses 4-26*).
2. Daniel's Preaching (*verse 27*) — a clear call to repentance.
 - a. B_____ off thy _____ — *turn from!*
 - b. BY _____ N E S S — *turn to!*
3. Nebuchadnezzar's Pride (*verses 29,30*).
4. God's Judgment (*verses 31-33*).
5. Nebuchadnezzar's Repentance & Faith (*verses 34,35*).
6. Nebuchadnezzar's Testimony (*verse 37*) — a changed life!

C. THE REPENTANCE OF THE PRODIGAL SON:

Our Lord's parable in *Luke 15:11-24* is a wonderful picture of what repentance means and what it brings. Consider carefully the steps involved:

1. The Way Of Sin:
 - a. Sin's demand — “give ___,” “to ___” (*verse 12*).
 - b. Sin's deception — “_____ his substance” (*verse 13*).
 - c. Sin's depletion — “began to be in _____” (*verse 14*).
 - d. Sin's degradation — *verse 16*.
2. The Way Of Repentance:
 - a. Realization — “he _____ to himself” (*verse 17*).
 - b. Resolve — “I will arise and ___ ... and will ___ ...” ...
“I have _____” (*verse 18*).
 - c. Return — “He arose, and ___ to his father” (*verse 20*).

D. THE REPENTANCE OF THE THESSALONIANS:

The entrance of the Gospel into the city of Thessalonica brought remarkable results. Notice what was involved (See: I Thessalonians 1:9; 2:14):

1. They _____ TO _____ FROM _____.
2. They now lived to _____ the living and true God.
3. They became _____ of the churches of God.

E. GOD'S PRESCRIPTION FOR ISRAEL'S REPENTANCE:

In *II Chronicles 7:14* the LORD answered Solomon's great prayer of dedication by reiterating the provisions and conditions of the Palestinian Covenant (*Deuteronomy 28:1–30:10*). The well-known verse is a call to repentance from sin, and invokes three steps:

1. Shall _____ themselves — a change of mind, FROM pride to humility.
2. And _____, and _____ my face — a realization of the only One Who can hear, forgive, and heal. A turning TO!
3. And _____ FROM their _____ ways.

F. ESAU'S VAIN SEARCH FOR REPENTANCE:

Hebrews 12:17 is one of the most misinterpreted scriptures on the subject of repentance. The common understanding is that Esau wanted to/tried to repent, but either could not or would not. (This fits in with the Calvinistic idea of God dispensing salvation and repentance to some, and withholding it from others.)

A proper interpretation (interpreting scripture with scripture) reveals a different story — one which again shows repentance to be a change of mind which leads to a change of action. Read: Genesis 27:30-38.

1. Esau Found No Place Of Repentance.

Esau did not want to repent — he was profane (*Hebrews 12:16*)! He wanted his father (Isaac) to repent (i.e. to change his mind with regard to the blessing, thereby changing his actions by blessing him instead of Jacob). But Isaac would not repent.

2. Though He Sought It Carefully With Tears.

See: Genesis 27:34,38. Unfortunately, Esau's tears were those of regret and remorse.

G. THE REPENTANCE OF GOD:

There are a number of scripture references to GOD repenting — *Genesis 6:6,7; Exodus 32:12,14; Judges 2:18; I Samuel 15:11,35; II Samuel 24:16; Psalm*

106:45; Jeremiah 15:6; 18:8,10; 26:3,13; 42:10; Joel 2:13,14; Amos 7:3,6 — and not repenting, Jeremiah 4:28; 20:16; Ezekiel 24:14; Zechariah 8:14; Romans 11:29.

This seems hard to understand at first glance — especially if we define repentance in terms of sin and salvation (since God never sins and does not need to be saved!!). However if repentance is properly defined as a change of mind resulting in a change of action, it becomes much easier to understand how it can apply to God. When God repents, He changes His mind and does something different.

The bigger question is: **How can an unchanging God change His mind???**

1. God Is Immutable (unchanging).

- a. *Malachi 3:6 — I am the LORD, I _____;*
- b. *Hebrews 1:12 — Thou art the _____.*
- c. *Hebrews 6:17 — God's _____ is immutable.*
- d. *Hebrews 13:8 — The _____ yesterday, today, and forever.*

2. God Will NOT Repent Like A Man — *Numbers 23:19; I Samuel 15:29.*

3. So, How Come God Repents??

The answer to this perplexing question is as follows:

- a. God is absolutely unchanging and unchangeable in all His divine **attributes**. (By ‘attributes’ we mean His omnipotence [all-powerful], omniscience [all-knowing], omnipresence [everywhere], His holiness, His love, His veracity [truth], etc. If He changed one scintilla in any of these, he could not be God!)
- b. Consider the example of *Jonah 3:9,10; 4:2k* — where the LORD repented of the evil (judgment) He said He would bring upon Nineveh. In doing so...
 - Did God cease to be all-powerful? Did He somehow lose His ability to destroy cities? NO!
 - Did God cease to be holy? Did He somehow change and become tolerant of sin? NO!
 - Did God cease to be a God of love? Not according to *Jonah 4:2!*
- c. According to *Jonah 4:2*, God’s repentance is a function of (and within) His unchanging LOVE, and according to *Genesis 6:6,7*, His repentance is a function of (and within) His unchanging HOLINESS.

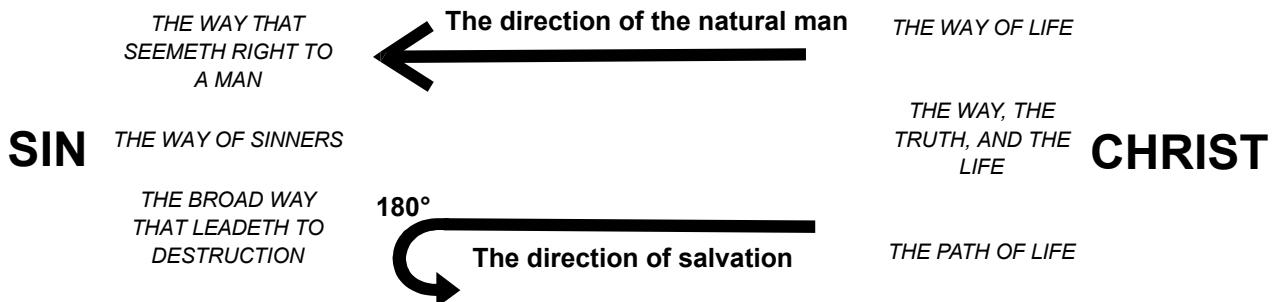
- d. The context of *Numbers 23:19; I Samuel 15:29; and Hebrews 6:16-19* is the **truth** (Word) of God. What God has **SAID**, He will never change.
- e. When it comes to the salvation of sinners, God's truth can never/will never change.
 - Those who die in their sins → remain lost for ever.
 - Those who believe on the Son → pass from death unto life.
- f. Thus God (by His immutable counsel) *repents every* time a sinner turns from his sin and puts his or her faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. He changes His mind (about turning the lost man into Hell) and thus changes His action (gives the sinner eternal, everlasting life)!! This He does because of His unchanging holiness, love, and truth.

THE “DOUBLE” OF REPENTANCE

Repentance resulting in the remission of sins (*Acts 2:38*) is one side of a “two-sided coin.” The other side of that coin is FAITH.

- *Acts 20:21* speaks of REPENTANCE toward _____, **and** FAITH toward our _____.
- *Hebrews 6:1* speaks of REPENTANCE from _____ **and** of FAITH toward _____.

Though repentance and faith are not the same thing, they are inseparable components of salvation. (Faith = “believing God’s Word and acting upon it.”) True salvation involves a 180° turn-around — from sin (repentance), to the Saviour (faith).



A man may repent and not be saved — if that repentance is not accompanied with faith in Christ. For example: a lost man may realize smoking cigarettes is bad for his health,

repent (change his mind) and quit smoking (change of action). He has indeed repented, and will hopefully live longer — but he will still die in his sins without Christ!

According to *Matthew 27:3*, _____ repented, but died lost (*John 17:12*).

When it comes to salvation, repentance without faith is **not** repentance for the remission of sins — and faith without repentance is **not** saving faith! There must be both a turning FROM (sin) and a turning TO (God). Man *cannot* truly turn to Christ without turning from his sin!

A. **REPENTANCE AND FAITH TOGETHER:**

1. *Matthew 21:32f* — “and ye ... _____ not afterward, that ye might _____ him.”
2. *Mark 1:15* — “Repent ye and _____ the Gospel.”
3. *Acts 26:20* — “Repent and _____ to _____. ”

B. **REPENTANCE AND FAITH USED INTERCHANGEABLY:**

While repentance and faith are not the same thing, because of their co-dependency they are sometimes used interchangeably. This explains:

1. Why the word “repentance” is not found in John’s Gospel — which was written that men might believe and be saved (*John 20:31*).
2. Why the Great Commission as stated in Luke’s Gospel requires that *repentance* should be preached among all nations (*Luke 24:47*).
3. The “baptism of repentance” (*Matthew 3:11a; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 13:24; and 19:4*). Some have imagined the baptism of John the Baptist to be something different from the ordinance practiced by the Lord’s churches today.

However, notice that Baptist baptism:

- Is called “the baptism OF [i.e. ‘unto,’ ‘because of’] *repentance-for-the-remission-of-sins*,” *Luke 3:3*. If we flip the coin and read “*faith-for-the-remission-of-sins*,” then it is plain to see that John’s baptism was a baptism *because of* [following] salvation — thus identical to that observed by Bible-believing Baptist churches today.
- Requires repentance and faith as a prerequisite — *Acts 19:4*.

THE DEMAND FOR REPENTANCE

The doctrine of repentance has been called the “Great Omission” of modern-day preaching. Too often, would-be soul winners and preachers call on men to turn to Christ without ever really addressing the question of sin and its offensiveness to a thrice-holy God.

Repentance is to be preached — and that is something much more than merely mentioning the word in the course of a sermon or Gospel presentation. Preaching repentance involves the proclamation of what it means and what God requires.

According to *Acts 17:30*, God _____ all _____ everywhere to repent.

A. NO SALVATION APART FROM REPENTANCE:

According to Jesus Christ, it is: “Repent or _____” — *Luke 13:3,5*.

B. GOD DESIRES REPENTANCE:

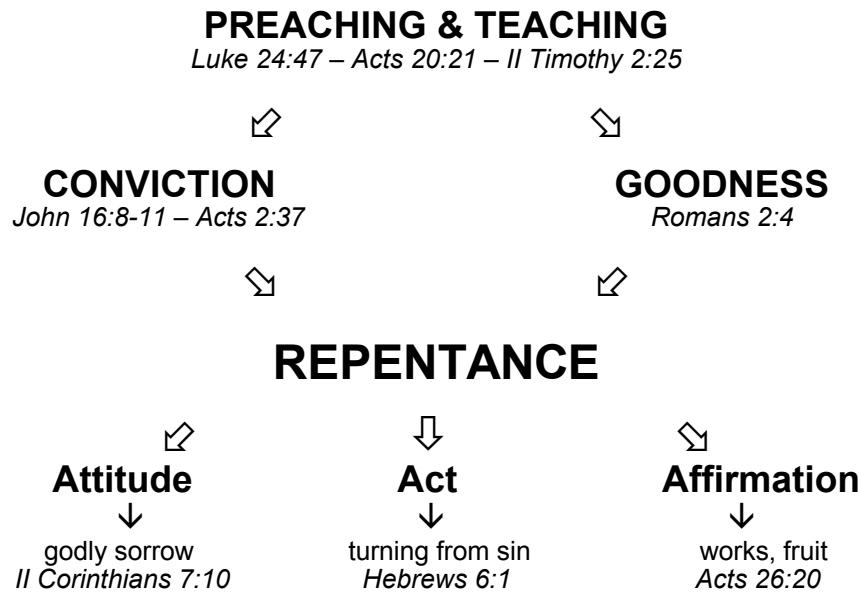
1. Jesus came to this earth specifically to call _____ to repentance (*Matthew 9:13*).
2. There is _____ in Heaven over _____ sinner that repents (*Luke 15:7,10*).
3. The _____ of God _____ S men to repentance (*Romans 2:4*).
4. God is _____ I N G, not willing that _____ should _____, but that _____ should come to repentance (*II Peter 3:9*).

C. ANCIENT PREACHING CALLED FOR REPENTANCE:

1. *Matthew 3:2,8* — preached by _____ the _____.
2. *Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:15* — preached by _____.
3. *Mark 6:12* — preached by the T _____.
4. *Acts 3:19* — preached by _____.
5. *Acts 26:20* — spoken by _____.

THE DESIGN OF REPENTANCE

The following diagram shows the way in which repentance comes about:



THE DISTORTION OF REPENTANCE

There are many misconceptions about repentance as it applies to salvation.

Repentance is not:

A. SELF-REFORMATION:

A man may “turn over a new leaf” and get rid of some bad habits in his life. He may even, of his own volition, install some good things in his life. However, repentance without faith in Christ is merely reformation: just as ‘faith’ in Christ without repentance is only head knowledge — *Matthew 7:21-23*.

Salvation requires the Spirit’s regeneration, not self-reformation! Any attempt to change one’s life in order to be saved becomes a works-salvation.

B. REMORSE:

II Corinthians 7:10 calls this the “— — — — — of the — — — — —,” which is often a sorrow felt over ‘being caught,’ or a sorrow over the consequences of sin.

Repentance may or may not involve visible tears and outward weeping. It does involve godly sorrow over one’s condition before God.

C. MERE BELIEF:

There are those who insist that repentance is merely going from a state of *unbelief* to *belief*. This is true to a point, but *Revelation 21:8* lists unbelief as just one among seven other sins which will consign a man to the Lake of Fire.

The idea of repentance being equivalent to believing on Jesus Christ ignores the **sins** issue. This misconception is at the heart of much present-day “soul winning.” Methodology which focuses on getting a lost person to pray a prayer, at the expense of explaining “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come” (*Acts 24:25*) shuts out the Spirit of God (*John 16:8*). It may produce impressive tallies of professions but, sadly, few conversions.

Old time Baptists based their statistics on baptisms and abiding members. Our faith must never be in a prayer — it must only be in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. YIELDING 100% TO CHRIST:

One of the extremes surrounding the doctrine of repentance is the teaching that a lost person must turn from all his sins and yield himself totally to the Lord Jesus Christ (a task that is an absolute impossibility for any sinner to do [*Jeremiah 13:23*]!!) in order to be saved. This is a form of works salvation.

This teaching is sometimes referred to as Lordship Salvation.

1. According to scriptures such as *Romans 10:13; Acts 9:6; 11:17; & 16:1*, a sinner must believe on the LORD Jesus Christ, i.e. he must receive Christ as his Saviour and his Lord. Anyone who claims to have been saved but then shows no interest in doing anything Christ wants (i.e. basics such as attending church meetings, reading the Bible, following the Lord in baptism, etc.) no matter how imperfectly, cannot have been saved.

He must S _____ T to the _____ of God — *Romans 10:3c*.

2. Nevertheless, receiving Jesus Christ as LORD and Saviour does not mean that unless He is immediately and completely Lord of all, a person is not saved. This idea fails to consider facts such as:
 - The growth progress in the Christian life — *I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:18*.
 - The flesh principle — *Romans 7:18*.
 - The call to “brethren” to surrender — *Romans 12:1,2*.
3. Accepting the Lordship of Christ occurs the moment one turns from sin to God. Repentance involves a change of ownership — from gods to God, from lords to THE Lord. This doesn’t mean a convert immediately performs (or even knows!) everything his Lord wants him to do. At the beginning it is more of an *attitude* than an *act*, but it is an attitude which

leads the believer to yield more and more of his life to the Lord day by day.

E. **DISPENSED ARBITRARILY BY GOD:**

Using three Bible passages, some hold to a Calvinistic-like philosophy that a man cannot repent unless God allows him to. These scriptures are:

- *Acts 5:31* — “... to _____ repentance to Israel ...”
- *Acts 11:18* — “Then hath God also to the Gentiles _____ repentance unto life.”
- *II Timothy 2:25* — “If God peradventure will _____ them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”

The giving or granting of repentance to Israel and the Gentiles refers to the historical entrance of the preaching of the Gospel. In Acts 11, Peter was being criticized for preaching to the household of Cornelius (*verses 1-3*). After Peter recounted what God had done (*verses 4-15*), the Church realized that the door of faith (thus repentance) had been indeed opened to the Gentiles.

The giving of repentance in II Timothy comes as a result of the Spirit of God working through the teaching and instruction of the Truth (the Word of God).

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Acts 20:20,21*.

S Sin, Suffering, & Sickness

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The problem of human suffering has engaged the minds of both commoner and sage e'er the days of Eden's flaming sword (*Genesis 3:22-24*). It is a universal problem. Throughout all ages and in every land, anguished brows and grieving hearts have turned heavenward and asked, "WHY?"

"If there is a God, and if (as the Bible says) He is a loving God, then *why* doesn't He prevent human misery, diseases, disasters, wars, pestilence, famine and mass starvation, poverty, accidents, and death?" "Why did He allow ____ to happen?" "Why did He take ____?" Perhaps no other question has created more skeptics, agnostics, or atheists.

This study deals with the subject of suffering, sickness, and death. It is an important subject because it affects us all — if not now, then one day! It is a 'mysterious' subject because we don't have all the answers and there are some things we will never understand this side of eternity. It is also a controversial subject because of the outrageous and unbiblical claims of so-called 'faith' healers and their "health and wealth 'gospel.'"

There have been some notable failures in finding answers to human suffering. For all its remarkable advances and achievements, science hasn't kept man from dying. Medicine offers no comfort to a dying man (except to alleviate his pain). Half the world still goes to bed hungry. Politicians have been unable to solve the problem by law, handout, or education. Altruistic desires to make the world a better place, to eliminate war and 'man's inhumanity to man,' to enforce democratic ideals, etc., consistently fail. An evolutionary world view ultimately condemns man to the caprice of chance!

The Christian perspective is markedly different. While believers are not exempt from these things (*Matthew 5:45*), they have the Word of God to strengthen them (*Psalm 119:28*), the Spirit of God to comfort them (*John 14:26,27*), the grace of God to sustain them (*II Corinthians 12:9*), and the presence of the Good Shepherd to lead them (*Psalm 23:4*).

Nevertheless, the question often arises: Why do the righteous suffer? Why do we get sick? Why are God's choicest servants taken in death? Therefore this study will approach the subject of suffering, sickness, and death from a Christian's viewpoint.

And now to the study....

THE FACT OF SUFFERING

Human suffering is a fact of life.

A. FOR MANKIND IN GENERAL:

1. *Job 14:1* — Man is of _____ days and full of _____.
2. *Ecclesiastes 2:23* — All of man's days are _____.
3. *James 4:14* — Man's life is likened to a _____.
4. *Job 30:23* — All the living will be brought to _____.

B. FOR BELIEVERS IN PARTICULAR:

1. Natural Suffering.

- a. *James 5:14* asks, "Is any _____ among you?"
- b. Believers suffered illness... e.g. there was:
 - *II Corinthians 12:7* — _____.
 - *Philippians 2:25-27,30* — _____.
 - *I Timothy 5:23* — _____.
 - *II Timothy 4:20b* — _____.

c. Believers died...

- *I Thessalonians 4:13* — they had fallen _____.
- *Acts 9:36,37* — _____ or _____.

2. Christian Suffering.

- a. We can expect T _____ I O N — *John 16:33*.
- b. We will _____ for Christ's sake — *Philippians 1:29*.
- c. Trials are not to be thought S _____ — *I Peter 4:12*.
- d. Godly living 'guarantees' _____ I O N — *II Timothy 3:12*.

THE BASIC CAUSE OF SUFFERING

We shall learn that there are many possible reasons why people suffer, get sick, and die. However, there is an underlying cause for all sickness and human misery.

A. THE REASON BEHIND ALL SUFFERING:

1. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely ____" — *Genesis 2:17.*
 - a. Spiritual death (separation from God's presence and fellowship), *Genesis 3:9; Ephesians 2:1,12.*
 - b. Physical death (separation of the soul and spirit from the body), *Genesis 3:19; 35:18a; 49:33 with 50:2; Ecclesiastes 12:7.*
 - c. Eternal death (separation from God forever), *Revelation 20:14,15.*
2. Through Adam's fall, _____ came upon all men — *Romans 5:12.*
3. According to *James 4:1*, the origin of wars and fightings (on a national scale as well as in a personal sense) is ____ S.

You cannot explain the problem of human suffering apart from the problem of **sin**. Most wars and 'natural' disasters are God's judgment on sin in the here-and-now: Hell and the Lake of Fire are God's judgment on sin in the hereafter. If you don't believe in God or Hell, you have no answers. Once you reject the Bible, you plunge into darkness.

B. THE PERSON BEHIND SOME SUFFERING:

It is interesting to see how **Satan** — the instigator of sin — shows up in the arena of human suffering and sickness.

1. The Book of Job, which was written to answer the "Why?" of suffering, reveals Satan as the one behind Job's trials (*Job 1:6-9; 2:3-5*). Notice:
 - a. Satan has power to afflict — *Job 2:7.*
 - b. Satan's power is limited by divine permission — *Job 1:12; 2:6.*
2. Mary Magdalene was healed of _____ and _____, having had seven _____ cast out of her by the Lord Jesus Christ — *Luke 8:2.* See also: *Acts 10:38; Luke 13:10-17.*
3. Paul's "thorn in the flesh" is called the _____ of Satan — *II Corinthians 12:7.*

4. The Devil had some of the members of the Church in _____ cast into _____ — *Revelation 2:8,10*.
5. In *I Corinthians 5:5*, the church was instructed to deliver an erring member to Satan for the _____ of the _____.

C. **THE BITTER-SWEET GIFT OF PAIN:**

Pain hurts, but pain also helps. God has designed the sensation of pain to indicate a problem. (In rare cases people are born with non-functioning nerve sensors and are unable to feel pain [ganglionopathy]. While we might envy those with that disease, it can be in actual fact a very dangerous condition — e.g. appendicitis might be mistaken for a minor stomach upset, blisters and fractures may go unnoticed, etc.) We thank God for the physical sensations that enable us to taste and smell and feel a baby's soft skin — but those same sensations come into play upon the passing of a kidney stone!

THE REASONS FOR SUFFERING

The Word of God actually gives many reasons *why* we suffer. These are broadly grouped under five headings:

A. **We Suffer Because Of HUMAN FRAILTY** — *Psalm 39:4,5*.

Suffering, and ultimately death, is the result of sin and the natural course of all human life.

1. “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely _____” (*Genesis 2:17c*).
2. “Unto _____ shalt thou _____” (*Genesis 3:19e*).
3. Adam lived _____ years: “and he _____” (*Genesis 5:5*).
4. And so _____ passed upon _____ men, for that all have _____ (*Romans 5:12d*).
5. According to *Psalm 90:10*, man’s life expectancy is _____ years, perhaps _____ years if he is strong.
6. The _____ man is perishing (*II Corinthians 4:16b*).
7. It is _____ unto men to _____ (*Hebrews 9:27*).

Unless the Rapture intervenes we will all eventually die. In one sense, the death process begins when we are conceived. Certainly from early adulthood we are a declining (dying) people. Skeletal growth ceases around age 14 for women and 19 for men. Reproductive and muscular strength begins declining at age 18 for women and age 28 for men. The brain is the only organ that actually improves with use, although it reaches its maximum size around age 12, thereafter losing about 10,000 cells per day. Sin's corruption will eventually succeed — and for most of us it is going to involve some sickness and some pain either along the way or at the end.

Remember: God sent one Man into this world Who was *without sin*, and He was “*a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*” (*Isaiah 53:3*).

Sometimes when we suffer, it is simply a matter of sin taking its natural course.

B. We Suffer Because We VIOLATE NATURAL LAWS.

The creation of God (including man) is governed by natural laws divinely set in place. Violation of these laws often comes with physical consequences. For example:

1. We can violate laws of physical capability — jumping from a great height, speeding, involvement in “extreme sport,” diving into shallow water, etc.
2. We can violate laws of bodily health — smoking cigarettes, sniffing glue, eating too much of the wrong kinds of food, overeating (gluttony, *Proverbs 23:2,21*), extreme dieting, sun bathing, lack of exercise, poor hygiene, personal neglect, insufficient sleep, overwork, etc.
3. We can violate financial laws and suffer because of loss of possessions or wherewithal — credit card debt, unwise investments, laziness, etc., all have consequences.

Sometimes when we suffer, it is self-inflicted. We have no one to blame but ourselves.

C. We Suffer Because We SIN AGAINST GOD.

Violating divine Law has consequences. These may come from:

1. The Sins of the Flesh.
 - a. The physical effects of _____ are described in *Proverbs 23:29,30* (see: *Proverbs 20:1*).
 - b. *Romans 1:27* speaks of men _____ IN themselves the _____ of their error (STD's, AIDS, etc.).

- c. In Exodus 15:26, God said He would put “ _____ of these _____” upon His people if they did that which is _____. See also: Exodus 23:25.
2. The Sins of the Mind — self-centeredness.
Living for SELF is often manifested as either:
 - a. Anger (the *outward* reaction to SELF being threatened), resulting in changes in blood flow, gland secretions, and muscle tension, and often a contributing factor in hypertension, heart attack, stroke, stomach ulcers, etc.
 - b. Fear (the *inward* reaction to SELF being diminished), often contributing to ailments such as stomach ulcers, depression, etc.

3. Consider the case of King David:

- Spiritual laxity — *II Samuel 11:1*
leading ↓ to
- Fleshly lust — *II Samuel 11:2*
leading ↓ to
- Double sin — *II Samuel 11:4,15*
leading ↓ to
- Physical suffering — *Psalm 32:3,4*

There is a law of sowing and reaping (*Galatians 6:7*). A lot of people sow a crop, then spend the rest of their lives praying for a crop failure! If God doesn't do anything about a crop you have sowed, what does that prove? If you sow it, you're entitled to reap it!

Sometimes when we suffer, it is because we have allowed sin to reign in our mortal bodies.

D. We Suffer By DIVINE PERMISSION.

It is possible for believers to suffer according to the _____ of God (*I Peter 4:19*). No carelessness is evident. No sin has been committed. It is simply God's plan for the Christian's life. Why? There are many possible reasons why the Lord allows us to get sick and/or suffer:

1. That the _____ of God may be made manifest through us — *John 9:3*.
2. For the _____ of God — *John 11:4*. See: *Matthew 9:6-8; 15:31*.

Note: In *John 21:18-22*, there are two important principles: first, that even in our death we should _____ God (*verse 19*); second, that in matters of life and death (including suffering), God's will for the believer is uniquely individual (*verses 21,22*).

The fact that I am called upon to suffer when those around me apparently aren't is not to concern me.

3. To "come forth as _____" — *Job 23:10* (i.e. to purify us, make us more Christlike). See: I Peter 1:7.
4. To make us _____ (mature) — *I Peter 5:10*. God may use tribulation, suffering, and/or sickness to:
 - a. Establish us — to bring about spiritual stability, i.e. "patience" (*Romans 5:3*).
 - b. Strengthen us — e.g. because David killed a lion and a bear, he was able to trust God to take care of Goliath. i.e., "experience" (*Romans 5:4*).
 - c. Settle us — God needs Christians who will trust Him no matter what the circumstances, i.e., "hope" (*Romans 5:5*).
5. To use us to be a _____ to others — *II Corinthians 1:4*. (i.e. to develop a ministry.)
6. To cause us to bring forth more _____ — *John 15:2*.
7. To prevent us from being _____ above measure — *II Corinthians 12:7*. (i.e. pride!)
8. To keep us dependent on the _____ of Christ in our service for Him — *II Corinthians 12:9e*. See: II Corinthians 4:16.
9. To spread the preaching of the _____ — *Acts 8:1,4*.
10. To prove God true and Satan a liar — *Job 2:3-6,9,10*.
11. Simply because we are a _____ — *I Peter 4:16a* (in the true sense of the word); *II Timothy 3:12; John 16:33; Acts 5:41; I Thessalonians 3:3,4*.
12. To make G _____ more real — *Romans 8:18; Revelation 22:4; I Peter 4:12,13; II Corinthians 4:17,18*.
13. To make _____ (Christ) more real — *Philippians 3:10*.

E. We Suffer Because Of CHASTISEMENT.

A loving Heavenly Father often uses affliction and trials as a means of chastising and correcting His children. Chastisement may come from:

1. The Hand of the Lord — *Hebrews 12:5-13.*
 - a. The Lord will chasten those He _____ S — *verse 6.*
 - b. God's chastening is an evidence of true salvation — *verses 7,8.*
 - c. God's chastening is for our _____ — *verse 10.*
 - d. God's chastening produces the _____ fruit of _____ — *verse 11.*
 - e. God will use hard times to open our _____ — *Job 36:15b.*
2. The Hand of the Church — *I Corinthians 5:4,5.*

This scripture refers to disciplinary action taken by a Baptist church over one of its erring members. In such cases:

- a. The church is to G _____ itself together in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ — *verse 4* (cf. *Matthew 18:17*).
- b. The church has the P _____ [authority] of the Lord Jesus Christ to act — *verse 4.*
- c. The church is to D _____ the unrepentant member over to _____ — *verse 5.*
This is what occurs when a brother is set apart from the church under discipline. See: *I Timothy 2:20; Revelation 2:2e.*
- d. The church's action may well result in the destruction of the sinning member's F _____ (i.e., physical death) — *verse 5a.*
- e. Such action does not result in the loss of salvation — *verse 5b.*

Note: According to *I John 5:16,17*, for the believer ("brother," *verse 16a*) there is such a thing as:

☞ A sin _____ unto death AND a sin unto _____.

Examples of what the latter involves are:

- Coming to the Lord's table in an unworthy manner (*I Corinthians 11:28-32*).
- Lying to the Holy Ghost (*Acts 5:1-10*).
- Murmuring and complaining (*Numbers 14:27-29*).

3. The Hand of the Law.

- a. God ordained government for the _____ M E N T of _____ — *I Peter 2:14; Romans 13:1-5.*
- b. Christians ought not ever _____ as murderers, thieves, evildoers, etc. — *I Peter 4:15.*
- c. If we break the law of the land there is no _____ in suffering for our _____ — *I Peter 2:20.*

4. The Hand of Nature.

Oftentimes, God speaks by means of His wondrous creation. For example, in *Job 37:9-13*, Elihu recognized that God sometimes used weather for the purpose of _____ (*verse 13b*).

Natural disasters which invariably result in considerable widespread suffering are meant to be a “wake-up call” to the lost.

THE RESPONSE TO SUFFERING

How ought the believer respond to sickness and/or suffering?

A. SOME COMMON HUMAN RESPONSES TO SUFFERING:

When someone contracts a serious disease or illness, or when some calamity falls upon a person, an incorrect response is often forthcoming:

1. “I/They Must Have Sinned!”

- a. This was the basic response of Job’s three “friends” — *Job 4:1,7,8; 8:1,4-6.*
- b. This was the thinking of some who reported a tragedy to Jesus — *Luke 13:1-5.*
- c. This was the belief of the disciples — *John 9:1,2.*

Note: Sometimes when a believer begins to suffer, he may ask the question: “Am I *really* saved?” “If I am truly saved, why would God allow this kind of thing to happen to me?” One of the most important things to remember in times of suffering is that one of the reasons we suffer is because we ARE saved. Salvation is a work of God — all His works are perfect; salvation needs no testing to see if it will endure or if it is any good! Read: *I Peter 1:3-8.*

2. “Why Me?” — see: *Romans 9:20,21.*

Many souls have had their faith made shipwreck because they have demanded answers that God has sovereignly chosen not to answer to their satisfaction.

Whenever we find ourselves passing through times of affliction — be it physical, emotional, financial, a bereavement — and we ask the question “WHY?,” we should prayerfully consider all of the Biblical possibilities.

Is what has happened because of:

- The curse — *are the natural effects of sin just taking their course?*
- Sowing & reaping — *am I suffering because of my own neglect or actions?*
- Persecution — *am I suffering as a Christian?*
- Chastisement — *is God dealing with me about something?*
- God’s will — *what is He wanting to accomplish in or through me?*
- God’s desire — *is he seeking to divorce me from things taking precedence over Him? Compare Exodus 20:5c with Matthew 22:37.*

And above all else, we should be asking: “How may I glorify God through this?” (See: *I Peter 4:16b; John 21:19; I Corinthians 10:31; Romans 14:8.*)

3. God Is Blamed, Hearts Become Bitter.

- a. Naomi changed her name to _____ (“Bitter”), and basically blamed God for her impoverished lot in life — *Ruth 1:20,21.* (In actual fact her lot was the consequence of Elimelech’s earlier decision, *Ruth 1:1,2.*)
- b. Bitterness comes when we fail to appropriate the _____ of God — compare *Hebrews 12:15* with *II Corinthians 12:9.*

Bitterness only hurts the container it's in!

B. THE CONSIDERED BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO SUFFERING:

When we are called upon to suffer, there are some things we can KNOW for sure:

1. We KNOW the Lord _____ S for us — *I Peter 5:7.* See: *Psalm 55:22.*
 - a. He knows all about us — *Matthew 10:30.*
 - b. We are of great V _____ to Him — *Matthew 10:31* (see: *Luke 12:6,7*).
 - c. He is _____ E D with the _____ I N G of our infirmities, *Hebrews 4:15a.* See: *Isaiah 53:3a; Matthew 8:20.*

- d. He _____ S the way that we take — *Job 23:10a.*
 - e. He records all our _____ and even stores all our _____ — *Psalm 56:8.*
 - f. His _____ intercedes on our behalf — *Romans 8:26,27.*
2. We KNOW that _____ things work together for _____ to them that love God — *Romans 8:28.*
- Note:**
- a. This passage is set in the context of the suffering and infirmities experienced in our body, *verses 22-27.*
 - b. This scripture does not say “all things” will be good. Rather, all things (both good and bad) work together for good.
 - c. This much-claimed promise applies to those who love God, see: *John 14:15.*
 - d. According to *Hebrews 11:22*, Joseph was a man of faith. Consider his sufferings — how cruel, how enduring, how unjust they were — then read *Genesis 50:20.*
 - e. Shall not the _____ of all the earth do _____? (*Genesis 18:25d.*)
3. We KNOW the _____ of God is _____ for every sickness or trial — *II Corinthians 12:9b.*
4. We KNOW that our sufferings are but for this _____ time, *Romans 8:18* — i.e. they will come to pass.

Because of these precious promises we are able to respond to our infirmities and tribulations with implicit trust in God — *Job 13:15.*

“I do not know why oft around me
 My hopes all shattered seem to be—
 God’s perfect plan I cannot see,
 But someday, He’ll make it plain.

I cannot tell what depths of love
 That move the Father’s heart above
 My faith to test, my love to prove,
 But someday, He’ll make it plain.

Someday, when I His face shall see!”

A old-time preacher put it this way: “*Heaven am de place for understanding.
 Earth am de place for trust!*”

HEALING FOR THE SUFFERER

Whenever we are afflicted with some physical ailment our thoughts and prayers inexorably turn to God (and rightly so). Just as a wounded child runs to its parent for comfort, so the child of God naturally looks to the Divine Physician for a healing touch.

What does the Bible say about divine healing? What can we expect? What should we expect?

A. POWER FOR HEALING:

There are two issues here.

1. Can God Heal?

God is omnipotent (all-powerful), and His power unquestionably extends to His ability to heal the physical body (e.g. *Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 10:46-52; John 5:5-9*), to deliver a suffering saint (e.g. *Daniel 3:20-28; 6:22; II Timothy 3:11; 4:17*), and to restore life to a dead [temporal] body (*Matthew 9:23-25; John 11:43,44*).

We must note, however, that God's exercise of this power has always been arbitrary, not universal (i.e. not everyone was healed or delivered), and that it has not always been conditional (i.e. in response to some quality in man).

We should also note that God has created a natural *healing mechanism* within the human body.

2. Does God Heal?

The question is really, “Is the [miraculous] spiritual gift of healing given to men today?”

- a. The gift of healing is listed as one of the S _____ Gifts in *Mark 16:17,18*.
- b. The purpose of this class of gifts was to C _____ the spoken Word of God — *Mark 16:20*. i.e. they confirmed the message or the messenger of God. (See: Hebrews 2:3,4).
- c. Like the gift of tongues (the miraculous ability to speak another language), the gift of healing passed away when “that which is perfect” (i.e. the written Word of God) was come — *I Corinthians 13:8-10*.

[The subject of divine healing and so-called ‘faith healing’ is covered in greater detail in lesson “G.”]

B. PROVISION FOR HEALING — *James 5:13-16.*

This passage is the only text giving specific instruction to present-day believers about healing.

1. The Context Is Critical.

A careful reading of the entire chapter yields two key words — “affliction” (*verses 10,13*) and “sick” (*verses 14,15*).

a. Affliction.

The context defines this as suffering arising from *external causes*.

- Fraud, murder, etc. (*verses 4-9*)
- Persecution (*verse 10*)
- Divine testing (*verse 11*)

The proper response to this kind of suffering is prayer (*verse 13a*).

b. Sickness.

Here the context seems to define this as suffering specifically arising from *sin*.

- “If he have committed _____ ...” (*verse 15*)
- “Confess your _____ ...” (*verse 16*)
- “Brethren ... _____ from the truth...” (*verse 19*)
- “Converteth the sinner ... error of his way ... multitude of sins...” (*verse 20*)

2. The Call Is Clear — *verse 14.*

The Bible gives three clear steps involving:

a. The “elders” of the church — i.e., the pastors. [“elder,” “bishop,” and “pastor” all refer to the same office.]

Note: It is not the pastors who call on the sick — it is the sick who call on the pastors!

b. The anointing with oil. There are several opinions as to what this might be:

- It is the equivalent of using modern-day medicine — see: Luke 10:34; Mark 6:13.
- It symbolizes mourning (over sin) — II Samuel 14:2.
- It symbolizes sanctification, consecration — e.g. Exodus 29:7,21; Leviticus 8:10,12; 21:10; I Samuel 10:1; 16:13.
- It represents the Holy Spirit, Who searches the heart.

c. The prayer of faith — verse 15.

This is prayed by the pastors (*verse 14*). Faith means it is a Bible-based request made to Heaven — presumably claiming the promises such as *I John 1:9; Jeremiah 3:22*.

C. PRAYING FOR HEALING:

Prayer is an integral part of dealing with suffering and sickness. The afflicted are instructed to pray (*James 5:13*; example, *Acts 4:23-30*) and the sick are to seek prayer from others (*James 5:14c,15-18*).

However, we can only scripturally pray, “**If it be Thy will, O Lord!**” The reason for this is that it is not always God’s will to heal. For example:

1. Paul prayed _____ times but was not healed — *II Corinthians 12:8*.
2. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were prepared to perish in the flames rather than deny the faith — *Daniel 3:17,18*.

Their statement is a great exposition of the whole issue of divine healing and deliverance as it applies to us today:

“our God ... is able” — “but if not...”

Note: In II Kings 20 we read of king Hezekiah begging God to deliver him from a deadly plague (*verses 1-3*), whereupon the LORD graciously granted him another 15 years of life (*verses 6-11*). Hezekiah subsequently not only committed a serious indiscretion (*verses 12-15*), but was extremely careless about it (*verse 19b*). God’s will and God’s timing is always best!

THE END OF SUFFERING

For the believer, “our _____ affliction ... is but for a _____” (*II Corinthians 4:17*). There is an end in sight!

A. THE “END OF THE LORD” — *James 5:11d*.

The “end of the Lord” for Job was enrichment — *Job 42:10-12a*. Passing through life’s trials results in the same for the Christian (*Job 23:10; I Peter 1:7*).

B. THE END OF MORTAL LIFE:

1. According to *II Corinthians 4:8*, to be _____ from the body means to be _____ with the Lord.
2. For the believer, death is likened to “falling _____” — *Acts 7:60; I Corinthians 15:6,51; I Thessalonians 4:13-15; 5:10*.

3. The death of a child of God is _____ to the Lord — *Psalm 116:15*.
4. At the resurrection (the Rapture), every saved person will receive a spiritual, glorified, incorruptible (not subject to sickness, pain, or death) body — *I Corinthians 15:42-54*.
5. There will be no more D _____, neither S _____, nor C _____, or P _____ throughout eternity!! — *Revelation 21:4*.

C. **THE WRONG WAY OUT:**

Suicide, whether by one's own hand or 'assisted,' is not sanctioned at all by the Word of God.

Three men in the Bible wished to die, yet none of them contemplated taking their own life:

- _____ sat and longed for death — *Job 6:8,9*.
- _____ sat and requested death — *I Kings 19:4*.
- _____ sat and wished for death — *Jonah 4:8*.

RESOURCES WHEN SUFFERING

Here are some helpful (scripturally sound) resources for the times of sickness or suffering:

- A. **THE REFUGE OF PRAYER** — *Psalm 50:15*.
- B. **THE COMFORT OF PRAISE** — *Job 35:10; Acts 16:25*.
- C. **THE FELLOWSHIP OF GOD'S PEOPLE** — *Hebrews 13:3; Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15; I Corinthians 12:26*.
- D. **THE DISTRACTION OF SERVICE** — *II Corinthians 11:23-28*.

The apostle Paul suffered greatly, yet he continued to fulfill his responsibilities. We must not allow sickness or suffering to cause us to "drop out" of God's work.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *James 5:13-16*.

NOTES & QUESTIONS

T The Tabernacle

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The study of Bible typology is one of the most enriching areas of scriptural research. A ‘type’ is a “divinely appointed prophetic illustration of a scriptural truth” — an Old Testament shadow of a New Testament reality.

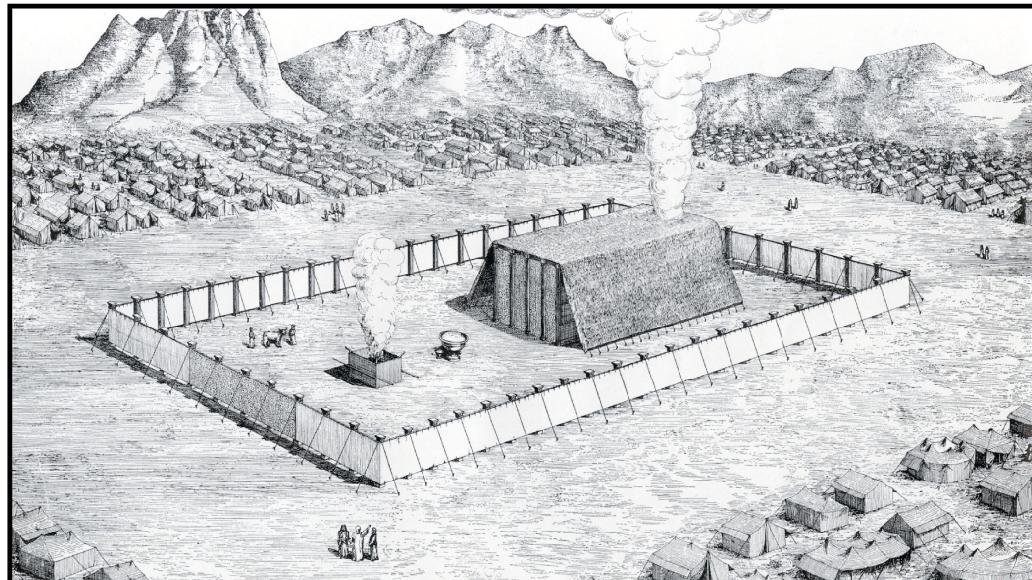
The Israelite Tabernacle in the Wilderness is without doubt the most comprehensive type of Christ found in the Word of God. A study of this unusual structure is both fascinating and remarkable.

The Old Testament **details** of the tabernacle are found in Exodus 25–27 and in Exodus 35–40. The first of these references begins with the ark (25:10) and works outward to the *court* (27:9); the second reference begins with the *curtains* (36:8) and works inward to the *ark* (37:1). The significance of this is seen in the chapters between — notably the rebellion of the golden calf, Exodus 32.

The New Testament **explanation** of the meaning, purpose, and plan of the tabernacle is found in Hebrews 8–10.

The word “tabernacle” simply means a ‘tent,’ or a ‘house.’ The tabernacle in the wilderness was a portable structure consisting of three areas (the outer court, the holy place, and the holy of holies) and seven pieces of furniture (the brazen altar, the brazen laver, the golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense, the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat).

The following diagram gives a general view from the outside:



“MADE ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN”

Read: *Hebrews 8:5.*

In this passage we learn that Moses was admonished of God to “make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”

A. WHAT DID MOSES SEE ON THE MOUNT?

Read: *Exodus 24:9,10,15-18.*

1. Moses saw the _____ of _____ (verse 10).
2. Moses saw the _____ of the _____ (verses 16,17).

Note: This incredible event is explained by *Exodus 33:17-23*. It is impossible for any man (encased in a material body) to actually see God Who is a spirit, thus immaterial (*John 4:24*). Moses did not see God in His essence — He saw His glory.

Read: *Hebrews 8:2; 9:11.*

3. Moses also saw the _____ tabernacle which the _____ pitched;
a _____ and more _____ tabernacle.
4. According to *Hebrews 9:23,24*, the tabernacle in the wilderness was to be
a _____ of the temple in the heavens.
5. See: *Psalm 11:4; Acts 7:48,49; 17:24,25; Revelation 11:19.*

B. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TABERNACLE?

There are three key words associated with the tabernacle:

1. P _____ — *Hebrews 8:5; 9:23.*
2. F _____ — *Acts 7:44.*
3. F _____ — *Hebrews 9:24.*

The first two words are translated from the Greek word ‘*tupon*’ from which we get the word “type.” The word literally means “the mark of a [hammer] blow” or “the impression made by a die.” We could think of it as a ‘footprint.’ The third word is translated from the Greek word ‘*antitupon*,’ “antitype.” The New Testament truth which is foreshadowed (*Hebrews 8:5; 10:1; Colossians 2:17*) by the Old Testament type is sometimes referred to as the antitype.

The word ‘*tupon*’ is elsewhere translated as “example” (*I Corinthians 10:6*), “ensample” (*I Corinthians 10:11*), and “remembrance” (*Jude 5*) — thereby defining typology.

The tabernacle is the greatest type of Christ. It proclaims God's deep desire to dwell with His people in fellowship (*Exodus 25:8,9*); it portrays Jesus Christ as the way to fellowship; and it declares the means and blessings of that fellowship (*Hebrews 9:6-12*). See: *John 5:39.*

C. AN OVERVIEW OF THE TABERNACLE:

1. The Dimensions Of The Tabernacle.

A cubit is the measurement from a man's elbow to his fingertips. It is generally accepted as being 18" in length.

The tabernacle measured 30 cubits × 10 cubits × 10 cubits high (45' × 15' × 15'). It was divided into two compartments — the sanctuary, or "holy place" (the place of priestly service), and the "holy of holies" (which could only be entered by the high priest once each year on the Day of Atonement). See: *Hebrews 9:2-7.* These two compartments were separated by a veil.

Surrounding the tabernacle was the court — bounded by a linen 'fence' measuring 100 cubits (150') by 50 cubits (75') and 6 cubits (9') high.

2. The Materials For The Tabernacle.

Exodus 35:5-7 provides a list of the various materials used to construct the tabernacle. (Other materials were specified for the service of the tabernacle and the priestly garments.)

There is a rich significance in these materials, as shown below:

- a. G _____ — this would speak of royalty, or deity (See: *Matthew 2:11; Song of Solomon 5:11,14,15; Revelation 21:18,21; Daniel 2:37,38*).
- b. S _____ — signifying redemption (*Exodus 30:11-16; 38:25,26; Zechariah 11:12*).
- c. B _____ — speaks of judgment (*Revelation 1:15; 2:18*).
- d. The color B _____ reminds us of the heavenly (the Gospel according to John: Christ the Son of God).
- e. The color P _____ is usually associated with royalty (*Esther 8:15; John 19:2,3*). The Gospel according to Matthew: Christ the King of kings.
- f. The color S _____ (a dye derived from a crushed insect) — the "glory of a worm" — reminding us of Christ the lowly servant (*Psalm 22:6*). The Gospel according to Mark.
- g. F _____ [white] Twined Linen — a symbol of personal righteousness (*Revelation 19:8; 3:4,5; 7:13,14*). The Gospel according to Luke: Christ the perfect Man.

- h. G _____ , H _____ — the garment of a prophet (*Hebrews 11:27*). These were dyed black: Christ the SIN BEARER.
- i. R _____ , S _____ dyed _____ — these were sacrificial animals. Christ the SUBSTITUTE.
- j. B _____ , S _____ — an animal of the earth, unattractive, plain in appearance — *Isaiah 53:2*.
- k. S _____ W _____ — acacia wood; very hard, durable. Will not rot. Earthy. Reminds us of Christ's humanity.

With the construction of the tabernacle, ***nothing*** was left to the devices or preferences of men — everything was to be made “according to the pattern” given by God.

“SET IN ORDER”

After the components of the tabernacle were crafted, the LORD instructed Moses to “set in order” the “things that are to be set in order” (*Exodus 40:4*). In other words, God had a plan for the very arrangement of this structure. Nothing was left to chance!

- “God is not the _____ of _____”
(*I Corinthians 14:33*).
- God requires His work be “done decently and in _____”
(*I Corinthians 14:40*).

A. ITS ORDER IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS:

This is significant in God’s grand plan of salvation.

1. Exodus 19–23 — the LAW of God is given.
 - a. Revealing God’s holiness — *Romans 7:12*.
 - b. Proving man’s sinfulness — *Romans 3:19*.
 - c. Showing man’s helplessness — *Galatians 3:21c*.
 - d. Driving man to God — *Galatians 3:24*.
2. Exodus 25–30 — the GRACE of God is pictured.
Showing the Way to God — *Hebrews 9:19-28*.

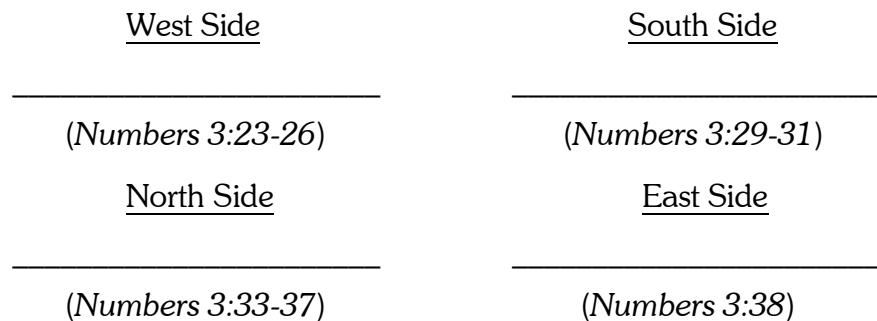
B. ITS ORDER IN THE CAMP OF THE ISRAELITES:

Read: *Numbers 1:51-54*.

The camp was arranged in three great circles: the outer circle comprised the warriors and their families; the inner circle was made up of the workers (the Levites); then the tabernacle itself and Moses and Aaron, the worshipers.

Note: These happen to be the three main aspects of the Christian life: we are to be warriors (*II Timothy 2:3*); workers (*II Timothy 2:15*); and worshipers (*John 4:24; Philippians 3:3*). We observe from the order of the tabernacle which of these pursuits is *closest* to God. (Without worship, our warfare becomes daunted and our labors burdensome.)

1. The erection and dismantling of the tabernacle was only to be done by the _____ (*Numbers 1:51*).
2. The camp of the _____ was set in the _____ of the general camp (*Numbers 2:17*), as follows:



3. The following tribes encamped on the east side of the tabernacle under the standard of _____ (*Numbers 2:3-9*):

4. The following tribes encamped on the south side of the tabernacle under the standard of _____ (*Numbers 2:10-16*):

5. The following tribes encamped on the west side of the tabernacle under the standard of _____ (*Numbers 2:18-24*):

6. The following tribes encamped on the north side of the tabernacle under the standard of _____ (*Numbers 2:25-31*):

With this arrangement, the tabernacle was observable by everyone. God was truly in the midst of His people. There was no place for self-will. When the cloud abode, Israel abode; when the cloud moved, Israel moved. (The body was subject to its Head!! See: Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23,24.)

C. **ITS ORDER IN MAN'S APPROACH TO GOD:**

This consideration will be elaborated on below. Sufficient here to observe the following:

1. Before Man Could Even Look Upon The Tabernacle — he must come through the GATE in the courtyard fence — *John 10:9; 14:6; Acts 4:12*.
2. Before Man Could Get To The Tabernacle — he must come to the BRAZEN ALTAR and have the blood applied — *Hebrews 9:22*.
3. Before Man Could Get Inside The Sanctuary — he must wash at the BRAZEN LAVER to be clean for service — *II Timothy 2:21*.
4. Before Man Could Enter Into The Presence Of God — he must pass through the VEIL — *Hebrews 10:20; 4:16*.

THE OUTER COURT

Read: *Exodus 27:9-19; 35:18; 38:17.*

A. **THE FENCE OF DISBARMENT — James 2:10. (“Stay Out!”)**

1. Its Dimensions:

- a. The length (north & south sides) was _____ cubits.
- b. The west side was _____ cubits wide.
- c. The height of the fence was _____ cubits.
- d. The east side had two sections of _____ cubits, on either side of the 20 cubit-wide gate.

2. Its Materials:

- a. Its Hangings — F _____ L _____ [righteousness].
- b. Its Support — pillars and sockets of _____ [judgment].
- c. Its stability — hooks and fillets of _____ [redemption].

3. Its Typology:

- a. A message of *despair*, the high fence of righteousness — barring man's direct approach to a thrice-holy God. Declaring God's standard! cf. *Revelation 21:27*.
- b. A message of *judgment* — proclaimed by its 56 pillars and their sockets. Establishing God's demand!
- c. A message of *hope* — the hooks and fillets declaring that God's righteous judgment is met with God's love. Proclaiming God's provision!

B. **THE GATE OF INVITATION — Matthew 11:28.** (“Enter In!”)

1. The ONLY way in — *John 10:9; 14:6.*
 2. A WIDE gate, not restrictive — *II Peter 3:9; Revelation 22:17.*
 3. A GOSPEL gate — the three colors and the fine twined linen, depicting the four-fold presentation of Christ by the Gospels.
 4. It was NEVER closed — *Isaiah 59:1.*
 5. Held up by four PILLARS — whose job it was to hold up the beautiful gate. Pictures the Lord’s churches — *I Timothy 3:15; Philippians 2:15.*
-
-

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

Read: *Exodus 27:1-8; Hebrews 9:11-14.*

A. **THE ALTAR:**

1. Its Dimensions:

It measured _____ cubits by _____ cubits, and was _____ cubits high (or, 7½' square, and 4½' high).

2. Its Materials and Construction:

- a. Made out of _____ (Exodus 27:1).
- b. Overlaid with _____ (Exodus 27:2).

3. Its Features:

- a. Four _____ upon each corner (Exodus 27:2).
- b. Various utensils made of _____ (Exodus 27:3).
- c. A brazen _____ underneath and inside the altar (Exodus 27:4,5).
- d. To transport it, _____ inserted into _____ (Exodus 27:6,7).

4. Its Typology:

- a. The wood pictures Christ’s perfect humanity.
- b. The brass and fire speak of divine judgment.
- c. *IPeter 2:24* — “Who [Christ] his own self bare our _____ in his own _____ on the _____ ...”
- d. *Psalm 118:27* gives the purpose of the horns: “_____ the sacrifice with _____, even unto the horns of the altar.”

- e. The horns were also a place of refuge — *I Kings 1:50,51*.
- f. Horns also speak of power — *Zechariah 1:18-21*.

The brazen altar was central to all the service of the tabernacle. We will never see the gold until we've seen the blood!

B. THE OFFERINGS:

See: Leviticus 1–5. It will take five different offerings to fully picture the finished work of Christ.

1. The _____ Offering — *Leviticus 1; 6:8-13*.

This offering portrays the Lord Jesus Christ offering Himself without spot to God. It was to be totally consumed by fire upon the altar, which came directly from the Lord (*Leviticus 9:24*). Our Lord was no martyr made by human hands; it “pleased the LORD to bruise Him” (*Isaiah 53:10*).

2. The _____ (Meal) Offering — *Leviticus 2; 6:14-23*.

This offering portrays Jesus Christ offering a holy, perfect life to God.

3. The _____ Offering — *Leviticus 3; 7:11-21*.

The last offering of the “sweet savor” group of offerings (peace comes only after God’s demands and man’s needs are met).

4. The _____ Offering — *Leviticus 4; 6:25-30*.

Portrays the Lord Jesus Christ being “made sin for us” and making atonement for the guilt of our sin.

5. The _____ Offering — *Leviticus 5; 7:1-7*.

Portrays the Lord Jesus Christ atoning for the injury of our sin.

THE BRAZEN LAVER

Read: Exodus 30:17-21.

A. THE LAVER:

A laver is a large basin filled with water, designed for washing in.

1. Its Dimensions:

- a. This is the only item of tabernacle furniture for which no dimensions (or weight specifications) are given.
- b. It was constructed with a _____ (*verse 18*), meaning a second tier into which water from above would cascade.

2. Its Materials:

- a. It was to be made from _____.

- b. According the *Exodus* 38:8, this material was supplied from the ladies' _____.

Note: What a wonderful lesson ... sacrificing objects of personal vanity in order for God's glory to be manifested! (The foundation of our consecration is often our reservation.)

- c. The laver and the golden candlestick are the only items associated with the tabernacle that were made from one material.

3. Its Purpose:

The laver was there for Aaron and his sons to wash their _____ and _____.

4. Its Typology:

The brazen laver is an indirect type of Christ in that it pictures the Word of God. It is first a mirror of judgment, then a fountain of cleansing!

- a. Brass speaks of divine _____ — see: *Psalm 119:30, 160; II Timothy 3:16 ("reproof"); Hebrews 4:12*.
- b. The Word of God is likened to a G_____ [mirror] in *James 1:23-25*. We look into a mirror to see if our appearance is satisfactory: we look into the Word of God to see if our life is right (cf. *I Corinthians 11:31*).
- c. The Word of God is also symbolized by _____ in *Ephesians 5:26*.
- d. The Word of God makes us _____ — *John 15:3*. See also: *Psalm 119:9,11; John 17:17; II Corinthians 7:1*.
- e. Just as the laver has no stated dimension, so the Word of God is boundless!

As the priest approached the laver, he would see himself in its highly polished finish; then he would cleanse himself in its water. The Bible is a two-edged sword: it convicts and cleanses; it reveals and remedies; it searches and sanctifies; it probes and purifies; it warns and washes!

B. THE PLACEMENT OF THE LAVER:

There are two significant matters concerning the location of the brazen laver:

1. In The Word Of God:

The laver is not mentioned in the first set of instructions concerning the tabernacle (*Exodus 25-27*). It is mentioned only after the directions for the consecrating of the priests (*Exodus 29*).

2. In The Arrangement Of The Tabernacle — Exodus 30:18.

The laver was located between the brazen altar and the door of the tabernacle.

- a. It came *after* the gate of invitation and the altar of justification.
- b. It came *before* the tent of ministration.

The laver teaches us the need of right preparation for service. See: *Isaiah 52:11b; II Timothy 2:19-21; Ephesians 4:1. Exodus 30:20,21 ("that they die not") indicates the seriousness of serving God acceptably — Hebrews 12:28.*

The laver is an illustration of our Lord's acted parable in *John 13:3-10*.

- Salvation washes us clean “every _____” (*John 13:10*).
- Service and fellowship require that we continually “wash our feet” to remove the contaminants ‘picked up’ along the way in our walk through the world.

THE TABERNACLE PROPER

Read: *Exodus 26:1-30,36,37; 36:8-34,37,38; Hebrews 9:1-5.*

The tabernacle was erected as follows: its northern, southern, and western sides were made using interlocking boards; then the structure was completely covered over with four layers of curtains.

A. THE FIRST (INNER) CURTAIN:

1. Made of fine twined _____ and _____, _____, and _____, embroidered with _____.
2. First, _____ curtains, each measuring _____ cubits × _____ cubits, were made (*Exodus 26:1,2*).
3. _____ of these curtains were then coupled together to make _____ larger curtains (*Exodus 26:3*).
4. Fifty _____ were made from the S_____ (fringe) along one edge of these larger curtains (*Exodus 26:4,5*).
5. Fifty _____ of _____ then joined these larger curtains into a single (one) tabernacle (*Exodus 26:6*).

Note: The final measurement of the inner curtain was 28 cubits × 40 cubits. Since the tabernacle was 30 cubits × 10 cubits, and 10 cubits high, this meant both crosswise and lengthwise the beautiful curtain remained at least one cubit off the ground.

B. THE SECOND CURTAIN:

1. Made of _____, _____ (*Exodus 26:7*).
2. Constructed from _____ curtains, each measuring _____ cubits × _____ cubits (*Exodus 26:8*).
3. Coupled into two larger curtains made from _____ curtains and _____ curtains, resp. (*Exodus 26:9a*).
4. The sixth curtain was made _____, then the two larger curtains were bound together with fifty taches of _____ (*Exodus 26:9-11*).

Note: The final dimension of this second curtain was 30 cubits × 42 cubits. This means it completely covered the northern, southern, and western sides down to the ground with a 2 cubit overhang on the eastern (door) side.

C. THE THIRD CURTAIN:

A covering made from _____' skins dyed _____ (*Exodus 26:14a*).

D. THE OUTER COVERING:

This final covering was made of _____' skins (*Exodus 26:14b*).

Note: The Gershonites were given _____ wagons and _____ oxen to carry all the coverings and hangings (*Numbers 7:7*, see: *Numbers 3:25,26*).

E. THE BOARDS:

1. Made from _____ overlaid with _____ (*verse 29a*).
2. They measured _____ cubits high × _____ cubits wide (*Exodus 26:16*).
3. Made with two finger-like _____ (*Exodus 26:17*).

F. THE SOCKETS:

1. A total of _____ sockets of _____ (*Exodus 26:19-25*).
2. An additional _____ sockets were used for the pillars supporting the veil (*Exodus 26:32*).
3. According to *Exodus 38:27*, each socket weighed a _____. (This was equivalent to approximately 114 pounds (50kg). At today's prices, each socket would be worth over \$US8,000. The tabernacle rested on five tons of silver!)

G. THE BARS:

1. Made from _____ overlaid with _____ (*Exodus 26:26-29*).
2. There were a total of _____ bars, _____ on each side (*Exodus 36:31,32*).
 - a. These linked and stabilized the boards by passing through golden _____ (*Exodus 26:34*).
 - b. The _____ bar went _____ the boards, the entire length of the side (*Exodus 36:33*).

Note: The Merarites were given _____ wagons and _____ oxen to transport all the boards, bars, and sockets, etc. (*Numbers 7:8*, see: Numbers 3:36,37).

H. THE DOOR:

The entire east end of the tabernacle comprised its door. See: Exodus 26:36,37.

1. The Construction Of The Door — a _____ I N G of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen.
2. The Support Of The Door — _____ pillars made of shittim wood overlaid with gold.
3. Standing Upon — sockets of _____ — *Exodus 26:37*.

I. THE PINS AND CORDS:

The tabernacle was a portable structure, yet its construction was remarkable. It had no nails, bolts, screws, glue, or hinges — yet it effortlessly withstood 40 years of wilderness heat, wind, and storms! Its sides were extremely heavy; it rested on very weighty sockets; it had a four-layered roof (the outer layer being very durable, *Ezekiel 16:10b*); and it was locked together by bars and rings.

On top of that, it was further secured by pins made of _____ and cords, *Exodus 27:19; 35:18*.

J. THE TYPOLOGY OF THE TENT:

1. Its Appearance:
 - a. From the **inside** — the glories of the Lord Jesus Christ. See: Philippians 2:9; Song of Solomon 5:16; Psalm 96:6-9.
 - The magnificent curtain made a ceiling which pictured Christ in His earthly perfections as presented by each of the Gospels.
 - The cherubim, guardians of God's throne, God's majesty.
 - Around the sides would be seen the radiance of gold (deity).

- b. From the **outside** — drab, dull; expressing what most men think of Christ. See: *Isaiah 52:14; 53:2-4; Philippians 2:7,8; I Corinthians 1:18,27-31; I Peter 2:7a.*

The metal most seen from the outside was brass, proclaiming the need for sin to be judged. Once inside, however, it was all gold and beauty.

- c. In **between** — the work of Christ in reconciling man to God.
- Rams' skins — the ram was a sacrificial animal, *Genesis 22:13. Christ our Substitute!*
 - Goats' hair — two goats were sacrificed on the great Day of Atonement, *Leviticus 16:19-22. Christ our Sin-bearer!*

2. Its Foundation:

The tabernacle did not rest on the earth, but on silver. Our salvation is not of worldly means nor does it stand upon shifting sands — it rests squarely and securely upon redemption!

3. Its Security:

From *Isaiah 22:23,24*, a pin or a “nail” speaks of surety or security.

- According to *Hebrews 6:19*, Christ is the _____ of our soul.
- According to *IPeter 1:5*, we are _____ by the power of God.
- According to *John 10:28,29*, no one can _____ us out of Christ's hand.
- According to *Jude 24*, Christ is _____ to _____ us from falling.

From *Hosea 11:4*, we see that cords speak of the bands of _____.

- Christ's love is E _____ — *Jeremiah 31:3.*
- Nothing can _____ us from the love of Christ, *Romans 8:38,39.*

4. Its Door:

Just as we must come through the beautiful gate of invitation to receive the atonement for our sins, so it is that we can only serve the Lord acceptably through the beautiful door — Jesus Christ (*John 15:5; Colossians 3:23; Hebrews 9:14*).

This door of service is considerably narrower than the gate of invitation. Conditions for Christian service are restrictive — we must serve the Lord on His terms.

Passing through the door, we enter the sanctuary, the place of priestly service where Aaron and his sons ministered unto the Lord. (Under the New Testament there is no longer a priestly class — there is the “priesthood of believers,” offering up spiritual sacrifices in a spiritual house [each New Testament church]. See: *I Peter 2:5-10; I Timothy 3:15; Ephesians 2:20-22; I Corinthians 3:16.*)

Inside the sanctuary were three items of furniture. Not only do these speak of Christ, they also illustrate God’s provision to us for our service unto Him. They are:

- The golden Candlestick — our *preparation* for service
- The Table of Shewbread — our *provision* for service
- The Altar of Incense — our *power* for service

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK

Read: *Exodus 25:31-40; 37:17-24.*

This exquisitely ornate object was the only source of light in the holy place of ministry. It was positioned against the south wall (*Exodus 26:35*), on the left as one entered the sanctuary. Without its light all priestly service was impossible.

A. ITS CONSTRUCTION:

1. Like the brazen laver, no dimensions are given — except that it was to be made from one _____ of pure _____. (*verse 39*).

This meant it weighed between 100–125 lb (45–55 kg). It would be worth over five million dollars at today’s prices!

2. It was not molded, it was _____. (*verse 31b; Exodus 37:32*).
3. It had a S _____, with three B _____ coming out of each side (*verses 31c,32*).

4. Each branch had:

- An almond-like _____ — for holding the lamps.
- A _____ — thought to be a spherical “bud-shaped” decoration.
- A _____ — out of the knop and under or around the bowl.

5. On the center branch (the candlestick proper) there were _____ of the above, thus it was probably considerably higher (*verse 34*).

6. The candlestick held _____ lamps (*verse 37*).

7. Gold _____ and _____ were provided to trim the lamps(*verse 38*).

8. The oil for the lamps was to be made from beaten _____ (*Exodus 27:20*).
9. The candlestick was made according to the Heavenly _____ (*verse 40; Revelation 4:5*).

B. ITS NOTABLE FEATURES:

The golden candlestick gave:

1. Perfect light — seven is the number of divine perfection (*Exodus 25:37*).
2. Pure light — *Exodus 27:20*.
3. Perpetual light — *Exodus 27:20*.
4. Purposeful light — *Exodus 25:37c*.

C. ITS TYPOLOGY:

The golden candlestick pictures five things:

1. It Typifies Jesus Christ — the Essence of Light.
 - a. Pure gold (deity) that has been beaten (*Isaiah 53:4,10*).
 - b. He is the _____ Light (*John 1:9*).
 - c. He is the Light of the _____ (*John 8:12*).
 - d. In Him is no _____ (*I John 1:5*).
 - e. He is the Light of _____ (*John 1:4*. cf. *Luke 2:32*).
 - f. He is perfect (*Matthew 3:17*), pure (*Hebrews 7:26*), perpetual (*Hebrews 13:8*), and purposeful (*John 3:21*).
2. It Pictures The Word of God — the Source of Light.
 - a. God's Word is a light unto our _____ (*Psalm 119:105*).
 - b. The commandment is a _____ ; the law is _____ (*Proverbs 6:23*).
 - c. It is perfect (*Psalm 19:7*), pure (*Psalm 12:6*), perpetual (*Psalm 12:7; Matthew 24:35*), and purposeful (*II Corinthians 4:4; I John 1:7*; etc.).
3. It Pictures The Spirit Of God — the Instrument of Light.
 - a. The seven lamps point to the "seven Spirits of God" mentioned in *Revelation 4:5*. The seven-fold Spirit of God is explained in *Isaiah 11:2*.
 - b. The oil typifies the Holy Spirit (compare *Hebrews 1:9* with *Isaiah 61:1* and *Acts 10:38*), producing light but revealing the candlestick (cf. *John 16:13e*).

4. It Pictures The Believer — the Reflector of Light.
 - a. We are the light of the _____, according to *Matthew 5:14-16*.
 - b. According to *Philippians 2:14-16*, we are _____ as lights in the world by holding forth the _____ of _____.
 - c. According to *Ephesians 5:8*, our light is _____ the Lord. In other words, we are but reflectors of the Light. For this reason we must continually be filled with oil (*Ephesians 5:18*).
5. It Illustrates The Lord's Churches — the Bearers of Light.
 - a. In *Revelation 1:12,20*, the seven churches in Asia were symbolized by seven _____.
 - b. Churches are not THE Light — they are to hold forth the Light. This is our commission (*Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8*).

THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

Read: *Exodus 25:23-30; 37:10-16.*

A table evokes thoughts of feasting and fellowship (*II Samuel 9:7; Psalm 23:5; Luke 22:30; I Corinthians 10:21*). Thus with this small table located against the north wall of the sanctuary (*Exodus 26:35*), to the right as one entered in through the door.

A. THE TABLE:

1. Its Dimensions:

The table measured _____ cubits × _____ cubit × _____ cubits high.

This meant it was quite small — only 3' × 1'6", and 2'3" high.

2. Its Construction: (*Exodus 25*)

- a. Made from _____ wood, overlaid with _____ (*verses 23,24*).
- b. It had a _____ of gold around its edges (*verse 24*).
- c. It had a [raised] border of an _____ breadth (4") on its top (*verse 25*) — presumably to keep the shewbread in place during transportation (or to provide a ledge for the utensils).
- d. It was transported with _____ which passed through four golden _____ (*verses 26-28*).
- e. Its accompanying vessels were made from _____ (*verse 29*).

3. Its Typology.

- a. The elements of its construction point to Jesus Christ (wood and gold, humanity and deity).
- b. The crowns remind us of His victory — *Hebrews 2:9*.
- c. The table symbolizes the believer's sustenance and communion. Our fellowship with God is through Christ — *I Corinthians 1:9; Philippians 3:10; I John 1:3,6,7*.
- d. There were no chairs. The priests ministered "standing up" (*Hebrews 10:11*, contrast *verse 12!*). Our work is not done, our fellowship is yet incomplete — we're not home yet! (*I Corinthians 13:12*.)

B. THE SHEWBREAD:

Read: *Leviticus 24:5-9; Exodus 25:30*.

The word "shewbread" literally means the 'bread of presence.' It reminded the tribes of Israel that they were continually before the Lord.

1. Made from fine _____, without leaven (see: *Leviticus 2:11*).
2. Set in _____ rows of _____ on the table of shewbread.
3. Pure _____ was placed on the table and thus the loaves.
4. The loaves were replenished every _____.
5. It was eaten by _____ and his _____.
6. This surely speaks of Christ the _____ of _____ (*John 6:35*).
 - a. Our fellowship with Christ is through His _____ (*Matthew 4:4*).
 - b. There is a special 'fragrance' to our fellowship with him. Frankincense is a sweet perfume, emitted when cast upon fire.

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

Read: *Exodus 30:1-10,24-36*.

A. THE ALTAR:

1. Its Dimensions: (*verse 2*)

The altar measured _____ cubit × _____ cubit × _____ cubits high. It was the tallest item of furniture within the sanctuary.

2. Its Construction: (*verses 1-5*)

- a. Made of _____ wood overlaid with _____.
- b. It had _____ on each corner.
- c. It had a _____ of gold around the top.
- d. There were two golden _____, placed on opposite corners to facilitate transportation.

3. Its Location: (*verse 6*)

It was placed before the _____ and the _____.

4. Its Purpose: (*verses 7,8*)

Aaron was to burn a P _____ upon it before the Lord.

B. THE INCENSE:

This was made from _____ weights of the following sweet spices:

- _____.
- _____.
- _____.
- pure _____.

Nothing is known about the first three spices. This is the only mention of them in the Word of God.

C. THE TYPOLOGY:

1. The Altar — pictures Jesus Christ.

- Durable wood + imperishable gold point to His perfect humanity and His perfect deity.
- The crown symbolizes majesty, victory, and glory.
- The horns speak of power.

2. The Incense — pictures _____ (*Psalm 141:2a*).

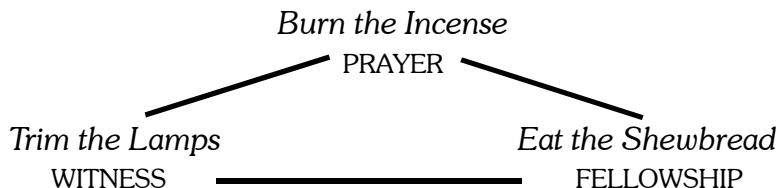
See: *Revelation 8:3,4* (cf. *Revelation 5:8d*).

3. This altar points to the risen Christ who “ever _____ to make _____” for us (*Hebrews 7:25b*).

See: *Luke 22:31,32; John 17:20.*

4. The Secondary Application:

The sanctuary was the place of priestly service. There is a wonderful picture of the work of the believer-priest seen in the three items of holy furniture. The priest's job was to:



"We shine best before men when we burn most before God!"

5. The Two Altars Compared:

The Brazen Altar

Christ on the Cross
Brings the sinner nigh
Power in the blood (horns)
Perpetual fire (salvation)
Hebrews 9:26

The Golden Altar

Christ in Glory
Brings the saint nigh
Power in prayer (horns)
Perpetual incense (prayer)
Hebrews 9:24

THE VEIL

Read: Exodus 26:31-33; Hebrews 10:19,20.

The veil was a curtain dividing the _____ place from the _____ holy, the two rooms inside the tabernacle — Exodus 26:33b. See: Hebrews 9:2,3.

A. THE RESPLENDENT VEIL — Exodus 26:31; 36:35.

1. It was made of _____, _____, _____, and fine twined _____.

2. It was manufactured of _____ work. This word means "intricate," "detailed," "skillful."

Note: The qualifications and preparation of those who constructed the tabernacle — Exodus 35:30-35; 36:1,2,8. (Spiritual endowment rather than physical talent!)

3. It had _____ woven into it.

4. It was hung upon _____ pillars made from shittim wood overlaid with gold — picturing the person of Christ, the God-Man.

5. The pillars rested upon sockets of _____ — picturing the purpose of Christ, the Redeemer.
6. The veil typifies our Lord's _____ (*Hebrews 10:20*) — i.e. the earthly life (and character) of the Lord Jesus Christ — picturing the probity of Christ.
7. Cherubims guard the glory of God. See: *John 1:14*.
 - a. “The Word was made _____ and dwelt among us...”
 - b. “And we beheld his _____ ... as of the only begotten of the Father.”

B. THE RESTRICTIVE VEIL:

1. The veil separated and barred man from the holy _____ and the very presence of God — *Leviticus 16:2*.
2. According to *Hebrews 9:6*, the priests were _____ in the first [room of the] tabernacle, accomplishing the _____ of God.
3. But according to *Hebrews 9:7*, the _____ only could enter the _____ [room of the] tabernacle.
 - a. Only _____ every year.
 - b. Not without _____.
 - c. Offered for _____ and the _____ of the people.

Note: All this occurred on the Day of Atonement — *Leviticus 23:27*. Read *Leviticus 16* for the details of this solemn day. The elaborate and demanding ritual serves to demonstrate the great separation between God and man brought about by sin. According to *Hebrews 9:13*, the Old Testament sacrifices could only cover sins; the sacrifice of Jesus Christ took away sins, forever! — *Hebrews 9:12,14,15*.

4. The message of the veil was that the _____ into the holiest of all was not yet made _____ — *Hebrews 9:8*.

C. THE RENT VEIL — *Matthew 27:50,51; Hebrews 10:20*.

1. The veil of the temple was _____ the very moment our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ died upon the cross.
 - a. In _____ — not partially, but completely — *John 19:30c*.
 - b. From the _____ to the _____ — i.e. supernaturally.

Note: Tradition says that this particular veil in Herod's temple was 4 inches thick; that two teams of oxen could not tear it!

2. Christ entered the _____ and more _____ tabernacle (*Hebrews 9:11*), where He took His own _____ into the _____ place (*Hebrews 9:12*).
3. The "message of the rent veil" is that we can now _____ into the _____ by the _____ of _____ (*Hebrews 10:19*).
 - a. With B _____ — *Hebrews 10:19; 4:16*.
 - b. In _____ A _____ — *Hebrews 10:22*.
4. According to *Ephesians 2:13*, we are made _____ unto God by the _____ of Christ.

D. **THE REPAIRED VEIL:**

Within 15 years of the miraculous event accompanying the death of Christ, men were trying to "sew up the rent veil using the thread of ritualism" — *Acts 15:1* (contrast *verse 11*). Legalism is man's attempt to "get to God" by means other than grace. See: Galatians 3:1-3. Salvation is only BY grace, THROUGH faith, IN Christ.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES

Read: *Exodus 25:10-22; 37:1-9; Hebrews 9:3-5*.

The holy of holies was the 10 cubits × 10 cubits × 10 cubits (15' × 15' × 15') compartment at the west end of the tabernacle. It was separated from the sanctuary by the veil.

It was here that God would _____ with man (*Exodus 25:22*), where God put His special presence among His people.

Within the holy place were two permanent items of furniture:

A. **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT:**

This was the centerpiece of the tabernacle.

1. Its Construction — *Exodus 25:10-15*.

a. Materials: _____ wood overlaid with _____.

b. Dimensions: _____ cubits × _____ cubits × _____ cubits
(approximately 45" long × 27" wide 27" deep)

- c. Borne by two permanent wood/gold _____ passing through four _____ of gold.
2. Its Contents — *Hebrews 9:4.*
- a. The golden _____ that had _____ .
 - b. Aaron's _____ that _____ .
 - c. The _____ of the _____ .
3. Its Characterization — a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ.
- a. In its construction, an emblem of His perfect humanity and deity.
 - b. In its designation (“ark”), a place of refuge (cf. *Hebrews 11:7; Exodus 2:3*).
 - c. In its preëminence, as the item detailed first by the Lord in His instructions for the tabernacle. See: *Colossians 1:18*.
 - d. In its contents:
 - The tables of the Law — Jesus both kept the Law (*Hebrews 7:26*) and fulfilled the Law (*Matthew 5:17*) by meeting its demands upon sin. Christ the Holy One!
 - The manna — *John 6:31-35,47-58*. Satisfying the sinner. Christ the All-sufficient One!
 - The rod — *Numbers 17:1-8; John 11:25; I Corinthians 15:20*. Christ the All-powerful One!

B. THE MERCY SEAT:

This served as the “lid” of the ark of the covenant.

1. Its Construction — *Exodus 25:17-20.*
- a. Made of _____ .
 - b. Made with two _____ of gold.
 - Located on each _____ of the mercy seat.
 - Their _____ covered the mercy seat.
 - Their _____ looked to one _____ and toward the mercy seat.
2. Its Typology:
- a. Gold speaks of deity — mercy extends from God.
 - b. According to *Leviticus 16:15*, it was _____ with _____ (changing it from “precious” to “priceless!”).

- c. It is called a “seat” — signifying completion — *Hebrews 10:11,12*.
- d. It covered the contents of the ark, which (as they relate to man) speak of:
 - The Law — broken, man’s transgression and guilt.
 - The Manna — man’s murmuring, complaining, ungratefulness.
 - The Rod — man’s rebellion.
- e. The Greek word translated “mercy seat” in *Hebrews 9:5* is translated as “propitiation” in *Romans 3:25* and *I John 4:10*. The word literally means “covering.” The mercy seat covers it all! (*Psalm 32:2*.)

The ark pictures Christ as He relates to the Father: the mercy seat pictures Christ as he relates to the sinner.

THE ERECTION OF THE TABERNACLE

Read: *Exodus 40:16-35*.

A. THE OBEDIENCE OF MOSES:

1. The tabernacle in the wilderness was first reared up on the _____ day of the _____ month of the _____ year (cf. *Exodus 12:2,6,12; 19:1,2*). It took about 7 months to construct.
2. Seven times in *Exodus 40:17-32* we find the expression, “as the LORD [had] _____ Moses...”
3. As a consequence we read: “So Moses _____ the work.” (Consider the connection between obedience and completion — *Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 5:8,9; Romans 5:19; John 4:34; 17:4; 19:30; Hebrews 12:2* and *II Timothy 4:7*.)

B. THE CLOUD OF GLORY:

1. The _____ of the _____ filled the tabernacle, *verse 34*.
2. This signified God’s presence among His people. It also indicated the tabernacle Moses had built was acceptable to God.
3. The cloud had the appearance of _____ by night — *Numbers 9:15,16*.

C. THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD:

God is omnipresent throughout His creation (*Psalm 139:7-12*) — yet in a very real and special way, God dwells *uniquely* among His people in temples. See: II Chronicles 6:1,2,18.

There are seven such temples mentioned in the Word of God:

1. The tabernacle in the wilderness — *Exodus 25:22*. God's presence (and acceptance of this temple) was visibly manifested by the cloud —*Exodus 40:34*.
2. Solomon's magnificent temple in Jerusalem — *II Chronicles 3,4*. God's presence (and acceptance of this temple) was visibly manifested by a cloud — *II Chronicles 5:13,14; 7:1-3*.
3. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ — *John 2:19-21*. God's presence (and acceptance of this temple) was visibly manifested at His baptism — *Luke 3:22; John 1:32*.
4. The New Testament Church — *Ephesians 2:20-22; I Corinthians 3:16*. God's presence and ratification of this temple was visibly manifested on the Day of Pentecost in *Acts 2:2-4*.
5. The believer — *I Corinthians 6:19*. Each believer is indwelt by the Spirit of God — *John 7:38,39; 14:16-18,23; Romans 8:9,14-16*.
6. The future Millennial temple — *Ezekiel 40-44*. God's presence and authentication of this temple will also be visibly manifested — *Ezekiel 43:4,5; 44:4; Haggai 2:7,9*.
7. The Eternal, Heavenly temple — *Revelation 21:3,22,23*.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TABERNACLE?

A. THE JOURNEYS OF THE TABERNACLE:

The Israelites moved the tabernacle when the _____ was taken up, *Exodus 40:36,37; Numbers 9:17-23*. Its history may be divided into three sections:

1. From Sinai to Shiloh (1500–1400 B.C.)
 - a. Wilderness wanderings — *Exodus 40:38*.
 - b. Entering the Promised Land — *Joshua 3:11-17; 6:6,7*.
 - c. Pitched at Shiloh — *Joshua 18:1*.
2. From Shiloh to Solomon (1400–1000 B.C.)
 - a. The ark captured by the Philistines — *I Samuel 4:11; 5:1-4; 6:1*.

- b. The ark returned and kept at Kirjath-jearim — *I Samuel* 6:7-12; 7:1,2.
 - c. The ark brought to the City of David (Zion) — *II Samuel* 6:12-17.
3. From Solomon to the Subjugation (1000–600 B.C.)
- a. The ark and the vessels are brought into Solomon's temple — *I Kings* 8:1-11.
 - b. The temple vessels (*possibly* including some belonging to the original tabernacle) were taken by the Babylonians or destroyed (*II Chronicles* 36:9-19).
 - c. The last *possible* mention — *Daniel* 5:1-4. (See also: *Ezra* 1:7-11)

It is thought by some that the ark was taken by God to Heaven — *Revelation* 11:19. God protects His glory.

B. THE JUDGMENTS OF THE TABERNACLE:

The instances of death and defeat associated with the tabernacle clearly show that God is not subject to the whims of man.

1. Strange Fire — *Leviticus* 10:1,2.
2. Strange Incense — *Leviticus* 16:16-35. (See also: *II Chronicles* 26:16-21.)
3. The “Abandoned Ark” — *Numbers* 14:40-45. Well-meaning Israelites attempting to accomplish God's Word outside of God's will. cf. *Acts* 16:6-9. (Presuming upon the Word of God.)
4. The “Captured Chest” — *I Samuel* 4:1-5,10,11. Jesus Christ is not to be ‘invoked’ when things get desperate. His Name is not some magic formula! God doesn't answer to our beck and call!
5. The “Cursed Captors” — *I Samuel* 5:6-12.
6. The “Lifted Lid” — *I Samuel* 6:13-20. The lid was the mercy seat! Lifting it revealed the Law which condemns man.
7. The “Restrained Receptacle” — *II Samuel* 6:2-9. This tragedy resulted from the failure to follow God's instruction for the transportation of the ark (See: *Numbers* 4:4-15). David used Philistine methods to do God's work (*I Samuel* 6:10,11). See: *II Samuel* 6:13.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Hebrews* 10:19-22

NOTES & QUESTIONS

U The Unseen World

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The question is often asked, “Are there *extraterrestrial* beings? Is there life in outer space?” According to the Bible, the answer is “yes” — though certainly not like anything that has been devised in the imaginations of men.

The Bible teaches the existence of a vast celestial world of spirit beings, collectively referred to as *angels*. Though as real as you and I, they are rarely seen. Theirs is an unseen, immaterial, spirit world — extending from the third Heaven and the very throne-room of God to the earth itself.

This study seeks to “*lift the veil*” of the unseen world as much as the Bible allows. (Considerable fallacy and superstition surround this area of theology. Paganism has produced grotesque and fanciful legends of angels and demons; ‘Christian’ art often portrays them as feminine beings with long hair and wings; and today’s marketing of “guardian angels” has all the overtones of ‘good-luck’ charms.)

The word “angel” means “*messenger*” — one who has been sent on a mission. Strictly speaking therefore, the angels of God refer to only one group of spirit beings. There are other spirit beings, such as the cherubim and seraphim, who are not messengers. Furthermore, men (who serve as messengers) are called angels — *Revelation 1:20; 2:1*.

For the most part, we shall use the term “angel” to refer to all spirit beings collectively.

THE ORIGIN OF ANGELS

Where did these spirit beings come from?

A. THEY WERE CREATED:

1. According to *Psalm 148:2,5*, God _____ and they were _____. See also: Nehemiah 9:6.
2. According to *Colossians 1:16*, ____ things (including the invisible) were created ____ Him, and ____ Him. (The context shows “Him” to be _____.)

B. WHEN WERE THEY CREATED?

1. Scripture does not give us the actual account of their creation.
2. According to *Job 38:4-7*, they were present (thus already created) when God laid the _____ of the earth.

C. HOW WERE THEY CREATED?

1. *Matthew 22:30* indicates that angels do not _____.
2. This means angels are a company, not a race. They do not reproduce themselves. When God created them, He called into existence the whole host at one time.

D. HOW MANY WERE CREATED?

1. *Deuteronomy 33:2* — _____.
2. *Psalm 68:17* — even _____.
3. *Daniel 7:10* — _____ and _____ thousand times _____ thousand.
4. *Matthew 26:53* — more than _____ legions.
(A Roman legion consisted of between 4,500 and 6,000 soldiers.)
5. *Luke 2:13* — a _____.
6. *Hebrews 12:22* — an _____ company.
7. *Revelation 5:11* — _____ thousand _____ thousand, & _____ of _____.

THE NATURE OF ANGELS

What are angels like?

A. THEY ARE SPIRIT BEINGS:

1. According to *Hebrews 1:14*, they are ministering _____.
See also: Psalm 104:4.
2. This means they are ‘incorporeal’ — i.e. they possess no material body.
(Keep in mind that man himself is essentially a spiritual being housed inside a material body — *II Corinthians 4:16–5:4*; *II Peter 1:13-15*; *Ecclesiastes 12:7*.)

3. Angels do have the ability to materialize. Study: *Genesis 18:1,2,22; 19:1.*

B. THEY ARE SUPERHUMAN BEINGS:

1. According to *Psalm 103:20*, angels _____ in strength. See: *Revelation 18:1.*
2. According to *II Peter 2:11*, angels are _____ in power and _____ (than men).
3. One angel is capable of destroying an entire army of _____ men — *II Kings 19:35.*
4. They are called _____ — *II Thessalonians 1:7.*
5. Angelic power is supervised power: it is always under God's control. See: *II Samuel 24:16; Matthew 26:53; Revelation 7:2,3; 16:1.*
6. Read: *Daniel 9:20-23.* Gabriel had the ability to travel from Heaven's throne room to earth in less time than it took Daniel to _____.

C. THEY ARE MASCULINE BEINGS:

One of the unscriptural notions about angels is that they have a feminine appearance. Religious art often portrays them with long (golden) hair, flowing white robes, and wings! In actual fact:

1. Look up: *II Samuel 24:16; I Chronicles 21:15; Matthew 29:2-4; Acts 12:7 and Revelation 22:8,9.* References to angels in these passages use the personal pronouns:
_____, ____ and _____.
_____.
2. Compare: *Matthew 28:1-5* with *Mark 16:1-5.* Although glorious in appearance, the angel is referred to as a _____. _____.
3. In *Genesis 18:2; 19:1*, the LORD and His two attendant angels are called "three _____. "
4. In *Zechariah 1:8-12*, the _____ of the _____ is described as a man.
_____.
5. In *Acts 10:1-3,30,31*, Cornelius described the angel he saw as a man in
_____.
6. Those spirit beings whose names we have been given (Michael, Gabriel, and Lucifer) each have a masculine name.

Note: These descriptions would preclude wings. The only spirit beings actually said to have wings are the seraphim and cherubim.

Note: The only reference to winged women is found in *Zechariah 5:5-11*. They are clearly distinguished from the angel. The passage seems to line up with the “woman of Babylon [Shinar]” in *Revelation 17*. (The demonic creatures which are released from the bottomless pit are described as having the hair of women [*Revelation 9:8*]).

D. THEY ARE INTELLIGENT, PERSONAL BEINGS:

1. Angels are considered to have great _____ (*II Samuel 14:20*).
2. Angels are able to T _____ with men, *Daniel 9:22; Zechariah 1:9,13,19; Revelation 17:1; 21:9; 22:8,9*. They are not mindless robots.
3. Angels may be highly intelligent, but they are limited in their knowledge, *Matthew 24:36; I Peter 1:10-12*.

E. THEY ARE MORAL BEINGS:

1. *II Peter 2:4* speaks of the angels that _____.
2. *Matthew 25:31* and *Mark 8:38* speak of the _____ angels.

Although the Word of God has little to say about the matter, angels obviously were created with the capability of moral choice (*Jude 6*). We assume the fall of certain angels into sin was associated with the fall of Lucifer (*Ezekiel 28:14-17; Isaiah 14:12-14*) and, unlike the fall of man, must have been on an individual basis. Angels cannot be saved — therefore we would suppose their moral nature has been steadfastly confirmed.

THE KINGDOM OF ANGELS

The spirit world is an organized realm. There are some spirit beings singled out by their unique appearance and ministry. There are some spirit beings whose names we are told. In several passages, we see the host of heaven is arranged in an orderly kingdom.

A. UNIQUE SPIRIT BEINGS:

1. The Cherubim.

These creatures exercise a ministry of *guardianship*.

- a. In *Genesis 3:22-24*, they were set as sentinels at the east end of the garden of _____.
- b. Compare *Psalm 80:1; Psalm 99:1* and *Revelation 7:10*. Cherubim guard the _____ of God.

Note: The most famous cherub, Lucifer, was the “anointed cherub that covereth” (*Ezekiel 28:14*).

- c. *Ezekiel 1:4-28* gives us a detailed description of the cherubim. (*Ezekiel 10:15,20* shows them to be cherubim.) They:
- Had the likeness of a _____ (verse 5).
 - Had four _____ (verses 6,10; *Ezekiel 10:14*).
 - Had four _____ (verse 6b).
 - Had feet like the sole of a _____ (verse 7).
 - Were the color of burnished _____ (verse 7).
 - Had the _____ of a _____ (verse 8; *Ezekiel 10:8*).
 - Were translucent, with moving lights (verse 13).
 - Moved like _____ (verse 14).
 - Sounded awesome (verse 24).
 - Had bodies full of _____ (verse 18; *Ezekiel 10:12*).
 - Were accompanied by strange, moving _____ (verses 15,16,19; *Ezekiel 10:16,17*).

Lucifer’s description in *Ezekiel 28:13* gives us a further glimpse of what these creatures must look like.

- d. Sculpted cherubim guarded the _____ covering the ark (*Exodus 25:18-22*).
- e. Carved cherubim graced the _____ (holy of holies) in Solomon’s temple (*I Kings 6:23-35; II Chronicles 3:7-14*).

2. The Seraphim — *Isaiah 6:1-7*.

This is the only reference to seraphim in the Bible. They and the cherubim are the only spirit beings said to have wings.

- a. The seraphim are associated with the _____ N E S S of God.
- b. The seraphim have one _____ and _____ wings (verse 2).
- c. The seraphim also have _____ (verse 6).

3. The Four Beasts — *Revelation 4:6-9*.

These creatures have features of both the cherubim and seraphim.

- Eyes and faces like the cherubim
- Wings and worship like the seraphim

B. NAMED SPIRIT BEINGS:

Apart from Lucifer, only two spirit beings have their names revealed to us in God's Word.

1. Michael.

- a. He is one of the _____ (Daniel 10:13).
- b. He is the prince who stands for the children of _____ (Daniel's) people, i.e. the Jews (Daniel 10:21; 12:1).
- c. He was the funeral director for _____ (Jude 9; Deuteronomy 34:5,6).
- d. He will lead the angelic army of God against the armies of the great red _____ (Satan) in the middle of Daniel's 70TH Week (Revelation 12:7-9).
- e. He is the only spirit being called an _____ (Jude 6).
- f. As such, his _____ will announce the Rapture (I Thessalonians 4:16).

2. Gabriel.

Gabriel is the spirit being whose ministry has involved him bringing God's most important (history changing) messages to man.

- a. He explained to Daniel his vision of the _____ and the _____ goat in Daniel 8:15-21.
- b. He gave Daniel the great prophecy of the _____ (Daniel 9:20-24).
- c. He announced to _____ the miracle birth of _____ the _____ (Luke 1:11-20).
- d. He announced to _____ the supernatural conception and birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-33).

It is most likely Gabriel who speaks with Daniel in Daniel 10:10-21.

C. THE HEAVENLY HOST:

The celestial kingdom is an organized kingdom, one which apparently mirrors the kingdoms of the world.

1. Daniel 10 reveals that spirit “_____” are at work behind the human rulers of nations — Daniel 10:13,20,21. (Both good and evil!)
2. Daniel 11:1 indicates that spirit beings can _____ and _____ world leaders.

3. *Daniel* 12:1 indicates that these spirit beings will _____ up for their nations in times of crisis.
4. In *Daniel* 4:13,17,23, spirit beings are called _____.
5. *Ephesians* 6:12 speaks of a spiritual, unseen warfare, in which God's people are arrayed against:
 - _____.
 - _____.
 - _____ of the _____ of this world.
 - spiritual _____ in _____ places.

See: *Ephesians* 2:2.

6. *Colossians* 1:16 speaks of:
 - _____ (spirit beings behind sitting rulers).
 - _____ (domains of control).
 - _____ (the realm of a prince).
 - _____.

See also: *Ephesians* 1:21; *Jeremiah* 13:18; *Matthew* 20:25; *Colossians* 2:15. (*Romans* 8:38 apparently makes some distinction between these hierarchies and angels in general.)

THE ACTIVITY OF ANGELS

According to *Hebrews* 1:14, angels are _____ spirits.

The object of their activities are the _____ of _____.
See: *Titus* 3:7; *Colossians* 1:12; *Ephesians* 1:11; *Galatians* 4:7 and *Romans* 8:17.

Note: The expression “shall be” in *Hebrews* 1:14 alludes to the three tenses of our salvation: PAST (we are saved from sin’s penalty, *Hebrews* 9:28a); PRESENT (we are being saved from sin’s power, *Hebrews* 9:24); and PROSPECTIVE (we shall be saved from sin’s presence, *Hebrews* 9:28b).
See: *I Peter* 1:3-5.

The ministry of unseen angels to God’s children extends all through life — until we are safe at Home in glory!

A. THEY ARE CURIOUS ABOUT THE SALVATION OF SINNERS:

1. They _____ to _____ into it — *I Peter 1:12e*.
2. The manifold wisdom of God in salvation is made _____ to the _____ and _____ by the Lord's _____ E S — *Ephesians 3:8-11*, esp. verse 10.

Note: This scripture may explain *I Corinthians 11:10*. A woman's (long) hair is a 'badge' of subjection to the authority of her husband — thereby demonstrating to unseen watchers an important aspect of the manifold wisdom of God. See: *I Corinthians 11:3*.

3. They witness much _____ in _____ over the salvation of sinners — *Luke 15:7,10*.
4. They are ever-present, observing, listening — *I Timothy 5:21a*.

B. THEY MINISTER AMONG THE SAVED AND SAFE:

1. Most always _____ — *Hebrews 13:2*.
2. They exercise spiritual oversight of “_____ ones” — *Matthew 18:10*.

Note: “Beholding God’s face” means they see God’s attitude toward children, *Matthew 18:6*.

3. The angel of the LORD _____ round about them that _____ him, and delivereth them — *Psalm 34:7*.
4. *Psalm 91:11* is a Messianic prophecy. It was misquoted by Satan when he tempted Christ, *Matthew 4:6; Luke 4:10,11*. (Note the omission, and see *Proverbs 3:6; 16:7*.)
5. They are not to be _____ ED — *Colossians 2:18; Revelation 22:8,9* (or prayed to!).

C. THEY HAVE ON OCCASIONS MANIFESTED THEMSELVES TO MEN:

1. To the discouraged _____ under a _____ tree (*I Kings 19:5-8*).
2. To the terrified _____ of Elisha (*II Kings 6:15-17*).
3. To _____ in the den of _____ (*Daniel 6:22*).
4. To the praying _____ (*Daniel 9:20-23; 10:10-14*).
5. To the imprisoned _____ (*Acts 5:17-20*).

6. To the obedient soul winner, _____ (Acts 8:26).
7. To the condemned sleeper, _____ (Acts 12:3-16).
8. To the cheerful prisoner, _____ (Acts 27:21-25).

Note: Such manifestations of spirit beings are not to be expected or sought after today. God's Word often gives us "special-case" examples to establish our faith in its "every-day" promises.

Note: The "tongues of angels" (*I Corinthians 13:1*) is not some unknown, heavenly language. In the Bible, whenever angels spoke to men, they spoke in the [known] language of the hearer (e.g. *Daniel 9:22*; *Acts 12:7*). This passage is referring to a perfection of speech beyond the normal capabilities of men.

D. THEY BEAR THE SOULS OF THE SAINTS TO GLORY:

The soul of _____ was carried by angels to Paradise, *Luke 16:22*.

E. THEY WILL ACCOMPANY BELIEVERS AT CHRIST'S RETURN:

1. Angels will accompany Christ when He comes in His _____ (*Matthew 25:31*).
2. Angels will wreak God's _____ upon an unbelieving world (*II Thessalonians 1:7-9*).
3. Accompanying the King of kings and his angelic hosts will be _____ of His _____ (*Jude 14,15*).

See also: *Revelation 19:8,14*.

F. THEY WILL EXECUTE GOD'S JUDGMENTS UPON SIN:

1. They Will Administer Divine Judgments During Daniel's 70TH Week:
 - a. The seven _____ judgments — *Revelation 8:2-9:2,13-15*.
 - b. The seven _____ judgments — *Revelation 16:1-17*.
2. They Will Separate The Saved And The Lost Before The Millennium:
 - a. The _____ from the _____ — *Matthew 13:24-30,36-43 (verse 39c)*.
 - b. The _____ from the _____ — *Matthew 25:31-34,41,46*.
3. An angel will bind _____ at the beginning of Christ's Millennial kingdom — *Revelation 20:1-3*.

THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS

There is another dimension to the unseen world — an invisible, spiritual kingdom of darkness. See: Ephesians 6:12. The believer engages this kingdom in constant spiritual warfare.

Notice that this adversarial kingdom represents the “wiles of the _____” against us (*Ephesians 6:11b*). In other words, we are not (normally) subject to the *personal* attention of Satan himself — he can only operate through his minions. After all, he is not omnipresent.

A. **THE CONSTITUENTS OF THIS MALEVOLENT KINGDOM:**

The Lord Jesus Christ affirmed the existence of this kingdom of darkness (*Matthew 12:26*). Scripture reveals the following concerning its citizens:

1. The _____ — *I Peter 5:8*.
2. The Devil’s _____ — *Matthew 25:41d; Revelation 12:7-9*.
3. _____, or evil _____ — *Matthew 8:16*.

Note: The Authorized, King James Version accurately renders the Greek word ‘*daimon*’ as “devils” rather than “demons” because it is they which give *THE* Devil his façade of omnipresence.

4. The angels that _____ and kept not their _____ — *II Peter 2:4; Jude 6*.

Note: These spirit beings are bound. Their exact sin is not mentioned in the Word of God.

The Bible does not tell us when this kingdom of darkness came into being. We assume it was associated with the fall of Lucifer — *Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:15-17*. *Revelation 12:4* (in the light of *Judges 5:20*) may indicate one-third of the angelic company joined Lucifer in his prideful rebellion.

Like the celestial kingdom, this infernal kingdom is structured. We see principalities contesting the rise and fall of nations (*Daniel 10:13,20*). We see powers working **in** the lives of the lost (*Ephesians 2:2*). We see devils afflicting men (*Luke 8:2*).

B. **THE NATURE & CHARACTER OF THIS MALEVOLENT KINGDOM:**

1. They are _____ spirits — *Luke 9:38-42*.
2. They are L _____ (numerous) — *Mark 5:9*.

3. They are intelligent, personal beings. Why?

Because:

- a. They “B_____” the Lord — *Mark 5:10,12*.
- b. They recognized _____ as the Holy _____ of God — *Mark 1:24*.
- c. They obeyed the Lord Jesus Christ — *Matthew 8:16*.
- d. They even knew their _____ was coming when they would be _____ E D in the Lake of Fire — *Matthew 8:29*.

C. THE ACTIVITIES OF THIS MALEVOLENT KINGDOM:

1. They Influence Spiritual Perversion.

- a. They foment false _____ S — *I Timothy 4:1-3*. This is why we must try (“test”) every doctrine by the Word of God, *I John 4:1-3*.
- b. They are behind _____ A T R Y — *Deuteronomy 32:17; Psalm 106:36,37; I Corinthians 10:20,21*.
- c. They seek to discredit the Gospel — *Acts 16:16-18*. Attaching the well-known reputation of this damsel to the Paul’s message was designed to produce confusion in the minds of his hearers.
- d. They are capable of working _____, see: *Revelation 16:13,14*.

2. They Are Capable Of Causing Physical & Mental Affliction In Men.

- a. _____ N E S S — *Matthew 9:32,33*.
- b. _____ N E S S — *Matthew 12:22*.
- c. Torment and physical harm — *Mark 9:17-27*.
- d. Mental anguish, insanity — *Luke 8:29* (cf. verse 35).

Note: The Bible does not support the notion that ‘demons’ are merely superstitious explanations for certain diseases. While these spirit beings could cause physical affliction, (cf. *Job 2:7*), they could be spoken to and dealt with separately from the affliction. See: *Mark 1:32*, where both conditions are distinguished.

D. WHAT ABOUT “DEMON POSSESSION?”

There has been considerable interest over recent years in the subject of demon possession. So-called “deliverance ministries” specialize in ‘casting out demons,’ and their assertions are very concerning. For example, they claim:

- Christians can become demon-possessed.

- Persistent and deliberate indulgence in the sins of the flesh or spirit ‘opens one up’ to demon-possession.
- Failure to surrender completely to God invites demon possession.
- Drugs and alcohol use make demon-possession more likely.
- Involvement in rôle-playing games such as *Dungeons and Dragons* leads directly to demon-possession.
- People may be possessed and not even be aware of it. Therefore, a ‘test’ must be employed to determine whether they have a demon.

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of modern-day ‘Christian exorcism’ is that demons are commonly blamed for sin. People are told they are possessed by the ‘spirit of lust,’ the ‘spirit of envy,’ or the ‘spirit of anger,’ etc. This is nothing more than a “cop-out” — the Bible calls these things the “*works of the flesh*” (*Galatians 5:19-21*), i.e. SIN!

Consider what the Bible does teach on the matter:

1. Demon Possession Means Evil Spirits Actually Inhabit Human Beings.
 - a. They can “_____ in and _____ there” (*Matthew 12:45*).
 - b. They can be “_____ out” (*Matthew 8:16; 9:33; Mark 1:34*).
 - c. They can “_____ out” (*Mark 5:8*) and be “_____ out of a man” (*Matthew 12:43*).
 - d. *Matthew 12:43-45* indicates that devils desire to indwell people, but that it is not an easy matter for them to do so (“*seeking rest, and findeth none*”).
 - e. They not only possess, but they totally control the individual (*Mark 9:18,20; Mark 5:2-5*).
 - f. More than one devil can possess a person (*Matthew 12:45; Mark 5:9; 16:9*).
2. Demon Possession Is Very Noticeable.

The most usual feature is that of extreme physical and mental torment and suffering — see: *Mark 1:23,26*. Devils have the ability to:

- a. Control the vocal chords of their victim — to speak (*Matthew 8:29; Mark 5:7*), or to refrain from speaking (*Matthew 12:22*).

Note: These devils spoke rationally and logically (unlike the symptoms of mental or neurological disorders).

- b. Give their victim superhuman physical strength (*Mark 5:3*).
- c. Cause their victim to self-mutilate (*Mark 5:5; 9:22*).

- d. Produce extreme wildness (*Matthew 8:28*).
- e. Sorely vex (torment) their victims (*Luke 6:18; Acts 5:16*).

A consideration of the examples of possession in the New Testament shows that even the unsaved had no trouble identifying the affliction (*Mark 7:25,26; 9:17,18,24*), so dreadful was it. The idea that demons can *secretly* inhabit people (and that a test is needed to determine this) is nonsense.

3. Demon Possession Is Not Brought On By Human Actions.
 - a. Children were possessed — *Mark 9:17-21; Matthew 17:15; Mark 7:26-30*.
 - b. Jesus (or the apostles) never rebuked an individual for having an evil spirit.
4. What About Demon Possession Today?

There are several points to note:

 - a. There was an obvious ‘outbreak’ of demonic activity during the period of Christ’s earthly ministry.
 - This was surely the occasion for Satan’s greatest opposition.
 - The miracles of Christ (including those of casting out devils) were primarily for the purpose of authentication — *Mark 1:27; John 5:36; Luke 7:18-22*.
 - b. Casting out devils was one of the sign gifts (*Mark 16:17*), given to authenticate the *preached* Word of God.
 - The gift passed as the *written* Word of God was completed.
 - Biblically recorded incidences of demon possession decreased to zero after *Acts 19*.
 - The epistles are silent on the matter.
 - c. Paul’s casting out evil spirits was called a _____ miracle (*Acts 19:11,12*). i.e. it was an apostolic sign.
 - d. Christ has _____ principalities and powers (including evil spirits) — *Colossians 2:15*. Like Satan, they are a defeated foe.
 - e. The Bible speaks of another massive outbreak of demonic activity during the events of Daniel’s 70TH Week (*Revelation 9:1-11; 16:12-14; 18:1,2*). The Restrainer of the coming Antichrist [the Holy Spirit] evidently is also restraining the activity of these evil spirits (*II Thessalonians 2:3,6-10*).

5. What About “Casting Out” Demons?

- a. Christ and the apostles had no “method” of casting out devils. Sometimes Christ spoke to the devils (*Matthew 8:16; Mark 1:25,26*); sometimes He did not even see the one who was possessed (*Mark 7:29*). This indicates it is not a ‘ministry’ which is to be practiced today.
- b. The seven sons of Sceva were _____ (*Acts 19:13-16*). This practice involved the use of incantations and potions to cast out devils. It is basically a demonic practice itself. See also: *Matthew 7:22*.

Note: It is interesting to note that Ephesus was a place given over to occultic practice (*Acts 19:19*) and idolatry (*Acts 9:27*). We might expect the greatest opportunity for demonic possession today would be in similar cultures. (This seems to be the testimony of present-day church-planting evangelists who minister in such places.)

We face Satan and his malevolent kingdom with the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ (the sword, *Ephesians 6:17*), the power of prayer and fasting (*Mark 9:28,29; Ephesians 6:18a*), and the whole armor of God (*Ephesians 6:11-17*).

6. Can A Christian Be Demon Possessed?

- a. According to *I Corinthians 6:19*, the believer’s _____ is the temple of the _____.
- b. *I John 4:4* declares, “_____ is He that is **in** you, than he that is in the _____” (see: verse 3).
- c. For an evil spirit to enter and possess a believer, he would first have to _____ the _____ man inside, *Matthew 12:29*.
- d. The _____ of God is sufficient to stand against the Devil and his subordinates, *Ephesians 6:11-13*.
- e. Simply _____ I N G the Devil (*James 4:7b*) steadfast in the _____ (*IPeter 5:9a*) guarantees the believer victory.

Answer: No!

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Hebrews 1:14*.

V The Preacher's Vocation

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The word “*vocation*” means ‘a calling;’ a ‘life-work for which one has been specially chosen and fitted.’

This lesson concerns itself with the “**call to the ministry**” — that intangible and somewhat mysterious experience, whereby a man perceives and acknowledges the distinct call of God upon his life to be a preacher. Such a study may be considered by most to be of little interest, given that it only relates to Christian men (*I Timothy 2:12*), and to relatively few at that. However it ought to be taken to heart by *all* church members, who have a responsibility both to pray that God would call and send preachers (*Luke 10:2; Romans 10:14*), and to pray for those that are called and sent (*I Thessalonians 5:12; II Thessalonians 3:1*).

Before embarking on this study, a distinction must be made between ‘ministry’ in general and ‘the ministry’ in particular.

- All believers are to minister and serve (*Romans 6:22; 12:1; Galatians 5:13; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23,24; Hebrews 6:10*). No one is exempt. Some will have received the spiritual gift of ministry for the edification of their church (*Romans 12:7; I Peter 4:10,11*).
- The New Testament also speaks of *THE* ministry as a separate and distinct calling upon some (*I Timothy 1:12; Ephesians 4:12*) — in much the same way as it speaks of “*THE* faith” (as distinct from ‘faith’ in general) when referring to the whole body of belief or doctrine (e.g. *Jude 3; Romans 14:1; I Corinthians 16:13; I Timothy 4:1; II Timothy 4:7*; etc.).

It is important to understand that this Biblical distinction in no way divides God’s people into classes — i.e., those who serve and those who don’t have to serve; the “do-ers” and the “pew-ers;” the clergy and the laity! *Acts 8:4*, in light of the last three words of *Acts 8:1*, clearly demonstrates the responsibility of every church member to be actively involved in the work of the Lord.

The major portion of this lesson will involve looking at the actual experiences of men in the Bible who were distinctly called of God to be preachers, with the goal of finding answers to two questions:

- ☞ What is a divine call to the ministry?
- ☞ How does one recognize a divine call to the ministry?

GOD'S GENERAL CALL

God's general call is issued to all Christians. It involves:

A. THE CALL TO SALVATION:

1. According to *Matthew 9:13e*, Jesus came to call _____ to _____. See also: Mark 2:17.
2. According to *II Thessalonians 2:13,14*, the lost are called to salvation:
 - a. Through sanctification of the _____.
 - b. Through belief of the _____.
 - c. By the _____.
3. From *Galatians 1:15* and *II Timothy 1:9* we learn our calling is not according to our _____, but by God's _____.
4. According to *Matthew 22:14*, _____ are called, but _____ are _____. (cf. *I Corinthians 1:26; Matthew 23:37.*)
5. We are called:
 - a. Into His marvellous _____ — *I Peter 2:9.*
 - b. Into the _____ of His _____ Jesus Christ — *I Corinthians 1:9.*

Because God sovereignly chose (elected) to save all who put their faith in His Son, believers are called the 'elect' of God, *Colossians 3:12; I Peter 1:2.*

B. THE CALL TO BE SAINTS — *Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:2.*

1. A call to walk _____ of the Lord — *Ephesians 4:1; I Thessalonians 2:12; II Thessalonians 1:11,12.*
2. A call unto _____ — *I Thessalonians 4:7. See also: I Peter 1:15; James 2:7.*

C. THE CALL TO BE SERVANTS:

1. By _____ to serve one _____ — *Galatians 5:13.*
2. To bring forth _____ — *John 15:15.*

D. A CALL TO SUFFER:

Read: *I Peter 2:21&c.*

GOD'S SPECIFIC CALL

By this we mean the distinct call to the ministry.

Some believe there is no such call. They would say, “Who needs a *call* when we have a *commission*?” This is a mistaken view however, because although they are intimately connected, the Great Commission was given to the Lord’s churches [institutionally] whereas a divine Call is issued to men [individually].

For the sake of this particular study, we shall consider the three aspects of God’s specific call as it related to the apostle Paul — the “who?” the “what?” and the “where?” — especially since these are the major concerns of any man contemplating a divine call.

A. THE CALL TO A PERSON — “WHO?”

Is God calling me? How do I know?

1. Look up Acts 9:6 and write out Saul’s first question as a saved man.
-

2. Write out the Lord’s answer to his question (same verse).
-
-

3. God revealed to Ananias that Saul was a _____ vessel who would preach Christ before Gentiles, royalty, and Jews alike (Acts 9:15).
4. God’s call upon Saul’s life was conveyed through _____ (Acts 22:12-15).
5. Soon after his baptism, Saul _____ Christ (Acts 9:20).
6. Paul later testified that he was not _____ to the heavenly vision (Acts 26:16-19).

This was Paul’s distinct call **into** the ministry. Read his testimony in *I Timothy 1:12,13*.

B. THE CALL TO A POSITION — “WHAT?”

What is God calling me to be or do?

Read: *Acts 13:1-3.*

1. Saul was serving as a pastor-teacher in the _____ church.
2. The Holy Ghost spoke to the brethren and said, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the _____ whereunto I have _____ them.”

This was Paul’s distinct call to a **particular** ministry — he went from pastor to evangelist, and church-planting became his ministry for the rest of his life.

C. **THE CALL TO A PLACE — “WHERE?”**

Where is God calling me to serve?

Read: *Acts 16:6-10.*

1. Paul and his team were _____ by the Holy Ghost to preach the Word of God in Asia, Mysia, and Bythinia (places which all desperately needed the Gospel).
2. The Lord directed Paul through a _____ in the night.
3. In *verse 10*, Luke records their assured understanding “that the Lord had _____ us to preach the Gospel unto _____.”

This was Paul’s distinct call to a **field** of service.

The divine call embraces all three aspects. First comes the call to preach — which **never** changes, *Romans 11:29*. This is usually followed by a period of preparation and mentoring, but ultimately will require God’s direction as to the nature of the ministry to be undertaken (which may change along the way) and the field of service (which is also subject to redirection).

We now commence our study of the call of God upon men in the Bible. In this, we will observe considerable diversity among those called and in God’s approach in the call. There is no single pattern! Nevertheless, we will attempt to identify some commonality with each experience.

THE DIVINE CALL UPON MEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Old Testament preachers were prophets (both *forthtellers* and *foretellers*).

A. **THE DIVINE CALL OF MOSES:**

Read: *Exodus 3:1-14; 4:1-17; Acts 7:20-35; Hebrews 11:23-26.*

The life of Moses is divided into three distinct periods: forty years in Egypt, learning to be a “somebody” (*Acts 7:22*); forty years in Midian learning to be a “nobody” (*Acts 7:29*); then forty years in the wilderness being a blessing to “everybody” (*Acts 7:36*). (God will prepare a man before he uses him.)

Each period began with a crisis of faith:

- When he was _____ (*Hebrews 11:23*).
- When he was _____ to _____ (*Hebrews 11:24-26*).
- When he was C _____ (*Exodus 3:4*).

There are several notable circumstances surrounding the call of Moses to be a prophet (*Deuteronomy 34:10*) of God:

1. The Preparation of the Man of God.

A call to the ministry is not ‘surprising’ to God! In fact, a preacher is chosen before he sees the light of day — *Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:13,15; Galatians 1:15*. Yet *before* the actual call is issued, God is providentially preparing that man for the task ahead.

Use your own words to answer the following:

- a. Compare *Hebrews 11:23* with *Hebrews 11:27*. What two qualities in his parents did Moses later duplicate in his life?

-
- b. What did Moses receive during his years in the Egyptian court?
See: *Acts 7:22*.

-
- c. Compare *Exodus 3:1a* with *Genesis 46:34f*. What character trait would you say Moses learned during the ‘desert years?’

-
- d. Compare *Exodus 2:21* with *Philippians 4:11*. What other quality did Moses learn in Midian?
-

2. The Call of the Man of God.

In *Acts 7:23-27* and *Exodus 2:11-14* we see a “false call.” Though rightly motivated, Moses nonetheless acted in self will. Instead of a clear call from God, he “supposed” (*Acts 7:25*)! Consequently, his fleshly ministry was perceived as being without divine authority (*Acts 7:27c*).

A NEED is not a call — although there is always a great need.

A BURDEN is not a call — although a burden is necessary.

An OPPORTUNITY is not a call — although opportunities abound.

Having ABILITY is not a call — although qualification is essential.

A DESIRE is not a call — although desire is part of it.

An INVITATION is not a call — unless it comes from God!

The **true call** of Moses came from the _____ bush.

- a. Look at *Exodus 2:23,24* and *3:7*. What was the LORD’s motivation in issuing a call to Moses?
-

- b. The lesson of the burning bush is threefold:
 - A *bush*, not a tree — God uses the common and the insignificant (which Moses had now become). See: *I Corinthians 1:27-29.*
 - A *flame* of fire — God must be the One Who works in and through the man He calls (cf. *Exodus 2:11,12*). Any greatness comes from Him.
 - *Not consumed* — with a divine call comes a divine enabling.

- c. How do we see the divine call of Moses as being a *personal* call?

(Exodus 3:4).

- d. What did the *place* of Moses' call become? (Exodus 3:5)

3. The Revelation to the Man of God.

When God issues a call, He also draws that man to Himself. There is something intensely personal and intimate about it. Here, God revealed two things about Himself to Moses:

- a. His Identity — Exodus 3:6,15,16. A covenant-keeping God!
- b. His Name — the great “ ” (Exodus 3:14).

Note: The Name of God literally means, “*the self-existent One.*” See: John 8:58.

4. The Response of the Man of God — “ am I” (Exodus 3:4).

- a. Moses responded to God's call with TWO QUESTIONS:

- am I? (Exodus 3:11) — an awareness of inadequacy.

God answered with a promise (Exodus 3:12a).

“*I will be thee.*”

- What is [Thy] ? (Exodus 3:13) — a quest for divine authority (in light of Exodus 2:14).

God answered with a commission (Exodus 3:14).

“*I AM hath me unto you.*”

- b. Moses also came up with TWO EXCUSES:

- They will not me — Exodus 4:1.

God responded with a question (*Exodus 4:2*).

“*What is that in thine _____?*”

Whereas Moses was given special signs to authenticate his preaching, today's preacher has the Book!

- I am not _____ — *Exodus 4:10*.

Compare *Acts 7:22* with *II Corinthians 10:10*. There is a difference between words (content) and eloquence (delivery)!

God responded with another question (*Exodus 4:11*).

“*Who hath _____ man's _____?*”

- c. The danger of PRESUMPTION — *Exodus 4:13*. Moses thought he knew better than God when he suggested someone else should be the one to go. Though sounding humble and pious, his sense of inadequacy [unbelief] was now limiting the possibilities of his life and evading the responsibilities entrusted to him. God became angry; Moses lost a part of his ministry — *Exodus 4:14-16*. Unbelief was Moses' “achilles heel” (*Numbers 20:12*).

B. THE DIVINE CALL OF SAMUEL:

Read: *I Samuel 2:11,18-20,26; 3:1-21.*

Samuel represented the transition between the period of the judges and the days of the prophets (*Acts 13:20*).

1. The Preparation of the Man of God — *I Samuel 1*.

a. The influence of a GODLY HOME (*verse 3*):

- Hannah _____ for a son — *verses 11g,27*.
- Hannah promised to _____ her son unto the LORD — *verse 11h*.
- Hannah _____ him to the LORD — *verse 28*.

b. The Influence of EARLY CONSECRATION and SERVICE:

- Samuel was taken to the temple (tabernacle) at Shiloh when he was _____ — *verses 22-24*.
- Samuel _____ before the LORD as a _____ — *I Samuel 2:18*.

- Samuel's mentor was _____ — *I Samuel 3:1a*.
- Samuel's _____ consistently encouraged him in his service — *I Samuel 2:19*.

2. The Call of the Man of God.

The call of Samuel into the ministry came at a time of great apostasy in Israel. Read: *I Samuel 2:12,17,22,29; 3:13*.

The word of the LORD was _____ (*I Samuel 3:1*), i.e. “scarce.” God was not speaking with His people! See: *Amos 8:11,12*.

The _____ of God was allowed to go _____ in the temple. Compare *I Samuel 3:2* with *Exodus 27:20* and *Leviticus 24:2*.

- Samuel was _____ IN G when the LORD began calling him (*I Samuel 3:3&c*). Notice, God called him by NAME.
- Samuel did not _____ the LORD at this time (*I Samuel 3:7a*). Like Paul, he was saved and called virtually at once.
- Samuel thought it was _____ who was calling him (*I Samuel 3:5,6,8*). Remember, Eli was old and obese (*I Samuel 4:15,18*). No doubt the boy was accustomed to responding to his beck and call.
- Eli's sound advice to this tenderhearted boy was to respond with:
“_____ , _____ ; for thy _____ ” (*I Samuel 3:9*).

3. The Revelation to the Man of God — I Samuel 3.

- The LORD _____, and _____ before Samuel (verse 10a) — in a _____ (verse 15c).
- This fourth time, God spoke Samuel's name twice. cf. *Exodus 3:4; Acts 9:4*.
- God revealed to Samuel a message of _____ against the house of Eli — *verses 11-14*. It's as if God drew Samuel to Himself and shared a secret with him.

4. The Response of the Man of God — I Samuel 3.

- Samuel lay awake until _____ — verse 15a. There is a wonder and ‘awesomeness’ associated with a divine call!
- Samuel at first _____ to tell Eli what God had told him — verse 15b. There is often a sense of fear and/or inadequacy associated with a divine call. He was given an unwelcome message to deliver.

- c. Samuel told Eli every _____ — *verse 18a* (cf. *Acts 20:27*). He was raised to be an obedient child (cf. *verse 16*) — a quality which now carried over into his ministry!

5. The Evidences of a Divine Call — I Samuel 3.

- a. The LORD was _____ him (*verse 19b*). Unmistakable evidence of God's PRESENCE in the man of God's life.
- b. God let none of Samuel's words fall to the _____ (*verse 19*). i.e. God 'owned' (endued) his preaching. POWER.
- c. God's call upon Samuel became evident to all _____ (*verse 20*). PERCEPTION.
- d. The LORD appeared _____ to Samuel (*verse 21*). There was a continuing and increasing work of God in his life and ministry. PROGRESS.

C. THE DIVINE CALL OF ELISHA:

Read: *I Kings 19:15-21.*

Nothing is said about the call of the mighty prophet Elijah. In this passage we read of God's provision for his replacement — evidently decreed as a result of his slump into despondency.

1. The Preparation of the Man of God — *I Kings 19:19a.*

- a. Elisha's occupation was that of a _____ .
- b. The number of oxen is an indication of the size of his father's property and the attendant wealth of his family.
- c. Wealth and privilege were not a hindrance to Elisha. See: *Lamentations 3:27*.
- d. He worked with [alongside] the _____ ox — an indication that he was a strong, hard working young man.
- e. He obviously had a loving home life — *I Kings 19:20f.*

2. The Call of the Man of God — *I Kings 19:19b.*

- a. It was first made known to _____, the messenger of God (*I Kings 19:16b*).
 - It came to him as the word of the LORD (*I Kings 19:15a*).
 - Compare this with *I Timothy 4:14b*. REVELATION from God.
- b. It was communicated to Elisha by the cast _____.
 - This was the prophet's cloak.
 - Compare this with *I Timothy 4:14c*. RECOGNITION by man.

Note: Ordination is the *choosing* of a man to an office or position; the laying on of hands is a symbolic , and , his call and ministry. There is no impartation of grace involved in either act — although there is an impartation of vested authority.

3. The Response of the Man of God — I Kings 19.

- a. It was IMMEDIATE — he _____ the oxen, and _____ after Elijah (*verse 20*). See: *Matthew 4:19,20.*
- b. It was SACRIFICIAL — he not only left his means, but he had to say “good-bye” to his _____ and _____ (*verse 20*). cf. *Mark 10:29,30.*
- c. It was TESTED — Elijah told him to “_____ again” (*verse 20*). Elijah also put him through a similar three-fold test in *II Kings 2:2,4,6*. He was also tested by discouraging words (*II Kings 2:3,5*). If a man can happily do anything else beside preach, he has no business in the ministry! cf. *Luke 9:57-62.*

Note: There is a difference in Elisha’s actions with respect to his parents and that of the man in *Luke 9:59* — whose father had not died yet!

- d. It was TOTAL — Elisha killed and cooked a _____ [two] of _____, using the plough _____ as fuel for the fire (*verse 21*). He literally “burned his bridges behind him!”
- e. It was PUBLIC — he gave the food to the _____ (*verse 21*). Although the call of God often comes in a personal and private way, there comes a time when it needs to be openly declared before others.
- f. It was COURAGEOUS — considering the days in which Elisha lived. Ahab and Jezebel were still ruling the land, and Satan was hissing in a frenzy (cf. *verses 1,2*).
- g. It was HUMBLE — Elisha began his ministry by willingly following and _____ IN G to Elijah (*verse 21*). See: *I Kings 3:11f.*

Elisha’s time of preparation came *after* he received the call to the ministry. He learned by serving, and when the time came for him to assume the responsibility of God’s prophet he knew exactly what he needed most — *II Kings 2:9.*

D. THE DIVINE CALL OF ISAIAH:

Read: *Isaiah 6:1-9.*

This account is more of a “ministry-transforming call” to Isaiah than an actual call into the prophetic ministry. It seems evident from *Isaiah 1:1* that he had already been engaged in his ministry during king Uzziah’s lifetime.

1. The Preparation of the Man of God — verse 1; II Chronicles 26:1-21.
 - a. Isaiah’s transforming vision occurred in the _____ that king Uzziah _____ — *verse 1.*
 - b. Uzziah reigned over Judah for ____ years (*II Chronicles 26:3*).
 - c. According to II Chronicles 26, Uzziah did R _____ (*verse 4*), he S _____ God, and was made to P _____ (*verse 5*).
 - d. Uzziah was marvellously helped — till he was _____ (*II Chronicles 26:15*).
 - e. Uzziah attempted to intrude into the _____'S office (*II Chronicles 26:16-19*).
 - f. Uzziah became a _____ until he died (*II Chronicles 26:21*).

Uzziah’s reign was second only to Solomon’s in its prosperity. The king was noted for his zeal, his fame, his power, his genius, and piety.

Prosperity can easily lead to complacency — a “lost dependence upon God” — *II Chronicles 26:16*. See: Revelation 3:15-17,19; John 15:5.

Uzziah’s sudden demise was a shattering blow to the nation — and no doubt to the prophet Isaiah. Sometimes the Lord will allow traumatic circumstances to come into our lives to get our attention. Sometimes, He has to do this!

2. The Call of the Man of God — verse 8.
 - a. Godward: “Whom shall I _____?”
 - b. Manward: “Who will _____ for _____?”
3. The Revelation to the Man of God — verses 1-5.

The most significant feature of the divine call upon Isaiah was the vision he received. It was a THREE-DIMENSIONAL vision:

- a. Isaiah saw the LORD as He really is:
 - A sharp contrast between Isaiah’s king (*verse 1a*) and THE King (*verse 5f*). Uzziah was polluted, and his passing brought gloom. The Lord is thrice-holy, eternal, and glorious.

- This vision got Isaiah's eyes on the Lord — a “must” for any man of God!

b. Isaiah saw himself as he really was:

- Isaiah exclaimed, “ ____ is me!” (*verse 5a*), not “wow is me!” It is significant that in the previous chapter the prophet had pronounced six of these upon the people (*Isaiah 5:8,11,18,20,21,22*) — but the seventh was for himself. Perhaps up until this vision Isaiah had been a ‘routine’ prophet, dutifully preaching the biblically-sound sermons he was supposed to deliver, yet without real conviction or a broken heart!!
- Isaiah was convicted of his unclean _____ (*verse 5a*), the very instruments of his ‘trade.’
- Isaiah concluded by saying, “I am _____” (*verse 5a*). He offers no self-vindication. He does not rationalize his previous actions. He is emptied, and can only cast himself upon the Lord.
- The greater a preacher’s comprehension of God and the greater his understanding of himself, the greater that preacher! To Isaiah now, God was everything and he was nothing.

c. Isaiah saw others as they really are:

- He saw his people as _____ (*verse 5b*). Complacent eyes had seen a great nation filled with good people. Now, God had opened his eyes.
- The word “unclean” means “polluted.” It has to do with leprosy!
- A preacher must see men as God sees them.

4. The Response of the Man of God.

- FIRST, God _____ his lips with a _____ coal from the altar (*verses 6,7*).
- SECOND, Isaiah answered the call (*verse 8b*).

“ _____ ; _____ .”

***The Lord must do a work IN a man before He can ever do a work
THROUGH that man.***

E. THE DIVINE CALL OF AMOS:

Read: Amos 1:1; 7:10-15.

- Amos was a prophet contemporary with _____ (cf. Amos 1:1; Isaiah 1:1).
- Tekoa was one of 15 cities built for _____ in Judah and Benjamin (*II Chronicles* 11:5-10).
- The region around Tekoa was a _____ (*II Chronicles* 20:20a).

1. The Preparation of the Man of God — Amos 7:14b.

Amos was:

- a. An _____, and...
- b. A _____ of sycamore _____.

Like Moses and Elisha, Amos probably spent considerable time laboring in relative solitude before God called him to preach.

God used this time: his prophecies are replete with farming illustrations. Look up: Amos 2:13; 3:12; 4:9; 6:12; 7:1; 8:1. They also reflect the lonely nights spent on hillsides with the flock — Amos 5:8.

2. The Call of the Man of God — Amos 7:15.

Amos simply explained:

- a. The LORD _____ me as I _____ the flock, and...
- b. The LORD said, “_____, _____ unto my people...”

Consider Amos 7:14a. Preaching is not a chosen profession (“I was no prophet”), nor is it a transferable occupation (“neither was I a prophet’s son”). There must be a divine call! See: Galatians 1:1a.

3. The Response of the Man of God — Amos 7:16a.

“Now _____ hear thou the word of the LORD:”

With this statement Amos exhibited simple obedience to God’s call, yet it was an obedience in the face of fierce opposition from the *professional* religious establishment (Amos 7:10-13).

- a. He was lied about — *verse 11.*
- b. He was disdained — *verse 12.*
- c. He was told he “didn’t fit in” with the respected ‘ministerial association!’ — *verse 13.*

Consider: Isaiah 30:9,10; Luke 6:26; and *II Timothy* 4:1-5.

F. THE DIVINE CALL OF JEREMIAH:

Read: *Jeremiah 1:1-10.*

Jeremiah is called “the weeping prophet” (*Jeremiah 9:1; 13:17; Lamentations 1:16; 3:48-51*). He was God’s final messenger to the southern kingdom of Judah. See: II Chronicles 36:11-21. His broken-hearted ministry extended over a period of about 30 years.

1. The Preparation of the Man of God — verses 1-3.

- a. Compare *Jeremiah 1:1* with *II Kings 22:3,4.* It seems Jeremiah was raised in the home of the _____.
- b. After reading *II Kings 22*, particularly *verses 8* and *12-14*, would you say Jeremiah’s father was in tune with God?
 Yes No

2. The Call of the Man of God — verses 4,5.

Jeremiah was _____ [chosen] to be a prophet:

- a. Before he was _____ in the belly; before he came forth from the _____. See: Psalm 139:13-16.
- b. When he was but a _____ — *Jeremiah 1:6.*

Because of his father’s eminent position, young Jeremiah was probably well acquainted with king Josiah. It is not unreasonable to believe he may also have been around the same age as the king. Why?

Look up: *II Chronicles 34* (and consider in the light of *Jeremiah 1:6*).

- Josiah began to reign when he was _____ — *verse 1a.*
- Josiah began to seek God when he was _____ — *verse 3a.*
- Josiah began to reform the nation when he was _____ — *verse 3b.*
- Josiah was killed in battle when he was _____ — *verse 1b.* (Note Jeremiah’s reaction to this event in *II Chronicles 35:25a*, indicative of a personal friendship.)

(The LORD turned to the **youth** of the nation to bring about Judah’s last great revival!)

Note: Youth is no bar to the ministry (*I Timothy 4:12*) — provided it is accompanied by spiritual maturity (*I Timothy 3:6*).

3. The Response of the Man of God — verses 6,8.

Jeremiah’s initial objections apparently were:

- a. His young _____ (*verse 6*).
- b. A fear of _____ (*verse 8a*).

Once these objections were answered, Jeremiah immediately entered upon his prophetic ministry — *Jeremiah 2:4*.

4. The Revelation to the Man of God — *verses 8-10*.

God gave Jeremiah:

- a. A promise — “I am _____ thee” (*verses 8,19*).
- b. A touch — He touched his _____ (*verse 9*).
- c. A commission — “I have this day _____ thee...” (*verse 10*).
- d. A charge — “_____ up thy _____” (*verse 17*).

Note: This charge was given in view of a very difficult ministry. Jeremiah would be threatened (*Jeremiah 11:21*), beaten and publicly humiliated (*Jeremiah 20:2*), defamed (*Jeremiah 20:10*), imprisoned (*Jeremiah 37:15,16*), and thrown into a miry dungeon (*Jeremiah 38:6*). See: II Timothy 2:3. The prophet complained once (*Jeremiah 12:1*) and wanted to quit once (*Jeremiah 20:9*), but his divine call was his stay.

G. THE DIVINE CALL OF EZEKIEL:

Read: *Ezekiel 1:1-3,28; 2:1-10*.

Ezekiel was a prophet of the Babylonian Captivity, having been taken in the second deportation of Jews. Up until *Ezekiel 33:21* he preached God's judgment against a still-sinning nation; thereafter he prophesied of Israel's future restoration and millennial glory.

1. The Preparation of the Man of God.

All we know about Ezekiel is that:

- a. He was a _____ — *Ezekiel 1:3*.
- b. He endured the horrors of invasion, siege, defeat, transportation, and exile. See: Psalm 137:1-4.

2. The Revelation to the Man of God.

Ezekiel's divine call to be a prophet came through an amazing vision of:

- a. Four _____ — *Ezekiel 1:5*. These were cherubim — *Ezekiel 10:14,15*.
- b. The _____ of the LORD (*Ezekiel 1:28*).

3. The Call of the Man of God.

- a. The call came _____ to Ezekiel (*Ezekiel 1:3*). There is no mistaking a divine call to the ministry!

- b. Ezekiel was filled with the _____ (*Ezekiel 2:2*), an essential qualification for every preacher, e.g. *Acts 4:8,31; 7:55*.
- c. Ezekiel was sent by God to the _____ of Israel (*Ezekiel 2:3*).
- d. He was instructed to _____ God's _____ to them (*Ezekiel 2:7; 3:4*).
- e. Ezekiel was made a _____ (*Ezekiel 3:17*).

Note: Ezekiel was not responsible to be successful, just faithful (*Ezekiel 3:19*). See: *Acts 13:46*.

4. The Response of the Man of God — *Ezekiel 3:14*.

After receiving the call, Ezekiel departed:

- a. In _____ — i.e. over the message of judgment he was to deliver.
- b. In the _____ of his _____ — i.e. in righteous anger over the sins of his people.

Such emotions are necessary for a man of God if he is to preach faithfully. Even stronger is the sense of divine duty — the burden that God gives him.

THE DIVINE CALL OF MEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A number of New Testament men were distinctly called to be preachers — serving as either apostles, prophets, evangelists, or pastors and teachers. Although the offices of apostle and prophet ceased [see: Lesson “G,” Volume I, page 118] with the completion of the Word of God and the end of the apostolic age (c.100 A.D.), God still calls and equips men to serve as pastor-teachers and evangelists today.

This section of the lesson looks at the divine call upon various New Testament men:

A. THE DIVINE CALL OF THE APOSTLES:

Although each man was called individually, there were **four** definite experiences in the lives of each of the apostles as evidenced by the life and call of Simon Peter:

1. The Call To Salvation:

There are several theories as to *when* the apostles were actually saved. *Matthew 16:16; Luke 22:32; John 1:41,42; John 20:22;* and *John 20:27-29* have all been suggested as identifying the point in time.

Actually, the New Testament is quite clear:

- a. According to *John* 1:35-37, the two who began to follow Jesus were _____ of John the Baptist (*verse 35*).
- b. According to *Acts* 1:22, one qualification required of an apostle was that he had received the _____ of John.
- c. According to *Matthew* 3:8, John required _____ meet for _____ before he would baptize anyone.
- d. According to *Mark* 1:4 and *John* 1:6,7,29, John the Baptist preached a message of repentance and faith in Christ — the same Gospel message we preach today!
- e. According to *Luke* 1:17, part of John the Baptist's mission was to make _____ a _____ prepared for the Lord.

Based on this evidence, it is possible to conclude that *all* the apostles were saved (except Judas Iscariot) and baptized under the ministry of John the Baptist. He prepared the ‘building materials’ (baptized believers) for the Church Jesus would subsequently build (*Matthew* 16:18).

- Peter’s great declaration in *Matthew* 16:16 was not something he had received from “flesh and blood” (i.e. man), but was revealed by the Father (*verse 17*) — showing he had already experienced the new birth, *I Corinthians* 2:10.
- The word “converted” in *Luke* 22:32 means ‘changed.’ The context shows the Lord was referring to the trial of Peter’s faith, the outcome of which is seen in *John* 21:15-17.
- *John* 20:22 was a symbolic restatement of the great promise of *John* 14:17, and is part of the church’s commission. Until the Holy Spirit was sent from the Father (in *Acts* 2), He dwelt with men. Since Pentecost, He dwells **in** men.
- Thomas’ great declaration in *John* 20:28 came as he realized the great truths of the resurrection. Evidently, Thomas had a difficulty grasping the Lord’s teachings (*John* 11:15,16; 14:4-7).

2. The Call To Discipleship — *John* 1:35-42.

- a. After hearing John speak, two of his _____ began to follow _____ (*verse 37*).
- b. Andrew sought out his brother _____ and brought him to meet the Messiah.

- c. Although this passage is often held up as an example of soul winning, it actually records a change of allegiance in *discipleship*, viz. — from following John the Baptist to following Jesus Christ!
3. **The Call To “Full-Time” Ministry** — *Matthew 4:18-22.*
- There was a period of time between the call to discipleship and the call to full-time ministry.
- ☞ *John 1:35-42* took place near _____ (*John 1:28*), located where the Jordan flows into the Dead Sea.
 - ☞ *Matthew 4:18-22* transpired by the sea of _____ (about 70 miles to the north).
 - ☞ Therefore we must conclude these were two *separate* events.
- a. The call issued to Peter and Andrew was, “_____ me, and I will make you _____ of men” (*verse 19*).
 - b. The disciples’ response to the divine call was to immediately leave their _____ (i.e., occupation) and _____ Christ.
 - c. At the same time Jesus called James and John, who immediately left the _____ and their _____ (*verses 21,22*).
 - d. Read: *Luke 5:1-11.* This event occurred during the Lord’s second Galilean circuit (some time after *Matthew 4:18-22*), and constitutes a reiteration of His call to these men. Evidently the four had accompanied Christ on His first preaching tour, then returned to their fishing trade. The words of Jesus in *verse 10* point to feelings of **fear** in following the Lord in full time service.
 - e. Shortly thereafter (compare *Luke 5:10,11* with *Luke 5:27*), Jesus called _____ (*Matthew — Matthew 9:9*) to follow him.
- Note:** Matthew’s salvation and subsequent baptism, though not recorded, is likely alluded to in *Luke 3:12,13*.
- e. Matthew’s response to the divine call was to leave _____ (his occupation) and follow Jesus, *Luke 5:28.*
4. **The Call To Be Apostles** — *Luke 6:12-17.*
- a. After a night of prayer, Jesus chose His _____ apostles.
 - b. From *verse 13* and *verse 17a*, it is obvious Jesus had much more than just twelve disciples.
 - c. The apostolic office was unique. It was largely associated with the ministry of the Gospel before the completion of the written Word (*Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3,4*), and with the writing of the

New Testament (Acts 1:2; 2:42; Romans 16:25,26; Ephesians 2:20; 3:3-5; II Peter 3:2; Jude 17).

The apostles were saved and baptized under the ministry of John the Baptist. Shortly after the Lord's own baptism, they became disciples (followers) of Him.

They were among at least another _____ disciples who subsequently received a divine call into the ministry (*Luke 10:1,17*).

B. **THE DIVINE CALL OF PHILIP:**

Philip is called “the _____” (Acts 21:8). While scripture does not give us details of his divine call, there are some interesting things to note:

1. His Spiritual Qualifications were Apparent to his Church — Acts 6:3-5.

Philip was “one of the seven” deacons of the church at Jerusalem. As such he was:

- a. Of _____ report.
- b. Filled with the _____.
- c. Full of _____.

2. He was Thrust into the Ministry by Circumstances — Acts 8:1-4.

Philip’s ministry of serving others was effective (Acts 6:7), but God had further plans for him.

- a. God used a great _____ to redirect his ministry (*verse 1*).

“*Our disappointments are His appointments!*”

- b. Hard times call many a preacher — *verse 4*. The opportunity is not the call, but it can be the means of delivering a call to a man.

3. He Became a Great Church Planter:

The ministry of Philip defines the work of an evangelist:

- a. He _____ Christ (Acts 8:5).
- b. He _____ those who believed (Acts 8:12).
- c. He organized churches.

- The sending of Peter and John from the “mother church” (Acts 8:14) is akin to the practice of organizing independent churches.
- Philip traveled from city to city _____ I N G (Acts 8:40).
- Philip finally ended up in _____ (Acts 8:40), where a church was also established (Acts 18:22).

The *Biblical* evangelist is what most people today call a “missionary.”

C. **THE DIVINE CALL OF TIMOTHY:**

Timothy is the only person called a “man of God” in the New Testament (*I Timothy* 6:11, cf. *II Timothy* 3:17). His ministry spans between Acts 16 and *II Timothy* — a period of about 18 years.

1. **The Preparation of the Man of God:**

- a. Timothy was from the city of _____ (*Acts 20:4*).
- b. Timothy’s mother (_____) was a _____ who _____ (*Acts 16:1; II Timothy 1:5*).
- c. Timothy’s father was a _____ (*Acts 16:1*). The “but” indicates he was of a contrary mind to that of his wife, i.e., an unbeliever.
- d. Young Timothy was greatly influenced by the:
 - Unfeigned (real) _____ of his grandmother and mother (*II Timothy 1:5*).
 - The holy _____ taught to him as a child (*II Timothy 3:15*).
- e. Paul referred to Timothy as his “_____ in the _____” (*I Timothy 1:2*), meaning he led him to Christ (in the sense of *I Corinthians 4:15*).
- f. In *Acts 16:1*, Timothy is called a “_____” (i.e. he was saved and baptized).
Since this was at Paul’s second visit to Lystra and Derbe, we conclude Paul led Timothy to Christ during his first visit (*Acts 14:19-23*).

2. **The Call of the Man of God:**

No actual account of Timothy’s call is given. The evidence of scripture is that he received his divine call during Paul’s first visit, right after he was saved.

- a. *I Timothy 4:14* shows his call was:
 - Given by (through) _____ — i.e. preaching.
 - Recognized by the _____ — the pastors.
(The laying on of their hands symbolizes this.)
- b. *II Timothy 1:6* shows Paul was also present, thereby establishing the time of his receiving the call.
- c. *Acts 16:2* shows that the regional _____ and churches subsequently recognized Timothy’s gifts and calling.

3. The Training of the Man of God:

Timothy was probably quite young when Paul and Barnabas first came to his home town. His ministry preparation began in earnest with Paul's second visit, c.49 A.D.

Timothy did not immediately become a pastor; he wasn't even given a title! His education took him through several stages of serious "on-the-job training."

a. The "Minister" Stage.

- He began his training by _____ unto Paul — *Acts 19:22*.
- Barnabas and Saul had taken _____ as their minister on their first evangelistic tour — *Acts 13:5c*.
- This meant he began as a lowly servant, a "go for!" Yet during this time he was exposed to many churches (*Acts 16:4-6*), he saw what it meant to suffer for Christ (*Acts 16:22-24*), and he learned that it took time to do a work for God (*Acts 18:11, 18a; 19:10*).
- According to *II Timothy 3:10,11*, Timothy received the following from his spiritual father and mentor:

D _____,
M _____ of L _____,
P _____,
F _____,
L _____,
C _____,
P _____,
P _____, and...
A _____.

b. The "Messenger" Stage.

From about 56 A.D., Paul began to give Timothy special assignments:

- He was sent to _____ — *Acts 19:22*. See also: *I Thessalonians 3:1,2*.
- He was now called a "_____” — *Romans 16:21*.

c. The “Man of God” Stage.

- Timothy became pastor of the church at _____ (*I Timothy 1:3*).
- It was then he was called a “man of God” (*I Timothy 6:11*).

d. The “Mentor” Stage.

As the apostle Paul was preparing to finish his course (c. 67 A.D.), he instructed Timothy to now engage himself in the ministry of duplication — *II Timothy 2:2* — thereby continuing the cycle.

- Paul → Timothy → _____ Men → Others

Note: The above is not to suggest that there is a ‘ministerial hierarchy.’ Timothy was *not* training to be a preacher — he was a preacher in training!

EVIDENCES OF A DIVINE CALL

We’ve seen what a divine call is, and we’ve studied examples of men who received such a call. The question still remains: “*How do you know if you have been called to preach?*” Today, such a call will not come in some visible, tangible way — as with men of old. There will be no burning bush, no audible voice, or holy vision. The call of God is a deep, inward conviction of the will of God for a man’s life. It is an experience which proves to be self-validating — one which is always in harmony with God’s Word.

Nevertheless, there will be some clear indicators — both internal and external.

A. INTERNAL INDICATORS OF A CALL:

1. An Inner Compulsion — “_____ is unto me, if I preach _____ the gospel!” (*I Corinthians 9:16*). Conversely, preaching brings a deep inner satisfaction.
2. An Inner Desire — “If a man _____ the _____ of a _____, he desireth a good work” (*I Timothy 3:1*).
3. An Inner Peace — “_____ gathering that the Lord had _____ us for to preach the gospel” (*Acts 16:10*).
See also: *Colossians 3:15*.

“Do not enter the ministry if you can help it!” — C. H. Spurgeon.

B. EXTERNAL INDICATORS OF A CALL:

1. A Divine Enablement.

- a. "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath _____ me ... putting me into the ministry" (*I Timothy 1:12*).
- b. A bishop then must be ... " _____ to teach" (*I Timothy 3:2*).
- c. And the servant of the Lord must ... "apt to _____" (*II Timothy 2:24*).

One who has been called to preach should expect to *noticeably* develop a deeper understanding of the Word of God, a fervent pursuit of preaching, and an anointed delivery of God's message. His preaching should affect people! They will be blessed and helped. Souls will be saved!

2. An Awareness By Others.

- a. "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to _____ ..." (*Acts 15:28*).
- b. "...being recommended by the _____ ..." (*Acts 15:40*).
- c. " _____ reported of by the _____" (*Acts 16:2*).

Others will notice when God has His hand on a man.

"This inward call associated with the preacher's own experience will be corroborated by the outward call of the Church in which the reality of divine vocation is recognized and attested." — A. Skevington Wood.

WHAT TO DO WITH A DIVINE CALL

We have seen from the Old Testament examples of men who were called to preach that the divine call is intensely personal — almost as if the whole world is shut out as God deals with His man over the matter.

There are some things a man might do:

A. WHEN CONSIDERING A CALL:

1. When Samuel wasn't sure, he went to Eli — another man of God.
2. When the church at Antioch was seeking God's will, they fasted and prayed.

There is nothing wrong with taking the time to be certain.

B. WHEN DECLARING A CALL:

1. A man should make a public declaration before his church. Whether as a pastor-teacher or an evangelist, God's work done God's way by God's men will always be through God's churches.
2. A man should submit himself to his pastors for guidance, preparation, and opportunity. He should seek their acknowledgment of his readiness to embark upon any ministry.

"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God..."

Hebrews 5:4.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Romans 11:29.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. How important are a man's parents and home life to the divine call? [Moses, Samuel, Jeremiah, Timothy]
2. What part can a good education play in the ministry? Is there a place for "ignorance" in the ministry? [Moses, Paul]
3. How can an industrious, hard-working life be an asset to a man who has received a divine call? [Moses, Samuel, Elisha, Amos, Peter, Andrew, James, John]
4. Why do you think the Lord instructs His churches to "*lay hands suddenly* [hastily] *on no man*" (*I Timothy 5:22*). How might this be avoided? [Timothy]
5. Comment on the statement: "*Being is more important than doing.*" [Moses]
6. Where does the "burden of God" fit in with a divine call? [Ezekiel, Paul]
7. After studying the various examples of God's calling upon men, why is the practice of "comparing ourselves with some" such folly? (*II Corinthians 10:12*.)

W The Rôle of Women

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

This lesson concerns itself with the rôle of women in our Baptist churches. It is a somewhat controversial subject, largely because of feminist thinking prevalent in society and the hot issue of women preachers within Christendom.

Religion has never been kind to women. Almost without exception, the fairer sex has been relegated to a standing lower than that of men. In the ancient Greek world women were considered inferior to men, and wives faced a life of seclusion and practical slavery. During the Roman empire a wife enjoyed a better standing, although legally she was considered to be chattel — completely under the control of her husband. Jewish women of old had few legal rights, but were accorded a place of dignity and responsibility — in the home. Their honor came through motherhood. Public affairs and activities (apart from certain religious duties) were virtually outside the sphere of womanhood. In the synagogues men would pray, “*Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast not made me a woman,*” while women would pray, “*Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who hast made me according to Thy will.*” Islam is one of the most repressive religions of the world, especially in its treatment of women.

The **Gospel** elevates women to the highest (God-intended) plane. It truly liberates — not only by bringing freedom from sin’s dominion, but also in opening a door of opportunity to participate in the affairs of the kingdom of God.

There are some limitations God places upon Christian women. These however are not intended to inhibit, but to enhance! This study considers the principles behind the God-given rôles and restrictions of women — particularly as they relate to the Lord’s churches.

THE WORTH OF WOMEN

Read: *Galatians 3:26-28.*

This passage (notably *verse 28b*) teaches an equality of standing in Christ:

- ★ In Christ there is “neither _____ nor _____.”
- ★ They are both “_____ in _____ Jesus.”

In the New Testament we see that:

A. WOMEN WERE MADE PARTAKERS OF THE GOSPEL:

1. At Philippi, the Lord opened the heart of _____ — Acts 16:14.
2. Many _____ women of _____ believed after hearing Paul preach the Gospel in that city — Acts 17:4.
3. In _____, many _____ women who were _____ were saved — Acts 17:12.
4. In Athens, a woman named _____ believed — Acts 17:34.

B. WOMEN WERE BAPTIZED:

1. Women were counted among the _____ who were _____ unto the Lord [i.e., to the Lord's body — His church at Jerusalem] through baptism — Acts 5:14. See also: Acts 2:41,47.
2. As a result of the preaching of _____, both men and women believed and were baptized — Acts 8:12.
3. Upon her salvation, _____ was baptized in a _____ located outside the city — Acts 16:15.

C. WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN REGULAR CHURCH LIFE:

1. Women were present with men in the _____ room, with one accord in _____ and _____ (Acts 1:13,14).
2. A certain _____ named _____ was full of good works and _____ (Acts 9:36).
3. _____, the mother of John Mark opened her _____ for a _____ meeting (Acts 12:12).
4. Together with her husband, _____ grounded Apollos more fully in the Word of God (Acts 18:2,26).
5. Women _____ with Paul in the _____ (*Philippians 4:3*).

Paul lists seven such women in Romans 16:

- a. _____ — helper in Christ (*verse 3*).
- b. _____ — a bestower of much labour (*verse 6*).

- c. _____ — a labourer in the Lord (*verse 12a*).
- d. _____ — a labourer in the Lord (*verse 12a*).
- e. The beloved _____ — who laboured much (*verse 12c*).
- f. The _____ of Rufus — who mothered Paul (*verse 13*).
- g. The _____ of Nereus (*verse 15*).

The key word in the passage is “labour” — work, service, activity.

- 6. Read: *Acts 8:1-3*. Women were also _____ E D for their faith in Christ. See also: *Acts 22:4*.

D. WOMEN WERE HONOURED BY THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

- 1. Read: *John 4:7-26*. Jesus dealt with a woman of _____ about her soul’s salvation.
- 2. Women were included in the great _____ that was miraculously fed by the Lord — *Matthew 14:15-21*.
- 3. The Lord Jesus responded to the great _____ of the Canaanite woman — *Matthew 15:21-28*. See also: *Luke 8:43-48*.
- 4. Jesus commended _____, who sat at His feet to _____ His _____ — *Luke 10:39*.
- 5. Jesus acknowledged the costly sacrifices made by women — *Luke 7:36-38; Luke 21:1-4; John 12:1-7*.
- 6. Jesus dignified women by exalting marriage and restricting divorce — *Matthew 5:31,32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18*. (In Christ’s day, a Jewish man had the legal right to divorce his wife for any number of arbitrary reasons.)
- 7. The Lord’s very first post-resurrection appearance was to _____ — *Mark 16:9*.

E. WOMEN ARE TO BE HIGHLY RESPECTED IN THE CHURCHES:

See: *I Timothy 5:2*.

- 1. Treat the _____ women as _____.
- 2. Treat the _____ women as _____.
- 3. These relationships are to be maintained with all _____. Nothing unseemly must ever take place.

THE WEAKNESS OF WOMEN

According to *I Peter 3:7e*, the wife is the “ _____ .”

This is not a slight, it is a fact! That this applies in a *physical* sense is obvious: women have a different physical make-up to men — they do not possess the same muscular strength or endurance (pound-for-pound) as their male counterparts. God made women different than men — not inferior, but different.

In the marriage bond, the wife is to be an “ _____ ” for her husband (*Genesis 2:18c,20d*), thereby adding *her* strengths to a “one flesh” entity. She completes, complements, and crowns the man.

Read: *I Timothy 2:9-15*. This key passage addresses two matters affecting the rôle of women in a Bible-believing Baptist church:

A. **THE SPIRITUAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN:**

According to *verse 14*, in the fall of man into sin:

1. Adam was not _____.
 - a. The prohibition on eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was given by God to the ____ (*Genesis 2:16,17*).
 - b. After the fall, it was _____ that the Lord called to account (*Genesis 3:9*).
2. The _____ was deceived.
 - a. The _____ made his approach through the woman (*Genesis 3:1*).
 - b. According to *Genesis 3:6*, Eve’s perspective of the tree and its fruit was:
 - It was _____ for _____.
 - It was _____ to the _____.
 - It was to be _____ for wisdom.

While Eve was **in** the transgression, it was “by one _____” that “sin entered into the world” (*Romans 5:12*). Adam sinned willfully — he ate the forbidden fruit with his eyes wide open!

The women is the weaker vessel spiritually. She is more open to spiritual deception than the man — and Satan knows it!

In the Bible there are several examples of Satan working through a women to “get” to the man:

- ☞ He used _____ ’S ungodly advice to cause _____ to sin — *Genesis 16:1-4*.

- ☞ He used a conniving _____ to incite _____ in his deception of Isaac — *Genesis 27:6-17*.
- ☞ He used _____ and Aaron to oppose _____ and halt the progress of God's people — *Numbers 12:1,2,15*.
- ☞ He finally ensnared _____ through _____ — *Judges 16:4,5,15-21*.
- ☞ The many strange women in wise _____ 'S life were his downfall — *I Kings 11:1-8*.
- ☞ The wicked _____ was used to corrupt _____ and all of Israel with Baal worship — *I Kings 17:29-33*.
- ☞ The advice of _____ 'S _____ may have sounded reasonable (based on the circumstances), but it was in fact ungodly — *Job 2:9*.
- ☞ The _____ of James and John was driven by ambition to make an unspiritual request of the Lord Jesus Christ — *Matthew 20:20-23*.

Note: This does not mean that women are *incapable* of making wise spiritual choices and decisions — or that men never err or make wrong spiritual decisions. It simply points to the reality that women are more easily deceived, particularly through their feelings and emotions.

Note: It is relevant to take note of the number of women involved in the founding of cults and other unscriptural religious activities:

Beginning with _____ of T _____ (*Revelation 2:18,20*), there has been Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy (Christian Science), Ellen G. White (Seventh Day Adventism), Margaret & Kate Fox (Spiritism), Helena Petrova Blavatsky (Theosophy), Aimee Semple McPherson (Four Square), etc. The modern Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement is noted for its dominant female element. Then there are also the witches so prevalent today — fortune tellers, palm readers, and so forth — most of them women.

The Bible speaks of _____ being particularly vulnerable to false teachers — *II Timothy 3:6*.

Note: Many are perplexed by *I Timothy 2:15* — “*she shall be saved in childbearing.*” This is not teaching ‘salvation by childbirth,’ but is actually a paraphrase of God’s promise in *Genesis 3:15*. The promised “seed of the woman” in none other than Jesus Christ the Saviour!

B. THE PRINCIPLE OF LEADERSHIP AND SUBMISSION:

The entrance of sin brought chaos into the world. God re-established order by imposing **rule** — i.e., principles of leadership and submission.

1. In The Garden — *Genesis 3:16b.*

- a. Thy _____ shall be to thy _____.
- b. He shall _____ over _____.

2. In The Home — *Ephesians 5:22-24; I Peter 3:1a.*

- a. Wives, _____ yourselves unto your own husbands.
- b. The husband is the _____ of the _____.

Note: Subjection does not mean inferiority. True Biblical subjection is to be understood by the relationship between God the Son and God the Father — *John 10:30; John 5:30; Luke 22:42*. Jesus Christ is in no way inferior to the Father, even though the “head of Christ is God” (*I Corinthians 11:3*).

3. In The Churches — *I Timothy 2:12.*

Women are not to _____ (take, exercise, lay claim to, commandeer) _____ over men.

The reasons given for this command are:

- The order in creation — *verse 13.*
- The deceptability of women — *verse 14.*

This is the guiding principle governing the rôle of women in the church.

C. RESTRICTIONS PLACED UPON WOMEN IN BAPTIST CHURCHES:

The New Testament places the following restrictions on women insofar as church life and witness is concerned:

1. Women May Not Serve As Pastors.

Why?

- a. I suffer not a woman to _____ — *I Timothy 2:12a.*
 - Pastors are _____ — *Ephesians 4:11h.*
 - Pastors must be _____ to _____ — *I Timothy 3:2g; II Timothy 2:24.*
 - Clearly, this restriction only applies to women teaching men, *Titus 2:3,4* (see below).

- b. Nor to usurp _____ over the man — *I Timothy 2:12b.*
 - Elders are to _____ — *I Timothy 5:17.*
 - They are to be _____ E D and _____ T E D to in the exercise of their office — *Hebrews 13:7,17.*
- c. If a _____ desire the _____ of a bishop — *I Timothy 3:1b.*
 - An impossibility for a woman.
- d. A bishop is to be the _____ of one _____ (*I Timothy 3:2b*).
 - An impossibility for a woman.
- e. A bishop is to _____ his _____ — *I Timothy 3:4a.*
 - The _____ is to be the head of the home, not the wife (*Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:4*).
- f. A pastor is to preach with all _____ — *Titus 2:15.*
 - Therefore, a woman preacher would of necessity violate the principle of *I Timothy 2:12.*
 - Women cannot be evangelists ('missionaries') in the sense of being a Gospel-preaching church planter. However, they may certainly accompany (*I Corinthians 9:5*) and assist (*Philippians 4:3 &c*) evangelists in their work.

Note: What of the four _____ of Philip (*Acts 21:8,9*)? Weren't they preachers?

Yes, prophets are preachers — both foretellers and forthtellers. The office of predictive prophet ceased with the completion of the Word of God (*I Corinthians 13:8-10*), so any exercise of the prophetic gift today is only preaching (*I Corinthians 14:3,4,12*). Clearly, women may prophesy (*I Corinthians 11:5; Acts 2:17,18*), but not in mixed company (*I Corinthians 14:34*).

These four unmarried women evidently had a notable ministry among other women. But when the Lord wanted to give a message to the apostle Paul (a man), He bypassed the four female preachers and sent Agabus (a man) to deliver it — *Acts 21:10,11!*

Note: What of _____ (*Judges 4:4*)? She was a prophetess and a Judge of Israel who obviously exercised authority over men (*Judges 4:5*).

This was an unusual case. Israel was in a state of extreme spiritual apostasy (e.g. *Judges 2:10-19; 21:25*), and men with backbone

were nowhere to be found! Deborah urged Barak to lead an army against Jabin and Sisera (*Judges* 4:6,7), but he refused to do so unless she went with him (*Judges* 4:8). She reluctantly agreed, but told him he would receive no honor (*Judges* 4:9). When men will not do God's will, to their shame He will use a woman!!

One of the characteristics of a spiritually bankrupt society is weak men, unruly children, and strong women — *Isaiah* 3:12.

2. Women May Not Serve As Deaconesses.

A deacon is a *servant* of the Church, and as such carries no authority. For this reason some argue that a woman may serve in the office as a deaconess because in doing so, she would not violate the principle of *I Timothy* 2:12.

However, the qualifications of a deacon preclude women:

- a. The _____ of one _____ (*I Timothy* 3:12a).
- b. Ruling their ... own _____ (*I Timothy* 3:12b).
- c. Even so must their _____ be... (*I Timothy* 3:11).

Note: What about _____ our sister (*Romans* 16:1)? She was a _____ ('*diakonos*') of the church at Cenchrea.

Furthermore, the church at Rome was ordered to assist her with whatever she needed — suggesting some level of authority.

However, her authority was a *derived* authority, not an autonomous authority — i.e., it was only by Paul's authority that she would ask for assistance. It is quite in order for a pastor to ask a woman to undertake a task or a project in the church — provided it is clear that she is acting on behalf of the pastor or the church and does not become "bossy" with men. Furthermore while every church member cannot hold the office of deacon, every church member is to be a servant — *Matthew* 20:27; *Galatians* 5:13.

3. Women Are To "Keep Silent" During Church Meetings.

Read: *I Corinthians* 14:34,35; *I Timothy* 2:11.

Does this keeping silence refer to every activity — including singing, praying, testifying, etc.? Remember, one of the serious problems in the church at Corinth was the flaunting of spiritual gifts.

- a. The **context** of *I Corinthians* 14:34 is preaching — see: *verses* 29-31.

Three things that will produce confusion (*I Corinthians* 14:33,40) in a preaching meeting are:

- Men preaching in foreign languages without the aid of an interpreter — *verses 23,27,28*.
- Two or more men preaching at the same time — *verse 31a*.
- Women preaching — *verse 35c*.

I Corinthians 14:28 defines what keeping silent means.

- b. The **context** of *I Timothy 2:11* is learning.

See also: *I Corinthians 14:35a*.

The act of “keeping silent” (“hushed”) in a church meeting is the mark of a woman who is properly under subjection. It stands as a testimony to the divine order (*I Corinthians 14:40*). This does not require that a woman be mute or muzzled during church meetings, but it clearly prohibits a woman from preaching, commenting, asking questions, and otherwise speaking out in an individualistic manner.

Participation in congregational activities such as lifting heart and voice in praises to God, etc., would not violate the New Testament principle.

As difficult as these things might seem, we do well to take note of Paul’s statement in *I Corinthians 14:37*.

4. Women Are To Have Their Heads Covered.

Read: *I Corinthians 11:5-15*.

- a. An uncovered head is D _____ IN G (*verse 5*), S _____ F U L (*verse 6*), & U _____ L Y (*verse 13*).
- b. Long hair is a badge of subjection (cf. the Nazarite — *Numbers 6:2-5*). A woman’s head covering is a token of her submission to her husband (*verses 7-10*). As such, it is her true adornment, *I Peter 3:5*.
- c. Her _____ (not a hat) is provided by the Lord as the covering (*verse 15*).

Note: It is interesting to see that *I Timothy 2* makes mention of a woman’s hair (see: *I Timothy 2:9*) in the context of her rôle in the church. Baptist women ought to take special care to ensure their hairstyles reflect what God intends — that they be neither manly (*verse 6*) nor ostentatious (*I Peter 3:3*).

- d. A woman ought to have _____ [authority] on her head because of the _____ (*verse 10*).
 - The manifold _____ of God is revealed to the spirit world by the Lord’s _____ — *Ephesians 3:10*.

- A woman's head covering is an impacting witness to God's order (vs. confusion) — both to the seen and unseen worlds!

Note: Even with these limitations, the passage in I Corinthians 11 nevertheless affirms the equality of men and women "in the Lord" (verses 11,12).

THE WORK OF WOMEN

What special opportunities are afforded women in the service of the Lord?

A. A WOMAN'S PRIMARY MINISTRY IS FAMILY-CENTERED:

1. God's will is for the younger women to _____, _____ children, and _____ their homes — *I Timothy 5:14*.

Note: This verse is actually set in the context of widows, but applies equally to the unmarried woman (*I Corinthians 7:9*).

2. According to *Titus 2:3-5*, _____ (mature) women have a ministry of _____ I N G the _____ women:
 - a. To be _____ (wise).
 - b. To love their _____.
 - c. To _____ their children.
 - d. To be _____ (cautious, self-controlled).
 - e. To be _____ (pure, holy).
 - f. To be good house-_____ E R S.
 - g. To be _____ (i.e., good-hearted, good-natured, etc.).
 - h. To be _____ .

3. A woman's greatest ministry is with her _____ (*Proverbs 1:8b; 6:20b; 31:1; II Timothy 1:5; 3:15*).

B. A WOMAN'S PRIMARY RESOURCE IS HER HOME:

1. The great woman of _____ provided for the physical needs of the prophet _____ — *II Kings 4:8-10*.
2. At Bethany, _____ received the Lord into her house — *Luke 10:38*. See also: John 12:1,2.

3. Mary, the mother of ____ Mark opened up her home for a church _____-meeting — *Acts 12:12*.
4. After she was saved and baptized, _____ opened up her home to Paul, Silas, and Timothy — *Acts 16:15,40*.
5. Women such as _____ (*Romans 16:3-5; I Corinthians 16:19*) and _____ (*Philemon 2*) were willing to open up their homes for church meetings.

C. A WOMAN'S GREATEST SERVICE IS IN HER GOOD WORKS:

1. The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 _____ E D out her hand to the _____ and the _____ — *verse 20*.
2. Dorcas made _____ and _____ for others — *Acts 9:36,39*.
3. Good works A_____ the godly woman — *I Timothy 2:9,10*.

Note: These good works include raising a family, extending hospitality to visiting preachers, refreshing fellow believers on their journey through life, and relieving the poor — *I Timothy 5:10*.

D. A WOMAN MAY ENGAGE IN “FULL TIME” CHRISTIAN SERVICE:

Romans 16:1-16 shows that women can be much involved in the ministry on a more-or-less full time basis. Here are some considerations on the matter, based upon the principles and examples hitherto discussed:

1. God does not **call** women into “the ministry” as he does men. There is no divine call for women, but the godly woman will gladly dedicate her life to God for whatever He desires — *Romans 12:1*.
2. A woman’s service is most effective alongside her husband’s — part of the reason the wives of pastors and deacons are important, *I Timothy 3:4,11,12*.
3. A woman must not neglect her first responsibility for her service. For this reason, single women have a greater opportunity — *I Corinthians 7:34*.

THE WIDOW WOMEN

I Timothy 5:3-16 gives special regulations covering the way Baptist churches are to respond to widows in their membership:

A. TWO KINDS OF WIDOWS ARE IDENTIFIED:

1. The “WIDOWS _____” — *verses 3,5a,16d.*
 - a. She is _____ (i.e. has no children, nephews, or other relatives) — *verse 5b.*
 - b. She is totally depending upon _____ — *verse 5c.*
 - c. She is a “_____ warrior” — *verse 5d.*
 - d. She is over _____ years old — *verse 9a.*
 - e. She has never been divorced and remarried — *verse 9b.*
 - f. She is well _____ of for good _____ — *verse 10.* i.e., she has maintained a wonderful testimony of a godly woman.
2. The “_____ WIDOWS” — *verse 11.*

While by no means so in every case (“some” — *verse 15*), this passage notes some tendencies with these kinds of widows. They are more likely to:

 - a. Become _____ -loving — *verse 6.* i.e., go out into the world.
 - b. W _____ W _____ — *verse 11.* i.e., go after men in order to remarry.
 - c. Cast off their first _____ — *verse 12.*
 - d. Become I _____ W _____ E R S — *verse 13a.*
 - e. Become _____ and _____ - BODIES — *verse 13b.*

B. THE RELIEF OF WIDOWS:

1. The First Avenue Of Relief — see: *verses 4,16.*
 - a. In the early years of family life, _____ lay up for their _____ — *II Corinthians 12:14.*

- b. In the declining years, children are to R _____ (give back in return) their _____ — *I Timothy 5:4*.
2. The Second Line Of Relief — verse 14.
God's will is that the _____ widows re-_____, and re-establish regular family life. Read: *I Corinthians 7:8,9.*
3. The Third Line Of Relief — verse 16d.
The church is responsible only to _____ them that are widows _____.
- a. There was a daily _____ for the widows of the church at Jerusalem — *Acts 6:1*.
 - b. Pure and undefiled _____ is to visit widows in their _____ — *James 1:27*.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Titus 2:3-5.*

NOTES & QUESTIONS

X Excuses

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

The work of the Lord is plagued with excuses. They seem to abound with every endeavor. The lost come up with all kinds of excuses for not believing the Gospel, and sadly, many believers are not far behind them with a plethora of excuses for not obeying the Lord, serving the Lord, or walking with the Lord as they should.

There is a distinction between excuses and reasons in the sense that reasons arise from prevailing circumstances (e.g. *I Thessalonians 2:18*), whereas excuses are but sinful justifications for unbelief, disobedience, or incomplete surrender. They are given to avoid personal responsibility.

This study examines some of the classic excuses offered by men, and offers the Christian worker some suggestions as to how to answer them.

GREAT EXCUSES IN THE BIBLE

There are fifteen notable excuses recorded in the Word of God:

A. ADAM & EVE — Genesis 3:12,13.

After being confronted with the question, “*Hast thou eaten...whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?:*”

1. Adam blamed “the _____ whom _____ gavest to be with me.”
2. Eve blamed “the _____.”

This is classic blame-shifting. Instead of taking full responsibility for his transgression (e.g. *Psalm 51:4*), Adam not only shifted the blame to another, but ultimately blamed God!

Modern psychiatry is mostly an exercise in blame-shifting — it looks for a reason apart from sin. Sigmund Freud taught that man’s problems are essentially the result of his victimization by *others* in society (overbearing parents, strict churches, unreasonable employers, etc.), and that the psychiatrist’s task is first to determine who the victimizer really is (via “psychoanalysis”), then free his patient from the victimization. B. F. Skinner taught that man (as an animal) is strictly a product of his environment — that he is what he is and does what he

does because of where he is — that the psychiatrist's task is to re-train, re-program, or re-educate his patient. Social engineering is the key!

Note: The Word of God records man's failure in a perfect environment at both ends of human history: historically, in Eden's paradise (*Genesis 3*); prophetically, after a glorious millennial utopia (*Revelation 20:7-9*).

B. **ABRAM — Genesis 12:11-13.**

This passage actually records two faith-failures in the life of Abraham, both of which involved trusting the promises of God.

1. Abram went _____ into _____ — *verse 10*. See: Isaiah 31:1.
2. Abram asked his wife to say she was his _____ — *verse 13*.
The excuse Abram gave for making his wife lie was the supposition that the Egyptians would _____ him to take his beautiful wife.

Abraham repeated this offense in *Genesis 20:1,2*. In both instances it resulted in a lost testimony. The sin was later repeated by Abraham's son Isaac — *Genesis 26:6-10*.

Abraham's excuse was in reality his failure to trust the Lord for provision and protection. It is kin to the popular statement, “*The Lord helps those who help themselves!*”

C. **LOT — Genesis 19:19.**

This despicable excuse was uttered from the lips of a man as he was literally being dragged out of the condemned city of Sodom.

1. Lot was told to escape to the _____ (*verse 17*).
2. His excuse as to why he could not do so was, “lest some _____ take me, and I _____. ”
3. Lot's desired compromise was a _____ city (*verse 20*), subsequently named Zoar.

If Lot must leave his beloved Sodom, then he would not go too far from it. His excuse is that of a man who is unwilling to let go of the world in order to follow Christ (*I John 2:15-17; Matthew 16:24,25*). If he must follow, then it will be from afar! If he couldn't have it all, he'd settle for a little! Lot's concern over encountering evil on the mountain was a mockery — what greater evil could there be than that which was in Sodom?!

The repercussions of his actions were reaped in his family.

D. MOSES — *Exodus 4:1,10.*

Moses had received his divine call and commission at the burning bush. He gave two excuses as to why he could not do what God had called him to do:

1. They will not _____ me, nor _____ unto me” (*verse 1*).

God responded with a question, “*What is that in thine _____?*” (*verse 2*). Whereas Moses was given special signs to authenticate his preaching, today’s preacher has the Book!

2. I am not _____ (*verse 10*).

God answered this excuse with another question, “*Who hath _____ man’s _____?*” (*verse 11*).

God’s calling brings God’s enabling — *I Timothy 1:12*.

E. AARON — *Exodus 32:22-24.*

As Moses was up on Mount Sinai receiving the Law, Aaron led the children of Israel to make the golden calf idol. His excuses were:

1. The _____ ... are set on mischief (*verse 22*) — classic blame-shifting.
2. I cast it into the _____, and there came out this _____ (*verse 24*) — it just happened!

The fact of the matter is, Aaron:

- _____ the golden earrings (*verse 4*).
- _____ them with a tool (*verse 4*).
- made it a _____ calf (*verse 4*).
- declared it to be the _____ which brought Israel out of Egypt.
- built an _____ before it (*verse 5*).
- proclaimed a _____ to the LORD (*verse 5*).

F. THE TEN SPIES — *Numbers 13:31-33.*

After returning from a 40-day mission into the promised land, ten of the twelve spies gave the following excuses why Israel could not go in and possess it:

1. The _____ [of the land] are _____ than us (*verse 31*).
2. The land _____ up its inhabitants (*verse 32*).
3. We were in our own _____ as grasshoppers (*verse 33*).

Looking at the circumstances instead of the LORD will always bring discouragement, delay, and defeat. Contrast the the faith-attitude of Caleb and Joshua, *Numbers 13:30; 14:6-9*. See: II Corinthians 5:7; I John 5:4.

G. **SAUL — I Samuel 15:15.**

King Saul had been sent to battle with clear instructions from God (*I Samuel 15:3*). He failed to completely obey these instructions — for which he offered the following excuses:

1. We spared the best to _____ unto the _____.
2. The rest we have _____.

A noble cause, and a job otherwise well done! Saul thought he was doing God a favor.

See: verses 22,23 for God's response. It is NEVER right to do wrong to accomplish right!! Never! Disobedience cost Saul the kingdom.

H. **NAAMAN — II Kings 5:11,12.**

These verses record Naaman's initial excuses for not obeying Elisha.

1. “I _____, he will surely come out...and _____ his hand over the place...” (*verse 11*).
2. “Are not _____ and _____ ... better than all the waters of Israel?” (*verse 12*).

The first excuse is typical of those given because of the simplicity of the Gospel. “There must be something more to it.”

The second excuse is heard from those seeking a way other than the cross. The blood-stained way is too offensive (*Galatians 5:11*).

I. **JEREMIAH — Jeremiah 1:6.**

Jeremiah was called to preach when a young boy. The excuse he gave for initially declining God's call was:

“I am a _____.”

God gave him a promise: “I am _____ thee” (*verse 8*). Human inadequacies are not a problem for the Lord.

J. **JONAH — Jonah 4:2.**

This verse explains why Jonah ran from God (and Nineveh).

“I _____ that thou art a gracious God...”

This bigoted preacher just knew that if he obeyed God and went to Nineveh the people would believe his preaching and repent, and God would spare them. He wanted to see the city and the people destroyed!

K. THE UNFAITHFUL STEWARD — *Matthew 25:24*.

Stewardship involves the management of the affairs of another. The steward who was given one talent buried it. His excuse?

“I knew thee, that thou art a _____ man.”

Blame shifting again. The steward blamed his Lord for his failure to use his talent. In doing so, he painted an untrue picture of the Master — cf. *Matthew 11:30; I John 5:3; Ephesians 1:19*.

L. THOSE WHO LOOKED BACK — *Luke 9:57-61*.

The call to discipleship is a call to deny “self” (*Luke 9:23*). In this account three men thought to follow Christ, but evidently went back when faced with the reality of that call. Herein is revealed three common excuses for not serving the Lord wholeheartedly.

1. Comfort (*verse 58*) — following Christ may require giving up the comforts of material blessings.
 - a. See: *II Corinthians 6:4; 11:27; 12:15a*.
 - b. This excuse is a huge factor in the present decline in numbers of those willing to take the Gospel to foreign lands.
2. Finances (*verse 59*) — “suffer _____ to go and bury my father.”
 - a. The implication here is that the man’s father was not deceased.
 - b. The man wanted to wait until his father was dead in order to collect the inheritance.
3. Family (*verse 61*) — “let _____ go bid them farewell which are at my house.”
 - a. The implication here is that this was to be more than a simple good-bye — cf. *I Kings 19:20*.
 - b. The pull of family ties can cause a man to look back and to go back from following the Lord — *verse 62*. See: *Mark 10:29,30; Matthew 4:20-22*.

Note: *Luke 9:62* is speaking of service, not salvation. A man plowing a field fixes his sight on a far-distant object in order to make straight furrows. If he keeps looking behind him, he will plow all over the place!

M. THOSE INVITED TO THE GREAT SUPPER — *Luke 14:18-20*.

In this parable of our Lord, those invited to the great supper (salvation) all with one _____ began to make _____ (*verse 18a*).

Here are some common excuses for procrastination (putting off Christ).

1. Property — “I have bought a piece of _____ and must needs go _____ it” (*verse 18b*).

This is a strange way to do business. Who buys something ‘sight unseen’ anyway — especially land?

Also, see: *Luke 12:15-21; I Timothy 6:7; James 4:14; II Peter 3:11*.

2. Profession (work) — “I have bought ... _____ (‘tools of trade’), and I go to _____ them” (*verse 19*).

3. Partner — “I have _____ a _____” (*verse 20*).

If ever there was a time when a man needed the Lord, it must surely be when he is married and starting a family!

Material blessings, employment, and family are all fine. God has a plan for each of them where they can be used mightily for His glory. However, they are no excuse for neglecting salvation — *Mark 8:36; Hebrews 2:3a*.

N. **LATTER-DAY SCOFFERS — II Peter 3:4.**

It is a dangerous thing to doubt the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ (*Matthew 24:44*). The scripture here warns us that scoffers will indeed doubt the second coming of Christ. Their excuse?

“All things _____ as they _____ from the beginning.”

The Bible declares this excuse is based on IGNORANCE:

1. Of the _____ of _____ — *verse 5a*.
2. Of the measure of the Lord — *verse 8*.
3. Of the _____ of God — *verse 9*.

O. **THE CHURCH OF THE LAODICEANS — Revelation 3:17.**

This Baptist church had become lukewarm and indifferent to its commission. It was blinded to the reality of its spiritual bankruptcy. What was its excuse?

“I am _____, and _____ with goods.”

How many Christians equate material wealth with God’s blessings? How many churches feel they have “arrived” — based on their expansive, plush facilities?

This church had Christ on the outside, knocking and seeking to come in. It desperately needed:

- To get out of its comfort zone — “*gold tried in the fire*” (*I Peter 1:7*).
- To return to its righteous roots — “*white raiment*” (*Revelation 3:4*).
- To open its eyes and look upon the fields — “*eye salve*” (*John 4:35*).

COMMON EXCUSES PEOPLE GIVE FOR NOT BELIEVING THE GOSPEL

Soul winners will often hear excuses for not believing the Gospel from those they are trying to win to Christ. It is common for the lost to experience difficulties in believing. Their excuses may be frivolous (indicating no real conviction or desire to trust Christ) or felt (indicating a lack of understanding or faith in God's Word). It is vital to clear away any roadblocks that would prevent them from coming to Christ.

Before attempting to give a scriptural answer, the soul winner should make certain the one being dealt with fully understands his or her absolute need of Christ and wants to be saved. Otherwise, answering their excuses will become an exercise in futility.

Below are fifteen common excuses, with appropriate scriptures which will help a lost soul overcome any fears or perceived difficulties. (It is suggested these be copied onto a flyleaf of your Bible or New Testament for ready use.)

A. I AM TOO GREAT A SINNER — I WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED:

Many people's lives are so filled with wickedness they are enslaved by sin. When they compare themselves to 'normal' people they believe they are "too far gone" — beyond redemption.

The following references clearly show there is no sinner too vile that Christ will not (or cannot) receive:

1. *I Timothy 1:15* — "Christ Jesus came into the world to _____ ; of whom I am _____ ."
2. *Isaiah 1:18* — "Though your sins be as _____ , they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like _____ , they shall be as _____ ."
3. *Matthew 9:12,13* — "For I am _____ come to call the righteous, but _____ to repentance."
4. *Luke 19:10* — "The Son of man is come to seek and to _____ that which was _____ ."
5. *Romans 5:8* — "... while we were yet _____ , Christ died for us."

Other references: *Psalm 32:5; Ezekiel 33:11.*

Also, use Bible examples of great sinners who were saved. e.g., David (Psalm 51); Saul of Tarsus (*I Timothy 1:13*); etc.

To someone who thinks he is too great a sinner say, “Your sins are great, far greater than you think — but they have all been paid for by Christ.”

Never give false hope by saying to such a man, “You are not that bad a sinner!”

B. I HAVE COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN:

This sin is mentioned in *Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:28,29;* and *Luke 12:10.* It is the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

1. Take the one you are dealing with to the context of these passages, e.g. *Matthew 12:24&c.*
 - a. Point out that this sin is to ascribe the work of the Spirit of God to Satan.
 - b. Ask if that is what has occurred — if so when and how?
2. Explain that the only sin God cannot forgive is his willful rejection of the “cure” — i.e. Christ-rejection (*John 3:36*).
3. *John 6:37* — “him that _____ to me I will in ____ wise cast out.”
 - Point out there are *no* preconditions placed upon “him.”

Other Scriptures: *Romans 10:13; Hebrews 7:25; II Peter 3:9.*

C. I MUST BECOME BETTER BEFORE I CAN BE A CHRISTIAN:

Many lost people believe they must give up some bad habit or quit some sin before they can be saved. It is important to show them that:

- They can never clean up their lives sufficiently to please God
 - They can and must come to Christ as they are.
1. *Isaiah 64:6* — “All _____ righteousnesses are as _____ rags...”
 2. *Matthew 9:13* — “I am not come to call the _____, but _____ to repentance.”
 3. The “_____ and the _____” in *Luke 18:9-14* is an excellent illustration.

D. I CANNOT GIVE UP MY SINS:

1. Show That They Must — or they perish.
 - a. *Romans 6:23a* — “For the _____ of _____ is death.”
 - b. *Galatians 6:7* — “Whatsoever a man _____, that shall he also _____.”

2. Show Them That Christ Can Set Them Free.

- a. *John 8:36* — “If the _____ therefore _____ make you _____, ye shall be free _____.”
- b. *Romans 6:18* — “Being then made _____ from _____, ye became the servants of _____ N E S S.”
- c. *Hebrews 7:25* — “Wherefore he is _____ also to save them to the _____ that come unto God by him, seeing he ever _____ to make intercession for them.”

E. I AM AFRAID I SHALL FAIL — I CANNOT “HOLD OUT:”

1. *I Peter 1:5* — We are _____ by the _____ of _____.
2. *Jude 24* — “[He] is _____ to _____ you from falling.”
3. *II Timothy 1:12* — “[I] ... am persuaded that _____ is _____ to _____ that which I have committed unto him against that day.”
4. *Philippians 1:6* — “Being confident of this very thing, that _____ which hath begun a good work in you _____ perform it _____ the day of Jesus Christ.”
5. *Isaiah 40:29,31* — “He giveth _____ to the _____;”
6. *Isaiah 41:10* — “Fear thou not; for I am _____ thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will _____ thee.”
7. *II Peter 2:9* — “The Lord knoweth how to _____ the godly out of _____.”
8. *I Corinthians 10:13* — “[God] ... will with the temptation also make a way to _____, that ye may be able to bear it.”
9. *Philippians 4:13* — “I _____ do _____ things through Christ...”

F. I CANNOT LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:

Many see the Christian life as being “too hard.” However:

1. *Matthew 11:30* — “My yoke is _____, and my _____ is light.”
2. *Proverbs 3:17* — “Her ways are ways of _____ N E S S, and all her paths are _____.”
3. *I John 5:3* — “his _____ are not grievous.”

4. *I Peter 1:8* — “ye rejoice with joy _____ and full of _____.”
5. *Proverbs 13:15* — “the way of _____ is _____.”
6. *Isaiah 57:21* — “There is no _____, saith my God, to the wicked.”

G. I WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP TOO MUCH:

Some people fear they will have to give up their lifestyle, their job, etc. Show them:

1. *Mark 8:36* — “What shall it _____ a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and _____ his own soul?”
2. *I John 2:17* — “And the _____ passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the _____ of God _____ for ever.”
3. *Psalms 84:11* — “No _____ thing will he _____ from them that walk uprightly.”
4. *Matthew 6:33* — “Seek ye _____ the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be _____ unto you.”
5. *Philippians 3:7* — “But what _____ were gain to me, those I counted _____ for Christ.”
6. *Romans 8:32* — “He that spared not his own Son ... how shall he not with him also _____ give us _____ things?”

Other scriptures and examples: *Luke 12:16-21; Mark 10:17-24; I Timothy 6:10; Hebrews 11:24-26; Luke 18:29,30.*

H. I WILL LOSE MY FRIENDS [FAMILY]:

1. *Proverbs 13:20* — “He that walketh with _____ men shall be wise: but a _____ of _____ shall be destroyed.”
2. *I John 1:3* — “That ... ye also may have _____ with us.”
3. See: Psalms 1:1,2.
4. *James 4:4* — “Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the _____ is the _____ of God.”

5. *Matthew 19:29* — “Every one that hath _____ houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”
6. *Matthew 10:36* — “And a man’s _____ shall be they of his own _____.”
7. *Psalms 27:10* — “When my father and my mother _____ me, then the _____ will take me up.”

Other scriptures: *Proverbs 1:10-15; 24:1,2.*

I. **I WILL BE PERSECUTED:**

Fear of what others may say or do (ridicule) is often a stumblingblock. Use the following scriptures to show the eternal cost of this kind of fear:

1. *Proverbs 29:25* — “The _____ of man bringeth a _____: but whoso putteth his _____ in the _____ shall be safe.”
2. *Mark 8:38* — “Whosoever therefore shall be _____ of me and of my words ... of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”
Take the inquirer to *II Thessalonians 1:7-9* to explain what this means and when it will happen.
3. *Matthew 5:11,12* — “_____ are ye, when men shall revile you, and _____ you ...”
4. *Acts 5:41* — “And they departed from the ... council, rejoicing that they were counted _____ to suffer _____ for his name.”

Do not whitewash the Christian life. Use *II Timothy 3:11,12* to show the reality, then go to *II Timothy 2:12; Romans 8:18*; and *I Peter 2:20,21* to show the promises of God.

J. **I HAVE NO FEELING:**

In our “touchy-feely” society, many want to “feel” or experience something rather than simply believe. This is extremely dangerous, because the Devil is well able to provide just about any experience being sought (e.g. *Job 4:15*). The sad thing today is that many are basing their hopes for eternal salvation on some feeling or religious experience — rather than on the truth of the Word of God and in the finished work of Christ.

Remember — true salvation is ...

**SETTLED on FACTS
SECURED by FAITH
SEQULED by FEELINGS**

Any ‘salvation’ based on feelings will change if and when those feelings change.

Two kinds of feelings lost people often look for are:

1. Feelings Of Joy And Peace:

In which case, use the following scripture progression to show that feelings follow faith:

- a. *Galatians 5:22,23* to show that these are realities (not mere feelings) which are the “ _____ of the _____.”
- b. *Ephesians 1:13* to show that we receive (and are sealed by) the Holy Spirit “ _____ that ye _____.”
- c. *I Peter 1:8* — “... yet _____, ye rejoice with _____ ...”

Use passages such as *Romans 10:9,10* and *Acts 13:38,39* to show what a sinner must do to be saved.

2. Feelings Of Sorrow For Sin:

In which case, show that God requires repentance, not remorse.

Isaiah 55:1 — “Let the wicked _____ his way...”

If the one being dealt with does not *feel* lost, use scriptures which plainly declare the fact of his condition — e.g. *Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:10-20*; etc.

K. I SEE TOO MANY CHRISTIAN HYPOCRITES:

Regrettably, many professing Christians have a poor testimony before others. Instead of them being a stepping stone, they are a stumblingblock to many coming to Christ. Sinners will readily point to the inconsistent and hypocritical lives of church-goers as an excuse for not trusting Christ.

The best approach is to use scriptures showing a personal accountability to God. For example:

1. *Romans 14:12* — “So then _____ of us shall give _____ of _____ to God.”
2. *Romans 2:1-5*, which shows the hypocrisy of pointing at hypocrites.
3. The parable of the Wheat and the Tares (*Matthew 13:24-30,36-43*) is also useful to show that God knows the true spiritual condition of all men — even hypocrites!

L. I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE:

1. Show The One With Whom You Are Dealing The Reasons Why This Is So:
 - a. *I Corinthians 2:14* — “But the _____ [unsaved] man receiveth _____ the things of the Spirit of God.”
 - b. *Ephesians 4:18* — The _____ I N G of the natural man is darkened.
 - c. *II Corinthians 4:4,3* — Satan has _____ the unbelievers' _____ so as to keep them from Christ.
2. Then Show How This Can And Will Be Changed:
 - a. *Acts 26:18* — The Gospel of Christ will _____ a man's eyes and turn him from _____ to light and from Satan's _____ to God's.
 - b. *John 8:32* — “The _____ shall make you _____.”
 - c. *John 7:17* — “If any man will _____ his _____, he shall _____ of the doctrine, whether it be of God...”

M. I AM NOT THAT BAD A PERSON:

Many trust their own righteousness and righteous acts will be good enough to “get them to Heaven.” People who express this false hope are not under conviction of sin, and desperately need to see themselves as God sees them.

1. *James 2:10* — “For whosoever shall keep the whole _____, and yet offend in _____ point, he is _____ of _____. ”
2. Using the above text, go to the Ten Commandments in *Exodus 20:1-17* and begin going down the list, asking the one you are trying to win if he or she has kept this commandment. Also use *Matthew 22:37,38*.
3. *Galatians 2:16* — No _____ is justified by the _____ of the law. See also: *Romans 3:19,20; Galatians 3:10*.
4. *Isaiah 64:6* — “But we are _____ as an unclean thing, and _____ our _____ N E S S E S are as _____ rags.
5. *Matthew 5:20* — Our righteousness must _____ that of the _____ and _____. Go to *Philippians 3:4-7* to see what just their righteousness entailed.

String the following references together: *I Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:9; Luke 16:15; Romans 2:16*. Also, see: *Luke 18:10-14*.

N. GOD IS TOO GOOD TO CONDEMN ANYONE TO HELL:

In this case, it is best to use scriptures which speak of the holiness and righteousness of God (e.g. *Psalm 7:11b*; *Isaiah 59:1,2*; etc.) together with the fact of eternal judgment (e.g. *Matthew 25:41,46*; *Revelation 20:11-15*; etc.).

Then show what God's goodness really means:

1. According to *Romans 2:4,5*, the goodness of God “ _____
thee to _____.”
2. According to *II Peter 3:9*, the Lord is “not _____ that any
should _____.”
3. According to *Ezekiel 33:11*, God has no _____ in the
_____ of the wicked.”
4. The real problem is that “ye will _____ to me, that ye
might have _____” — *John 5:40*.

Note: The unsaved are condemned _____ — *John 3:18*.

O. I'M NOT READY JUST YET:

Procrastination is an enemy of the soul. Many a sinner has put off being saved once too often. If there is evidence of genuine conviction of sin, use the following scriptures:

1. *II Corinthians 6:2* — “ _____ is the _____ time.”
2. *Isaiah 55:6* — “Seek ye the LORD _____ he _____ be found.”
3. *Proverbs 27:1* — “ _____ not thyself of _____.”
4. *Proverbs 29:1* — “He, that being often reproved _____ E T H
his neck, shall _____ L Y be destroyed...”
5. *Ecclesiastes 12:1* — “Remember _____ thy _____”
6. *Hebrews 3:15* — “ _____, if ye will _____ his voice, harden
not your _____.”

Other references: *Matthew 25:1-13; Luke 12:19,20; James 4:13,14; Acts 24:25.*

WILL MAN HAVE ANY EXCUSE?

Is there any possibility that God might accept the excuses of some? Not according to the Book of Romans — a Book written specifically to show the WAY of salvation (chapters 1-5), the WHAT of salvation (chapters 6-8), and the WHY of salvation (chapters 12-15).

- *Romans 1:20* — “so that they are _____ excuse.”
- *Romans 2:1* — “Therefore thou art _____.”

A. IGNORANCE IS NO EXCUSE:

Romans 1:19 gives two reasons why this is so. It is because “*that which may be known of God....*

1. Is Manifest ____ Them.

This refers to the Law of God having been _____ on the hearts of all men — *Romans 2:15*.

2. God Hath Shewed It Un ____ Them.

This refers to the [invisible] things of God being _____ seen and understood by the things that are made (creation).

According to *Psalm 19:1&c*, the _____ declare the glory of God, etc.

B. KNOWLEDGE ONLY INCREASES CULPABILITY:

This is taught by *Romans 2:17-23*. The Jews had the truth but did not receive the truth.

1. For unto whomsoever _____ is given, of him shall be _____ required — *Luke 12:47,48*.
2. To reject truth now is to invite “strong _____” after the Rapture — *II Thessalonians 2:10-12*.
3. There will be many who say, “_____, _____” who will enter into eternity lost — *Matthew 7:21-23*.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Romans 1:20*.

NOTES & QUESTIONS

Y Youth

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

An expression often mentioned in Baptist circles, particularly in any discussion of salvation and baptism, is the “Age of Accountability.” Though not so-stated in scripture, it is a term generally applied to the age at which someone is capable of understanding the Gospel and of making a willful decision to accept (or reject) the Lord Jesus Christ. Exactly what that age is is not stated. It is somewhat nebulous.

Does the Bible teach such a thing? Yes! and there is a Biblical expression which is associated with the notion of an age of accountability. It is “*from my youth*” or words to that effect, and it is found some 20 or so times in the Word of God.

This study explores the age of youth and its relationship to moral accountability.

THE AGES AND STAGES OF LIFE

It is clear from the reading of the Bible that there are three main stages, or levels of maturity, in a person’s life.

These are stated by way of spiritual application in *I John 2:12-14*. There is the:

- _____ stage (*verse 12a*).
- _____ stage (*verse 13d*).
- _____ stage (*verses 13a,14a*).

THE AGE OF CHILDHOOD

The age of childhood obviously begins at birth, and includes infants (e.g. *Job 3:16; Luke 18:15*) and “little ones” (e.g. *Genesis 43:8; Matthew 18:3,6*).

Ecclesiastes 11:10 differentiates _____ and _____.

The Bible also makes a distinction between children and adults in *I Corinthians 13:11*, listing three obvious areas of difference, as follows:

- S _____ I N G.
- U _____ I N G.
- T _____ I N G.

According to the Bible, childhood is to be a period of life marked by:

A. GROWTH:

Read: Luke 2:40,52. We see how Jesus grew:

1. Strong in S_____ (character).
2. In W_____ (mentally).
3. In S_____ (physically).
4. In favour with G____ (spiritually).
5. In favor with M____ (socially).

Note: In Luke 2, we see Jesus was called a _____ (verse 43) at the age of _____ (verse 42).

B. TRAINING:

1. Proverbs 22:6 — “_____ up a child in the _____ he should go.”
2. Proverbs 23:13 — “Withhold not _____ from the child.”
3. Proverbs 29:15 — “The _____ and _____ give wisdom.”
See also: Proverbs 22:15.
4. Fathers are responsible to raise their children in the _____ and _____ of the Lord — Ephesians 6:4.

C. EDUCATION:

1. Parents are to teach the Word of God _____ to their children — Deuteronomy 6:6,7.
2. Children learn under _____ and _____ until the time appointed of the _____ — Galatians 4:1,2.

The expectation is that by the time someone reaches the end of normal childhood, he is disciplined and equipped to begin shouldering responsibility.

DEFINING THE AGE OF YOUTH

The time between puberty and adulthood is referred to as “adolescence.” Today’s society generally views the adolescent as a part-child/part-adult entity still to be fully disciplined and equipped. This thinking has helped produce a generation of “big kids” (many of whom do not stop beyond the teen years) — dependent, unreliable, and irresponsible.

Youth is indeed the time of transition into adulthood. The Bible speaks of “*the days of [Israel’s] youth*” as the time she became a nation — the point in their history when:

- They came up _____ of the land of _____ — *Hosea 2:15*.
- When God made His _____ with them — *Ezekiel 16:60*.

The Bible, however, presents a somewhat different characterization of youth to that of modern-day thinking:

A. PHYSICALLY:

1. The _____ of young men is their _____ — *Proverbs 20:29*.
2. *Isaiah 40:30,31* implies endurance as a quality of youth.
3. It is _____ for a man that he _____ the _____ in his youth — *Lamentations 3:27*.
This would mean youth are supposed to be capable of hard work.

B. SOCIALLY:

1. Youth is that time when one is still resident in the _____, _____ — *Leviticus 22:13; Numbers 30:3,16*.
2. Youth ought to be able to keep _____ (i.e., be capable of working) — *Genesis 46:34; Zechariah 13:5*.
3. Youth is meant to be a time of V _____ — *Ezekiel 23:3,8,21*. (In these verses, God is illustrating Israel’s unfaithfulness.)
4. This is the time of life when a man will be lead to the _____ of his _____ — *Proverbs 5:18; Malachi 2:14,15*.

C. EMOTIONALLY:

1. _____ feared to draw his _____ — *Judges 8:20*. This was his first big test of courage.

2. Read: *I Samuel 17:33,42*. Both _____ and _____ discounted David's ability and courage to fight. Verses 34-37 explain why David was not afraid.

D. MENTALLY:

1. Understanding is a _____ of ____ — *Proverbs 16:22*.
2. According to *Proverbs 7:7*, a youth may be _____ of understanding, but this is not normal.
3. In *I Kings 12:6-11*, king _____ disastrously rejected the _____ of the old men for that of his young men.

DEFINING MORAL ACCOUNTABILITY

There is a difference between young children and youth in the matter of discernment and accountability. Consider what the Bible says:

A. CONCERNING LITTLE CHILDREN:

1. All Children Are Born With A Sin Nature.
 - a. The wicked are estranged _____ the _____ — *Psalm 58:3a*.
 - b. We are _____ in _____ — *Psalm 51:5*.
2. All Children Sin Because They Are Sinners.
 - a. They go astray as _____ as they be _____, speaking lies — *Psalm 58:3b*.
 - b. Even a child is _____ by his _____, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right — *Proverbs 20:11*.

3. All Children Are Subject To The Physical Consequences Of Sin.

According to Romans 5:

- a. Because of Adam's sin, _____ passed upon all men (*verse 12*).
- b. Death reigned even over them that had _____ sinned after the _____ of Adam's transgression (*verse 14*).

Adam's transgression was willful disobedience. Infants and young children do not willfully sin — they *naturally* sin! Yet they are still subject to physical death.

4. Young Children Are Unable To Discern.
 - a. _____ N E S S is _____ in the heart of a child — *Proverbs 22:15*.
 - b. According to *Deuteronomy 1:39*, little ones possess _____ knowledge between _____ and _____.
5. Little Ones Who Die Are Safe In Jesus.

One of the most comforting passages of scripture arises out of the tragic death of the child conceived through the adultery of David with Bathsheba.

David said of the child: “I shall _____ to _____” — *II Samuel 12:23*.

God’s mercy makes allowance — see: *Jonah 4:11*.

B. CONCERNING YOUTH:

1. Youth Are Capable Of Willful Obedience.

- a. “All these things have I _____ from my _____ up” (*Matthew 19:20; Mark 10:20; Luke 18:21*).

Note: The rich young man’s statement probably had reference to his Bar Mitzvah (“Son of the Commandment”), the Jewish rite of passage. At this age (13), a young man is expected to assume the responsibilities of observing the commandments and becomes eligible to participate in temple worship and other legal activities. (Girls have a Bas Mitzvah at age 12.)

Note: He had faithfully kept all the commandments — except the first! His wealth was his real god, as his sorrowful departure from the presence of the Lord revealed.

- b. Ezekiel declared he was not polluted because he observed the Law “from my _____” (*Ezekiel 4:14*).

2. Youth Are Capable Of Willful Disobedience.

As the prophet Jeremiah preached against the sins of Judah, he said:

- a. From our _____ even unto this _____ [we] have **not** _____ the voice of the Lord (*Jeremiah 3:25*).
- b. This has been the _____ from thy youth, that thou obeyest _____ [the Lord’s] voice (*Jeremiah 22:21*).
- c. They have only done _____ before me _____ their youth (*Jeremiah 32:30*).

God declared the _____ I O N of the _____
of man to be _____ from his youth — *Genesis 8:21* (cf. 6:5.)

3. Youth Are Held Accountable For Their Conduct.

- a. Paul declared that his _____ of _____ from his _____ was well known (*Acts 26:4*).
- b. *Ecclesiastes 11:9* warns the youth that God will _____ him into _____ for his actions.

4. Youth Is The Time For Salvation.

- a. Remember _____ thy _____ in the days of thy _____ (*Ecclesiastes 12:1a*).
- b. According to *Psalm 71:5*, a person is able to _____ the Lord from the time of his youth.
- c. Moses took his stand for the LORD when he was _____ to _____. — *Hebrews 11:24*.
- d. Obadiah _____ E D the _____ from his youth (*I Kings 18:3,12*).

While Christ is well able to save sinners of any age up to the point of death, statistics show that the vast majority believers are converted to Christ before they reach their adult years — before the bitterness of life kicks in (*Ecclesiastes 12:1b*).

5. Youth Still Need Guidance And Teaching.

According to *Psalm 71:17*, youth is a teachable age.

Proverbs 2:17 and *Jeremiah 3:4* speak of the “guide” of youth — in the context of unfaithfulness to God.

6. Youth Are Well Able Able To Make Their Lives Count For Christ.

- a. Well-raised children are like _____ in the hand of a _____ man — *Psalm 127:40*.
- b. Well-raised children are like _____ (sons) and polished _____ (daughters) — *Psalm 144:12*.
- c. Although he may have been beyond his teenage years at the time, Timothy was enjoined (in *I Timothy 4:12*) to:
 - Let no one _____ his youth.
 - Be an _____ of the _____.

Youth is *the* time for surrender to the work of God. So often we lower our expectations of our young people — or have other, more worldly ambitions for them — so that by the time they reach adult years they are lost to what might have been.

7. Youth Are Well Able To Stand Against Evil And The Evil One.
 - a. David did — read I Samuel 17.
 - b. In the analogy of Christian maturity (*I John 2:13,14*), young men have _____ the _____ one.

WHEN IS THE “AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY?”

There is no set age. It has much to do with one’s physical and mental maturity **and** one’s spiritual upbringing.

The concept of an age of accountability is seen in *John 9:21,23*. The Lord Jesus Christ healed a beggar who had been blind from birth. When questioned about this miracle by the Pharisees, the man’s parents said:

“He is of _____; _____ him: he shall _____ for himself.”

For most, we suppose the age of accountability will be reached sometime between mid-to-late childhood and the early teen years. For some, it may be earlier; for others it will come later. For those afflicted with a severe mental handicap — it may never come! It’s not a physical age; it’s a cognitive age.

In *Nehemiah 8:2*, Ezra read the Law before the congregation both of men and women, **and** all that could _____ with _____.

Consider the following examples:

A. KING JOSIAH — II Chronicles 34:1-3.

1. Josiah was _____ years old when he began to reign as king of Judah.
2. Josiah was about _____ years old when he began to seek after God.
3. When Josiah was about _____ years old he began a spiritual purge of Judah.

Here is an example of a very young man not only being able to shoulder the burden of royalty, but also able to act righteously with great deliberation and purpose.

B. KING JEHOIACHIN — II Chronicles 36:9.

1. Jehoiachin was _____ years old when he began to reign as king over Judah.
2. Jehoiachin's reign lasted _____ months and _____ days.
3. This king did that which was _____ in the sight of the LORD.

Here is an example of a very young man being held accountable by God for the character of his reign.

C. SAMUEL — I Samuel 3.

1. As a _____ Samuel _____ unto the Lord, *verse 1.*
2. Samuel did this even though he did not _____ the Lord at the time, *verse 7.*
3. Samuel first met the LORD through a _____ in the night, *verse 15.*
4. The child Samuel was thus _____ to be a _____ of the LORD, *verse 19,20.*

Note: Jeremiah was also called to preach when a child — *Jeremiah 1:5-9.*

D. THE LITTLE ONES WHO BELIEVED — Matthew 18:1-14.

This is one of the more misunderstood or misapplied passages in all of the Bible. It is a perennial favorite of baby sprinklers, who use it to justify their so-called ‘infant baptism’ — a remarkable wresting, since baptism is not mentioned once in the passage.

The key to understanding our Lord’s teaching here is the little word “**as**” in *verse 3.* It is “as” [like], not “when!” For anyone to be truly converted, they must come to Christ with child-like faith (humility, *verse 4*) — not with self-righteous pride.

Nevertheless, the Lord spoke of “these little ones who _____ in me” (*verse 6*). The fact is, children can believe.

1. The child in question was old enough to hear, understand, and respond by walking over to Jesus, Who had _____ him — *verse 2.*
2. This is in contrast to the incident recorded in *Matthew 19:13; Mark 10:13;* and *Luke 18:15.* Here, these little children were:
 - a. _____ unto Him by others — *Matthew 19:14;*
Mark 10:13.

- b. Specifically called _____ — *Luke 18:15*.
 - c. Small enough to be held in the _____ of Christ — *Mark 10:16*.
 - d. Not brought for salvation, but for Jesus to lay His _____ on them and _____ for them — *Matthew 19:13; Mark 10:13*.
3. The will of the Heavenly Father is that _____ child should _____, *verse 14*. cf. *II Peter 3:9*.
 4. Jesus said, “_____ little children to _____ unto me, and _____ them not” — *Matthew 19:14*.

THE SALVATION OF CHILDREN

Surely the greatest desire of every Christian parent is to see each of their children come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. In this they would echo the cry of Hagar in *Genesis 21:16* — “*Let me not see the death of the child.*”

In *Proverbs 23:24,25* we are told that the parents of the _____ [i.e., saved] shall greatly rejoice.

Yet there exist some serious problems in Baptist homes and churches today in the matter of childhood professions of faith — problems such as:

- Multiple professions — often made at a very young age, then again in later years.
- Copy-cat professions — made because one’s peers are doing it.
- Aggressive children’s ministry workers — sometimes caught up in a numbers game.
- Assurance based on the fact that one “remembers praying a prayer” (faith is not to be in a prayer but in a Person!).
- Assurance based upon the say-so of a parent — “*I know because my Mom told me what I did when I was X years old.*”

The all-too-often sad outcome of this is people depending on false hopes for salvation, or professing Christians abandoning Christ, His church, Biblical morality, etc. in their later years.

Great caution is needed lest we “*offend one of these little ones*” by leading them into a false hope or profession.

A. THE NATURE OF CHILDREN SHOULD COUNSEL CAUTION:

The illustration using children in *Ephesians 4:14* highlights the fact that children are:

1. Fickle — “tossed ____ and ____.”
2. Easy To D_____.

It is very easy to lead a child along. Anyone who has worked with children can testify that it would be easy get multiple ‘decisions for salvation’ through simple manipulation.

Children have a desire to please adults, especially their parents — who in turn have a desire to see their children saved.

A child has a limited vocabulary, and may not be able to properly express their real understanding (or lack thereof) of the plan of salvation. On the other hand, children who are “raised” in a godly Christian home and in a sound Baptist church may have learned “pat answers.” The question is, do they really comprehend what they are saying or doing?

B. THE FOCUS IN CHILDHOOD SHOULD BE ON PREPARATION:

1. According to *Psalm 34:11*, children can be taught the _____ of the _____.
2. According to *Psalm 78:1-8*, the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful _____ [salvation] should not be H ___ D E N from children (*verse 4*).
3. Timothy was influenced by the faith of his grandmother _____ and his mother _____ — *II Timothy 1:5*.
4. Timothy had known the holy _____ from the time he was a _____ — *II Timothy 3:15*.

The preparation of a child’s heart is so very important. It will take more than a short conversation to win a young person to Christ. Here are some suggestions for parents:

- Pray, pray, pray for your children — privately and publicly and often.
- Teach your children diligently — ask questions and answer questions.
- Teach your children to reverence the Word of God.
- Live the Christian life — don’t give salvation a “bad name” by your sour attitude or disobedient living. Your faith must be visibly real to your children (*Proverbs 23:26b*).

- Have your children memorize scripture — this is the KEY!
- Always encourage your children toward Christ (*Matthew 19:14*). Never discourage them. Always answer their questions Biblically.
- NEVER, NEVER push them into making a decision.

C. **LEADING YOUNG PEOPLE TO CHRIST:**

There are two points to keep in mind:

- ☞ There is no separate plan of salvation for children.
- ☞ Salvation is not complicated.

1. Look For Evidence Of CONVICTION.

Never assume a child is ready to be saved. If anyone (child, teen, adult) says “I want to be saved,” the proper response is to ask them, “WHY?”

If they don’t know why they want to be saved, they are not ready to be saved. Don’t be afraid to lovingly send the child on his way — if there is true Holy Spirit conviction, they’ll usually not let you. Trust God’s promises concerning children.

When a child is under conviction, they will express a sense of knowing they are a sinner. They will express a sense of the weight of their sins. Remember, the work of the Holy Spirit (*John 16:8-11*) is to reprove (convict) of:

- _____
- _____
- _____

2. Look For Evidence Of COMPREHENSION.

Never put words in a child’s mouth. Avoid asking questions which require a “yes/no” answer.

Any intelligent person can understand the Gospel intellectually. True comprehension comes when:

- a. Truth is not just revealed by flesh and blood (i.e., man), but by the Heavenly _____ — *Matthew 16:16,17*.
- b. One is _____ of God — *John 6:45*.

A wise parent or children’s ministry worker will want to let God work in the heart of a child.

Require a child professing faith in Christ to give a verbal testimony of their faith. Don’t expect them to speak after the manner of an adult, but look for an articulation of what they have experienced.

Always pray with a child whether they are ready to believe on the Lord or not. Never treat salvation (or a precious child) with disparagement.

3. Look For Evidence Of CONVERSION.

Do not tell a child he or she **is** saved. Do not tell them they are **not** saved, either. That is the task of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. Instead, assure them that when anyone is truly saved, GOD does a wonderful work in their heart and life. Things are going to happen in their life.

There can be nothing worse than for a child (or anyone else for that matter) to say a prayer, get baptized and join a church — then **try** to live right!!

Babes in Christ do not evidence their salvation by becoming theologians. They will not be perfect. The real evidence will be seen in their:

a. Desire For Christ.

Jesus said: "My sheep H _____ ... and F _____" (*John 10:27*).

b. Disdain For Sin.

Ye _____ to God from _____" (*I Thessalonians 1:9*).

4. Look For Evidence Of COMMITMENT.

This is somewhat difficult for a child to realize in his or her life, partly because of his natural immaturity and partly because they are under the full authority of their parents and not at liberty to make many life choices. *Luke 14:26-33* gives some of the requirements for discipleship. Children are not in a position to engage in such a calling. For this reason, attitude will be more important than action.

Time will tell. Continuance is a key indicator of true conversion. In *John 14:21*, Jesus said:

"*He that hath my commandments, and _____ them, he it is that loveth me.*"

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Ecclesiastes 12:1.*

Z Zeal

Lesson Commenced: _____

Lesson Checked: _____

Zeal may be defined as “passionate enthusiasm.” It can be good or bad, depending on what one is zealous about. In fact, the word “zeal” comes from the Greek ‘*zelos*’ which ranges in meaning from “jealousy” and “emulation” to “fervor” and “ambition.” Zeal is like a fire — it needs both feeding and watching!

Zeal is the opposite of apathy, indifference, and slothfulness. If ever there was a time for Baptists to be zealous, surely it is now. These are undoubtedly Laodicean days in which we find ourselves, where the spiritual temperature is “neither cold nor hot” (*Revelation 3:15,16*). There is a desperate need for the Lord’s churches and believers to get “on fire” (and stay “on fire”) for Christ.

Both these kinds of zeal are seen in *Galatians 4:17,18*, where the apostle Paul addresses the Galatians who had been swept up by the error of the Judaizers. He wrote:

- “*They zealously affect you, but _____*” (*verse 17a*) — the wrong kind of zeal.
- “*It is _____ to be zealously affected _____ in a good thing*” (*verse 18a*) — the right kind of zeal.
- “*And not _____ when I am _____ with you*” (*verse 18b*) — a genuine zeal.

This study examines the zealous Christian life. It looks at the two kinds of zeal.

MISDIRECTED ZEAL

Many people are zealous — but for the wrong cause. The communists of the 20th century were certainly zealous. Cults, such as the Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses, are zealous. New-age environmentalists and certain Sodomite organizations, for example, are extremely zealous for their wicked causes — and, as a result, are often successful in achieving their ends.

Religious zeal is usually extremely passionate, and often downright dangerous! So-called Islamic fundamentalism (the brand of Islam which actually believes and practices all that the Koran and Hadith teach) is a prime example of misdirected zeal. Zealous cults like the Branch Davidians have also brought about the loss of many innocent lives.

A. ZEAL ALONE WILL NOT GAIN SALVATION:

Many think it doesn't matter what you believe so long as you are sincere (zealous). However, consider the following examples:

1. The Jews — Romans 10:1-4.

The apostle Paul wrote of his beloved countrymen:

- a. They have a _____ of _____, but _____ according to _____ (verse 2).
- b. They are _____ of _____' _____ righteousness (verse 3a).
- c. They seek to _____ their _____ righteousness by observing the law of Moses (verse 3b).

2. The Apostle Paul.

His own testimony shows the futility of religious zeal. He was:

- a. Brought up at the feet of the eminent _____ (Acts 22:3d).
- b. Taught according to the _____ manner of the law of the fathers (Acts 22:3e).
- c. _____ toward _____ (Acts 22:3f).
- d. More _____ zealous of the traditions than most (*Galatians 1:14*).
- e. So zealous, that he vehemently P _____ E D the _____ (*Philippians 3:6*).

Yet after he was saved, Paul wrote: "But what things were _____ to me, those I counted _____ for Christ (*Philippians 3:7*).

3. The Religious Wolves — Matthew 7:15-23.

- a. Not everyone who says, "_____, _____" is truly saved (verse 21).
- b. True salvation is K _____ I N G Jesus Christ personally (verse 23).

B. BELIEVERS CAN BE ZEALOUSLY CAUGHT UP IN WRONG THINGS:

1. Many Galatians Were Zealous For False Doctrine — Galatians 4:17.

Having been saved from the Law's penalty, they were turned again:

- a. To its _____ and _____ elements (*Galatians 4:9*).
- b. To its B _____ (*Galatians 4:9e*).

- c. To _____ I N G days, and months, and times, and years (*Galatians 4:10*).
2. Many Corinthians Were Zealous In Showing Off Their Presumed Spirituality — *I Corinthians 14:12a*.
 They were more concerned about showing others how spiritual they were than being a blessing to them.
- The exercise of any spiritual gift without _____ is vanity (*I Corinthians 13:1-3*).
 - Real Christian love does not V _____ itself (*I Corinthians 13:4d*).
 - The purpose for spiritual gifts is to _____ the church (*I Corinthians 14:12b*) — not to brag about.

C. BELIEVERS CAN BE WRONGFULLY ZEALOUS IN RIGHT THINGS:

- In seeking to defend his Master, _____ drew his _____ and was prepared to fight off a large group of armed men — *John 18:10*. Jesus rebuked this kind of zeal.
- Christians may be zealous in their L _____ to the detriment of a _____ brother — *I Corinthians 8:9-13*.

Zeal for Christ must never cause us to do wrong — even if it is to accomplish right! We must always “strive lawfully” (*II Timothy 2:5*). Some areas in which misguided zeal usually does more harm than good are:

- High-pressure ‘evangelism.’
- Confronting others about their faults.

DIRECTED ZEAL

Believers ought to be “zealously affected” in good things. There are seven things the Word of God directs us to be zealous for. Christians and churches need to be:

A. ZEALOUS FOR THE WORD OF GOD:

- In the “Word of God chapter” the Psalmist declares of the Bible:
 - My _____ hath _____ me (*Psalm 119:139*).
 - It is very _____ : therefore thy servant _____ it (*Psalm 119:140*).

2. The Bereans _____ the scriptures _____ (*Acts 17:11*).
3. In *Job 23:12*, Job said he esteemed the Word of God to be _____ than his _____.

B. ZEALOUS IN PRAYER:

1. In *James 5:16*, we are told the effectual _____ prayer of a righteous man availeth _____.
2. In *Colossians 4:12*, Paul said _____ was always labouring _____ in prayer for his home church.
3. According to *I Thessalonians 3:10*, Paul prayed _____ and day _____. See also: *II Timothy 1:3*.

C. ZEALOUS OVER THE HOUSE OF GOD:

1. The messianic prophecy of *Psalm 69:9* declares: “The _____ of thine _____ hath _____ me up.”
2. This prophecy was fulfilled in *John 2:17* when _____ cleansed the _____ in Jerusalem.
3. In this present age, the house of God is the _____ (the organized assembly of scripturally baptized believers) — *I Timothy 3:15*.

It has been said that the:

- Sunday morning attendance is an indication of how much the preacher is loved.
- Sunday evening attendance is an indication of how much the church is loved.
- Midweek attendance is an indication of how much the Lord is loved.

Does the anticipation of attending church meetings “eat you up?”

D. ZEALOUS FOR THE GREAT COMMISSION:

1. According to *II Corinthians 9:2*, the _____ of the Corinthian church in giving to the Lord’s work _____ very many.
2. This zeal demonstrated their professed _____ unto the _____ of Christ (*II Corinthians 9:13*).

A giving church is also a going church!

E. ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS:

1. In *Titus 2:11-14*, we read that Christ gave Himself for us that we might be a people who are zealous of _____.
2. According to *Ephesians 2:8-10*, we are not _____ BY our good works, but we are saved _____ good works.
3. According to *Romans 12:11*, we should not be _____ in the Lord's business, but _____ in spirit and service.
4. All that we do should be done _____ as to the Lord (*Colossians 3:23*).
5. Whatsoever thy _____ findest to do, do it with thy _____. (*Ecclesiastes 9:10*).
6. For the work of Christ, _____ regarded not his _____. (*Philippians 2:30*).

F. ZEALOUS TOWARD THE SAINTS:

1. Epaphras had a _____ zeal for the saints in the churches at Colosse, _____, and _____. (*Colossians 4:13*).
2. The house of _____ was _____ to the _____ of the saints (*I Corinthians 16:15*).
3. In *I Peter 4:8*, believers are admonished to practice _____ among themselves (*I Peter 4:8*).
Our love for one another needs to be “on fire!”

G. ZEALOUS FOR CHURCH PURITY:

1. According to *II Corinthians 11:2*, a church is _____ to Christ — He is the Bridegroom (*John 3:29*); she is His bride.
2. A bride is to remain a _____ until she is presented to her husband. For a church, this means both MORAL and DOCTRINAL purity.
3. In *I Corinthians 5:7*, the church was instructed to _____ out the erring member in order to maintain its purity (see: verse 6).

4. Later, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, Paul referred to these [hard and distasteful] instructions he had given concerning church discipline. He noted the church's commendable attitude in finally dealing with the "sin in the camp." This is expressed in *II Corinthians 7:11*:

- a. What _____ it wrought in you.
- b. What _____ of your selves.
- c. What _____ .
- d. What _____ .
- e. What _____ desire.
- f. What _____ .
- g. What _____ .

These all have to be a church's attitude toward sin if it is to remain pure.

Note: The correct attitude toward the sinning member is given in *II Corinthians 2:6-11*.

5. God told the insipid church of the Laodiceans to be _____ and to _____ (*Revelation 3:19*).

Many churches exhibit a care-less attitude when it comes to doctrine, standards, and expectations of its members. They are in grave danger of losing their purity.

- A zealot is a fanatic. The word "fanatic" has been abbreviated to "fan." A great example of zeal is seen in the actions of true sports fans.
- Sadly, many Christians believe a fanatic is anyone who loves Jesus more than they do!
- It is easier to cool down a fanatic than to warm up a corpse!
- Hell trembles when men kindle.
- "*If by excessive zeal we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master's service, then glory be to God — we shall have so much less of the world and so much more of Heaven!*" — C. H. Spurgeon.

MEMORY VERSE:

Try to memorize: *Galatians 4:18*.