

SETTING YOUR LIFE RIGHT WITH GOD

CHAPTER 1

God loves you and offers a wonderful plan for your life.

God created you. Not only that, He loves you so much that He wants you to spend eternity with Him. Jesus said:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Jesus came so that each of us could know and understand God in a personal way. Jesus alone can bring meaning and purpose to life.

What Keeps us From Knowing God?

All of us are sinful and separated from God. Therefore we cannot know and experience God's love and plan for our life.

The fact is, we need Jesus. The Bible says, "...all fall short of God's glorious standard" (Romans 3:23b). Though God intended for us to have a relationship with Him, we naturally want to do things our own way. We're stubborn, selfish and frequently unable to follow through on our promises. Try as we might, we just keep stumbling.

Deep down, our attitude may be one of active rebellion or passive indifference, but it's all evidence of what the Bible calls sin - an old archery term which literally means "missing the mark."

The Bible says the result of sin in our lives is death - spiritual separation from God. (Romans 6:23) Although we may try to reach God through our own effort, we inevitably fail. We just can't ever be good enough.

This diagram shows the great gap that exists between us and God. The arrows illustrate that we are always trying to reach God and find a meaningful life through our own efforts. We may try to do good things or adopt a new guiding philosophy - but we inevitably fail.

How can we reconcile this gap?

Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him we can know and experience God's love and plan for our life.

Jesus Christ is God's solution to the problem of human imperfection and evil. Because of Jesus' death on the cross, we don't have to be separated from God any longer. Jesus paid the price for our sin and in so doing, bridged the gap between us and God.

Instead of trying harder to reach God, we simply need to accept Jesus and his sacrifice as the one way to God.

"I am the way, the truth and the life," *Jesus said*. "No one can come to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

He also said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish" (John 11:25-26).

But not only did Jesus die for our sin, He rose from the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:3-6) When He did, He proved beyond doubt that He can rightfully promise eternal life - that He is the son of God and the only means by which we can know God.

Yet just having knowledge about God's plans and purposes isn't enough. We need to consciously accept Jesus Christ as the payment for our sin and welcome Him into our life.

Not enough to just know these much

We must individually accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our life.

The Bible says:

"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12).

We accept Jesus by faith. The Bible says:

"God saved you by his special favour when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Accepting Jesus means first believing that Jesus is who He claimed to be, then inviting Him to take the control of our lives and make us into new people. (John 3:1-8)

Jesus said:

"I'm standing at the door and I'm knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in" (Revelation 3:20).

How will you respond to God's invitation? What will you do with the claims of Jesus Christ?

Know more Truths to set you life right and appropriate those in to your life.

CHAPTER 2

SIN

What is sin? It is the breaking of God's law. *It's in the Bible*, I John 3:4, NIV. "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness." I John 5:17, NIV says, "All wrongdoing is sin..."

The basic principal of God's law is summed up in one word—love. *It's in the Bible*, Matthew 22:37-40, NIV. "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Sin comes from the inside out. *It's in the Bible*, Mark 7:20-23, TLB. "And then He added, 'It is the thought-life that pollutes. For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts of lust, theft, murder, adultery, wanting what belongs to others, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, pride, and all other folly. All these vile things come from within; they are what pollute you and make you unfit for God.'"

No one is better than another—we all sin. *It's in the Bible*, Romans 3:9-10, TLB. "Well, then, are we Jews better than others? No, not at all, for we have already shown that all men alike are sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles. As the Scriptures say, 'No one is good—no one in all the world is innocent.'"

Without Jesus, the consequences of our sin is death. *It's in the Bible*, Romans 6:23, TLB. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What if I'm not sure of what all my sins are? *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 139:23-24, TLB. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test my thoughts. Point out anything you find in me that makes You sad, and lead me along the path of everlasting life."

Confess sin to God and receive forgiveness. *It's in the Bible*, I John 1:9, NIV. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Man's breaking of the Covenant of Works with God has abolished the possibility of his earning eternal life through his works. Fallen man is guilty of, and polluted with, sin. Man's fall has not ended God's requirements, however. God still justly demands perfect righteousness and holiness from each person.

Actual sin flows out from original sin. Our sinfully-polluted heart is the fountainhead which spews forth a host of actual sins in our lives. Actual sins are the sins in thoughts, words, and actions that each of us actually commit.

Actual sins are of two types:

1. Sins of **omission**
2. Sins of **commission**

Sins of omission are sins of not doing, of omitting, that which God commands us to do - not thinking, saying, and doing that which God requires of us in His law. Sins of omission testify of our failure to live up to the standard of God's law, to live the life we should.

Sins of commission are sins of doing, of committing, that which God forbids us to do - thinking, saying, and doing that which God forbids in His law. Sins of commission testify of our rebellion against God, our transgressions of His commandments.

Tonight when you retire to bed," a minister once explained to his catechism class, "if you do not read a portion of Scripture, asking God's blessing upon it, you commit a sin of omission. If you read an evil book instead, you perform a sin of commission.

A child not obeying her mother's request to first clean her room before playing, commits a sin of omission. A boy doing that which his mother told him not to do, commits a sin of commission.

Not speaking a comforting, supporting, or rebuking word when necessary is a sin of omission. Saying a cruel, degrading, or unnecessary word is a sin of commission.

On his deathbed, an old, faithful servant of God prayed aloud, "O God, forgive my sin - especially my sins of omission!"

Sins vary not only in kind but also in degree. While any sin committed is terrible in its unrighteousness, rebellion, pollution, and punishment, (for only one transgression makes us guilty lawbreakers in God's sight), there are degrees of sin. Sin and its punishment increase in degree according to the knowledge, opportunities, and blessings given to a person.

The worst degree of sin mentioned in Scripture is the unpardonable (or unforgivable) sin. This sin is also called the sin against the Holy Ghost. When using the term "the sin against the Holy Ghost," distinction must be made between pardonable sins, and the unpardonable sin against the Holy Spirit. Scripture speaks of **vexing** the Spirit (Isaiah 63:10), lying to the Spirit (Acts 5:3), grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30), **quenching** the Spirit (I Thessalonians 5:19), and resisting the Spirit (Acts 7:51). All of these are sins against the Holy Ghost, but they are not the unpardonable sin.

The unpardonable sin is a sin which Scripture teaches is unforgivable, after which a change of heart is impossible, and for

which it is not necessary to pray. It is a sin of degrees, of deepening steps taken over time. It is the ultimate rejection of God. To commit this sin one must have received a clear knowledge of the truth and have "tasted" an impression of the truth in his conscience and emotions. He must be convinced of God's truth to a degree to make an honest denial of it impossible. In his mind and conscience, he must be convinced of the truth.

The unpardonable sin is committed when, against this background of mental knowledge and conviction, a person consciously, willfully, and **maliciously** rejects, slanders, and **blasphemes** the evidence and testimony of the Holy Spirit regarding the grace of God in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the end, from his deep hatred and enmity, he speaks of the truth as the lie, Christ as Satan, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of hell. This sin is unpardonable, not because its guilt transcends the merits or abilities of Christ to save or because the person who committed it is beyond the power of the Holy Spirit to save; but because, in this sin of degrees, the sinner refuses to repent, hardens his heart, sears his conscience, and God finally gives him over to himself.

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The result of this sin is a person who displays a pronounced hatred of God, a defiant attitude toward true religion, and a devilish delight in mocking and slandering that which is holy without any remorse, sorrow, or concern for his soul or eternity.

This terrible sin and frightful condition was displayed in Scripture by some of the Pharisees and members of the Sanhedrin, who - after hearing Christ's words and seeing His miracles, being convicted mentally of His truth, having emotionally "tasted" impressions of His power, and knowing in their consciences that He was from heaven - increasingly fought against these convictions.

Because Jesus' teachings testified against them, the more powerfully they were convicted of the truth, the more they hated Him; until with hellish fury they denied, argued, mocked, ridiculed and blasphemed Christ. Finally, God gave them over to themselves - to the full hardening of heart and searing of conscience - to say and try to convince others that Christ was a devil; and that His spirit of power was from Beelzebub, the chief of the devils; to publicly state that Christ's testimony was blasphemy, and finally with devilish

When the Holy Spirit impresses and convicts a person of his sin, Satan often tries to convince him that there is no hope for him, that he has sinned too greatly, or that he has committed the unpardonable sin. However, those who receive warnings of conscience concerning sin - impressions regarding their soul's condition, or convictions of the truth of eternity - receive evidence that they have not committed the unpardonable sin. Those who have committed this sin never experience any remorse, sorrow, or concern over these matters. The Word of God encourages all those who feel the weight of their sin, not to despair, but to plead for salvation in Jesus Christ, for "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him" (Hebrews 7:25a). No sinner can place himself beyond the uttermost.

In Hampton Court Gardens there were many large, stately oak trees. However, several of these trees were killed by ivy vines.

Had the ivy been uprooted or killed when it was a young plant, the oaks would not have become the victims

Death

Sin is always a very serious matter, and it is always taken seriously by God. Sin is not only a transgression of God's law but it also is rebellion against the Lawgiver. It is an **affront** to God's righteousness and holiness. Therefore God will always righteously punish sin. Throughout the Bible God continually warns us of the terrible consequences of sin - for sin results in death, and death means separation - separation of man's soul from its body and from God. Already in Paradise, God warned man, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17b).

The death God spoke of is a three-fold death.

1. **Corporal** (physical, bodily, or temporal) death
2. Spiritual death
3. Eternal death

Corporal death is the death of a person's body. When corporal death occurs, a person's soul and body separate. The body is buried and returns to the ground, but his soul returns to God who judges and sends it to heaven or hell.

Man was not created to die; it is unnatural. Corporal death is the result of our sin.

Jesus Christ has passed through and conquered death and the grave for His people. Therefore death has become a passageway to eternal life for the souls of all true believers. While some of God's children receive more faith than others to clearly see this when dying, all shall be safely brought through death into eternal life. This truth caused Paul to testify, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:55-57).

Spiritual death is the condition of separation from God's saving grace, favor, and communion, the sad condition in which all fallen men are born. Man is born with original sin - in a sinfully guilty state and polluted condition. Spiritual death is total depravity, man's being born spiritually dead in sin. Man's sin has spiritually separated him from God, his only source of spiritual life and growth. God's Spirit no longer dwells in man in his natural state.

Spiritual death does not mean, however, that man's will is dead or that his freedom to act is lost. Fallen man is still a rational being, and through God's common grace, he still retains characteristics of the wider sense of God's image as taught in the previous chapter. Fallen man still freely chooses and acts for himself according to his own will. Since the fall, however, natural man's will is **perverse**. It is reversed and desires to serve self, sin, world, and Satan instead of God. It is inclined to all evil and is totally depraved of any spiritual good - of love to God and others. Natural man's will is active; he freely makes choices continually; but being a spiritually dead sinner, he chooses for sin instead of righteousness - for self instead of God.

Some people base their hope for salvation upon spiritually dead sinners, upon their making a decision for Christ, or choosing to live for God. These, and any other hopes based upon totally-

depraved sinners making right choices of themselves, are false hopes. Believing that fallen man will exercise his free will to choose for God, denies the truths of Scripture regarding man's fall, total depravity, and spiritual death.

Hope for man's salvation must be based upon God, not upon fallen man. God is almighty and gracious. He has sovereignly declared His desire to save lost sinners through the merits of Jesus Christ. God's willingness, grace, and work - not fallen man's willingness, decision, and works - is the scriptural foundation of hope.

The results of spiritual death were experienced immediately after man's first sin in Paradise. Spiritual death, being separated from God's favor and communion, included the following:

1. The loss of God's image In its restricted sense; the reflection in man of godly knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.
2. The awareness of nakedness - A feeling of shame; the loss of openness and comfortableness in God's presence.
3. Horror of conscience - A sense of guilt and fear of God; the loss of innocence.
4. **Expulsion** from Paradise - The casting out of all unrighteousness from God's presence; the loss of God's blessed communion in the intimate relationship man had with the Lord.

Eternal death is the eternal punishment of sinners in both soul and body in hell. This is the fullest extent of God's punishment of sin. It is the ultimate consequence of man's fall. In hell, sinners are fully given over to themselves and God's wrath against sin is fully poured out. Here they are completely separated from a gracious God, being not only separated from God's saving grace, but also from any blessings of common grace. Eternal death in hell is spoken of in Scripture as being without intermission, mixture, or end. Here unrepenting sinners will eternally experience what it means to willfully sin against an eternal, infinite, holy, and righteous God.

Man's three-fold death can be defined in the following terms:

Three-Fold Death	
Type of Death	Separation Of:
1. Corporal	Soul from body
2. Spiritual	Soul from God's saving grace, favor, and communion
3. Eternal	Person (soul and body) from God's saving and common grace eternally

Fallen man is in a most miserable condition. His misery includes:

1. His sin (or sinful state) which separates him from God, his only source of spiritual life and growth.
2. His **impotency** (or sinful condition) of being unable to deliver himself from his state of spiritual death.
3. His punishment (or the result of sin) for the wages of sin is death, resulting in total separation from God's grace and eternal punishment under the full wrath of God.

Sadly, fallen man is blind for his own blindness. He does not feel his misery. He is unconcerned over his sinful state. The sadness of this condition is illustrated in the following story.

At one time, convicts were employed in building the high, thick walls around the prison grounds in Portland. Every block that was laid made their escape more impossible. Yet the imprisoning walls were being built by the very people imprisoned by them.

How does this picture an unrepentant sinner? The prisoners in this story were forced to build their own walls, but sinners build their own imprisoning walls willingly. How does this increase the sadness of sinful man's condition?

Man's heart is spiritually dead. His only hope is returning to his Maker to have it thoroughly renewed.

Genesis 3, which relates man's sin, fall, and punishment, is often referred to as "the black chapter" of Scripture. But the first gospel promise, the promise of the Savior, is also found in this chapter. Blessed be God! He did not leave all men in the miserable state into which they had brought themselves, but He graciously opened a wonderfully complete, rich, and glorious way of salvation for lost sinners through the death payment of His Son - the Lord Jesus Christ. After man broke the Covenant of Works and plunged himself into hopeless misery, God revealed a second covenant, the Covenant of Grace, through which man can again be brought into relationship and communion with God, and be restored into God's favor and fellowship eternally.

Have you been brought to know, feel, and own your actual and original sin? If so, all hope and expectation in your own efforts, works, and righteousness have been cut off. Have you been led to see, hope, and trust in Jesus Christ for deliverance? If so, your heart has been won over to most deeply desire to increasingly love and serve Him in all things.

CHAPTER 3

REPENTANCE

Who are called to repentance? *It's in the Bible*, Luke 5:32, NIV. "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

What goes with repentance? *It's in the Bible*, Luke 24:47, NIV. "And repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

How do I know if I have sinned? *It's in the Bible*, Romans 3:20, TEV. "For no man is put right in God's sight by doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to make man know that he has sinned."

What must I do to be saved? *It's in the Bible*, Acts 2:38; 16:31, NIV. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven." "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Repentance is a gift from God. *It's in the Bible*, Romans 2:4, NIV. "Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?"

How do I feel when I sin? *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 38:18, TLB. "I confess my sins; I am sorry for what I have done."

What does repentance bring? *It's in the Bible*, II Corinthians 7:10, NIV. "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret."

How does Jesus feel when I repent? *It's in the Bible*, Luke 15:7, TEV. "I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine respectable people who do not need to repent."

Conversion consists of two parts:

1. Repentance
2. Faith

Conversion is the Holy Spirit's turning of a person from sin to God. Repentance is turning away from sin; faith is turning toward God. The two are the negative and positive aspects of the same turning; they both result in a loving, godly obedience. This truth is illustrated in the diagram below.

Have you experienced personal conversion - repentance from sin and faith in Christ? If so, then you desire, above all else, to increasingly know, love, and serve the Lord. You will desire to grow in obedience to His will - to serve and please the Lord in all things. If not, then you are yet desiring, above all else, to love and serve self. You desire obedience to your will - that all things will serve and please you. Who is king in your heart - God or self? The one produces true worship; the other, sinful rebellion.

In the heart of a regenerated person, the new nature loves that which the old nature hates - God's rule, will, work, honor, and Person. It also hates that which the old nature loves - self rule, will, work, and honor. Through God's regenerating grace, the new nature is placed on the throne in the essence of the will, in the inner recesses of the heart. The old nature, however, remains in the soul fighting against the new. This struggle between the two natures produces a spiritual warfare within the heart of a regenerated person. But blessed be God and His all-conquering grace! The old nature, which is defeated in principle in regeneration, will be totally destroyed in death. Only

the new nature of all regenerated persons will ascend to be with God forever in heaven. The total victory shall belong to Christ, and through Him, to His Church.

What is repentance? True repentance is a sincere confession of, a godly sorrow for, and a firm resolution to turn from sin. There are other forms of regret, which are not true repentance.

Esau regretted his sin of despising his birthright, but his regret was motivated by selfish reasons. He was sorry he sinned because of the bitter consequences he experienced in missing the blessing of his father. Self-motivated regret is not true repentance. Real repentance is sorrow over sin because it is sin against God, because it is rebellion against His will. True repentance sincerely regrets sin, and genuinely desires to abandon it, even when no undesirable consequences will be suffered because of it. True repentance is motivated by true love - a sincere desire to please God and avoid that which is displeasing to Him; it is not motivated by self-love.

True, godly repentance includes the person's mind, emotions, and heart, as shown in the charts below:

TRUE REPENTANCE INCLUDES:		
The Person's:	Description:	Example Text:
1. Mind	<i>A knowledge and confession of personal sin</i> - This includes a change of thought and view. The person recognizes his sinfulness - his guilt and defilement. He sees that God's law is right, and he is wrong.	For by the law is the knowledge of sin. - Romans 3:20b
2. Emotions	<i>A feeling of sorrow and regret for personal sin</i> - This includes a change of feeling. The person experiences sorrow for sin itself and deeply regrets sinning against God.	For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of. - II Corinthians 7:10a
3. Heart	<i>A heartfelt turning from personal sin to God</i> - This includes a change of one's deepest desires and will. The person wholeheartedly confesses his sin to God; seeking pardon and cleansing grace, but also strengthening grace to fight against temptation and keep himself from sin.	Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. - Psalm 51:1-2

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF TRUE REPENTANCE

King Josiah

Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before Me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

- II Kings 22:19

Ezra

Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children: for the people wept very sore.

- Ezra 10:1

Job

Then Job answered the LORD and said,

I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but

Peter

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.

And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

- Luke 22:61-62

The Prodigal Son

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy

The Publican

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

- Luke 18:13

Nehemiah

Let Thine ear now be attentive, and Thine eyes open, that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant, which I pray before Thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against Thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.

We have dealt very corruptly against Thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which Thou commandedst Thy servant Moses.

- Nehemiah 1:6-7

Asaph

Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins.

So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before Thee.

- Psalm 73:21-22

<p>now mine eye seeth Thee.</p> <p>Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.</p> <p>- Job 42:1,5,6</p>	<p>son.</p> <p>- Luke 15:18-21</p>	
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Read David's and Daniel's repentances recorded in Psalm 51 and Daniel 9.

Psalm 51:1-3,7

Have mercy upon me,
O God, according to
Thy lovingkindness:
according unto the
multitude of Thy tender
mercies blot out my
transgressions.

Wash me throughly
from mine iniquity, and
cleanse me from my
sin.

For I acknowledge my
transgressions: and my
sin is ever before me.

Purge me with hyssop,
and I shall be clean:
wash me, and I shall be
whiter than snow.

Daniel 9:3-5

And I set my face unto
the LORD God, to seek
by prayer and
supplications, with
fasting, and sackcloth,
and ashes:

And I prayed unto the
LORD my God, and
made my confession,
and said, O Lord, the
great and dreadful God,
keeping the covenant
and mercy to them that
love Him, and to them
that keep His
commandments;

We have sinned, and
have committed
iniquity, and have done
wickedly, and have
rebelled, even by
departing from Thy
precepts and from Thy
judgments.

Can you identify all three elements of true repentance in these examples - a confession of, sorrow for, and turning

from, sin to God?

God speaks clearly in His Word of: commands to sinners to repent from their sins, promises to those who do so, and warnings to those who do not. The following chart provides some examples.

SCRIPTURAL COMMANDS, PROMISES, AND WARNINGS REGARDING REPENTANCE			
1. <i>Commands to repent</i>	<p>Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Ezekiel 18:30-31</p>	<p>Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Acts 3:19</p>	<p>Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:</p> <p>And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Joel 2:12-13a</p>
2. <i>Promises to those who do</i>	<p>The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 34:18</p>	<p>Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 55:7</p>	<p>If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- John 1:9</p>
3. <i>Warnings to those who do not</i>	<p>He, that being often reproved hardeneth</p>	<p>But after thy hardness and impenitent heart</p>	<p>Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto</p>

	<p>his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.</p> <p>- Proverbs 29:1</p>	<p>treasurest up unto thyself wrath against teh day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.</p> <p>- Romans 2:5</p>	<p>thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.</p> <p>- Luke 10:13</p>
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Conversion includes both true repentance and faith. Repentance has been described; faith is examined in the following chapter - Chapter 15.

Both true repentance and faith are the fruits of the Holy Spirit's gracious, saving work in the hearts of His children. God the Holy Spirit is the Author of conversion, which is begun by His gracious regenerating power and continued by His gracious illuminating and sanctifying influences.

CHAPTER 4

CONVERSION THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRITS WORK

The Holy Spirit works conversion through the means of His Word. Both law and gospel function together; they are inseparable, but yet serve distinct roles. God generally works repentance by means of the law and faith by means of the gospel. The following texts are examples of this truth.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS CONVERSION THROUGH GOD'S WORD		
<p><i>Repentance</i> – by means of the law</p>	<p>The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 19:7a</p>	<p>Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Romans 3:20</p>
<p><i>Faith</i> - by means of the gospel</p>	<p>But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?</p>	<p>In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with</p>

	So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. - Romans 10:16-17	that Holy Spirit of promise. - Ephesians 1:13
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While regeneration is purely a one-sided work of God in which man is entirely **passive**, conversion is not. In conversion, the regenerated person's old nature fights against the Holy Spirit's work; but his new nature agrees and cooperates with the Holy Spirit. The renewed person most deeply desires that which God desires; his new nature wills that which God wills. The following texts speak of this truth.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.

- Psalm 110:3a

And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

- Ephesians 4:24

The spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak.

- Matthew 26:41b

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

- Romans 7:22

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

And I will delight myself in Thy commandments, which I have loved.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

- Romans 8:5-6

O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

- Psalm 119:47,97

When speaking of the regenerated person's new nature cooperating with the Holy Spirit in conversion, care must be given to note that:

1. The activity of the person always results from a previous work of God in him: his new nature was implanted by God in regeneration.

2. The activity of the person always results from the presence of the sustaining and empowering influence of the Holy Spirit. His new nature depends upon the abiding life, care, and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without this continual, imparting grace, the new nature could not live or act; it would be overpowered by the sinful, old nature.

These two points must be clearly understood; otherwise, man would receive credit which belongs solely to God. Man's new nature, which loves God and desires perfect conversion to His will, is totally a result of God's *life-implanting* grace. Its exercise is totally dependent upon God's *life-sustaining* grace.

Therefore, the *regenerated person is willing*, but *he has been made, and is kept, willing by the gracious work of the Holy Spirit*. The one truth is important because it confirms that God's child does personally repent, believe, and obey. The other is necessary because it maintains that his repenting, believing, and obeying is purely the result of God's free and sovereign grace.

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God's children are totally dependent upon the Holy Spirit for their spiritual life and salvation - they need Him for their spiritual life's beginning, continuation, and completion. God the Holy Spirit is the Regenerator, Sustainer, Leader, Teacher, Comforter, Converter, Enlightener, Sanctifier, and Preserver of all true believers.

The Holy Spirit's saving work in the souls of His people includes:

1. Internal calling
2. Regenerating
3. Converting
 - a. Repentance (the conviction of sin - misery)
 - b. Faith (the trusting in Christ - deliverance)
 - c. Obedience (the desiring of God's will - thankfulness)

4. Uniting with Christ
5. Applying of justification
6. Working of sanctification
7. Assuring of salvation
8. Preserving in grace
9. Preparing for heaven

The Holy Spirit's saving work is a total work. We need the Holy Spirit to begin, continue, and complete His saving work within us.

Do you recognize your personal need of the Holy Spirit and His work? Are you actively using the means through which the Holy Spirit works, and earnestly praying for His blessing upon it?

The *marks* of true conversion are:

1. *A heartfelt experiencing of misery (repentance)* - This takes place when a person is convinced of his sin. He is convicted by the Holy Spirit of his actual sins but also of their source, his original sin - his totally depraved and sinful heart. A sincere knowledge of, sorrow for, and desire to turn from, all sin is experienced. However, all of the person's attempts at self-reformation fail, and his conviction deepens. His totally lost state and condition become real; he is without God in the world and unable, because of his own sinful heart, to save himself. The heartfelt knowledge of his need to be saved and the impossibility of saving himself are both worked by the Holy Spirit in his soul to direct him outside of himself to God's appointed Savior.

2. *A heartfelt experiencing of deliverance (faith)* - When a person experiences that his sin has cut off all his hope for self-salvation, has separated him from God, and has made him ripe for God's judgments, the Holy Spirit directs the soul's eyes outside of itself to Jesus Christ. The person begins to see the wonderful, gracious way of salvation opened in Jesus Christ for lost sinners.

As these truths are applied to his heart, he learns to hope, believe, and trust in Jesus Christ as his only way to be reconciled with God, delivered from sin, and escape well-deserved punishment. As faith deepens, Jesus Christ increasingly becomes his deliverance, righteousness, holiness; in short, his "everything" for salvation. Jesus Christ becomes his personal Savior. Christ possesses everything which the convicted sinner has learned that he lacks and needs for salvation.

3. *A heartfelt experiencing of thankfulness (obedience)* - Experiencing something of the deep, gracious, saving love of God through Jesus Christ for sinners produces an overflowing love toward God in return. With true thankfulness of heart, the person desires to love, serve, and honor God - to do that which is pleasing in God's sight. He wants to obey God wholeheartedly and perfectly. God's law then is not a burden or something which he is forced to follow, but a delight and that which he wants to do more than all else. His remaining sin deeply grieves him, for his deepest motives, desires, and affections are to love and serve God perfectly with his entire being.

Can you relate to these descriptions of experiencing misery (repentance), deliverance (faith), and thankfulness (obedience)? Do you know something of them in your life's experience?

The *fruits* of true conversion are *good works of love to God and others*.

The more inward-working graces of misery, deliverance, and thankfulness (repentance, faith, and obedience) produce the more outward-working fruits in a converted person's life - works of love to God and others. Conversion on earth is not perfect, due to the person's remaining sinful nature; yet, good works will and must evidence themselves in the lives of true believers. In certain cases of physical or mental inability, *expression* of the inward graces in outward actions is not possible (at least, not possible for us to properly interpret). This, however, is not a hindrance to God who knows and judges the hearts of all. God's normal manner of working, however, is that the inward-working marks reveal themselves in outward-working fruits, in good works of love toward God and others.

True conversions vary according to:

1. Experiential depth and emphasis
2. Emotional accompaniment
3. Outward impressiveness
4. Surrounding circumstances

1. *Personal conversions vary according to experiential depth and emphasis*. The thief on the cross received a deeper and clearer insight into Christ's work and kingdom in a few hours than the apostles did in the three years they walked with Jesus. He recognized that Jesus' kingship and kingdom were spiritual when he pleaded with the dying Jesus, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). The apostles were still looking for an earthly kingship and kingdom. Even after Christ's

Conversion also varies in emphasis and depth of misery, deliverance, and thankfulness. One person is led more clearly and deeply into misery, another in deliverance, and a third in thankfulness. While all truly converted persons experience something of all three, the emphasis and depth of each varies.

CHAPTER 5

FORGIVENESS

God is ready and waiting to forgive anyone who asks. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 86:5, "O Lord, you are so good and kind, so ready to forgive; so full of mercy for all who ask your aid."

On what did David rest his hope of forgiveness? *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 51:1, NIV. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions."

How is God's mercy measured? *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 103:11-12, NIV. "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us."

What promise is made to those who confess their sins? *It's in the Bible*, I John 1:9, TLB. "But if we confess our sins to Him, He can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong. [And it is perfectly proper for God to do this for us because Christ died to wash away our sins.]"

Can I be forgiven while holding a grudge against someone else? *It's in the Bible*, Matthew 6:14-15, TLB. "Your heavenly Father will forgive you if you forgive those who sin against you; but if you refuse to forgive them, He will not forgive you."

The forgiven are forgiving. *It's in the Bible*, Ephesians 4:32, NIV. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Real forgiveness does not keep track of mistakes. *It's in the Bible*, Matthew 18:21-22, NIV. "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'"

When we're forgiven we shouldn't continue to feel guilty. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 32:5, NIV. "Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'—and You forgave the guilt of my sin."

Through forgiveness, Christ provides complete deliverance from the penalty of sin. *It's in the Bible*, Colossians 2:13-14, TLB. "You were dead in sins, and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then He gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for He forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges proved against you, the list of His commandments, which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross."

If you are in need of forgiveness, what should you do?

First acknowledge your sin. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 51:2-4, TLB. "Oh, wash me, cleanse me from this guilt. Let me be pure again. For I admit my shameful deed—it haunts me day and night."

Second, Ask forgiveness for your sin. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 51:7-12, TLB. "Sprinkle me with the cleansing blood and I shall be clean again. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. And after You have punished me, give me back my joy again. Don't keep looking at my sins—erase them from Your sight. Create in me a new, clean heart, O God, filled with clean thoughts and right desires. Don't toss me aside, banished forever from Your presence. Don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me again the joy of Your salvation, and make me willing to obey You."

Third, Believe that God has indeed forgiven you and quit feeling guilty. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 32:1-6, TLB. "What happiness for those whose guilt has been forgiven! What joys when sins are covered over! What relief for those who have confessed their sins and God has cleared their record. There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. All day and all night Your hand was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, 'I will confess them to the Lord.' And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Now I say that each believer should confess his sins to God when he is aware of them, while there is time to be forgiven. Judgment will not touch him if he does. You are my hiding place from every storm of life; You even keep me from getting into trouble! You surround me with songs of victory."

CHAPTER 6

JUSTIFICATION

Justification consists of the following two parts:

1. *Forgiveness of all sin*; pardon from all guilt

- Romans 3:24

2. *Right to eternal life*; adoption as a child and heir of God

Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

- Romans 8:1a

God's law demands the penalty of death for all who transgress its commands, and the reward of eternal life for all who keep it perfectly. As Substitute and Covenant Head, Jesus Christ paid the death penalty for His people to fully pardon them from all guilt. He also perfectly kept God's law and earned for them a right to eternal life.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The perfect active and passive obedience of Christ being applied to a sinner results in his complete justification, as shown in the chart below.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs

with Christ: if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.

- Romans 8:15-17

CHRIST'S OBEDIENCE AND THE RESULTING BENEFITS OF JUSTIFICATION FOR HIS CHURCH		
Type of Christ's Obedience	Relation to God's Law	Resulting Justification Benefits
1. Passive obedience	Christ bore the full punishment of God's wrath against sin; He paid the full death <i>penalty</i> for His Church.	A full pardon from the penalty of sin - forgiveness of all sins; <i>deliverance from eternal death (hell)</i>
2. Active obedience	Christ lived a perfectly sinless life; He earned the reward of eternal life for His Church.	A right to eternal life; adoption as God's child and heir; <i>entrance into eternal life (heaven)</i>

In justification, God graciously grants to unworthy sinners everything they stand in need of; it closes hell, opens heaven, and restores communion with God (as adopted children). Is justification by God your deep need, desire, or experience?

Every saved person becomes a child of God in the following two-fold sense:

1. *Spiritual* sense -By spiritual birth; being born again by God's spirit in *regeneration*
2. *Legal* sense -By legal adoption; being adopted into God's family of saved children in *justification*

Becoming a child of God includes the person in all the legal rights of children. It makes him a rightful heir of God and entitles him to all the blessings of salvation, both in temporal and eternal life.

Both the spiritual and legal sense of sonship of a child of God occur at the same time. In the moment of regeneration, an exchange of states takes place. From God's side, each person's regeneration and justification takes place together. The born-again sinner is pardoned from all sin, and receives a legal title to eternal life as a child of God.

Who can properly define the exchange of states which takes place in regeneration and justification? The previously-described ragged, debt-ridden, guilty orphan boy becoming a respected, rich, free prince through the king's gracious pronouncement cannot

Only the Triune God can justify a sinner. Scripture ascribes various aspects of a sinner's justification to each of the three Divine Persons, as summarized in the following chart:

A TRIUNE GOD JUSTIFIES AN ELECT SINNER	
Divine Person and Work	Example Texts
<p>1. <i>God the Father</i> - Pronounces the divine sentence of justification according to His eternal, electing decree</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Moving Cause</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Initiator and Sentencer</i> <i>The Judge</i></p>	<p>Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Romans 8:33</p> <p>To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of reconciliation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- II Corinthians 5:19</p>
<p>1. <i>God the Son</i> - Earned a sinner's justification through perfectly satisfying God's justice; Christ also intercedes, on the basis of His merits, for the justification of all elect sinners</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Meriting Cause</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Mediator and</i> <i>Intercessor</i> <i>The Advocate</i></p>	<p>My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:</p> <p>And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- I John 2:1-2</p> <p>Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make</p>

	<p>intercession for them.</p> <p>- Hebrews 7:25</p>
<p>1. <i>God the Holy Spirit</i> - Applies and seals personal justification in the hearts of the elect</p> <p><i>The Applying Cause</i></p> <p><i>The Applier and Sealer</i></p> <p><i>The Comforter</i></p>	<p>And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.</p> <p>- I Corinthians 6: II</p> <p>Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.</p> <p>- Romans 15:13</p>

Scripture testifies of a five-fold justification. This distinction is important when examining the question, "When is a child of God justified?" The five steps of a believer's justification are listed in the chart below.

<p>THE FIVE-FOLD JUSTIFICATION OF GOD'S PEOPLE</p>		
<p><i>PRECEDES</i></p> <p><i>FAITH</i></p> <p><i>Collective</i> <i>Justification</i></p>	<p>1. <i>From Eternity</i> in the electing decree of God</p>	<p>Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.</p> <p>- II Timothy 1:9</p>
	<p>2. <i>In the Resurrection</i> of Christ</p>	<p>Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.</p> <p>- Romans 4:25</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>ACCOMPANIES</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>FAITH</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Personal Justification</i></p>	<p>3. In the <i>Moment of Regeneration</i></p>	<p>And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;</p> <p>Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Ephesians 2:1,5</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>FOLLOWS</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>FAITH</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Public Justification</i></p>	<p>4. In the <i>Tribunal of One's Conscience</i></p>	<p>But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.</p> <p>The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Romans 8: 15b-16</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>FOLLOWS</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>FAITH</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Public Justification</i></p>	<p>5. On the <i>Final Judgement Day</i></p>	<p>Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- II Timothy 4:8</p>

Justification from eternity refers to God's electing decree from the Council of Peace in which the Triune God agreed to elect and save His Church on the basis of Christ's merits. All the saved are included in this eternal decree.

What rich security and comfort is missed by those who deny the truth that God's justification is from eternity?

All true believers, God's entire Church, are also included in the *resurrection of Christ*, the Church's Victory Day. On Easter morning, God confirmed that Jesus had paid the full price for sin and earned a legal title to eternal life for all His elect. As Church and Covenant Head, all His people were included with Him.

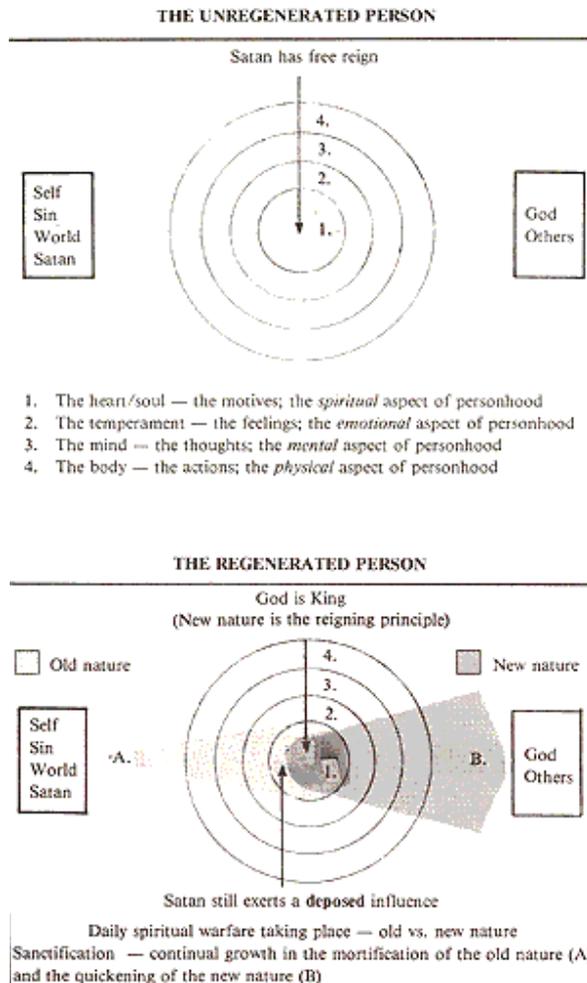
These first two steps of justification refer to the elect sinner's justification in the thoughts and works of God. They are collective and objective -they include all the elect, without their person knowledge. Each one of God's children is an elect soul in God's

CHAPTER 7

REGENERATION

The condition of unregenerated and regenerated persons is

pictured in the sketches below. Notice how both the unregenerated and : regenerated hearts both affect all other aspects of human personhood:



As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

- Romans 3:10-12

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man::

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

- Romans 7:22-25

Deposed - Removed from a reigning or kingly position

In regeneration, God delivers the elect from the dominion and ruling power of sin. He is no longer a slave to sin and Satan as he was formerly. Yet the remnants of sin remain alive in him, and he must battle against these continually.

In this spiritual struggle against sin, God's children painfully experience the deep, remaining sinful corruption in their hearts and their incapacibilities to overcome sin in their own strength. This experience directs them away from trusting in themselves - in their spiritual strength and holiness - to seeking refuge in Jesus Christ in whom infinite strength and perfect holiness are to be found.

Do you personally know something of this soul struggle in your life's experience?

The believer's help, strength, and stability -also in sanctification - are to be found only in Jesus Christ, in faith and communion with Him. Christ has earned His people's sanctification and to Him the sanctifying Holy Spirit has been given. We are totally dependent upon Christ: outwardly - upon His merits, and inwardly - upon His applying Spirit. If believers lose sight of Christ, their faith will waver and their growth in sanctification will be hindered.

When Jesus walked upon the water to reach His disciples in their boat, Peter also walked on the water to meet Jesus. But something happened which caused him to sink. Read this from: *Matthew 14:28-31*

God lovingly commands His people to be perfect, to live a perfectly holy and sinless life -"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). This is the divine standard, the target for which they are to aim. Sanctification's ultimate goal is to make believers Christ-like.

While the saved shall attain this goal in their future, eternal life in heaven, they will not reach it here on earth. Their new, God-given, spiritual nature is perfect -"We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not" (I John 5: 18a). But until their death, their old, fallen, sinful nature also remains alive. This hinders, pollutes, and at times overpowers the new principle within them, causing even their best works to be stained with sin. Therefore, the Apostle John writes, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). No biblical saint ever led a perfectly sinless life (think of Noah, Abraham, Job, David, Peter, etc.). For this reason, confession of sin, prayer for forgiveness, and careful watchfulness remain continual necessities in the Christian's life of sanctification.

While sanctification may drop to a very low ebb in the life of God's children, and God's Word may use very strong language to warn them against sin and to exhort them to overcome evil; nevertheless, no saved child of God will utterly fall from grace. While believers must remain on their guard against sin and Satan, and devotedly run to obtain the prize of their high calling, yet God will certainly give them upholding grace. All of God's people will persevere in grace.

GOOD WORKS

Sanctification - the mortification of the old nature and the quickening of the new - produces good works in the life of the believer. Good works are the fruits of sanctification.

Scripture defines a good work as one which includes the following three qualities:

THE THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SCRIPTURAL GOOD WORK
--

Characteristic	Example Texts
1. Its <i>source</i> (or root) is <i>saving faith</i>	But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. - Hebrews 11:6
2. Its <i>standard</i> (or rule) is <i>God's law</i>	For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous. - I John 5:3
3. Its <i>motive</i> (or goal) is <i>God's glory</i>	Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. - I Corinthians 10:31

Q. But what are good works?

A. Only those which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to His glory; and not such as are founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men.

CHAPTER 8

MAN AND IMAGE OF GOD

His creation by a special, personal act of God. When creating plants, we read, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass" (Genesis 1:1 1a). Of the creation of water animals and birds, Scripture states, "And God said, Let the waters bring forth" (Genesis 1:20a). When creating land animals, the Bible says, "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature" (Genesis 1:24a). Of the creation of man, however, Scripture uses the most personal, direct, and immediate language possible. "And God said, Let Us make man" (Genesis 1:26a); "So God created man... in the image of God created He him" (Genesis 1:27). God speaks of personally forming man's body from the ground, and of personally breathing man's life into him. "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Genesis 2:7a).

3. *His being created in the image of God.* "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness" (Genesis 1:26a); "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him" (Genesis 1:27a).

4. *His being created with a soul.* No other creature was created with a living soul, only man; "And man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7b).

5. *His being placed in **dominion** over the earthly creation.* "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

Image Of God

What is meant by the expression "the image of God"? What does it mean when we confess that "man was created in the image of God"? The word "image" in this sense refers to a reflection, resemblance, or likeness.

Ellen carefully studies her reflection in the mirror before leaving the house. She wants to see what she looks like. Would the reflection Ellen sees in the mirror reflect some of her characteristics? Would it reflect all? Would all of Ellen's joys, sorrows, feelings, thoughts, and desires be fully seen in this reflection?

John often looks at the painting of his **deceased** grandfather which hangs on the wall at the head of the stairway. This painting portrays such a clear resemblance of his grandfather to him, that John enjoys viewing it. However, would this painting reveal every aspect of his grandfather's character?

Mary's appearance, speech, and actions resemble her mother's to such an extent that people often say to her, "You are the 'picture' of your mother." Do you think Mary is a true "picture" of her mother in every sense?

These examples help us understand what is meant by the image of God. When God created man, He created him to reflect, to "mirror," some of His qualities on earth. Man bore a likeness to God, a resemblance of His righteous Being.

This image, reflection, resemblance, or likeness of God in man is centered in the following three qualities:

1. Knowledge
2. Righteousness
3. Holiness

Knowledge refers to man being created with a true knowledge of God, himself, others, and creation.

Righteousness speaks of man being created upright; in a right relationship with God; not guilty of breaking God's law; in a condition of total innocence; and living in complete love to God and others.

Holiness **signifies** man being created pure. In thoughts, words, and actions, he was entirely devoted to God and separated from evil. Man walked in total conformity to God's will.

This image of God - true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, was reflected by man in Paradise. Before the fall, man beautifully resembled his Creator. **Traits** of God's loving

knowledge, righteousness, and holiness could be seen in man. In Paradise, Adam walked with God as with a loving friend. With full devotion, he loved to serve his Creator, for his heart was one with God's. Without feeling fear or a need to hide, Adam enjoyed God's righteous and holy presence.

What an honor, what a glory, what a crown was placed upon man in his creation! In distinction from the rest of creation, man was chosen to reflect the image of God, his Creator!

This was a **resembling** image, not a *perfect* or **express** image. Man was not created to be divine. Adam was not God, nor did he possess the same infinite depth of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness as his infinite Creator. Only Jesus Christ was created in the express or perfect image of God. Only Jesus possessed infinite knowledge, righteousness and holiness. Adam's resembling image was perfect in type, but only Christ's was infinite in degree. The following example can help illustrate the difference between type and degree, and between resembling and express images.

Bearing the image of God, Adam reflected God's being. When viewing Adam, one would be reminded of God. Yet, the infinite depth of **virtues** revealed were only to be found in the actual personhood of God Himself

The beautiful state in which man was created and in which he lived in Paradise is described in the Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 6, in this manner:

"God created man good and after His own image, in true righteousness and holiness, that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him and live with Him in eternal happiness to glorify and praise Him."

In Paradise, man fulfilled the purpose for which he was created: to know, love, serve, glorify and enjoy God, his Maker. Therefore, man lived in perfect happiness and contentment.

The image of God can be spoken of in a narrower sense and a wider sense. When this is done, the image of God in its narrower (or restricted) sense refers to the image itself - to the reflection of God's knowledge, righteousness, and holiness in man, as previously described.

The image of God in its wider sense refers to man as God's image-bearer - to the characteristics and qualities God has given man which place him above the animal creation and set him apart as God's image-bearer.

The image of God in its wider sense includes man's being created with:

1. *Rationality* - the ability to reason; think **abstractly**; deal with deeper meanings; and use language.
2. *Spirituality* - a soul which **enables** man to spiritually worship and communicate with God, who is a Spirit.
3. **Immortality** - a never-dying soul, and after the resurrection, a never-dying body.
4. *Conscience* - a deep awareness of God and a moral sense of right and wrong.

5. **Erect** body posture - standing and walking erectly on two legs instead of lowered to four; eating with our heads erect instead of lowered to the ground.

Some add a sixth distinction to this list - dominion over God's earthly creation. However, we do not include it, for this is not a created difference, but was assigned to man after his creation. It is, however, an additional difference which places man above the animal creation.

Your dog may be lively, but it cannot worship nor communicate with God as man can - it does not have a soul. Your dog has a **consciousness** of certain behaviors being wrong because you have consistently punished him when he did them. But your dog does not have a consciousness of God, an inborn sense to live morally upright, or a sense of **accountability** to God, does he? Do you see, now, how only man was created with these characteristics?"

Why are these points of difference between man and animals especially important today when many promote the theory of evolution?

Some add a sixth distinction to this list - dominion over God's earthly creation. However, we do not include it, for this is not a created difference, but was assigned to man after his creation. It is, however, an additional difference which places man above the animal creation.

The Image Of God In Man

When man fell into sin in Paradise, he lost the actual image of God (in its narrower sense) entirely. All people are now born as fallen sinners. We no longer reflect God's image of true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. Instead, we are born knowing and loving ourselves instead of God; guilty instead of righteous; and sinful instead of holy.

Since everyone is now born as a fallen sinner, can this lost image be restored in a person? From man's side - no. Each of us naturally desires to serve self, sin, world, and Satan. We are at enmity with the true God; we desire to be our own god. But, from God's side, the answer is - yes. Salvation is possible even for the chief of sinners. Through the Father's electing grace, the Son's meriting salvation, and the Holy Spirit's planting of new spiritual life in the sinner's heart, the lost image of God can be restored in man.

Is this your desire? We all need the Holy Spirit, not only to plant God's image in us by regeneration, but also to increase the reflecting of His image in our daily lives of sanctification. Then others will increasingly see a reflection of God's image in us. Are you a regenerated child of God? Are you increasingly reflecting the image of your Creator?

When Adam fell, the image-bearing characteristics (the image in its wider sense) were severely damaged - but not lost entirely. After the fall man's rationality, spirituality, immortality, conscience, and erect body posture are still retained, but not in their previously glorious state. We are still rational, but now are so often mistaken in our reasoning; we have a soul, but by nature, it now misses true communion with its Creator; we remain immortal, but eternity will be a state of eternal death for many; we have retained our conscience, but it so often misleads

through improper training; we have kept our bodily characteristics, but our bodies now suffer from weaknesses, diseases, infirmities, aging, and death.

In our terrible fall in Paradise, we lost the restricted sense of the image of God entirely; but we yet retain, in a damaged state, its wider sense.

CHAPTER 9

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Birth of Jesus

About 2000 years ago God sent an angel to Israel, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to Joseph, a carpenter. The angel told Mary that by God's power, she would conceive and bear a son.

When Joseph learned that she was pregnant, an angel instructed him to marry her. Joseph took her to Bethlehem to register for a census. While there, Mary gave birth to Jesus. She laid him in a manger because there was no room at the inn. Shepherds visited Jesus in Bethlehem.

Later, wise men brought gifts to Jesus. They told Herod the Great, a wicked king, that Jesus would rule Israel. So Herod sent soldiers to kill the children in Bethlehem. Warned by an angel, Joseph took his family to Egypt. After Herod died, they returned to Israel and raised Jesus in a town called Nazareth.

Friends of Jesus

Jesus had many friends, including John the Baptist and the 12 disciples.

John the Baptist

John lived in the wilderness near the Jordan River. Many people came to hear John preach about repentance and the coming of Christ. John baptized people in the river for the forgiveness of sins.

Although Jesus never sinned, he was baptized by John. When Jesus came up from the water, the Holy Spirit descended, and God spoke from heaven, saying "This is my beloved son."

John the Baptist rebuked Herod Antipas for his evil deeds, and for marrying his brother's wife. Herod imprisoned John for this, and later had him executed.

12 Disciples

The disciples were men Jesus selected as companions. They had different backgrounds. Jesus chose fishermen, a tax collector, a twin, and others. They travelled with Jesus as he preached. After Jesus died, they taught others about him.

The apostles names were: Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus, Simon, and Judas Iscariot

Teachings of Jesus

Jesus taught people how to live godly lives. As he traveled around Israel, Jesus taught with sermons and parables.

Sermon on the Mount

Jesus delivered his most famous sermon on a mountain. In it, Jesus taught his listeners to:

- Love your enemies.
- Do not judge others.
- Trust God.
- Don't be anxious about tomorrow.
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you (The "golden rule").

Parables

Jesus often taught with parables. A parable is a short story with a spiritual meaning.

Jesus told a parable about two builders. One was wise, and built his house upon a rock. The other was foolish, and built his house on sand. When a storm came, the wise man's house stood, but the foolish man's house fell. Whoever obeys Jesus is like the wise man. Whoever disobeys his words is like the foolish man.

Jesus taught with many parables. Some were easy to understand, and some were difficult. Matthew chapter 13 has several parables of Jesus.

Miracles of Jesus

Jesus did many miracles to show others that he was God's son. God gave Jesus power over nature, power over disease, and even power over death!

Power Over Nature

Jesus and his disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee in a small boat one evening. While Jesus was sleeping, a fierce storm came, and began to sink the boat. The disciples woke him.

Jesus arose and rebuked the storm saying, "Peace be still." It became calm, and Jesus said to them "Where is your faith?"

The disciples were afraid, saying "Who is this, that even the wind and sea obey him?" (Mark 4:35-41)

Power over Disease

One day a crowd was following Jesus on a road near Jericho. Hearing the crowd, a blind beggar asked what was happening. They told him Jesus was passing by. The blind man cried out "Jesus, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped, and asked what he wanted. "Lord, I want to regain my sight," he replied. Jesus said, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." Immediately the man could see, and the crowd began glorifying God. (Mark 10:46-52)

Power over Death

Jesus had a friend named Lazarus, who lived in Bethany with his sisters, Mary and Martha. When Jesus learned that Lazarus died, he came to Bethany.

Now Lazarus had been dead for 4 days, and a boulder covered the cave where his body was. Jesus asked them to remove the stone. He then shouted "Lazarus, come forth!" And Lazarus

came out, restored to life!

After seeing this, many witnesses believed that Jesus was the son of God. (John 11:1-45)

Trials of Jesus

Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. They accused him of blasphemy, and had Jesus arrested.

A Roman governor named Pilate tried Jesus. He wanted to release Jesus. But when the Jews threatened to riot, Pilate condemned Jesus to death on a cross.

Death

Jesus was sentenced to death by crucifixion. He was beaten by Roman soldiers, scourged, stripped, and nailed to a cross. He was crucified between two robbers, and died.

Burial

His body was placed in the new tomb of a rich man named Joseph of Arimathea. Jesus had promised the disciples he would come back after he died. His enemies knew this. So, to prevent anyone from stealing the body, they had soldiers guard the tomb of Jesus.

Resurrection

On the third day after Jesus died, an angel descended, and the soldiers fled. The disciples came and found an empty tomb. Jesus had risen from the dead!

He later appeared to many believers, commanding them to teach and baptize others

The Mediator was named "Jesus" because He would "save His people from their sins." Jesus is a complete Savior - He saves His people. As "Jesus," the Mediator not only earned salvation for, but He also applies salvation to, the hearts of His children.

If Jesus had only earned the right and offered salvation to His church, each person would have rejected it. As totally-depraved sinners, they would have freely chosen, with all men, for self, sin, world, and Satan. They, too, would have chosen to continue serving self instead of turning to God.

But blessed be God! Jesus is a complete Savior. He not only merits, but also applies, salvation. Through His Spirit, He plants new spiritual life in the hearts of His children and makes them willing to turn to God in a way of repentance, faith, and obedience. The Savior is named "Jesus" because "He shall save His people from their sins!" What a richly gracious Savior is Jesus! Is He your Savior? If so, then He also is your Lord. Your deepest desire will be to know, love, and serve Him increasingly. Is this your heart's desire? He must become your Savior, shall it be well with you.

New Testament, Greek name "Christ" is identical to the Old Testament, Hebrew name "Messiah." "Christ" means "The **Anointed One**." "Christ" is the Mediator's official name. In the Old Testament, persons were anointed for serving in one of three offices - that of prophet, priest, or king.

Examples Of Old Testament Anointings For A:

a. Prophet	And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. - I Kings 19:16b
b. Priest	<i>And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office.</i> - Exodus 40:13
c. King	And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. - II Kings 9:6

In Scripture, oil is a type of the Holy Spirit. A person being anointed with oil pictured the following two truths:

1. Being ordained by God (appointed, chosen and placed) into an office
2. Being qualified by God (given the necessary abilities) for the office

Christ was ordained by God from eternity to serve as prophet, priest, and king for His church. He was qualified by God in time for His work.

Christ's qualifying was necessary for His human nature only. No qualifying work was necessary for His divine nature, for it is infinitely perfect in itself. The Holy Spirit qualified the human nature of Christ by giving Him unlimited gifts of wisdom, power, and holiness. These gifts revealed themselves in Christ's teachings, miracles, and sinlessness, as shown in the following chart:

Christ's Human Nature Qualified For His Work		
Gift	Revealed	Example Text
a. Wisdom	Christ's teachings	For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. - Matthew 7:29
b. Power	Christ's miracles	And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.

		- Luke 24:19
c. Holiness	Christ's sinlessness	For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. - Hebrews 7:26

The Triune God was involved in the anointing of Christ in the following ways:

1. God the Father - The Anointer
2. God the Son - The Anointed
3. God the Holy Spirit - The Anointing

Christians also bear the name of Christ. They also become a partaker of Christ's anointing as prophet, priest, and king. How does Question and Answer 32 of the Heidelberg Catechism describe the Christian's involvement in Christ's anointing?

Is Jesus your Lord and Master? If so, then your deepest desire is to wait upon Him with anticipation. Are you looking and listening for Him in your life? Is the fact of your poor servanthood a burden to you?

Jesus Christ is the one and only Mediator between a holy God and sinful people. He is God and man in one sinless Person. He bears numerous precious names.

Is He your Mediator and Savior? Do you love His names Jesus, Christ, Son of man, and Son of God? Do you honor and serve Him as your Lord?

All of Scripture points to this Mediator - Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is full of prophecy and the New Testament, of fulfillment regarding Him. The chart on the following page provides some examples of this truth.

Jesus Christ is the central theme of the Scriptures; is He the center of your life?

Center Of Scripture		
Old Testament Promises	Events in the Life of JESUS CHRIST	New Testament Fulfillments
And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it	Born as a human	But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth

<p>shall bruise th; head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Genesis 3:15</p>	<p>being</p>	<p>His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Galatians 4:4</p>
<p>But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Micah 5:2a</p>	<p>Born in Bethlehem</p>	<p>Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 2:1</p>
<p>Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 7:14b</p>	<p>Born of a virgin</p>	<p>Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 1:18</p>
<p>He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 53:3</p>	<p>Despised by the Jews</p>	<p>He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- John 1:11</p>
<p>Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Zechariah 9:9</p>	<p>Triumphant entry into Jerusalem</p>	<p>Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him' and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- John 12:13-14</p>
<p>And I said unto them, If ye think good, give Me My price: and if not, forbear. So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Zechariah 11:12</p>	<p>Sold for thirty pieces of silver</p>	<p>And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you? And they coverinted with him for thirty pieces of silver.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 26:15</p>

<p>He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 53:7</p>	<p>Silent during His trial</p>	<p>And the high priest arose, and said unto Him, Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which these witness against Thee?</p> <p>But Jesus held His peace.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 26:62-63a</p>
<p>I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 50:6</p>	<p>Hit and spit upon</p>	<p>And some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him, and to say unto Him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Mark 14:65</p>
<p>They pierced My hands and My feet.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 22:16b</p>	<p>His hands and feet pierced</p>	<p>Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- John 20:27</p>
<p>And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Zechariah 12:10a</p>	<p>His side pierced</p>	<p>But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- John 19:34</p>
<p>They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 22:18</p>	<p>Lots cast for His garments</p>	<p>And when they had crucified Him, they parted His garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Mark 15:24</p>
<p>He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 34:20</p>	<p>No bone broken</p>	<p>But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs.</p>

		- John 19:33
<p>And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Isaiah 53:9a</p>	Buried with the rich	<p>And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 27:59-60</p>
<p>For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 16:10</p>	Arose from the dead	<p>He is not here: for He is risen, as He said, Come, see the place where the Lord lay.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Matthew 28:6</p>
<p>Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Psalm 68:18a</p>	Ascended into heaven	<p>And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Luke 24:51</p>

CHAPTER 10

DAILY DISCIPLINE OF DEVOTION WITH GOD

- **Rejoice** (one minute) - praise God for what He has done, is doing, and is getting ready to do in world revival.
- **Review** (five minutes) - read books, magazines, other literature and most of all the scriptures to learn all you can about the nature of revival, its impact on missions and its current manifestation around the world. What is discovered during these five minutes helps create more meaning for what you do with the other ten minutes.
- **Repent** (one minute) - take time each day to confess to God on your behalf, and on behalf of the whole church, the specific ways in which we are hindering world revival.
- **Resist** (one minute) - target in prayer those points where Satan is attempting to undermine the life and the mission of the church, so as to diminish the potential for local and world revival.

- **Request** (five minutes) - drawing from the vast reservoir of Biblical promises, intercede for full revival in the church - both your own and in other nations.
- **Recommit** (one minute) - reflect on all that you have learned from the Lord and all that you have said to Him, and commit yourself back to Him to be used in answer to your prayers, whatever the cost. Also, recommit to set the pace for others to pray with you in the same direction.
- **Record** (one minute) - keep a journal to record whatever you sense God has said to you as a result of the previous fourteen minutes. What new understandings has He given you of revival? What new directions has He given for prayer? What new steps of obedience has He called you to take as a result of praying? How has He encouraged you to set the pace for others? Over a period of time, this journal will provide a tremendous encouragement, not only about your praying, but about how God is working in response to your prayers.

And consider this: If an individual Christian would commit to this fifteen minutes daily discipline for a year, he would add 90 hours of revival praying to his life.

CHAPTER 11

NURTURING THE NEW BELIEVER

Communication is vital to any relationship, as is quality time.

1. New believers need a **vital relationship with God**. It will enable them to stand firm and take action (Daniel 11:32). Knowing Jesus Christ can become the most exciting relationship a new believer has.

(a) They need the **security of assurance of salvation** (I John 5:11-13) and that they have been completely forgiven and accepted by God.

(b) They need to **know God by studying the Bible** (the vehicle through which God communicates with us). Our goal is to teach them to become self feeders, discovering God's plans and provisions in the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). This will make them dependent on God, not us.

(c) They need to **communicate with God through prayer** - sharing their thoughts, needs and desires to do His will (Philippians 4:6,7).

(d) They need to know **how to maintain their fellowship with God** by dealing with sin (I John 1:9) and appropriating the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18; I John 5:14,15).

2. New believers need **relationships with other Christians** (Hebrews 10:25). Teach them these truths as you develop a warm, encouraging relationship with them. You will model for them how they can give and receive with other Christians.

(a) Provide **opportunities for study, worship, prayer and sharing**.

(b) Underline the importance of attending a local Christ-honouring, Bible-teaching **church**.

(c) Introduce them to other Christians and **encourage them to form friendships**.

3. New believers need **relationships with pre-Christians**: family, friends, neighbours and co-workers.

(a) They should be encouraged to **maintain most current friendships**, but on neutral ground and in uncompromising situations.

(b) Have them **write out their personal testimony**. Underline potential 'points of identification' which they could use as transitions when sharing their faith with these pre-Christians.

(c) Train them how to **use a simple tool to communicate the Gospel**.

Nurturing new believers is a rewarding first step to launching them on their lifelong process of becoming spiritually mature.

What does God want you to do with this information? Do you know how you would like to use this in your area of interest and influence? Pray that God will enable you to fulfil your plan of action.

CHAPTER 12

Bible Promises

God always keeps his promises. *It's in the Bible*, II Corinthians 1:19-20, TLB. "[Jesus Christ] isn't one to say 'yes' when He means 'no.' He always does exactly what He says. He carries out and fulfills all of God's promises, no matter how many of them there are; and we have told everyone how faithful He is, giving glory to His name."

God never takes back or changes His promises. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 89:34, TLB. "No, I will not break my covenant; I will not take back one word of what I said."

None of God's promises ever fail. *It's in the Bible*, Joshua 23:14, NIV. "You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed."

We have been promised eternal life. *It's in the Bible*, I John 2:25, NIV. "And this is what he promised us—even eternal life."

God can do the impossible. *It's in the Bible*, Luke 18:27, NIV. "Jesus replied, 'What is impossible with men is possible with God.'"

We have been promised new hearts and desires. *It's in the Bible*, Ezekiel 36:26, TLB. "And I will give you a new heart—I will give you new and right desires—and put a new spirit within you. I will take out your stony hearts of sin and give you new hearts of love."

He has promised forgiveness. *It's in the Bible*, I John 1:9, NIV. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

He has promised the fruit of the Spirit. *It's in the Bible*, Galatians 5:22-23, NIV. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

He has promised deliverance from fear. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 34:4, NIV. "I sought the Lord, and He answered me; He delivered me from all my fears."

God has promised salvation for our children. *It's in the Bible*, Isaiah 49:25, NIV. "I will contend with those who contend with you, and your children I will save."

We are promised the Holy Spirit. *It's in the Bible*, Luke 11:13, NIV. "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

All of our needs will be supplied. *It's in the Bible*, Philippians 4:19, NIV. "And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

No good thing will be withheld. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 84:11, TLB. "For Jehovah God is our Light and our Protector. He gives us grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk along his paths."

He has promised wisdom. *It's in the Bible*, James 1:5, NIV. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

God has promised peace. *It's in the Bible*, Isaiah 26:3, NIV. "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You."

God has promised escape from temptation. *It's in the Bible*, I Corinthians 10:13, NIV. "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

We have the promise of health and healing. *It's in the Bible*, Jeremiah 30:17, NIV. "But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds."

God has promised protection from harm and danger. *It's in the Bible*, Psalm 91:10, NIV. "Then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent."

The Bible promises that the dead will live again. *It's in the Bible*, John 5:28-29, NIV. "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."

Jesus has promised that he will come again. *It's in the Bible*, John 14:2-3, TLB. "There are many homes up there where my Father lives, and am going to prepare them for your coming. When everything is ready, then I will come and get you, so that you can always be with Me where I am."

He has promised an end to death, sorrow, and pain. *It's in the Bible*, Revelation 21:4, NIV. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."