

A People of the Book
A Topical Study

A Study of

Christian Fundamentals II

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Christian Fundamentals

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- Lesson 2 Our Problem of Sin
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Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 1

Trusting God's Authority

As Christians and children in God's kingdom, we willingly submit ourselves to His authority when we make Jesus the Lord of our lives. We trust God and have faith in His will for how we are to live and work as apart of the church, which is the body of Christ.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

The Bible declares itself to be the full and final revelation of God's will. The world says the Bible is, at best, a good book to help mankind live a good life. At worst, the world says the Bible is a fairy tale written by men and there is no God. As Christians, we trust God and strive to be obedient to His will and authority.

Jude 3 - Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was *once for all* entrusted to the saints.

Brief overview of the Bible

Divided into Old Testament and New Testament

66 Separate books written in 3 languages by 40+ authors over almost 2000 years

Written primarily in three languages: Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic

There are many popular English translations, some better than others

Absolutely accurate in history and science

While we could spend much time proving the Bible to be correct, here are a few examples:

- Obadiah 1:18 - Prophesied that descendants of Esau (Edom) would have no survivors but descendants of Jacob would endure
- Psalm 8:8 – The paths of the sea; sea currents discovered and mapped after Civil War
- Genesis 6:15 – The dimensions of the ark is the perfect ratio of size for shipbuilding: 30:5:3

The Bible was inspired by God

All scripture is God breathed – 2 Tim 3:16, 17

We have been given *EVERYTHING* we need for life and godliness – 2 Peter 1:3, 4

The Bible was not given to us by men – 2 Peter 1:20-21

We can test God's perfect will - Romans 12:2

Written so that we may believe - John 20:30-31

Patterns of God

To reproduce anything exactly requires a pattern

- Exodus 25:9 – God was very specific about how the tabernacle and its furnishings were to be made
- Genesis 6:15-16 – God was very specific about the ark He commanded Noah to build
- Philippians 3:17 – Paul wanted Christians to follow the pattern he gave them
- 2 Timothy 1:3 – The pattern is sound teaching
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15 – Stand firm in what was taught by Paul by preaching or by his letters
- Rom 6:17-18 – We are set free from sin when we obey the pattern of teaching in the Bible

As Christians, we should seek everyday to be obedient to the will of God as found in the Bible and do the things Christians did in the early Church

The Authority of Jesus

Jesus has *ALL* authority in heaven and on earth

- Matthew 9:6 – He has authority to forgive us of our sins
- Matthew 28:18-20 – *ALL* authority has given to Him
- John 5:27 & John 17:2 – God gave authority to Jesus
- Colossians 2:9, 10 – Christ is the head over all authority

Conclusion

The Bible is completely trustworthy and accurate and reveals God's will and pattern for us to live by

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 2

Our Problem of Sin

We are often asked as Christians “What denomination are you? What church do you go to?” Is one group as good as another in the eyes of God? As Christians we are often unprepared to answer these questions or we are uncomfortable in doing so. We struggle because we do not want to judge others and we all have family and friends that attend denominational churches and hold many beliefs to be true based on their understanding of tradition or scriptures. We frame answers to questions about salvation in terms of “doing the right things” rather than in the context of understanding sin and how Jesus removes those sins. We also struggle with those questions because we often do not fully understand sin and how it separates us from the perfect nature of God.

Acts 2:47 – ...And the *LORD* added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Salvation

What is salvation and why do we seek it? Is there really a need to be saved? Is it not enough to simply believe in God?

God wants a holy people, a people without spot or blemish and for this to become real in our lives we have to have the proper attitude toward sin and the things in life that separates us from God.

1 Peter 1:8-9 - 8Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Understanding Sin

What separates us from God? The sins we commit are not thought to be that serious. In fact, we often think that the little wrongs we do could never be seen as sin. Therefore, we only make mistakes, have a shortcoming, made a bad decision, or it's “just the way we are”. When we sin, we literally “miss the mark”, as when an archer misses the center of the target. Therefore sin is some kind of action (or the lack of action) in which we fail to meet the goal that God intended in our life.

· Romans.3:10-18 & 3:23 – We are *ALL* sinners and fall short of the glory of God.

Sin is the failure to meet a certain standard, to miss the mark. Failure to understand the true nature of sin is why there we have so much apathy toward sin. We fail to see that every time we “miss the mark” we hurt our relationship with God, others and ourselves. Sin is choosing to go one's own way in life, doing our own thing instead of doing what God says.

Sin is living like one wants instead of living like God says.

Sin is disobeying God, not doing what God says to do and doing what God says not to do.

Sin is disbelieving God instead of believing what God says.

Sin is ignoring God and neglecting God instead of following and worshipping Him as He says.

Sin is rebelling against God instead of doing what God says.

God is perfect and pure. Therefore, we cannot come into His presence with sin. If God lets anything less than perfect into heaven, then heaven would no longer be perfect. Therefore, God can never accept anything other than perfection. Sin causes to come short of God's glory and of God's perfect nature. We often do not fully understand sin and how it separates from the perfect nature of God. We often test God in how far we can go in our sin and fooling ourselves in our own self-righteousness.

· Galatians 6:7, 8 – God *CANNOT* be mocked. We reap what we sow.

· Genesis 4:6, 7 – Sin *MUST* be mastered in our lives.

· Romans 7:15-24 – Sin is constantly at war within us.

· Isaiah 64:6 – Sin sweeps us away.

Sin is always waiting to have us. Life is a constant struggle to master our minds and bodies against sin. We can *CHOOSE* to not sin but what can be done with sin we already have?

Romans 7:24-25 - 24What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Jesus Came To Do Away With Sin

Jesus lived a sinless life, a life of absolute perfection without sin and can therefore be the perfect sacrifice needed to remove our sins. When we are *in* Jesus, are obedient to Him and accept Him as Lord in our lives, God counts the sacrifice that Jesus made in His death for us. God then no longer sees our sins but sees us through Jesus, for Jesus took our sins and died for them. They are thereby removed from us, and we are counted free of sin. They are gone forever because Jesus took them upon Himself and died for them. Consequently, being free of sin, we become acceptable to God.

- John 1:29 – Jesus is the Lamb of God sent to take away our sin.
- Romans 3:24-26 – We are redeemed, bought back from sin, by the blood of Christ.
- Romans 5:8-10 – God loves us and saves us through the blood of His son.
- Romans 7:25 – Through Jesus, we choose to be slaves to God’s laws.
- Romans 8:1-4 – In Christ, there is no condemnation from sin.
- Ephesians 1:7 – Because of God’s grace, we are forgiven of our sins.
- Colossians 1:19-20 – God removes the separation of sin because of the cross of Jesus.
- 1 Peter 1:18-19 – Only the shed blood of the Lamb of God removes our sin.
- Hebrews 8:10-12 & 10:16-22 – God **FORGETS** our sins, so we can draw near Him with **FULL** assurance. How wonderful is the grace of God!

We tend to be obedient in the early stages of our walk with God because we see the need to have our sins removed and we want to please Him. After we are washed clean by the blood of Christ, we tend to rely on our own understanding and strengths to fight sin, rather than constantly rely on the blood of Christ. Then we become lukewarm and ineffective, never reaching maturity.

Since we are human, we will continue to struggle with sin. We may often wonder if we are still saved when we sin. As Christians we **ALWAYS** have access to the blood of Christ if we are willing to humble ourselves before God.

1 John 1:5-10 - 5This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

Conclusion

Sin is a constant battle in our lives. It separates us from God. But He provided the payment of our debt of sin through the shed blood of Jesus. We must take **ALL** sin seriously and understand that we must master it in our lives. As Christians we are forgiven of sin and can be continually forgiven.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 3

Grace & Mercy

Hebrews 4:14-16 - 14Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. 16*Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.* NIV

16Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. NKJV

Grace & Mercy

The main thought in this passage is that we should come confidently and boldly to the throne of grace. But what does that mean? And why should we seek to do this?

Simple Definitions

Grace – The unearned and undeserved favor of God. When we get what we *don't* deserve.

Ephesians 2:4-9 - 4But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Mercy – The undeserved forgiveness and compassion of God. When we *don't* get what we deserve. Titus 3:3-7 - 3At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Our Salvation is by Grace through Faith

We are dead in trespasses and sins - Ephesians 2:1

We walking with the world and the devil - Ephesians 2:2

We fulfill the desires of our flesh and mind - Ephesians 2:3

Before we became Christians, we were truly "sons of disobedience" and "children of wrath"!

So the question of our lives is this:

How can we as 'sons of disobedience' and 'children of wrath' ever become...

- holy and without blame?
- receive the adoption as God's children?
- accepted and seen as righteous by God?

God's Great Love toward Us

God's love toward us is the beginning point of salvation, not because of who we are or what we do, but is because of who **God** is. Everything flows from God's great love. God did not love us because we were lovable, but because God is loving!

The grace and mercy that God shows us is founded on the fact that God has a great love for us - John 3:16

Jesus plainly shows the grace and mercy of God's love in the story of the prodigal son – Luke 15:20:24

We should also love one another because God's love moved Him to offer His Son - 1 John 4:7-10

We must heed the warning of the unmerciful servant - Matthew 18:23-35

The Rich Mercy of God

The word "mercy" comes from the word "eleos" and is defined by Vine's Expository Dictionary as "the outward manifestation of pity". Mercy, then, is compassion that one has for those in trouble. God's great love makes Him rich in mercy. His great love for us as sinners enables God to be filled with compassion toward us. The riches of His mercy seek to reach out to all who will accept it.

- God is rich in mercy - Ephesians 2:4
- God wants **ALL** men to be saved - 1 Timothy 2:3-4
- God wants **EVERYONE** to come to repentance - 2 Peter 3:9
- God's saves us according to His mercy – Titus 3:5

The Wonderful Grace of God

While we were dead in our sins, God makes us alive through and together with Christ because of His unmerited favor, His grace. His grace is based on faith and not by our works. Salvation is first and foremost by the grace of God. It was God's mercy, love, and grace which made salvation possible.

- God makes us alive and raises us up – Ephesians 2:5, 6
- There is nothing compared with God's grace and mercy – Ephesians 2:7
- Truly, salvation is not from us, it is the gift of God – Ephesians 2:8
- We **cannot** earn God's grace since we are **HIS** workmanship – Ephesians 2:9, 10

Conclusion

So it is by grace through faith that children of wrath can become children of God! We can be accepted by God because of God's great love, God's great mercy, and God's wonderful grace. He makes us alive together with Christ and raises us up together with Christ to sit with Him in the heavenly realms.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 4 Obedient & Trusting Faith

As Christians and children in God’s kingdom, in faith we willingly submit ourselves to His authority when we make Jesus the Lord of our lives. We trust God and have faith in His will for how we are to live and work as apart of the church, which is the body of Christ.

Colossians 1:2-6 - 2To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father. 3We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, 4because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— 5the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel 6that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.

Has your faith ever been so strong, so evident and so effective that other people have heard about it? More to the point, is your faith something people would WANT to hear about? In the opening verses of the book of Colossians, Paul says that he gave thanks for the "faithful brethren" in Colosse whose faith and love he had heard of. Their faith was well known. Their faith and love was of the type and quality that someone was telling somebody about it. Is our faith something that is being heard about? It's not that we should be seeking recognition or attention, but we often question what faith is and wonder if our faith is of such a quality, of such a depth or of such a consistency that lives around us are being changed to the glory of God.

What is Faith?

If anyone were to ask about your faith, what kind of answers would you give? If someone were listening to others about your faith in the Lord, would it please you or embarrass you? We often wonder where our faith comes from, sometimes attributing faith to experiences or a prodding from God. Scripture very clearly says faith comes hearing the word of God.

- Romans 10:17 – 17So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. NKJV
- Hebrews 11:1 – 1Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ESV

Faith is not sight, but the absolute conviction of it should be evident in our lives. Salvation comes through faith. There is no other way.

- Hebrews 11:6 – 6And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. NASB
- Romans 1:16, 17 – 16For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” NKJV
- Ephesians 2:8-10 – 8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9not by works, so that no one can boast.” NIV

There is Only One Faith

If any faith was good enough, how would we know which faith to continue in?

- Ephesians 4:4-13 - Leaders were given to help root the flock in the faith, to understand alike and be united in one faith, a body of truth that is taught and produces faith in Jesus.
- Acts 6:7 – The faith can be obeyed
- Acts 14:21, 22 – The faith can be continued in
- Galatians 1:23 – The faith is what was preached
- Galatians 1:6-9 – What Paul taught he referred to as “the faith”

If any faith was good enough – how would we know what to strive for?

- Philippians 1:27 – Christians are encouraged to strive for “the faith of the gospel”
- Jude 3 – Christians commanded to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered
- 1 Tim.4:1 – Christians can abandon the faith

Our Faith in God

Our faith overcomes the trials and difficulties of the world

- John 16:33 – Jesus has overcome the world
- 1 Corinthians 10:13 – Provides a way of escape
- 2 Peter 2:9 – Our Lord knows how to deliver the godly

Our faith overcomes all the forces of evil

- Romans 8:35, 37-39 – We are more than conquerors
- Isaiah 41:10 – Do not be afraid
- Galatians 6:10-18 – Do we wear the armor of God?

Our faith gives victory over sin and Satan

- Romans 6:1-7 – We are no longer slaves to sin
- Romans 6:11-14 – We are no longer under law
- Colossians 2:15 – Satan is disarmed

Our faith gives victory over death

- John 5:24 – We have passed from death into life
- Hebrews 2:14-15 – We are delivered from fear of death

Our faith gives victory over judgment

- John 3:16-18 – Jesus came to save, not condemn
- Romans 8:1 – There is no condemnation for those in Christ
- Romans 5:8-10 – Christ died for us while we were yet sinners

Our faith gives victory over fear and despair

- John 14:27 – We should not let our hearts be troubled
- 2 Timothy 1:7 – Our Lord not given us a spirit of fear

Our faith leads us to action

- James 2:14-20

Our Heavenly “COW”

Hebrews 11 is a great chapter of the Bible because it speaks of the obedient faith that so many people had when they obeyed and trusted God. After describing the great works of faith of so many people, the writer of Hebrews encourages us by their examples of trusting God’s commands.

Hebrews 12:1-3 - 1Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great *cloud of witnesses*, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Conclusion

Our faith in God should bring us to trusting and obeying His commands in His word so that we do not rely on our own will and strength. He saves and sustains us because we willingly submit ourselves to Him. We obey and trust our heavenly Father in faith.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 5

God’s Plan of Salvation – Abraham & the Promise

Genesis 3:15 - And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

When Adam and Eve sinned, God promised that the Seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent, who was Satan. In Abraham, God begins to show His plan of salvation for man in a powerful way. In Christ, we are all part of the promises of God revealed to Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-4 - 1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. 2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” 4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. NKJV

Abraham’s trusting and obedient faith was credited to him as righteousness.

Genesis 15:6 - And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. NKJV

Let’s examine the promises of God to Abraham and how we as Christians are blessed because of the trusting obedience and faith of Abraham.

The Promises of God to Abraham

- The land promise - Gen 12:1, 7, 8; 13:14-17; 15:1-20; 17:1-8; 26:3
- The nation promise - Gen 12:2; 13:16; 17:6; 18:18; 26:4
- The seed (spiritual) promise - Gen 12:3; 22:1-18; 26:4
- The fulfillment of these promises to Abraham is the theme of the Bible, God’s plan of redemption for mankind through Jesus Christ.

The Land Promise Fulfilled

- Joshua 21:43-45 – All of it came to pass
- 1 Kings 8:56 – Not one word of God’s promises has failed

The Nation Promise Fulfilled

The physical nation

- Genesis 46:26-27 – 26 Israel goes to Egypt
- Exodus 1:7 – Israel filled the land of Egypt
- Exodus 12:40, 41 – 430 years in Egypt

The spiritual nation

- Exodus 19:6 – Israel is a kingdom of priests
- 1 Peter 2:4, 5 – In Christ, we are priests in the kingdom of God
- Galatians 3:6-9 – By faith, Christians are sons of Abraham

The Seed (Spiritual) Promise Fulfilled

- Galatians 3:13-18 – In Christ, we receive the full blessings of the promise given to Abraham
- Galatians 3:26-29 - Christians are Abraham’s seed and heirs of the Promise
- Romans 4:13-17 – Abraham is our father by faith

Abraham’s Faith is an Example to Us Who Believe & Obey

- Galatians 3:6 - Abraham's faith was accounted to him for righteousness
- Galatians 3:7 - Those who are of faith are sons of Abraham
- Galatians 3:8 - As foretold by Scripture, God would justify the nations by faith
- Galatians 3:9 - Those of faith are blessed along with believing Abraham
- Galatians 3:13 - Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, by His death on the cross

- Galatians 3:14 – This made it possible for Gentiles to receive the blessing of Abraham in Christ, in particular the promise of the Spirit which is received through faith
- Romans 4:1-3 – Abraham believed God and was credited for righteousness
- Acts 7:1-7 – Stephen defended the righteous acts of Abraham
- Hebrews 11:8-12 – Abraham acted in faith
- Hebrews 11:17-19 – Abraham trusted God
- Hebrews 12:1-2 – Abraham is part of our cloud of witnesses

Conclusion

We have seen that the faith of Abraham was based upon revelation from God. Abraham's faith was an obedient, trusting faith. We in Christ are then heirs of Abraham, heirs of the promise made regarding his seed. Those whom Christ has redeemed, are recipients of the promise of the Spirit. Those who have the faith Of Abraham are truly the recipients of the promise made to Abraham.

"In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed Me."

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 5

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"In your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed Me."

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 6

God's Plan of Salvation – Types & Shadows in the Law

Colossians 2:16, 17 - 16Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

When we look closely at the Law of Moses and the pattern of worship that God gave to Moses, we see very quickly the symbolism of how we are to worship God in the new covenant of the body of Christ. In other words, the Law of Moses was a *type and shadow* of the church that brought mankind to Jesus and taught us about sin.

Hebrews 8:3-6 - 3Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. 4If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. 5They serve at a sanctuary that is a *copy and shadow of what is in heaven*. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Abraham's trusting and obedient faith was credited to him as righteousness.

Hebrews 10:1-4 - 1The law is only a *shadow of the good things that are coming*—not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. 2If it could, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins. 3But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, 4because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Blood Atonement

Leviticus 17:11 – 11 For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make *atonement* for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes *atonement* for the soul.

An innocent life was to take the place of sin which keeps man from being united with God. This is known as *blood atonement*; it is that which satisfies and pays the debt of sin. There is no other way for man to atone for his sin and to be saved from separation from God. Blood is life. Life is blood. When blood is shed, a life is shed. Jesus came for one reason, to shed His blood. *How does blood atone or satisfy the debt of our sins?* Blood was holy, set apart. Blood could not be handled except in sacrifice. God made it off limits so that everyone would treat it with reverence. Blood (innocent life) is the bridge that rejoins us to God where sin has separated us from God. *Atonement* is when something reconciles or makes satisfaction for a wrong or injury. It is the blood (innocent life) that takes the place of, or covers over the sin. Under the sacrificial system of the Law of Moses, the blood of innocent life would cover over specific and individual sins that had been committed. At that point, man would be united again with God, but every time man would sin, he would again need to make another sacrifice to take the place of his sin.

The Day of Atonement was the holiest day of the year under the Law of Moses. Even today Jews observe Yom Kippur. "Yom" means "day" and "Kippur" means "atonement".

Day of Atonement

Leviticus 16:1-3

Only the high priest carried out the activities of this day; he was the one representative for all the sin of all the people. Not just anyone could come into the presence of God. God is Holy and anyone coming into His presence must be purified from sin. The High Priest was the only one allowed in the Tabernacle.

Leviticus 16:4 - Before Aaron could come into the Tabernacle, he had to unclot himself for bathing. Normally, he wore priestly, colorful, glorious garments, but today he had to remove these garments to bathe. Symbolically, he had to remove himself from these divine or sanctified garments. The high priest

had to bathe himself in water. This was not like the daily ceremonial washing in the laver, but a total washing to symbolize purity. Matthew 3:13-15 shows us that Jesus' baptism was **not** for the forgiveness of sins, but was to "*fulfill all righteousness*" before He began His work of atonement. The high priest would put on linen garments of servitude, dressed as the ordinary servants of the Lord. He humbled himself down to the ordinary servants of God as Jesus eventually would. He performed all the services of this day in this manner, just as Jesus did.

Leviticus 16:5-10

Five total animals would be used: 1 bull (sin offering for priests), 2 goats (for a sin offering for all the people), 1 ram (burnt offering for priests), 1 ram (burnt offering for the people). The high priest would cast lots over the goats to see which would be sacrificed to God as the sin offering, and which would live as the "scapegoat".

Leviticus 16:11-14

On this one day of the year, the Alter of Incense is taken into the Most Holy Place, so there is the Alter of Incense and the Ark of the Covenant with the Mercy Seat on top, signifying the presence of God. The high priest went into the Most Holy Place with two hands full of incense and throws it all on the fire from the Alter of Incense making a cloud of incense that covers the Mercy Seat. Some versions refer to the Mercy Seat as the Atonement Cover. Incense is symbolic of prayer. Aaron will eventually leave the Most Holy Place and bring the Alter of Incense out with him until the next year.

Leviticus 16:15-22

The killing of the goat that was set aside for God was the sin sacrifice for the people. The first goat is the "*cause of atonement*". Without the shedding of blood, there could be no removal of sins. The high priest killed it.

The presentation of the live goat, or scapegoat, literally the "*removal*" goat is the "*effect* or result of atonement". The goat was sent away into an uninhabited land never to return. Israel was now forgiven for her sins.

Leviticus 16:23-30

The High Priest re-enters the Holy Place (leaving the Most Holy Place), removes the linen garments, re-bathes himself leaving his lowly garments there, re-clothes himself with the bright garments of glory, honor and holiness, and offers the burnt offerings for himself and for the people. All of this was done to make atonement for sin so that Israel would be cleansed of their sins before the Lord.

Jesus is our Atonement & Perfect Sacrifice

- Hebrews 9:11, 12, 24 - the sacrifices symbolized what Jesus would actually do
- Hebrews 10:1, 2 - the Law was only a shadow of the good things to come and repetitive nature of the sacrifices did not make the worshippers perfect
- Hebrews 10:3 - every day and annually there was the constant reminder of sins
- Hebrews 10:4 - it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins
- Hebrews 10:5, 6 - God provided the perfect sacrifice
- 1 John 4:10 - this reminds us that atonement for sin was provided by God, not man
- Hebrews 10:7-9 - our atonement was freely offered by Christ since He came to do the will of God

What animal sacrifices could not accomplish, God did by sending His Son who freely offered Himself for sin. Jesus was the perfect Lamb of God. (John 4:29)

Jesus Now Redeems us from Death with a New Covenant!

- Hebrews 9:11-12 - Christ entered the "Most Holy Place" (heaven)
- Hebrews 10:10-12 - Jesus did not take the blood of goats and calves, but His **OWN** blood!
Jesus entered "once for all", not once a year and He "obtained eternal redemption"

This is also why the New Covenant, the church, is therefore superior, because it is:

- Hebrews 8:7-13 - based upon better promises
- Hebrews 9:1-28 - based upon a better sanctuary

- Hebrews 10:1-18 - based upon a better sacrifice
- Romans 5:6-11 - Christ reconciles us to God died for us by taking our place
- John 1:29 - He is the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"
- Ephesians 1:7 - In Him we have "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins"
- Ephesians 2:13 - The blood of Christ *redeemed* us! He *bought* us!

Jesus is our *atonement* because he paid the debt for our sins. Jesus *redeemed* us from death because he bought us with his blood! What a wonderful and glorious gift of God!

Conclusion

Hebrews 4:14-16 -14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

THE TABERNACLE: A TYPE & SHADOW OF THE CHURCH

Tabernacle: The word "tabernacle" comes from the Hebrew word "mishkan" which means "residence" or "dwelling". At Mount Sinai God gave his people the law and instructions for the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus chapters 25-28. The book of Hebrews gives a description of the tabernacle and all its items and also how Jesus the sacrifice for people (Heb. 9:1-16, 28). The tabernacle represents God's dwelling place with His people and was the center of worship. **EVERYTHING** about the tabernacle was decided by God and Moses was commanded by God to "follow the pattern shown to him on the mountain" (Exo. 25:9, 25:40, 26:30, Num. 8:4). **It is very important to know that the things in the tabernacle are copies, or types and shadows, of the TRUE things, the HEAVENLY or SPIRITUAL things, which is the church (Heb. 9:23, 24).**

1. Entrance: The entrance was at the east end of the courtyard. Only the priests of the tribe of Levi could serve the Lord (Heb. 9:6). Only the High Priest could go in the Holy of Holies once a year and make sacrifice for his sins and the sins of the people (Heb. 9:7-8). **Christians are the priests of God today and serve the Lord (1 Peter 2:9).**

2. Bronze Altar: It was also called the altar of burnt offering. Animals without blemish were sacrificed there. **The altar is the type and shadow of Jesus when He died for the sins of the world. He is the perfect Lamb of God without spot or blemish (John 1:29, 1 Peter 1:19).**

3. Laver: The laver was a large tub where the priests of Levi washed their hands and feet before serving the Lord in the Holy Place so they would not die (Exo. 30:17-21; Exo. 38:8; Exo. 40:29-32). When priests first started serving the Lord they were completely washed to be made holy. **The laver is the type and shadow of baptism today so that we also will not die and we are made holy to serve God with new life (Ro. 6:3-5).**

4. Candlestick: On the south side of the Holy Place was the candlestick or lampstand. **The candlestick gave light for the Holy Place and is the type and shadow of the Bible which gives light to us when we obey its teachings (John 8:12, 2 Tim. 3:16).**

5. Table of Showbread: On the north side of the Holy Place was the table of showbread. 12 loaves were placed there every week. **The table of showbread is the type and shadow of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament (1 Cor. 10:16-17).**

6. Incense Altar: Also called the golden altar, incense was burned on it with hot coals from the bronze altar. **It is very important to know the incense placed before the Mercy Seat of God. This incense is the type and shadow of prayers of saints ascending to God (Rev. 5:8, Rev. 8:3).**

7. Holy Place: The Holy Place represented the church, separated from the world (the courtyard). Only the priests could serve God in here. **The Holy Place is the type and shadow of the Church today. Christians are the priests that offer services before the Lord with prayers and offerings using the Light of God's Word.**

8. Veil: The veil was between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. It was also called the Most Holy Place. The Holy of Holies represents heaven. These curtains were embroidered with cherubim. **The veil is the type and shadow of the separation between heaven and people on earth. It was torn from the top (heaven) down to us (earth) when Jesus entered heaven for us. When we become a Christian we can boldly come to God (Mark 15:38, Heb. 6:19, 20, Heb. 10:19, 20).**

9. Holy of Holies or Most Holy Place: Inside the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant (Lev. 16:2-3; Heb. 9:12; Heb. 10:19). God's dwelling place was the Holy of Holies above the mercy seat where He would meet with them (Exo. 25:22). The Holy of Holies was entered only by the High Priest who would offer an animal sacrifice his sins and the sins of the people once a year. **It was a type and shadow of heaven--the dwelling place of God. Jesus is our High Priest. He entered the Holy of Holies once for all with His OWN blood (Heb. 9:12).**

10. Ark of the Covenant: The Ark of the Covenant was a wooden, rectangular box covered with gold. On top of the ark was a lid of gold called a "mercy seat" (Exo. 25: 20, 22). On top of the lid were two gold cherubim. Inside the ark were the Ten Commandments, a dish of manna, and Aaron's rod that had budded (Heb. 9:4). Once a year the high priest would sprinkle the ark with blood for the sins of the people (Num. 10:33; Exo. 25:22; Heb. 9:7). **As priests in the kingdom of God, we now boldly approach the throne of grace, the mercy seat, through the blood of Jesus (Heb. 4:14-16).**

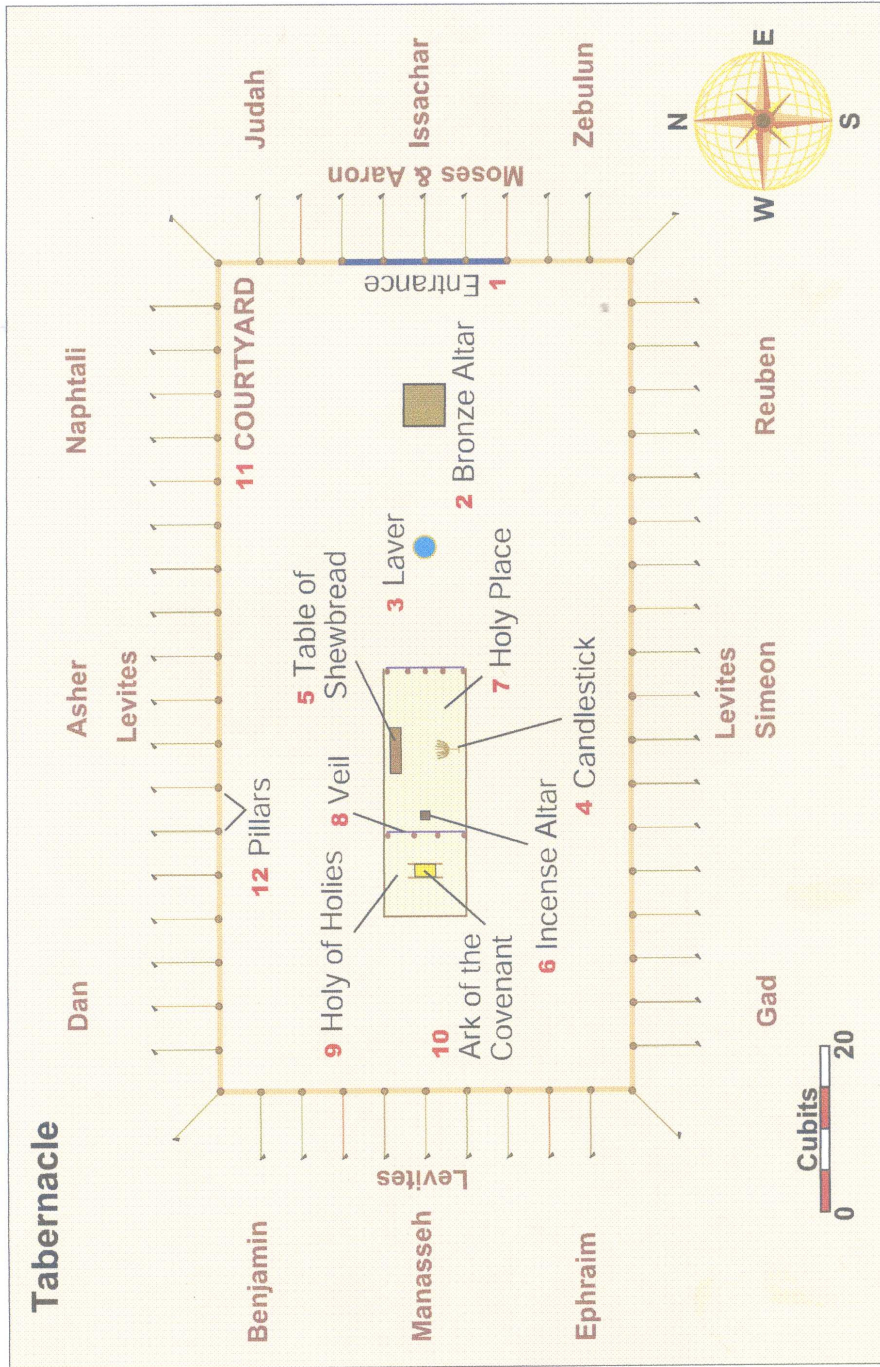


Diagram courtesy of Manna – www.biblemaps.com

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 7

God’s Plan of Salvation – Becoming a Christian

A study of the Old Testament and the Law of Moses reveals God’s plan of salvation for us. Looking at the promises made to Abraham and the types and shadows of the atoning sacrificial system of the Law brings us to the fulfillment of the promise of atonement and redemption through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6 – 6Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. **No one comes to the Father except through me.**”

Luke 19:10 – 10“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

There is absolutely nothing more important in life than to make the decision to be obedient to God, submit to His authority, trust in His power to redeem us from our sins, and become a Christian. While there may be much confusion in the world about what a Christian is, the word of God and the words of Jesus are absolutely clear on how to become a Christian.

Mark 16:15, 16 - 15He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”

Matthew 28:18-20 - 18Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

An easy way to remember what the Bible says to do to become a Christian is to understand what God says to do.

Hear the Word

- Romans 10:17 – faith comes from hearing the word of God, nowhere else
- Romans 1:16 – the gospel is the power of God for salvation

Believe and have Faith in Jesus

- Mark 16:16 – he who does not believe is condemned
- John 3:16 – God so loves us
- John 8:24 – if we don’t believe we will die in our sins
- Hebrews 11:6 – without faith it is impossible to please God

Turn Away from Sin (Repent)

- Luke 13: 3 – we will die in our sins if we don’t repent
- Acts 2:37, 38 – Peter very clearly tells us how to receive forgiveness of our sins

Confess that Jesus is God's Son

- Romans 10:10 – confession results in salvation
- Acts 8:34-38 – the Ethiopian eunuch confessed that Jesus was the son of God
- Matthew 16:15, 16 – Peter confessed that Jesus the son of the living God

Be Immersed (Baptized) in Water for the Forgiveness of Sins

- Romans 6:3, 4 – we are buried in baptism into Jesus death
- Colossians 2:12 – we are raised up from baptism by the working of God
- 1 Peter 3:21 – baptism saves us
- Acts 22:16 – God washes away our sin in baptism

Live a Righteous Life

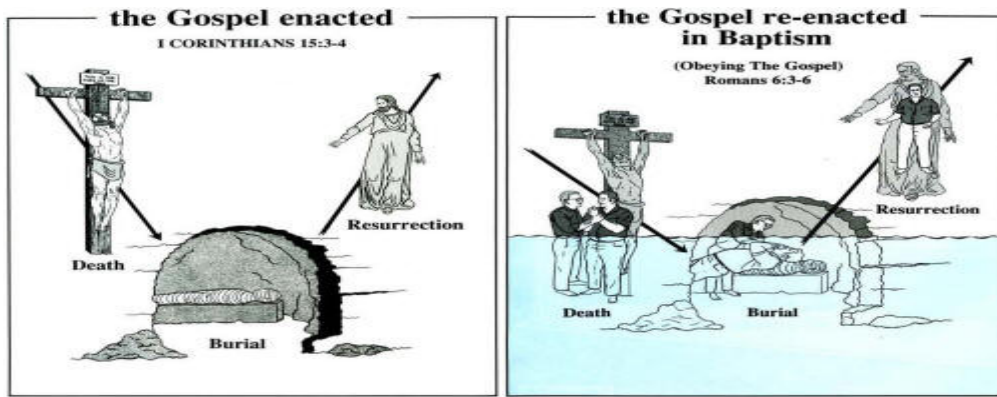
- 1 Peter 2:24 – we die to sin and live to righteousness
- Philippians 2:14, 15 – live as lights in the world
- Romans 6:11-13 – don’t let sin reign in our bodies

We are Baptized INTO Christ

- Romans 6:3, 4 - we are buried in baptism into Jesus death
- Galatians 3:26, 27 – we are buried in baptism and are clothed with Christ
- 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13 – we are baptized into one body by the Spirit of God

We are not saved or a Christian until our sins have been forgiven and atoned (paid for) and we have been redeemed (bought) from death through the blood of Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. God then sanctifies (sets apart) us through the working of His Spirit. Baptism is the point of our salvation in Christ.

What the Disciples Taught and What Their Hearers Did



Search the following passages on the left and write the words that you find in them or check off the boxes if you find the words above the columns in the passages.

SCRIPTURES	FAITH, BELIEF, BELIEVE OR TRUST	REPENTANCE OR REPENT	BAPTISM, BAPTIZED OR BAPTIZING	FORGIVENESS OF SINS, WASHING AWAY OF SINS, OR SAVED
Acts 2:36-47 Pentecost				
Acts 8:5-12 Samaritans				
Acts 8:13 Simon				
Acts 8:34-39 The Eunuch				
Acts 9:10-18 Saul or Paul				
Acts 10:34-48 Cornelius				
Acts 16:13-15 Lydia				
Acts 16:25-34 Jailer				
Acts 18:8 Corinthians				
Acts 19:1-7 Ephesians				
Acts 22:12-16 Saul or Paul				

Please review the next lesson on the Plan of Salvation, “7-Plan of Salvation - ThiefCornelius.pdf”, which is an excellent study of the thief on the cross and the house of Cornelius by Brother Mark Copeland.

Baptism

What About The Thief On The Cross?

INTRODUCTION

1. In this series we have already examined baptism...
 - a. In the preaching of the apostles
 - b. In the teaching of Paul
 - c. In the teaching of Peter
2. The conclusion drawn from such sources was that baptism is...
 - a. For the remissions of sins - cf. **Ac 2:38**
 - b. Therefore necessary for salvation - cf. **Ac 22:16; 1 Pe 3:21**
 - Which certainly seems consistent with Jesus' own words in **Mk 16:15-16**
3. But invariably someone will say: **“What about the thief on the cross?”** - **Lk 23:39-43**
 - a. This is most popular objection to the necessity of baptism
 - b. Despite all that is revealed about the purpose of baptism in the Bible!
4. The objection can be summarized like this:
 - a. The thief on the cross was not baptized
 - b. The thief was saved
 - c. Therefore, baptism is not essential to salvation!
5. Is such reasoning valid?
 - a. Might there be something the objector is failing to take into consideration?
 - b. A significant fact that renders the salvation of the thief irrelevant to the issue?

[As we take a closer look at the objection, **“What About The Thief On The Cross?”**, let's me first emphasize that...]

I. THE THIEF WAS SAVED

A. JESUS CERTAINLY HAD THE POWER TO SAVE HIM...

1. While on earth, Jesus had the authority to forgive sins
2. He exercised this authority on several occasions
 - a. For the paralytic - **Lk 5:18-26**
 - b. For the sinful woman - **Lk 7:36-50**

B. JESUS CLEARLY OFFERED HIM SALVATION...

1. The thief asked: “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” - **Lk 23:42**
2. Jesus replied: “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.” - **Lk 23:43**
- **None can doubt that Jesus promised him salvation!**

[Yet the question remains: Is the salvation of the thief relevant to the issue? Consider that...]

II. THE THIEF WAS SAVED BEFORE BAPTISM WAS COMMANDED

A. THE BAPTISM UNDER DISCUSSION...

1. Was commanded **after** Jesus died and arose - **Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16**
2. Was a baptism into Jesus' death - **Ro 6:3-4**
- **How could the thief been baptized into Jesus' death, when Jesus had not yet died?**

B. THE THIEF WAS NEVER SUBJECT TO THIS BAPTISM...

1. It was commanded **after** he died!
2. Just like Adam, Noah, Moses, etc.
 - a. None of these were baptized
 - b. But they all lived before the death of Jesus
 - c. And like the thief, were never commanded to be baptized!
3. Yes, there was the baptism of John - **Mk 1:4-5**
 - a. But that was preparing people for the coming of Christ
 - b. It was designed to be replaced by baptism into Christ and His death - cf. **Ac 19: 4-5**
- **One might use the thief on the cross to say John's baptism was not necessary, but the argument can't be made regarding the baptism which Christ later commanded!**

[The thief on the cross died **before** Jesus gave His commandment in **Mt 28** and **Mk 16**. Since we live **after** Jesus commanded baptism, how can we use the example of the thief to say it is not necessary? In a similar vein...]

III. THE THIEF WAS SAVED BEFORE THE NEW COVENANT BEGAN

A. THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT COVENANTS...

1. There was a covenant between God and Israel - **Deu 5:2-3**
 - a. It governed all Israelites, such as Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, the thief on the cross, etc.
 - b. It never commanded people to be baptized!
 - c. It came to an end when Jesus died on the cross - cf. **Ep 2:14-16; Co 2:14**
2. There is the new covenant that is now in force - cf. **He 8:6-7**
 - a. Of which Jesus spoke when He instituted the Lord's Supper - **Mt 26:28**
 - b. Which came into force when Jesus died - **He 9:15-17**

B. WE NOW LIVE UNDER THE NEW COVENANT...

1. We must submit to Christ's authority as expressed after His death
 - a. An authority delegated to His apostles - cf. **Mt 28:18-20; Jn 13:20**
 - b. Who clearly commanded baptism! - cf. **Ac 2:38; 10:48; 22:16**
2. How can we appeal to the example of one who lived under the old covenant?
 - a. Can we appeal to the example of David? (of course not)
 - b. Can we appeal to the example of Isaiah? (of course not)
 - **Nor should we appeal to the example of the thief, who lived and died before the new covenant became of force!**
3. We must heed what Jesus and His apostles taught AFTER the new covenant began!

CONCLUSION

1. Yes, the thief was saved on the cross without baptism
 - a. For which we should be thankful

- b. For which we should give God praise for His wonderful grace
2. But the thief's example is irrelevant to the issue of baptism...
 - a. He died before Christ ever issued the command to be baptized into His death!
 - b. He lived under the old covenant, which did not require baptism into Christ!
3. The thief on the cross would be relevant **IF**...
 - a. You lived **before** the command to be baptized into Christ was given
 - b. You lived under the **Old** covenant
 - c. You were in the presence of Christ and he told **you** "*Assuredly, I SAY TO YOU, today YOU will be with Me in Paradise.*"
4. But here are the facts...
 - a. You live **after** the command to be baptized has been given
 - b. You live under the **New** covenant, in which baptism has a crucial role
 - c. Christ has commanded **you** (and **all**) through His apostles to be baptized - **Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16; Ac 2:38; 10:48; 22:16**

Rather than depending upon an example of salvation that is nothing similar to our situation today, base your faith and assurance of salvation on the many examples of salvation that were recorded in the book of Acts for our benefit.

Heed the preaching and teaching of Christ and His apostles directed toward **you!**

Baptism

What About Cornelius And His Household?

INTRODUCTION

1. At this point we are considering objections to the idea that baptism is...
 - a. For the remission of sins
 - b. Therefore necessary for salvation
2. In the previous study we examined the salvation of **the thief on the cross**, noting that...
 - a. He was saved before the command to be baptized into Christ's death was given
 - b. He was saved before the new covenant became of force
 - **Which makes his example of salvation irrelevant to the issue of baptism**
3. Another objection concerns **Cornelius and his household**, which be summarized like this:
 - a. The Spirit came upon Cornelius and his family before they were baptized
 - b. The Spirit falling upon them was evidence that they were saved
 - c. Therefore they were saved before baptism, making it not essential to salvation
4. Is this a proper conclusion to reach?
 - a. Does the evidence in Acts support such a conclusion?
 - b. Did Peter and the others conclude that the Spirit falling upon the Gentiles was for the purpose of saving them, and therefore they were saved before baptism?
5. There are important questions that must be answered as we consider the events of this conversion:
 - a. Exactly when did the Spirit fall upon Cornelius and his household?
 - b. What was the purpose of the Spirit falling upon them?

[As we consider the objection, "**What About Cornelius And His Household?**", let's first take a close look at...]

I. THE ACTUAL SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN THIS CONVERSION

A. THE ANGEL APPEARS TO CORNELIUS...

1. Cornelius, a centurion, is a very religious man - **Ac 10:1-2**
2. The angel appears to him - **Ac 10:3-6**
 - a. With an announcement that his prayers and alms have been noticed by God
 - b. With instructions to send for Peter; please note:
 - 1) The angel said, "He will tell you what you must do." - **Ac 10:6**
 - 2) As Peter later recounted, "...who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved." - **Ac 11:14**
 - **Note Well:** Cornelius would not be saved until he heard words telling him what to do!
3. Cornelius then sends two servants and a devout soldier to Peter - **Ac 10:7-8**

B. PETER HAS A VISION...

1. While the three men are traveling toward Peter, he has a vision - **Ac 10:9-16; 11:4-10**
 - a. It involves a sheet descending from heaven, containing all sorts of creatures

- b. A voice tells Peter to “kill and eat”
 - c. Peter objects, for he has never eaten anything common or unclean
 - d. The voice tells him, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.”
2. Three times the vision is repeated

C. THE SPIRIT TELLS PETER TO GO WITH THE MESSENGERS...

1. The men from Cornelius arrive as Peter contemplates the vision - **Ac 10:17-18; 11:11**
2. The Spirit tells Peter to go, “doubting nothing, for I have sent them” - **Ac 10:19-20; 11:12**
3. Peter receives the men and takes six with him as they go to Cornelius - **Ac 10:21-23; 11:12**

D. PETER ARRIVES AT CORNELIUS’ HOUSE...

1. Cornelius has gathered his family and close friends - **Ac 10:24**
2. Peter deflects an attempt by Cornelius to worship him - **Ac 10:25-26**
3. Peter explains his presence is a violation of Jewish custom, but now understands “I should not call any man common or unclean” - **Ac 10:27-28**
4. Asked by Peter to explain why he was called, Cornelius recounts the appearance and instructions of the angel - **Ac 10:29-32; 11:13-14**
5. Cornelius and his household were ready “to hear all things commanded you by God” - **Ac 10:33**

E. AS PETER BEGINS TO SPEAK, THE SPIRIT FALLS UPON THE LISTENERS...

1. At this point, carefully note the actual sequence of events
2. Luke’s record gives attention to the sermon first, and then the Spirit coming upon the Gentiles - cf. **Ac 10:34-44**
 - a. But Luke also says that “**While** Peter was still speaking...the Holy Spirit fell”
 - b. From this we do not exactly when the Spirit fell
 - c. It could have been at the beginning, in the middle, toward the end, of his sermon
3. Peter, however, explained what happened “in order from the beginning” - **Ac 11:4**
 - a. He describes the events as they happened
 - b. He says “**As I began to speak**, the Holy Spirit fell upon them” - **Ac 11:15**
-- **Note Well:** We learn from Peter that the Spirit actually came upon the Gentiles at the **beginning** of the sermon!
4. With the Spirit falling upon the Gentiles, they began speaking with tongues, which amazed Peter and his Jewish companions - **Ac 10:45-46; cf. Ac 2:4,6,8,11**

F. PETER’S SERMON TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF CORNELIUS...

1. He begins with a full perception that God shows no partiality - **Ac 10:34-35**
 - a. A perception started with the vision of the sheet and unclean beasts
 - b. A perception continued with the Spirit’s instruction to go with the messengers
 - c. A perception made clear with the Spirit falling upon the Gentiles - **Ac 11:15-17**
2. Peter then proceeds to proclaim Jesus Christ - **Ac 10:36-43**
 - a. As Lord who was anointed with the Holy Spirit and power - **Ac 10:36-38**
 - b. Who was killed, but then raised from the dead and seen by eyewitnesses who knew Him well - **Ac 10:39-41**
 - c. Who has commanded the apostles to proclaim Him as ordained by God to be the Judge of the living and dead - **Ac 10:42**
 - d. Through Whom remission of sins is offered to those who believe - **Ac 10:43**

G. PETER COMMANDS THEM TO BE BAPTIZED...

1. How could anyone forbid water to those who had received the Spirit just as the apostles did? - **Ac 10:47**; cf. **11:17-18**
2. So Cornelius and his household were commanded to be baptized in the name of the Lord - **Ac 10:48**

[The events surrounding this conversion are certainly remarkable. They evidently were intended to convey important truths. But our purpose in this study is to answer these questions:

- ♦ **At what point** were Cornelius and his household saved?
- ♦ If not to save them, **what was the purpose** of the Spirit falling upon Cornelius and his household?

Let's now answer the first question...]

II. THE POINT AT WHICH CORNELIUS WAS SAVED**A. REMEMBER WHAT CORNELIUS WAS TOLD...**

1. Peter would tell him "what you must do." - **Ac 10:6**
2. Peter would tell him "words by which you...shall be saved." - **Ac 11:14**

B. YET THE SPIRIT FELL UPON HIM BEFORE HE HEARD...

1. As Peter said, the Spirit fell upon them "as I began to speak"
2. It wasn't until the end of his sermon and afterward that Peter told them the "words by which you...shall be saved."

C. CORNELIUS WAS SAVED AFTER HE HEARD...

1. The "words" by which he would be saved (i.e., the sermon)
 2. What he was told to do
 - a. Such as to believe - cf. **Ac 10:43**
 - b. Such as to be baptized, as commanded in **Ac 10:48**
- **Until he heard the words, and obeyed what he was told, he was not saved!**

[Since Cornelius and his family were not saved until they heard the "**words**" by which they would be saved, and told what they "**must do**", the Spirit falling upon them did not save them, for it came upon them **before** they heard the "words" and were told what to do!

But why did the Spirit come upon them, if not to save them? Consider what actually was...]

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE SPIRIT FALLING UPON CORNELIUS**A. THE PURPOSE CAN BE GLEANED FROM THE FOLLOWING...**

1. The effect it had on the Jewish brethren who were present, and Peter's response - **Ac 10:45-47**
2. The reaction of the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem when Peter told them what happened - **Ac 11:17-18**
3. Peter's explanation at the council held later in Jerusalem - **Ac 15:7-11**

B. THE PURPOSE WAS TO SHOW JEWISH BRETHERN...

1. That God was no respecter of persons - **Ac 10:34-35**
2. That God was willing to grant them opportunity to repent and have life - **Ac 11:18**
3. That Gentiles could be saved in the same way as Jews...
 - a. By faith, repentance, and baptism - **Ac 15:9,11**; cf. **2:38** with **10:48**
 - b. Which faith comes through hearing the word of God - **Ro 10:17**

CONCLUSION

1. While miraculous events surrounded the conversion of Cornelius and his family, their salvation was no different from what we see in other cases of conversion...
 - a. They heard the gospel of Jesus Christ
 - b. They were taught to believe and be baptized
 - **Thus they were saved “in the same manner” as all those previously - cf. Mk 16:15-16; Ac 2:38; 8:12**
2. The purpose of the Spirit falling upon them...
 - a. Was not to show one could be saved without baptism
 - b. But to show that Gentiles were no longer to be considered “common” or “unclean”, and could be granted the same opportunities to hear the gospel and be saved by it!
3. One might also ask...
 - a. When the Spirit came upon Balaam to prophesy concerning Israel, did it save him? - **Num 24:2**
 - b. When the Spirit came upon Saul to prophesy, did it save him? - **1 Sam 19:20-24**
 - c. When Caiaphas prophesied, was he saved? - **Jn 11:49-52**
 - **The purpose of the Spirit coming upon a person may vary, and one should not assume that one filled with the Spirit at any given time is thereby being saved by the Spirit!**

Those of us not descended from Israel can rejoice in what God revealed with the conversion of Cornelius and his household. As properly concluded by the Jewish brethren in Jerusalem:

“...God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.” (Ac 11:16)

And when carefully noted, they were saved ***“in the same manner”*** (cf. **Ac 15:9-11**) as all others, having their hearts purified through faith when they heard and obeyed the word of God!

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 8

God's Plan of Salvation – the Church, the Body of Christ

There is often great confusion among people professing to be saved about what composes the Church.

How is someone added to the Church? Who adds someone that is saved to the Church? If you move to a new congregation, do you need to be baptized into THAT Church?

First and most importantly, it is vital to understand what the Church is...

Colossians 1:18-24 - 18And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. 19For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. 21Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. 24Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of *his body, which is the church*.

...and how one is added to His body, the Church

Acts 2:38-47 - 38Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." 40With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. 42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And **the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

Christians are part of ONE body

- 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17 – one body partakes in Christ
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 – there are many parts but one body
- Romans 12:3-5 – we belong to one another
- Ephesians 4:14-16 – we must grow up in Christ together
- Ephesians 1:15-23 – God made Christ to be head over ALL things

Christ is Head over ALL things

Christ exercises His authority over all things and is for the benefit of His church!

Because Jesus is Lord, all things work together for our benefit – Romans 8:28

This is not to say that Christ will prevent hardship, persecution, even death

But through Christ all such things can be used to our benefit and ultimate glory!

In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him – Romans 8:35-39

The world or life or death...all are yours – 1 Corinthians 3:21, 22

Sufferings brought by Satan can be used by God to "perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle" us!

- 1 Peter 5:8-11

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 9

Worship – Part 1

Lesson Theme: We will examine the *object* of worship, *types* of worship and *emotions* in worship.

Philippians 4:4 – 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Colossians 3:17 – 17 And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do all* in the *name* of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

John 4:23, 24 – 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. **24** God is spirit, and his worshipers *must* worship in spirit and in truth.

Worship is a topic that can evoke many deep feelings and opinions in Christians because it goes to the heart of what we want to do for the Creator of life and the Savior of our souls. Why do we need to understand worship?

- Romans 1:18-25 - if we don't worship *Him*, he will give us over
- We have a need to worship something greater than ourselves.

Who do we worship?

- Genesis 1:1 - God Creator
- John 3:16 - God Savior
- Matthew 16:16 - God is living

How do we Worship?

- Matthew 15:8-9 - “honor me with their lips but heart far”
- Psalm 51:16-17 - “you do not desire sacrifices”

Types of Worship:

Proskuneo – ‘prostrating before a person, kissing his feet’ – Formal worship

- Luke 7:37, 38 – the sinful woman

Latreuo – life of service – Daily living

- Romans 12:1, 2 – our lives should be an act of worship

Motivation for Worship:

- God should always be the object of our worship
- Worship is not about what we get out of worship
- Worship is not just a duty to obey or a way to seek an emotional high
- ***Must worship in spirit and truth***

The Authority of Jesus

Our worship is based, not on what we desire, but on the authority of Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 28:18-20 - 18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.

Conclusion

God is the only acceptable object of worship and His glorification is the only acceptable reason for worship. Bible speaks of worship in the formal sense as well as a life of service. Jesus calls for us to worship in spirit *and* in truth.

Music In New Testament Worship - Part One

Types Of Worship In The New Testament

INTRODUCTION

1. The example of Nadab and Abihu serves as a very important example for us today in regards to rendering worship to God...
 - a. When they offered in worship something the Lord had not commanded, it was taken by the Lord as a sign of disrespect for His Holiness - **Lev 10:1-3**
 - b. Such examples were written for our learning - cf. **1 Co 10:11**
2. As children of God ...
 - a. We are to be holy before the Holy One who called us - cf. **1 Pe 1:14-16**
 - b. Therefore it is equally important that we treat God as holy!
 - c. This we can do in our worship by doing exactly as He instructs in His Word!
3. To be sure that we do this in regards to our **music in worship**, I would like for us to consider what the NT has to say about...
 - a. The nature of worship in general
 - b. And especially about the music in NT worship

[In this lesson, we will investigate what the NT says about worship in general. Beginning with the fact that there are different ...]

I. TYPES OF WORSHIP IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

A. "TRUE" WORSHIP...

1. Referred to by Jesus in **Jn 4:20-24**
2. This is the type of worship expected by God today ("an hour is coming, and **now is**")
3. Since this concerns us personally, we shall deal with it in more detail later

B. "VAIN" WORSHIP...

1. Referred to by Jesus in **Mt 15:7-9**
2. This worship is the result of:
 - a. Following traditions of men and ignoring the commands of God on a particular subject
 - b. Also, when worship is not done "from the heart"

C. "IGNORANT" WORSHIP...

1. Referred to by Paul in **Ac 17:22-23**
2. This is worship offered in the absence of a knowledge of God's will concerning who He is and how He is to be worshipped

D. "WILL" (SELF-IMPOSED) WORSHIP...

1. Referred to by Paul in **Co 2:20-23** (KJV)
2. This worship, closely aligned with **vain** worship:
 - a. Is the result of doing what **we** like and **we** think is good
 - b. But not taught by God in His Word (cf. Nadab & Abihu)

[It should be evident, then, that not just **any** worship is acceptable to God! There are different kinds that can be offered, but only **one** is acceptable. Since God will only accept “**true**” **worship**, we had better understand what is involved ...]

II. THE MEANING OF “TRUE” WORSHIP

A. AS DEFINED BY JESUS...

1. “the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth” - **Jn 4:23**
2. But what is meant by the phrase “in spirit and truth”?
3. Notice first the contrast being made by Jesus - cf. **Jn 4:19-24**
 - a. The Jews had been worshiping correctly by going to Jerusalem
 - b. But now the time was coming when place was not important (as it was in the OT)
4. Thus the contrast is between OT and NT worship!
 - a. Somehow, OT worship had not been “in spirit and truth”
 - b. But NT worship would be!

[The contrast becomes more evident as we define what is meant to worship “in spirit and in truth”]

B. WORSHIPPING GOD “IN SPIRIT”...

1. Some understand this to mean “to do so with sincerity, from the heart”
 - a. But this does not fit in with the idea that Jesus is making a contrast between OT and NT worship
 - b. For sincerity was required just as much under the OT - **Deu 6:4-7; Isa 1:10-18**
2. A better interpretation is that to worship in spirit means to offer “**spiritual worship**”
 - a. In contrast to worship that is physical or fleshly
 - b. This contrast is in harmony with the context
 - 1) Jesus began by saying “God is Spirit”
 - 2) Therefore the worship of Him is to be “spiritual”, that is, more in keeping with His nature
 - c. This interpretation is in harmony with what we learn elsewhere about the contrast between OT and NT worship
 - 1) From He 9:1-10 we learn that OT worship consisted of **fleshly** ordinances; e.g.:
 - a) A physical structure (tabernacle)
 - b) Special clothing for priests
 - c) Lamp stands
 - d) Burning of incense
 - e) Instruments of music
 - f) Animal sacrifices
 -- all of which appeal to the **physical** senses
 - 2) But NT worship is geared more toward the **spiritual** side of man:
 - a) God’s temple is spiritual, made up of Christians - **1 Co 3:16; Ep 2:19-22**
 - b) All Christians are priests, offering up spiritual sacrifices - **1 Pe 2:5,9; Ro 12:1; He 13:15**
 - c) Our prayers are sweet incense - **Re 5:8**
 - d) Our music is making melody with the **heart** - **Ep 5:19**
 - 3) The physical ordinances of the OT were to last until a “time of reformation” - **He 9:9-10** (which has occurred with the coming of the New Covenant)
 -- **To “worship in spirit”, then, is to offer up SPIRITUAL worship as taught in the NT**

and not the PHYSICAL as found in the OT

C. WORSHIPPING GOD IN “TRUTH”...

1. What is meant to worship in “truth”?
 - a. To worship according to the commands of God? (as so often interpreted)
 - b. Certainly we should do this
 - c. But again, this is no contrast to what God expected in the OT - cf. **Deu 5:32-33**
 - d. Jesus admitted that the Jews were right in their worship - **Jn 4:22**
 - e. So the contrast is **not** between “true” and “false” worship
2. The contrast is between that which is “true” (or real), and that which had been a “shadow” pointing toward the true!
 - a. Many elements of OT worship were simply a “shadow” or “figure” of what was to come
 - 1) The Tabernacle was a symbol - **He 9:8-9**
 - 2) The Law with its worship was only a “shadow” of that to come - **He 10:1**
 - b. Christ is now in the **true** tabernacle (heaven)- **He 9:11-12,24**
 - 1) Therefore we should expect the worship of the **true** to be different from that of the **shadow**
 - 2) And we have already seen that to be the case:
 - a) The OT worship, which was but a **shadow**, was **physical** in nature
 - b) But N. T. worship, which God now expects of “true worshipers”, is according to the **true** realities (God is Spirit, Christ in heaven) and is therefore **spiritual** in nature

CONCLUSION

1. We see that there are different types of worship, but only one is now acceptable to the Father
2. We see that this worship is “in spirit and in truth”...
 - a. It is not the physical worship found in the OT which was only a “shadow” of what was to come
 - b. But a spiritual worship which is the true substance of what God wants of us in worship

Our next study shall examine the **true, spiritual** music God wants in the worship of the church, as revealed in the NT...

Music In New Testament Worship - Part Two

Music In The New Testament Church

INTRODUCTION

1. In our last lesson, we noted various types of worship...
 - a. **Vain** worship - **Mt 15:8-9**
 - b. **Ignorant** worship - **Ac 17:22-23**
 - c. **Will** worship - **Co 2:20-23**
 - d. **True** worship - **Jn 4:23-24**
 - The last one being the only one acceptable to God!

2. We then considered what was involved in “true” worship, what Jesus meant when He said “worship in spirit and truth”...
 - a. It is more than just worshipping with the right attitude and in the right way (for such was true with regards to OT worship)
 - b. It is a **spiritual** worship which is in harmony with the **truth** concerning God’s nature (God is Spirit) and the location of the **true** tabernacle (in heaven)
 - c. Contrast this with OT worship with its **fleshly** ordinances which served only as a **shadow** until the **true** came along

3. In this lesson, we shall consider the **music** God wants in the worship of the church; in doing so...
 - a. We shall notice that it is indeed a **true, spiritual** music unlike that found in the OT
 - b. Also, that our understanding of the kind of music to be used in the worship of the church is supported by what many historians, reformers, and scholars have said on the subject

[Let’s begin with a look at...]

I. THE MUSIC IN “TRUE” WORSHIP

A. THE ONLY MUSIC COMMANDED IN THE NT WAS “VOCAL”...

1. The example of Jesus and His disciples - **Mt 26:30; Mk 14:26** (they “sung a hymn”)
2. The example of Paul and Silas - **Ac 16:25** (“singing hymns”)
3. Other references
 - a. **Ro 15:9** - “sing to Your name”
 - b. **1 Co 14:15** - “I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding”
 - c. **Ep 5:19** - “singing and making melody in your heart”
 - d. **Co 3:16** - “singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”
 - e. **He 2:12** - “I will sing praise to You”
 - f. **Ja 5:13** - “Let him sing psalms”

B. THE MUSIC IN THE NT EMPHASIZED THE “SPIRITUAL”...

1. **Ep 5:19** - “singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”
 - a. “making melody” (**psallontes**) - In the OT this had reference to the playing of musical instruments
 - b. But notice that now (in the NT) the “making melody” is to be done “in the heart”, not with mechanical instruments!

- c. Notice the contrast: the heart (**spiritual**) vs. mechanical instruments (**physical**)
- d. Since this music is to be offered “to the Lord”, we had better regard Him as Holy and offer exactly what He specified (cf. Nadab & Abihu)!
- 2. **Co 3:16** - “singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”
 - a. This passage is parallel to **Ep 5:19**
 - b. Notice again that the emphasis is **spiritual**: “in your hearts to the Lord”

C. REVIEW THE CONTRAST BETWEEN OT MUSIC AND NT MUSIC...

- 1. OT music
 - a. Performed by a professional choir
 - b. Accompanied with various mechanical instruments
 - c. **Emphasis**: How it sounds to the human ear (appealing to the **physical** side of man)
- 2. NT music
 - a. Sung by all in the congregation (“speaking to one another in psalms...”)
 - b. The melody to be made in the **heart**, not on the **harp**
 - c. **Emphasis**: How it affects the soul (the **spiritual** side of man)

[Music in NT worship, therefore, is to be **spiritual** in emphasis:

- ◆ Sung by all
- ◆ With emphasis not on how we sound, but that we are making true melody in our hearts to the Lord!

Lest people think that we are unusual in this view of using only vocal music in NT worship, and choosing not to add mechanical instruments in worship, consider some interesting references...]

II. REFERENCES ON MUSIC IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

A. THE VOICE OF HISTORY...

- 1. “All our sources deal amply with vocal music of the church, but they are chary with mention of any other manifestations of musical art... The development of Western music was decisively influenced by the exclusion of musical instruments from the early Christian Church.” - **Paul Henry Lang, Music In Western Civilization, p. 53,54**
- 2. “Only singing, however, and no playing of instruments, was permitted in the early Christian Church.” - **Hugo Leichtentritt, Music, History And Ideas, p. 34**
- 3. “There can be no doubt that originally the music of the divine service was everywhere entirely of a vocal nature.” - **Emil Nauman, The History Of Music, Vol. 1, p. 177**
- 4. “We have no real knowledge of the exact character of the music which formed a part of the religious devotion of the first Christian congregations. It was, however, purely vocal.” - **Dr. Frederick Louis Ritter, History Of Music From The Christian Era To The Present Time, p. 28**
- 5. “Both the Jews in their temple service, and the Greeks in their idol worship, were accustomed to sing with the accompaniment of instrumental music. The converts to Christianity accordingly must have been familiar with this mode of singing...But it is generally admitted, that the primitive Christians employed no instrumental music in their worship.” - **Lyman Coleman (Presbyterian), The Apostolic And Primitive Church, p. 368-369**

[It may seem odd that music was entirely vocal in the early church, when instrumental music was

quite common in the worship of the Jews and Gentiles. But not when you recall that the worship in the NT was to be spiritual in its emphasis.]

B. THE VOICE OF VARIOUS RELIGIOUS SOURCES...

1. **Catholic** - "... the first Christians were of too spiritual a fiber to substitute lifeless instruments for or to use them to accompany the human voice." - **Catholic Encyclopedia**
2. **Greek Orthodox** - "The execution of Byzantine church music by instruments, or even the accompaniment of sacred chanting by instruments was ruled out by the Eastern Fathers as being incompatible with the pure, solemn, spiritual character of the religion of Christ." - **Constantine Cavarnos, Byzantine Sacred Music**
3. **Presbyterian** - "Musical instruments in celebrating the praises of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting up of lamps, the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise; but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostle is far more pleasing to Him." - **John Calvin, Commentary on the Book of Psalms, Vol. I, p. 539**
4. **Methodist** - "I have no objection to instruments of music, in our chapels, provided they are neither heard nor seen." - **John Wesley (founder)**
5. **Methodist** - "Music as a science, I esteem and admire: but instruments of music in the house of God I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music; and here I register my protest against all such corruptions in the worship of the Author of Christianity." - **Adam Clarke (commentator)**
6. **Lutheran** - "Martin Luther called the organ an 'ensign of Baal'." - **McClintock & Strong's Encyclopedia**
7. **Baptist** - "I would as soon attempt to pray to God with machinery as to sing to Him with machinery." - **Charles H. Spurgeon**

[Why did these men object so strongly to instrumental music in the worship of the church? Because they properly realized:

- ◆ That such was a carry-over from the Jewish worship
- ◆ That as such it was out of harmony with the **spiritual** nature of NT worship
- ◆ That it rightfully belonged to the Old Law with its "shadows" and not the "true" worship of the NT

Finally, let's consider...]

III. JUSTIFICATION OFFERED FOR THE USE OF INSTRUMENTS

A. "IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A TRADITION IN OUR CHURCH..."

1. Not really, as history reveals the use of instruments to be an innovation introduced hundreds of years after the NT Church began
2. In most cases, it has been used only during the last two centuries
3. Even so, as "traditions of men" it qualifies as **vain** worship - **Mt 15:9**

B. "I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG WITH IT..."

1. Then your worship is **ignorant** worship - **Ac 17:22-23**
2. For you are not aware of the kind of worship God commands of you

C. “I LIKE IT IN MY WORSHIP TO GOD...”

1. Then it becomes **will** worship - **Co 2:20-23**
2. And you begin worshipping like Nadab & Abihu
 - a. Offering that which **you** like
 - b. But offering that which is profane, for God did not command it

D. “IT IS FOUND IN THE OLD TESTAMENT...”

1. So are a lot of other acts of worship which were “imposed until a time of reformation” - **He 9:10**
2. That time is come and God expects His people to worship differently - **Jn 4:23-24**
3. The fact that God may have commanded it in the past does not mean that He approves its use now (especially when He has revealed what He **does** want)
4. Consider the sin of Moses
 - a. God first told him to **strike** the rock for water - **Exo 17:5-6**
 - b. Later, God at another time told him to **speak** to the rock - **Num 20:7-8**
 - c. But Moses struck the rock as before, and in so doing sinned and lost his right to enter the promised land - **Num 20:9-12**
5. His sin? He did not treat God holy by doing **only** what God had commanded at the **present** time!
 - a. God may have commanded **instrumental** music in the past (OT)
 - b. But He now commands **vocal** music (NT)

CONCLUSION

1. Let’s not make the same mistakes as did Nadab and Abihu, Moses and Aaron, forfeiting our inheritance in the Promised Land offered to Christians (i.e., Heaven)
2. As we approach God in worship, let us treat Him as Holy by worshipping as He has commanded: **“in spirit and in truth”**
3. In regards to our music ...
 - a. Let it be singing with melody in our hearts to the Lord
 - b. And not with melody made with mechanical instruments

In doing so, we **know** we are on safe ground, and that our worship is well pleasing to Him...!

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 9

Worship – Part 2

Lesson Theme: We will examine the New Testament patterns of worship. Is there truly a pattern of worship in the early church? What things did the early church do as a part of worship?

2 Thessalonians 2:15 - 15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

Singing

What does the Bible say?

- Ephesians 5:19, 20 - sing and make melody
- Colossians 3:16 - sing to God with grace in your hearts

The word "singing" is from the Greek word *ado* (Strong #103), which, according to Thayer's Lexicon, actually means, "to sing, chant; to the praise of any one".

What does singing do for us?

- teaches and admonishes
- comforts us - Acts 16:23-25
- expresses joy, sadness, any emotion

What is the purpose of singing in worship?

- teaching, admonishing, praises to God

Lord's Supper

What does the Bible say?

- Matt 26:26-29 – the body and blood of Christ
- Mark 14:22-25 – the body and blood of Christ
- Luke 22:17-20 – the blood and body of Christ
- Acts 20:7 - first day of week disciples came together to break bread
- 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17 – the one body participates together in Christ
- 1 Corinthians 11:26 – we proclaim His death until He returns
- 1 Corinthians 11:28 – we examine ourselves in order to understand our sinfulness
- Jesus and disciples have just finished the Passover meal which symbolized God's deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery by killing the firstborn of every Egyptian while sparing each family with blood on the doorpost. – Exodus 12:1-6
- unleavened bread represents His body while the fruit of the vine represents His blood

The Lord's supper was observed on the first day of the week. There is no example in scripture or other early Christian writings of any practice other than every first day of the week.

Prayer

What does the Bible say?

Prayer, like singing, should permeate our life – public worship, private meditation, family devotion, and momentary requests for strength and guidance or thanksgiving.

How should we pray?

- Colossians 4:12 - wrestle in prayer
- Luke 22:39-44 - Jesus prayed earnestly
- Acts 12:5 - the church prayed earnestly for Peter's release
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17 – continuously pray without ceasing
- Luke 18:1-6 – the widow was persistent
- Luke 18:9-14 – check our attitude – are we humble in prayer?
- Ephesians 6:18-20 – pray in the Spirit for things the Spirit desires
- Hebrews 4:15-16 – pray boldly
- Romans 8:26, 27 - the Holy Spirit intercedes for us

How should we NOT pray?

- Matthew 6:5, 6 - for our own selfish glory
- James 1:5, 6 - without faith

Giving

What does the Bible say?

Our giving is directly tied to our love for the Lord and others. The church was noted for its love for one another.

- Acts 2:44, 45 & Acts 4:32-35 - exemplified in the church at Jerusalem
- Acts 11:27-30 - it went beyond those in the local congregation
- 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 - a weekly collection was instituted to provide for the needs of the saints

Principles were taught to determine how much one should give.

- 1 Corinthians 16:2 – as we are prospered
- 2 Corinthians 8:12, 13 – with a willing mind and according to what we have
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 – as we *cheerfully* purpose in our hearts without grudges or simply duty by keeping in mind the principle of "sowing and reaping"
- 2 Corinthians 11:8, 9 – funds collected were used to help needy Christians 6)
- Philippians 4:10-18 – funds were collected to help those devoted their lives to preaching the gospel

Preaching the Word

What does the Bible say?

Romans 10:14-17 - 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- Acts 2:42 – Christians are noted for their attention to the Word of God as we continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine
- 1 Corinthians 14:37 & 1 Thessalonians 2:13 - as ambassadors of Christ, the apostles' words are taken very seriously
- Acts 20:7 – the assembly of the saints were used to hear God's Word
- Colossians 4:16 - when letters from the apostles had been

Conclusion

The simple worship practices of the New Testament church are not supplied to us by God's Word in a casual manner nor did the apostles institute the patterns of worship in the Church as an "option" to follow. If we are to be obedient to the words of Jesus in "worshipping in spirit and in truth", we must carefully and joyfully follow the pattern of worship as found in scripture only.

Please review the next lesson on worship, "9-Worship3.pdf", which is an excellent study of New Testament music by Brother Mark Copeland.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 10

The Structure of the Church

What do we look for in a church? Christians have a desire and an obligation (Hebrews 10:24, 25) to assemble with other Christians. People who are not in Christ seeking spiritual answers to their lives search for a church that will show them how to develop a relationship with Jesus. A biblical structure of the Church that Jesus died for is imperative to maintain as we seek and save the lost.

The Church is the body of Christ, *NOT* a social club. The Church is where the gospel is proclaimed.

- Ephesians 2:1, 2 – Christ is the head of the Church
- Ephesians 5:25-27 – Jesus died to produce a glorious Church

Christ is building *HIS* Church

- 2 Thessalonians 2:14 – Christ calls us through the gospel
- Acts 2:41, 47 – the *Lord* adds us to *His* body as we obey the gospel
- Galatians 1:6-9 – it is vital that the gospel not be perverted in any way

If the gospel proclaimed by a group of people is different by changing the facts or commands of the gospel, then people are not being saved, and the Lord is not adding them to His church! A church with a perverted gospel may have the nicest people, but they are still lost people if they are not in Christ.

The Apostles Doctrine

Our goal is not to copy the churches of the 2nd, 3rd, 18th, or 20th centuries, nor to simply imitate the traditions of Catholicism and denominationalism.

- Acts 2:42 - this is what characterized the churches of the New Testament
- Romans 16:16 – we should strive to be like the faithful churches in the first century

Such a church will have **worship** like that described in the New Testament with such elements as singing, prayer, Bible study, preaching, and the Lord's Supper.

Such a church will **work** as a congregation will be similar to that found in New Testament churches.

- Hebrews 10:24, 25 - with assemblies stirring one another to love and good works
- Ephesians 4:11-16 - equipping the saints for ministry
- Philippians 4:15, 16 –spreading the gospel by sending out evangelists

Such a church's **organization** as a congregation will seek to be like that found in the New Testament.

- Acts 14:33 & Acts 20:28 – with elders (also known as bishops, pastors, presbyters, or shepherds)
- 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4 - qualified to oversee and tend to the local flock
- 1 Timothy 3:8-13 - with deacons qualified to minister to the local congregation
- 1 Peter 2:9-12 - with saints (members) who journey in this world with conduct that is honorable and gives glory to God

A Church seeking to please Jesus will let the apostles' doctrine guide its worship, work and organization, and not be based on traditions of uninspired men.

Within the body of Christ, the Church, is where righteousness, peace, and joy is found

- Romans 14:7 – this is to be the focus of those in the kingdom of God
- Hebrews 13:9 – the Church is not social entertainment and food, but for matters of salvation
- 1 Timothy 5:16 – the Church is not a social program, for this can hinder the church
- Romans 14:18-20 – the Church is a place where brethren are focused on peace and edification
- John 13:34, 35 & John 17:20-23 – the Church pursues things that make for peace, love and unity
- 1 Corinthians 14:26 – the Church pursues things that make for building up brethren
- Romans 16:17, 18 – the Church avoids those who cause divisions and occasions to stumble

Conclusion

First and foremost, the structure of the Lord's Church should enable Christians to seek and save the lost. In addition, the structure of the Lord's Church should be conducive to spiritual growth, where people are encouraged to live holy lives in peace and joy.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 11

Our Lives as Christians

Mark 12:28-34 - 28One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" 29"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." 32"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. 33To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God."

As we grow and mature in Christ, it can be easy to lose our focus as Christians and forget how we are to live and function in His church. Our hearts and minds can become distracted if we do not examine our attitudes every day As Christians work together in a local congregation, the right attitudes are necessary. All the talent in the world cannot make up for wrong attitudes. With the right attitudes, our efforts in service to the Lord are enhanced and live up to their full potential.

Attitudes toward God

Love

- Matthew 22:34-40 – we must have the right kind of love toward God that *Jesus* defined

Faith & Trust

- Hebrews 11:1, 6 – without faith, it is impossible to please God
- Romans 10:17 – faith is a strong conviction and trust in what God says Christ

Thankfulness

- Ephesians 5:19, 20 – every Christian should have an attitude of gratitude
- Romans 1:18-21 – God's righteous indignation is toward those who have become unthankful

An attitude of thankfulness for the blessings we have will help allay the bitterness that often destroys the spirit in any congregation.

Attitudes toward Ourselves

Humility

- Romans 12:3, 16 – a humble estimation of yourself is very important
- John 13:6-17 – humility includes a willingness to serve, even to do "menial" tasks

Are we humble enough to serve our brothers and sisters?

Teachable

- Proverbs 15:31, 32 – to be teachable is to be wise
- Deuteronomy 8:2-4 – do you hunger for God's word?
- James 5:16 – are we willing to admit our mistakes *AND* correct them?

How teachable are we, when it comes to opportunities to study God's word? Do we try to learn and grow?

Do we learn from correction and seek to profit from advice and criticism?

Attitudes towards Our Brothers & Sisters in Christ

Love

- John 13:34, 35 – Jesus taught us the necessity of loving our brethren
- 1 Peter 1:22, 23 – we have been saved that we might love one another *fervently*

If we truly love one another, how can we not work together?

Cooperation

- 1 Corinthians 12:21 – this involves a willingness to work together, as God intended
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13 – we need to appreciate the hard work others are doing

True appreciation for others will eliminate destructive criticism, gossip and divisiveness.

Submissiveness

- Ephesians 5:21 – we are to submit to one another
- Hebrews 13:7 – we are to submit to those in positions of leadership

A lack of submission to one another prevents us from carrying out the commands of the Lord to seek and save the lost.

Peaceable

- Romans 14:19 – we should pursue peace among brethren
- Ephesians 4:1-3 – it is part of walking worthy of our calling
- Matthew 5:9 – blessed are the peacemakers
- James 3:17, 18 – working in peace brings a righteous harvest

The true children of God are those who are peacemakers, and sow their deeds of righteousness in the atmosphere of peace.

Hospitality

- Romans 12:13 – Christians are to be hospitable
- Hebrews 13:2 – includes both hospitality to strangers and to brethren

Warmth, Friendliness, Openness

- Acts 2:44-47 – we see this expressed by those in the church at Jerusalem
- Acts 11:27-30 – it continued with the saints in Antioch

The Church spread rapidly in the first century partly because of the open hospitality extended by Christians.

Gentleness & Meekness

- Galatians 6:1 – especially necessary in dealing with the spiritual
- 2 Timothy 2:24-26 – but also in dealing with those who oppose us

Forgiveness, Forbearance, Patience, Longsuffering

- Ephesians 4:1-5, 31, 32 – all of these attitudes overlap, and are very important

These attitudes help smooth out the bumps and obstacles that Satan will put in our way in his effort to destroy the local congregation.

Conclusion

Ideal attitudes make for ideal working conditions among the members of a local church. Attitude improvement can be compared to the woodcutter sharpening his ax. (Ecclesiastes 10:10) If we want the work of the congregation to go smooth, we need to hone our attitudes! They will make us "useful to the Master, prepared for every good work". (2Timothy 2:21)

Are we developing the right kind of attitudes that prepare us for the work of the Lord?

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 12

I am weak, what if I fall?

It's common for Christians to view some people in the Bible as "super Godly". That's why God put them in the Bible, right? Next in line after people in the Bible are a few people we know who appear to be spiritual that we look up to which might include Bible teachers, elders and preachers, and others that you personally know who have a reputation of being "super" Christians. Because of the perception that some people make up some kind of "upper class" quality of spirituality, we often settle for average in our own Christian walk believing that we can never achieve such high standards. We think we can't possibly be as "good" as the godly people in the Bible or those Christians we know who seem so strong in their walk with God.

It's a myth, a misperception created by the father of lies to deceive us, a built-in excuse meant to trap us into being spiritual lukewarm. We ALL have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:21-24 - 21But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, **23for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God**, 24and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

The more godly a person is, the more they realize what a weak and inconsistent Christian they are. The most godly and consistent Christians you know will be the first to proclaim how utterly weak and prone to failure and sin they really are. Given the chance they would argue strongly that they are the least and the last person who possesses the goodness and qualities that God should be looking for. The heroes of the Bible that we elevate to a Godly status were some of the most sinful and unlikely people you would think God would choose to do His work.

Moses

Questioned and doubted God's word - Exodus 3:11

Was a complainer and grumbler - Exodus 5:22, 23

Was impatient - Exodus 6:12

Was very pessimistic – Exodus 4:13-15

David

Was an adulterer - 2 Samuel 11:2–5

Was a murderer - 2 Samuel 11:6–25

Was a thief - 2 Samuel 11:26-12:10

Thought only of himself - 2 Samuel 18:33-19:1–4

Pride caused him to disobey God and allow Satan to influence him - 2 Samuel 24:1-4

Peter

Was presumptuous and impulsive - Matthew 16:22-23

Struggled with faith - Matthew 14:28–31

Acted without thinking - Matthew 26:50, 51

Denied Christ completely - Matthew 26:69–75

Was a hypocrite - Galatians 2:11-14

Paul

Was a prideful religious zealot - Acts 22:3-5

Was a murderer and persecutor of Christians - Acts 7:58- 8:1-3; 9:1, 2

Was the least of Christians - Ephesians 3:7-9

Was the worst of all sinners - 1 Timothy 1:15, 16

Struggled constantly with sin - Romans 7:14-25

What made these men great servants of God? What matters is how we respond to our sin when we do fall.

2 Samuel 12:13 - 13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." Nathan replied, "The LORD has taken away your sin. You are not going to die.

When you sin, do you just feel bad and go on? When you fall, do you act like nothing happened and give the impression to others that you are spiritually strong even though you feel terrible inside? Do you believe that you will never be the kind of Christian that God wants you to be? You are no different than every other Christian. When we sin and fall, God is able to forgive us and make all things new again. Jesus continually intercedes on our behalf to our heavenly father. We just need to humble ourselves and ask for forgiveness in prayer.

1 John 1:8-10 - If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.

1 John 2:1-2 - My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Luke 18:9-14 - To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

God's kingdom is made up of liars, murderers, adulterers, cowards, hypocrites and weak sinners. God doesn't look for the "good", the "best" or the "exceptional". God looks for the "available", the "repentant", the "humble" and the "willing". It doesn't matter what you were in the past, whether 5 years ago, or 5 seconds ago. What will you be from this moment forward? We often remember our sin and guilt for a long time, letting it rob us of joy and motivation to serve God and making us lukewarm as Christians.

Philippians 3:12-14 - Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Even though we are not perfect and often fall, we strive for the goal in Christ. God can use you no matter what you have done in the past, even if you "worst" sin is being lukewarm towards God. So we should not settle for being an average Christian. Because of the power of God and the blood of Jesus that continuously cleanses us from sin, we are set aside by God to serve Him as Christians even when we fall. God uses the weakest and least likely of us who may possess some terrible sinful qualities, but have in common a heart of repentance, willingness and availability to serve God.

Conclusion

Even though David committed adultery and murder, God proclaimed him to be "a man after God's own heart". Why? David was willing to humble himself and repent and serve God. We can do the same thing when we fall. Our assurance in salvation is based on the grace and mercy of God through the blood of Jesus. As we strive but sometimes fall to be obedient and walk in the light, He cleanses us from our sin so that we may boldly approach and serve Him.

Christian Fundamentals – Lesson 13

Becoming a Mature Christian

Introduction

A tremendous calling has been given to us as Christians – to live a worthy life. We often grow complacent in our faith, growing cold and sure of our own righteousness before God. We often need reminded of those fundamental things that brought us to the Lord to help us resume or begin maturing in our faith so we may lack nothing in our devotion and service to Him. As we mature, we are made complete in the Lord and are ready and equipped for every good work. (Ephesians 4:12-14) Jesus paid the price for our sins and we are righteous before God because of that sacrifice. Now Jesus wants us to live a life that honors God in everything that we do. As Christians we are responsible for the reputation of God here on earth. When we fail to live godly lives, God's reputation is damaged. Nathan the prophet told David after his sin with Bathsheba that now "you have given great occasion for the enemies of God to blaspheme Him". (2 Chronicles 12:14)

Three types of Christians

Hot – those that seek to fulfill all their needs in the Lord Jesus Christ and are continuously drawn closer to His will

Cold – those who seek to fulfill their needs in the world and are continuously drawn closer to the ways of man

Lukewarm – those who feel they have no needs or need to grow in maturity and faith and feel content to stay as they are – "I'm OK"

Problems

Cold – go back to the world and are hardened to Jesus

- Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:9, 10 - Demas, a co-worker with Paul who returned to the world

Lukewarm – live life no different from the world and therefore are a hindrance to the cause of Jesus

- Revelation 3:14-18 – the Laodeceans became lukewarm

In spite of our weaknesses and lack of maturity, God makes a promise to His people -

2 Chronicles 7:14 - 14 if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Paul had this goal as an apostle –

Colossians 1:28, 29 - 28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone *perfect* in Christ. 29 To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

How can we tell if we are maturing and growing spiritually?

There is a new and greater awareness of right and wrong

- John 16:8 – the Spirit convicts us

- Romans 7:18-25 – words, thoughts, actions that are displeasing to God will become more evident to us as we will feel the pain of guilt

- Matthew 4:1-4 – we should be hungering for God's word

- John 14:15 – we delight in the commands of God and have a genuine desire for a changed life

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – in Christ we are new creatures

There is an increase in personal testing, often by those who are closest to us and do not understand spiritual things

- 2 Timothy 3:12 – all who seek to live godly will suffer persecution of some kind

We have an increased love for other Christians and have a sincere enjoyment of fellowship

- Acts 2:42-47 – in their devotion to each other, they wanted to be together

An increasing desire to share your faith in Christ with others

- 1 Peter 3:15 – always be ready to give an answer to the hope you have in the Lord

Practical Ways to Maintain Spiritual Maturity and Growth

- Psalm 119:2 & 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 - discipline ourselves to be in God's word daily
 - John 15:1-4 – always seek God's strength and help daily and stop depending upon yours
 - Hebrews 3:13-15, 10:24, 25 –become accountable and rely on someone to spur you on
- Examine every thought, word and action and don't be afraid to repent
- 2 Peter 1:8 – always maintain the spirit of a disciple because there is always room to grow
 - Matthew 28:18-20 - recognize and acknowledge the authority of Jesus and live accordingly

Conclusion

We may struggle in our walk with the Lord in this life, but we can and should strive to grow in our faith and become spiritually mature.

Ephesians 4:11-14 - 11It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and *become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ*. 14Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

A People of the Book

Where Truth and Love Abound



Our Service Schedule

Sunday:	10:00 a.m.	Bible Study (classes for all ages)
	11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.	Worship
Wednesday:	7:00 p.m.	Bible Study (classes for all ages)

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